## **OVERVIEW OF YEAR 3**

# APDES Permit No. AKS-052558

# 2012 Stormwater Outreach: Ongoing Education and Public Involvement Submitted by Anchorage Waterways Council (AWC), 12-31-12

Year 3 of the APDES MS4 Education/Outreach contract was designed as a time for reflection on the previous two years of work. The goals were to evaluate changes and trends noted from the first two years, and realign direction if necessary. During this evaluation, the previous audiences and focus of campaigns were reviewed. Having two years of data, experience, observations, and interactions was truly helpful. Several things that were initially thought to be targets have been changed or honed in on, and there are some new areas of focus that have been added.

### **BREAKUP AND ICE MELT PRODUCTS**

The Year 3 contract started during a record-setting winter snow fall, which meant that the issue of snow and ice management was of great importance to tackle. One of the first campaigns of Year 3 was to find as much information about snow melt management in Anchorage as possible. Observational surveys of snow and ice practices by residents and businesses were made along with data collection regarding products sold in Anchorage stores. Research on the different effects of the melt chemicals was provided to residents and businesses in several ways. Over 1600 inserts were placed in the Alaska Convention and Visitor Bureau's (ACVB) March/April 2012 bi-monthly newsletter (attached) and a more detailed one was added to ACVB's January/February 2013 newsletter (attached). Solid Waste Services (SWS) from the Municipality publishes an excellent guide titled "Anchorage to Zero Waste", and their fall 2012 issue had an entire page devoted to ice melt products and water quality. It also included a good discussion on pet waste. AWC promoted this publication in the January 2013 ACVB newsletter and in other mailings.

One hundred newsletters were sent to the Bancroft Subdivision residents also in March 2012 that discussed ice melt (see later section for attachment).

Phone calls were made to large institutions, such as Alaska Regional Hospital, and two AWC board members worked with the sustainability office at UAA to learn more about their exterior maintenance and snow removal and to give them some useful suggestions. It seems prudent to start discussions with small and large yard and ground maintenance firms early in the fall with information regarding proper amounts and application methods (safety MUST come first is their motto, which we respect) as well as the differences between the various types of ice melt products. Some areas primarily use pea gravel, such as the Metro Mall, which is preferable to chemicals. Shoveling residential and storefront walkways, while labor intensive, is really the best—but it's not practical for large areas, such as parking lots. AWC staff observations show that there tends to be overuse and improperly applied amounts in many areas. On February 1, 2012, Lauren Maxwell of KTVA, interviewed AWC Executive Director Cherie Northon about snowmelt that can be viewed at: <a href="http://www.ktva.com/home/outbound-xml-feeds/lce-Melt-Dangerous-for-the-Enviorment-138534419.html">http://www.ktva.com/home/outbound-xml-feeds/lce-Melt-Dangerous-for-the-Enviorment-138534419.html</a>. The printed story, "Ice Melt Use Causes Environmental Concerns", is attached.

One of the other problems after breakup that was observed in 2011 was the tremendous amount of soil, aggregate, leaves, trash, pet waste, and other detritus that is left on residential, business, and institutional lawns, yards, parking lots, and driveways after break-up. On March 27, 2012, the *Anchorage Daily News* published a Letter-to-the-Editor written by Northon titled, "Picking up waste and trash can help keep our waterways cleaner" (attached) which was to suggest that people consider start cleaning up before breakup.

AWC has been tracking various practices used to deal with or remove the extensive residue of winter that is left on lawns and impervious surfaces. Residents often mow and mulch (which is one of the better

ways to keep leaves and soil out of the waterways), others power-spray everything off their yards which goes into storm drains, and some rake and use blowers. There are businesses that sweep and recycle the aggregate and others that hire power-spray companies to wash everything down into the street or storm drains. One landscape company, Titan, actually advertises that they dethatch and rake lawns and SWEEP driveways and parking lots—and AWC staff has observed this. We have been attempting to interview the owner about their practices and find out how they can offer more labor-intensive services, but we have not yet been able to connect.

### PET AND ANIMAL WASTE ISSUES

While most Anchorage residents fretted over a potential deluge from melting snow, it was fortunate that meteorological conditions made breakup less dramatic than feared. What was apparent was the immense amount of pet waste that had not been cleaned up, was buried under snow, and then was emerging in huge puddles. AWC's phone was ringing off the hook and complaint emails were flying right and left. The spring poop problem caught the attention of the public and media, and several news stories were done about the problem. Numerous complaint Letters-to-the-Editor were published in the *Anchorage Daily News*. The feedback from the public is encouraging. KTVA interviewed Northon for a news stories on May 2, 2012, titled "Record Snowfall Brings an Excess of Pet Poop Across the City" (attached), which can be viewed at: <a href="http://www.ktva.com/home/outbound-xml-feeds/Record-Snowfall-Brings-an-Excess-of-Waste-Across-the-City-149949015.html">http://www.ktva.com/home/outbound-xml-feeds/Record-Snowfall-Brings-an-Excess-of-Waste-Across-the-City-149949015.html</a>. And, Jill Burke from the *Alaska Dispatch* contacted Northon before she published an article on April 30, 2012, titled "After record-breaking snows, poop popsicles melting across Anchorage" (attached) found at <a href="http://www.alaskadispatch.com/article/after-record-breaking-snows-poop-popsicles-melting-across-anchorage">http://www.alaskadispatch.com/article/after-record-breaking-snows-poop-popsicles-melting-across-anchorage=full</a>.

At the April 21, 2012, Scoop-the-Poop Day, one of the problems encountered was that much of the pet waste remained difficult to remove from snow and ice since there had not been a good melt, but still much was gathered from the dog parks at University Lake and Connor's Bog as well as the South Anchorage Sports Complex. Those who worked the event felt that regardless of the quantity removed, it was important because of the educational value for participants. Event posters, such as the one attached, were placed in the areas to be cleaned the week before the event. Other spontaneous cleanup events were held by residents and groups who decided to take matters into their own hands. A second Scoop-the-Poop day took place just at University Lake on September 10. A variety of educational materials and giveaways are provided at each event and all tablings. This year included scarves, small flashlights with Scoop-the-Poop printed on them, Mutt-Mitts, and Scoop-the-Poop buttons (attached).

Scoop-the-Poop tabling opportunities this year have been brought to large numbers of people (see attached Outreach Table). These included:

- Pet New Year, Feb. 4, at Alaska Mill and Feed
- Fur Rondy Mutt Show, Feb. 26, at Alyeska Canine Trainers
- Alaska Botanical Garden Fair, June 16 & 17, at the Alaska Botanical Gardens
- Pawstice (Blessing of the Animals), June 23, Ruth Arcand Park
- Friends of Pets (FOP) Dog Jog, July 28, at East High School
- Pet Day at the Spenard Market, August 4, Spenard Farmers' Market
- AWC Annual Meeting, October 10, BP Energy Center

And, there were an additional twelve presentations (listed in attached Outreach Table) where pet waste issues were addressed.

The door hanger program resumed in late May along with the placement of 16 additional reflective signs on trail posts (see attached maps). In 2012 approximately 1400 door hangers were added to

residences around Anchorage making a total of 4400. The two-sided Scoop-the-Poop (STP) brochure, that was updated in 2010 and initially distributed to over 25 establishments, is now part of our "refill" program to replenish brochures (attached).

The Scoop-the-Poop committee is still going strong with at least 9 partner groups: AWC, MOA Parks and Rec, MOA Animal Care and Control (AACCC), MOA Watershed Management Services, BLM Campbell Tract, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, The Alaska SPCA, Friends of Pets, Anchorage Unleashed, as well as some community individuals including Mike Lewis who writes the *Anchorage Daily News* "Dog Blog" and Michele Troyer who is a biologist on JBER (Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson).

In the past year, AWC has learned that there are a lot of pet owners who are willing to pick up the pet waste from others rather than leave it on the ground and walk past it. This is a nice trend. Our overall goal is to have everyone picking up after their pets. In working with young people in the schools, we feel that effective progress is being made there, and that it hopefully will "trickle up" to parents.

# **Pet Friendly Establishments:**

A new poop campaign this year was aimed at pet-friendly establishments. In Anchorage there are over 35 hotels, motels, B&Bs, and RV parks that accept pets. Many establishments were surveyed by phone, and their solutions for handling pet waste varied from having an on-site "relief" location complete with bags and trash cans to telling guests to take their pet up the street to a vacant lot. AWC developed a letter (attached) and included our STP brochure to introduce these businesses to services we can provide in terms of guidance as well as letting them know that their guest's actions could result in a \$100 violation. One manager from The Hotel Group that oversees several properties in Anchorage actually contacted AWC before the letter was sent out. Frustrated with the amount of animal waste left on the hotel grounds (he is also a pet owner), he wanted some advice and help on how to work with guests.



Extended Stay Suites on Old Seward and 34<sup>th</sup> with Pet Station

The caretaker of the Alpine Apartments (approximately 400 units in 6 buildings covering roughly 10 acres) was interviewed in April. Dogs are allowed in all units, and 8 waste pickup stations were installed two years ago. From their perspective, the addition of the waste pickup units has reduced the overall amount of poop left on the ground, and they estimate that about 60% of the pet owners pick up after their pets. Maintenance time for their yard crews to clean up after those who don't pick up is estimated to be about 20 hours a week. They are currently researching other ways to encourage compliance such as a \$25 fine or even eviction. Video cameras were suggested as a solution, but the cost in time to monitor the footage could be more than the money now spent to clean up the property.



Pet Waste Station at the Alpine Apartments

There are several bag and dispenser products on the market such as Mutt Mitts that the Muni uses. One of the primary issues is the cost of the dispenser and the shipping costs of refill bags to Alaska. Perhaps with more options in the market, they may become more common and less expensive. Several of the people who contacted AWC this year wondered why there weren't more dispensers around. Cost is clearly a factor.

Another common public query has been why the Muni couldn't station people at the parks (all 200+) to hand out tickets to pet waste offenders. It was explained that there is not money in the Muni budget for this type of work, however if dog license sales increased—it might help Anchorage's Animal Care and Control's (AACCC) budget that could allow increased vigilance of offenders. AACCC's Brooke Taylor estimates that only about 15% of Anchorage's approximately 70,000 dogs are licensed. The Scoop-the-Poop Committee encourages licensing of pets for this reason when tabling and works closely with AACCC.

AWC has also established a Facebook page called "Scoop the Poop Anchorage". After last winter, a big push towards dealing with animal waste was opportune. AWC has also been assisting one of our Scoop-the-Poop committee members, Nicole Troyer, who is interested in getting a pet waste program going at JBER.

Finally, a bus sign that focused on Scoop-the-Poop was designed, printed, and then displayed on five buses for seven weeks beginning in September. AWC held a contest where the first person to notice the bus signage and contact us won a goodie bag.



2012 People Mover Bus Signage

Although most of AWC's focus has been on pet waste, a new situation regarding animal waste has arisen at Cuddy Park where folks are feeding the ducks. While this is one of the joys of childhood, it also has contributed to more ducks overwintering in a very small area where Fish Creek ponds. KTVA's Lauren Maxwell did a news story on November 18, 2012, titled, "Hand-Fed Ducks Not Flying South for Winter" (attached). It can be viewed at http://www.ktva.com/home/outbound-xml-feeds/Human-Fed-Ducks-Not-Flying-South-for-Winter-179859121.html . She interviewed a biologist from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and Northon. This has been a subject of concern before from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) especially during summer. Ducks get habituated to humans feeding them and tend to congregate in areas, such as along Westchester Lagoon and now at Cuddy Park. During the news story AWC took a water sample from the pond, which resulted in high fecal coliform and other bacteria counts. The public concern tends to be about the welfare of the ducks by overwintering (which is not an issue according to the biologist and others). The biologist also affirmed that there was no regulation that prohibited the public from feeding the ducks, although it is discouraged. The major problem for water quality is the large concentration of ducks in a small area (that has tended toward getting smaller with the recent cold weather) and fecal coliform contamination. This is obviously a delicate situation that needs some sort of resolution. Signage in other locations about not feeding the ducks does not appear to be a large deterrent.

## **VEHICLE WASHING ISSUES**

# **Fund-Raising Car Washes:**

Last year AWC sent out over 200 letters to churches and other organizations regarding the problems of fundraising car washes. While there was no response from any—even though we offered assistance—the dirty cars that emerged from last winter were a target for fundraising opportunities again. Two Jiffy Lubes allowed groups to use their premises for carwashes in late April. Northon called the managers of both to explain that their complicity in these events, while charitable, could be construed as violating the Clean Water Act. That seems to have gotten their attention. We are not sure if the subsequent car washes that were planned were canceled, but the Jiffy Lube managers were quite concerned and asked for written information.

Shortly thereafter, a fundraiser car wash was observed at the Alaska Club on Tudor by the Old Seward. Again Northon stopped and talked to the group leaders (supporting rowing crew activities). One leader held up the cleaner that they were using, Armor All, which they assumed was "environmentally friendly". On the back of the bottle was the following warning, "Do not allow rinse water to enter storm drains, streams or lake". The two group leaders were surprised especially after it was pointed out that their wash water was running out of the driveway and directly into a storm drain that was less than 10' away.

There are two populations involved that need to be educated—those who are trying to raise money, and there are the property owners who—thinking they are doing a good deed—allow groups to use their facilities and water to wash cars. This results in a difficult target because of trying to predict who might let their property be used (it ranges from gas stations to private businesses) and which groups will use this as a means for fundraising (youth to Veterans). One solution that has proven to help in other states is working with local car wash facilities to provide fundraising groups with discounted washing tickets to sell. The car wash owner gets the business, the group raises some funds, and the wash water goes into the proper place. What seems to be the best solution is to have a campaign that first targets local car wash businesses to see if they will participate, then find a means of getting the word out to groups that want to fundraise about this alternative.

# **Washing Vehicles in Sales Lots:**

AWC is working with a list of over 41 companies that sell new and used cars and have rentals (cars to RVs). Various methods are used for cleaning vehicles: power spraying with just clear water, power spraying with soap, hosing, and hand-washing with dishwashing liquid. Not one solution fits all—the goal is to make the businesses aware of the consequences of where their runoff is going. This will be a campaign we will be ready to start around breakup in 2013.

## **Good Practices for General Car Washing:**

Every January, Green Star holds a "Plug@20" event where vehicle plug timers are given away to approximately 200 residents. AWC tables at these and provides information regarding preferable ways to wash cars at home. (Attached)

### ISSUES FROM THE GARDEN

AWC tabled at the April 7, 2012, Sears Mall Garden Show and used a drawing for four garden books to obtain survey information from attendees. The questions on the Sears Mall survey were identical to the survey run in Year 1 regarding gardening habits (attached). There were 36 respondents. About 33% were strictly organic gardeners, and about 22% had natural/native vegetation in their yards. The disposal of green waste fared better as about 50% used it for compost or mulch. No one admitted to dumping grass in wetlands or along or in creeks although AWC is learning from several sources that this is a considerable problem.

At the Alaska Botanical Garden show in June, AWC also held a drawing for Jeff Lowenfels' autographed book, "Teaming with Microbes". To be eligible, questions were asked on a survey form about personal habits. The results of this event (based on the same questions asked at the April Sears' Garden Show) were:

- For fertilizers, a higher percentage use organic than conventional
- For herbicides and pesticides, a higher percentage use conventional than organic, but the majority do not use either.
- Several people (a majority) prefer natural/native vegetation
- Green waste disposal is composted in the yard by the majority responding

The total respondents numbered 69, but the trend shown is positive in regard to helping keep our creeks healthier.

Jeff Lowenfels has become a good proponent of clean creeks. Several of his Thursday columns in the Anchorage Daily News begin with a discussion about some aspect of gardening or yards, but he will often bring in little tidbits about things that good gardeners should and should not do in order to keep our waterways healthier. The topics include picking up pet waste, composting, and reducing or entirely stopping the use of chemicals that are harmful to the environment and the associated runoff into streams. Attached are copies of three of his 2012 columns from March 15, April 5, and December 19. In the first, "In theory, snow should mean warmer soil", he mentions AWC and snow melt products. At the end of the second, "Keep off the grass as lawns emerge from snow", he reminds homeowners about picking up pet waste; and the third, ""Gardener's dreaming of a pesticide-free Christmas," he comments on the impact of pesticides in waterways. Northon also was invited to participate in two of his Saturday radio programs, "The Garden Party" (KYBR 700 AM) on March 10, 2012, and July 21, 2012. The earlier discussion was in regard to ice melt products and the latter about problems associated with dumping yard cuttings into creeks and not cleaning up pet waste. An article from April 19, 2012, "Organics is a gardening 'craze' that's totally sane" (attached), Lowenfels questioned the need for a subsidized rain garden program, but he was obviously set straight about the value because he apologized for his earlier remarks in his May 2, 2012, article, "Don't be tempted to start planting outside yet" (attached). Rain

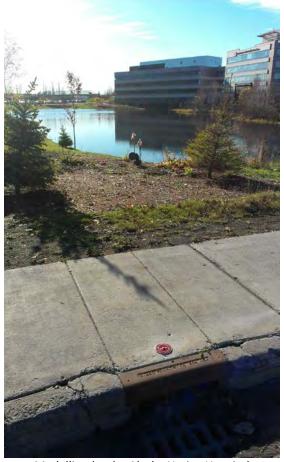
gardens are becoming a much familiar solution to stormwater runoff. A couple of years ago, rain gardens were literally an unknown, but the MOA's program seems to have been successful in spreading the word as Northon knows several people who have put them in and others who are planning to install them.

### ADDITIONAL EDUCATION AND OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

# "Drains To Waterway" Medallions For Storm Drains:

Storm drain stenciling has proven to be a large challenge due to the various types of road surfaces and the lack of sidewalks in many areas of the Municipality. It also is not particularly permanent. AWC's solution has been to purchase medallions that are sunk below the sidewalk (recessed) and placed in epoxy with a carriage bolt. Initially 100 were ordered and about 20% have been placed. Similar to the stenciling, weather conditions need to be above freezing when they are installed. The medallions are being placed strategically in high traffic areas, at bus stops, etc. (See attached map for locations.)





Medallion by the Alaska Native Hospital

## **AWC's Annual Meeting:**

This year AWC's annual meeting on October 10 was titled "From the Local to the Global: It All Goes with the Flow" (program attached). The inspiration for this began after Northon visited Midway Island about 1,000 miles northwest of Hawaii in June. She witnessed firsthand Laysan albatross chicks who were fed plastics that their parents had mistaken for food. An incredible number of chicks and parents perish from plastic debris. Further research led to collaboration with Chris Pallister, President of the Gulf of Alaska Keeper, environmental chemist John Kennish of UAA who analyzes plastic breakdown and toxicity, and Dr. Thomas Novotny of San Diego State University, who is directing his research towards the environmental impacts of cigarettes and cigarette butt waste. There is documented evidence of the

toxicity to marine and freshwater fish from very minor amounts of cigarette filters, and as a form of litter—cigarettes rank first as the most commonly collected waste item on beach cleanups (<a href="www.cigwaste.org">www.cigwaste.org</a>). Further, "butts" regularly find their way into our creeks through storm drains. Breaking the cycle of smokers "tossing their butts" is going to be a challenge, but it is well worth working on. NOAA has an interesting fact—80% of marine debris originates on land in watersheds. If we can clean up our local watersheds, we will be helping the global "garbage patch" problems as well. The presentations were recorded and are being placed on the AWC website.



Storm Drain on the Old Seward Highway by Dowling

Displays at the Annual meeting included reused (upcycled plastic) items made by Begich Middle School students(shown in adjacent photo), statistics of trash collected during the September 8 Ocean Conservancy's "Coastal Cleanup" (AWC staff participated in), a tri-fold about AWC's activities, one of the People Mover bus signs, information on proper pill disposal, cigarette butt toxicity, and ways to reduce plastic use and water pollution (the latter three attached). One particular emphasis of this meeting was on reducing the use of toss away plastic drinking bottles by encouraging refillable permanent plastic or metal water



# **Annual Creek Cleanup:**

On May 19, 2012, AWC held its 28<sup>th</sup> Annual City-wide Creek Cleanup. Over 650 volunteers worked Saturday morning in the creeks, and at noon they were provided with a free bar-be-cue lunch, music, prizes, and educational displays at Valley of the Moon Park. There were 16 supply bag and glove stations on the major Anchorage creeks, Westchester Lagoon, Waldron Lake, and Potter Marsh. Thirty-six volunteer organizations participated in addition to individuals and families who removed several tons of trash. The program emcee was Jackie Purcell, and Mayor Sullivan also attended and gave a short speech. (Poster attached)

# "Creek Report Card":

AWC's "Report Card" project is similar to one that the Anchorage Parks Foundation has done twice in the past five years. Seventy volunteers took observations and made notes and comments on approximately 175 creek miles this summer, and the information is being analyzed and compiled into a report. This project brought to light several problems that aren't often found: illegal bridges, trash dumps, homeless camps, bank trampling, yard waste in creeks, etc. There was also some positive information about our creeks and how important they are for a variety of reasons (recreation, nature observation, fishing, etc.). Integration of this information into the APDES outreach and education campaign will be very helpful. Further, an offshoot of this was a "Creeks 101" class given at REI by AWC Research Associate Thom Eley, which was also recorded and played on NPR. AWC has received many positive comments about the presentation and the subsequent radio version as well as by the report card participants. The project served as a good way to engage dozens of people with their creeks, and many would like to do it again next year. A recent discussion with one funder, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, suggested that AWC might try to convince residents to "adopt-a-drain" similar to hydrants, etc. This would be fairly light duty—keeping the storm drain clean and watching for pollutants that impact it.

# "Creeks as Classrooms":

For the second year, ConocoPhillips has provided AWC with funding to continue the "Creeks as Classrooms" program, which benefits the MOA's APDES outreach and education component. The primary objective is to introduce youth in the Municipality to creek science. As part of the curriculum, they are given information about creek health. This includes cleaning up pet waste, not littering, recycling, damage caused by invasive plants and animals, monitoring water quality with chemicals and macroinvertebrates, as well as several other things. By having this as a corollary program, AWC is able to greatly expand its audience, while at the same time training our youth to be good stewards. The activities, schools, and numbers of students for 2012 can be found in the Outreach table that is attached.

# **Invasive Plant and Animal Education:**

A funded opportunity to have AWC Program Director Matt Kays attend a week-long Invasive Plant Workshop at UAF in July led to his attendance (also funded) at and presentation to a 3-day Invasive Species Conference in Kodiak during October. He is also working with a US Fish and Wildlife Grant on invasive plant (Reed Canarygrass) removal near Grass Creek Village on Chester Creek. Part of his duties includes outreach and education to the local residents along Chester Creek with the goal of them understanding the problems with invasives.

## **Business Property Owners:**

AWC is still providing BOMA (Building Owners and Management Group) with brochures for their monthly meetings. Another area of opportunity that presented itself this year was taking a newly released 4-page report from the EPA titled, "The Economic Benefits of Protecting Healthy Watersheds" (attached) and using some of the information for another insert in the Anchorage Convention and

Visitors' Bureau (ACVB) newsletter. The flier, "Protecting our Waterways and Watersheds is Good for Business and the Economy!" was sent out to over 1600 business members in September 2012 (attached).

## **AWC's E-Newsletter:**

Approximately every 3-4 weeks, AWC sends out over 400 E-Newsletters that discuss a variety of topics. These have included: upcoming events, tips for dealing with problems that can impact our waterways, and any issues that are important in regard to our creeks.

# Bancroft Neighborhood "Windshield" Survey:

A project was started last year in July with the 100+ residents of the Bancroft Subdivision. This varied from the EPA's "windshield survey" because it was carried out by foot on a very regular basis. Information newsletters were sent to all residents. As mentioned earlier in this report, the March 2012 *Bancroft Bugler* (attached) focused on snow and ice melt issues, and it also contained a postcard survey.

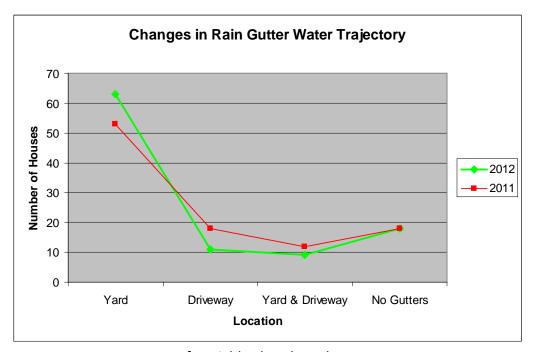
What is the most interesting a from our neighborhood newsle	nd/or important information that you have learned etters?
	anges in the outdoor use or care of your property e <i>Bancroft Bugler's</i> information? If so, what did
Than Are you interested in receiving Address (optional):	nk you for your input, future newsletters? Yes Na

There was a 15% return rate. Following are some comments from the respondents:

- What is the most interesting and/or important information that you have learned from the neighborhood newsletters? What changes have you implemented?
  - o The info about how snow melt affects the environment and using snowmelt sparingly.
  - o What [storm] drains run where and the access of each.
  - o Started a Rain Garden and am working on a second one.
  - How our activity affects water quality
  - Less chemicals down the driveway and into the storm drains
  - Simple ways to improve my property
  - o Awareness of deicers
  - Pulled the dandelions by hand instead of "weed and feed"
  - o Moved the drain spout to drain into the yard
  - o Picked up the dog poop more often

Considering the normal rate of survey return (3-4%), 15% was good. Observation has confirmed that there are a few die-hards in the neighborhood who will not change their habits, but conversely there seems to be a greater number of residents making changes.

In May 2012, an additional *Bancroft Bugler* was sent out that highlighted rain gardens, rain barrels, and urged local residents to be mindful of water usage (attached). A visual survey by AWC staff in the fall showed that several residents had changed their gutter configurations. Residents' property was categorized as either having the runoff go into the yard by downspouts, onto the driveway by downspouts, a combination of both, or no gutters (rain runs off roof). In the ensuing year, there was a higher percentage of residents directing runoff into their yard and conversely a lower percentage onto the driveway. This was a 10% improvement into yards, a 9% decrease onto driveways, a 3% decrease of those homes categorized as "half-half" (part yard and part driveway), and the number of homes with no gutters stayed stable. One resident had an existing rain garden, and another took advantage of the rain garden program to put one in her yard. Three others put up containers to capture water from downspouts.



Bancroft Neighborhood, Anchorage, AK

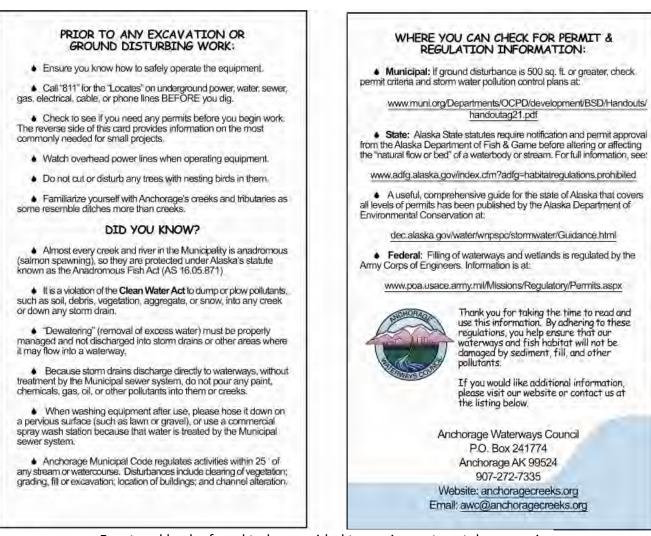
Continuation of the Bancroft newsletters for another year is being reviewed. The residents like them, but with a small turnover in the neighborhood—it's likely that most of what would be sent out would be repetitive and probably not result in dramatic changes. The information that was given to residents over the year seems to be important and resulted in observable changes.

## **Equipment Rental for Homeowners:**

Visual observation around the Municipality reveals that there are a lot of people doing yard work with rented equipment such as Bobcats, backhoes, excavators and other machinery, that disturb the soil, and can lead to sediment runoff and impaired water quality. AWC has developed a 3" x 5" card that will be professionally printed and given out to the dozen or so DIY (do-it-yourself) rental agencies. For the most part, the larger commercial companies are familiar with and have access to training by the AK-CESCL program (Alaska Certified Erosion and Sediment Control Lead)<sup>1</sup>. For those who have one time projects, it is likely that they are not acquainted with permit requirements, proper planning for erosion and sediment

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> E.D. Cherie Northon and Research Assistant Thom Eley are both certified as AK-CESCL.

control, BMPS, etc. The goal is to have the rental companies provide their customers with educational information on the card that could help reduce water quality issues.



Front and back of card to be provided to equipment rental companies

## **FUTURE DIRECTIONS IN YEAR 4**

AWC staff believes that most programs are heading in the right direction. There is no doubt that keeping a constant presence on pet waste will continue next year. Conversations with ADEC staff have reinforced the value of this campaign as has the feedback from the citizens that AWC interacts with. AWC has plans to work on vehicle washing in a variety of venues—from the homeowner to associated businesses to fund-raising groups. Storm drain awareness through the continued placement of medallions and other educational materials will be used. Chemicals, including ice melt and yard products, and the residuals of plastic and cigarette butt waste, will be heavily emphasized this year. One insidious habit that appears to be more widespread than first thought is to educate people about not using their creeks and waterways as dumping grounds for yard waste, dead annuals, etc. The value of this campaign became apparent from the creek report card project and during creek walks for the Chester Creek Watershed Plan. The campaign will be directed toward residents adjacent to waterways (as well as trying to discourage mowing and chemical applications right up to the edge of creeks).

AWC also plans on repeating the general survey that was completed in Year 1 to evaluate behavioral and knowledge changes among the current population.

# Where does all the snow go during breakup?



Let snow piles melt naturally and avoid washing them down with water or icemelt chemicals as this contributes to excess runoff and pollutes our great urban creeks.

03

Keep your pets and children out of puddles where chemicals, vehicle fluids, animal waste, and other pollutants can accumulate.

The runoff from Anchorage's snowmelt and stormwater travels across yards, through parking lots and industrial areas then along streets until it finds a storm drain. It then flows, mostly untreated, into our waterways which drain into Cook Inlet. You can do your part to reduce some of its impacts on our water resources.

CB

Pick up litter, yard waste, and especially pet waste from the snow around your home or business.

03

Keep storm drains clean and open by removing debris, leaves, and snow.





Anchorage Waterways Council has been protecting our great creeks and lakes since 1984. For more information on managing snow melt and protecting Anchorage's great outdoors, please check our website at www.anchoragecreeks.org.

# PROTECTING OUR WATERWAYS AND WATERSHEDS IS GOOD FOR BUSINESS AND THE ECONOMY!

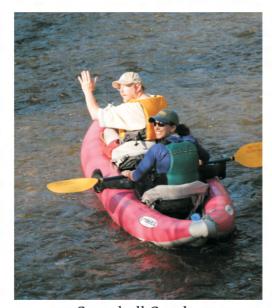
A variety of studies regarding healthy, intact watersheds demonstrate that they provide us with social and economic well-being. In addition to reduced costs for basic services such as water filtration and treatment plants, these areas contribute immensely to tourism, recreation, and general economic health.

Profitable returns are measured in many economic sectors:

- Sales
- Tours and guiding
- ♦ Hospitality (hotels, cabins, restaurants, etc.)
- Equipment rentals
- Licenses, fees, permits and taxes



Lake Hood



Campbell Creek





Ship Creek

What you can do to help our tourist industry, economy, and environment

Reduce stormwater runoff into our creeks as well as the pollutants that are carried directly into them by:

Keeping vehicles well maintained to eliminate fluid drips Reducing or eliminating chemical additives in landscaping Cleaning up trash, cigarette butts, and animal waste Only allowing clean water down storm drains Applying minimal snowmelt chemicals during winter Installing a rain garden

# ICE MELT PRODUCTS: HOW TO SAVE MONEY, REDUCE DAMAGE, AND PROTECT OUR WATERWAYS THIS WINTER!

Studies point to the economic value for businesses to keep their watersheds and the associated waterways healthy. This needs to occur year-round, and each season poses specific issues. After strong winds, heavy fall rain, and freezing temperatures, winter has finally brought snow and ice to Anchorage.

For safety, salting and sanding practices are needed, however these additives eventually find their way into our creeks and streams during breakup.



Uneven, ineffective, and wasteful application



Proper amount and placement and combined with traction material

Anchorage Waterways Council protecting local creeks and rivers since 1984. For more information:

www.anchoragecreeks.org

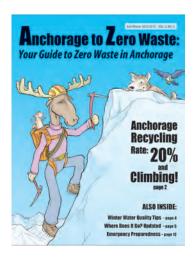




# Keep these considerations in mind:

- The best time to spread ice melt is **BEFORE** snowfall. If it has already snowed, shovel areas clear before applying ice melt products.
- T Read all directions **PRIOR** to application--this includes proper amounts to be used (more is **NOT** better), safe handling, and areas to avoid.
- $\Gamma$  Use with traction products, i.e. sand, to reduce the amount of chemicals needed.
- $\Gamma$  Check the effectiveness of the many available products in regard to temperature effectiveness, corrosiveness factor, cost, and human, pet and environmental impact.

The purpose behind ice melt products is to create a brine that helps break the bond between the snow/ice and surface in order to make removal, i.e. shoveling, easier. Although referred to as ice "melt", that is not its function, so don't waste time and money by using it otherwise. Anchorage's Solid Waste Services has produced a great guide that provides ice melt information as well as other useful tips.



Download "Anchorage to Zero Waste guide at: www.muni.org/departments/sws/recycle/Pages/default.aspx

## Anchorage

## Patkotak spews hate against church

I just finished reading with disgust Elise Patkotak's vitriolic diatribe against men and the Catholic Church in her column published March 14 ("Trust? Sen. Lisa Murkowski lost mine").

I am shocked that the ADN would give Ms. Patkotak a platform to spew her message of hatred for men and the Catholic Church with little or no evidence to support her claims beyond her personal opinion. This drivel is what I expect to find on some extreme feminist blog, not the editorial section of the ADN.

-- Carl Soderstrom

Eagle River

# Picking up waste and trash now can help keep our waterways cleaner

Brown, jagged snow piles are now lining our roads, as they do every spring. Spring means they will leave, but to where? Most runoff goes down metal parking lot grates and roadside storm drains. But from there, where?

Runoff (and all that it's carrying) goes into our urban waterways, which then flow untreated into Cook Inlet. Sand, gravel, trash, cigarette butts, vehicle drips, animal waste, ice melt chemicals and more pour directly into our creeks, which is how Anchorage's storm water system is designed.

It is not something we can stop or divert but there are actions that can mitigate the runoff pollution into our creeks and lakes.

Besides picking up animal waste when out with your pet, start cleaning it up in your yard now as it emerges from the snow. All of our major urban waterways are impaired by fecal coliform (bacteria from warm-blooded animals). Avoid use of ice melt chemicals or use sparingly and only as directed. Making our city and its creeks healthier begins well before breakup.

-- Cherie Northon, executive director

Anchorage Waterways Council

Anchorage

### Ballot information has name reversed

Be careful when you look at information from the Municipality of Anchorage concerning the ballot. (Or maybe this will be on the actual ballot you receive.)

The "2012 Sample Ballot" link will tell you that there is someone running for School Board Seat G named Starr, Marsett.

The woman running for School Board Seat G is named Starr Marsett, or Marsett, Starr.

Call the municipal clerk and ask for the correct information. 243-VOTE (8683) or <u>elections@muni.org</u>.

# KTVA CBS 11 | Anchorage, Alaska News and Weather Anchorage, AK

Print this article

# Ice Melt Use Causes Environmental Concerns

 $Originally\ printed\ at\ http://www.ktva.com/home/outbound-xml-feeds/Ice-Melt-Dangerous-for-the-Environment-138534419.html$ 

By Lauren Maxwell February 1, 2012

Anchorage residents are dealing with this winter's heavy snow anyway they can.

They are shoveling, blowing and trucking it away to massive snow dump mountains that won't be melting any time soon.

But many Anchorage residents are using another product that has environmentalists concerned – ice melt.

Cherie Northon, director of the Anchorage Waterways Council, said the big melt-off sure to come this spring will go directly into storm drains that empty into local creeks.

The untreated water will contain chemicals used for melting ice and snow.

"If we know it's not good for humans and it's not good for pets it's not going to be good for fish," says Northon. "It changes the water chemistry and it can impact them negatively."

Northon said people who must use ice melt should do so sparingly and be aware that some types are safer for waterways than others.

Products that contain magnesium chloride instead of potassium chloride are considered better for creeks, but Northon warns those same products may not be safe for pets – consumers should read labels very carefully.

1 of 1

# **Record Snowfall Brings an Excess of Pet Poop Across the City**

Originally printed at http://www.ktva.com/home/outbound-xml-feeds/Record-Snowfall-Brings-an-Excess-of-Waste-Across-the-City-149949015.html

By Alexis Fernandez May 2, 2012

ANCHORAGE - The record snowfall in Anchorage not only brought potential flooding concerns, but also an excess of pet waste across the city.

"It really changed everything; normally it's spread out and this year it was compact and gross," said Brent Zielinski, owner of K-9 Pooper Scoopers.

Zielinski is just one of many people who make a living off of pet waste.

This year he's been extra busy.

"Normally we're well done this time of year, and this year I got six more phone calls today alone," he said.

He does the work alone and cleans nearly 30 yards a day. He said he's had some challenges with the job – which include being chased and stepped on by a moose.

"Owners are really happy because than they don't have to deal with it, keeps bugs down, keeps the dogs happy because they have fresh sniffs all the time," Zielinski said.

Yards aren't the only ones that have been affected by the ravages of winter. Parks across Anchorage are also in need of some TLC.

"There's more water on the ground, somewhat frozen, like dog poop soup," said Dr. Cherie Northon, executive director at Anchorage Waterways Council.

Neighborhood programs like Scoop the Poop aims to help with bags available throughout the city, but ultimately picking up after pets is the responsibility of the owner.

"If people could just be responsible for their own pet waste it would make a huge difference," said Northon.

And for Zielinski scooping up is just part of his job.

2 of 2 1/29/2013 12:18 PM



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Anyone tasked with nagging people to clean up after their dogs has a stinky job. A walk along Anchorage trails or through its parks is proof enough that human behavior is difficult to change. Everything poops, as the children's book by the same title descriptively tells us about animals, birds, bugs and people. Not everyone cleans it up.

On a recent sunny day near University Lake in Anchorage, Buchi Lind was calling out to her son, 13-year-old Christian, to avoid the unpleasant brown lumps spaced two to three feet apart. "It's really annoying to walk on the sidewalk as pedestrians," she said, explaining to Christian that "irresponsible owners" were to blame for the ick-factor.

Lind and her family were out for a walk near their mid-town hotel, where they're staying in order to take care of some medical needs at a nearby hospital.

"Dog poop. Moose poop. It's no fun," she said, explaining why only moose get a pardon. "Dogs have owners. Moose do not. So we can excuse the moose."

Wheeling along on his foot-powered scooter, Christian chimed in, "The owners should just clean up after their dogs."

Easier said than done, apparently. As snow melted across Anchorage, halfpound piles of poo emerged from a long, cold winter. It smells bad. There's a lot of it. And it contains microscopic bugs that can pollute waterways and make people sick.

# Angry phone calls

This may be the year park-goers finally decide they've had enough. Cherie Northon, executive director of the **Anchorage Waterways Council** has been fielding angry phone calls and emails daily ever since the melt began, revealing the scope of this year's problem.

"I have never had so many irate people," she said. "People are disgusted by the dog poop in Anchorage right now." And this comes more than a week after the city held its big spring clean up, sending teams of volunteers into parks to do other people's dirty work.

Other cities have experimented with creative ways to motivate people to keep parks clean. Boston once tried Park Spark, street lamps powered by methane generated from collected dog waste. Mexico City is trying Poo Wifi, a unique service in which minutes of free wireless Internet service are exchanged for

#### pounds of poo.

Anchorage hasn't used gimmicks like this to encourage good etiquette. People who lead clean-up efforts here focus on one of two psychological tactics: shame and reward. Do the right thing and you're thanked. Don't and it's hoped your guilt buttons can be pushed so you eventually give in.

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The city estimates 65,000 dogs live in Anchorage, each of which will poop approximately three-quarters of a pound every day, leaving 48,000 pounds – or 24 tons –to clean up.

The city used to pay someone to stroll the parks to encourage people to scoop up their pets' poop. Leaving a mess behind can be costly. Get caught and you can be hit with a \$100 fine. But these days, that's unlikely. Budget cuts have cut Anchorage animal-control staff, and the remaining six full-time officers are spread thin dealing with dog bites and attacks as well as assisting police. Poop patrols are low on the priority list.

Animal control officers still answer calls about this unseemly version of littering. But usually, there's little that can be done. To make a case, officers have to know the name of the offending owner and be able to trace a particular pile of unscooped poo to the owner's dog.

Meanwhile, two paid positions within the city's parks department that sometimes deal with dog parks are vacant.

Could it be time for a poop czar?

# A health issue

Eventually, fecal coliform – bad bacteria that live in the poop of warm-blooded animals – will end up in streams and lakes. Fortunately, the source of most of Anchorage's drinking water, Eklutna Lake, isn't inundated the way the city's smaller waterways are. But families out enjoying the parks and trails can still come into contact with the bugs.

Every summer, people wade in Campbell Creek and Chester Creek, both of which flow through town. Some will raft or kayak Campbell Creek in an urban day-trip as it winds through the city. The Anchorage Waterways Council closely monitors University Lake, the site of one of the city's popular dog parks, as well as Fish Creek, a major estuary which loops in and out of neighborhoods before is pours into Cook Inlet near the Tony Knowles Coastal Trail.

The council suspects coliform is gathering in the lake rather than getting flushed downstream. And it's noticed the coliform levels in Fish Creek rise and fall depending on which location is tested. Levels are high at the headwaters — and high again in Spenard.

Another dimension to the city's poop problem are fenced schoolyards – a hard-to-resist ready-made enclosure for people who want to run their pets off leash. Signs warn people dogs aren't allowed. Yet dogs, people and poop still show up.

# Pile power

In the poop-and-run crime category there are two types of offenders, according to Northon: walkers and people doing a drive-by with their pooch. Walkers either don't plan for a pick up and have no collection bag with them or don't believe scooping is their responsibility. Drivers are the lazier version: pulling up to a park, letting Rover jump out of the car to do his business, then jump back in before the duo goes into the sunset, leaving the steaming gift behind.

The designers of the Poo Wifi devices being tested in Mexico City hope to make cleaning up both novel and useful. The sophisticated system measures the deposit, then calculates minutes of free wireless service based on weight.

Anchorage resident Matt Zabinko thinks it's an interesting concept, along with the poop-to-methane converters once tested in Boston. But whether creative ideas likes these will get rogue pet parents to clean up their act is unknown.

Zabinko enjoys taking his very large and very ball-obsessed chocolate labs, Bain and Bruno, for walks at University Lake. Currently, the trail is in pretty good shape – drying nicely and relatively free of dog waste, he said. It's likely in good shape because Anchorage Waterways Council held scoop-the-poo events on April 21, sending volunteers out to clean up a full winter's mess.

Like many Anchorage residents, Zabinko might be considered a hybrid offender by park etiquette standards. He picks up after his pups if they leave deposits on or near a trail. But if they do their business in the trees or out of sight, he tends not to worry about it.

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•	 

"Even people who don't like picking it up don't like stepping in it," he said as he tossed a ball for his dog.

# Contact Jill Burke at jill(at)alaskadispatch.com



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University Lake South Anchorage Sports Complex Connor's Bog



For more information call Anchorage Waterways Council: 272-7335 www.anchoragecreeks.org

# Scoop-the-Poop Event Give-aways



LED Flashlight





Mutt Mitt 5- packs



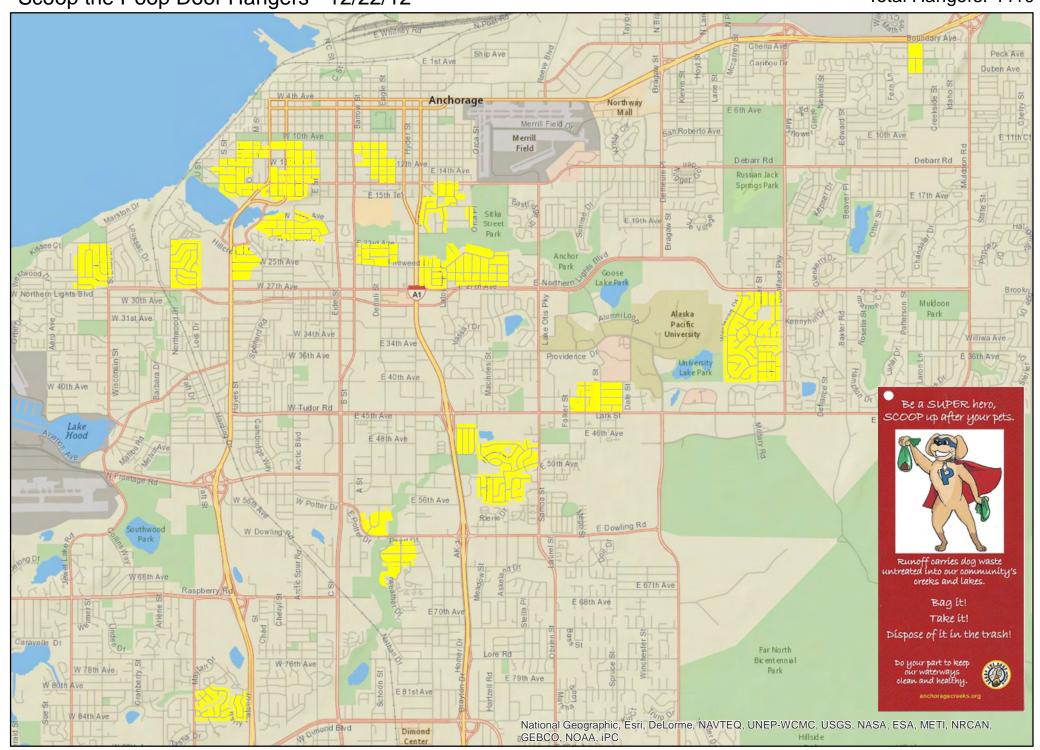
Scoop-the-Poop Pins

#### **AWC 2012**

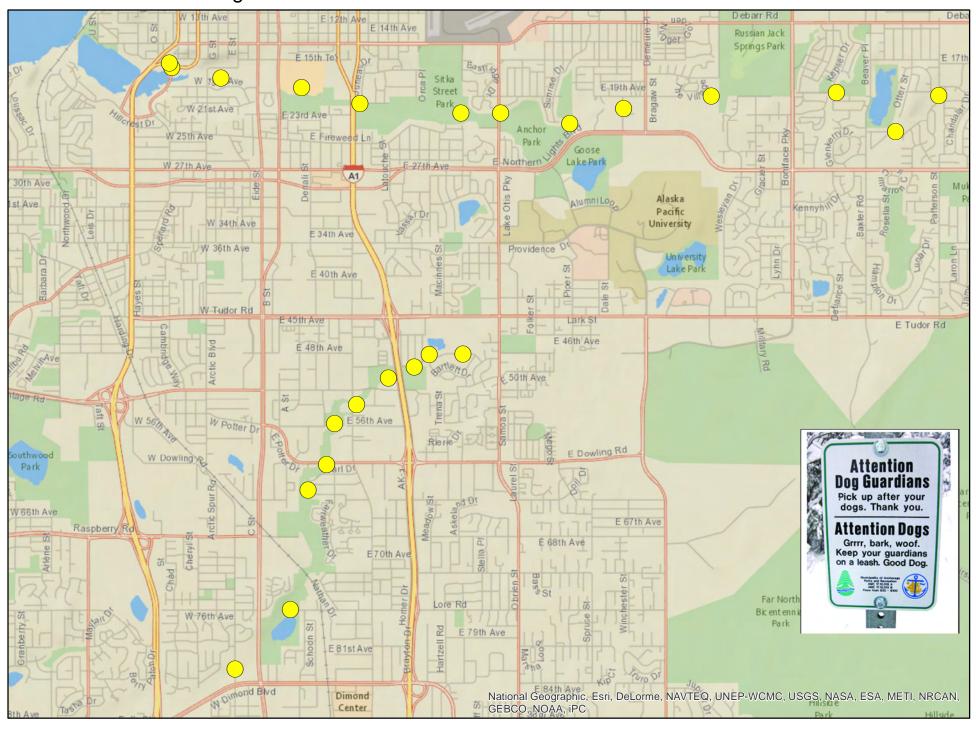
Outreach	
Education	
Action	

Event Date Location Attendance 7814 STP Monitoring Invasives Stormwater Lawn Auto 1/27-28/2012 Harley Davidson of Alaska Hogs and Dogs 150 Pet New Year 2/4/2012 Alaska Mill & Feed 300 Х 300 Fur Rondy Mutt Show 2/26/2012 Alyeska Canine Trainers Х Sears Mall Garden Show 4/7/2012 Sears Mall 150 Х Х Jr. Naturalist Program 4/14/2012 Eagle River Nature Center 40 Panel in APU Environmental Science Class 4/19/2012 Alaska Pacific University 25 Х 80 Scoop the Poop Day 4/21/2012 University Lake, Connor's Bog Creeks as Classrooms--Mears 5/9-10/12 Campbell Creek by Minnesota 240 15 Aguarian Charter School Field Trip 5/11/2012 Old Hermit Park Mental Health Trust Chester Cleanup 5/14/2012 Mental Health Trust Authority Х 650 Annual AWC Creek Cleanup 5/19/2012 City-wide Х ADF&G Outdoor Days 6/6/2012 Cheney Lake Park 96 ADF&G Potter Marsh Discovery Days 6/8-9/12 Potter March Boardwalk 1450 6/9/2012 Eagle River Nature Center Jr. Naturalist Program 34 Х Alaska Botanical Garden Fair 6/16-17/2012 Alaska Botanical Garden 1500 Х Х 6/23/2012 Ruth Arcand Park 100 **Pawstice** Х Chester Creek Invasive Removal 6/28-29/2012 Grass Creek Village 15 Х 7/9/2012 Chester Creek Trail YEP Chester Creek Exploration 30 Kincaid Adventure Camp 7/12/2012 Little Campbell Lake 30 7/17-31/2012 UAA ANSEP ANSEP Youth Camp 120 Х Jr. Naturalist Program 7/21/2012 Eagle River Nature Center 30 Х 7/28/2012 East High School 350 Friends of Pets Dog Jog Х Pet Day at Spenard Farmers' Market 8/4/2012 Spenard Farmers' Market 100 Х Creek Report Card Training 8/7/2012 Chester Creek Trail 20 Х Х Х 8/8/2012 Bird TLC 8 Invasive Species Removal Х 8/9/2012 Chester Creek Trail YEP Mentorship Day

				STP	Invasives	Stormwater	Lawn	Auto	Monitoring
Creeks as Classrooms-Rogers Park	8/29/2012	Rogers Park School	30		Х				Х
Creeks as Classrooms-Rogers Park	8/31/2012	Rogers Park School/Chester Creek	60		Х				Х
USFWS Share Fair	9/6/2012	UAA Wendy Williams	300			Х			х
Creeks as Classrooms-Chugach Optional	9/7/2012	Valley of the Moon Park	50	Х	Х				х
Scoop the Poop Day	9/10/2012	University Lake	65	Х					
United Way Day of Caring	9/12/2012	Fish Creek-Spenard	13		Х	Х			
BLM Water Discovery Days	9/13-14/2012	Campbell Creek Science Center	1000						х
Creeks 101	9/18/2012	REI Anchorage	14	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	х
Urban Forests For Tomorrow Field Trip	9/20/2012		18		Х	Х			
Creeks as Classrooms-Polaris School	9/27-10/5/2012	Polaris/Little Campbell Creek	25	Х	х	Х	х	х	х
Water Quality Monitoring w/ APU class	10/8/2012	APU Experimental Farm	18	Х					Х
AWC Annual Meeting	10/10/2012	BP Energy Center	65	Х		Х			Х
Creeks as Classrooms-Steller Secondary	10/12-11/25/12	Steller/Chester Creek	30	Х	Х	Х	х	х	Х
Creeks as Classrooms-Girdwood School	10/17-22/12	Girdwood School/Glacier Creek	30			Х			Х
AK Rural Water Assn. Lecture	10/31/2012		15	Х	Х	Х			
Water Wise Presentation Anc. Adv. Meetup	11/6/2012	Assets, Inc.	22	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	
Creeks as Classrooms	11/7/2012	Romig Middle School	120	Х	Х	Х			
Bancroft Windshield Survey	2011-2012	Bancroft Neighborhood	100	Х	Х	Х	Х	х	



# Pet Waste Ordinance Signs 12/22/12



Anchorage has an estimated **70,000 dogs** eliminating approximately 0.32 pounds of waste per dog, per day. That adds up to **more than 10 tons of waste produced every day**.

A significant amount of that fecal matter is deposited into parks, common areas, and neighborhoods and is left to dissolve and run off into our local water bodies.

The Committee's goal is to educate pet owners about reducing this type of pollution by "scooping the poop" and disposing of it properly.

Go to www.scoopthepoop.org for a list of over 50 poop stations around the city and see a map of their locations!! While you're there, check out our STP Public Service Announcements with Martha Stewart!

# **Scoop The Poop Mission:**

The Scoop the Poop Committee is a collaborative effort, facilitated by the Anchorage Waterways Council to reduce fecal coliform counts in Anchorage waterways by encouraging the responsible pet ownership practice of picking up after your pets.

























Watershed Management Services

Members of the committee include:
 Anchorage Waterways Council,
 Municipality of Anchorage Parks and Recreation,
 Anchorage Animal Care and Control,
 University of Fairbanks Cooperative Extension Service,
 BLM Campbell Tract,

Alaska Department of Fish and Game,

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation,

Municipality of Anchorage Watershed Management Services,

The Alaska SPCA.

Friends of Pets,

Alyeska Canine Trainers,

Anchorage Unleashed and

The Alaska Kennel Club.

www.scoopthepoop.org

# Scoop the Poop

# THE POOP CYCLE



# It's Your Dooty!

# Scooping: It's the LAW

First of all, when it comes to poop, it's the law within the Municipality of Anchorage

(Girdwood to Eklutna) to pick up after your pet. If caught, you will be charged \$100 for every violation.



# E. Coli and Roundworm

E. Coli is a type of bacteria found in ALL animals, and animal waste is filled with all kinds of bacteria, including E. Coli. E. Coli can be the source of many different



illnesses from sore throats to diarrhea. You can get this from water polluted with dog waste. Roundworms are microscopic

parasitic organisms that can live in the small intestines of dogs. The eggs are passed into the feces and they then take two weeks to become infective. Old poop becomes a health risk. It's important to pick it up right away!

# The water will wash it away, why should I pick it up now?

In the springtime, rainwater and melting snow may wash away the feces, but where does it go? It goes into Anchorage's creeks, streams, and lakes, causing pollution and noxious odors. Before the feces melt away, it is unpleasant to look at and smell. It also poses a hazard that people can step in or slip in.

# What Can I do?

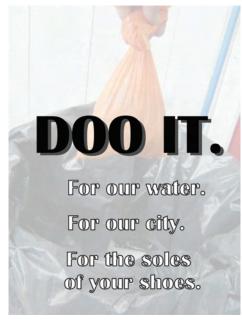
First, be a responsible pet owner and clean

up after your pet, whether it's in your yard, on a local trail, or at one of our offleash dog parks. Second, encourage your neighbors and other pet owners to Scoop the Poop! And finally, help out by sponsoring and maintaining a Poop Station for a trailhead near you! For more information on Poop Stations, visit



www.anchorageparkfoundation.org.

If we all pitch in, Anchorage will become a cleaner and safer place to live!



# **How To Pick Up Poop:**

Keep bags handy in your car, purse or pocket. You can use grocery bags, newspaper wrappers or commercial poop scooping supplies.



**Step 1.** Place bag over hand like a glove.



Step 2. Pick up poop.



Step 3. Reverse bag.



**Step 4.** Throw away in a trash receptacle.



# ANCHORAGE WATERWAYS COUNCIL

P.O. Box 241774 • Anchorage, Alaska 99524-1774 • 907 272-7335 • www.anchoragecreeks.org

May 7, 2012

Name Address Town

Dear Pet-Friendly business owner.

Anchorage is a great town to be a dog. The city boasts a wealth of pet-friendly amenities, facilities, and businesses. Every day, residents and visitors alike can be seen enjoying the wonders Anchorage has to offer along with their loyal companions. The openness with which our animal friends are welcomed here in Anchorage is one of the most treasured aspects of our city. Unfortunately, many dog owners are less than conscientious about cleaning up the waste left behind by their pets, creating a number of problems in our community. The purpose of this letter is to inform and educate those managing pet-friendly establishments about these important issues and some easy ways they can help to improve the experience of those who live in and visit Anchorage.

Dog waste littering lawns, sidewalks, lots, parks, and trails is obviously an unpleasant sight. It can also be a real stinky mess that detracts from the experience of those who wish to enjoy a clean, well-kept city. But, not only does it look bad and smell worse, it also contains many harmful bacteria and organisms that can cause diseases in humans and other animals. Rainfall and snowmelt wash pet waste and other pollutants into the city's storm drains, which then flow, untreated, directly into the nearest creek where the water becomes contaminated and can cause severe illnesses from sore throats to diarrhea. In fact, the fecal contamination problem in Anchorage is so severe that it has led the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to classify every urban Anchorage creek as an "impaired waterway." These creeks, although often unheralded, add tremendously to the quality of life in Anchorage by providing us with many recreational opportunities and by supporting the world-renowned fish and wildlife populations that Alaska is known for.

Poop is not really something that most of us like to think about, but, for those of us who care for dogs know all too well, it is indeed afoot, and all the more so after spring breakup. Poop is a problem that affects the perception of our community as well as the health of its residents, but a little awareness and effort will go a long way toward keeping our water, air, and shoes clean. You can help by encouraging your clientele to be courteous and responsible pet owners, and the Anchorage Scoop the Poop Committee is making an effort to gain your support and provide assistance in this effort.

By friendly reminders to your guests about observing Municipal policies regarding pets, you can surely increase their cooperation. Municipal law from Girdwood to Eklutna states that a \$100 fine can be charged for every violation for not picking up pet waste. Evaluate your establishment's pet guidelines and add or amend them to ensure consistency, relevance, and regard for ecological health concerns. Designate pet exercise and relief areas and provide clear signage, information, and even a bag dispenser and trash can. This can help keep fecal material from ultimately draining into our creeks. The Scoop the Poop Committee is a collaborative effort of the Anchorage Waterways Council, Anchorage Animal Care and Control, and several other organizations and agencies that share a concern over the impact that inadequate disposal of animal waste has on the overall well-being of residents and visitors. We would like to offer you our assistance by providing advice, brochures, or even a site visit to help you plan for proper disposal of pet waste.

Please feel free to contact us at <a href="mailto:awc@anchoragecreeks.org">awc@anchoragecreeks.org</a> or call 272-7335 if we can be of assistance to you. We look forward to working with you to make the Municipality of Anchorage even better.

Sincerely,

Cherie Northon, Ph.D. Executive Director

# KTVA CBS 11 | Anchorage, Alaska News and Weather Anchorage, AK

Print this article

# Hand-Fed Ducks Not Flying South for Winter

 $Originally\ printed\ at\ http://www.ktva.com/home/outbound-xml-feeds/Human-Fed-Ducks-Not-Flying-South-for-Winter-179859121.html$ 

By Lauren Maxwell November 18, 2012

ANCHORAGE - Don't feed the ducks! That's the message Fish and Game wants to spread as more and more ducks are wintering-over in Anchorage. But feeding ducks is a tradition many people treasure, not to mention a chance for Alaska kids to get up close to wildlife.

"We don't feed the moose or the bears," said a young mom whose toddler was enjoying throwing bites of bread to the ducks at Cuddy Park in Midtown. "It's nice to be able to feed the birds."

But Fish and Game says determined duck feeders may be causing problems for the birds they love. There are at least a thousand ducks that have crowded into the pond at Cuddy Park which still has open water. They don't appear to be leaving any time soon.

"They are getting free handouts and they have open water, so why leave?" said Fish and Game biologist Mike Petrula.

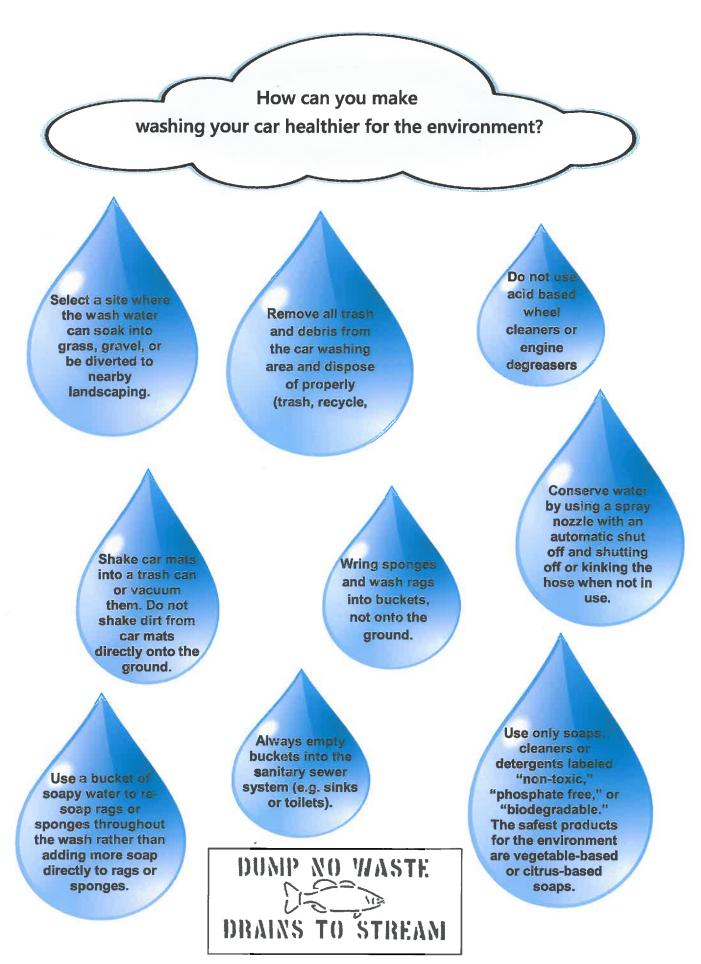
Petrula says it's not illegal to feed the ducks, but it is discouraged. The well-fed birds get used to people and their vehicles, causing traffic jams in the park parking lot when they don't feel like moving. Cherie Northern with the Anchorage Waterways Council said there's another concern: ducks can be dirty.

"When you have this concentration of wildlife and birds in one area they are going to go to the bathroom in the water. That increases the fecal coli form which contaminates the water all the way downstream," said Northern.

Northern said the pond, which is man-made, connects to the city's Fish Creek water system and contaminants can flow throughout its shallow waters. But, she said, ducks are just a small part of a much bigger problem when it comes to stream pollution.

Biologists said as long as people continue to feed the birds they will stick around.

1 of 1 1/29/2013 12:38 PM



Remember: What's on the ground washes down!

Anchorage Waterways Council • www.anchoragecreeks.org

# **AWC Gardening Survey and Drawing**

1. At your residence, do you or or garden products? Please ch			ply any o	of the follow	wing law
	Conventional		Both	None	N/A
Fertilizer		[eq.]			
Weed killers/herbicides				P <sup>m</sup>	
Pesticides					F
2. Which of the following states can answer more than one)?  I prefer the look of a manicured ya	•		r gardenii	ng preferer	ıces (yoı
☐ I prefer a yard with natural/native v					
I have a vegetable garden, berries					
Other:					
Other (please specify)					
" ' ' ' ' ' ' ' ' ' ' ' ' ' ' ' ' ' ' '		12			
Compost it in the yard  Mulch onto lawn  Dispose of it in a wetland area or wor lake)	vater body (creek	Garde Other	ener takes it	t	
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Lowenfels: Careful watering key to cactus care in Alaska

# Gardener's dreaming of a pescticide-free Christmas

Published: December 19, 2012

By Jeff Lowenfels — Gardening

All I want for Christmas is an end to pesticide use.

I came to this gift idea a couple of days ago when a reader asked what I wanted from Santa. She was operating under the assumption her husband would like the same thing. Up until then, I hadn't given too much thought to the question. I am too old to accumulate any more "things" and there isn't a garden thing I wish for.

And then it hit me. I want an end to pesticide use. OK, I realize that this might be impossible. It is too big of a present for someone who behaved as poorly as I did this year. Still, a smaller version would do, say, just the state of Alaska going pesticide free. I would even settle, this year at least, for just Anchorage to be a pesticide free zone. What a gift that would be for us all.

This really shouldn't be much of a request. True, it would have been not so many years ago when these products first were described as miracles of modern chemistry and any yardener could get his or her hands on them to save the earth one quarter-acre lot at a time. We believed the advertising, didn't understand the labels (which didn't have warnings in many cases) and plunged into a greener, less insect - and fungal-ful, weed-free world.

Today, of course, the most die-hard chemical user recognizes that synthetic pesticides have proven to be far from miracles in any sense of the word. Just reading a pesticide label these days should be enough to end their use. It goes beyond not being able to pronounce the chemical ingredients or know what the inert ones are. There are dire warnings on most of these labels.

More than 300 diseases have been linked to pesticide use. These are not as a result of lab rat tests and studies either. They are based on real-life, epidemiological studies of humans around the country. Of the top 25 pesticides used to manage "facilities" and the 13 used in "landscape management," 11 are linked to cancer, five cause birth defects, 10 cause liver or kidney damage, 12 are linked to neurological problems and the list goes on.

Of course, children are the most susceptible to injury from pesticide exposure because their systems are still developing. Many pesticides are endocrine disrupters, so the development that is supposed to happen happens "wrong." There is even now link to lower I.Q. in children when exposed. This is not a happy state of affairs.

Adult blood samples indicates that 95 percent of us have at least one pesticide residue in our blood streams. This can't be good. It did matter, incidentally, if the samples were taken from an urban or a rural location. It's on the food we eat if it isn't in the air or water.

And speaking of streams, 90 percent of water and fish samples taken from streams in the United states contain one or more pesticides. If memory serves me, Alaska was the only state that didn't show these

high numbers when the survey was taken. All of us who enjoy fishing or makes a living from those who do, should be asking Santa for the same gift as me.

Yes, pesticides usually work. They kill weeds, insects, fungi and help produce a flawless crop of tomatoes or cabbage. Their use, however, has consequences and they are becoming clearer and clearer as being unwanted and unnecessary.

The more I think about it, this should be a pretty easy gift. What are a few aphids compared to a child's I.Q.? All you Santas out there just need to leave a little reminder to each and every gardener on your list to stop using pesticides. I think most will be agree.

Jeff Lowenfels' is author of "Teaming With Microbes: The Organic Gardener's Guide to The Soil Food Web." He can be reached at www.teamingwithmicrobes.com

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Be responsible in battling those pesky weeds

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# Keep off the grass as lawns emerge from snow

By Jeff Lowenfels (04/05/12 08:32:22)

Oh my goodness! Lawn grass is showing in our yard! Not a lot of it, to be sure, but enough to assure that the rest of this winter's snow won't be around much longer. Once it starts melting, it goes fast. That is just the physics of how snow melts.

Lawn! It's been quite some time, hasn't it? Whoopee! Now give me the sense to stay off it until it dries out. Why compact it any more than the 11 feet of snow that piled up on it?

The only excuse to walk on your lawn until it does dry out is if you have to go and get the bird feeders and the bird seed and make sure they are put away in a bear-proof location. You can bet if I am seeing lawn, bears are up and looking about for that quick meal fix after a long winter of hibernating. Nothing satisfies that bear hunger better than a bunch of sunflower seeds. Those in your feeder can be smelled a mile or so away. Get it locked up today. It's the only fair thing to do. Once a bear becomes a nuisance bear, it is put down.

In addition to possible bear sightings there is no question that this week a few people will be sighting daffodil and tulip plants. It's a bit early for seeing their flowers, I would think. Usually this means that deck containers should be free of snow and present some interesting possibilities. Either move them inside and plant directly into them, or consider putting some onion sets and sweet peas in them where they are.

Indoors, it is time to plant cole crops: kale, broccoli, Brussels sprouts and cabbages. These are all easy to grow from seed. They are the only plants started indoors that shouldn't have seed rolled in mycorrhizal fungi. They don't form mycorrhizae with fungi.

Don't get carried away and plant entire packages of cole crops all at once. Stagger the plantings, say a few seeds every four days or so. That way you will have a longer harvest instead of everything coming ripe at once. It is hard to get a family to eat 25 cabbages in a week.

Use individual containers if you have the space. Each seedling can remain until transplanting outdoors. If you plant any other way, the seedlings will most probably need transplanting indoors into larger quarters. This is a lot of work, so skip it. Just make sure the containers, be they paper or styrofoam cups to plastic or clay pots, have adequate -- meaning great -- drainage.

Tomatoes should be started now, too. You need an outdoor greenhouse for most varieties, though there are some that will grow in the outdoor garden. Unfortunately, they are not the biggest or best-tasting, but if you don't have a greenhouse, they will do. Look for names like "polar" and "Siberian."

On the flower front, this is the last week to start snapdragons. These germinate when the seeds are exposed to water and light. Do not cover them and grow them at cool temperatures. Look for the tall varieties that you can't buy as starts.

Cosmos are up for planting this week as well. There are lots of kinds, but the large, purple standards work the best here if we have a sunny summer. And we will. Again, plant these up in individual containers so you don't have to mess with repotting into larger containers up before transplanting outdoors. Pinch Cosmos back after they get four real leaves.

Tuberous begonias should be started as should gladioli corms and dahlia tubers. What this means to those who are new to gardening in Alaska, is that it is time to start visiting local nurseries and buying stuff. We have a great collection of nurseries. Each has its own "thing." However, we never seem to have enough to go around so the early bird gardener gets the good stuff. It is important, therefore, to start making visits to nurseries part of your weekly habit. It is, after all, spring. I know; I saw lawn.

Jeff Lowenfels is a member of the Garden Writers Hall of Fame. You can reach him at teamingwithmicrobes.com.

#### Garden calendar

Alaska Master Gardener Conference: April 14, Marion Owen from Kodiak, Rita Joe Shultz from Homer, Dr. Linda Caulker Scott from Washington, and lots of other great speakers. You do not have to be a master gardener to attend. It is a great conference for all gardeners. Go to www.alaskamastergardeners.org for details and sign up. \$75 and well worth it.

Classes at Alaska Mill and Feed: April 7, "Composting with Worms" with Joan Dimond at 10 a.m. and "Potato Growing for New Gardeners" with Jay Dearborn at 1 p.m. April 14, "Raised Beds" at 10 a.m. and "Roses in Alaska" with Dani Haviland at 1 p.m. Classes are free. Call to register. 276-6016.

Vegetables to start from seed: Broccoli, cauliflower, kale, cabbage, head lettuce, pepper. • Flowers to start: Achimenes, begonias, and dahlias (tubers), brachyscome, dianthus, Stock, Lockspar, cosmos, snapdragons

Herbs to start from seed: Sorre

Nurseries: They are open and you should visit

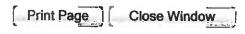
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Yard work: It is time to pick up after rover. Wait any longer and you will be sorry. Frozen is better.

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#### In theory, snow should mean warmer soil

JEFF LOWENFELS (03/15/12 00:22:16)

So the big debate these days is the impact of all this year's snow on the garden season. It is, of course, impossible to tell exactly what the impact will be, but there is some science that helps us make some pretty good predictions.

I mentioned on Saturday's Garden Party Radio Show (KBYR, AM-700 from 10-noon or www.kbyr.com) that every year I can remember, there have been daffodils blooming in Anchorage by April 15. That doesn't mean our yards are absolutely clear of snow at that date, just that there are enough bare patches for daffodils to not only green up, but actually flower. But it does mean there are pretty good odds the same thing will happen this year.

How can this be, the skeptical ask. There are several feet of snow in some places, and the ground must be frozen deep. It is the depth of the snow that gives way to the truth. Those individual snow flakes have all sorts of air spaces, and when you pile them up as in a good snowfall, the blanket formed is a terrific insulator because of all the trapped air.

How terrific? The general rule is that the temperature at the bottom of a snow dump (that is the soil) increases 2 degrees for every inch of snow. I am not really sure if the math matches up when there are 125 inches, but the soil temperature after a nine inch accumulation of snow at 14 below has been measured to be 28 degrees. That is a huge difference. Especially if you are a plant or microbe in the soil.

Understand that the heat of the earth, especially in the fall, moves up through the soil. When we have a good snow cover early, the soil never really freezes very deep. If there is no snow cover, many will remember, the frost line drops deep. This is why we are worrying about roofs caving in this spring as opposed to pipes freezing in the ground.

This all leads to the conclusion that the soil is not frozen very deep so if we have a quick thaw, we will be able to get those onions, peas and sweet peas in the ground a lot earlier than if we had none of this white stuff.

I've written before that snow used to be called "poor man's fertilizer" because it contains a bit of nitrogen that can actually be used by microbes and plants. The snow also deposits sulfur, though not as much as it used to thanks to stricter air pollution controls. Still, its a good addition to our lawns and they will green up quicker if we get a fast melt so they can dry a bit before it all runs off into the water system, Even Mother Nature pollutes sometimes.

Speaking of polluting and snow melt, the good folks at the Anchorage Water Ways Council, shepherds of our many creeks and streams, suggest we be very careful this time of year when it comes to using snow melt products. They are correct.

Let me point out that these products really are not lawn fertilizers as some are lead to believe and they do not help the flower beds that line your icy walks. You don't really want this stuff in your soil. If you must use a snow melt product where melting snow is likely to take some into soils,

magnesium chloride-based products are the closest thing to a best. Sand is better.

The problem you want to avoid as a gardener/yardener is runoff. First into your yard and then down the street into the storm drain and then into our creeks. This stuff can kill plants, especially when folks incorrectly believe more means it will melt faster. Wonder what it does to riparian habitat? For goodness sake, read the label of the package. This stuff is corrosive to you, your soil and your environment.

Of course, there is always judicious use of sand and hand chipping and clearing. Never apply snow melt on top of snow. Clear the snow first. And it really helps if you can get the stuff down in critical locations before a snow.

In any case, by April 15, some of us will be lucky enough to be looking at daffodils and all of us will be putting this winter's snow behind us.

#### Garden calendar

To start indoors even without lights: Dahlias, Gladioli, tuberous begonias

Stored fuchsia: Time to bring them out into light and warmer weather.

**Stored pelargoniums:** See if yours made it. Start at the tops of plants and cut back the stems until you hit the live cells. Pot up survivors.

**Seeds to start:** Lobelia (20 days to germinate but do not cover as seeds need light), snapdragons (10 days and seeds need light, cool), carnation (20), verbena (20), pelargonium, salvia, pansies.

Herbs to start: Lavender, lovage, lemon balm and it is not too late for rhodochiton.

Jeff Lowenfels is a member of the Garden Writers Hall of Fame. You can reach him at teamingwithmicrobes.com.

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Lowenfels: Dreaming of a pesticide-free Christmas

### Don't be tempted to start planting outside yet

Published: May 2, 2012

By JEFF LOWENFELS — Gardening

The big temptation when the night temps seem to stop dipping below freezing is to plant everything outdoors. Obviously, the experienced Alaskan gardener knows this is a big, big mistake. It is way too early. Do not give in to your desires. We have a few more weeks before the birch leaves are the size of a squirrel's ear, which is the sign that we really won't have any more frosts until the end of summer.

Even then, it is too early for most things to go into the ground because the soil is simply too cool. There are some exceptions. These are the plants (or seeds) that you can put into the ground right now: peas (including sweet peas), spinach, onion sets, kale, chard and mustard. If you must plant something this weekend, limit yourself to these unless you find something a local nursery says can be planted.

So what else is a gardener to do while we wait for Planting Out on Memorial Day Weekend or a week or so beforehand? I assume you have carefully cleared off mulch from the perennial beds and, if your lawn is dry enough, mowed over the winter's debris. Really, cleaning up is about all you should be doing in the yard.

You could (and should) spend a bit of time getting your gear in order. Repair hoses, change washers and make sure none of your watering tools leak. Toss out any that do not work or leak. Consider setting up some way to get warmer water to your plants, either a storage barrel in the sun or actually using hot water from the laundry room.

Oil the handles of all wooden tools with a good vegetable oil to keep them in shape or consider painting handles bright colors so you can easily find the tools to which they are attached. Coat metal parts with WD-40. A bit of sand paper on rough handles is a good idea as well.

This is also the time of year to make sure your mowers are working properly and, since you've hopefully used the blade to clean the debris, consider getting it sharpened. This will reduce the brown tips that occur when you cut the lawn with a mower that has a dull one. If you have a push reel mower, oil it up. Power mowers, which happen to pollute three times more than your car, should be tuned up.

Wander around the yard with a pad of paper and make the plan that I am always trying to get you to make. This is useful when you go to nurseries to buy plants. It doesn't have to be complicated, too scale or even pretty. Just something that tells you what you need and where so you don't over- or under-buy plants. Take it to the nurseries you should be visiting this weekend and use it.

Finally, a quasi apology. Sometimes my organic zeal gets the best of me! I dissed the Muni/FWS rain garden program a week or so back. Under this program the government helps you build a rain garden on your property. I said it was a gimmicky trend here in southcentral where every garden is a rain garden! I guess that is not entirely fair as the idea is to help runoff of water. If you are interested, check out the program at anchorageraingardens.com.

Jeff Lowenfels is a member of the Garden Writers Hall of Fame. You can reach him at teamingwithmicrobes.com.

Garden calendar FLOWER SEEDS TO START: MARIGOLDS, CALENDULA, NASTURTIUMS. FLOWERS TO PLANT OUTDOORS: SWEET PEAS, EITHER SEEDS OR PLANTS. VEGGIES TO PLANT OUTDOORS: PEAS (INCLUDING SWEET PEAS), SPINACH, ONION SETS, KALE, CHARD AND MUSTARD RHUBARB: COVER WITH A BOX OR BUCKET TO SPEED UP GROWTH (IF YOU MUST FOR SOME REASON). GARDEN PARTY ON KBYR RADIO: WE ARE OFF THIS WEEKEND. BACK NEXT SATURDAY FROM 10 A.M. TO NOON AS USUAL.

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Be responsible in battling those pesky weeds

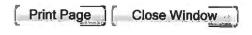
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#### Organics is a gardening 'craze' that's totally sane

Jeff Lowenfels (04/19/12 07:44:14)

When I lecture Outside, people often ask, "What gardening craze are Alaskans into this year?" For some reason, gardening crazes are a hot topic of discussion among gardeners these days.

I've mentioned the chicken craze. People are enamored with the idea that they can raise their own chickens and harvest their own fresh eggs. As a result, there are a dozen new books on the subject, chickens and chicken paraphernalia are appearing in some nurseries as are all sorts of inventions to help make the chore of keeping chicks easier and less damaging on the yard. For example, there is a moveable coop so the yardener can fertilize the lawn without burning it with too much chicken poop.

Then there is the "Meadow" craze, an off-shoot of an underlying gardening theme that just about everyone other than Pennington and Scotts seems to be promoting: Get rid of lawns. I remember this craze in its last incarnation: prairie gardens. I suppose folks in places that never had prairie didn't understand and so the more romantic and generalized concept of a "meadow" has caused the shift. (Am I that old that I remember when this used be the "wildflower" craze and people were throwing down bags of wildflower seeds, whatever "wildflower" really means?)

Rain gardening is big this year Outside. I know we have a grant program for rain gardening here in southcentral, but I am not sure why. Rain gardens? To capture rainfall so that precious water isn't wasted watering gardens and lawns? Really? Here in Alaska we do not need a grant program to get people to construct gardens in the low spots of yards. A waste of taxpayer money, in my opinion since given our weather, all our gardens are rain gardens.

The biggest craze going on right now in the rest of the country, however, would have to be planting natives. Native plants are those that were in the area you garden before other gardeners came and brought with them favorite plants from former homes. This movement is not just about stopping the introduction of invasive plants, though that surely has to be the source of the movement. The introduction of plants that unwittingly spread and take over native plants will be a subject of another column, but know it is an extremely serious, long range problem for the Alaskan Ecosystem. Still it is not an Alaskan gardening trend.

In any case, it doesn't seem that Alaskan gardeners would be too keen on the idea of sticking with an only native palette. Perhaps this is because these plants are all around us on the vast amount of public lands here. Or it might just be that they are too easy to grow, lack enough color or might give the impression to neighbors that you are a lazy yardener. The big exception would be alpines and rock garden natives.

No, it seems to me that while we may dabble in these crazes, our big movement is "organics" and based on my observations, we were and still are at the forefront of this movement. Compost, compost teas, animal and plant meals for fertilizers, no rototilling and, no matter how reluctant, a grudging willingness to start accepting dandelions and clover in lawn seem to be prevailing.

Now some readers still bridle at the thought that Alaska is going organic in its gardening, but these

are a dying breed (perhaps even due to the very chemicals some of us use) as they will be in the lower 48. Scotts can try all the thick-accented actors it wants to promote products that kill off the life in the soil and reduce soil structure. Bayer can push chemical science all it wants. In the end, the bees and you and me are going to win, however.

My prediction is they are going to start heavily concentrating on their organic products. This will happen because gardeners are recognizing the damage that we do using "unnatural" products in our yards. And most of us, are not stupid. We read the articles about products like Roundup and its dangers, not to pick on just one company. Best of all, we have educated ourselves so we realize when you use a chemical fertilizer you end up having to do lots more work. Most important, we are Alaskans and we are sick and tired of people Outside telling us we are rapers and pillagers. Demonstrating that this is not the case starts, it seems to me, in our own yards.

All of this is my opinion, of course. But what isn't is the fact that organic gardening starts at the beginning of the season. Alaskan gardeners should make sure that they buy organic soils and composts in which to start seeds. Real organic products, not those that simply say "natural" or use the word "organic" without agency or organizational certification.

From the start of the season, we should all be using organic foods to feed the microbes in soil and compost and not chemical fertilizers. It is not hard. All of our nurseries have recognized our organic gardening bent and they all carry the kinds of things we, as responsible, organic gardeners, need.

Jeff Lowenfels is a member of the Garden Writers Hall of Fame. You can reach him at teamingwithmicrobes.com and hear him on the Garden Party from 10 a.m.-noon on Saturdays on KBYR, 700 AM.

#### Garden calendar

Flower seeds to start in individual containers: Nemophelia (grow cool), canary bird vine, nasturtium, silene, mignonette, arctic poppy, California poppy, sunflower, morning glory, sweat peas, Shirley poppy, Marigold, Balsam, Zinnia, Clarkia, calendula

Vegetables to start from seed in individual containers: Cucumbers, squash

Flowers to start from seed: Nemesia, scabiosa, sweet alyssum, bachelor buttons

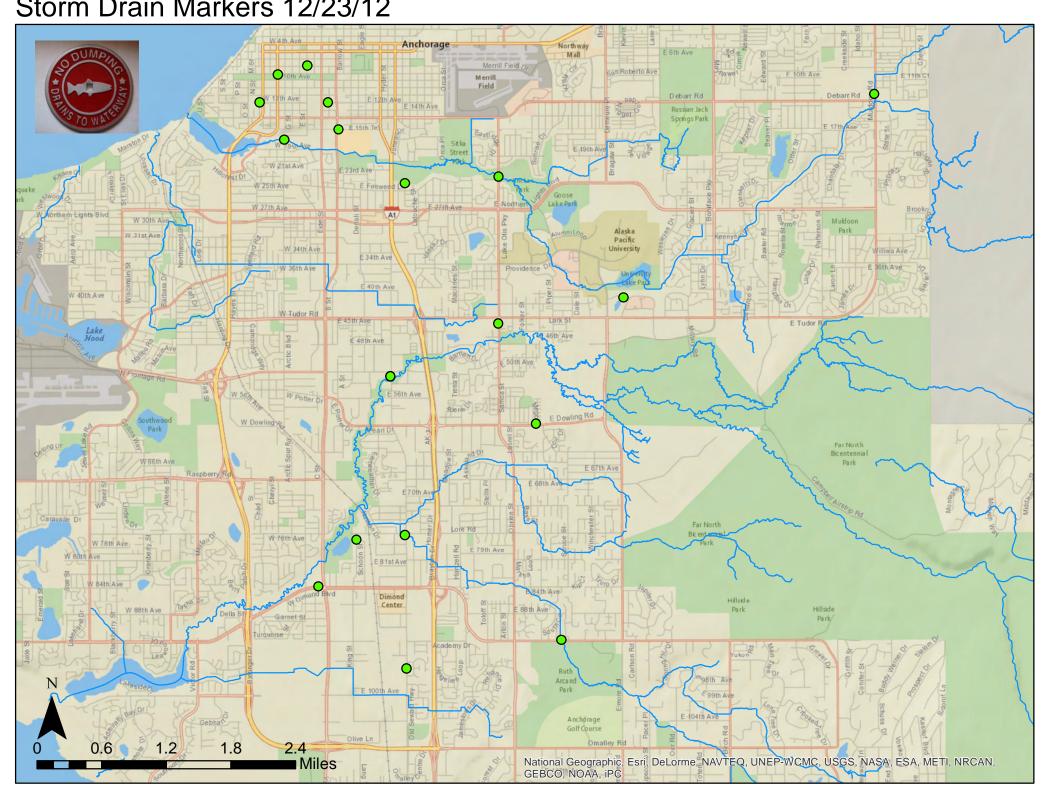
**Yard:** Remove mulch from garden beds if the snow has melted off them, but save it to put back on once the soil warms up. And be careful of new growth under the mulch. Gentle is the rule.

Transplant: Tomatoes and any seeds started that are showing any roots from the drainage holes.

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### Storm Drain Markers 12/23/12



#### **AWC Board of Directors' Ballot**

Pete Pritchard - President

Robert Shipley - Vice President

Christine Geis - Treasurer

Scott McKim - Secretary

Birgit Hagedorn - Director

Dave Trudgen - Director

Craig Valentine - Director

Isaac Watkins - Director

Sarah Warnock - Director

Carolyn Kinneen - Director

Sammie Shephard - Youth Director

#### **AWC Staff**

Cherie Northon - Executive Director Matt Kays - Program Director Thom Eley - Research Associate Vangie Wight - Admin Assistant Nathan Welker - Intern



ANCHORAGE WATERWAYS COUNCIL
P.O. Box 241774
Anchorage AK 99524
907 272-7335
anchoragecreeks.org



From the Local to the Global:

It Goes with the Flow

Anchorage Waterways Council's

Annual Meeting

Wednesday, Oct. 10, 5:30 pm

BP Energy Center



#### **PROGRAM**

5:30 pm - doors open

5:45 - 6:15 pm - AWC Business Meeting and Election of Board

6:15 - 6:30 pm - break

6:30 - Panel Discussion moderated by Peter Briggs

6:30 Cherie Northon - "The problem starts at our doorstep"

6:45 Thomas Novotny, M.D. - "Environmental impacts of

cigarette butt waste"

7:00 John Kennish - "Plastic waste as a source of

contamination in Anchorage waterways"

7:15 Chris Pallister - "Marine debris on Alaska's shoreline"

7:30 Thom Eley - "From the local to the global: it all goes

with the flow"

7:45 - Door Prize Drawing, Wrap-up and Audience Questions

ANCHORAGE WATERWAYS COUNCIL (AWC) is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) corporation whose mission is *to protect, enhance, and restore the waterways, wetlands and associated uplands of Anchorage.* It was started in 1984 by citizens who were concerned about protecting our urban water resources. Funding for AWC consists of grants, donations, memberships, and contracts. AWC would like to thank the speakers for their time and expertise on this evening's important topic. And, a hearty thanks to the many AWC volunteers who donate hundreds of hours every year to our programs: CEMP (Citizen's Environmental Monitoring Program), Creeks as Classrooms, Scoop the Poop, Creek Issues, Stormwater Education and Outreach, Creek Cleanup and Adopt-A-Stream.

Major program funding comes from the Municipality of Anchorage, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, ConocoPhillips, the Bullitt Foundation, Royal Bank of Canada, Aveda Corporation, Cook InletKeeper, Bristol Alliance of Companies, BP, CIRI and Arctic Wire and Rope.

#### SPEAKER BIOS

**Cherie Northon, PhD** - Executive Director (E.D.) of AWC. Dr. Northon earned her BA, MA and PhD from UC Berkeley in geography. She is an accomplished cartographer and has taught a variety of geography and cartography courses at UC Berkeley and UAA. She became the E.D. of AWC in 2010 after several years working there as educational director and research associate.

Thomas Novotny, MD, MPH - Professor of Global Health at San Diego State University and the University of California San Diego. He graduated from the University of Nebraska Medical Center and Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and has served as a family physician, a CDC Epidemic Intelligence Service Officer, a medical epidemiologist in the Office on Smoking and Health, and CDC Liaison to the World Bank. Currently he co-directs a unique joint PhD program in Global Health at SDSU/UCSD, and is founder of the Cigarette Butt Pollution Project (www.cigwaste.com). Thank you to UAA and AWC board member Dr. Birgit Hagedorn for sharing the costs to bring Dr. Novotny to Anchorage.

**John Kennish, PhD.** - Professor of chemistry at UAA for over 30 years. He received his BA in chemistry from Rutgers University, his MS in chemistry from Shippensburg State University, and his PhD in environmental analytical chemistry from Portland State University, and teaches courses in general, analytical and environmental chemistry. In addition to restructuring the undergraduate programs at UAA, he also developed and managed the Applied Science Engineering and Engineering Laboratory (ASET) from 2000-2005.

Chris Pallister, JD - President and co-founder of Gulf of Alaska Keeper. He received his BS in natural science from UAA, a JD from Lewis and Clark College School of Law, and an LLM in law and marine affairs from University of Washington School of Law. He has spent the past 25 years "knocking" around Prince William Sound and the northern Gulf of Alaska trying to protect and conserve these irreplaceable wilderness areas. (www.goak.org)

**Thom Eley, PhD**- Reseach Associate at AWC. He holds a BS and MS in wildlife ecology and oceanography from Humboldt State University, an MA and PhD in maritime geography from UC Berkeley, and has taught at UC Berkeley, University of West Florida, University of Alaska's Rural Campuses, and at UAA. Additionally he has worked for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Currently he is overseeing the AWC Creek Report Card project and the Citizen's Environmental Monitoring Program (CEMP).

Displays were created by Regan Brooks, Ocean Conservancy Volunteer (rpbrooks12@gmail.com) and Scott McKim's PACE group at Begich Middle School. ALPAR also graciously provided a display.

#### Top Ten List of Ways to Reduce Your Plastic Use



- 1. Recycle and/or re-use all plastics.
- 2. Bring your own cloth bags to stores (grocery, liquor, farmer's market.
- 3. Avoid drinks in plastic bottles—carry a reusable metal container (stainless is best) for water or your favorite coffee.
- 4. Purchase laundry detergents in boxes rather than plastic containers.
- 5. Use matches or refillable lighters instead of plastic disposable lighters, such as BIC.
- 6. Don't use plastic eating utensils or plates (unless they are compostable)—use the real thing.
- 7. Look for foods and other items that are packaged in paper rather than plastic (baguettes, chips, toilet paper).
- 8. Carry containers to restaurants that only provide take-out in Styrofoam.
- 9. Use alternative methods for saving foods in the fridge: re-used plastic containers (cream cheese, yogurt, etc.) or aluminum foil.
- 10. Buy music CDs that are packaged in cardboard or buy your music online.

### Top The Eleven List of Ways to Help Reduce Water Pollution

- 1. Seal your house in order to lower the thermostat and reduce CO releases into the atmosphere and ocean.
- 2. Drive less, walk, bike, or take public transportation.
- 3. Use less water in your house, watering your yard, and for washing down walkways, etc.
- 4. Dispose of prescription drugs safely—NOT down the toilet.
- 5. Use a car wash that recycles and filters washwater.
- 6. Get your yard off of chemicals. Mulch your cuttings, plant native vegetation, and think about installing a rain garden.
- 7. Keep your vehicle in good order to reduce or eliminate fluid drips.
- 8. Scoop the Poop! Clean up after your pet when out walking as well as in your yard.
- 9. Reduce or eliminate exfoliating soaps, body washes and skin scrubs that get their grit from tiny plastic particles that wash down the drain and through the sewer system.
- 10. If you need snow melt chemical products, use them sparingly, follow directions (more is NOT better), and look at the ingredients. Magnesium chloride is one of the less damaging. Shovel as much snow as you can and consider aggregate for traction.
- 11. Businesses can establish smoking stations to encourage proper disposal of cigarette butt waste.

#### PRIOR TO ANY EXCAVATION OR GROUND DISTURBING WORK:

- Ensure you know how to safely operate the equipment.
- Call "811" for the "Locates" on underground power, water, sewer, gas, electrical, cable, or phone lines BEFORE you dig.
- Check to see if you need any permits before you begin work. The reverse side of this card provides information on the most commonly needed for small projects.
  - Watch overhead power lines when operating equipment.
  - Do not cut or disturb any trees with nesting birds in them.
- Familiarize yourself with Anchorage's creeks and tributaries as some resemble difches more than creeks.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

- Almost every creek and river in the Municipality is anadromous (salmon spawning), so they are protected under Alaska's statute known as the Anadromous Fish Act (AS 16.05.871)
- It is a violation of the Clean Water Act to dump or plow pollutants, such as soil, debris, vegeteation, aggregate, or snow, into any creek or down any storm drain.
- ♠ "Dewatering" (removal of excess water) must be properly managed and not discharged into storm drains or other areas where it may flow into a waterway.
- Because storm drains discharge directly to waterways, without treatment by the Municipal sewer system, do not pour any paint, chemicals, gas, oil, or other pollutants into them or creeks.
- When washing equipment after use, please hose it down on a pervious surface (such as lawn or gravel), or use a commercial spray wash station because that water is treated by the Municipal sewer system.
- Anchorage Municipal Code regulates activities within 25 ' of any stream or watercourse. Disturbances include clearing of vegetation; grading, fill or excavation; location of buildings; and channel alteration.

#### WHERE YOU CAN CHECK FOR PERMIT & REGULATION INFORMATION:

• Municipal: If ground disturbance is 500 sq. ft. or greater, check permit criteria and storm water pollution control plans at:

#### www.muni.org/Departments/OCPD/development/BSD/Handouts/ handoutag21.pdf

♦ State: Alaska State statutes require notification and permit approval from the Alaska Department of Fish & Game before altering or affecting the "natural flow or bed" of a waterbody or stream. For full information, see:

#### www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=habitatregulations.prohibited

♠ A useful, comprehensive guide for the state of Alaska that covers all levels of permits has been published by the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation at:

#### dec.alaska.gov/water/wnpspc/stormwater/Guidance.html

• Federal: Filling of waterways and wetlands is regulated by the Army Corps of Engineers. Information is at:

#### www.poa.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory/Permits.aspx



Thank you for taking the time to read and use this information. By adhering to these regulations, you help ensure that our waterways and fish habitat will not be damaged by sediment, fill, and other pollutants.

If you would like additional information, please visit our website or contact us at the listing below.

Anchorage Waterways Council P.O. Box 241774 Anchorage AK 99524 907-272-7335

Website: anchoragecreeks.org Email: awc@anchoragecreeks.org



anchoragecreeks.org

BEASIPER HERO! SCOP IP AFTER 



# STEWARDSHIP CREEK CLEANUP - MAY 19, 2012

CLEANUP: 9 AM - NOON - SUPPLY SITES LOCATED ALL OVER TOWN CELEBRATION: NOON - 2 PM - VALLEY OF THE MOON PARK FEATURING FREE FOOD, FABULOUS PRIZES, AND MUSIC BY AMY LOU! ANCHORAGE WATERWAYS COUNCIL - ANCHORAGE CREEKS.ORG



**EPA 841-N-12-004** 

#### **Did You Know?**

Maintaining the integrity of natural biological and physical systems provides economic benefits through ecosystem service provision.

Degradation of riparian ecosystems can cause negative economic impacts far from the altered site.

Protecting healthy watersheds reduces capital costs to supply clean drinking water and to treat waste water.

## Healthy Watersheds support healthy economies!

## Protecting Healthy Watersheds...

- --Lowers drinking water treatment costs
- --Avoids expensive restoration activities
- --Sustains revenuegenerating recreational and tourism opportunities
- --Minimizes vulnerability and damage from natural disasters
- --Provides critical ecosystem services at a fraction of the cost for engineered services
- --Increases property value premiums
- --Supports millions of jobs nationwide
- --Ensures we leave a foundation for a vibrant economy for generations to come

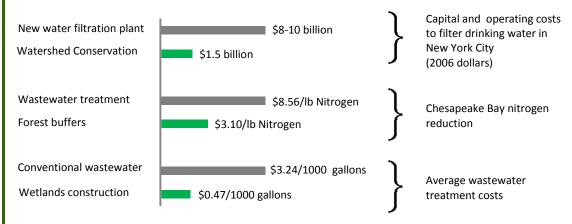
## The Economic Benefits of Protecting Healthy Watersheds

April 2012

#### Protecting our nation's healthy watersheds makes economic sense

Healthy intact watersheds provide many ecosystem services that are necessary for our social and economic well-being. These services include water filtration and storage, air filtration, carbon storage, nutrient cycling, soil formation, recreation, food and timber. Many of these services have not been monetized and therefore the economic contributions of healthy intact ecosystems are often under-valued when making land use decisions. Ecosystem services provided by healthy watersheds are difficult to replace and most often very expensive to engineer (see chart). An engineered ecosystem service replacement may only provide a fraction of the services provided by highly functioning natural systems.

Preventing impairments in healthy watersheds protects valuable ecosystem services that provide economic benefits to society and prevent expensive replacement and restoration costs. Maintaining riparian connectivity and natural processes in the landscape provide a supporting network for ecological integrity, ensuring the sustainable and cost effective provision of clean water over time.



Watershed protection is less expensive than building new "grey" infrastructure Hanson, Craig et al. 2011. Forests for water: exploring payments for watershed services in the US south." World Resources Institute Issue Brief, Issue 2, Pp15.

#### How is monetary value assigned to an ecosystem service?

Environmentalists and economists frequently suggest that there would be a greater incentive for environmental stewardship if ecosystem services were valued in a manner that reflects the large contribution they have to our economy and society. Assigning a monetary value to a particular service can be very complicated due to issues of scale and the complexity of ecological interactions that make isolating the economic effects of one service difficult. Although challenging, valuation is seen as essential for encouraging conservation. Economists have developed innovative methods that attempt to quantify ecosystem services and the economic benefits of conservation.

Instead of developing values for individual landscape features, such as a wetland, a healthy stream reach or headwaters, many economists have found that holistic valuation techniques that monetize a range of services provided by a landscape to be a more effective communication tool. At times, value is measured indirectly through payment for ecosystem services (PES) programs that compensate landowners for conserving land so that others may benefit from the multitude of ecosystem services the land supplies. Value can also be estimated by citizen's willingness to pay (WTP) to use or protect a land area or ecosystem service.

Another common indirect valuation method is the estimation of avoided costs to society due to protection activities. Cost avoidance scenarios are used to communicate the costs associated with losing ecosystem services and replacing them. These scenarios are commonly used to show costs saved from the prevention of flood damage or impairments that would occur if a floodplain was not intact.

#### Protecting healthy watersheds avoids future costs and benefits communities

Investing in the maintenance of healthy watersheds can significantly lower costs associated with water treatment and flooding. In a study of 27 US water suppliers, researchers found that protecting forested watersheds used for drinking water sources can reduce capital, operational and maintenance costs for drinking water treatment. They found that watersheds with greater percentages of protected forest correlate to fewer water treatment expenditures (see table).

Retaining high quality natural green infrastructure minimizes property damage and clean-up costs from flood damage and storm surges. Forested cover prevents runoff from moving rapidly across the landscape and allows it to slowly infiltrate into the soil, reducing erosion and high flows. Intact wetlands store and capture excess water. For example, wetlands surrounding the Boston area have been estimated to prevent \$42,111 of flood damage per acre of intact wetland. A healthy watershed will reduce the area and impact of a flood, minimize the economic burden on public infrastructure, reduce erosion and water treatment costs and can restore natural groundwater recharge.

Floods cause an average of \$8 billion in damage every year in the United States

Healthy watersheds that maintain protected riparian corridors are expected to be more resilient to the anticipated effects of climate change. Expenses associated with recovery from extreme weather impacts increased by a factor of six between 1997 and 2007. This rising trend is expected to continue. Floods now cause an average of \$8 billion in damage every year in the U.S. The most efficient way to avoid excessive future costs is to increase the flexibility of ecosystems now so that they may function and retain resiliency under a wider range of climatic conditions. Riparian areas

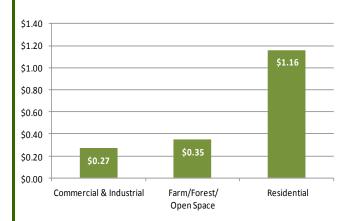
Share of forested watershed	Treatment costs per 3,000 m <sup>3</sup>	Average annual treatment costs	Cost increase over 60% forest cover
60%	\$29	\$297,110	
50%	\$36	\$369,380	24%
40%	\$46	\$465,740	57%
30%	\$58	\$586,190	97%
20%	\$74	\$746,790	151%
10%	\$91	\$923,450	211%

— that are hydrologically connected to their landscape can maintain their functionality, are more adaptable to change, and better equipped to handle large storm events.

Future costs associated with the loss of natural intact systems and the services they provide may include constructing new infrastructure to manage and treat more stormwater and drinking water and greater clean-up costs from natural disasters. Comparing future adaptation costs to current short-term profits from land conversion can accurately reflect the ecological and economic consequences of land use decisions.

Percent forest cover and predicted water treatment costs based on 27 US water supply system, based on treatment of 22 million gallons per day, the average daily production of water suppliers surveyed. For more information, see *Postel, Sandra L. and Barton H. Thompson. 2005. Watershed protection: capturing the benefits of nature's water supply services. Natural Resources Forum.* Issue 29, Pp 98-108.

#### Economic and ecological benefits of conservation development



Conservation development preserves open space and maintains landscape connectivity, while clustering development to the least environmentally sensitive areas. Traditional development requires intensive and costly additions of grey infrastructure to connect new neighborhoods to road and utility networks. In a review of 98 communities across 21 states, researchers found that for every dollar received from residential development revenues, an average of \$1.16 was spent on providing services to the new community by the local government (see figure). Conservation development provides economic benefits to communities because it consumes less land, needs fewer roads, resources and utility infrastructure. Additionally, many studies have shown that people are willing to pay a premium to live in conservation developments; these premiums provide greater revenues to local communities.

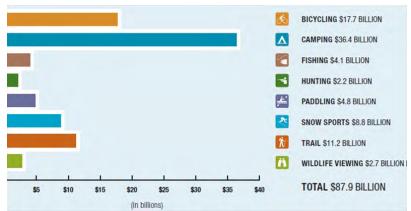
The median cost to provide public services to different land uses per dollar of revenue raised (n=98 communities)

Reprinted with permission from Crompton, John L. 2007. "The impact of parks and open spaces on property taxes." The Economic Benefits of Land Conservation. Ed. Constance T.F.de Brun. The Trust for Public Land. Pp1-12.

#### Recreation and tourism

Recreation and tourism are billion-dollar industries in the United States. According to the American Sportfishing Association, there are over 30 million anglers in the U.S., generating over one million jobs and over \$45 billion in retail sales annually. Healthy intact ecosystems are essential to the viability of both commercial and recreational fishing. More people in the U.S. fish (30 million) than play golf (24.2 million) or play tennis (10.2 million).

In a 2003 study, the Outdoor Industry Foundation found that the outdoor recreation economy contributed \$730 billion annually to the economy, supported 6.5 million jobs and generated \$88 billion in state and federal tax



Federal and state tax revenues generated by recreational activity Outdoor Industry Foundation 2003

revenues. Wildlife watchers in The Chesapeake Bay region spend about \$3 billion annually on trip-related expenses and equipment; this estimate does not include job creation and multiplier effects from these activities. Rural areas near forest land and other types of open space often depend on tourist spending to help support their local economies. Outdoor recreation and eco-tourism are large economic forces whose foundation rely on the maintenance of healthy watersheds and the protection of open space.

More people in the United States fish (30 million) than play golf (24.2 million) or play tennis (10.2 million)

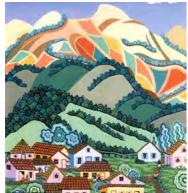
#### **Property value premiums**

People value living near healthy clean water. Studies from Maine and Minnesota show that home values declined by tens of thousands of dollars with declines in water quality. The aggregate effect of an increase in property values attributed to good water quality on a single lake equates to millions of dollars per lake in these areas. Further, recent studies around the country (e.g., in Colorado, Pennsylvania, Oregon, Maryland, Ohio and Virginia) have shown increased property values and tax revenues from properties near open space, green space, walking/biking trails, or riparian areas. Even in tight economic times, a relatively higher premium is placed on properties with access to nature. For example, a current study of five counties in southeastern Pennsylvania shows that open space is attributed with adding \$16.3 billion to the regional housing stock value. Clean and healthy waterfronts boost property values and revenues for adjacent retail and commercial businesses, too. Waterfront business properties are attractive to customers and have greater property value premiums when they are near clean waters. Preserving healthy watersheds and protecting open space while providing access to people has the potential to boost local revenues while providing attractive amenities.

#### Quality of life and health benefits

The EPA and other public health organizations have long acknowledged the link between water and air quality to human health. When people think of human health and the environment, they often think of the negative health effects from an impacted environment, rather than the positive impacts that a healthy environment can have on human well-being.

There are social and health benefits related to the proximity of people to nature, parks, walking trails and biking trails—both in the form of physical exercise and mental stress relief. Forests outside of urban areas significantly contribute to human health in urban areas. These health benefits have the potential to provide significant cost savings in health expenditures. People who exercise regularly and seek stress relief are generally healthier, have fewer insurance claims and spend less time in hospitals, thus their societal health care costs are lower.



Forests outside
of urban areas
significantly
contribute to
human health in
urban areas...
reducing health
expenditures

## About Healthy Watersheds

EPA's Healthy
Watersheds Initiative
(HWI) was developed to
protect the nation's
remaining healthy
watersheds, prevent them
from becoming impaired,
and accelerate our
restoration successes

The HWI complements existing EPA program efforts by focusing on protection of high quality watersheds. These healthy areas are identified through holistic aquatic ecosystem assessments. Protection and restoration priorities are developed through these assessments to strategically implement protective actions that are both economically and ecologically beneficial.

#### We can't afford not to protect our nation's remaining healthy watersheds!

If you would like to receive a copy of a white paper on the economic benefits of protecting healthy watersheds or learn more about Healthy Watersheds at EPA.

Contact Laura Gabanski: <u>Gabanski.Laura@epa.gov</u>

Visit our website www.epa.gov/healthywatersheds

#### People support protecting our nation's environment—it's good for the economy

Citizens across the United States have overwhelmingly voiced their support of environmental protection: between 1994 and 2004 over 75% of conservation referenda on ballots were passed and a 2011 Gallup poll shows that nearly 80% of people worry about pollution of lakes, rivers, streams and drinking water.

The United States has spent on average \$1 billion per year on stream restoration since 1990. These numbers are expected to rise as communities work to mitigate environmental problems. Restoration efforts are less successful without a supporting ecological network of healthy watersheds. Protecting highly functioning aquatic ecosystems is a cost-effective way to sustainably provide the multitude of services required to meet society's needs. Studies show that the total economic value of intact systems exceeds that of lands converted for intensive economic uses over time.

Understanding the contribution that healthy watersheds provide to local economies is an important tool for land stewardship. Strengthening protection of high quality waters or diverting new development from these sensitive areas can have a positive economic and social impact and maintain these benefits for generations to come.

#### **Selected Publications and Resources**

Ecosystem services provided by conserving forest land

Forests, water and people: Drinking water supply and forest lands in the Northeast and Midwest United States

http://na.fs.fed.us/watershed/fwp\_preview.shtm

This analysis by the US Forest Service highlights the connection between forests and the protection of surface drinking water quality.

Investing in protecting healthy watersheds avoids future costs

Forests for water: Exploring payments for watershed services in the U.S. South <a href="http://www.wri.org/publication/forests-for-water">http://www.wri.org/publication/forests-for-water</a>

This World Resources Institute study from 2011 explores the use of landowner compensation to protect natural resources and for avoided costs.

Green infrastructure: Smart conservation for the 21st century

Mark A. Benedict and Edward T. McMahon

http://www.greeninfrastructure.net/sites/greeninfrastructure.net/files/GI\_RR.pdf

This 2002 publication lays out the natural green infrastructure concept of protecting ecological hubs and corridors and discusses how protecting these areas avoids future costs.

Revenues generated in recreation and tourism sectors from healthy watersheds

**American Sportfishing Association** 

http://www.asafishing.org/

This organization provides links to several studies that explore the economic impact of the hunting and fishing industries, which rely on healthy fish and wildlife habitats.

#### **Outdoor Industry Association**

http://www.outdoorindustry.org/national-economic-impact-reports.php

This website provides links to comprehensive economic reports on the impact that outdoor recreational activity has on the economy.

Valuing ecosystem services

The World Conservation Union (IUCN) Value: Counting ecosystem services as infrastructure

http://www.iucn.org/what/tpas/greeneconomy/resources/documents/?1136/Value-counting-ecosystems-as-water-infrastructure

This 2004 IUCN publication is a comprehensive look a how ecosystems provide valuable services and the critical need for investment in protecting natural systems.

The *Economic Benefits of Protecting Healthy Watersheds Fact Sheet* is produced by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Mention of commercial products, publications, or web sites in this fact sheet does not constitute endorsement or recommendation for use by EPA or its contractors, and shall not be used for advertising or product endorsement purposes. The discussion in this document is intended solely as guidance. Thus, it does not impose legally binding requirements on EPA, States, or the regulated community. This guidance does not confer legal rights or impose legal obligations upon any member of the public. This is a living document and may be revised periodically without public notice. EPA welcomes public input on this document at any time.

What is the most interesting and/or important information that you have learned from our neighborhood newsletters?		
Have you implemented any changes in the outdoor use or care of your property or our neighborhood due to the <i>Bancroft Bugler's</i> information? If so, what did		
you do?		

#### Thank you for your input.

Are you interested in receiving future newsletters? Yes No Address (optional):

**POSTCARD RESPONSES:** Thanks to all of you who returned the postcard enclosed with the last mailing. It is nice to know that many of you have learned new things, changed some habits, and you like getting this newsletter.

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**W**hat is going on near our neighborhood, on the New Seward, and along Campbell Creek? Most of you have probably seen the start of the New Seward widening that began after breakup. This is going to make the next couple of years more difficult as roads are changed, the entrance to our subdivision off of Brayton is moved south, barrier trees and fences are removed along the New Seward, and myriad other changes occur. Information that should be forthcoming to residents of the Bancroft subdivision is not always timely, so we all are going to have to be pro-active if we want to keep up with change. There is a website that AKDOT has put up. Unfortunately, the information on it is not always helpful or current, but there are contacts. The site can be found at www.sewardhighway.info. The AKDOT contact listed on the page, Jim Amundsen, has been redirected to Chong Kim, project engineer. His contact is chong.kim@alaska.gov. For the sake of expediency, send questions and concerns to him.

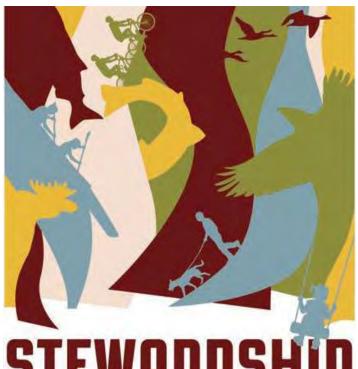
You may have noticed that the Campbell Creek trail is now closed from Brayton to the Peanut Farm and the creek is also considered a construction zone in some areas. Last week a postcard was sent regarding an "Open House" on May 3 that would show road information along the creek and the sound wall for Bancroft. This conflicted with the Campbell Park Community Council meeting, and also did not give many people time to plan for it. One Bancroft resident attended and brought back a picture of a mock-up of the sound barrier that AKDOT "might" be putting up. Please note on their website under "Documents" that their plans call for placing this fence along the Campbell Creek greenbelt on Rakof as far east as Kupreanof (maps, fence heights, and road configurations over Campbell Creek can be viewed on the lower left corner of the following website page:

www.sewardhighway.info/documents/Noise\_Wall\_Figure\_Feb

2011.pdf).

AKDOT's "mock-up" of the sound wall barrier that was displayed at their Open House on May 3, 2012. The color is actually more red than it shows in the photo.





## STEWARDSHIP

CLEANUP: 9 AM - NOON - SUPPLY SITES LOCATED ALL OVER TOWN CELEBRATION: NOON - 2 PM - VALLEY OF THE MOON PARK FEATURING FREE FOOD, FABULOUS PRIZES, AND MUSIC BY AMY LOU! ANCHORAGE WATERWAYS COUNCIL - ANCHORAGECREEKS.ORG

Anchorage Waterways Council's 28th Annual Creek Cleanup will be Saturday, May 19. Bancroft neighborhood residents Christy LeBlond and Steve Smith will have supplies at Bancroft Park by Shelikof and Rakof from 9-11:45. A thank-you celebration bar-be-cue will take place at Valley of the Moon Park from noon until 2. Besides food, there will be prizes, music, educational exhibits, and trash awards! Information is at: anchoragecreeks.org.

#### Waldron Lake Updates



Purchase of the Waldron Lake property has made it into the state's budget for the second year. Last year Governor Parnell vetoed the purchase expenditure. Public comments will be accepted until May 26 at sean.parnell@alaska.gov. You can also send a letter to him at P.O. Box 110001, Juneau, AK 99811-0001. Fax is (907) 465-3532, and phone is (907) 465-3500.

#### Remember to help our creeks by:

- 1. Only clean water down storm drains
- Scoop your pet's waste and dispose of it in the trash
- Report any creek concerns to AWC at anchoragecreeks.org/modules/report\_issue.php

Anchorage Waterways Council - "protecting Anchorage's creeks for over 28 years"
P.O. Box 241774 Anchorage, AK 99524



## The BANCROFT BUGLER May 2012

As we wrote earlier, WHAT a winter! Anchorage was probably lucky that fairly optimal meteorological conditions occurred and much of the snow evaporated ("sublimated" is the correct scientific term) rather than all of it melting at once. Many of us still have snow around in our yards, and several parking lots and snow dumps in town remain piled high.

Because most stormwater runoff is carried through the city storm drain system, which empties untreated water into local creeks before making its way to Cook Inlet, we need to be vigilant in keeping our driveways, streets, gutters, and storm drains as clean as possible. One good solution for our creeks is to NOT wash these areas down. but to sweep them. This is much more work, but remember that everything that is washed down through power sprayers and highpressure hose nozzles eventually ends up untreated in Campbell or Fish Creeks. And, this includes washing vehicles on driveways. If possible, try to use a car wash, because the dirty and soapy water goes into the sanitary sewer and is often recycled as well.

If you really need to use water to clean an area, try to point your hose in the direction of some vegetation so it can absorb the excess water. Wash your car on grass using a phosphate-free soap. Minimizing the amount of water that runs into storm drains is one of the primary

objectives of Anchorage Waterways Council.

Stormwater runoff is one of the worst problems plaguing Anchorage's creeks because of what the water carries: pet waste, vehicle fluids, sediment, yard chemicals, and more. Our goal is to find ways to reduce runoff from impervious surfaces, such as roofs, driveways, and solid walkways, because they inhibit infiltration of runoff into the soil. There are some clever and utilitarian solutions to help reduce runoff, such as rain gardens, rain barrels, downspout disconnects, and other methods. Many of these solutions can be found at www.anchorageraingardens.com.



Sixty gallon rain barrel receiving downspout runoff which, in turn, provides water that can be directed onto vegetation.



Sodium chloride (salt) has been the long-used product, but it is falling out of favor due to its extreme corrosiveness to vehicles and metal infrastructure. The downside of less corrosive snow melt and de-icers is that they tend to cost more than regular salt. Regardless, consumers should read the various product packages and any other documentation (or review them on the web) to acquaint themselves with the variety of ingredients, the application amounts, the temperature ranges for effectiveness, and the hazards, because it might not take very much to achieve the level of safety needed. Magnesium chloride is one of the more popular and less expensive substitutes for sodium chloride, and tends to be less environmentally damaging than others.

It is also important to be mindful of the timing of application. Most sources recommend that they be put down sparingly and uniformly BEFORE a storm (called "anti-icing"). This helps prevent ice build-up or bonding to walkways and driveways while reducing amounts needed as opposed to applying ice melt during a storm or "after the fact". And, NEVER apply large amounts to speed up melting as this is not effective and will contribute to reduced water quality

through runoff into our creeks.

When you read the warnings on these chemical products and how they can impact concrete or kill vegetation, it begs the question of "just how harmful are they to humans, pets, fish, and wildlife?". This is dependent on the ingredients, the amounts used, the timing of application, and several other factors. Severe reactions by pets have been reported if they ingest snowmelt chemicals from snow, in puddles where they might drink, and when they clean their fur or feet. While you may be careful in your own yard, be cognizant of where your animals (and children) walk. If your pet walks on sidewalks or other paved areas that have icemelt solutions on them, it's almost certain that they have picked up the liquid brine on their feet. Most of us have probably seen the white stains on our car mats, entry rugs, and even on shoes. This is where we have picked up ice melt chemicals ourselves.

Remember, this is not healthy for us or for anything that it comes in contact with. And, it certainly is not good for our waterways once the runoff makes its way to them!



De-icer spread unevenly at a local medical building.



A good, uniform spreading of icemelt chemical that has some aggregate to assist in reducing a slippery surface.

#### Waldron Lake Updates



If you would like to keep up on what is happening regarding the Waldron Lake property, there is a Facebook page titled "Save Waldron Lake". Please check it out for the most up-to-date information and what you can do if you care about keeping this resource in our community.

#### **Postcard Enclosed**

AWC would like your feedback on these quarterly newsletters, so there is a stamped postcard enclosed in your envelope with two questions. Your responses would be very helpful, so please take a few minutes to let us know your thoughts. Thank you.

#### AWC's Creek Cleanup - 2012

Anchorage Waterways Council's 28th Annual Creek Cleanup will be Saturday, May 19. Honchos, who provide bags and gloves, will be stationed in our neighborhood for cleanup of Campbell Creek and Waldron Lake. The cleanup starts at 9 am and finishes just before noon. A thank-you celebration bar-be-cue will take place at Valley of the Moon Park from noon until 2. Besides food, there will be prizes, music, educational exhibits, and trash awards! Information is at:

anchoragecreeks.org/pages/creekcleanup\_about.php

Creek Cleanup Coordinator is Matt Mays at 907 529-9289 or email him at matt@anchoragecreeks.org.

Anchorage Waterways Council - "protecting Anchorage's creeks for over 28 years" P.O. Box 241774 Anchorage, AK 99524

www.anchoragecreeks.org 907 272-7335



## The BANCROFT BUGLER

What a winter! Intense extended cold and so much snow. Where will it all go? If weather conditions, such as temperatures, their range between night and day, wind, humidity and other factors, are optimal, this might not result in the flood that many of us anticipate during breakup this year. Regardless, there will be melt and runoff, and it will have to go somewhere.

In Anchorage, most of our stormwater runoff is carried through our storm drain system which empties untreated into our creeks before making its way to Cook Inlet. If the snow were clean, this would not be such a problem. It only takes a glance at the filthy snow piles along our roads and sidewalks to realize how impure this snow is. It contains everything that has been placed on the road for traction as well as vehicle drips, and residue from tires, studs, and brake linings. Then, as this snow melts and runs across the landscape, through ditches, and along roads—all sorts of additional contaminants and pollutants are picked up adding to the mixture. These include ice melt products, sand and aggregate, trash, pet waste, chemicals, and much more.

Picture all this pouring into our creeks through a culvert during the three or four weeks of breakup! Our waterways receive the first flush of winter's dregs in excessive amounts. Scientific studies show that breakup runoff causes freshwater salinity and fecal coliform levels to dramatically rise and dissolved oxygen (which fish and other critters are dependent on) to decrease along with other detrimental effects. This is a huge shock to our waterways and their inhabitants every spring.





East High student Charles Chard moving snow the old fashion way.

In the last newsletter, there was a map to show the outfalls into Campbell Creek and those that run north towards the Fish Creek watershed. A lot of water will be running across our yards, down the streets, and into the storm drains soon, however there are some things we can all do to help minimize the impacts of breakup on our creeks.

Don't wait for our annual spring cleanups to pick up trash and especially pet waste. As soon as these "buried treasures" emerge, clean them up. Also, make sure that storm drains are clear and free of debris. Finally, don't be in a rush to melt snow on your property with chemicals or water as this only contributes to the already abundant amount of runoff.

One of the least impacting ways to deal with snow and ice are the old fashioned ways: shoveling, snow blowing, or plowing. This avoids all chemical use, but sometimes it's just not practical. Safety is paramount, and we want the areas we walk on to be as safe as possible to avoid slipping and falling.

If you do choose to use a snow melt chemical or de-icer, there are some things to consider. One of the most important notions is that quantity does not affect the speed at which the products work and using too much of the product will most likely damage surfaces and harm the environment.