



Steering Committee Meeting

Alaska Department of Fish and Game, 1800 Glenn Highway, Suite 4, Palmer

Tuesday, March 13, 2018, 1:30-4:00 pm

Join WebEx Meeting

Meeting number: 808 751 901

Meeting password: 124578963

Join by Phone: 1-907-269-3000 or 1-907-269-7570

Facilitator: Trent Liebich (US Fish and Wildlife Service)

Notetaker: Amy O'Connor (The Alaska Center)

In Attendance (in-person or phone):

Jim DePasquale (TNC)

Kelly Ingram (TNC)

Brianne Blackburn (Mat-Su Borough)

Megan Cavanaugh (The Alaska Center)

Thomas Capiello

Ted Eischeid (Mat-Su Borough)

Jessica Speed (TNC)

Christy Cincotta (Tyonek Tribal Conservation District)

Jess Johnson (Alaska Department of Fish and Game)

Chris Cunningham (Cedar Grove Compost)

Bryn McElroy (Tanana Valley Watershed Association)

Marc Lamoreaux (Native Village of Eklutna)

Laura Eldred (Department of Environmental Conservation)

Chandra McGee (Fairbanks Green Infrastructure Group)

1. Guest Presenter: Chris Cunningham, Cedar Grove Compost (30 min)

Chris Cunningham shared a presentation about the use of compost to reduce stormwater impacts in the Pacific Northwest. They are planning a spring/summer trip to a few different regions in Alaska to explore methods of salmon bearing stream preservation. They are trying to align with some key decision makers in advance to learn about Alaska and how industrial stormwater is currently managed to see if there is a need for compost to help with this ongoing effort.

Action Item: Share Chris' presentations with meeting attendees.

2. Partnership Business (75 min)

- **Approve November 2017 and January 2018 Meeting Notes.** Notes approved.
- **Partnership Year in Review and Fiscal Year 2019 Budget (Jessica)** Jessica shared some of the Partnership's accomplishments in 2017, and Partnership's \$126,544 annual budget. A bigger expense this year will be hiring a contractor to help facilitate the Partnership's Strategic Plan update. Budget approved.
Action Item: include a summary of the Partnership's 2017 accomplishment highlights in meeting notes.
- **Department of Interior Review Process – USFWS Funding for NFHP (Trent)** - status of funding for National Fish Habitat Partnership projects is still unknown.
- **Steering Committee Motivation and Engagement (Brienne)** The committee discussed how to improve engagement by increasing our knowledge of what each other does, and getting to know one another better. Some ideas included: alternating locations and who hosts

meetings, meeting socially after a committee meeting, volunteer together on a project, invite each other to meet informally i.e., go get a coffee.

Action: Future Steering Committee meetings should be hosted by different committee members in different locations with guest speakers to attend as hosts see fit. May meeting will be hosted by Brianne at the Mat-Su Borough, Marc will host the July meeting at Native Village of Eklutna with a possible field trip to the Eklutna Dam site.

3. Committee Updates (30 min)

- **Strategic Planning (Kelly)** The strategic planning committee has broken up the revision process into two parts: 1) Review of our accomplishments thus far in relation to the 2013 strategic plan objectives and 2) prioritization, feedback and scoping from partners into a draft revision of the plan. Kelly Ingram is starting on the first piece of work, an accomplishments report, with plans to complete this by the end of May with input from partners about accomplishments from 2013-2017. We plan to hire a contractor to take on the second piece of work involving partner feedback about priorities, scoping meeting(s) and the production of an updated strategic action plan.
- **Science and Data (Kendra Zamzow)** The science and data committee has been working on identifying index watersheds in the Mat-Su. These watersheds would have more concentrated data collected in them to be able to assess change over time and potential impacts, with the idea being that they would be representative of other similar watersheds across the basin. The science and data committee would like steering committee input on what the Steering Committee wants out of these index watersheds and how committed the Steering Committee is to funding work within them. Anjanette Steer and Gene Agnew were recommended by Science and Data Committee as new members, and approved by the Steering Committee.

Action:

- Jim, Amy, Tom and Jessica will attend the next Science and Data Committee meeting to learn more about the potential role of index watersheds and provide a Steering Committee perspective.
- Kendra will send Anjanette and Gene's bios to the Steering Committee
- Laura will let them know they are invited to join the Science and Data Committee

Outreach (Kelly) The outreach committee has updated the Partnership's annual outreach plan, and is focused on organizing a progress report covering the years 2016/17, and the summer site tour.

- **Symposium Planning (Kelly)** Tentative Symposium dates are November 14th and 15th, 2018 at the Palmer Depot.

4. Other Updates (15 min)

- **NHFP Project Funding and Alaska Hydrotechnical Working Group (Jim)** – Ak Hydro is facing potentially severe funding cuts. AK Hydro is responsible for all stream mapping in the state, AWC modernization/improvements and the incorporation of habitat and biologic data into our statewide hydrographic database. Given this, and that AK Hydro does support many FHP objectives it might be appropriate to lend a hand to AK Hydro. Jim shared a potential idea that AK FHP's annually earmark say \$10k each (40k total) to support AK Hydro for a period of 3 to 5 years until it might have more stable financial footing.
- **ATV Data in the Mat-Su (Trent)** Trent shared information about an APU graduate student project that plans to map current and historical ATV trails from Talkeetna to Glennallen using imagery. The project will also conduct water quality impact testing of ORVs in the Nelchina Public Use Area this summer. Discussion followed about the need for additional

ORV trail information in the Mat-Su. Amy O'Connor shared that Mat-Su Parks and Trails Foundation is in the process of developing an app for riders to map ORV trails.

5. General Partner Updates (all or any attendees)

Upcoming Events:

- Wildlife Wednesdays: Wednesday, March 7th, 7:00 pm, UAF Experiment Farm
He Who Cares for the Frogs (and Other Herpetofauna), Josh Ream, USFWS
- Western Division American Fisheries Society Meeting: May 21-25, 2018, Anchorage

Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 8, 1:30-4:00 pm*

Facilitator: Brianne

Notetaker: Christy

Mat-Su Basin Salmon Habitat Partnership Highlights – 2017

Communications & Outreach

Outreach initiatives in 2017 included hosting the 10th annual Mat-Su Salmon Science & Conservation Symposium, with an associated community [salmon storytelling](#) event. We also held a third annual Summer Site Tour of projects for community leaders, partnered for the third year in a community fish and wildlife lecture series to reach college age audiences, testified at the Cook Inlet Board of Fisheries meeting, staffed a Partnership booth at six community and school events, and provided formal presentations to two local chambers of commerce. Partners also completed a draft of salmon-safe standards for residential and commercial development in the Mat-Su among many other ongoing outreach initiatives.

Science

In 2017, the Mat-Su Salmon Partnership began early stages of an update to its Strategic Action Plan, and continued to build upon past successes. Streams in the entire Mat-Su Basin were mapped to national standards and incorporated into the USGS National Hydrographic Database (NHD) in late 2015. This work continued to improve habitat restoration and protection efforts including identifying previously unmapped streams and lakes now in the Anadromous Waters Catalogue, as well as updating the current listing of anadromous streams to adopt the new hydrography - scheduled for completion in 2018. In 2017 partners additionally collected aerial imagery to analyze wetland loss, and expanded a long-term stream temperature monitoring program to the Deshka River watershed. This program is identifying long term stream temperature patterns across the basin, including cold-water refugia - areas that will remain coolest in a warming climate.

Protection and Restoration

Partners protected 80 acres of priority salmon habitat, with nearly 9,000 conserved since 2005, and continued to add stream miles to the Anadromous Waters Catalogue, which affords these streams greater protection under state law. A collaborative water reservation program continued to systematically work toward protecting the most threatened priority water bodies in Mat-Su. Main creeks in the core populated areas were completed, with partners working on the next set of priority creeks that in 2017 included gaging on three creeks – one of which is a new index site that will be used to secure water rights on two additional creeks. Partners improved impacted fish habitat by removing 100 feet of structures detrimental to fish, hosting a streambank restoration workshop, continuing to address habitat threats from aquatic invasive plant Elodea, Reed Canary Grass and Northern pike, and replacing one priority barrier opening 2.2 upstream miles. To date partners have improved passage for fish at nearly 100 sites, and are preventing the creation of new ones, with fish friendly standards on borough owned roads.