

# 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  
**PERFORMANCE YEAR:** July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019  
**REPORT DUE DATE:** September 1, 2019  
**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:** Joe Meehan, Lands & Refuges Program Coordinator  
**COOPERATORS:** N/A

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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:** Alaska State Parks (Office of Design and Construction) completed site surveys during this reporting period and initiated the environmental review and engineering process. Draft design is expected in fall 2019 with construction completed by spring 2020.

**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:** See summary in 1-c below.

**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:** Upon assessments of the Willow Mountain Trail (Willow Mountain CHA), Fox River Trail (Fox River Flats CHA), and Watermelon Trail (Anchor River-

Fritz Creek CHA), we selected the latter two trails to concentrate our efforts for restoration, improvements and/or rerouting. A previously prepared trail assessment report for the Willow Mountain Trail will provide a baseline for additional work should project funding allow.

During this reporting period, we made one ground-based trip to the Fox River and Watermelon trails to assess trail conditions and further identify repair needs. We contracted with the Homer Soil and Water Conservation District and developed a plan for repairs to both trails including the following:

Fox River Trail – 1) relocate two ATV bridges due to channel erosion; 2) repair and/or extend approaches to all seven bridges; and 3) as a means to test overwinter retention and feasibility for rerouting the trail, place test sections of Geoblock trail hardening panels in several areas on the open sedge flats.

Watermelon Trail – 1) install approximately 160 linear feet of Geoblock trail hardening panels at three locations where erosion and/or wetlands are affecting access along the trail and impacting surrounding habitats; and 2) repair and harden the approaches to the Beaver Creek bridge.

While this work was initiated during this reporting period, only the placement of the test panels on the Fox River Flats was completed. The other components of this work will be completed in the next (and last) reporting period of this grant.

**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:**

Palmer Hay Flats Refuge - Reflections Lake Parking Lot: parking was expanded along 400 feet of the road shoulder adjacent to the trailhead at Reflections Lake. Lacking a dedicated parking lot, approximately 20 vehicles can now safely park off the road surface and site users can walk to the trailhead. In addition, an approximately 232-foot-wide parking lot to accommodate trucks and boat trailers was constructed at the Knik River access site. This site serves as an alternative parking area for Reflections Lake and a primary parking and staging area for anglers and hunters launching boats on the river.

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

**III. SIGNIFICANT DEVIATIONS AND/OR ADDITIONAL FEDERAL AID-FUNDED WORK NOT DESCRIBED ABOVE THAT WAS ACCOMPLISHED ON THIS PROJECT DURING THIS SEGMENT PERIOD:**

**IV. PUBLICATIONS:** Two television news stories were produced as a result of our work at Reflections Lake:

<https://www.ktva.com/story/39367553/more-parking-space-at-reflections-lake>

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://www.ktva.com/story/39367553/more-parking-space-at-reflections-lake>. The page header features the KTVA logo (11 KTVA) and the location 'KENAI' with a temperature of 51°. The navigation menu includes 'NEWS', 'WEATHER', 'ONLY ON 11', 'GRUNWALD MURDER', 'CRIME', 'POLITICS', 'LIVESTREAM', and 'VOTE NOW'. The article title is 'More parking space at Reflections Lake', dated Friday, October 26th 2018, 8:37 PM AKDT, and updated at the same time. The author is Lauren Maxwell. The main image shows a construction site with a yellow excavator and several cars parked on a dirt area. To the right, there is a 'POPULAR STORIES' sidebar with four items: 'Renfro names Austin Barrett as Grunwald's killer' by Heather Hintze, 'Hope Center comes out on top in dispute with Anchorage Equal Rights Commission' by Daniella Rivera, 'Medicaid cuts to providers become permanent later this month. some fear patients will lose' by Lauren Maxwell, and 'How to save time when applying for your Real ID' by Megan Mazurek. Social media sharing icons for Facebook, Twitter, Email, and Print are visible on the right side.

<https://www.ktva.com/story/39368191/reflections-lake-recreation-area-considered-a-success-story-of-community-involvement>

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://www.ktva.com/story/39368191/reflections-lake-recreation-area-considered-a-success-story-of-community-involvement>. The page header features the KTVA logo (11 KTVA) and the location 'EAGLE RIVER' with a temperature of 49°. The navigation menu is identical to the first screenshot. The article title is 'Reflections Lake Recreation Area considered a success story of community involvement', dated Friday, October 26th 2018, 8:40 PM AKDT, and updated at the same time. The author is Lauren Maxwell. The main image shows a scenic view of a lake with trees in the background. To the right, there is a 'POPULAR STORIES' sidebar with the same four items as the first screenshot. Social media sharing icons for Facebook, Twitter, Email, and Print are visible on the right side.

**V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THIS PROJECT:** none

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