



Steering Committee Meeting

Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Agriculture, Suite 12
1800 Glenn Highway, Palmer

Tuesday March 14, 2017 1:30 – 4:30pm

To call in to the **conference room: (907) 746-6347**

To start the conference call from conference room: Dial 9 then 746-6347

AGENDA

Facilitator: Frankie

Notetaker: Christy

Approve January 2017 meeting notes (*January meeting notes*)

Partnership Business

Partnership Fiscal Year 2018 budget (Jessica) (*Draft FY18 budget*)(*pending*)

- Review & discussion

RFP update from working group (Frankie)

Partnership Strategic Plan (*Scoping document*)

- Discussion and decision

Partnership Priorities (*Memo from Partnership Plan Committee*)

- Discussion & decision

Committee Updates (*if time*)

- Science and Data (Jon or Jeff)
- Outreach (Frankie)
- Symposium Planning (Jessica)

3pm - Elodea in the Mat-Su - barriers and solutions to eradication in Alexander Lake and future rapid response. (Heather Lescanec/AKDNR & John Morton/USFWS)

- Discussion

General Partner updates (all or any attendees)

Upcoming Events:

- All AK FHP meeting, March 20, 2017 Anchorage, AK
- Kenai Peninsula Fish Habitat Partnership Science Symposium, April 5th and 6th, 2017. Sterling Community Center, Sterling, AK

Next meeting:

- Tuesday May 9th 1:30-4pm



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NOTES

Facilitator: Frankie Barker **Notetaker:** Christy Cincotta **Coordinator:** Jessica Speed

Steering Committee and other Participants: Frankie Barker, Christy Cincotta, Tracy Smith, Erika Ammann, Jon Gerken, Jim DePasquale, Mike Daigneault, Marc Lamoreaux, Arni Thomson, Heather Lescanec, John Morton, Tammy Davis, Gary Fandrei and Andy Wizik.

Approve January 2017 meeting notes: Steering Committee approved January 2017 meeting notes.

Partnership Business

Partnership Strategic Plan (*Scoping document*)

- Discussion:

While at TNC, Corinne prepared a scoping document for revisiting the strategic plan that was shared and discussed at this meeting. The Partnership Strategic Plan was created in 2008 and revised in 2013, and Jessica has asked the Steering Committee to consider a strategy and schedule for another revision. The steering committee discussed several possibilities, including forming a sub-committee to oversee an update, utilizing the Conservation Action Planning (CAP) process, and assessing current status on objectives. The group discussed the possibility of utilizing a facilitator to hold a meeting specifically to review the strategic plan, CAP, and progress. As this year's symposium marks the 10 year anniversary of MSBSHP symposiums, this may be a good time to look at progress and potential updates. Frankie and Jessica will talk to Corinne about the past process to gather information, and will lay out a suggested process and a timeline for steering committee approval at a future meeting.

Partnership Priorities (*Memo from Partnership Plan Committee*)

- Discussion & decision:

Jessica Speed shared that during the RFP scoring sheet revision process, a need for a process for determining partnership priorities was identified. The current priorities were determined in late 2015 through a process set up by Corinne and a plan committee. Jessica Speed proposed adding aquatic invasives as a priority for 2017 and keeping the others the same. The steering committee discussed setting up a process for determining priorities to be completed annually and to include public input at the annual symposium. Frankie and Jessica will work together to devise a tentative planning process to bring to the steering committee for a decision at the May meeting.

RFP update from working group (Frankie):

At an earlier meeting, a small group was tasked with updating the score sheet and guideline document for the RFP process for NFHP funds. The group has met to work on this and found that there were several inconsistencies between the two documents, and is now in the process of editing these documents. They also need 2017 priorities confirmed before completing an update to the scoresheet. The group will meet again before May in order to provide an updated score sheet and guideline document for review at the May meeting.

Partnership Fiscal Year 2018 budget (Jessica) (*Draft FY18 budget*)

- Review & discussion:

The 2018 budget includes multiple income sources, including NFHP, TNC, and other sources such as Symposium donations and registration fees. Currently the partnership is slightly short on income to cover anticipated 2018 expenses, and this is mostly in the symposium category. Jessica is working on applying for a Cabela's grant to help cover symposium costs. The group discussed a possible change in venue for the 2017 symposium and looking at the possibility of donated space. Jessica will ask the symposium planning committee to look at different options. The steering committee discussed options for funds in the workshop category, and Tracey requested funds to help support a streambank restoration workshop. Heather Lescanec also shared information about possibilities for invasive species workshops. Jessica asked for any questions or comments regarding the budget in the next two weeks in order to present a final budget at the May meeting.

Committee Updates (*if time*)

- Science and Data (Jon) – There are currently no updates. Index watersheds will be the next focus. This committee may also assist with the partnership prioritization process.
- Outreach (Frankie) – Outreach committee met this morning to review a workplan for 2017 that has been shared with the steering committee. The outreach committee was able to successfully address nearly all of last year's goals. The site tour and symposium are big goals for the year. Wildlife Wednesdays are planned.
- Symposium Planning (Jessica) – No updates at this time.

3pm - Elodea in the Mat-Su - barriers and solutions to eradication in Alexander Lake and future rapid response. (Heather Lescanec/AKDNR & John Morton/USFWS)

- Discussion:

Heather Lescanec, John Morton, Tammy Davis, Gary Fandrei, and Andy Wizik joined the meeting for a discussion focused on elodea. Heather shared the history of the Alexander Creek elodea infestation (discovered in 2014 at 10 acres) and current status (500 acre infestation). Heather and partners were able to apply herbicide to the infestation in 2016 with herbicide contributed by John Morton and CIAA, but work is needed over the next three years to achieve eradication. Heather presented a budget for travel, product, and water sampling costs over the next three years for this project. John shared that although he works for the Kenai Wildlife Refuge, they shared \$100,000 worth of product to address the issue in Alexander Lake because we're all in this together and we need to keep southcentral Alaska clean as a whole to have success in a particular area. John also shared that the risk of elodea spread is increasing as the hybrid in this area has adapted to cold, and because the vector is changing to include spread by float planes. Elodea was identified just two weeks ago at Sport Lake on the Kenai Peninsula, and it has spread to cover much of the perimeter of the lake although it was not present at the last survey in 2014. One benefit of addressing elodea infestations is that at this point there is no seed bank to deal with. However, this plant is capable of producing seeds in the right conditions. Known infestations are currently single sex plants, so reproduction is through cloning, and therefore no seed dispersal. If this were to occur in the future

(male and female plants ending up in the same waterbody), eradication would become nearly impossible.

Heather shared that the short term goal for addressing elodea in Alexander Lake is finding funding for the product, water sampling, and travel for the next two years. The long term goal is to keep monitoring and also to get a better understanding of where people are going and coming from Alexander Lake to better understand transport. Alexander Creek will need to be continually monitored. The creek was monitored in 2016 by TTCD and no elodea was found at that point.

In terms of overall Mat-Su elodea eradication and prevention goals, the current goals are improved outreach and continued and improved surveys for elodea. Currently on the ground survey is the only identification method – eDNA methods are in the development stage and it can't be identified by air. Although aquatic invasive species and Elodea are included in the Mat-Su Salmon Partnership's Strategic Action Plan, there is no strategic plan to exclusively address elodea in the Mat-Su at this time. John suggested that it's important to be strategic and try to reach as many high traffic lakes as possible for frequent surveys. In Kenai, several groups are working together as part of a coordinated effort to control elodea. Funding is an issue, as borough and state funds are drying up, and it may be important to reach out more to businesses for support.

Citizens in the Kenai who have been involved with or exposed to eradication efforts have a favorable view of the process, and have spoken at meetings in other areas to provide support. Elodea has been eradicated at Lake Hood and frequent surveys are planned to ensure it stays clean.

Long term goals for addressing elodea in the Mat-Su include monitoring high traffic areas, but also staging ourselves to address issues that pop up (i.e. having product on hand and an expedited permitting process to control an infestation when it's found). Making an educational presentation to the state legislature about the importance of this issue may be an important step. A bill with a focus on invasive species is currently going through the legislative process. A Mat-Su elodea task force, possibly coordinated by the partnership may be a helpful way to engage multiple partners to focus on this issue. In Fairbanks, the Fairbanks Soil and Water Conservation District plays a similar role.

Heather's contact info:

Heather Lescanec

Invasive Plant and Agriculture Coordinator (AKDNR)

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