



Steering Committee Meeting
Tuesday, July 8, 2025 1:30 – 4 pm
Virtual Meeting
Join via Teams: [Join the meeting now](#)
Meeting ID: 282 994 845 045
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Phone conference ID: 693 618 801#

AGENDA

Facilitator: Marykate Swenarton

Notetaker: Emily Mailman

Attendance:

Marykate Swenarton, TU
Emily Mailman, NOAA
Marc Lamoreaux, NVE
Melis Coady, SRC
Cody Beus, KT
Mike Campfield, MSB
Anna Senecal, USFWS
Matt LaCroix, EPA
Jeff Fisher, AKDEC
Anjanette Steer, UAA Alaska Center for Conservation Science
Jessica Speed, TU

Partnership Business

- Introductions
 - Add to agenda: White Spruce saplings
- Approve May 2025 Steering Committee meeting notes (5 min) [*Draft May meeting notes](#)
 - Approved
- Proposed Ordinance: Waterbody Setbacks in the Mat-Su Borough (25 min) [*Proposed changes](#)
 - Update: Buildings must be set back by 75 ft., but hundreds of out-of-compliance homes not following setback. Also few environmental protections within the setback. Many attempts to update the ordinance have been proposed but not adopted. The current effort has been sent to the planning commission, then it will head to the assembly.
 - The changes:
 - Proposed edits to setback ordinance & proposed changes to other sections of code
 - Definitions added, language added to purpose & intent, new section proposes additional setbacks besides structures, vegetation

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

requirements, 3 routes for the setback depending on if a garage, commercial, or industrial structure, process created to be closer using land use permit process, changes to general definitions, variance processes, and land use permit.

- Opportunities for engagement to community councils - Melis asked about letters and who they should be addressed to? Matt suggested drafting one letter and send to planning commission and assembly
- Matt will share most recent documents with the steering committee
- A summary of key changes is linked above following agenda item title
- Partnership engagement
 - Should the partnership support a letter (due July 23rd)
 - Jessica will provide letter to SC for feedback
 - August 4th planning commission meeting; assembly meeting sept. 2nd
 - MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission will be finalizing their input on the draft ordinance at a July 16th meeting.
- Partnership FY26 Budget (20 min) (Jessica) * FY26 Draft Budget – [summary](#) and [detailed](#)
 - FY25 update: we brought in less, but we also spent less
 - FY26 update: more funds from the NFHP (85k to 126k), TU is not able to provide cash funds to support the partnership this year (previously 25k); pursuing outside funding is a bigger priority now than in the past; salary increases; possible usage of overage to fund strategic planning
 - SC was unanimously in support of the budget
- Standing event hosting in 2025 (30 min) *[Site tour and Symposium notes](#)
 - 2025 Summer site tour focus and location (20 min)
 - Big Lake event might bring a wider range of attendees, include guests of all ages/interest levels
 - What would timing look like to bring the largest audience together - after the work day would bring a larger audience
 - When are there fish there? Would need to confirm this. What biologists could be there on a weekend? Check with Big Lake community council.
 - Is it too last minute to plan this for 2025? Yes.
 - Premier creek might be more feasible - we want to make sure Chickaloon is on board and that the message is theirs
 - Following up with Chickaloon (Jessica)
 - 2025 Symposium dates, location and format (10 min)
 - Proposed for Thursday/Friday Nov. 20-21st - we should start promoting this.
 - Formatting? Perhaps one day of talks, one day of breakout rooms? Theme?
 - How can we challenge the status quo? What is the theme?
 - Perhaps solicit ideas from the partnership as we do a save the date (Jessica and planning committee)
 - Folks seem to like the symposium and it is affordable
 - Outreach at the symposium? Maybe evening activity? Coho and cocoa?
- Partnership strategic plan update (20 min) *[Draft Quotes solicitation](#)
 - No comments provided on draft email
 - Requested input due by 7/11 (Friday) and Jessica will send out July 14th

- Change to format - at a minimum we want xyz, with possible options to add abc . . . so the organizations can come back with multiple scopes of work with various price points
- Next step is to establish a timeline: Update from current quote solicitation of July 14 - August 8th
- Are there any other organizations we should send this to?
- Jessica will send for review

**5-10 min break as needed*

Updates (20 min)

- National updates
 - NFHP project funding - big kudos to Anna for helping with the agreement
 - Waiting to see what funding tier we will end up in
 - NFHP changing funding timeline to be 1.5 years to 12 months, likely new RFP will go out earlier (instead of December) (Fall of 2026)
- Partner updates
 - White spruce saplings (Melis) 3,000 saplings to give away - application is open
 - Melis will be sharing more info on a SRC community event
 - Michael ADGF & Anna USFWS culvert training; culvert projects are rolling!
 - Erin - AKTEMP continues to get more data added to it, electrofishing is occurring to support AWC model, invasive mussel dashboard work
 - Mike - excited to be on the steering committee, project on crocker creek wrapped up, one on hidden hills, one on birch creek, montana creek planting pictures, pike are moving - Eklutna lake & Wasilla Creek
 - Include more time for partner updates for future meetings
 - Add pike and RFP timing to September meeting agenda.

Committee Updates (5 min)

- Science and Data – no updates
- Symposium Planning – already done.
- Outreach –
 - About 50 volunteers and 200 plants from the Montana Creek planting event, next year there might be root wads planted; has been watered, hydroseeding has happened

Upcoming Events and Relevant Dates:

- [MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission](#), MSB riparian ordinance special meeting, July 16th, 2025
- MSB Planning Commission public hearing for riparian setbacks ordinance, August 4, 2025, Palmer.
- Sue Mauger Deshka River Science Presentation at MSB Assembly meeting, 6pm, August 5, 2025, Palmer
- NFHP coordinators workshop and Board meeting, September 16 – 18, 2025 Minneapolis
- Existing Condition Assessment Workshop - September 22-26, 2025
- Stream Quantification Tool Field Camp - September 29-October 3, 2025
- Alaska Invasive Species Workshop, October 28-30, 2025, Anchorage

Next meeting: Tuesday, September 9th, 2025. ADFG office Palmer.

Facilitator: Michael Mazzacavallo

Notetaker: Laurie Stuart

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

- Science and Data
 - Did not meet. No updates.
- Outreach
 - Did not meet.
 - On June 14th from 10-2pm, partners collaboratively hosted a 3rd Plants for Salmon Community Riparian Planting Day on Montana Creek at Yoder Rd. bridge. 50 people planted 200 shrubs, trees and herbaceous plants to complete planting of the 450ft riprap dyke that was constructed in 2012 to address flooding issues. Knik Tribe additionally provided frybread and Dena'ina perspective and tradition stories with additional presentations from ADFG/USFWS and educational booths and crafts from SRC and TU. MSB funded dirt work and hydroseeding this year and may restore a short section of impaired shoreline upstream on this site in 2026 which would complete work at this location. Huge thanks to collaborating organizations: Susitna River Coalition, Mat-Su Borough, Knik Tribe, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and TU. TU Southcentral Chapter, NOAA, Mat-Su Health Foundation and Jessica Stephens Foundation funding also supported this project.
- Symposium Planning
 - Held one planning meeting. Tentative dates are: Thursday and Friday November 20th and 21st, Palmer Depot.
 - Still actively fundraising for the Symposium and recruiting for this committee if you know of anyone interested.
 - Next planning meeting is July 10, 2-3pm. All are welcome.
- Adhoc working groups and/or initiatives
 - Waterbody Setback Advisory Board
Matt LaCroix has been the Partnership's representative on the Mat-Su Borough's (MSB) Waterbody Setback Advisory Board who was tasked to review and recommend any changes to MSB code relating to waterbody setbacks– in particular how to deal with structures built in violation of waterbody setback code.

Following a May 20th Assembly meeting, the draft ordinance recommended by the MSB Waterbody Setback Advisory Board was referred to the “Transportation Advisory Board, The Agriculture Advisory Board, The MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission, The Parks, Recreation & Trails Advisory Board, the Water and Wastewater Advisory Board, and the Planning Commission. MSB staff mailed info to each Community Council in the borough. The public hearing for the Planning Commission Resolution is August 4, 2025.” Click to view [IM 25-126](#) and [OR 25-073](#).

- Science to conservation outcomes pilot.
Sue Mauger is scheduled to present to the Mat-Su Borough Assembly evening of August 5th, in Palmer about her Deshka River stream temperature science. This is follow-up from the MSB FWC's resolution to recommend that the Assembly classify

Deshka River cold water refugia that Sue has identified as “watershed lands”. This would simply flag these areas as important when considering land management activity.