



Kenai Peninsula Fish Habitat Partnership

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



The Kenai Fish Habitat Partnership (KPFHP) is committed to fostering effective collaborations to preserve healthy fish populations, ecosystems, and economies within the Kenai Peninsula Borough. This report summarizes the collective accomplishments of all KPFHP projects in 2023. Funding for these projects, including KPFHP coordination, is provided by the National Fish Habitat Partnership.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all our partners for their hard work and dedication to fish habitat conservation.

Sincerely,
The KPFHP Steering Committee

Communication and Outreach

- Distributed seven listserv emails to approximately 120 KPFHP partners regarding partnership activities, funding opportunities, and events.
- KPFHP's Coordinator presented to a group of partners and steering committee members in September about NFHP and KPFHP's histories and current status.
- Through the Adopt-a-Stream Program, KPFHP provided lessons based on fish habitat conservation to local youth, including 841 student contact hours over the course of 22 classroom visits and 17 field trips to local creeks.
- Hosted a "Bring Your Own Float" day, where members of the public paddled around a Kenai Peninsula lake to observe ADFG's stream gauging and fish habitat protection efforts, as well as spawning sockeye salmon.
- Trained 63 citizen volunteers from regional communities to be watershed stewards through the Stream Watch Program. Volunteers and staff visited the Kenai Peninsula's most popular sport fishing locations to educate anglers on habitat protection and ethical angling. Efforts resulted in a staggering 9,117 educational public contacts and volunteering 2,418 hours.
- Hosted 38 Stewardship Days, which recruited local volunteers in a variety of conservation and outreach efforts, including operating an educational booth at the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers for 31 days during personal use fisheries when these areas are flooded with thousands of fishermen. The purpose of the booth was to educate the public about fish habitat conservation, regulations, invasive species, and more. Volunteers also participated in 10 separate events for litter cleanup near these river mouths, three stream bank restoration events, and five invasive species removal days.

- Educated approximately 400 middle school students about aquatic invasive species at the Salmon Celebration; an annual educational event related to all aspects of salmon ecology.
- Hosted a booth at the Kenai Peninsula Sport and Rec Trade Show, promoting awareness to approximately 450 anglers and other outdoor enthusiasts about aquatic invasive species.
- KPFHP hosted the sixth biennial Kenai Peninsula Fish Habitat Science Symposium on April 20 and 21 in Kenai. Twenty-eight technical presentations were given to an audience of over 100 people, who work in various aspects of fish habitat conservation on the Kenai Peninsula. ([Report](#))

Science

- Used geospatial data, including the National Hydrography Dataset, impervious surfaces, and non-point source pollutant contributions to identify drainage networks and changes in impervious surface within the Kenai River watershed. This analysis was used to generate hot spots for stormwater runoff in the lower Kenai River drainage.
- Conducted stream gauge monitoring in the Devil's Creek watershed as part of a multi-year monitoring effort to collect hydrological data for more than 30 miles of remote stream.
- Conducted electrofishing in remote stretches of Devil's Creek, which resulted in a nomination to Alaska Anadromous Stream Catalog and would add new protection for 0.1 miles of anadromous stream.

Conservation

- Installed more than three miles of fencing to protect sensitive riparian vegetation at highly trafficked fishing sites on the Kenai River and removed 4,487 lbs. of trash from riparian areas.
- Installed 300 ft. of spruce tree revetment and educational signage to protect a highly trafficked section of riparian habitat in Soldotna.
- Surveyed 11 water bodies on the Kenai Peninsula for the presence of aquatic invasive species. Three of the waterbodies are in remote parts of Western Cook Inlet and were prioritized for high float plane activity.