



Steering Committee Meeting
Tuesday, May 10, 2022 1:30 – 4 pm
Remote Meeting

AGENDA

Facilitator: Eric Booton

Notetaker: Margaret Stern

Attendees: Andy Wizik, Matt Varner, Trent Liebich, Eric Booton, Jessica Speed, Margaret Stern, Laurie Stewart, Erica Amaan, Michael Daigneault

Approve March 2022 Steering Committee Meeting Notes

Partnership Business

NFHP funding: Jessica spoke with Stan Alan with Pacific Marine Fisheries Commission to provide clarity on funding allocations

Fully fund the top 5 projects. So what should we do with number 6? Proposal to allocate portion of Crocker Creek funding to UAA project.

Everyone currently at the meeting is in favor of this shift. Jessica will send out pertinent information to other committee members, and will go ahead with this shift if she does not hear back from folks.

Ted E. has joined

Report on NFHP in the D.C. Area

Relationship building was very important during this meeting

FHP reps, including one from Alaska, and a facilitator for part of it.

Perhaps there should be an executive committee for efficiency. Currently a board of 26 people, a chair, and a staff employed by various entities

Potential for a board meeting in Alaska coming up.

May 19th @ 4PM

Presentation by Sue Mauger and Jessica Speed on cold water refugia. Some Mat-Su Borough lands along the Deshka should be classified as “watershed lands.”

June 2nd

F&WC special Committee to host individuals to talk about the state’s water reservation system.

MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission will meet May 19th and June 2nd before the summer break.

Agenda and packet for each meeting is published on the FWC web page by the Friday before the Thursday meeting: <https://www.matsugov.us/boards/fishcommission>

Ted is working part time now, and you may not hear back from him on Monday or Friday.

Jessica Speed:

Water to watch program: Cottonwood Creek

BLM going through 10 year reviews for wild and scenic rivers and filing applications for new rivers. The process is evolving.

- Steering Committee Co-chairs (15 min) (Jessica Speed, MSBSHP)
 - Discussion and possible decision on creating a steering committee co-chair who is able to promote a vision
 - Our commitments are roughly 30 hours a year, and the co-chair would be an additional 10-20 on top of that.
 - No additional funding, but a commitment of someone to get involved further in the process
 - Might need some additional support as we talk about additional infrastructure
 - Where do we go from here? Carry on a discussion at the next partnership meeting as we gain more shape.

AK Statewide BIL coordination and outreach effort (20) (Mike Daigneault, USFWS) *AK Statewide BIL Coordination and Outreach Proposal

Now a loosely define process, desire to coordinate across the state of Alaska and engage with as many partners as possible interested in all conservation work

Infrastructure Bill: looking for folks to serve locally and at a statewide conservation level

Hoping for more leadership with tribal and nonprofits

National F&W foundation, new RFP through “America the Beautiful Challenge.” Close to 5 million in funds available with a National call for proposals and a focus on Large scale conservation work

There will be a webinar next week, and proposals are due the latter part of July

<https://www.nfwf.org/programs/america-beautiful-challenge>

New Funding stream within the infrastructure law is supposed to have another notice of funding coming up-- This is a historic moment.

Thoughts?

We should assess partnership goals prior to updating the plan and see how this funding could help our vision.

Infrastructure plan has 2 overarching themes- climate resilience and underserved communities.

A great opportunity to get the word out that there is funding available for these projects.

Perhaps we should offer letters of support for folks to include in their applications.

Foraker group may be able to help connect with grant writers & Native corporations have grant writers on staff.

Perhaps we can further engage with the public during a breakout session at the symposium

Committee Updates

- Outreach (Jessica)
 - Save the date: community riparian planting day is Saturday June 4th, 10-2pm. Thanks to generous sponsors (Knik Tribal Conservation District, Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association, Susitna River Coalition, Hooters Pub and Restaurant, TU we have raised enough funds to host the event. Stay tuned for more details. Summary write-up is below.
 - Planning for the summer site tour for community leaders has begun. Deshka River is top pick and we are currently researching. Site tour is typically held annually August 23-25th/Tuesday-Thursday – stay tuned for confirmation.
 - Need to fund raise for boats
 - Please share updates for list-serve or other Partnership outlets should be shared with Grant for posting.
 - Next outreach committee meeting is May 16th 1:30pm, feel free to join us.

- Science and Data (Nick or Jessica)
 - Thanks to the Science and Data Committee for providing technical review for the FY23 project proposals for NFHP funding.
 - Some members participated in the science to conservation outcomes follow-up meeting on April 21st.
 - Matt Varner/BLM presentation on habitat assessments and applications during the Mat-Su at April 28th Science and Data Committee meeting. The committee also discussed some findings from the science to conservation outcomes meetings.

- Symposium (Jessica or Grant)
 - The committee had their first planning meeting in April.
 - Note: Due to availability limitations, Symposium is tentatively scheduled for Monday and Tuesday November 14th/15th. Those are still to be finalized, - please still hold November 16th/17th.

- Capacity and Development (Jessica)
 - Committee has been inactive. Consider re-activating.
 - Jessica submitted Mat-Su's project package we are recommending for funding along with other reporting requirements to the National Fish Habitat Partnership Board.

- **Science to Conservation Outcomes – Cold Water Refugia** adhoc planning committee
 - In February, this small committee held seven small group and individual meetings to learn more about specific tools and pathways to conserve cold water refugia in the Deshka River and Big Lake Basin. They reconvened a second large group meeting on April 21st to report out on the small group meeting findings, gain more input and clarify next steps and roles. Results and identified next steps from the second meeting will be shared soon.

Other Updates

- Partner updates

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Andy Wizik; seasonal staff starts coming in soon and will be going into the field soon
Trent Liebich-Gotten funding for a few new projects, got a huge amount of funding—3.5 million!

Laurie Stewart- funding for culverts, getting field crews ready, got a grant through NRCS (equity and conservation)

Eric Booton- Community Engagement and Outreach for TU in Kenai, Fly fishing film tour at the bear tooth last week, clean up on willow creek this Sunday may 15 at 10AM, Southcentral chapter cleaning up fish creek on Spenard.

Erika Amman—NOAA funding has been delayed and do not know when infrastructure funding will be coming through, and may not be able to get funding to folks in 2022 fiscal year—no known dates for RFPs

Margaret Stern- Borough has released

Upcoming Events:

- World Fish Migration Day, May 21st
- Susitna Basin Recreation Rivers Advisory Board, 10-12pm, May 25
- Mat-Su Borough Fish and Wildlife Commission meetings (public welcome), 3rd Thursday of every month, 4pm (except summer) – next meeting May 26th
- MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission special meeting with DNR re: water reservations, June 2, 2022

Next meeting:

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

Facilitator: Melissa Heuer/Margaret Stern

Notetaker: Trent Leibich

Community Planting Day - Hosted by Mat-Su Basin Salmon Habitat Partnership

Event Details

Location: Jay Nolfi Fish Creek Park, Big Lake

Date: June 4, 2022

Priority Groups: Mat-Su Borough Community

Summary

The Mat-Su Salmon Habitat Partnership is planning on hosting a Community Volunteer Planting Day at Fish Creek Park on Saturday, June 4th. The Mat-Su Salmon Habitat Partnership is a group of businesses, non-profit organizations, state and federal agencies, and residents who share a common vision of thriving fish populations, healthy habitats, and vibrant communities in the Mat-Su Basin. The Mat-Su Salmon Partnership is a collaborative effort with a focus on bottom-up, locally driven, voluntary and non-regulatory methods to help accomplish its goals.

The goal of the Community Planting Day is to improve salmon habitat and public spaces. We plan on planting a variety of plants, including trees, shrubs, and flowers that will help strengthen the banks along Fish Creek, create sources of food inputs for fish, provide shade to park users, and help beautify the park space.

Event Description

The Mat-Su Salmon Habitat Partnership would like to host a volunteer community riparian planting day at the Jay Nolfi Fish Creek Park in Big Lake. Hosting a riparian planting day would be a simple way for the Mat-Su Salmon Habitat Partnership to implement a project that improves stream habitat and will strengthen the Partnerships engagement in community conservation. Not only will this project be a great way to improve the health and stability of Mat-Su streams, but it will also help bring community awareness of the Mat-Su Salmon Habitat Partnership and the importance of streamside habitat to healthy fish populations. Because these projects do not require extensive research, technical expertise, or a great deal of money, a planting event would be a relatively easy conservation project to get off the ground this summer.

Fish Creek Park was chosen for several reasons. Fish Creek supports five Pacific salmon species and the section of the stream adjacent to the Park is an important Sockeye spawning area. By hosting the planting day at a public park, it increases the public's visibility and awareness of the project.

Objectives

- Implement a revegetation project that improves nearshore salmon habitat in the Mat-Su Borough.
- Encourage engagement and participation with current partners of the Mat-Su Salmon Habitat Partnership.
- Improve the Partnership’s engagement with the local Mat-Su Community.

Why Plant

- Plants along waterways create riparian buffers that help prevent bank erosion and pollution from entering the water.
- For every 5% of tree cover added to a community, polluted stormwater is reduced by 2%.
- Plants provide shade and food inputs to streams that are important for health fish populations.
- Plants create wildlife habitat for birds and fish.
- Improves aesthetic value of the park.

Scope of Work

The current scope includes planting 90 plants along 235 ft of streambank. This will help improve roughly 4,000 ft² of riparian buffer (Figure 1). The suggested plants include trees, woody shrubs, and forbs (Table 1). The plant species were selected either based on their ecological importance or native floral species for their aesthetics.



Figure 1: Figure of proposed planting design the Fish Creek Park

Steering Committee note-taker/facilitator list for 2022/early 2023

Facilitator:

Trent - January

Theo - March

Eric - May

Melissa /Margaret - July

Matt - - September

Andy - November

Laurie - January 2023

Michael - March 2023

New local gov seat - May 2023

Notetaker:

Eric - January

Michael - March

Melissa /Margaret - May

Trent - July

Theo - September

Matt - November

Theo – January

Laurie – March