

**Steering Committee Meeting**  
**Tuesday, November 8, 2022 1:30 – 4 pm**

Remote Meeting

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## AGENDA

**Facilitator:** Matt Varner

**Notetaker:** Andy Wizik

*Matt Varner Introduction asks for additions and comments. None Given*

### Partnership Business

- Approve September 2022 Steering Committee Meeting notes (5 min) *\*September notes*

*Any adjustments to notes? None given. JS wanted to note that there are a couple action items from the last meeting that are still forthcoming.*

- Partnership Steering Committee [\\*Organizational structure](#)

- Steering Committee seat schedule – update

*At large seat discussion. MV recused himself from the conversation due to the seat being discussed being his own.*

*JS: Nine steering committee seats and this year added BLM to increase the number of seats to 10 total, with at-large seats to 4. The other seats are standing seats held by specific organizations or interests (Native Alaskan seat and fiscal sponsor seat). TG's seat expires this year. At large seats are 2-year terms. CIAA and tribal seat are up to term this year and both organizations may re-apply. AW and TG were thanked for their service and encouraged to reapply. Letters of interest will be accepted until January 3<sup>rd</sup>.*

*New at large seat for BLM created due to vacant government seat. Does it work to have a fourth at-large seat. If this is working, how do we see this fourth at-large seat working into the future. Everyone seemed to think that this was working and it is good to have more minds at the table. In the past, when someone stepped down from the committee, the organization could fill in to finish term or we would give one more year in a two-year term.*

*LS: suggested staggering the expiration dates of terms to keep balance on the SC. So a 2-year non-competitive term and after that term have a competitive process. We'd be inviting BLM to begin a new two year term and consider the past year a pilot year.*

*MV re-entered that discussion and he was given the option of a new two year term. MV agreed.*

- 2023 meeting dates and formats

*Discussion of meeting in person and/or online or hybrid model. TL suggested that they may be able to host meetings at his office. LS suggested having a couple of meetings in person and most still online. EA maybe meetings that require more conversation could be in person. JS there was a period of time that during the summer months steering committee organizations would host and offer a speaker so we could get to know their organizations. Agenda would be more than just business expanding to look at overlap in goals and successes in strategic planning. MV thinking ahead to next years' symposium it may be nice to include a meeting as part of the symposium because everyone is already there. JS does that fit into our plans? MV could be really productive since the symposium brings up many topics and they will all be fresh. Possibly a half day so people have a day to travel home.*

*LS suggested that the spring meeting could dove tail with AFS. Meetings are usually second Tuesday of each month so we should send reminders if these meetings do not fall into that schedule. We could also make every other meeting in person online hybrid. Most in person meetings in the past were at ADF&G Palmer. Group agreed that meeting should be in the MatSu.*

*In person meetings: March and November 2023 (in November, a half day meeting following the Symposium). In person attendance is encouraged, but there will be a hybrid option.*

*JS will follow up with F&G to see if meeting space is available. If anyone has any other suggestions for making these meetings more engaging please bring them up.*

- Preparing for FY24 request for proposals for National Fish Habitat Partnership funds ( min) [\\*RFP timeline, FY23 workplan and proposed projects, FY23 Application,](#)

*Partnership competes for annual funding from NFHP. The ACE Act has codified some of this and we need to continue to be ready to adapt as this process evolves.*

*Any updates to FY23 Funding? TL: no. Once federal budget is complete we will know more. We will have to open an FY24 RFP likely before decisions are made on FY23 projects. Realistically we could open RFP mid-December thru mid-February. Should give applicants enough time so proposals can go to NFHP by end of March.*

*We need to look to ensure all proposals are 1:1 non-federal match and have to look at hard and soft criteria for proposals so our Partnership does not lose points when being evaluated to determine how much funding will be directed to Mat-Su.*

*EA: is it match on individual projects or overall match? TL: used to be that way but now it is project based. Funding used to be really flexible but it isn't any longer. Now that the funding has changed, how do we navigate through this in a resilient fashion? If we are requiring 1:1 non-federal match, will we have fewer applicants or possibly new applicants. This is another reason for having RFP open as long as possible.*

*MV: have priorities go back to SDC in November. MM: priority should be getting out RFP asap which won't happen if it goes back through SDC.*

*JS: in recent years, we prioritized conservation priorities and plugged in identified data gaps from strategic plan update. MV: leave it as is and review them after we review FY24*

proposals to see if we have gaps that are not being addressed by proposals. EH: possibly funding projects that address data gaps that could be used to fund larger grants. FHP scoring by NFHP is largely dependent on projects submitted. What are the type of projects that have allowed WNTI to score so high on NFHP? EA: they just have a lot going on and they are not just depending on NFHP funds. MV: suggested getting a presentation from Therese Thompson on how they score so high in this process. LS: hard to believe that some of these projects have 1:1 non-federal match since so many of our funds for the issues we face are federal. JS: Back to the RFP. We have our dates, 1:1 match requirement (whether it's on an individual project basis), our priorities for the RFP, we could try to target the first week of December for RFP – knowing it may go out the week after. That would mean we as a SC are comfortable with the current priorities. Yes

Actions – JS – keep priorities from FY23, otherwise update as needed and announce RFP for FY24 funding.

- Discussion, possible Decision
- Alaska Invasive Species Partnership Strategic Plan Update *\*pending*  
During the statewide invasive species conference last week they invited JS to attend a session where they were asking for pledges of support in meeting goals outlined in their strategic action plan.

#### Discussion – pledges of engagement

JS: Did anyone else here attend? No. They held a strategic planning session and the entire thrust of the session was about their draft strategic plan but before they complete that they wanted to see if there was a commitment to achieve the goals they developed. It wouldn't preclude them from making the priority but they want to see pledged support from other organizations and partners. The goals in their plan do generally align with the vision of the Partnership's [2019 Addendum to the Strategic Action Plan](#) (Obj 7 – Aquatic Invasive Species). These priorities do overlap with the AKISP goals. MV: I would be surprised if anything in this draft was out of line with our priorities. JS: So do we want to sign onto any of these or engage in different ways? Like becoming a partner to AKISP. In supporting this plan we could also cite their plan because they are more focused on AIS issues than we are and nothing in this plan is outside of our mission. EH: why don't we say that we sign onto all of the goals that fall under our strategic plan. No objections to giving general support to the AKISP plan.

## Break

### Committee Updates (\*Find written committee updates below)

- Symposium (Jessica)  
JS: Symposium is set with keynote speaker, booklet, and agenda. Registration is a bit down but there should be some great presentations. EA: for the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) session, funders will be up on the stage to speak and answer questions on BIL funding opportunities. FYI – event planners are looking for timekeepers etc. also a ride from Anchorage for one of the presenters.
- Outreach (Eric)  
EB: Deshka R. announced as a National Fish Habitat Partnership Water to Watch. Well timed because it was just our site tour. Susitna R. was also recognized in the same program, via a nomination from the Pacific Lamprey Conservation Initiative. We are working on the

video for the site tour. Won't be done by symposium but working on some branding materials. Hopefully will be done by next meeting.

- Science and Data – (Nick or Jessica)  
*Hasn't met, won't meet until after symposium. JS: Spoke with Nick Decovich who reminded her that Anjanette has termed out and Nick soon will so it will be time for others to step in to the co-chair seats. Wondering if the steering committee has any recommendations for new members. General role is to support the RFP process and provide review but there are other areas where they could be involved. Typically co-chairs have been running meetings: setting agendas, doodle polls etc.*
- Science to Conservation Outcomes – Cold Water Refugia (Jessica)  
*Workgroup (Cook Inletkeeper/USFWS/Partnership Coordinator) is planning to host a session at the Symposium. Sharing an update on this initiative and requesting input via small breakout groups. Should we expand this effort beyond stream temperature to other projects with high quality data? We have asked the steering committee if we have your continued support on this effort. Please speak up if there are concerns with continuing this. No concerns raised*
- Capacity and Development – (Laurie or Jessica)  
*Haven't recently met but will after the symposium. No updates*

### **Other Updates**

- Partner updates (all)  
*EA: Last of our RFP's have closed and they are being reviewed now. Looking for duplications in proposals now and should be able to make funding announcements after the symposium. Because of the delay in the RFP they will be combining FY22 and FY23 funds.  
LS: TTCD is getting ready to grow and will be hiring Biologist, outreach specialist and Agriculture Project.  
MM: Wrapped up interviews last week to fill Michael's old job (restoration in MSB) meeting with USFWS on data sharing.  
MV: BLM rolling out a tech report on stream design. Will have applications to restoration projects in SC Alaska. Couple of projects with UAA to develop a temp monitoring network leveraging some Deshka work. Examining OHV activities effects on streams.  
TL: USFWS more new positions. Hoping to see fish passage projects funded. New AIS person will be in the office solely focused on AIS out of Anchorage field office. Two years of funding currently for position which may become more permanent.  
EB: New positions hiring AK habitat restoration director. Susitna Basin Recreational Rivers advisory board will reconvene meetings soon. Kenai Peninsula outreach person hired this year will be based on the peninsula.  
JS: Looking to bring together fish entities and people interested in fish passage. Perhaps we can serve as a conduit to bring folks together and highlight funding opportunities.*

### **Upcoming Events:**

- Mat-Su Salmon Science and Conservation Symposium, November 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022, Palmer, AK
- Mat-Su Borough Fish and Wildlife Commission, 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month, September - May, at 4 PM, Palmer, AK
- [Susitna Basin Recreation Rivers Advisory Board](#), meetings are fourth Wednesday of the month, November 2022 through March 2023. 10-12pm. next meeting is November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022.

**Next meeting:** Tuesday January 10<sup>th</sup>, 1:30-4pm. Location: Virtual.

**Facilitator:** Laurie Stuart

**Notetaker:** ~~Theo Garcia~~ updated to Eric Booton.

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

- **Outreach**
  - The Deshka River has been designated a 2022 Water to Watch by the National Fish Habitat Partnership. Read more about it on the NFH website <https://www.fishhabitat.org/waters-to-watch>. Note the Susitna River was also designated a Water to Watch by the Pacific Lamprey Conservation Initiative.
  - Please share updates for monthly list-serve bulletins, and/or other Partnership outlets with Grant (grant.robinson@tu.org).
- **Science and Data**
  - Did not meet. Next meeting is anticipated this fall – following the Symposium.
- **Symposium Planning**
  - The Symposium is November 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>. We have a great agenda lined up with some interesting sessions. Find more information including an agenda on the [Partnership website](#), and [register online here](#). [Agenda here](#).
  - Registration is low – please encourage colleagues and those in your network that would be interested. This is the Partnership’s Annual General Meeting. It presents a great opportunity in bringing partners together.
- **Capacity and Development**
  - Plan to meet following Symposium – late November/early December for development planning.
- **Science to Conservation Outcomes – Cold Water Refugia** adhoc planning committee (Sue Mauger, Jessica Speed, Mike Daigneault)
  - This group is hosting a session at the Symposium intended to report out and share the science to conservation outcomes initiative, further some specific workplan goals, and explore the idea of this pilot effort applying to another science output.