



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

1011 E. Tudor Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6199



FWS/ASA/SDMI Funding

AUG 19 2011

Nicholas Mastrodicasa
Project Manager, State of Alaska
Statewide Digital Mapping Initiative
4451 Aircraft Drive, Suite H
Anchorage, Alaska 99602

Dear Mr. Mastrodicasa:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Region 7, continues to support the Statewide Digital Mapping Initiative (SDMI). An improved Digital Elevation Model (DEM) would help the FWS address its mission in Alaska including:

- Managing 78 million acres of National Wildlife Refuge land,
- Management of trust wildlife species and their habitats,
- Statewide management of subsistence hunting and fishing on federally managed lands,
- Management of sea otters, walrus and polar bears.

An improved DEM would help the FWS in many aspects of our responsibilities. The DEMs are one of the key baseline data sets used in assessing the potential for changes across landscapes due to climate driven changes (e.g. permafrost stability, coastal erosion, sea level rise, vegetation shifts) and are essential in models to evaluate potential effects from different management approaches, development activities, and to respond to emergency events (e.g. earthquakes, oil spills). An improved DEM would be a critical data layer for ensuring that robust science is applied towards our FWS responsibilities.

While the FWS supports this effort and will contribute when we can, we are limited in the funding available.

We look forward to working with you and the other partners on this effort. We have designated Karen Murphy in our Science Applications office to be the regional contact for FWS in this initiative. Karen's contact information is: 907-786-3501 (phone) or Karen_Murphy@fws.gov.

Sincerely,

Regional Director

cc: Pat Pourchot, Special Assistant for Alaska Affairs

