



**Steering Committee Meeting
Remote Meeting**

Join via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87298416253?pwd=UTRuYmd1ZDg0Z3ppdGpjaXNKNENoQT09>

Meeting ID: 872 9841 6253, Passcode: 925935

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Tuesday, March 9th, 2021, 1:30 – 4 pm

Notes

Facilitator: Trent Liebich

Notetaker: Libby Kugel

Attendance

Jessica Speed, Trout Unlimited/Partnership Coordinator

Libby Kugel, Great Land Trust

Eric Booton, Trout Unlimited

Trent Liebich, USFWS

Michael Mazzacavallo, ADF&G

Ted Eischeid, Mat-Su Borough

Anjanette Steer, UAA/Center for Conservation Science

Mike Daigneault, USFWS

Theo Garcia, Knik Tribe

Melissa Heuer, Susitna River Coalition

Partnership Business

- Approve January 2021 Steering Committee Meeting Notes (5 min) **January Notes*
 - *Some of the partner updates were missing from the minutes. Jessica will collect what was missed and edit the minutes. After that minutes are good to go.*
- Vacant At-large Steering Committee Seat (20 min) **Letter of interest*
 - Discussion and decision re: letters of interest for At-large seat
 - *We have one out of three at-large Steering Committee seats open since Christy Cincotta has left the Steering Committee. We received one letter of interest from Andy Wizik at Cook Inlet Aquaculture.*
 - *Discussion: Andy joined the Feb. outreach committee meeting and was an active participant and contributor. He seems like a good fit for the Steering Committee. All are in favor of approving Andy Wizik joining the Steering Committee.*
 - *Jessica noted that Matt Varner with BLM was interested and indicated he would have submitted a letter of interest but was delayed due to internal approval processes. He may apply in the next round.*

- *If any SC members are interested in being a resource to Andy outside of the coordinator, let Jessica know.*
- **America's Conservation Enhancement (ACE) Act Transition - Updates (25 min)**
 - **National Fish Habitat Partnership Board (Ted)**
 - *Ted has attended his first National Fish Habitat Partnership Board meeting. Congratulations Ted! Official notes from that meeting are attached as part of the meeting packet for this meeting.*
 - *Add to next meeting's agenda to talk about the summer site tour and how we might be able to have Ted invite members of the National Fish Habitat Partnership Board.*
 - **Program operation in FY21 and FY22**
Some key items:
 - *FY21 – program administration will continue status quo for remainder of federal FY21 (current to fall 2021). This means that depending on our allocation application outcomes, we should receive funding for coordination and should receive funding for projects as normal with USFWS managing those awards with cooperative agreements. Great!!!!*
 - *In FY22 there is anticipation to transfer over to NFHP Board role. Legislation currently indicates project lists need to be to NFHP Board by March 31st, and Board must submit project lists to DOI but July 1. NFHP Board is behind however with no project criteria or process confirmed. Some FHP's are running RFP's based on previous years. This is a high priority item we may need to make a decision about in late March. We will have more information following the March 22nd Board meeting when Ted and Jessica will have more information.*
 - *For the NFHP legislation to be implemented in FY22, Congress will need to fund the NFHP program – or USFWS and NFHP may again be in a position to have new legislation but not the funding to support the transition as intended. That will require effort by those who can, to show the importance of the NFHP program.*
 - *Mike D. indicated the annual allocation applications have been reviewed by USFWS Regional liaisons, we should get official updates on our status later this spring.*
- **Updating Partnership organizational focus (40 min) **2020 progress toward organizational goals***
 - *Although the 2019 Addendum to the Strategic Action Plan extends to 2024, the organizational objectives ran from 2019 – 2020, so need to be updated for 2021-2022. At the last meeting, the Steering Committee decided to begin updating organizational priorities with a plan to complete them at the March meeting. The committee began walking through progress in the priorities followed by discussion of if the priority should remain as is going forward, be updated, or deleted.*
 - *Action items from priority #2 from last meeting was for Jessica to check in with partners about Elodea. She hasn't heard back from Dan Coleman. Talked to Catherine Schake and Nicole Swenson – they both said a rapid response fund for this work was needed. Elodea issues have improved, but it's still a problem that we could address.*
 - *Discussion on different invasives and why we focus on Elodea. New potential outbreak of Zebra mussels. Should we have discussions on emerging invasives and how we might be able to support work in this area? Could change priority #2 to be about emerging aquatic invasives, rather than just Elodea. Add the words “and other emerging aquatic invasives” after wherever it says “Elodea” to capture our historical focus on Elodea while acknowledging that we want to broaden our focus. Especially since we can only expect the issue of invasives to continue into the future.*

- *Priority #3: This is a key service that the partnership provides, and is an important part of our annual reporting, so it made sense to be a priority. This one might need a little bit more work, but we want to keep it in.*
- *We need to finish this up and don't want to wait until May to bring it to the full SC. Michael M. and Eric volunteered to help Jessica finish it up.*
- *ACTION ITEM: Eric, Michael M. and Jessica will meet to draft proposed updates to this section of the 2019 Addendum to the Strategic Action Plan for Steering Committee review and approval.*

New Committee Members and Annual Tasks for Science and Data Committee (20 min)*[Committee member bios and workplan ideas list from 2020](#)

- *Nick DeCovich is one of the new chairs of the Committee and was approved in this role via email preceding this meeting. Laura Eldred will remain on the committee, just no longer as a co-chair. We need to review and approve 2 new representatives to fill seats.*
- *Discuss and decision on new committee membership*
- *Tom Cappiello (retired ADF&G) and Carrie Brophil (Native Village of Eklutna). Both are past SC members and are interested in joining the S&D Committee. All SC members present are in support.*
- *Discussion of what this committee will ask science and data committee to include in their 2020 workplan*
- *Anjanette gave an update on the 2020 workplan. The committee narrowed the 10 work points to 4 and worked on 3 of those over the past year. Now the committee is looking for feedback from the SC on what to work on next. Suggestion from Anjanette that we could help shape the priorities on where to conduct Anadromous Waters Catalogue surveys.*
- *The S&D Committee would like to have a decision on the next priorities before the next SC meeting in May, if possible.*
- *ACTION ITEM: Jessica and Anjanette will check in to develop a plan. Other SC members are encouraged to email Jessica or Anjanette with ideas.*

Committee updates (as needed): (15 min)

- **Science and Data (Anjanette)**
 - *Anjanette applied for a grant through the university called the Science Transfer Grant. Funding for groundwater resource vulnerability work – could be a future source for Mat-Su.*
- **Outreach (Eric/Jessica)**
 - *We talked about the site tour: discussion on if it will be virtual or in person, and having a focus on a particular watershed/drainage – potentially the Little Su. (If online event, Theo volunteered the Knik might be able to help with drone footage.) We want to have some of the plans (virtual vs. in-person) firmed up by May SC meeting. Outreach Committee will keep moving forward on the Little Su idea.*
 - *Another item discussed was if there are any key policy decisions coming up that the Partnership could be of service in providing scientific information for. One that's upcoming is the MSB Wetlands Ordinance. Suggestion of hosting an online presentation on wetlands/wetland work supported by the Partnership open for any interested parties to attend.*
 - *ACTION ITEM: Jessica to explore further.*

- Symposium (Libby/Jessica)
 - *2021 dates: November 17 & 18. Jessica will reserve the Palmer Depot – in case event can be held in person. We are re-forming the Symposium Planning Committee and looking for committee members – please consider and/or share in your organization or anyone you think would be a good fit and interested.*
- Capacity and Development (Jessica/Ted) **draft position description*
 - *There's a job posting drafted for the Partnership Capacity Support position. It's being reviewed internally by TU right now. It will be a TU staff position – 12 month position. Hopefully will be posted by next week, with a goal of someone onboard by mid to third week of April. Jessica will notify the SC when it posts so we can all share it.*

Partner and other relevant updates: (15 min)

- Other national updates?
- General partner updates?
 - *Trent: USFWS is going to be hiring a lead biologist for the fish passage program soon. Another entry level contract position will be open in mid-April.*
 - *Eric: TU is looking to hire a new Communications & Engagement Director. April 14th, TU is hosting a virtual event about dam removal. Eric will send the event info out to the group.*
 - *Ted: MSB Supplemental Wetland Mitigation Ordinance timeline: March 18 = MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission action; April 19th MSB Planning Commission action; May 18th MSB Assembly action. <https://www.matsugov.us/acvolunteering/43-projects/21326-wetland-mitigation-ordinance>*
 - *Melissa: SRC has a presentation evening of 3/10 about changing water temperatures on the Doshka. The MSB Assembly is also going to be hearing an update on phase 2 of the West Su Road.*
 - *Libby: GLT has two summer positions open or opening soon. Suggestion for the Partnership to share all these job descriptions on the Partnership Facebook.*
 - *Theo: Knik is working with Knik Ahtnu and the Knik Conservation district on establishing a conservation easement on Cottonwood Creek.*

Upcoming Events:

- American Fisheries Society Alaska Chapter Meeting, March 21-25, 2021 virtual
- NFHP Board Meeting, March 22nd, 11am-1pm AKST

Next meeting:

- Tuesday, May 11th 1:30-4pm

Facilitator: Theo Garcia

Notetaker: Erika Ammann