44129 Sterling Highway | Soldotna, AK 99669 | 907-260-5449 | www.kenaiwatershed.org *Working Together for Healthy Watersheds on the Kenai Peninsula* 

**Subject: Kenai Peninsula Fish Habitat Partnership Steering Committee October Meeting**

Present: Branden Bornemann, Rob Sutter, Morgan Aldridge (in place of Sam Lopez), Katherine Schake, Kyle Graham, Maura Schumacher, Erika Ammann, Coowe Walker, Adam Cross, Mike Daigneault, Ben Meyer, Jack Buban

Date and Time: May 2nd, 2022 @ 2 PM AKST

Where: Virtual Meeting (see end of document for Zoom link)

Completed by: Branden Bornemann, KPFHP Coordinator; Jack Buban, Kenai Watershed Forum

Completed for: KPFHP Steering Committee

1. Call to Order Meeting commenced at 2:05 PM
2. Approve Agenda
3. Minutes from Previous Meeting
4. Coordinator Report
   1. Review of CAP w/ Rob Sutter
      1. Rob Sutter - really impressed with how it all came together,
         1. Four key components: 1) inclusion of indigenous people (recommendation of translations to native languages for certain portions, adding salmon culture to purpose and providing a crosswalk for river and fish names between English and local/native names) 2) recommending value section to guide the Partnership (in report) 3) explicitly link conservation targets to human wellbeing and environmental benefits 4) climate change incorporated with a greater understanding of climate change and its cascading effects
      2. Two parts: CAP and Climate Change and the Future of Fish and Fish Habitat on the Kenai Peninsula
      3. CAP now can chart an effective and efficient path to meet organization;s objectives (built upon the 2012 Freshwater Conservation Plan)
      4. This all sets the stage for: establishing goals and objectives, developing an implementation plan (small steps with timeframe, etc.) to instigate change and set framework for monitoring and evaluation ("take the values of the plan and make it valuable")
         1. What is the timetable of the implementation plan?
            1. spreadsheet that includes all outcomes, strategies into tasks, intermediate result, agency/person responsible but really focus on the ones that you do **for the next 1 or 2 years**
   2. Update from Branden
      1. FY23 Allocations report has been submitted to the national board, the board is trending towards projects that address the hard and soft criteria outlined in the ACE act, final permanent decisions in the next year or so,
      2. National Board meeting was last week, most were remote but there were a handful that were in person in DC, the meeting overall went fairly well as the National board recognized some of the on-the-ground difficulties the coordinators are dealing with, who is going to manage the distribution of these funds is still up in the air (USFWS is not completely out of the game on this), there is hesitant hope that since the board has met in person now that the ball will begin to roll in terms of things actually getting done
      3. There will eventually be a review of what partnerships will continue to be partnerships in the next 5-7 years (we are sitting in a good position on this)
      4. Branden will be stepping down from KWF and KPFHP effective June 13th
         1. There needs to be a collaborative decision among the Steering Committee about whether this should still be coupled with KWF Executive Director (ED) or should be split as a separate position
         2. How do we figure out who the next Coordinator will be? In the past it has just been a transition to who was been the KWF ED but the Steering Committee can choose to continue this or go a different route (Branden recommends a decoupling of these positions)
            1. Mike D: Would be great to figure out how to set up a Steering Comm meeting on how to figure out an interim/long-term solution for this (agrees with recommendation of separate coordinator and KWF ED) a couple of the other partnerships in the state who have employees or contractors that are basically part time employees of the fiscal sponsor (could still be housed under KWF but may be better as two different people)
            2. after this meeting we will set an interim and long term processes via Steering Committee
   3. General CAP Feedback
5. Partner Reports
   1. Permanent Members:
      1. NOAA - Erika Ammann - had to leave early
      2. USFWS - Kyle Graham - most active part is the streambank restoration cost share program with ADFG, they are currently removing a series of jetties
         1. Stewart's Landing is under new ownership and they have chosen to work with the cost share program to help clean up some of the debris and trash that has historically been left at that location
         2. Collaborated with KPB and TU to put together a coastal resilience funded proposal related to fish passage and land protection education and outreach in the Seward area
         3. Lots of activity on KNWR regarding federal highways (Mystery Creek is a pipeline road with interest in updating some of those crossings over their waterways)
         4. Other infrastructure bill related activities the tribal federal highway allocation is jumping from 14 million to 200 million dollars, may be the first time they have to reach out and look for Alaska and native Corp land for projects
         5. working the KPB to prioritize the infrastructure bill requests that are sitting in Juneau right now by selecting a number of culverts on road service area with needs for borough and climate resiliency
         6. working with HillCor, they are on board with a number of culvert and stream crossing updates in the Nikiski area as well as Marathon
         7. we did just get a request from NFHP to confirm that FY22 projects were still viable, that is the only update on FY22 funds that we have
   2. Non Permanent Members:
      1. KBNERR - Coowe Walker - super busy for this season, hiring a new Research Coordinator (right in the middle of the process), Coowe is still leading the watershed part,
         1. groundwater vulnerability mapping with a focus on recharge
         2. aquifer models that have been developed
         3. lot more work on peatlands to get a peatlands/wetlands project on the carbon market (hoping by end of the year)
         4. nearshore fish work is continuing with the new publication coming up soon and the KPFHP is the one who funded for the first time
         5. "same old stuff", new students and scholars coming on board
         6. different ways of knowing project funded by KPFHP is rolling with a focus in traditional stewardship
         7. June 3rd is a council meeting in Homer
      2. KPB River Center - Samantha Lopez - we have a new planning director who starts on Thursday and it will be Robert Ruffner
      3. USFS – Adam Cross - Updates - 1) have opted to postpone the Resurrection Creek Restoration nomination for Waters to Watch until 2023; 2) if interested in a site visit to the restoration project please contact me at adam.cross@usda.gov, next site visit tentatively scheduled for May 23rd or 24th
      4. DEC – Sarah Apsens
      5. KWF – Ben Meyer - recently attended the 2022 Stormwater and Watershed Conference in St. Petersburg, FL with lots of civil engineers and landscape architects, it is now a lot more possible to visualize how some of these projects could look on the ground near us (more info at Center for Watershed Protection network)
         1. Ben will be a part of new research project with USGS Anchorage office and two folks based in Wisconsin and just got the funding to look at some questions in the Beaver Creek watershed looking at groundwater and temperature in regards to low elevation, low gradient watersheds
         2. Kenai River Water Quality Baseline Assessment is this week and tomorrow by this time we will have them all back and dropped off where they need to be for analysis
      6. KP-CISMA – Katherine Schake, Jen Chauvet - good crew in the CISMA partnership, lots going on with permitting set for the whole summer, and we will be received some DNR Division of Forestry work an differing herbicide assistance for landowners who want to remove their own trees
         1. The CISMA spring training of standardizing herbicide safety work is June 2nd and 3rd and is pretty full with Chugach and KNWR and maritime refuge staff and currently reaching out to tribes to see if they want to send anyone else (if anyone wants to learn more about this training please reach out to Katherine)
         2. Statewide invasive species partnership has been working on HB54 to establish an Invasive Species Council and has been passed by House and will be heard in front of the Senate Finance Committee tomorrow (May 3rd) would establish a fund for invasive species and way to fund it with the voluntary purchase of decals
         3. projects in Port Graham and Nanwalek, ready to hit the ground running this summer
   3. Advisors
      1. State Legislature – Peter Micciche
      2. USFWS - Mike Daigneault, Emily Munter -
         1. FY22 funding, that was recently approved by USFWS aquatic fisheries conservation program as they briefed the director on what we received and it is a little shy of what was originally forecasted and they are going to have to cut ~$100K from FY22 and it should be moved from federal accounts to regional accounts in the not so distant future
         2. Four AKFHPs and other nonAK FHPs with focuses up here are meeting all together this week (hoping to have a robust conversation with the national board members from Alaska during this time)
         3. Infrastructure funds are still being worked through for fish passage program, lots of these funds are focused on restoration work so there is a ton of stuff in there and making it a little hard to sort through a lot of these funds (if there is anyone who would be local in serving with a grassroots group to serve with some prioritization)
         4. NOAA and USFWS has been on the receiving end of a lot of frustration from these funds and expecting an RFP before too long that overlaps in some sense to KPFHP and our organizations in this partnership, AKSSF also in line to maybe have some RFPs with more funding than available than in previous years, NFWF as well
            1. these are directed funding sources for USFWS but there are going to be other funding sources from other departments such as DOT (so look at other sources than just the $200 million slated for USFWS fish passage)
            2. America the Beautiful Challenge is hoping to have about a $1 billion through NFWF with the first RFP being released in May
      3. ADFG - Jess Johnson
6. Old Business (time permitting)
7. New Business (time permitting)
8. Action Items (time permitting)

**Zoom Information:**

Topic: Kenai Watershed Forum's Meeting Room

Join KWF Zoom Meeting (computer access, video and/or audio)

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