



**Steering Committee Meeting (Virtual)
Tuesday, September 12, 2023 1:30 – 4 pm**

Join via Teams: [Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 296 939 237 73

Passcode: iyxKwk

Or call-in [+1 571-447-9184,,62105132#](#)

Phone Conference ID: 621 051 32#

NOTES

Facilitator: Theo

Notetaker: Margaret

Attendees: Jessica Speed (Mat-Su Basin Salmon Habitat Partnership Coordinator/Trout Unlimited), Laurie Stuart (Tyonek Tribal Conservation District), Michael Mazzacavallo (Alaska Department of Fish and Game), Eric Booton (Trout Unlimited), Andy Couch (MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission), Theo Garcia (Knik Tribe), Margaret Stern (Susitna River Coalition)

Approve July 2023 Steering Committee Meeting Notes (5 min)

Approval of Notes. Laurie did a great job! Is more like a transcript.

Partnership Business

- **Mat-Su Borough (MSB) Waterbody Setback Advisory Board.** (15 min) * OR 23-079
 - Update and discussion since last meeting
- Anticipated date for approval of the Mat-Su Borough Waterbody Setback Advisory Board is September 26th.
- Matt LaCroix applied as the Mat-Su Basin Salmon Habitat Partnership representative in the Partnership designated seat on the Board. If approved, the Steering Committee would like to see him provide updates at Steering Committee meetings.
- Will keep the steering committee apprised.
- MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission also has a designated seat.
- We have sent in comments and/or prepared oral public comments through the process of proposed riparian ordinance update. The process has been at times challenging with last minute agenda changes at MSB meetings and issues with telephonic public comment. Overall, the process has been good though, and appreciate the opportunity and deep engagement by many.

- **Updating FY25 RFP Process for National Fish Habitat Partnership project funding through the Mat-Su Basin Salmon Habitat Partnership (80 min) *Resources for RFP update discussion**
 - Continued discussion of key updates (e.g., Partnership Priorities for FY25, incorporation of tribal projects, updating scoring matrix)
- A continuation of the discussion from last time. Would like to finish up and announce RFP prior to the Salmon Symposium.
- Modified top priorities. Anadromous Waters, Surface and Groundwater Studies, Alteration of Riparian Areas, Filling of Wetlands, Aquatic Invasive Species, Loss or Alteration of Water Flow and Volume. Removed climate change as a priority to prioritize resilience as so many of the projects address pieces of climate change but it is hard to have a climate change specific project.
- Discussion of why some things changed and potential next steps. We should come to a consensus now without subgroups and emails:
 - High Priorities Removed: Priority Data Gaps—Floodplain mapping.
 - Medium priorities: Culverts that Block Fish Passage, Impervious Surfaces, Overarching Applied Science Strategies—Habitat Quality and Water Quality Monitoring, Motorized Off-Road Recreation.
 - Low Priorities: Large-Scale Resource Development, Loss of Estuaries and Nearshore Waterways, Wastewater Management.
- Conversation about fish passage: This medium priority ranking only applies to the RFP, not the strategic plan.
- Scoring Spreadsheet Discussion
 - Within Resource Benefit Changes to scoring within identifies species benefitted
 - Within Technical Merit: Project design and methodology, clear obtainable means to goals, include monitoring plan, identifies clear personnel.
- Discussion: How to find more diversity in the project and organizations we are funding. What about a Wild Card proposal? Scored a bit differently.
- Let's create a date to review/have a deadline by the end of the month so can announce the RFP at the November Symposium.

Mat-Su Salmon Science and Conservation Symposium (20 min)

- Discussion of Steering Committee meeting following Symposium (November 15th) – purpose and primary details
- Important to meet in person, since so infrequent and so many committee members will be in Palmer for the Symposium.
- Identified 9-1 - potentially at Turkey Red the day following Symposium – November 15th.
 - Steering Committee input on Symposium sessions and keynote speakers

Are there any ideas on what we could cover? It is our annual general meeting, and it would be great to have input on this.

- Discussion of ideas, no changes to proposed content by Symposium Planning Committee.
 - Reschedule November Steering Committee meeting.

Discussion above re: in person meeting.

Committee Updates: **see written updates found at bottom of agenda (10 min)*

- Science and Data (Laura or Jessica)
- Outreach (Eric or Jessica)
- Symposium (Theo or Jessica)
- Capacity and Development (Jessica)
- Other adhoc committee updates
 - Hosting Mat-Su Regional Fish Passage Meetings (Michael Mazzacavallo or Jessica)
 - Science to Conservation Outcomes (Jessica)

Partner and other updates (15 min)

Shout out for summer site tour and shout out for Houston area culvert replacements.

Upcoming Events:

- National Fish Habitat Partnership Board meeting, 9am -1pm, Tuesday September 12th, 2023.
- [Cook Inlet Water Quality Summit](#), October 24th and 25th, 2023.
- Alaska Tribal Fish Passage Working Group Meeting, October 24th, 2023. Time TBD.
- Mat-Su Salmon Science and Conservation Symposium, November 13th and 14th, Palmer, AK, 2023. *Steering Committee follow-up meeting November 15th, time and location TBD.

Next meeting:

- Scheduled for Tuesday, November 14th 12th 1:30-4pm. **reschedule.*

Rescheduled to November 15th, 9-1pm in Palmer.

Facilitator: Laurie Stuart **Notetaker:** Pete Probasco

Committee Updates (*find list of committee members [here](#)*)

- Science and Data
 - Committee did not meet in interim. Next scheduled meeting is September 20th, 1-3pm.
 - Laura Pevan/Chickaloon Village Traditional Council accepted Science and Data Committee Chair, role.
- Outreach
 - Using Big Lake as a case study, on August 22nd, 13 presenters over five stops, highlighted some of the challenges and solutions to maintaining water quality and the integrity of fish habitat while growth continues in this recreational hotspot for fishing and watersports. Thanks to the over 40 people who took the time to come out! Thanks, as well to presenters, outreach committee – including Jeremy Thatcher/NOAA intern and supporters. Find more information including itinerary with tour handout [here](#). List of attendees at bottom of agenda.
 - Received a *Matanuska-Susitna Borough Recognition Award: Presented for Excellence* from Mat-Su Borough Manager Mike Brown following the site tour.

- We are still recruiting for additional outreach committee members. If there is someone in your organization who would be interested and a good fit, please reach out.
- Please share updates for list-serve with Jessica for posting.
- Symposium Planning
 - Registration and call for abstracts are open for the Mat-Su Salmon Science and Conservation Symposium, November 13th and 14th in Palmer. [Learn more and register here.](#)
 - Keynote speakers are Dr. Peter Westley/UAF and Dr. Stephanie Quinn-Davidson/Alaska Joint Venture Fund. Dr. Westley will highlight key lessons of salmon conservation science that have emerged during the past few decades. Dr. Quinn-Davidson has not confirmed her talk. It is tentatively – a personal reflection on science and advocacy.
 - Now is the time to identify and firm up session ideas for the Symposium. Please reach out with ideas.
 - We are still fundraising for the Symposium. Can you help support the event? Please let Jessica know.

Initiatives/Adhoc committees:

- Capacity and Development updates
 - Did not receive funding for BLM funds that applied for in mid-June (\$10,000/year over five years) to support Partnership outreach, operations and general capacity.
 - Jeremy Thatcher/NOAA intern is helping with site tour and Symposium. He is also interested in additional field work opportunities. Please reach out to him at jeremy.thatcher@noaa.gov if you have field work opportunities.
- Convening Mat-Su Regional Fish Passage Partners
 - Committee has not yet confirmed a fall meeting date or agenda and is in discussion with the Alaska Tribal Fish Passage Working Group to ensure efforts are in-step.
 - Recruiting for committee members.
- Science to Conservation Outcomes
 - Did not meet. Will be considering a Symposium session.
 - Shared Deshka cold water refugia locations with field crews to help get them surveyed and into the Anadromous Waters Catalogue.

2023 Site Tour Attendance and Contact List

1. Mike Brown, Mat-Su Borough, Borough Manager, mike.brown@matsugov.us
2. Moki Tew, Mat-Su Borough Assembly, Assembly representative District 5
mokietew@gmail.com
3. Stuart Leidner, Alaska State Parks, Mat-Su and Copper River Basin Region Superintendent,
stuart.leidner@alaska.gov
4. Carina Nichols, Senator Sullivan's Office, Fisheries staff,
carina_nichols@sullivan.senate.gov
5. Shannon Burns, Senator Sullivan's Office, Fisheries staff,
shannon_burns@sullivan.senate.gov
6. Mary-Eileen Manning, Senator Sullivan Office, Fisheries staff, mary-eileen_manning@sullivan.senate.gov

7. Patti Fisher, Meadow Lakes Community Council, Secretary, information@mlccak.org
8. Israel Payton, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sportfish, Director, israel.payton@alaska.gov
9. Greg Svendsen, State of Alaska Board of Fisheries, Member, greg.svendsen@alaska.gov
10. Andy Couch, Mat-Su Borough Fish and Wildlife Commission, Member, fishing@fish4salmon.com
11. Bill Gamble, Big Lake Community Council, President, akchief@outlook.com
12. Pat Daniels, Big Lake Road Service Area, Chair
13. Nicole Swenson, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Senior Aquatic Invasive Species Field Biologist, nicole_swenson@fws.gov
14. Peter Fasbender, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Alaska Region, Assistant Regional Director Fisheries and Ecological Services, peter_fasbender@fws.gov
15. Trent Liebich, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Habitat Restoration Program, trent_liebich@fws.gov
16. Eric Booton, Trout Unlimited, Sportsmen Engagement Manager/Eklutna Project Manager, eric.booton@tu.org
17. Alan Leonard, area landowner
18. Norm Lawler, area landowner, nmlawler3@gmail.com
19. Camden Yehle, Meadow Lakes Community Council, President, information@mlccak.org
20. Marian Guinnulis, Trout Unlimited, Alaska Communications and Engagement Director, marian.guinnulis@tu.org
21. Maija DiSalvo, Mat-Su Borough, Planning Division Admin Specialist, maija.disalvo@matsugov.us
22. Meghan Montagne, Alaska Department of Natural Resources Land Conveyance Section, Meghan.montagne@alaska.gov
23. Dan Jenkins, Alaska Department of Natural Resources Land Conveyance Section, dan.jenkins@alaska.gov
24. Alex Ede, Alaska Department of Natural Resources Land Conveyance Section, alex.ede@alaska.gov
25. Jonah Nitisapon, HDL Alaska, staff
26. Kevin Keith, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, kevin.keith@alaska.gov
27. Michael Mazzacavallo, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Habitat Biologist, michael.mazzacavallo@alaska.gov
28. Jeremy Thatcher, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Intern, jeremy.thatcher@noaa.gov
29. Jessica Speed, Trout Unlimited, Mat-Su Salmon Partnership Coordinator, jessica.speed@tu.org
30. Matt LaCroix, Environmental Protection Agency, Biologist, tour facilitator, lacroix.matthew@epa.gov
31. Franklin Dekker, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Hydrologist, presenter, franklin_dekker@fws.gov
32. Kyle Albert, HDL Alaska, Civil Engineer, presenter, kalbert@hdlalaska.com
33. Cole Branham, Project Management Division Manager, Mat-Su Borough Public Works, presenter, Cole.Branham@matsugov.us
34. Kevin Toothaker, Knik Tribal Council, Cultural Resources Specialist, presenter, ktoothaker@kniktribe.org

35. Fran Seger-Boss, Chickaloon Village Traditional Council and Knik Tribal Council, Cultural Resource Specialist, presenter, fseagerboss@gci.net
36. Ashley Oleksiak, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Environmental Program Specialist, presenter, ashley.oleksiak@alaska.gov
37. Amy LaBarre, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Habitat Biologist, presenter, amy.labarre@alaska.gov
38. Elias Wilson, University of Alaska Fairbanks/Alaska Department of Fish and Game, presenter, ewilson@alaska.edu
39. Jillian Jablonski, Tyonek Tribal Conservation District, Habitat Programs Director presenter, jjablonski@ttcd.org
40. Dan Coleman, Alaska Department of Natural Resources, presenter, daniel.coleman@alaska.gov
41. Terry Gorlick, Big Lake Community Council, Vice President, presenter, terryg@ak.net
42. Parker Bradley, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Fishery Biologist, presenter, parker.bradley@alaska.gov
43. Krissy Dunker, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Southcentral Alaska Invasive Species Coordinator, presenter, kristine.dunker@alaska.gov