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Working Together for Healthy Watersheds on the Kenai Peninsula

Kenai Peninsula Fish Habitat Partnership Steering Committee Meeting

Date and Time: Feb. 1, 2021, 2:00 – 4:00 PM

Where: Virtual zoom meeting

Completed by: Branden Bornemann, KPFHP Coordinator

Completed for: KPFHP Steering Committee

1. Guest Speaker: Suzanne Nelson, USFWS Office Olympia, WA; “Proactive approaches to conservation in Alaska.”
 - a. Goal: try to know potential threats to a system and get ahead of them
 - b. Surveyed proactive work happening in Alaska
 - c. Interviewed 31 people working in Alaska
 - d. High interest, low activity in this topic
 - i. Barriers
 1. Time
 2. Capacity
 3. Support from supervisors
 - ii. Some groups active in proactive work
 1. Fisheries professionals
 2. Climate change and community work personnel
 - e. Looked at the Beaver Creek watershed (near Kenai) as an example case study for proactive conservation
 - i. Can be considered an “average” stream
 - ii. Worked to find potential proactive projects in this area
 - iii. Examples:
 1. Fisheries and Watershed health
 - a. Warming water temperatures: Use felt leaf willow to increase riparian shading and cool water temperatures.
 2. Movement across the landscape
 - a. ATV/OHV river crossings and juvenile salmon mortality
 - b. Use signage to direct people away from juvenile fish habitat and unsafe crossings
 - c. Augment existing signage
 3. Community Engagement
 - a. Calculating the valuation of blue carbon credits
 - b. Some local work in progress to scope this project
 4. Encroaching development
2. KPFHP Partners Meeting
 - a. Call to order
 - i. none

- b. In attendance: not recorded
 - c. Approve Agenda
 - i. None
 - d. Minutes from Previous Meeting
 - i. See minutes from last meeting on Jan 4, 2021
 - e. Partner Updates
 - i. Coordinator Report: Branden Bornemann, Kenai Watershed Forum
 - 1. Kachemak Bay Science / Kenai Peninsula Fish Habitat Partnership symposium
 - a. Abstracts due Feb 8, 2021
 - b. <https://kachemakbayscience.org/>
 - 2. Call with national partnership leaders last week on Tues Jan 26
 - a. Mike Daigenault: USFWS faced with challenge of implementing NFHP legislation without clear guidance on funding
 - b. Awaiting further guidance on pending legislation
 - 3. Kenai Peninsula Borough Anadromous Habitat Waters Working Group
 - a. Recommendations forwarded to the borough planning commission
 - b. May be in front of borough assembly by April/May 2021
 - 4. DNR proposed changes to instream water reservations
 - a. Public comment link
<https://aws.state.ak.us/OnlinePublicNotices/Notices/View.aspx?id=201071>
 - ii. Coowe Walker, Kachemak Bay National Research Reserve
 - 1. Current projects and news
 - a. Groundwater modeling efforts underway, quantity/quality
 - b. Trophic transfer of toxins (e.g. from harmful algae blooms)
 - c. Biofilm studies and food web dynamics
 - d. Nearshore fish community assemblages
 - e. Hollings scholars visiting Summer 2021
 - iii. Kyle Graham, US Fish and Wildlife Service
 - 1. EVOS council (Exxon Valdez Oil Spill investment fund)
 - a. Opportunities to fund restoration projects
 - 2. Federal lands access program
 - a. Program that pays for improvements to road that provide access to federal lands
 - b. Might be well suited for a culvert on Funny River road near Soldotna airport
 - 3. “Fish 150” event; 150 year anniversary of USFWS
 - iv. Adam Cross, US Forest Service
 - 1. Aquatic organism passage (AOP)
 - 2. Portage area projects
 - 3. Resurrection Creek restoration work
 - v. Sarah Apsens, Department
 - 1. Later this week; announcement on ACWA grants
 - 2. Notice of public comment period for Integrated Report will be announced
 - vi. Jessica Johnson, Alaska Dept of Fish and Game
 - 1. Streambank restoration guidebook updates in progress
 - 2. Salmon in the Classroom program: will be continuing program
 - a. Contact Jenny Gates at ADFG Soldotna for questions
3. Old Business
 - i. None
4. New Business

- a. None
- 5. Action Items
 - a. None
- 6. Roundtable
 - a. None

Next Meeting: March 1, 2021; 2-4 pm