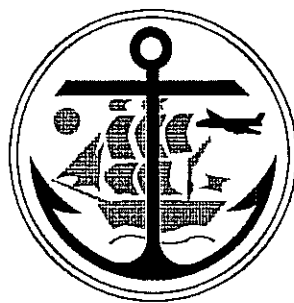


Municipality of
Anchorage



P.O. Box 196650
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6650
Telephone: (907) 343-7100
Fax: (907) 343-7180
Email : www.muni.org

Mark Begich, Mayor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 27, 2007
2007-11

Contact: Julie Hasquet, 343-7103
Communications Director
Mike Roy, 786-3925
USFWS

City Salmon Program Reels in National Recognition

The Municipality of Anchorage *Salmon in the City* program is part of a select group of salmon and wildlife restoration programs from around the country being recognized by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Salmon in the City is receiving the Fisheries and Habitat Conservation Partner Award in a ceremony at the Rayburn House Office Building in Washington, D.C. on March 1. The award is given each year to conservation partners around the nation for their unique efforts to sustain and enhance fish, wildlife, and their habitats.

“Anchorage is a great place to live and work, and the fact that we have salmon in our creeks is one of the city’s more remarkable features – thrilling tourists and contributing to our economy and quality of life,” said Mayor Mark Begich. “We are honored to receive this national recognition for the Salmon in the City program.”

Anchorage’s *Salmon in the City* initiative is part of a nationwide effort to ensure healthy populations of Pacific salmon. Congress established the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund to support state and local salmon restoration and recovery activities. Alaska’s congressional delegation, led by Sen. Ted Stevens, ensured that Anchorage and many other parts of the state received this funding to help sustain salmon populations throughout Alaska.

“We are recognizing individuals and organizations that have done an exceptional job conserving our trust resources,” said Thomas Melius, Regional Director for the Alaska Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. “Our wish is to honor those who worked in 2006 to communicate the importance of those resources, foster inclusive partnerships in the spirit of cooperative conservation and engage citizens in the shared stewardship of our natural resources.”

Anchorage is coordinating its efforts with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Alaska Department of Fish and

Game's Southeast Sustainable Salmon Fund, ConocoPhillips and many other state and federal agencies and community groups.

The city's Creeks Community Development Manager, David Wigglesworth, is in Washington, D.C. to receive the award.

"I am proud of the extraordinary collaboration between the City, resource agencies, community groups and the public to ensure good water quality in our creeks and healthy salmon populations," Begich said. "The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and our other partners provide the City with considerable expertise, resources, and good ideas to help us move forward on a number of important creek and salmon-related projects."

Salmon in the City is currently focusing its attention on Ship, Chester and Campbell creeks in Anchorage. Several restoration projects have been identified along these creeks. Projects include actions to remove barriers to fish passage, eradicating invasive species that harm salmon habitat, restoring stream banks, public education and improving recreational fishing access and viewing opportunities.

Recent improvements to the bridge heading out to Ship Creek Point enabled better fish passage for species like Chinook and coho salmon. Efforts are now underway to rehabilitate stream banks along the creek and provide for better fishing and recreational access. These actions will create a better experience for both fish and people!

Healthy creeks and watersheds not only benefit salmon, they provide significant dividends to our community. Salmon viewing and local fishing opportunities make Anchorage a destination site for visitors, convention goers, and business development

There are few cities left in the world where you can land a 45-pound king salmon within sight of high-rise office towers and then walk just three blocks to a Broadway play or four-star restaurant.

"Our salmon are world-class assets. Wildlife viewing, sport fishing, and business meetings are some of the top ten reasons why people visit Alaska," said Mayor Begich.

With help of federal funds and private-public partnerships, the *Salmon in the City* initiative is working to make it possible for residents and visitors alike to experience a natural part of Alaska without having to travel far beyond the borders of our Municipality. For more information go to: <http://salmoninthecity.muni.org>

###