



**Steering Committee Meeting**

MatSu Borough Main Building, Rm 203  
350 E. Dahlia Ave. Palmer, AK  
**Tuesday, May 8, 2018, 1:30-4:00 pm**

**Teleconference number:** 1-605-475-5602

**Participant passcode:** 7101440550

**Facilitator:** Brianne Blackburn (Mat-Su Borough)

**Notetaker:** Christy Cincotta (Tyonek Tribal Conservation District)

**In Attendance (in-person or phone):**

Jim DePasquale (TNC)  
Erika Ammann (NOAA)  
Thomas Capiello  
Jessica Speed (TNC)

Marc Lamoreaux (Native Village of Eklutna)  
Jerome Ryan (Sustainable Water Investment Group, LLC)  
Luanne Urfer (Sustainable Design Group)

**1. Guest Presenter:** Jerome Ryan, Su Knik Wetland Mitigation Bank (30 min)

Jerome Ryan shared a presentation titled "Status of Su Knik Wetlands Mitigation Bank, and Potential Impacts with Large Scale Development Projects on the Horizon." A goal of the mitigation bank is to aggregate mitigation into large projects that are going to be ecologically meaningful in a way that also allows for income to the MatSu Borough. Since 2014, the Army Corps of Engineers has been dismantling mitigation requirements in AK, despite the fact that development causes higher level impacts in the MatSu than state wide. High priority wetlands in the MatSu (ranked by GLT based on threat of development and ecological value) are imperiled by upcoming development projects. Because the Corps is allowing it, Donlin Gold and ASAP pipeline projects will only need to complete minimal mitigation. These and other projects will get their compensatory mitigation decision in the next few months, which will likely confirm that the Corps is shutting down compensatory mitigation in a non-public way, piece by piece. The Corps is unlikely to make any major changes, so if the Borough wants long term protections it will need to create its own ordinances. Unless things change, Borough wetlands will be destroyed and the borough will not be compensated. The Borough is aware of this and trying to get ordinances developed, but time is of the essence and things need to move quickly. This conversation also brought up a need for better mapping of impervious surfaces in the Borough as this information impacts Corps decisions.

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 March 2018 Meeting Notes.** Notes approved.

- **Strategic Plan Update (Christy)** Christy shared that Kelly has been working on the accomplishments report which will be completed by the end of May. Kelly will incorporate partner feedback and subject matter expert feedback. The group has discussed working with Forkaer group for the remaining plan deliverables. This committee will meet again in June, and if the committee decides to move forward with Foraker, the committee will share an update with the Steering Committee. Suggestions included changing the timeline for completion of the plan to incorporate a scoping meeting as part of the Symposium in November.
- **At-large Steering Committee Seat (Jessica)** – Amy O’Connor is leaving The Alaska Center and taking a new position with Hatcher Alpine Experience. The Alaska Center will retain this seat for the remainder of the term and the person who takes Amy’s position at the Alaska Center will fill that seat. Amy will remain on the other Partnership committees that she is currently involved with.
- **This Year’s Priorities, and Reflections on last year’s NFHP Funded Projects (Jessica)** Typically the Partnership sends out an RFP for NFHP funding in late July. Last year we had substantial updates to the score sheet. Additional updates may be needed to ensure that science projects are funded as well as on the ground conservation projects. The committee discussed the inclusion of discretionary points, the importance of having discussing project scoring as a committee and documenting those discussions, adding a funding category for Partnership capacity development projects, and the possibility of reserving a percentage of funding for specific priorities.

**Action:** A discussion of the scoring sheet as well as priorities for funding will be added to the July meeting agenda.

### 3. Other Updates

- **Summer Restoration Project on Cottonwood Creek, Luanne Urfer, Sustainable Design Group (SDG)**  
Jim shared that as part of the salmon safe guidelines project, Luanne and SDG were brought on to bring this document to more of a MatSu application. Luanne shared a real world application of the document that will involve restoration of two sites (A & B) within the Cottonwood Creek watershed. SDG proposed restoring both sites to allow for a more naturalized system where water will be filtered, siltation can happen, and better water storage will prevent storm surges. The projects are funded by an ACWA grant. Project A could be fully completed by a contractor, but project B would require volunteer labor because the site does not allow for equipment access.

**Action:** The Steering Committee will assist with outreach and volunteer coordination as needed for this project. Luanne will provide more information as needed as the project progresses.

### 4. Committee Updates (30 min)

- **Capacity and Development (Brienne)** This committee met on April 13 and invited Mike Walsh from the Foraker Group to participate in the discussion. The group discussed the idea of focusing on 1 or 2 organizational goals for the partnership as well as having a more user friendly strategic plan document. Note; MSBSHP is now included on the Beyond the Pond website as a way to receive individual donations.
- **Science and Data (Jessica)** This committee has not met since the last steering committee meeting. The next committee meeting will take place on May 15. Index watersheds will be on the agenda, and those interested in participating in this discussion are welcome to attend.
- **Outreach (Jessica)** The outreach committee and Jessica are involved with coordinating the AFS film festival on May 22. Committee priorities for the summer include preparing a

report and setting up this year's site visit, which will likely include a visit to Sutton to witness the Moose Creek salmon returning in July.

- **Symposium Planning (Jessica)** Tentative Symposium dates are November 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at the Palmer Depot.

**5. General Partner Updates (15 min)**

- **MatSu Borough Fish & Wildlife Commission (Brianne)** – Brianne shared that the commission is preparing for a meeting with the governor tomorrow to discuss a task force for upper Cook Inlet salmon issues. Stand for Salmon came up at the last regular meeting and the commission came out 6-1 in favor of supporting a ballot initiative. Another vote will be required to put the initiative in front of the assembly to identify a need to update habitat laws. The North Pacific Fisheries Management Council is looking to get more engaged with the issue of pink hatchery fish from Prince William Sound ending up in Cook Inlet.

**Upcoming Events:**

- Wildlife Wednesdays: Wednesday, June 6<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 pm, Musk Ox Farm, Palmer  
*Collecting and Preparing Quivuit for Woven Garments*, Stephanie Bass
- Western Division American Fisheries Society Meeting: May 21-25, 2018, Anchorage
- AFS Fish Film Festival, May 22, 2018, Anchorage

**Next Meeting: Native Village of Eklutna**, Tuesday, July 10th, 1:30-4:00 pm

Facilitator: Mark Lamoreaux

Notetaker: