



Homer Soil and Water Conservation District
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Memorandum to: Alaska Association of Conservation Districts and Department of Natural Resources

From: Homer Soil and Water Conservation District

Subject: Annual Plan of Work

Date: July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015

This represents the annual plan of work of the Homer Soil and Water Conservation District for fiscal year 2015 (July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015) as required by the cooperative agreement between the Alaska Department of Natural Resources and the Alaska Association of Conservation Districts. Funding sources identified include the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS); US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS); US Environmental Protection Agency -Wetland Program Development Grant (EPA-WPDG); USDA, National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), Alaska Association of Conservation Districts Invasive Plant Program (AACD-IPP), Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADFG), and Palmer Soil and Water Conservation District (PSWCD).

Many of the goals listed below will be achieved through established partnerships that will provide in-kind services and/or supplies toward accomplishing tasks. (Note, goal numbering runs sequentially through all programs.) Partners include: Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB), Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG), Port Graham Village Council, Cook Inlet Region Incorporated (CIRI), Kenai Peninsula Cooperative Weed Management Area (KP-CWMA), the Kenai Peninsula Wetland Working Group (WWG), Sustainable Homer, and Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP).

PROGRAM - LANDUSE PLANNING

Goal 1: Encourage incorporation of landscape systems into the planning process at any scale.

Objective 1: Through a collaborative process with various local, state and federal partnerships, document the relationships between development in wetlands and effects on wetland functions and value.

Task 1: Identify and recommend management strategies aimed at maintaining wetland functions and values, as well as available mechanisms to implement these strategies on non-federal lands on the Peninsula. Strategies will help landowners, land managers, and governmental entities plan and manage wetlands.

Devony Lehner/ Karyn Noyes
September 2014

Funding 100% EPA-WPDG

Personnel:	\$6,496.00
Fringe Benefits	\$1,249.00
Supplies:	\$250.00
Contractual:	\$2,500.00
TOTAL	\$10,495.00

Task 2: Incorporate wetlands management information into the Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB) online interactive parcel viewer to assist with land use planning.

*Devony Lehner/ Karyn Noyes
September 2014*

Funding 100% EPA-WPDG

Personnel:	\$2,625.00
Fringe Benefits	\$446.00
TOTAL	\$3,071.00

Objective 2: Promote Low Impact Development techniques on private and public lands to enhance benefits of natural systems that support green infrastructure functions.

Task 1: Continue a cost-share program for private landowners to install rain gardens as a low impact technique of treating stormwater run-off.

*Matt Steffy/Karyn Noyes
Ongoing*

Funding: 100% USFWS

Personnel:	\$5,000.00
Fringe Benefits	\$1,350.00
Travel:	\$150.00
Supplies:	\$2,700.00
Contractual:	\$1,500.00
TOTAL	\$10,700.00

Task 2: Review and update stormwater best management practices identified for road construction along East Road. Partner with Alaska Department of Transportation for successful implementation of BMP.

*Devony Lehner
September 2014*

Funding 100%HSWCD

Personnel:	\$1,840.00
Fringe Benefits	\$202.00
TOTAL	\$2,042.00

Goal 2: Maximize use of best management practices to protect water and soil related resources.

Objective 1: Assist both private and public landowners in planning sustainable, multi-use recreational opportunities.

Task 1: Work with the Kenai Peninsula Borough and local trail groups to address trail related issues, including legal easements, environmental concerns due to poor trail design, and the maintenance of existing trails.

Matt Steffy/Tara Schmidt
Ongoing

Funding 100% HSWCD

Personnel:	\$1,000.00
Fringe Benefits	\$165.00
TOTAL	\$1,165.00

Task 2: Coordinate with Cook Inlet Region Inc. and ADFG to identify and design a viable trail re-route to address trespass and resource degradation issues along the Watermelon Trail within the Anchor River-Fritz Creek Critical Habitat Area. Identify potential funding sources and apply for appropriate grants to implement proposed trail upgrades along the Watermelon trail.

Tara Schmidt
December 2014

Funding 100% HSWCD

Personnel:	\$1,000.00
Fringe Benefits	\$165.00
TOTAL	\$1,165.00

Task 3: Facilitate Homer Demonstration Forest Steering Committee meetings. Assist with research and education projects in the Homer Demonstration Forest that will support landowner efforts to manage their forest lands in productive and sustainable ways.

Tara Schmidt
Ongoing

Funding: 100% HSWCD

Personnel:	\$658.00
Fringe Benefits	\$136.00
TOTAL	\$794.00

Task 4 In conjunction with the Homer Demonstration Forest Steering Committee and the City of Homer, Parks and Recreation Commission explore the expansion of the current trail network at the HDF into the Diamond Creek Recreational Area (DCRA) as outlined in the DCRA Management Plan.

Tara Schmidt/Matt Steffy

Funding 100% HSWCD

Personnel:	\$658.00
Fringe Benefits	\$136.00
TOTAL	\$794.00

Objective 2: Provide support to the NRCS field office staff to implement conservation practices and farm bill programs at the local level.

Task 1: Work with local cooperators to provide resource inventories, develop forestry stewardship plans, and assist USDA in carrying out forestry related Farm Bill programs.

Tara Schmidt/Devony Lehner
Ongoing

Funding 100% HSWCD

Personnel:	\$960.00
Fringe Benefits	\$135.00
TOTAL	\$1,095.00

Task 2: Continue to work with conservation partners from the Local Working Group to address identified needs and concerns within our District boundaries. Partner with NRCS staff as appropriate to identify potential programs to address local concerns.

Tara Schmidt
Ongoing

Funding: 100% HSWCD

Personnel:	\$960.00
Fringe Benefits	\$135.00
TOTAL	\$1,095.00

Objective 3: Build capacity of local landowners to promote informed, sustainable management of natural resources in their neighborhoods, communities, and watersheds.

Task 1: Seek funding to provide technical assistance to help local landowners establish an organization, such as a watershed council, that can serve as a model for others interested in promoting informed, sustainable natural resource management through local landowner organizations.

Devony Lehner
Ongoing

Funding 100% HSWCD

Personnel:	\$720.00
Fringe Benefits	\$108.00
TOTAL	\$828.00

PROGRAM –WATER QUALITY

Goal 3: Work with partner agencies to assist in the protection of salmon habitat.

Objective 1: Identify anadromous streams throughout the District whose streambanks need to be stabilized or restored to protect aquatic life and habitat, water quality, and to reduce flood damage. Participate in training opportunities when available to stay informed on new practices and techniques for the design and implementation of projects.

Task 1: Work with local partners to identify and prioritize projects. Provide staff time to develop conservation plans with local cooperators who have streambank erosion concerns.

Tara Schmidt/Matt Steffy
Ongoing

Funding: 100% HSWCD

Personnel:	\$1,800.00
Fringe Benefits	\$ 308.00
TOTAL	\$2,108.00

Objective 2: Assess and prioritize stream crossing that negatively impact local stream ecology, hydraulics, and fish passage.

Task 1: Prioritize undersized or poorly installed culverts in order to identify potential projects for the HSWCD to undertake. Participate with local working groups, provide technical support, and develop partnerships to address high priority projects.

Tara Schmidt/HSWCD Board of Supervisors
Ongoing

Funding: 100% HSWCD

Personnel:	\$960.00
Fringe Benefits	\$135.85
TOTAL	\$1,095.00

Task 2: Refurbish and relocate bridges that cross the fingers of Wallace Creek in the Fox River Critical Habitat Area to address current degradation concerns of critical riparian habitats that support juvenile salmon.

Matt Steffy
June 2015

Funding: 100% USFWS

Personnel:	\$3,200.00
Fringe Benefits	\$644.00
Travel:	\$300.00
Supplies:	\$1,500.00
Contractual:	\$3,000.00
TOTAL	\$8,644.00

Goal 4: Promote and support sound management and protection of wetlands on non-federal lands on the Kenai Peninsula.

Objective 1: Work with partners to increase their knowledge of salmon and their use of freshwater and marine habitats, potential threats to salmon, habitats, and ways to improve critical degraded habitat.

Task 1 Participate in local wetland working group to provide interagency coordination of research, funding opportunities, and partnerships. Identify research projects, develop grants for funding, and support projects to document impacts of development on wetland and stream hydrology.

Devony Lehner/Tara Schmidt

Funding 100% HSWCD

Ongoing

Personnel:	\$960.00
Fringe Benefits	\$ 135.00
TOTAL	\$1,095.00

Objective 2: Work in conjunction with NRCS to identify wetlands subject to USDA wetland conservation provisions in order to facilitate conservation planning and ensure compliance with USDA conservation program requirements.

Task 1: Assist NRCS with completing wetland determinations to be used to ensure eligibility for participation in NRCS programs. Have at least one staff member complete training to earn certification for identifying wetlands for Food Security Act purposes (Wetland Conservation Provisions).

Karyn Noyes

Funding 100% NRCS

September 2014

Personnel:	\$6,300.00
Fringe Benefits	\$1,171.00
TOTAL	\$7,471.00

Task 2: Assist with the NRCS Snow survey program to estimate snow melt and help forecast water supplies for the Kenai Peninsula.

Tara Schmidt/Matt Steffy

Funding 75%NRCS/25%HSWCD

Winter 2014-2015

Personnel:	\$2,272.00
Fringe Benefits	\$425.00
Travel:	\$500.00
TOTAL	\$3,095.00

PROGRAM - AGRICULTURE

Goal 5: Provide support for agricultural activities in the Homer District.

Objective 1: Work with NRCS to develop farm and ranch conservation plans for private property owners interested in installing conservation practices.

Task 1: Provide soil testing services for use in developing nutrient management plans for high tunnel participants and agricultural producers.

Tara Schmidt

Funding: 100% HSWCD

Ongoing

Personnel	\$1,500.00
Fringe Benefits	\$173.00
Supplies:	\$220.00
Contractual:	\$1,500.00
TOTAL	\$3,393.00

Homer Soil and Water Conservation District –FY15 Annual Plan of Work

Objective 2: Develop criteria for identifying both soils of local importance and farmland of local importance to be adopted by Board resolution.

Task 1: Work with NRCS Soil Survey established criteria to determine current map units that would qualify as soils of local important. Compare qualifying soils with historic soil classifications to identify the need to add additional soil types.

*HSWCD Board/Karyn Noyes
September 2014*

Funding 50% HSWCD/ 50% NRCS

Personnel	\$1,050.00
Fringe Benefits	\$398.00
TOTAL	\$1,448.00

Task 2: In conjunction with the NRCS Realty and Easement Specialist complete an assessment of historic farmlands and farms in specialty crop production that may be considered eligible for Farm and Ranchland Protection easements.

*HSWCD Board/Karyn Noyes
September 2014*

Funding 50% HSWC/ 50% NRCS

Personnel	\$525.00
Fringe Benefits	\$114.00
TOTAL	\$639.00

Objective 3: Work with cooperators District wide to manage invasive weeds that threaten to degrade agricultural resources on the Kenai Peninsula.

Task 1: Provide staff to help identify invasive plant species of local concern for our cooperators. Develop pest management plans (IPM) to treat invasive species in accordance with KP-CWMA integrated pest management protocols. Assist cooperators with implementing IPM.

*Matthew Steffy
Ongoing*

Funding 50% HSWCD/ 50% USFWS

Personnel	\$1,900.00
Fringe Benefits	\$361.00
Travel:	\$75.00
Supplies:	\$500.00
TOTAL	\$2,836.00

Task 2: Promote certified Weed Free hay products. Have staff trained to inspect fields and certify crops as weed free upon request.

*Matthew Steffy
Ongoing*

Funding 100% HSWCD

Personnel	\$800.00
Fringe Benefits	\$161.00
Supplies:	\$250.00
TOTAL	\$1,211.00

Task 3: Work with NRCS Rangeland Specialist to assist local hay producers to increase quality of hay crop production. Provide site visits, soil sampling, and forage testing services to producers on the southern Peninsula.

Matthew Steffy
Ongoing

Funding HSWCD

Personnel	\$800.00
Fringe Benefits	\$161.00
Contractual:	\$125.00
TOTAL	\$1,086.00

Task 4: Provide support to the NRCS Range program by providing a student intern to assist with the statewide range program. Provide back ground research for a range assessment and recommendations to be completed for Chirikof Island.

Kathryn Schmidt
August 2014

Funding 100% NRCS

Personnel:	\$3,240.00
Fringe Benefits	\$550.00
Travel:	\$800.00
TOTAL	\$4,591.00

Objective 4: Work with partners to support and assist with research to meet the needs of specialty crop producers, handlers, and processors.

Task 1: Work with the Alaska Rhodiola Products Cooperative to secure funding for the purchase of equipment to increase the processing of the root into a marketable form.

Tara Schmidt
Ongoing

100% USDA Rural Development

Personnel	\$3,055.00
Fringe Benefits	\$401.00
Supplies:	\$31,044.00
TOTAL	\$34,500.00

Task 2: Assist the Palmer District with research to identify the best tomato variety for production in high tunnel environments.

Tara Schmidt
Ongoing

100% PSWCD

Personnel	\$888.00
Fringe Benefits	\$102.00
TOTAL	\$990.00

Objective 5: Work with the horse community and feed suppliers, determine the nature and size of the horse industry on the Kenai Peninsula.

Task 1: Document issues, needs, and concerns identified by horse owners and feed suppliers. Outline environmental impacts associated with the local horse industry and identify potential solutions and best practices.

Devony Lehner

Funding: 100% HSWCD

Personnel	\$500.00
Fringe Benefits	\$55.00
Contractual:	\$250.00
TOTAL	\$805.00

PROGRAM –INVASIVE PLANT PROGRAM

Goal 6: Further the Homer District’s Invasive Plant Program.

Objective 1: Collaboratively work with partners in the Kenai Peninsula Cooperative Weed Management Area (KP-CWMA) to promote outreach and effective coordination of resources to address identified concerns of the KP-CWMA.

Task 1: Provide staff time to serve as the Kenai Peninsula Cooperative Weed Management Area Coordinator. Promote the CWMA and continue to expand partnerships, facilitate quarterly meetings, disseminate relevant information among CWMA members, and assist with efforts to implement projects across jurisdictional boundaries.

Matthew Steffy
Ongoing

Funding: 100% USFWS

Personnel:	\$8,400.00
Fringe Benefits	\$1,544.00
Travel:	\$2,000.00
Supplies:	\$350.00
TOTAL	\$12,294.00

Task 2: Continue District public outreach programs on the southern Kenai Peninsula to increase awareness of the threat of terrestrial invasives to natural ecosystems. Support KP-CWMA sponsored events such as the annual weed smack down and the annual weed workshop.

Matthew Steffy
Ongoing

Funding 100% USFWS

Personnel:	\$1,100.00
Fringe Benefits	\$222.00
Supplies	\$200.00
TOTAL	\$1,472.00

Task 3: Work with the KP-CWMA to maintain an up-to-date, comprehensive inventory of invasive plant species recorded on the Peninsula. Ensure all records from the KP-CWMA are entered into the Alaska Exotic Plants Information Clearinghouse (AKEPIC).

Matthew Steffy
Ongoing

Funding 100% USFWS

Personnel:	\$3,200.00
Fringe Benefits	\$644.00
Travel:	\$150.00
Supplies:	\$200.00
TOTAL	\$4,194.00

Objective 2: Provide staff time to implement on-the-ground control/eradication projects.

Task 1: Promote District cost-share programs that encourage private landowners to implement integrated pest management for the protection of natural ecosystems and associated fish and wildlife.

Matthew Steffy
Ongoing

Funding 75% USFWS/ 25% HSWCD

Personnel:	\$1,800.00
Fringe Benefits	\$356.00
Travel:	\$400.00
Supplies:	\$3,000.00
TOTAL	\$5,556.00

Task 2: Conduct a series of terrestrial plant surveys along roadways, trails, and public areas to determine the invasive populations in Port Graham. Partner with Port Graham Village Council to develop invasive plant mitigation strategies and to incorporate Best Management Practices as defined by the CWMA into construction contracts and village projects.

Matthew Steffy
Ongoing

Funding 100% AACD IPP

Personnel:	\$2,654.00
Fringe Benefits	\$451.00
Travel:	\$1,720.00
TOTAL	\$4,825.00

Task 3: Work with KP-CWMA partners to implement the management plan for the eradication of elodea on Becks, Daniels, and Stormy Lakes. Develop long-term monitoring plan to track the efficacy of the treatment plan.

Matt Steffy
Ongoing

Funding 100% USFWS

Personnel:	\$3,200.00
Fringe Benefits	\$644.00
Travel:	\$350.00
TOTAL	\$4,194.00

Objective 3: Maintain early detection and rapid response (EDRR) efforts to prevent establishment of new invasives and maintain biodiversity of native habitats.

Task 1 Provide staff time to assist with the identification of, and response to, newly reported invasive species on the southern peninsula. When appropriate assist with the eradication of confirmed infestations.

Matthew Steffy
Ongoing

Funding 100% HSWCD

Personnel:	\$1,600.00
Fringe Benefits	\$322.00
TOTAL	\$1,922.00

Task 2 Survey freshwater lakes on the southern peninsula that have a high risk of infestation for aquatic invasives based on criteria such as recreational use, proximity to road system, and boat or air traffic.

Matthew Steffy
Summer 2014

Funding 100% USFWS

Personnel:	\$800.00
Fringe Benefits	\$161.00
Travel:	\$200.00
Supplies:	
Contractual:	
TOTAL	\$1,161.00

PROGRAM - EDUCATION

Goal 7: Provide educational opportunities and materials to assist the public in making informed decisions regarding resource management.

Objective 1: Provide for public outreach to increase landowner awareness and understanding of how common land uses and activities on the lower Kenai Peninsula can affect salmon habitats; and what actions landowners can take to help sustain salmon habitats and populations.

Task 1: Partner with local organization to improve delivery of educational outreach to watershed property owners in Anchor River, Deep Creek, Ninilchik River, and Stariski Creek watersheds.

Devony Lehner

100% HSWCD

Personnel:	\$1,600.00
Fringe Benefits	\$234.00
Supplies:	\$600.00
TOTAL	\$1,834.00

Objective 2: Create locally supported, self-sufficient People’s Gardens (community gardens) that will address community needs for better nutrition, improve community access to healthy foods, and provide significant educational opportunities about growing food.

Task 1: Manage micro-grant program that provides funding to local organizations to establish a minimum of 20 People’s Gardens that will benefit communities, be collaborative, and incorporate sustainable practices.

Tara Schmidt/Devony Lehner
September 2014

Funding 100% NIFA

Personnel:	\$1,920.00
Fringe Benefits	\$421.00
Contractual:	\$12,000.00
TOTAL	\$14,941.00

Task 2: Provide support to local schools in the development of People’s Gardens to serve as science-based educational sites. Coordinate technical support through the People’s Garden oversight committee.

Tara Schmidt/Devony Lehner
September 2014

Funding 100% NIFA

Personnel:	\$1,440.00
Fringe Benefits	\$165.00
TOTAL	\$1,606.00

Task 3: Work with the Homer Flex School to establish a working model to be used in the school district to operate a sustainable market garden that would serve as an educational based site to teach about local food production, farm operations, and marketing of produce to high school aged students.

Tara Schmidt/ HSWCD Board
Ongoing

Funding 100% HSWCD

Personnel:	\$500.00
Fringe Benefits	\$58.00
TOTAL	\$558.00

Task 4: Develop a program and seek funding to coordinate a school garden program on the lower peninsula that would allow for student internship opportunities to teach skills involving budgeting and drawing up a business plans; growing and processing crops; packaging and transporting products, and marketing and sales.

*Tara Schmidt/ HSWCD Board
Ongoing*

Funding 100% HSWCD

Personnel:	\$1,400.00
Fringe Benefits	\$240.00
TOTAL	\$1,681.00

Objective 3: Work cooperatively with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Kenai Peninsula Borough School District, and community organizations to plan and coordinate Schoolyard Habitat projects.

Task 1: Work with West Homer Elementary School to develop grade appropriate curriculum aligned with Alaska state educational standards and the sue of interpretative sites along the nature trail previously developed through the SYH program.

*Tara Schmidt/Matt Steffy
Spring 2015*

Funding: 100% USFWS

Personnel:	\$1,920.00
Fringe Benefits	\$271.00
TOTAL	\$2,191.00

Task 2: Partner with Homer Middle School to develop a Schoolyard Habitat Project on school grounds.

*Tara Schmidt/Matt Steffy
Ongoing*

Funding 100% USFWS

Personnel:	\$5,440.00
Fringe Benefits	\$995.00
Supplies:	\$5,000.00
TOTAL	\$11,436.00

Objective 4: Work cooperatively with the NRCS to deliver conservation education to the area's local public schools.

Task 1: Work with NRCS staff to coordinate delivery of conservation education and career development with the Homer High School Careers in Natural Resources Technologies class.

*Tara Schmidt
Ongoing*

Funding 100% HSWCD

Personnel:	\$960.00
Fringe Benefits	\$111.00
TOTAL	\$1,070.00

Task 2 In conjunction with NRCS Homer field office sponsor the annual speech and poster contest in area-wide schools.

Tara Schmidt
Ongoing

Funding 100% HSWCD

Personnel:	\$960.00
Fringe Benefits	\$111.00
TOTAL	\$1,070.00

PROGRAM - ADMINISTRATION/MANAGEMENT

Goal 8: Maintain District office to serve the public and to provide oversight and guidance to all HSWCD projects.

Task 1: Provide office personnel to run the day-to-day operations of the HSWCD. Hold monthly Board of Supervisor meetings, encouraging the participation of local landowners and land use managers with resource interests or concerns. Produce quarterly newsletters highlighting HSWCD projects and NRCS programs and opportunities. Maintain and improve the HSWCD website with regular updates about District programs and by providing links to other sites of interest.

Tara Schmidt
Ongoing

Funding: 100% HSWCD

Personnel:	\$8,000.00
Fringe Benefits	\$1,170.00
Travel:	\$1,500.00
Supplies:	\$1,250.00
TOTAL	\$11,920.00

Task 2: Maintain financial records, document expenditures and receivables, maintain program budgets, and make available financial reports to HSWCD Board of Supervisors and the AACD.

Tara Schmidt
Ongoing

Funding: 100% HSWCD

Personnel:	\$5,760.00
Fringe Benefit	\$812.00
Supplies:	\$900.00
TOTAL	\$7,472.00

Task 3: Research, apply for, and administer grants for conservation-related projects that meet the mission of the HSWCD. Coordinate available educational, financial, and technical resources to better meet the needs of local land users and managers involved in protecting and conserving soil, water, and related resources.

Tara Schmidt/ Matt Steffy
On going

Funding: 100% HSWCD

Personnel:	\$1,760.00
Payroll Cost	\$296.00
TOTAL	\$2,056.00

Task 4: Support Board of Supervisor's development and travel to bi-annual AACD conferences, and recruitment of new board members. Maintain membership in state and national associations.

HSWCD Board Members
Ongoing

Funding: 100% NRCDB

Travel:	\$1,000.00
Dues:	\$1,500.00
TOTAL	\$2,500.00

SOURCES OF INCOME

Environmental Protection Agency	\$13,567.00
US Fish & Wildlife	\$63,793.00
Natural Resources Conservation Service	\$15,831.00
Rural Development	\$34,500.00
National Institute of Food and Agriculture	\$16,546.40
Palmer Soil and Water Conservation District	\$990.00
Alaska Association of Conservation Districts -IPP	\$4,825.00
Natural Resources and Conservation Development Board	\$2,500.00
Homer District (Department of Commerce)	\$50,860.00
TOTAL	\$203,412.00

COST BY CATEGORY

PERSONNEL	\$105,326.00
FRINGE BENEFITS	\$18,652.00
TRAVEL	\$9,145.00
SUPPLIES	\$48,289.00
CONTRACTUAL	\$22,000.00
TOTAL	\$203,412.00

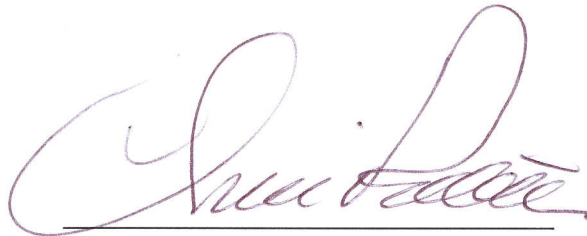
SIGNATURES:

Report Prepared by:
Tara Schmidt




Date

District Chair
Chris Rainwater




Date