

# Community Coastal Impact Assistance Program

## Coastal Habitat Restoration Project

### Award Amount

\$ 114,382.81

### Grantee

Bering Straits Coastal Association

### Project Contact

Willa Eckenweiler, Program Director  
P.O. Box 231, Unalakleet, AK 99684  
Telephone Number: (907) 624-3780  
E-mail Address: [wteckenweiler@hotmail.com](mailto:wteckenweiler@hotmail.com)

### Location

This project will be located in the Bering Straits Coastal Association (BSCA) region which includes the area of the former Bering Straits Coastal Resource Service Area, generally the Norton Bay and Seward Peninsula area in Western Alaska. All 15 communities within the coastal zone of the area serviced by the BSCA will be contacted for participation in this project. The communities in the BSCA include Brevig Mission, Diomedea, Elim, Gambell, Golovin, Koyuk, Savoonga, Shaktoolik, Shishmaref, St. Michael, Stebbins, Teller, Unalakleet, Wales, and White Mountain. The other communities that are not currently occupied or occupied on a seasonal basis that may be involved in this project as appropriate include: Tin City, Council, King Island, Mary's Igloo, Port Clarence, and Solomon. The project will be managed from Unalakleet which is located at 63.8816 North Latitude and 160.798 West Longitude.

### Project Duration

**Project Start Date:** March 1, 2015

**Project End Date:** October 31, 2016

**Project Duration:** 1.5 year

### Project Description

This project will result in a list of habitat restoration needs, a priority list of restoration projects and completion of a restoration project for one of these sites. It will provide a direct benefit to the natural coastal environment by carrying out habitat improvements to a site within the BSCA region. The project will restore habitat functions affected by either human activities or adverse natural conditions. One of the products of the project will be a priority list of areas meriting habitat restoration which will be provided to appropriate agencies in an effort to encourage support for future restoration projects. An indirect benefit will be education of area residents through raising local awareness about habitat restoration needs, the causes of the habitat degradation, and actions area residents can take to prevent future degradation to habitats.

The BSCA Program Director will manage this project and complete project tasks with

assistance from a consultant with experience in habitat restoration. The Program Director will develop a request for proposals for a qualified consultant to assist in completing the project goals and objectives. With direction from the BSCA board, the Program Director will select the consultant and enter into a contract. The consultant will assist with the following project tasks.

### **Year 1**

- Develop criteria for ranking habitat restoration projects.
- Contact community representatives (tribe, municipality or local Native corporation) and Kawerak Inc., the regional Native nonprofit, to identify areas in need of habitat restoration.
- Work with the Program Director to rank the potential projects.
- Visit top three project sites to evaluate their feasibility for restoration and develop estimated costs for restoration. Visit a high school class in each village to explain the project and solicit potential volunteers for the restoration project.
- Work with the Program Director to select the final project site and obtain permission from the landowner and obtain any necessary permits.
- After consulting with the area biologist for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and other appropriate agencies, develop a restoration plan including estimated costs for restoration of the site. Agencies will be contacted to determine if previous habitat restoration projects have been conducted in the BSCA, and if so, what techniques were used and whether any problems were encountered.

### **Year 2**

- Order supplies and make final arrangements for the restoration project including solicitation for volunteers.
- Conduct the restoration project using volunteers from the community, including high school students and adults.
- Distribute a summary of the project to all communities within the BSCA region. The summary will be useful to other communities because it will identify the process and techniques used for habitat restoration.
- Prepare a final report on the restoration effort which will include a monitoring plan to determine the success of the project.

## Measurable Goals and Objectives

### **Year 1**

- Prioritized list of sites meriting habitat restoration in the BSCA region.

### **Year 2**

- Complete one habitat restoration project that will involve at least 50' of stream bank or at least 2,500 square feet of upland area.

Complete final project report that summarizes habitat restoration efforts, identifies priorities for future restoration, and specifies specific actions residents can take to prevent future habitat damage. The report

will also identify region-specific habitat restoration techniques for the type of restoration involve with this project.

### CIAP Authorized Use

This project is consistent with Authorized Use #1 – Projects and other activities for the conservation, protection, or restoration of coastal areas, including wetlands. This project will result in both direct and indirect benefits to the natural coastal environment. Direct benefits will result from the actual restoration of one or more habitats. Indirect benefits to the natural coastal environment will result from development of a prioritized list of habitat restoration needs and through education of local residents about actions they can take to prevent future damage to habitats. While these added benefits may not result in direct improvements to the environment during the project, they are expected to result in direct benefits in the future. Development of a list of habitat restoration priorities will encourage local communities to apply for grants to fund restoration efforts or for land owners to complete the restoration on their own. Identification of actions local residents can take to prevent habitat degradation or restore habitats will lead to future direct benefits such as:

- Avoidance of off-road travel in sensitive areas which will result in natural regeneration of vegetation,
- Reduced use and proper disposal of plastic bags and other materials that are known to entangle wildlife,
- Improved disposal practices for hazardous materials which would otherwise leak contaminants into the environment, and
- Voluntary efforts to remove marine debris, petroleum drums and other hazardous materials from habitats.

Without development of a list of restoration priorities and local education, these future direct benefits to the natural coastal environment will not likely happen. The power of education should not be underestimated in its ability to prevent future habitat degradation.