



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

News Release

Pacific Islands External Affairs Office

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For Release: May 8, 2003
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PIEA-03-15
03-053

Fish and Wildlife Service Contracts Chugach Alaska Corporation to Operate Midway Atoll Infrastructure

A contract to provide operations and maintenance services at Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge was awarded on May 7 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to Chugach McKinley, Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Chugach Alaska Corporation. The five-month contract through the end of the federal fiscal year includes options to extend the contract annually.

“We are pleased to welcome a company with so much experience in providing operations and maintenance services in the Pacific and around the world,” said Dave Allen, Regional Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service’s Pacific Region. “Their experience at places like Wake Atoll and Kwajalein, though much larger scale operations than at Midway, will undoubtedly be helpful in managing this remote location.”

Under the \$3.3 million contract, Chugach will operate the airport facilities at Henderson Field; the fuel farm; and utilities, communications, waste management, and transportation systems. It will also be responsible for building, equipment, and grounds maintenance; food services; and medical services.

Chugach Alaska Corporation was formed in 1972 under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act to ensure long-term profitability and financial independence for Native Alaskans. Worldwide, Chugach has more than 5,000 employees who provide base operation, educational, construction, environmental, information technology, telecommunications, and employment services.

Chugach will take over operations and maintenance responsibilities from two temporary contractors on Midway, Geo Engineers, Inc., and American Airports Corporation. “We thank both these companies for keeping Midway operational over the past year as we sought a new long-term contractor,” Regional Director Allen said. “Managing an airfield, fuel farm, and a National Wildlife Refuge in such a remote location in the midst of the Pacific is quite a challenge, and not only did these folks step up to the plate, but they did an admirable job under sometimes trying circumstances.”

With the new contract in place, Regional Director Allen said the Fish and Wildlife Service would re-evaluate its visitor services program on Midway. The Fish and Wildlife Service opened

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Midway to the public in 1996 for the first time since the Pan American Airways flying clipper days in the late 1930s. The public use program was suspended temporarily in January 2002 but visitors have been welcomed since then during events and by special arrangement.

Allen said the agency's commitment to allowing the public to experience the atoll's historic and wildlife resources has not changed over the years. "We will be evaluating the type of visitor services that can be provided, based on the availability of resources," he said.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 540 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resource offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces Federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Aid program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.