

Notes From Partnership Meeting, February 14th -3:30pm -5:00pm

In attendance:

Holly Kent, Anchorage Waterways Council

Nick Bronson, Anchorage Waterways Council

George Taylor, Wasilla Soil and Water Conservation District

Kathy Ciarimboli, Wasilla Soil and Water Conservation District

Rick Ernst, Upper Susitna Soil and Water Conservation District

Catherine Inman, Palmer Soil and Water Conservation District

Kathy Weiss, Palmer Soil and Water Conservation District

Shawna Trumblee, Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council

Ingrid Harrald, Cook Inletkeeper

Sue Mauger, Cook Inletkeeper

Edan Badajos, Cook Inletkeeper

(not present: Kenai Watershed Forum, Chickaloon, Upper Mat-su, Port

Graham/Nanwalek, Seldovia. Other tribes doing monitoring?)

Partner Updates:

Anchorage Waterways: Nick Bronson was hired six months ago to coordinate monitoring. Last year, 18 new volunteers were been trained and there are currently 23 volunteers in the program. A total of 22 sites are currently being monitored, and a training is scheduled for mid-March. All data and graphs are currently accessible on their website at <http://anchoragecreeks.org>.

Wasilla Soil and Water Conservation District: Kathy Ciarimboli is helping as the project coordinator for monitoring. They had 2 trainings last year and 15-17 volunteers monitoring 17 sites. They also have their data compiled and posted on their website at <http://www.wasillaswcd.org>. They are coming to the end of their EPA grant funding, and looking for other funding ideas/sources. Working closely with Palmer Soil and Water has been a great partnership.

Palmer Soil and Water Conservation District: Working very closely with Wasilla Soil and Water. Currently monitoring 8 sites in Palmer. Fast development in area one of major concerns. Projects include a Fish and Wildlife Coastal Grant for salmon traps and salmon counts, and working with the Matanuska Watershed Coalition and TNC.

Upper Susitna Soil and Water Conservation District: Rick has successfully put all data on CD in excel format, and would like to get it online with a web link. All monitoring is currently on hold in the Upper Su as funding has been such a problem for so many years. There are still volunteers interested and invested, and as soon as funding comes through the program could start back up. There is a new manager, who has good energy and is interested in funding. Problems with getting funding to monitor streams that aren't on DEC impaired list. Other issues of concern: ATV degradation, intermittent drying out of Trapper Creek, and development on wetlands.

Cook Inletkeeper: 25 sites, 34 volunteers. Water monitoring, bio-assessment, and wetland monitoring. New brochure for lab, opportunities for organizations to get samples run cheaply. 2006 Annual Report completed, less data-intense, more eye-catching for potential funders. New stone fly monitoring program for winter high school students focusing on the effects of warming winters, and also becoming involved in construction monitoring at Stariski Creek.

Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council: Shawna sat in on meeting to give input on tribal participation. NAFWS funding is no longer available for their tribal water quality training program, so most monitoring in native villages is not occurring. There are many people who have been trained to be monitors through the program that may be interested in monitoring. Most have QAPP, field procedures guide, meters etc. Potential contacts: Michael Opheim, Lisa Ferber, and Tyonek Soil and Water Conservation District (worked with Upper-Susitna).

Funding Issues:

Everyone agreed that taking a Cook-Inlet wide approach to funding is good idea. The grant currently awaiting approval is the Temperature Monitoring EPA Targeted Watershed Grant. Decisions on this should be made as soon as congress passes appropriations bill. Even if not granted, the proposal is complete, and very marketable to other foundations. This would supply small amounts of funding to all organizations in the partnership.

All groups were interested in gaining funding for a partnership coordinator, so that we can focus on making all these great partnership ideas happen.

It was mentioned that one way to make our projects more marketable is to link our parameters to biology. Things that public can identify with. Example: Linking temperature with fish populations and macroinvertebrates has been successful in both outreach and funding.

Holly agreed to coordinate with the Tri-Borough Commission to get a slot of time to pitch our partnership successes and goals, as well as funding proposals. Ideally, she would like to pick three people to represent the partnership in the following issues: outreach, science, and development. Holly will research when the next meeting is and let everyone know.

Also, Alaska Association of Conservation Districts has recently hired a part-time grant specialist. This could lead to other potential funding sources.

Groups in the Anchorage/Mat Su areas are also able to work with The Nature Conservancy and their salmon work.

Partnership Ideas

All groups supported the idea of an all-partnership GPS map linked with all the partnership data so it can be accessed as a watershed. Possibly starting this with one

parameter of priority that all partners are monitoring and then adding. This is written into the EPA grant and is also part of the TNC project. Possibly, in the meantime Cook Inletkeeper could house this web page.

Also, flow reference stations, Fish and Game staff gauges that are not currently being used. (Christopher Estes was mentioned as contact?).

Having links to all partnership groups is another good outreach tool. Also, start effort in to mention the partnership in press releases, other outreach materials.

Holly suggested the need for a CEMP partnership “tag line”. A one-sentence description that we can use as a footer at the end of documents and emails and other outreach documents. If we could all bring our suggestions, we can talk more about this at recertification next month.

Recertification:

Dates were picked for potential recertification and Phase IV and Phase V training. March 9th, 11th, 12th, and 13th. Ingrid will email Dan Bogan to see if UAA space is available for any of those dates.

Annual report:

Ingrid will email an outline for information needed to be included in report. As we all seem to have more data there is a possibility to make a report that is easy to use for outreach and funding. Ingrid will send requests for info ASAP, so that maybe a start on report can be talked about a recertification.