



Municipality of Anchorage
Watershed & Natural Resources Advisory Commission

Room 525 - City Hall
632 West 6th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska

ACTION SUMMARY

12:00 Noon
Wednesday, June 27, 2012

Regular Meeting

I. ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM

Present: Dan Billman
Dan Bosch
Tamás Deák, Chair
Brett Jokela
Holly Kent
Cherie Northon
David Nyman
Rick Sinnott, Vice Chair

Excused: Captain Bob Pawlowski

Staff: Thede Tobish, Senior Planner, Community Development Department,
Planning Division, Long-Range Planning Section

Guests: Mary Lee Plumb-Mentjes, Corps of Engineers
Faith Martineau, Corps of Engineers
Loren Buck, University of Alaska-Anchorage
Danielle Dillon, University of Alaska-Anchorage

II. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at approximately 12:05 p.m.

III. ACTION SUMMARY

A. Regular Meeting of March 28, 2012

Commissioner Kent moved to approve the March 28, 2012 minutes with a change in Agenda Item IV.B.—replace Karen Keesecker with Bill Rice, USFWS, for the Watershed Plan discussion.

Commissioner Northon seconded.

The March 28, 2012 minutes were passed with the minor change in Item IV.B.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Great Land Trust Overview of Mitigation Program

Phil Shepherd, Executive Director of the Great Land Trust (GLT), provided an overview of the land trust's Anchorage area operations. Their service area extends from the southern border of the Municipality north into the Mat-Su Borough. At this time, GLT manages 18 conservation easements comprising over 17,000 acres. GLT administers a fee-in-lieu of mitigation program tied to Corps of Engineers permits and mitigation requirements. GLT leverages these funds with other sources to acquire and preserve larger areas. GLT has accomplished 8 acquisition projects since 1998 in the Anchorage area.

The Commission requested that GLT provide an annual update on Anchorage area activities.

B. Ship Creek – Port of Anchorage Mitigation Overview

Mary Lee Plumb-Mentjes, from the Corps of Engineers, presented a summary report on the work with the Port of Anchorage Mitigation Advisory Committee (PMAC). This agency committee was convened by the Corps to oversee how to assign mitigation funds from the Port of Anchorage's Corps permit mitigation requirement.

The Port was required to produce approximately \$8 million in mitigation funds to offset fill impacts from their long-term Port expansion project. The fill was nearly entirely to be placed in intertidal waters, and the mitigation funds were to include projects in similar estuarine areas directed at fish habitats. The PMAC was to review mitigation projects for consistency with this mitigation condition and determine how funds should be spent. To date, the PMAC assigned Port mitigation dollars to the purchase of the north side of the Campbell Creek estuary, two fish habitat projects at JBER, and others. The remainder of the Port funds will now go to a project in lower Ship Creek.

The PMAC wishes to attempt to address whether the storm drain outfalls in Ship Creek. The University of Alaska Anchorage's Biology Department has developed a protocol for determining water quality impacts on fish habitat and fish health. The team is assessing water quality at several municipal storm drain outfalls in Ship Creek. By placing trapped sticklebacks over a certain timed duration at these outfalls, the team is able to study impacts from these waters on the fish's endocrine systems. They can compare these results with endocrine systems disruptions from known contaminants, based on EPA water quality standards for various pollutants.

They are sampling fish above the outfall sites, then putting fish at the outfalls for a certain period of exposure, and then studying the endocrine health. The team hopes to produce a ranking of contaminant loads at these outfalls and a determination of the overall impacts these storm drains have on Ship Creek water quality and on local fish populations. Some qualification may be made on the contribution these systems have on fish in the estuary and on migrant populations. These data could give the Municipality a priority approach to addressing these drainage areas.

The Commission asked what would be done with these data. The UAA team suggested that the MOA, through Watershed Management, could systematically manage land uses within each storm drain system's drainage area and offer new or better treatments at the outfall or at a new outfall daylighted area. The UAA team will provide project updates to the Commission.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Trails Plan Policy Discussion from March Meeting

Postponed to next meeting.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS/STAFF REPORT (none)

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Kent moved to adjourn. *Commissioner Billman* seconded.

The motion passed without objection.

The meeting adjourned at 1:25 p.m.