



Strategy Meeting: Mat-Su Basin Salmon Habitat Partnership Steering Committee
Wednesday, January 8, 2025 9:30 – 4 pm
Board Room, Turkey Red
550 S Alaska St., Palmer
In-person meeting with remote option

Meeting objective: *Develop priority Partnership goals for 2025 that are practical, and the Steering Committee is excited about and committed to collaboratively ensuring they are met. Update the Partnership's annual workplan to meet those goals.*

MEETING NOTES

Attendance:

Maija DeSalvo, unaffiliated
Theo Garcia, Knik Tribe
Marc Lamoreaux, Native Village of Eklutna (virtual)
Michael Mazzacavallo, Alaska Department of Fish & Game
Laurie Stuart, Tyonek Tribal Conservation District
Matt Varner, Bureau of Land Management
Anna Senecal, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Nelli Williams, Trout Unlimited (TU)
Jessica Speed, TU
Marykate Swenarton, TU

9:30am Welcome, Meeting Overview and Opening Round Table Question

- What is something the group likely doesn't know about you already?

Group shared round table responses.

10am Reflecting on Progress Toward 2024 Workplan Goals

- Progress toward goals in the annual workplan: Highlights and challenges. Presentation, Jessica Speed (Trout Unlimited) (20 min)
- Discussion: Q and A and opportunity for any discussion (10 min)

Jessica shared some background and highlights. Workplan is directed to meeting organizational/Partnership priorities outlined in 2019 Addendum. These support meeting 12 conservation strategies that address threats. Find a short summary by Partnership priority in a [pdf of the presentation here](#), and [Partnership 2024 Workplan: Progress](#).

10:30am 2025 Budget Status

- Budget update (10 min)

Matanuska-Susitna Basin Salmon Habitat Partnership
Thriving fish, healthy habitats, & vital communities in the Mat-Su Basin

- Discussion: Opportunity for questions and discussion about overall budget. (10 min)

Resource document: *[FY2025 Partnership Budget: Detailed](#) and [Summary budget](#).

- Shared FY25 budget that runs 9/1/2024 to 8/31/2025. Partnership FY25 budget is \$158.

Budget update was more of a refresher on FY25 budget to help inform meeting conversation. FY25 budget is \$158,657. Greatest expenses are staff salary, Symposium and anticipated strategic plan update. Revenue is largely NFHP followed by TU, event sponsorship and BLM. Funding gaps include estimated \$10,000 for strategic plan update. Discussion included how to make budget role for fiscal sponsor a lighter lift – for instance matching with TU’s annual budget period which is spring to spring. Also suggestion to identify existing funding gaps within the budget.

10:45am **Partnership Self Reflection**

- Breakouts and group discussion: What key role or service does the Partnership provide?
- Notes generated from group and listed on post-it notes below.

Unique Value/Service of the Partnership

- Unifying thread for salmon conservation
- Forum for discussing and prioritizing salmon issues (and addressing threats)
- Technical assistance
- Funding local projects and address issues
- Connector/network
- Provides access to agency people
- Conservation convenor from a collaborative and neutral space
- Education and knowledge sharing
- *Also noted a current lack of clarity around identity of the Partnership.
- What are current areas of Success, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)?
- Group discussion tracked via Post-it notes below.

Going well/strengths

- Symposium!!
 - In-person, good attendance
 - Crosscuts all services
 - We are well recognized for providing this event to the community

- *Field Tours*
 - *Training/outreach connection*
- *SC!*
 - *High functioning; good expertise*
- *Known threats for prioritizing work*

Challenges

- *Identity crisis*
 - *Who are we?; what do we want to be moving forward?*
- *Match money*
- *Resources and capacity*
 - *Beyond 1FTE coordinator*
 - *Scope of work too broad?*

Opportunities

- *Rethink \$, beyond federal \$*
- *Passion and interest in and out of room*
- *Amplifying stories – lots of stories to tell*
- *National collaboration and spotlight following NFHP AK Board meeting and site visit*
- *Collaboration amongst a wide variety of partners “hub of collaboration and communication for on the ground fish habitat conservation.*
- *Commitment is strong – at org level, not just indiv*
- *NFHP – good base but can grow beyond. Grow beyond NFHP money.*
- *More diverse partners doing great work*
- *National networking and new collaborations and opportunities such as funding*

Threats

- *1 staff; resiliency*
- *Interest and experience are a high bar for applying for NFHP funding*
- *New administration; uncertainty around federal \$. Do more with less.*
- *Turnover and onboarding new people*
- *Retaining/cultivating agency commitment- maintain relationships*
- *Widening beyond the choir. Are we doing enough?*
- *ID: how do we grow and evolve to meet new landscape and needs*
- *Beyond the forming stage, what next?*
- *Navigating “politics” and what each org/agency priorities are*

11:30pm What do we Want to Achieve in 2025 and What are the top Priorities?

(Facilitator: Anna Senecal, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)

- *Discuss and identify top Partnership priorities for 2025*
 - *What are the ‘must do’ items and any carry-over from 2024 workplan?*

- Break out: Think, pair, share. Identify 1-3 items the Steering Committee wants to focus on in 2025. (As top priorities).
 - Does the SC want to retain the five current organizational priorities?
 - Identify 1-2 objectives for each of the organizational priorities.
- *Anna walked us through an exercise to take previous discussion and notes and put them into actions that may be articulated as a 2025 priority.*

See [document tracking that exercise here](#).

*Resource documents: [*Partnership 2024 Workplan: Progress](#), [*2019 Addendum to the Strategic Action Plan](#), [*Blank 2025 workplan template](#).*

12:00pm **Lunch:** Onsite, from Turkey Red Kitchen

12:30pm **What are the Top 2025 Priorities (continued)**

2:30pm **Do We Have the Resources to Achieve our Priorities?**

- What is the work?
- Who will do the work and when?
- Are there other needed capacities or funding support to meet 2025 Partnership priorities?

The group stayed pretty deep in the self-reflection section, and did not appear ready to move to this place.

Additional notes –

- *Is the articulated self-identity found in Partnership progress reports so different than a more service-oriented Partnership to benefit our partners? Perhaps it is more in the implementation than in the vision and mission statements.*

Action steps:

- *See about having someone from Foraker or other facilitator to help move this conversation forward.*
- *Develop a survey to learn what our partners think and use that to shape the workplan, what we do.*

Resource Documents: [*Blank 2025 workplan template](#), [*Partnership Operations Framework](#).

Five-minute afternoon break where needed.

3:40pm **Closing Reflections and Adjourn**