**Steering Committee Meeting**

Alaska Department of Fish & Game, Suite 4

1800 Glenn Highway, Palmer

**Tuesday, September 9th, 2014 1:30 – 4 pm**

**Meeting Notes**

**Steering Committee Members Present:**

Liz Robinson, Envision Mat-Su (Facilitator)

Erika Ammann – NOAA (Notetaker)

Roger Harding - Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Frankie Barker- Mat-Su Borough

Arni Thompson - Alaska Salmon Alliance

Jeff Davis - ARRI

**Jessica Speed- The Nature Conservancy (Coordinator)**

**Guests:**

David Wigglesworth- US Fish and Wildlife Service

Libby Benolkin - US Fish and Wildlife Service

Debbie Hart - Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership

Cecil Rich - US Fish and Wildlife Service

**Partnership Business**

NFHP/FWS allocation methodology changes for FY15 (David W.)

This is the same as last year. There will be a national template, the template is not done yet, stay tuned. End of Feb was deadline last year, this year looks to be sometime in January. Work is ongoing at HQ clarifying how FHP respond to some criteria ( ie leverage, project completion, etc.). FHP should begin compiling project information that needs to be reported on. This year the look back will include 2011, 2012, 2013. FY13 funded projects should be investigated to ensure completion.

Mat-Su NFHP funds submissions for funding update:

Reminder that our closing date for FY15 currently open Funding opportunity is October 1st . No submissions have been received yet. Make sure all know about this funding opportunity. Jessica Speed will send out a reminder. There is a large lag in funding , some FY14 monies have not been funded yet. Discussion of proposals by Science and Data committee meeting 8,9 or10th . Review by Steering Committee Oct 28th or 29th.

At-large Steering Committee Seat (Jessica)

Liz will be leaving Envision Mat-Su. It is not clear that Liz will have a successor from Envision Mat-Su. There may be a gap in the Steering committee so there is now an opening. Jeff’s seat will be expiring this winter. Jessica proposes filling both seats in December. Doing both seats simultaneously was supported by other on the call. Strategic plan says an organization can be on steering committee for 2 consecutive 2 year terms , off for one year and then is eligible again. There was a question if the At-large seat is held by the individual or the organization. Can another individual from the same organization replace a steering committee member? This issue will be resolved next meeting when, more information on filling the open seats is discussed. Envision Mat-Su will look into the option of another member taking the seat. Liz will notify the board of this issue.

Elodea discovery

Kristine Dunker ADF&G discovered Elodea a week ago last Friday in Alexander Lake. Elodea was identified while motoring in a boat. One documented instance of Elodea. Alexander Creek drainage is also the site of a pike eradication project. There is current work to document the extent of the infestation, 1 acre has been identified. AKDNR is gathering information to decide on a course of action. Alexander Lake is over 800 acres, larger than any other lake that has had controls. Shallow lake and freezes except for where stream enters. If Elodea does spread to sloughs then there could be changes in predator prey interactions, jeopardizing some of the pike work. It is not clear weather this is the only instance of Elodea in Mat-Su. The large patch was close to a cabin with a float plane, this could be a POSSIBLE method of introduction. There will be a need to conduct additional remote lake surveys. CIAA also has sockeye salmon lake for enhancement, could be another source of observations. Cecile will keep group updated. Control work will probably be needing funding. Who identifies the invasive species? Krissy is the expert in Elodea due to her experience in working in this area.

Last year there was a legislative bill (HB 89) about funding invasive species work. The bill was sponsored by Rep Seaton Homer. It has never passed. It would provide new authorities for ADF&G to deal with invasives and a fund that they could draw on for rapid response. Our partner organizations might contact their elected officials about this subject. The Kenai FHP main priority for FY14 funds was herbicide treatment for 3 lakes. NFHP funds could work for some of this work. NFHP funding might be for planning and materials. DNR and Fish and Game has authority for aquatic invasive in fresh and salt water. Update needed on how treatements on the 3 Kenai Lakes has gone. Initial indications are that Elodea is responding to the treatments, plants are bleaching out. Follow treatments planned for Fall and Spring. Good resources exist for public outreach on this issue. \* Kenai work might be a good idea for Mat-Su Symposium \* John Morton  john\_m\_morton@fws.gov  (confirmed).

(An update from Roger on Elodea as a follow- up to the Elodea issue:)

*I had a short talk with Tammy Davis, ADFG Invasive Species Coordinator, today and she basically reiterated most of what Cecil had reported on the discovery in Alexander Lake and mentioned that more information should be available soon. Tammy also gave me a quick background on invasive species legislation that has been introduced over the last 6 years or so but that have all fallen short of passing. Any support or encouragement that Mat-Su and it partners could give to legislators to pass an invasive species bill would be great. Ideally any legislation would include funding for a response to invasive species. If you would like more specifics about past invasive species legislation you may contact Tammy directly (tammy.davis@alaska.gov).*

**Committee Updates**

Science and Data

Next objective procedures for evaluating proposals.

Coordination of evaluation of habitat models for Mat-Su Basin. TNC is proposing to build on information of juv and adult salmon in Mat-Su. This would use Anadromous catalogue plus all publications to identify abundance in different streams. Then use lidar and other characteristics to correlate abundance with stream habitat characteristics.

Also identify information gaps for conducting this type of analysis. \* Important\* as we progress in this work we need to connect with national science and data committee; Cecile sits on this board. Need to know what data sets National Board is using for AK National Land cover data set , \* Cecile will try to give a list on what is being used and what is being proposed.

Symposium Planning (Jessica)

Nov 18 and 19. In the process of hiring symposium coordinator. Volunteer slots will be more defined this year. Frankie and Arnie volunteered to be moderators. Two key note speakers Mary Colligan and Dr. Katherine Myers .Second day will be more open . Poster session will bleed into social hour. Funders so far include ASA, GLT, ACE. Might need to communicate that his is a Partnership Event. Funding minimum $200. Symposium flyer will be sent out soon. Closing date for abstracts October 7. Possible focus on chinook salmon declines in Upper Cook Inlet that might not be reached in our local outreach.

Outreach (Frankie)

Terry Thompson statewide outreach coordinator.

Met in Aug., trying to keep a tally of outreach activity to determine who is being reached. Last outreach plan was in 2009 update 2010. Trying to align with new goals in 2013 strategic plan.

Progress report brochure has been well received.

**Miscellaneous**

NFHP awards nominations

Corrine Smith and Catherine Inman have received awards in the past. Award will be combined with AFS. Would the steering committee like to recognize anyone? Deadline Sept 19,2014.

David Wigglesworth suggested: extraordinary action Mat-Su Operations and Maintenance dept.

Possible submission for outreach and education based on symposium.

Info on the award is posted online (www.fishhabitat.org)

Workshop endorsement

TNC is putting together with partners directly following the Mat-Su Salmon Symposium and as well in conjunction with upcoming American Fisheries Society/Water Resources/ Southeast Fish Habitat Partnership conference in Juneau in October. Might the Partnership be interested in endorsing this event? \*Steering Committee says yes. \*

Baby Salmon Project

Arni added baby salmon topic <http://www.frontiersman.com/news/baby-salmon-project-to-educate-public/article_10997e12-3640-11e4-ba31-0019bb2963f4.html> . NFHP project created signs and a bus wrap that educated people on baby salmon.

**Upcoming Events:**

* Joint-conference American Fisheries Society (AFS) and American Water Resources Association (AWRA) – October 20-24, 2014 in Juneau
* NFHP Fish Habitat Partnerships teleconference Thursday, September 25th, 2014.
* NFHP Excellence Workshop/Restore America’s Estuaries Conference November 1 – 6th, 2014 ( Attending: Jeff Davis ARRI, David Wigglesworth FWS, Roger Harding ADF&G)

**Next meeting: TBA**

Facilitator: Corinne Notetaker: Bill