

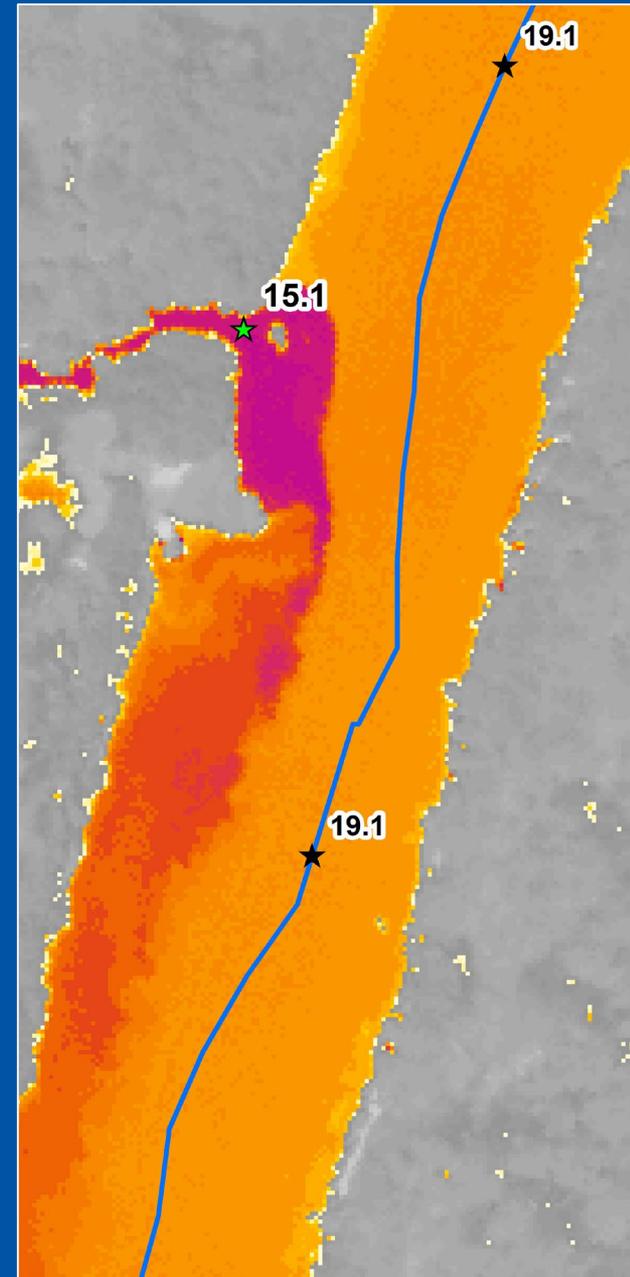
Identifying Strategies for Moving Local Science into Community and Agency Decision Making

How are we doing with cold water refugia?



Science Takeaways

1. The Deshka and Big Lake systems are some of the warmest watersheds in the Mat-Su Basin and are likely to get warmer.
2. In 2019, warm stream temperatures blocked adult migration and had negative effects on juvenile growth in the Deshka.
3. We have identified cold-water refugia in the Deshka and Big Lake basin which may be critical habitat for salmon in warming watersheds.



Science to Conservation Actions Initiative

Mat-Su Partnership Discussions started in 2021

Do we have land management tools to protect this habitat diversity to build salmon resilience?

- Identify
- Implement

Tools for Conservation

Incorporate thermal refugia information into the revision of the Susitna Basin Recreational Rivers Management Plan

Maintain and/or improve water quality standard revised language for water temperature

Communicate to private landowners about stewardship opportunities

Classify MSB parcels with thermal refugia as "watershed lands": a land classification that recognizes the importance of the land for water quality

Ensure relevant science is available, discoverable, interpretable for agencies for permit reviews and land sales

Tools for Conservation - Updates

Incorporate thermal refugia information into the revision of the Susitna Basin Recreational Rivers Management Plan

- With help from ADF&G, new language was included in public review draft (2024); plan revision has stalled after Advisory Board was dissolved by the Governor.

Maintain and/or improve water quality standard revised language for water temperature

- New draft language was proposed by ADEC in 2022 that would have weakened water temperature standards; following comment period, no changes were made thus maintaining current standards.

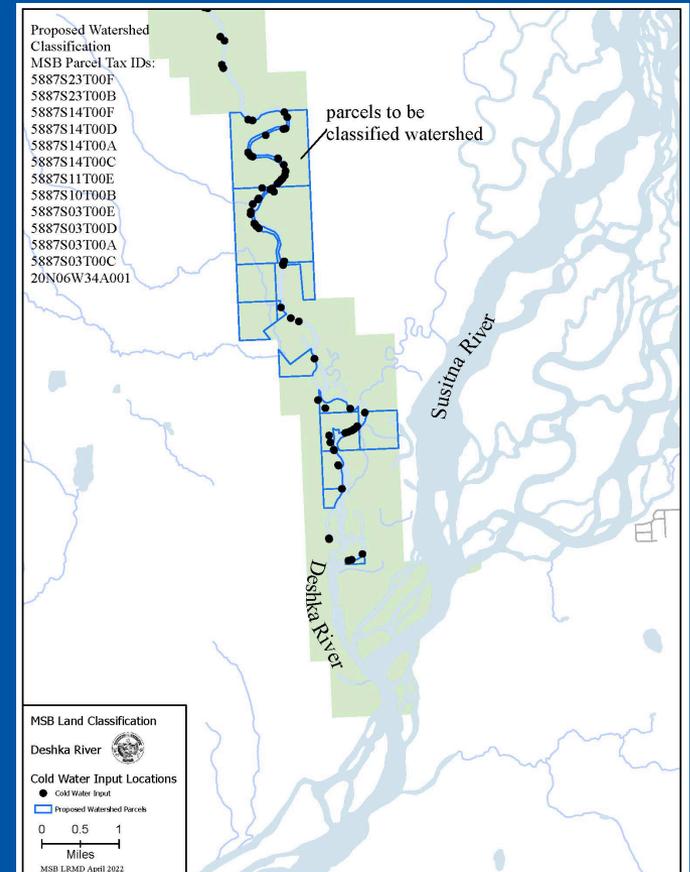
Communicate to private landowners about stewardship opportunities

- No formal progress on landowner outreach

Tools for Conservation - Updates

Classify MSB parcels with thermal refugia as "watershed lands": a land classification that recognizes the importance of the land for water quality

- Classification proposal supported by MSB Fish & Wildlife Commission Resolution FWC 2022-01 & 2025-02
- Presented proposal to MSB Assembly in August 2025
- Waiting for Assembly to take action directing staff to classify parcels



Tools for Conservation - Updates

Ensure relevant science is available, discoverable, interpretable for agencies for permit reviews and land sales

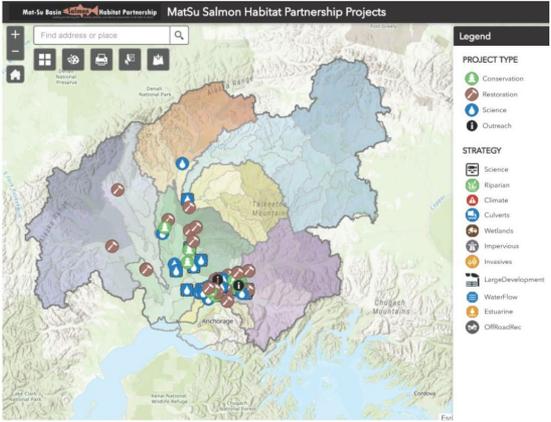
- Data Transfer sessions at Symposium
- <https://matsusalmon.org/resources/>

Partnership Mat-Su What We Do Your Help Resources Contact Blog

Project Mapper

Click on the link to view our inventory of projects!

With the involvement of many partners, the Mat-Su Salmon Habitat Partnership published its original Strategic Action Plan in 2008, that identified specific goals to conserve salmon and their habitat in the Mat-Su Basin. Over more than 15 years, the Partnership has provided funding for over 100 projects throughout the Mat-Su Basin, that address the Plan's goals and objectives.



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Databases

Key Statewide Databases & Mappers Related to Partnership Priorities

The following databases and web mapping tools were developed by member organizations of the Mat-Su Basin Salmon Habitat Partnership (Partnership). They are valuable resources to help inform and ensure community planning, development and conservation decisions are based on high quality, most current and available scientific data. Many of these datasets are collected using public funds, and archiving them in publicly accessible databases helps ensure that public investments in science and monitoring have a lasting impact - not just science for science's sake.

View the full PDF list and download below.

Lessons Learned for Conservation

Partnership needs to be:

- Opportunistic
- Communicative
- Relentless
- Strategic