



**Steering Committee Meeting**  
**Tuesday, January 12, 2020 1:30 – 4 pm**  
Remote Meeting

**MEETING NOTES**

**Facilitator:** Ted Eischeid

**Notetaker:** Jessica Speed

**Attendance:**

Michael Mazzacavallo, Alaska Department of Fish & Game  
Jessica Speed, Trout Unlimited  
Ted Eischeid, Mat-Su Borough  
Theo Garcia, Knik Tribe  
Eric Booton, Trout Unlimited  
Trent Liebich, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Melissa Heuer, Susitna River Coalition  
Libby Kugel, Great Land Trust  
Mike Daigneault, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Anjanette Steer, UAA/Center for Conservation Science  
Erika Ammann, NOAA

Ted brought up the idea of a land acknowledgement to begin our meeting(s). In light of all that's going on in our country, and recognition of past injustices. Theo agreed to provide one.

Knik Tribe is part of Denai'na in Wasilla. Much of their lands are consistent with Mat-Su Borough boundaries. His great great grand-father was Chief Wasilla. His name is his grandmother's middle - maiden name.

Theo indicated his appreciation for the land acknowledgement. And always wanting to work more with partners on stewardship.

**Partnership Business**

- Approve November 2020 Steering Committee Meeting Notes (5 min) *\*November Notes*
  - Jessica check with Mike D. to make sure NFHP/ACE Act updates are accurate.
  - Following that, they are considered good as is and Jessica S. will put in partnership files and on website under resources tab.

**Action:** Jessica: check with Mike D. to make sure NFHP/ACE Act updates are accurate.

- **Vacant At-large Steering Committee Seat** (Jessica) (20 min)
  - Discussion

We did not receive any letters of interest for the at-large SC seat in December – by the January 4<sup>th</sup> closing date. The Steering Committee discussed about what organizations we may want to target with an invitation. Names that came up:

- Matt Varner/BLM - long history and engagement with Partnership
- Matt LaCroix/EPA - long history and engagement with Partnership
- Someone from the MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission
- Someone from one of the newly funded agencies through the NFHP legislation (5 agencies receiving funds to provide technical support to FHP's: USGS, EPA, US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, NOAA)
- Janet Curran/USGS – also a history with Partnership including committee involvement – presented in 2018 site tour.
- Howard Carbone/Talkeetna Resident, private business owner, miner, on Su River Coalition board.

Committee agreed to extend the closing date for letters of interest to the end of February. This would give time for review and finalization in advance of the March Steering Committee meeting.

**Action:**

- Jessica – forward call for letters of interest for the Partnership Steering Committee including new closing date.
- Ted – share opportunity with Fish and Wildlife Commission members.
- Jessica – reach out to Matt Lacroix and Matt Varner
  
- **Process for Updating Organizational Priorities for 2021/2022** (20 min) *\*2020 progress toward organizational goals*
  - Discussion and decision re: process for updating

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.

The Steering Committee decided to begin updating organizational priorities during the current meeting and 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.

**Priority #1:** Yes, keep the priority as is, but with more of a dissemination focus. E.g., now that have created a number of products – ensure are maximizing their benefit by disseminating.

**Priority #2:** Yes, keep at least the concept of Elodea as a priority, but again consider changes at the next meeting

For March meeting follow-up on Priority #2 and remaining four priorities.

**Action:**

- Jessica follow-up with Elodea collaborations – including Alexander Crk Watershed Task Force for input.
- Provide at least 35 minutes on March meeting agenda to continue.

### **National level updates (Mike Daigneault) (30 min)**

- America's Conservation Enhancement (ACE) Act Transition – latest updates
- Allocation application

Mike Daigneault, USFWS Alaska coordinator for fish habitat partnerships shared an update on the recent National Fish Habitat Partnership legislation:

Although program is now codified, the legislature didn't provide the funding for the program this year. Funding in past years came from the FWS fisheries budget - and remains the only funding for the program. So in an awkward spot to move forward legislation, and FWS to move forward funds in its base allocation.

Right now not a ton going on in terms of transition to the new model. The initial board and agency reps have been named and seated. In the process of filling the new seats on the board.

### **Other National level updates:**

Allocation report - performance reports due this Friday. Deadline being extended to Friday January 29th, to give FHP's time to complete – given a year of upheaval and change.

Allocation process - USFWS typically manages funds and gets funding to partners. His understanding given the new model, will be that moving forward the new process/model may be that another section within USFWS will do lump sum block grants to individual FHP's, who would in turn manage individual awards. So.. the new model puts more on individual organizations and fiscal agents. We are moving toward that model, but there is uncertainty as to how and when.

### **Questions:**

- Is there a timeline for when new board seats will be filled? No.
- Will there be an RFP this spring? Don't know, but some partnerships are choosing to move forward with a call for proposals in March - just in case. With the timeline outlined in the legislation with board review, FWS approval etc.. there are some folks that are advocating that get applied immediately - others that are suggesting to delay it a year. Some FHP's are choosing to move forward just in case.

### **Actions:**

- Keep in mind we may have a 'sudden' call for proposals in the spring. As discussed last year, we may want to reach out to partners and let them know that 'could' happen.

### **Committee Updates (35 min)**

- **Science and Data** (Anjanette/Laura)
- Following the completion of proposal scoring in late 2020, the Science and Data Committee would like the Steering Committee to think about objectives it would like the Science and Data Committee to add to its annual workplan in 2021
- Laura Eldred will be stepping down as Co-Chair of Science and Data Committee, fortunately Nick DeCovich of ADF&G has agreed to fill this role. Other changes include Tom Capiello (retired ADFG) and Carrie Brophil (Native Village of Eklutna) are also interested and willing to participate as committee members. Tom and Carrie are also former

Partnership Steering Committee members. Thanks to Laura for her excellent service as Co-chair – she will remain a member of the committee.

Action: discuss science and data 2021 workplan at March meeting

- **Outreach** (Jessica)
  - Received a \$25,000 grant in collaboration with the Kenai and Southeast AK Fish Habitat Partnerships. To support joint outreach efforts. AKFHP's and regionals meeting next week for initial discussion
  - 2016-2019 Partnership progress report being finalized.
  
- **Capacity and Development** (Jessica)
  - Meeting with TU AK Director to work through TU procedures and prioritize getting capacity hire on-board.
  
- **Symposium** (Libby)
  - Will convene a planning committee and meeting in late Feb/March. – let Jessica know if you or anyone in your organization is interested in participating on the committee
  - Symposium budget is very thin. We are including an ask for Symposium support to NFHP. Please keep in the back of your mind for opportunities you may come across.
  - We'll also need to decide at some point if virtual – and that potential may make fundraising much easier again.
  - Good feedback on community perspective addition to 2020 Symposium.

**Other** (35 min)

- **Partner updates**

Mat-Su Borough Wetlands ordinance - Mayor Halter vetoed resolution 20-123 which was adopted by Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly on December 15th, 2020, and directed the Borough Planning Department to halt work preparing a supplemental wetland mitigation ordinance. Mayor Halter's veto will be considered and voted on by the Assembly on January 19th, 2021

Anyone welcome to attend MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission meetings – see details in 'upcoming events'.

TU will be submitting a project proposal for the NOAA Rec Fish funding opportunity in February. Project will support ongoing angler citizen science additions to the AWC in Southeast AK, but proposes to pilot modest expansion to Mat-Su and Kenai.

(\*Note: some of the partner updates were not captured in the notes)

- **Highlights from November Alaska Fish Habitat Partnerships meeting**
  - Lots of discussion on the new legislation that has codified the National Fish Habitat Partnership, include what the changes may be, process, challenges and opportunities.
  
  - Upcoming Climate Change Workshop hosted by Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership as well as film festival as part of American Fisheries Society Meeting – March 21-25th, 2021.

- NFHP has a project data base and [Data Catalog](#) they are developing. Want to better understand other data products that FHPs want documented in the Catalog and what Catalog products FHPs would benefit from. Looking for a centralized catalog for all NFHP Data products and to Communicate accomplishments and value NFHP.

**Upcoming Events:**

- Mat-Su Borough Fish and Wildlife Commission meetings (public welcome), 3rd Thursday of every month, 4pm (except summer)
- American Fisheries Society Alaska Chapter Meeting, March 23-26, virtual
- [4th Annual Lamprey Information Exchange Monthly Webinar Series](#), 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesdays in 2021

**Next meeting:**

- Tuesday, March 9th 1:30-4pm

According to our schedule, March are meeting facilitator and note-taker are listed below.

**Facilitator:** Theo Garcia

**Notetaker:** Libby Kugel