

Wildlife Restoration MULTI-YEAR GRANT INTERIM PERFORMANCE REPORT

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

Alaska Department of Fish and Game Wildlife Restoration Grant

GRANT NUMBER: AKW-19
PROJECT NUMBER: 7.0
PROJECT TITLE: Refuge/Special Areas Access Improvements FY2017
PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2020 (Amended to December 31, 2021)
PERFORMANCE YEAR: July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2021
REPORT DUE DATE: September 1, 2021
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Joe Meehan, Lands & Refuges Program Coordinator
COOPERATORS: N/A

Authorities: 2 CFR 200.328
2 CFR 200.301
50 CFR 80.90

I. PROGRESS ON PROJECT OBJECTIVES DURING LAST SEGMENT

OBJECTIVE 1: Improve and upgrade public access facilities while reducing impacts from existing modes of access.

Job/Activity 1-a: Upgrade the undeveloped boat launch site at Wasilla Creek-Rabbit Slough in the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge.

Accomplishments: Working with Alaska State Parks, the facility was completed and opened to public use during the prior reporting period; however, final expenditures to the project were made during this reporting period.

This project also supported the construction of a boat dock and a fishing platform adjoining the boat ramp. The dock provided a necessary facility for loading/unloading passengers and gear in boats while protecting streambank habitat. It also provided a sport fishing platform consistent with the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Job/Activity 1-b: Implement trail repair, rerouting, and hardening techniques to repair damaged trail sections in the Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Area and to encourage off-road vehicle users to avoid impacting sensitive sedge flat meadows. Similar trail improvement projects will be undertaken in other Special Areas as funds allow (e.g. Anchor River-Fritz Creek CHA, Goose Bay SGR, Susitna Flats SGR, Matanuska Valley Moose Range).

Accomplishments: Using a previous assessments of trail conditions and needs, repair work was performed on the Fox River Trail (Fox River Flats CHA). Work during this reporting period included: 1) contracting a surveyor to conduct a survey of approximately

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0.3 mile of trail that crosses private property in preparation of a trail easement donation from the landowner; and 2) through a contract with the Homer Soil and Water Conservation District, approximately 100 feet of trail was hardened using GeoBlock panels to help protect wetlands where off-road vehicle use was degrading wetlands.

Job/Activity 1-c: Contract professional trail consultant to provide an assessment of the Willow Mountain CHA off-road vehicle trail identifying areas in need of repair or rerouting; and to implement repair/rerouting of highest priority sections.

Accomplishments: An overall assessment of this trail was previously conducted. No trail repair/rerouting work was conducted during this period.

OBJECTIVE 2: Improve public access facilities to promote public use, awareness, and appreciation of these areas.

Job/Activity 2-a: Upgrade the roadside parking area for Reflections Lake in the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge; construct an access stairway or other structure to facilitate access to Sunny Point in the Mendenhall Wetlands State Game Refuge; upgrade or expand trails, boardwalks and/or interpretive panels at Creamer’s Field State Game Refuge; and improve or construct other access facilities in Special Areas as need and project funding dictates.

Accomplishments: no new work was conducted during this reporting period.

II. SUMMARY OF WORK COMPLETED ON JOBS IDENTIFIED IN ANNUAL PLAN THIS PERIOD: N/A

III. SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT REPORTS AND/OR AMENDMENTS:

IV. PUBLICATIONS: none.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THIS PROJECT: additional work is necessary on the Watermelon Trail (Anchor River-Fritz Creek CHA), Fox River, and Willow Mountain trails and we will continue to work with community organizations to plan repairs and seek funding for these projects.

Additional trail upgrades are necessary to provide for off-road vehicle access and protection of habitats. These upgrades include rerouting approximately 2.5 miles of the Watermelon Trail to eliminate a longstanding trail trespass issue on private lands. In addition, large portions of this trail require brush clearing, drainage improvements, hardening in wetland areas, and other upgrades.

Trail upgrades necessary on the Fox River Trail include finalizing a trail easement donation from a private landowner, a crossing structure on Fox Creek, trail hardening in

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wet areas, drainage improvements, brush clearing, and possibly bridge modifications to accommodate wider side-by-side off-road vehicles.

An assessment of available funds will be conducted to consider other access improvements included in the project objectives.

Prepared by:

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