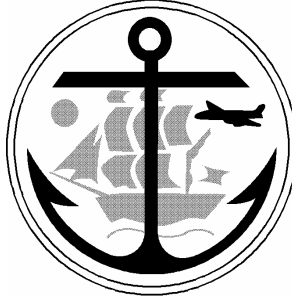


Municipality of  
Anchorage



P.O. Box 196650  
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6650  
Telephone: (907) 343-4431  
Fax: (907) 343-4499  
Email : [www.muni.org](http://www.muni.org)

*Mark Begich, Mayor*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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Contacts: David Wigglesworth, MOA  
343-7116  
Deb Essex, Anchorage  
Waterways Council  
229-1902

**RESIDENTS, BUSINESSES TAKE TO THE CREEKS SATURDAY**  
*Annual Clean-Up Event Celebrates Importance of Salmon, Waterways*

Hundreds of Anchorage residents, businesses, community groups and local, state and federal agency personnel will pull on their waders and take to the creeks to participate in the 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Creek Cleanup and Celebration from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. this Saturday.

The Municipality of Anchorage and many other private and public organizations participate in and sponsor this outstanding community event. Cleanup activities occur from 9 am to Noon – followed by a creeks and salmon celebration at Valley of the Moon Park from Noon to 3 pm. The event is coordinated by the Anchorage Waterways Council.

This event is an example of efforts ramping up under the Municipality's *Salmon in the City* initiative to keep our creeks clean and our salmon runs healthy, according to Mayor Mark Begich. In recognition of the benefits that healthy creeks and salmon provide to our community, the Mayor is proclaiming **Saturday May 20, 2006** as "**Creeks and Salmon Appreciation Day.**"

"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 – reeling in tourists and business interests," the mayor said. "I am proud of the extraordinary efforts of local community groups, businesses, agencies and residents participating in the annual Creek Clean Up event and on-going salmon restoration projects."

The cleanup celebration at Valley of the Moon Park will include the fabulous Irish band, *Back Alley Banned*. Other celebration activities include remarks from the Mayor at 1:45 pm, Trash Awards at 2:00 pm, Clowns creating animal balloons, and face painting for kids. The Sourdough Mining Co. Restaurant, Dianne's Restaurant, John O'Neil and Great Harvest Bread Company are providing food for the event.

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Anchorage's *Salmon in the City* initiative is part of a nationwide effort to ensure healthy populations of Pacific salmon and steelhead. 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 receive this funding to help sustain salmon populations throughout Alaska.

The city is coordinating its efforts with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Alaska Department of Fish and Game's Southeast Sustainable Salmon Fund and many other state and federal agencies and community groups.

"The mayor created a Watershed Task Force that brings together organizations with considerable expertise, resources, and good ideas to help us move forward on a number of important creek and salmon-related projects," said David Wigglesworth, the city's Creeks Community Development Manager.

*Salmon in the City* is currently focusing its attention on Ship, Chester, and Campbell creeks in Anchorage. The Watershed Task Force has identified many potential restoration projects along these creeks. Projects range from actions to remove barriers to fish passage, restore stream banks, public education and to 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," Begich said.

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 the Municipality.