**Meeting Agenda**

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June 7th, 2017

5:00 PM

USDA Service Center, 4014 Lake St Homer, AK

1. Call to order:
2. Roll call: Catherine Knott, Devony Lehner, Tim Alzheimer, Chris Rainwater, Genarita Grobarek, Karin Sonnen
3. Approval of the Agenda: Unanimous
4. Approval of the Minutes: motion to accept by Gena , seconded by Tim, passed
5. Visitors
   1. NRCS Report

* Conservation Planning and Programs: Thirty contracts obligated in Homer, several non-high tunnel projects. Approximately 27 applications will carry over to another round of funding in June-July. Currently 66 applications in queue for FY18 planning.
* Conservation Client Gateway is available to entities and individuals. Participants can electronically view, sign and send documents and track payments. <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/cgate/>
* State Technical Committee Meeting notes expected out this week from SRC, Scott Crockett.
* Local Working Group prep and facilitation tasks can be funded using NRCS cooperative agreement funds, as those are not normal district functions. Can either include in a new proposal, or if room in one of two current agreements can use those funds. To have influence on the ranking for 2018, will need to convene a meeting soon.
* Working Lands for Wildlife NRCS Engineer Alicia Green (Kenai) is going to the field with the inventory crews to become familiar with their inventory culverts needing attention. There are 29 known impairments the crews will inventory this summer and may find more.
* Other: Homer Staffing – Ryan departs 19 June for Delta. Workload has been reassigned.
* Staffing - New Assistant State Conservationist for Programs on board from North Dakota, Amanda Crowe. New Hub Leader in Wasilla – Michelle Gezeski - begins June 24. Ryan selected for Delta Junction GS-11 Soil Conservationist begins in Delta June 24. He is in the process of moving and will not be in the office much after this week. State Resource Conservationist position has been filled with Scott Crockett directly reassigned. Two Soil Conservationists to be advertised for Homer – 2018 at the earliest. No Soil Conservationist vacancies nation-wide in USAJobs at the moment. No 2018 budget has been passed yet.
* Soil Health Training in 2017 – August 28th in Palmer still on schedule, if Homer SWCD is sending someone, please discuss directly with Cory.
* Meg Out of Office: Portions of June – for whelping, not Meg’s, Geo’s.
  + 1. *Catherine: what are top choice practices to promote under EQIP? Karin: at different levels, it is identified at from the State Technical meeting or the Local Working Group. Catherine: water quality seems like it should be high. Lots of random development fast..*
    2. *Maybe when there is a big landowner we could give them signs*
  1. Other guests

1. Financial Report
   1. We’re poor. Need to figure out how to pay for admin
   2. Motioned to approve Cathy, seconded by Gena
2. Manager’s Report
3. **Trails**
   1. **Caribou Lakes Trail**: Nothing new to update.
   2. **Watermelon Trail**: SCA crew visited, sort of. It appears they may be in need of quite a bit of support…
   3. **School Yard Habitat Trails**: Homer Middle School has a great trail clearing and cleaning day (sorry, no photos, too busy). Will be building a bridge soon and putting in some board walk. McNeil Canyon Elementary is on hold until the return of Conrad Field from Iceland…
4. **Invasive Pest Coordination**
   1. **Chugach National Forest/RAC grant work**: Jamie and Matt are lining out the areas to be mapped and treated this summer. Jamie is experienced in using Alaska Exotic Plants Information Clearinghouse (AKEPIC) online and will be able update spread of invasives in this state-wide database.
   2. **Cooperative Weed Management:** Matt is on hold for further action on items outlined in our USF&W agreement until funding is restored. This includes Bradley Lake, all work in the villages across the Bay, and right-of-way weed control.
5. **Grants**
   1. **Fish and Wildlife**: All paperwork has been signed for our new agreement with F&W, but we have not yet received an agreement…
   2. **Division of Ag**: Good news, our project out for funding! ($15k for consumer study)
   3. **Rural Business Development Grant**: No news. ($15,000 grant for a producer study)
   4. **BLM**: Good news! Sent in paperwork for $80,000 for the work BLM wants Brad and Charlotte to do this summer regarding reindeer grazing. Recently asked to submit another proposal for additional $100,000 for AIM specific work in Nulatto Hills. ☺
   5. **Ag in the Classroom**: Good news! Fairbanks SWCD Ag in the Classroom coordinator got a grant for creating year round growing curriculum (hydroponics). Homer SWCD signed on as a participant to take the workshop and teach one class to teachers down here in Homer. Grant will pay for all travel and per diem for the workshop.
   6. **NRCS**: this is the time of the year to ask NRCS for further funding needs. Matt has put together a proposal to work with the villages of Port Graham and Nanwalek and the DOT to create a plan for controlling the spread or introduction of invasives during the new airport/road creation.
   7. **ACWA Grant**: positive feedback from DEC/EPA on proposal for streambank stabilization on the Anchor River. They LOVED the proposal. Lots of gushing of enthusiasm. But their funds are frozen. Don’t know when that will change. Looking at a timeline that will hopefully start in January?
6. Old Business
   1. Cooperator List
   2. Rhodiola Equipment
   3. Water Rights: Kyra: set up a public meeting about water rights and applying. Christine Ballard? motioned by Gena, seconded Tim in fall (October?)
      1. Ag will expand hugely with peonies
   4. Anchor River discussion: culverts and erosion? Can we define permafrost zones since they sluff so badly? Another thing…the Borough and their policy of crushing cars left on the side of the road? Or land owners who have junk and toxins going into wetlands?
7. New Business
   1. Local Working Group: who to invite? All agencies, landowners… technically only to help prioritize the ranking for NRCS…but it also is for input for us and for other agencies. Karin: Needs to be soon, Chris: August?
      1. Catherine: make these priority list available to everyone who applies. Karin: handouts determined by state office.
      2. List shows bear and salmon a top priority, clean water, noxious weeds
   2. Bison stories- many
   3. Ag lease on North Fork-possible cooperators?
   4. 4th of July parade?-no decision made

**Next Meeting July12th, 2017, 5:30 dinner, meeting 6pm**