



# URBAN FISHING OUTREACH PROGRAM





Work with others to **conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats** for the continuing benefit of the American people.





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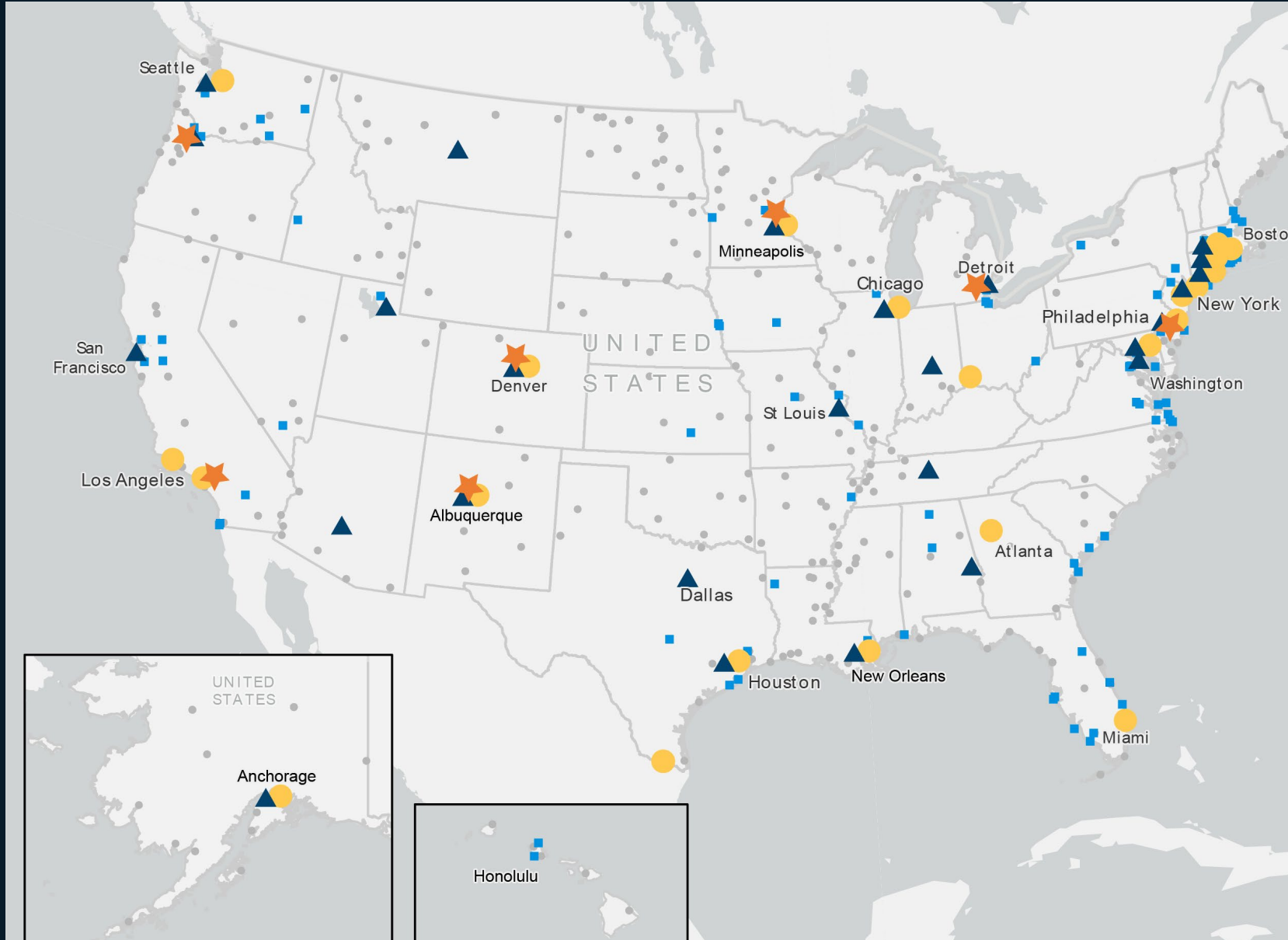


**80% of Americans live in or near cities**





# FAR-REACHING URBAN ENGAGEMENT



- **568 NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES**
- **101 URBAN NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES**
- **7 FLAGSHIP SITES**
- **70 NATIONAL FISH HATCHERIES**
- **32 PARTNER CITIES**
- **30 URBAN BIRD TREATY CITIES**



# Critical Elements

Inclusive

Intentional

Collaborative

Community-focused

Philadelphia, PA  
John Heinz at Tinicum  
National Wildlife Refuge





# Critical Elements

Inclusive

Intentional

Collaborative

Community-focused

Freemont, CA

Don Edwards San Francisco  
Bay National Wildlife Refuge





# Critical Elements

Inclusive

Intentional

Collaborative

Community-focused

Lacy, WA

Puget Sound/Olympic Peninsula Fisheries Complex





# Critical Elements

Inclusive

Intentional

Collaborative

Community-focused

Anchorage, AK

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Anchorage Regional Office



**FISHING FOR CONNECTIONS WITH URBAN  
ALASKAN YOUTH**







# Fishing For Connections with Urban Alaskan Youth



Katrina Liebich, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Marye Martin, Student Conservation Association





# Anchorage, Alaska

*surrounded by wilderness*

*bisected by salmon streams*

*Despite this, many of its diverse urban youth and their caregivers don't fish or spend time in nature.*

- AK's largest city (>290,000 pop)
- Ample urban fishing opportunities
- Tops national school diversity charts





## We want to...



...facilitate meaningful and inclusive community connections to nature in urban Alaska by providing expertise, funding, resources, and inspiration; by learning about and addressing barriers; and by investing in a diverse array of relationships and programming.

## We envision...



...outdoor spaces that are welcoming and accessible to people from diverse backgrounds and perspectives: where favorite memories are made; wellbeing found; relationships formed; wild foods are collected and shared; seeds of stewardship sowed and grown; and the norm is to be 'outdoorsy' in a safe and culturally affirming way.



# Urban Fishing Program Goals



- Competency and confidence fishing and in the outdoors
- Recruitment and retention of youth into angling
- Conservation and life-long stewardship of native fishes



# Audience

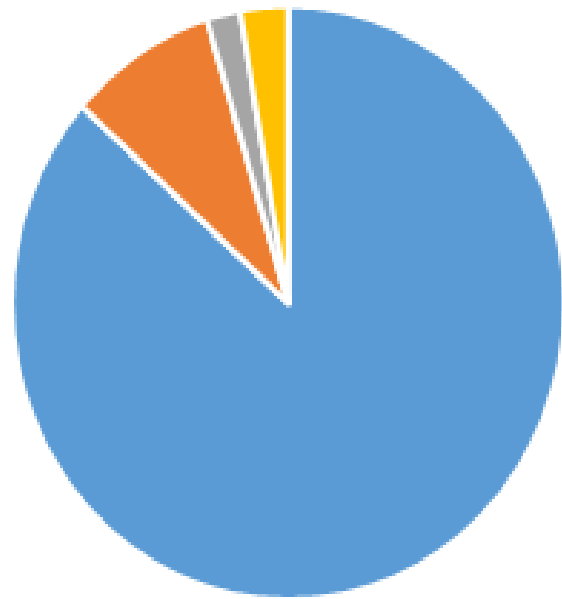
Diverse Anchorage youth and youth organization staff





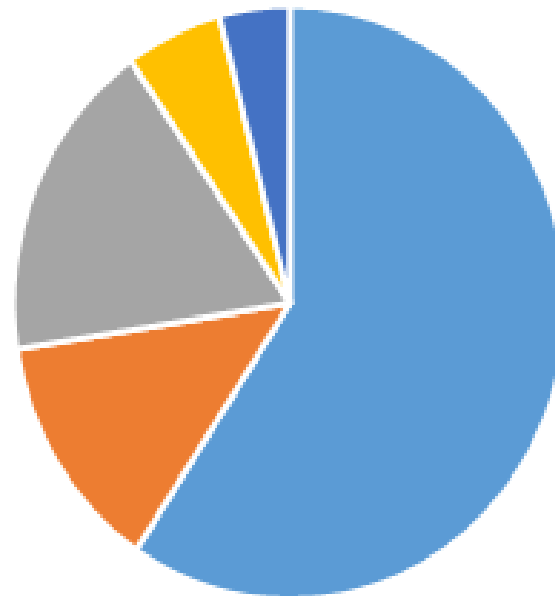
# Disproportionality

Race of Anglers 2016



■ Caucasian ■ African American ■ Asian ■ Other

US Population 2010



■ Caucasian ■ Black ■ Hispanic ■ Asian ■ Other

Sex of Anglers 2016



■ Male ■ Female

US Population 2010



■ Male ■ Female

# What barriers do Anchorage kids face?

fear

- *wildlife*
- *getting lost*
- *drowning, falling and "getting pulled in" by big fish/sharks*
- Not knowing how
- Not having the gear



# Our Strategy

- Repeat interactions within and across years
- Build competence to build confidence
- Fun, food, comradery
- Staff consistency & diversity
- Provide the gear & instruction

# Our Strategy



## In-Person Engagement

Settings: outdoors, classroom, pool



## Virtual Engagement

A bridge between summer programming





# In-Person Engagement

- June 1-mid August annually
- Each week builds on the prior
- Classroom, pool and outdoor settings



# What we teach

- Lake fishing with bobbers
- Fishing in current
- Cooking the catch
- Coldwater safety & river crossing
- Outdoor preparedness
- Thanking the fish we harvest





# A PHOTO TOUR OF A TYPICAL SUMMER

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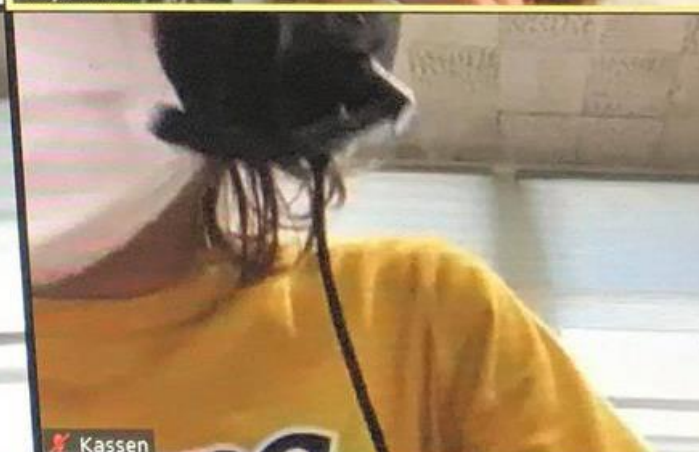
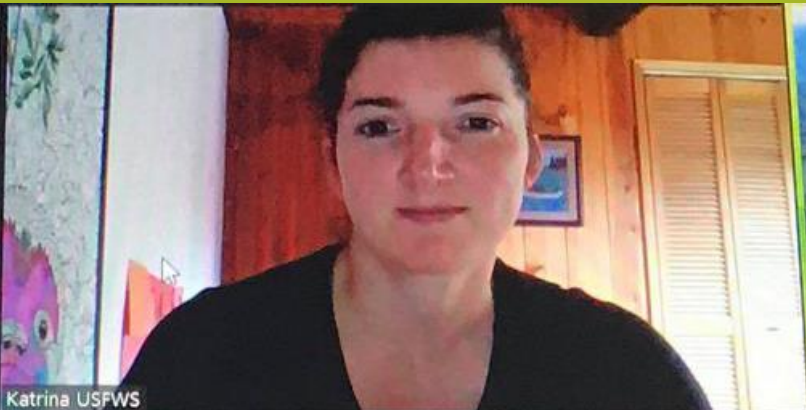




# Virtual Engagement

- Virtual Youth Fish and Wildlife Club bridges the summer program
- We co-design curricula across USFWS programs and with the Boys and Girls Clubs
- Promotes connectivity across topics to build “big picture” point of view







# Partnerships



**Staffing:** Supported by FWS, SCA and Alaska Geographic



**Instruction:** by FWS, Alaska DNR, JBER, Anchorage FD



**Transportation:** Youth organizations & Alaska Geographic



# Community Partners

- Organizations that serve as hubs for diverse youth
- Organizations that we can partner with to hire interns
- Organizations with subject matter expertise and gear



Alaska Geographic





# Successes

- Catching fish!
- Kids returning week to week; year to year
- Partnership longevity
- Staff consistency & diversity
- Reaching our target audience





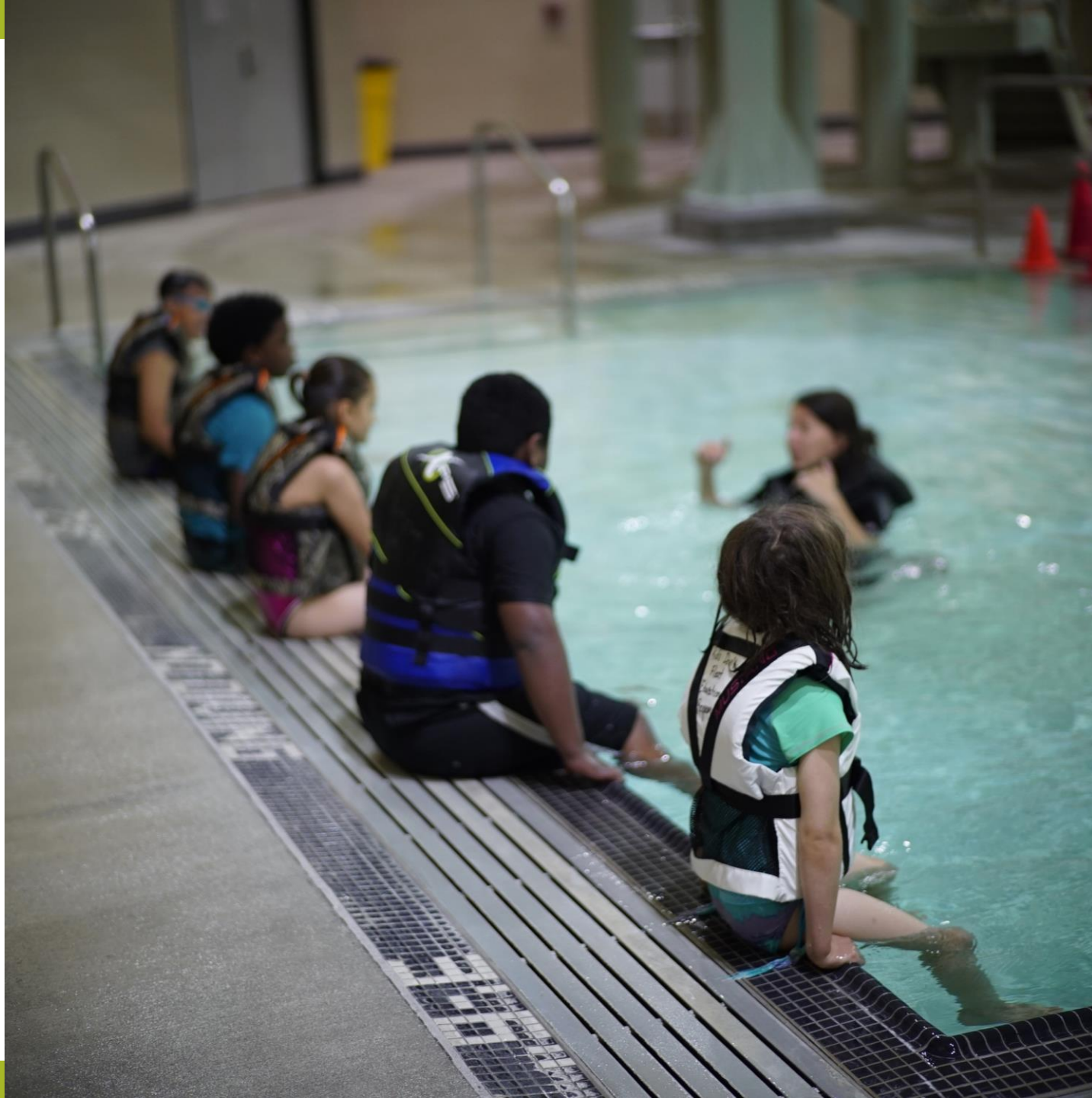
## How state agencies can get involved

- We have a thriving partnership Alaska DNR due to the safety barriers identified
- Program is co-designed. New state partners are always welcome!

























Thank You. Questions?





# WHAT'S NEXT?





# THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING.



## Urban Wildlife Conservation Program

angelina\_yost@fws.gov

<https://www.fws.gov/refuges/urban>



## Fish and Aquatic Conservation Program

holly\_Richards@fws.gov

<http://www.fw.gov/fisheries>



## Find a refuge or hatchery near you!

<https://www.fws.gov/visit-us>



Thanks so much for your time!