



**Steering Committee Meeting**  
**REMOTE MEETING**  
**Tuesday, November 10, 2020 1:30 – 4 pm**

**NOTES**

**Attendance:**

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

**Partnership Business**

- September 2020 Steering Committee Meeting Notes were approved with no additional comments.
  - The Committee heard and brief overview of the Mat-Su Borough's proposal request seeking funds from Natural Resource Conservation Service's Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) RFP to replacement culverts around Big Lake. Following the overview, the Committee discussed the Borough's requested for a letter of support endorsing their project proposal. Discussion from the Partnership concluded that the project was in line with the Partnership's mission and that the Partnership's support and endorsements are important for restoration and rehabilitation projects in the Mat-Su Borough. The Steering Committee unanimously decided to endorsement of the project.
  - In addition, the Steering Committee discussed how better to gain approval from Steering Committee for future partner endorsements. The overall discussion revolved around people needing to take responsibility and respond to emails in timely manner.
- Process to fill At-large, and newly vacant tribal Steering Committee Seats
  - Jessica Speed gave an overview of the current Steering Committee positions and those that are up for renewal at the end of the year. Currently, the Susitna River Coalition (SRC) is occupying the host organization seat. The recommendation is in 2021 Trout Unlimited (TU) take over the organization seat and SRC moves into an at-large seat on the Steering Committee. With Christy Cincotta leaving TTCD, Theo Garcia of Knik Tribe agreed to move into the tribal seat on the Steering Committee. These moves open up a vacant at-large seat that can be filled by a new organization.
  - Seeking application for an at-large seat should be announced at the Science Symposium.

- National Fish Habitat Partnership Legislation Update (20 min) (Mike Daigneault) *\*Press release*
  - Mike Daigneault gave an update on NFHP legislation and discussed the following:
    - The current RFP process should be continued, and funds should be requested through the USFWS.
    - The Steering Committee might need to prepare themselves to make a second RFP in the spring to stay updated with the new fiscal cycle.
    - NFHP funds will be redistributed across multiple federal agencies, this will reduce the ability of USFWS to continue to offer administrative support to the Partnership.
    - The rationale for moving funds across multiple agencies was to minimize administrative responsibilities to allow for an increase in on the groundwork projects and support. The board felt there was enough justification to support other agencies, outside of USFWS, currently involved and supporting other habitat partnerships around the country.
  - It is unclear how this will impact NOAA, but Erika will keep us in the loop.
  - The Steering Committee thinks it is a great idea and supports Ted Eischeid if he decides to apply for a seat on the National Fish Habitat Partnership Board.
  
- Organizational priorities in the 2019 Addendum to the Strategic Plan – Expire end of 2020 (Jessica) *\*Organizational Priorities 2019-2020* (20 min)
  - This item has been flagged and moved to the January meeting for discussion.
  
- Symposium – update and remaining needs (Libby/Jessica) (25 min)
  - Agenda has been posted on the Partnership’s website
  - Libby has been in communication with all speaks to work out all technology bugs prior to the Symposium
  - Libby and Jessica have been in communication with Katherine Shake of the Homer Soil and Water Conservation District to asking for input and advise on hosting a virtual event.
  - Jessica asked the Committee for any polling suggestions to ask during the Symposium.

**Committee Updates: (25 min)**

- Outreach (Jessica)
  - Site tour is not happening this year and maybe will re-evaluate in January 2021
  - Received a \$25,000 grant in collaboration with the Kenai and Southeast AK Fish Habitat Partnerships. These funds will support joint outreach efforts.
- Symposium (Libby)
  - *See above*
- Capacity and Development (Jessica)
  - Jessica is working with TU regarding TU staff support and how best to potential hire a support staff for Partnership coordination and outreach.
- Science and Data (Laura/Anjanette)
  - Update was given on the status of the proposal review process. The Science and Data Committee have reviewed the proposals for completeness and are following up with submitters on any questions the Committee had on methodology. The Committee

will deliver all their input and info the Steering Committee later this month for final evaluation and scoring.

- Following the proposal scoring, 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.
- The Science and Data Committee is looking for two additional members.

### **Partner and National Updates (25 min)**

- General partner updates – round robin style
  - Eric Booton – Gave an update on the Eklutna dam mitigation process and let the Partnership know about a information website on the Eklutna River created TU. <https://www.eklutnariver.org/>
  - Melissa Heuer – Gave an update on upcoming events hosted by the Sustina River Coalition. These included: 4<sup>TH</sup> Annual Susitna Wild Feast, Facebook Live Making Birch Syrup Event on November 23, and Facebook live event on Dog Powered Hunting on November 25<sup>th</sup>.
  - Ted Eischeid – Gave an updates and shared links to the following
    - Mat-Su Wetland Ordinance:  
<https://www.matsugov.us/acvolunteering/43-projects/21326-wetland-mitigation-ordinance>
    - FWC:  
<https://www.matsugov.us/boards/fishcommission>
    - West Susitna Access Road:  
Save the date!  
Virtual Meeting:  
<https://meethdr.webex.com/meethdr/onstage/g.php?MTID=e5738c1adabc8aaeedc9908bf2519319a>
  - Theo Garcia – Discussed on a project in partnership with the University of Texas looking at stream water quality in the Mat-Su
  - Erika Ammann – Reminded everyone of the NOAA Recreation Fisheries Grant now out.
- Remaining National updates (Jessica, Mike, Trent)
  - Interest in climate change workshop/film fest?

### **Next meeting:**

- Tuesday, January 12th 1:30-4pm

**Facilitator:** Ted Eischeid

**Notetaker:** Trent Liebich