

State, federal agencies sign wildlife pact

The heads of two state and three federal government agencies have signed a memorandum of understanding for cooperative activities on a 2.3-million-acre Fish and Wildlife Area, mostly within the Chugach National Forest.

The agreement will allow the agencies involved to consolidate past agreements, to promote continued cooperation and to coordinate future planning efforts and projects.

Working together will help reduce an overlap in state and federal functions, save money and use the existing expertise of the five agencies to meet mutual goals and objections, officials said.

Mike Novy, Chugach National Forest fish and wildlife staff officer said, "You cannot isolate fish and wildlife from their environment; therefore, when trying to manage land or fish and wildlife, close coordination is essential between land managers and fish and wildlife administrators."

For instance, the Forest Service will coordinate with the other four agencies when planning and implementing National Forest projects on the Copper River Delta.

The Forest Service will continue to assist the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in conducting migratory bird surveys, and help the Alaska Department of Fish & Game in banding geese, determining goose nest success and conducting studies on the dusky Canada goose predation by brown bears, birds and coyotes.

ADF&G and the Forest Service will join forces in fertilizing lakes, and developing groundwater spawning and rearing improvements for salmon.