

# MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH Fish & Wildlife Commission

350 E Dahlia Ave., Palmer, Alaska 99645

## CHAIRPERSON

Andy Couch

## VICE CHAIR

Peter Probasco

## MSB STAFF

Maija DiSalvo



## BOARD MEMBERS

Howard Delo

Larry Engel

Tim Hale

Gabe Kitter

Bill Gamble

Kendra Zamzow

*Ex officio:* Jim Sykes

## Regular Meeting

November 14, 2024

## Meeting Packet - Table of Contents

### Pg. = Item:

- 1 = Agenda
- 4 = Cold Water Refugia Presentation
- 23 = FWC Reso 22-03
- 25 = Draft Dec 5 Agenda
- 27 = NOAA Questions
- 28 = BOG Proposal Chart
- 29 = ACR 1 - Dewey Bitler
- 31 = Draft 2025 Schedule

**Physical Location of Meeting:** Assembly Chambers, DSJ Bldg, 350 E. Dahlia Ave., Palmer

**Remote Participation:** See attached agenda on p. 1

**Planning and Land Use Department - Planning Division**

<http://www.matsugov.us> • [planning@matsugov.us](mailto:planning@matsugov.us)

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH  
MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission  
AGENDA**

Edna Devries, Mayor

Andy Couch – Chair  
Peter Probasco – Vice Chair  
Gabriel Kitter  
Howard Delo  
Larry Engel  
Tim Hale  
Bill Gamble  
Kendra Zamzow  
Jim Sykes – Ex officio member

Maija DiSalvo – Staff



Michael Brown, Borough Manager

PLANNING & LAND USE DEPARTMENT  
Alex Strawn, Planning & Land Use Director  
Maija DiSalvo, Planning Services Manager  
Jason Ortiz, Development Services Manager  
Fred Wagner, Platting Officer

*Assembly Chambers  
Dorothy Swanda Jones Building  
350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer*

**November 14, 2024  
REGULAR MEETING  
4:00 p.m.**

Ways to participate in MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission meetings:

IN-PERSON: Assembly Chambers, DSJ Building

REMOTE PARTICIPATION VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS:

Join on your computer:

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 256 420 362 848

Passcode: gNTJuX

Or call in (audio only):

1-907-290-7880

Phone Conference ID: 744 543 710#

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. ROLL CALL – DETERMINATION OF QUORUM
- III. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT  
  
*"We acknowledge that we are meeting on traditional lands of the Dena'ina and Ahtna Dene people, and we are grateful for their continued stewardship of the land, fish, and wildlife throughout time immemorial."*
- IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
- VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. August 29, 2024 – Regular Meeting
  - B. September 26, 2024 – Regular Meeting
  - C. October 24, 2024 – Regular Meeting
- VII. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (*three minutes per person*)
- VIII. STAFF/AGENCY REPORTS & PRESENTATIONS
- A. Staff Report
  - B. Chair’s Report
  - C. Deshka Land Classification – *Sue Mauger, Cook Inletkeeper*
- IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
- A. ADF&G Fishing Season Summary Meeting
    - i. Review Draft Agenda
    - ii. NOAA Question Submission
  - B. Board of Game – *Gabe Kitter & Howard Delo*
    - i. Proposal Comments
    - ii. ACR #1 – Dewey Bitler
  - C. Board of Fisheries
    - i. Prince William Sound/Upper Copper Proposals
    - ii. Work Session Report – *Pete Probasco & Andy Couch*
  - D. Upcoming Legislative Meetings
    - i. December 19 – FWC Attendance
  - E. CAPSIS Projects
    - i. Anchor Point/Calgin Island Test Net Fishery
  - F. NOAA/NPFMC Updates
- X. NEW BUSINESS
- A. Waterbody Setback Advisory Board – *Kendra Zamzow*
    - i. Review Draft Ordinance
  - B. 2025 Meeting Schedule
    - i. FWC Holiday Gathering
- XI. MEMBER COMMENTS

XII. NEXT MEETING DATE:

- A. Special Meeting: ADF&G Fishing Season Summary – December 5, 2024 – 5:00 PM, Assembly Chambers
- B. Regular Meeting: December 12, 2024 – 4:00 PM, Assembly Chambers

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

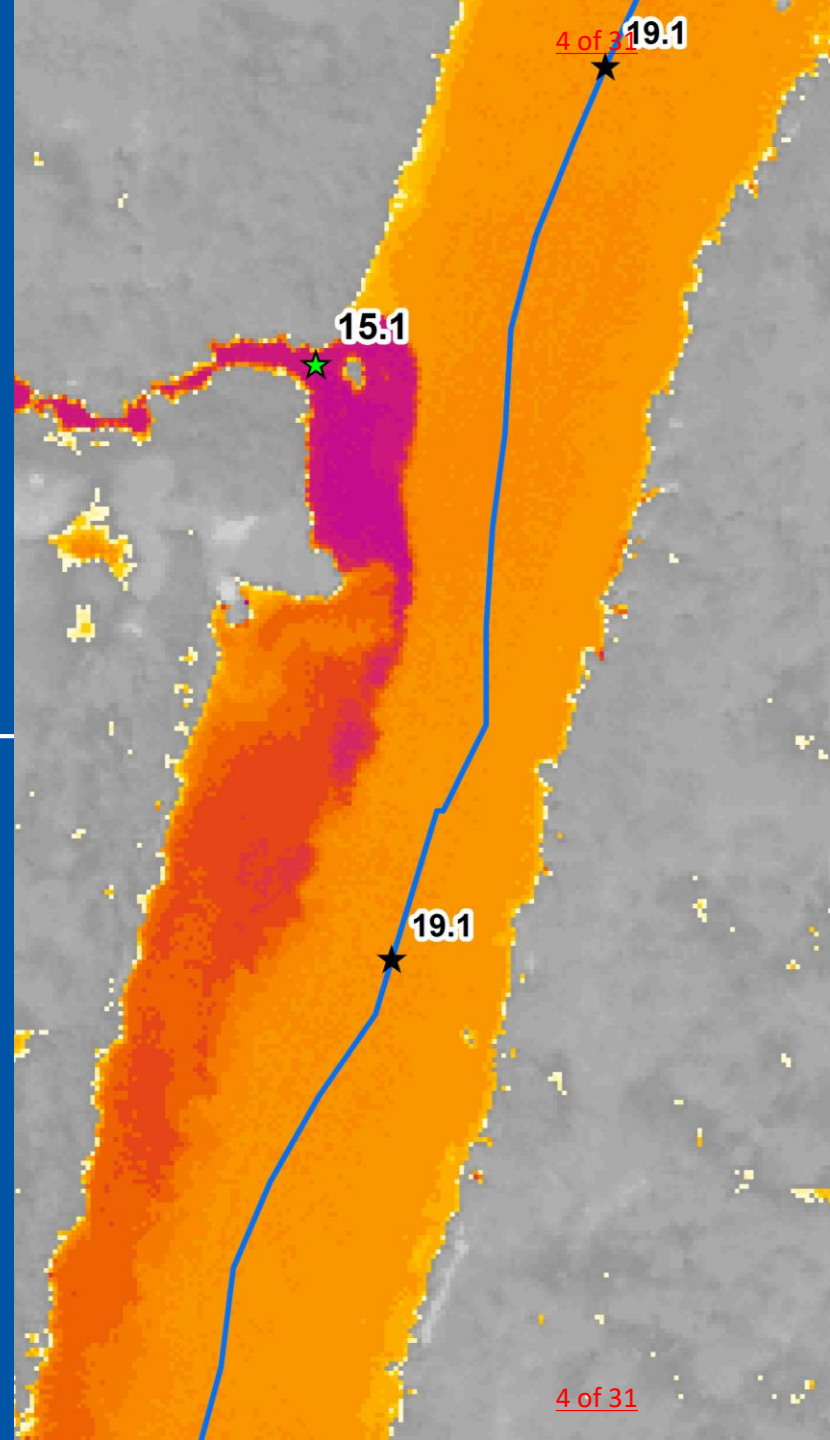
**Disabled persons needing reasonable accommodation in order to participate at a MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting should contact the borough ADA Coordinator at 861-8432 at least one week in advance of the meeting.**

# Science to Conservation Outcomes: Cold Water Refugia

Jessica Speed  
Mat-Su Basin Salmon  
Habitat Partnership



Sue Mauger  
Cook Inletkeeper

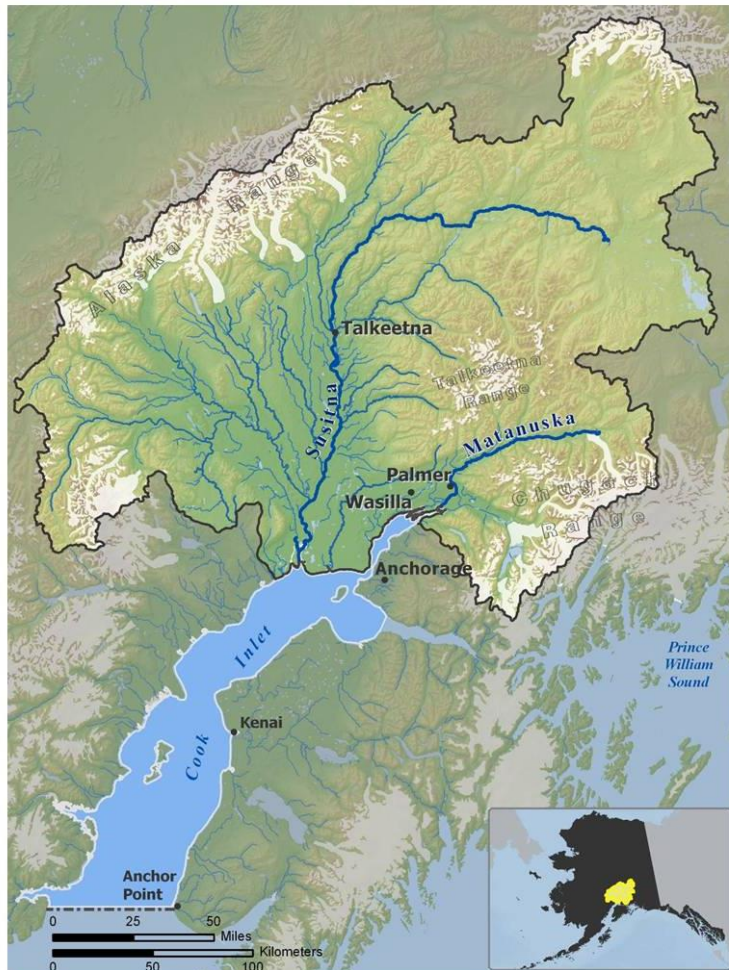




# Mat-Su salmon

PARTNERSHIP

## Working for thriving fish, healthy habitats, and vibrant communities in the Mat-Su Basin



## WHO WE ARE

Alaska Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development • Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation • Alaska Department of Fish and Game • Alaska Department of Natural Resources • Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities • Alaska Center for the Environment • Alaska Outdoor Council • Alaska Pacific University • Alaska Railroad Corporation • Alaska Salmon Alliance • Alaska Trails • AlaskaChem Engineering • Alaskans for Palmer Hay Flats • Aquatic Restoration & Research Institute • Bureau of Land Management • Butte Area Residents Civic Organization • Chickaloon Village Traditional Council • City of Palmer • ConocoPhillips Alaska, Inc • Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association • Cook Inletkeeper • Eklutna Tribal Conservation District • Environmental Protection Agency • Envision Mat-Su • Fishtale River Guides • Glacier Ridge Properties • Great Land Trust • HDR Alaska, Inc • Innovative Funding • Knik River Watershed Group • Knik Tribal Conservation District • Matanuska River Watershed Coalition • Matanuska-Susitna Borough • Mat-Su Anglers • Mat-Su Conservation Services • Mat-Su Trails & Parks Foundation • Montana Creek Campground • National Marine Fisheries Service • National Park Service • Native Village of Eklutna • Natural Resources Conservation Service • Palmer Soil and Water Conservation District • Pioneer Reserve • Pound Studio • SAGA • Sierra Club • Susitna River Coalition • Sustainable Design Group • The Conservation Fund • The Nature Conservancy • The Wildlifers • Three Parameters Plus, Inc • Trout Unlimited • Turkey Red • Tyonek Tribal Conservation District • United Cook Inlet Drift Association(UCIDA) • United Fishermen of Alaska • Upper Susitna Soil & Water Conservation District • U.S. Army Corps of Engineers • U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service • U.S. Geological Survey • U.S. Forest Service • Wasilla Soil and Water Conservation District

# Conserving Salmon Habitat in the Mat-Su Basin



## Addendum to the 2013 Partnership Strategic Action Plan - June 2019

*\*Organizational Priorities Updated June 2021*

### ORGANIZATIONAL PRIORITIES (2021-2022)

- 1) **Encourage the development and dissemination of relevant science-based information.**
  - The Science and Data Committee will focus on providing technical expertise within and outside the partnership, including identifying and filling data gaps, inform and establish best practices, and interpreting research on Basin habitat impacts.
  - Identify and implement strategy to improve dissemination of relevant science-based information.

## The Strategic Action Plan of the Mat-Su Basin Salmon Habitat Partnership 2013 Update



### Conservation Strategies #3. Climate Change

Objective 3.1: Comprehensive Baseline and Monitoring for Stream Temperatures.

By 2021, comprehensive baseline and monitoring program for stream temperatures exists to track regional changes while thermal heterogeneity of salmon habitat and the impacts on salmon are assessed within priority Mat-Su Basin watersheds. Data should meet minimum data collection standards for Alaska, site information should be posted on the Alaska Online Aquatic Temperature Site (AK OATS) and temperature data should be available to the public by request or archived online.

Objective 3.2: Integrate Climate Change into Priorities.

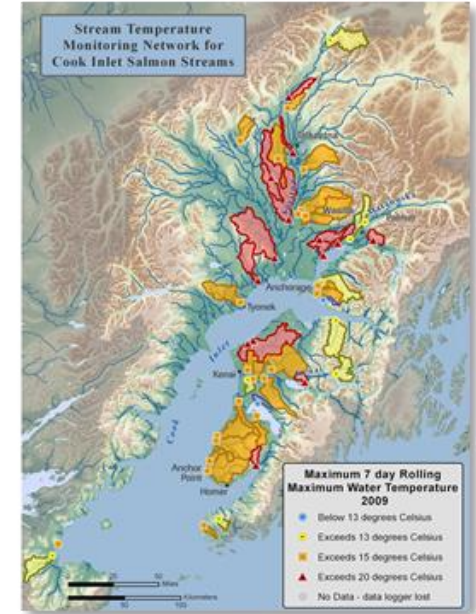
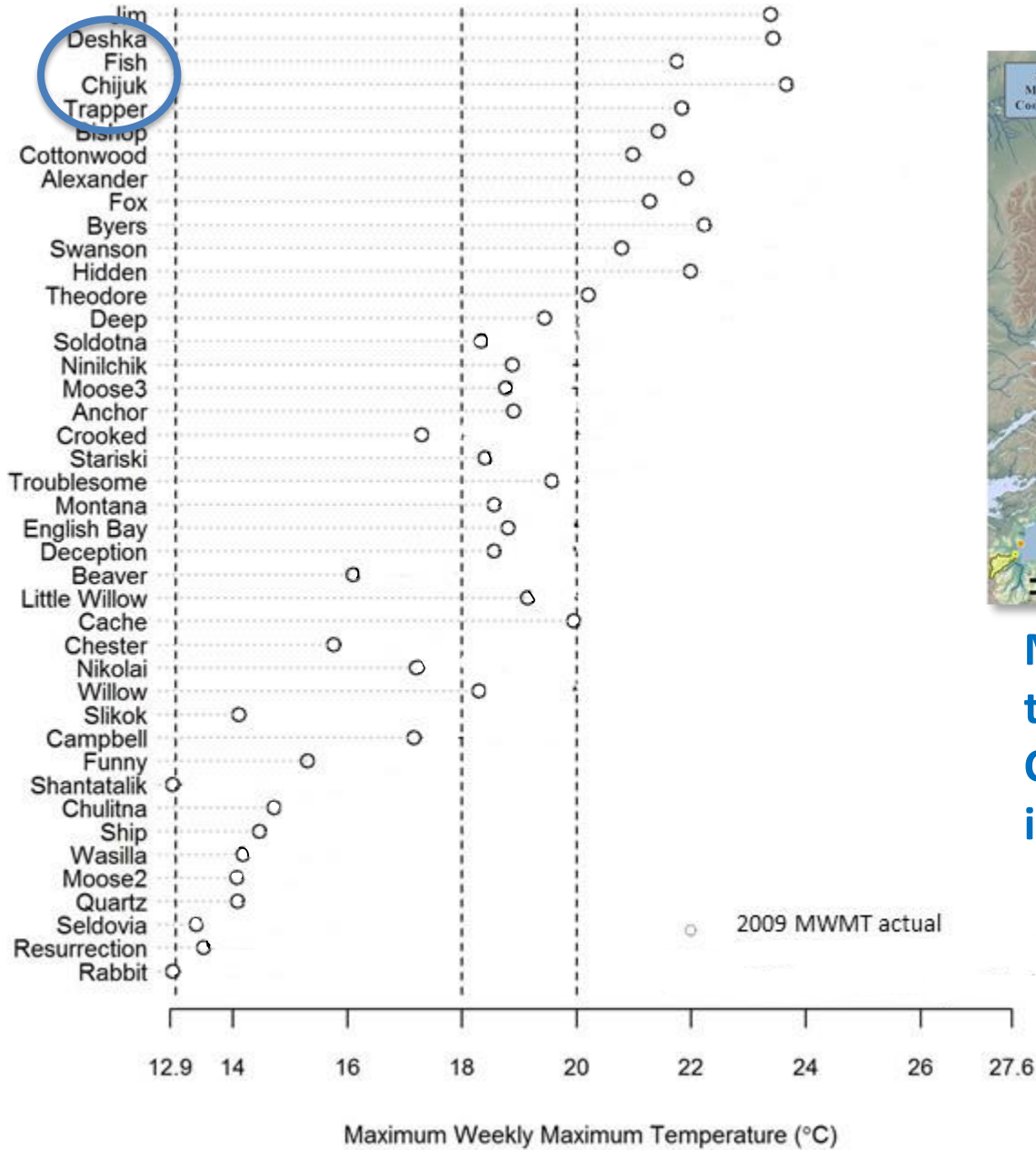
By 2023, integrate climate change vulnerability into habitat conservation strategies and prioritizations.

## Science Takeaways (2008 – present)

1. The Deshka and Big Lake systems are some of the warmest watersheds in the Mat-Su Basin and are likely to get warmer.
2. The Mat-Su Basin has some of the warmest watersheds in the state based on available data.
3. In 2019, warm stream temperatures blocked adult migration and had negative effects on juvenile growth in the Deshka.
4. We have identified cold-water refugia in the Deshka and Big Lake basin which may be critical habitat for salmon in warming watersheds.



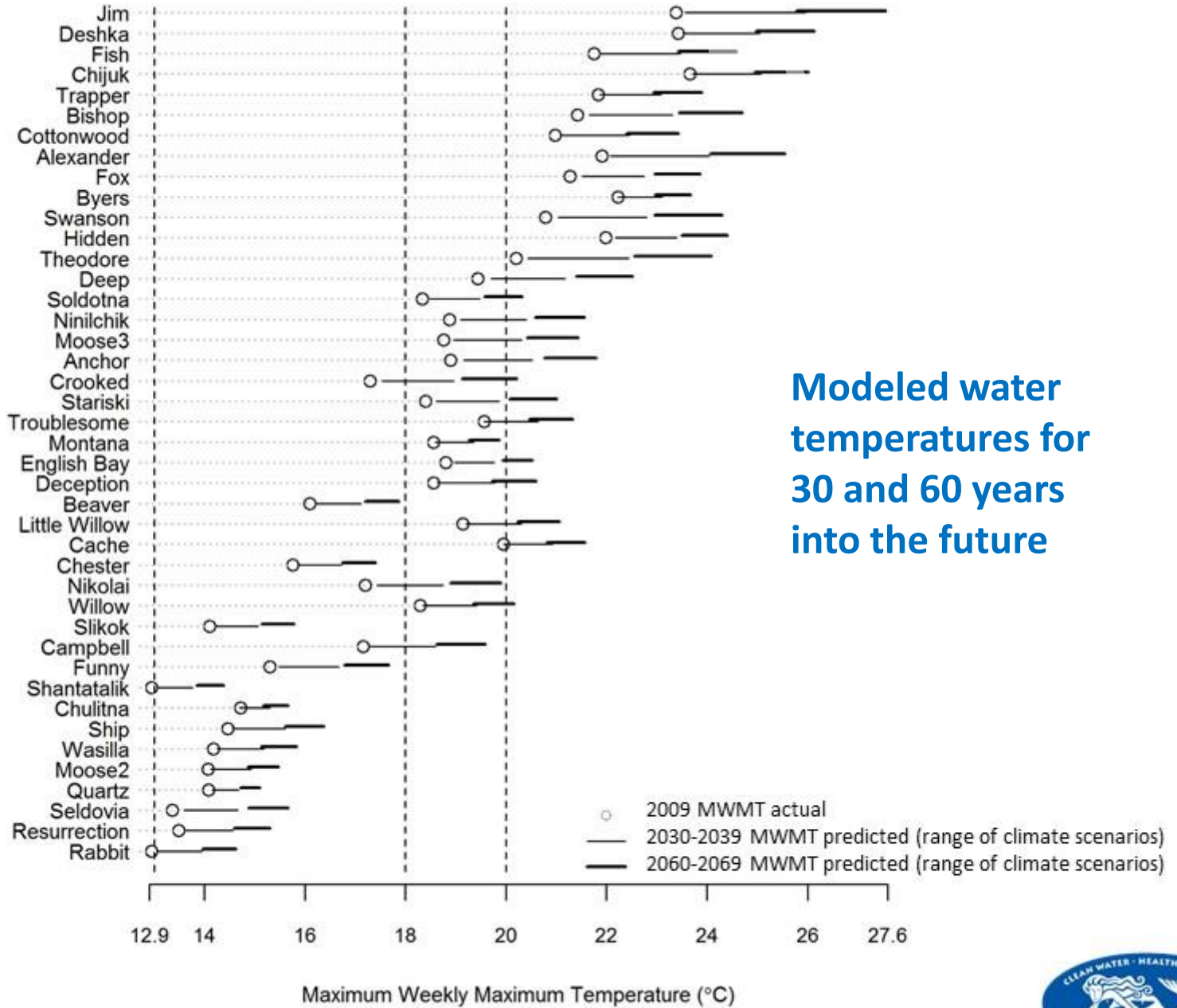
non-glacial Cook Inlet streams



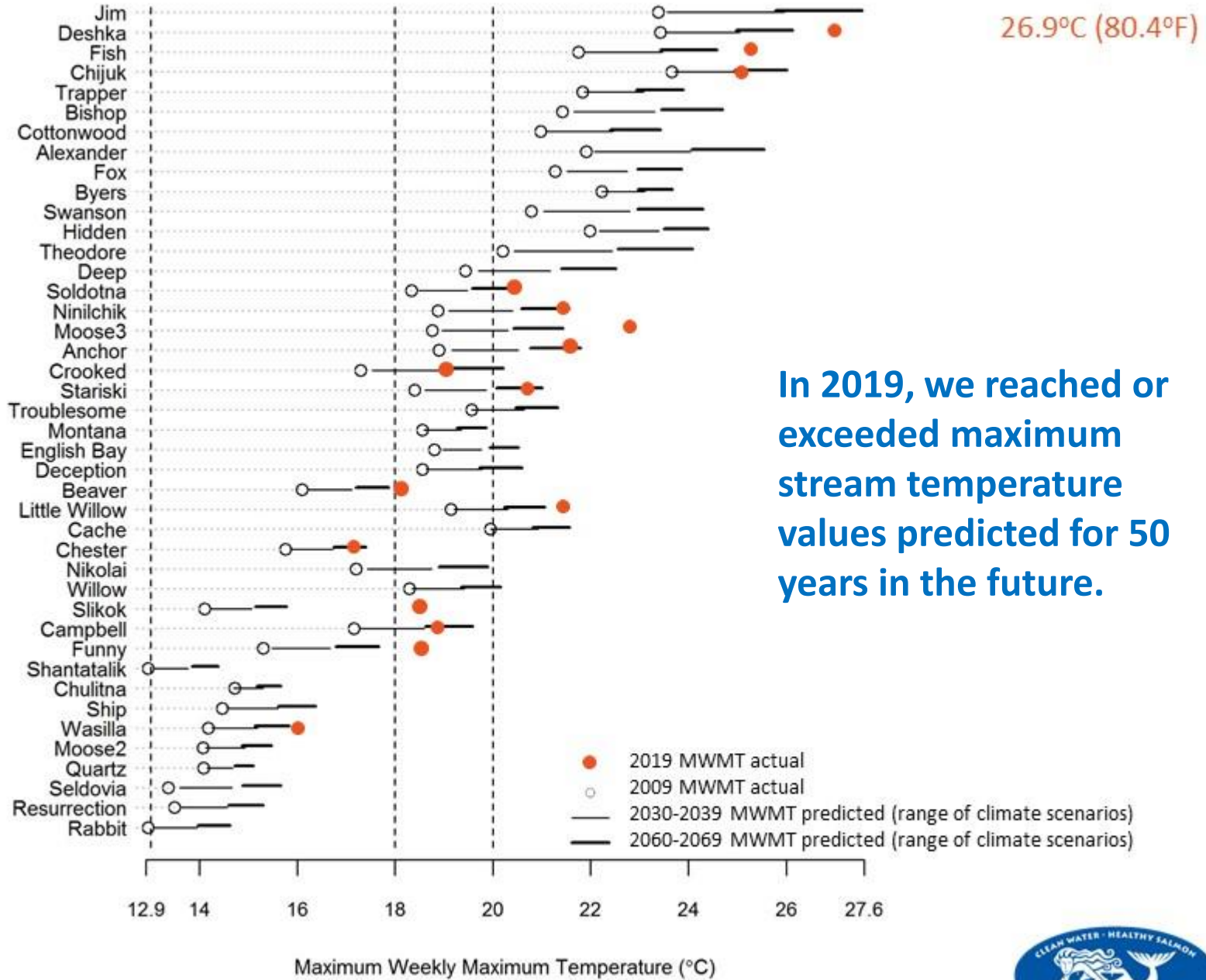
Measured water temperatures in Cook Inlet streams in 2009

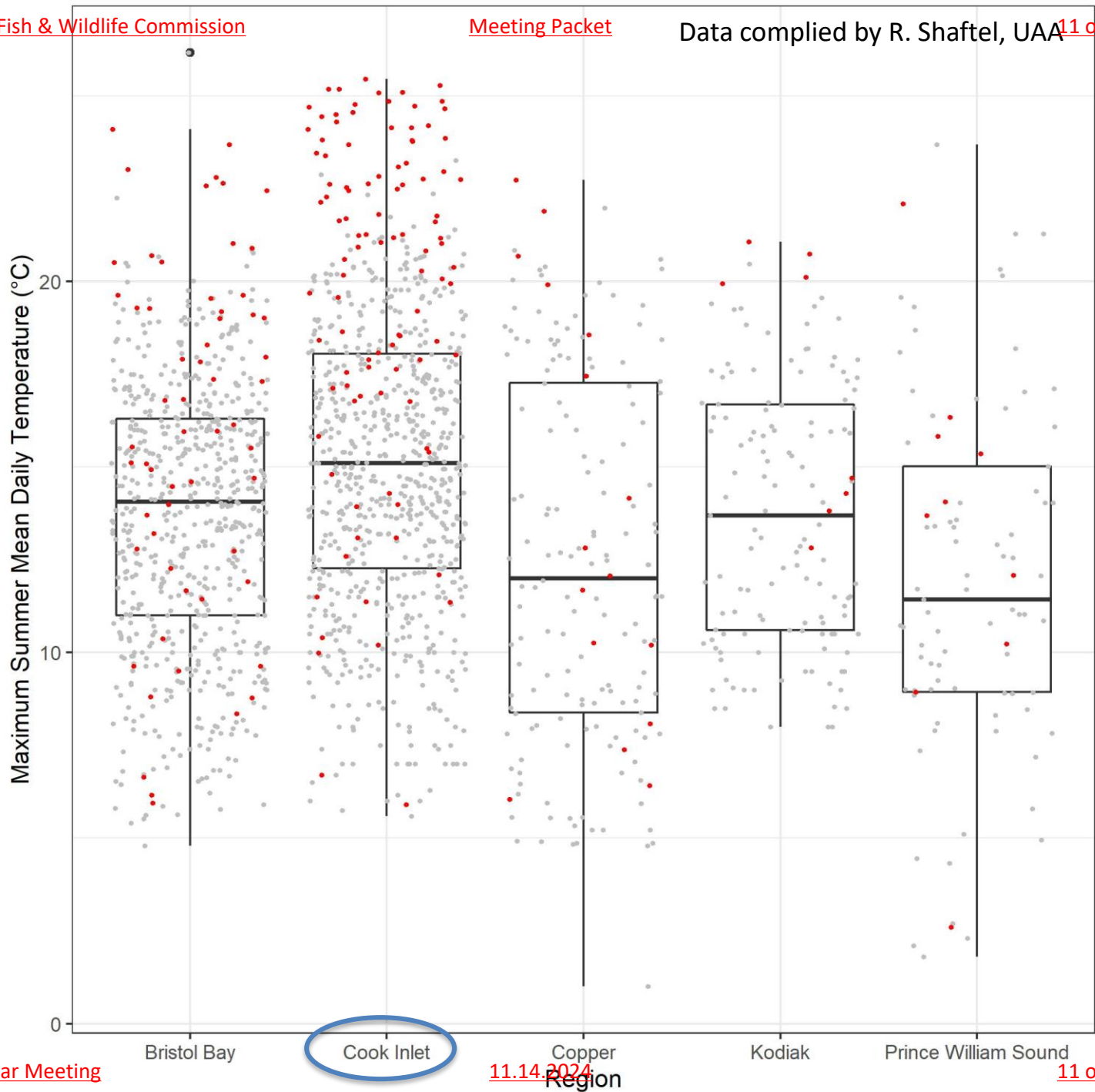


non-glacial Cook Inlet streams

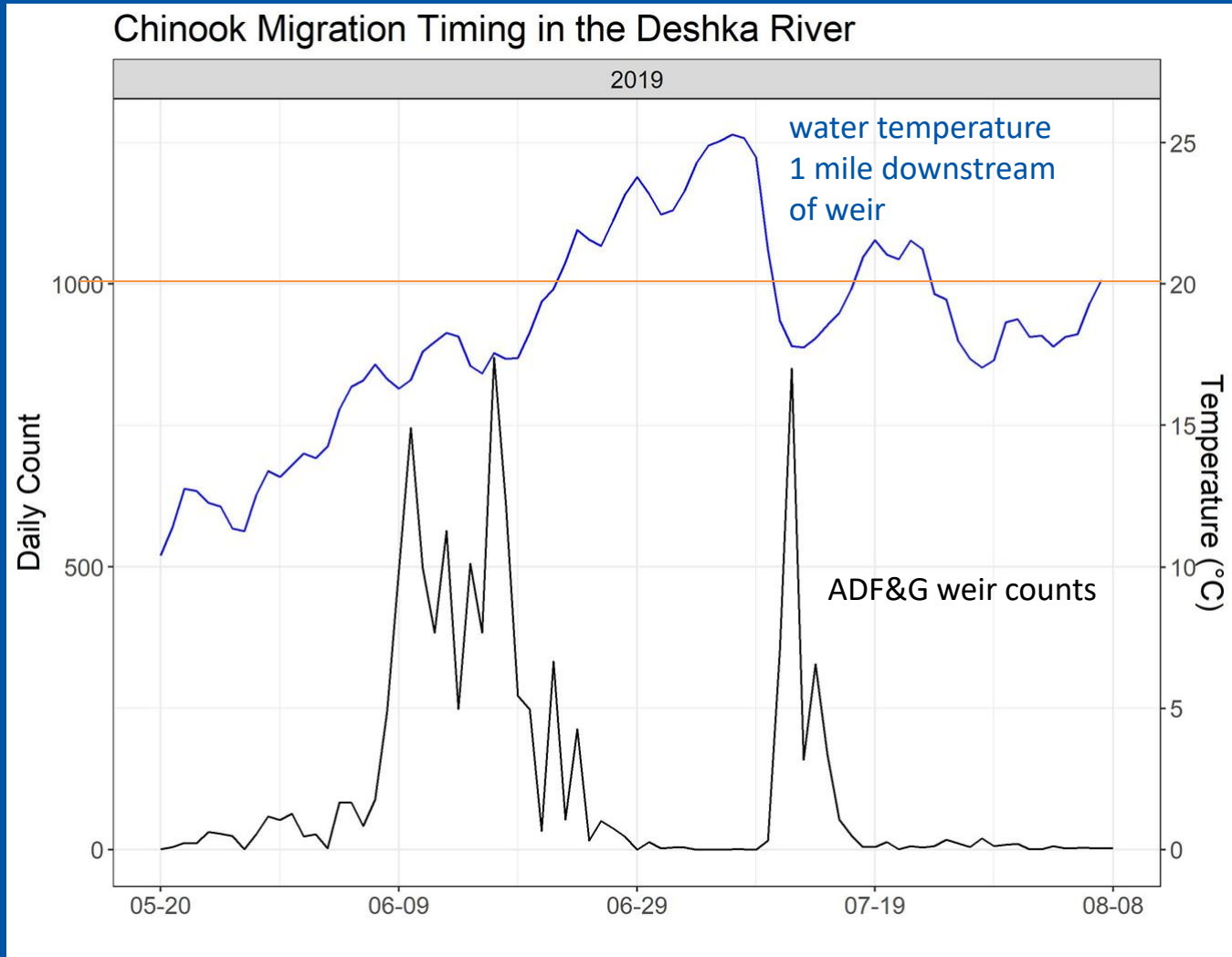


non-glacial Cook Inlet streams





# In 2019, warm stream temperatures blocked adult migration and had negative effects on juvenile growth in the Deshka.





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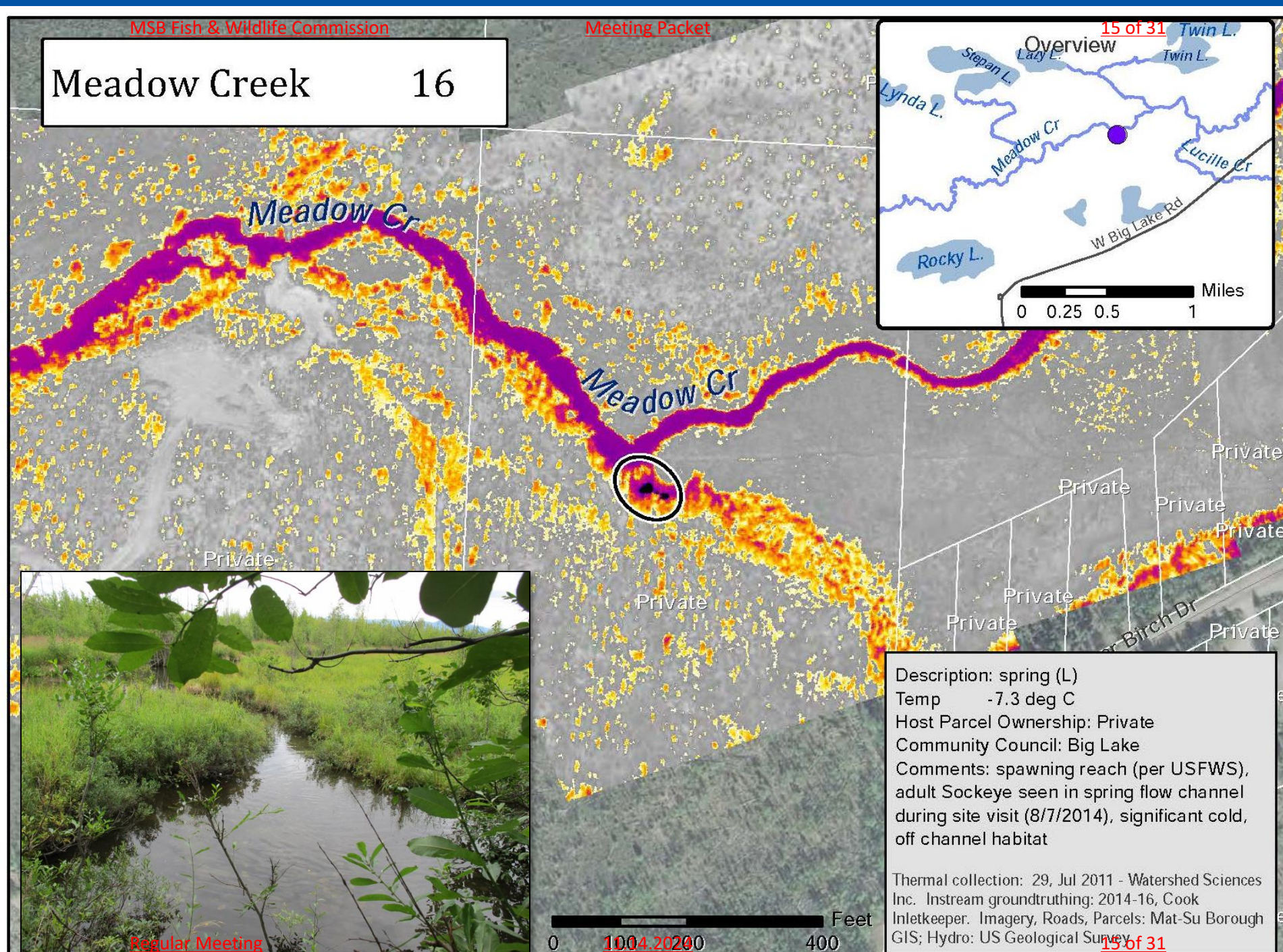
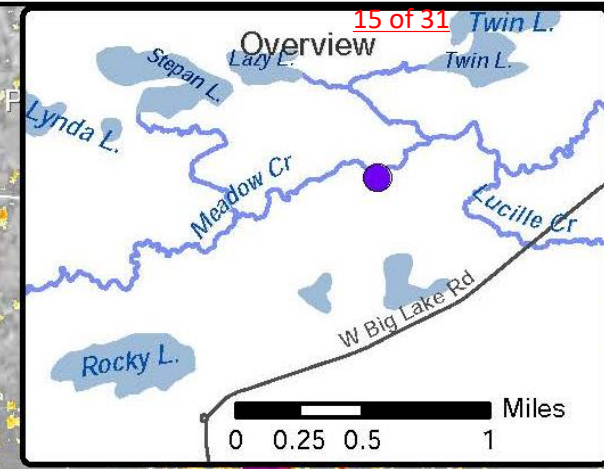


50 miles of thermal imagery in 2011





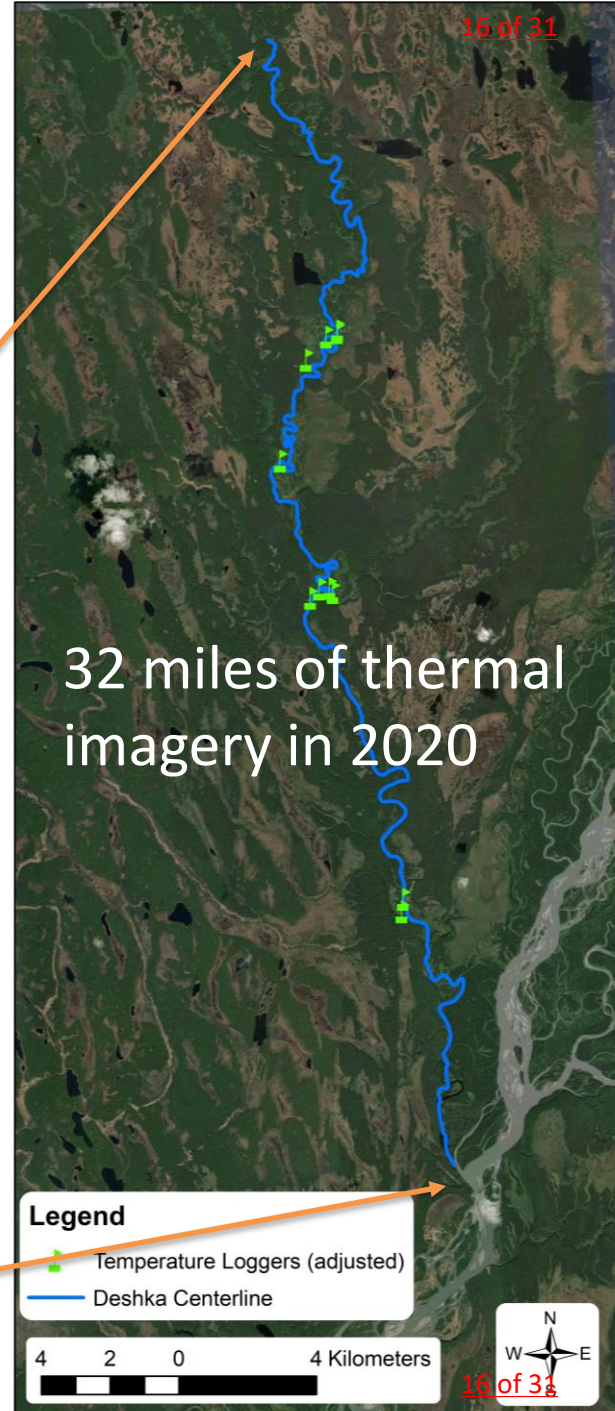
# Meadow Creek 16



Description: spring (L)  
 Temp -7.3 deg C  
 Host Parcel Ownership: Private  
 Community Council: Big Lake  
 Comments: spawning reach (per USFWS), adult Sockeye seen in spring flow channel during site visit (8/7/2014), significant cold, off channel habitat

Thermal collection: 29, Jul 2011 - Watershed Sciences Inc. Instream groundtruthing: 2014-16, Cook  
 Inletkeeper: Imagery, Roads, Parcels: Mat-Su Borough GIS; Hydro: US Geological Survey



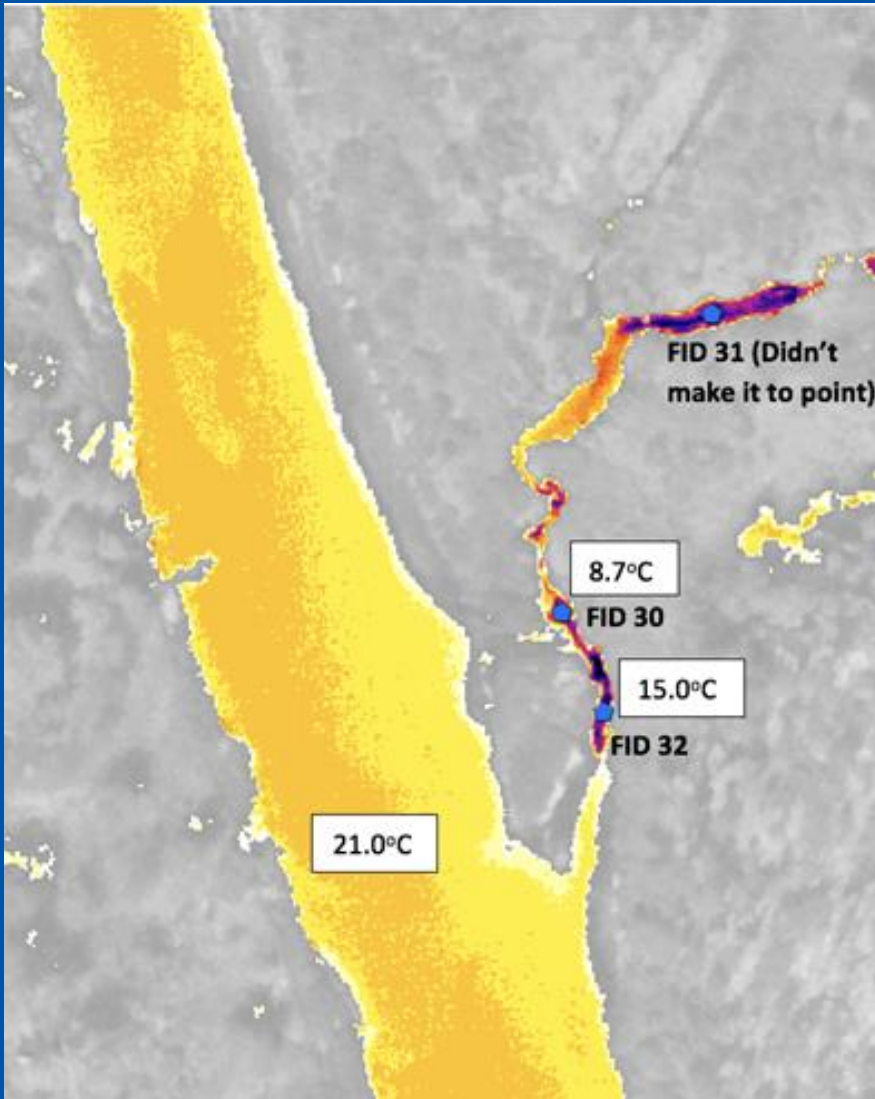


32 miles of thermal imagery in 2020

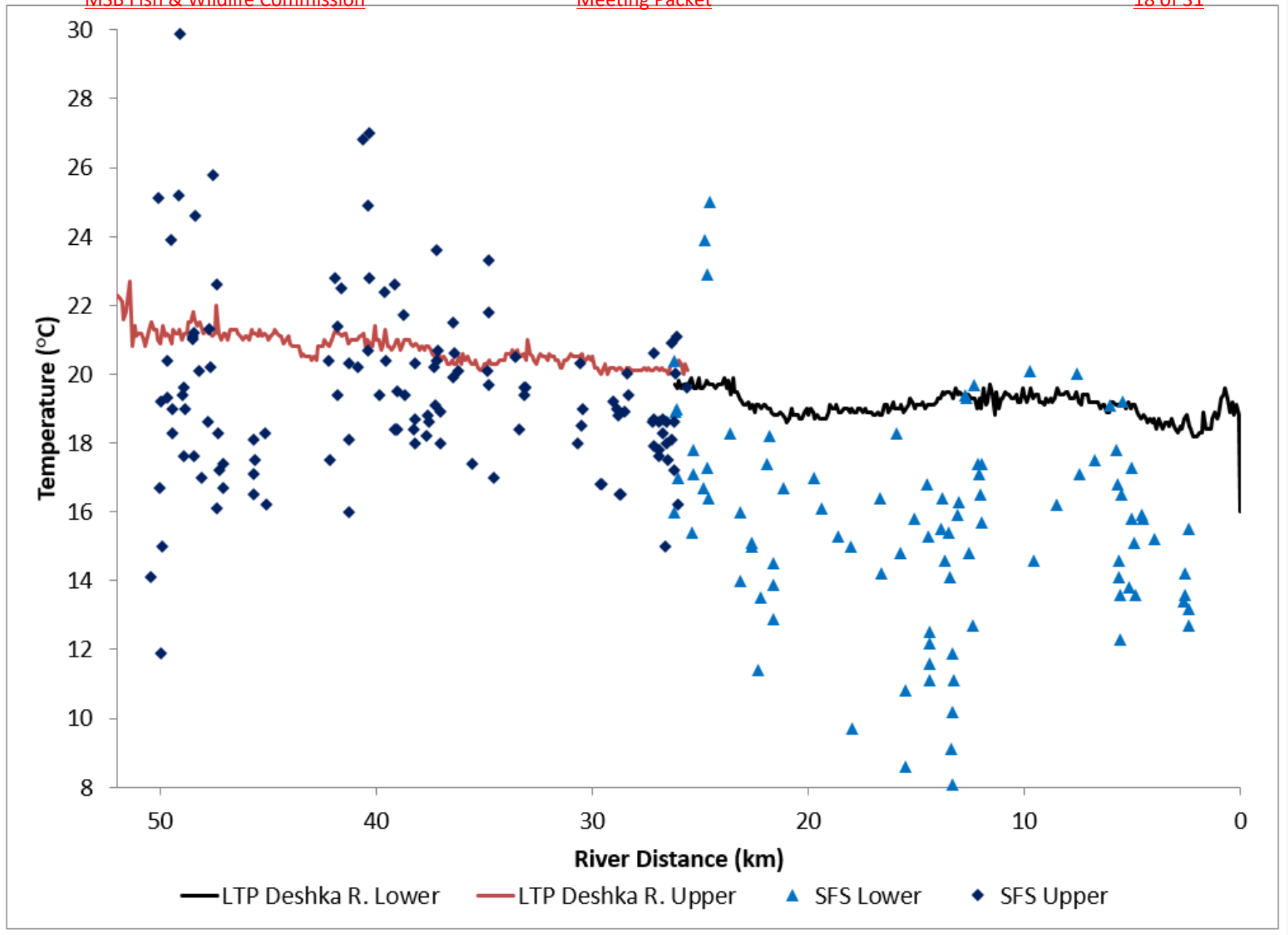
- Max 7-Day Max Temp 2017
- ≤ 21.5 °C
  - ≤ 20.0 °C
  - ≤ 19.0 °C
  - ≤ 18.0 °C
  - ≤ 16.5 °C
  - △ Tributaries

- Legend**
- Temperature Loggers (adjusted)
  - Deshka Centerline









Longitudinal temperature profile and mean water temperature of significant features along the Deshka River: July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020.





**More than 250 inflows**

**Land Ownership:**

**84.3% is State owned**

**13.7% is MSB land**

**2% is private (119 parcels)**





Video by Ben Rich, USFWS  
Deshka River, 2021

## Science Takeaways

1. The Deshka and Big Lake systems are some of the warmest watersheds in the Mat-Su Basin and are likely to get warmer.
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3. In 2019, warm stream temperatures blocked adult migration and had negative effects on juvenile growth in the Deshka.
4. We have identified cold-water refugia in the Deshka and Big Lake basin which may be critical habitat for salmon in warming watersheds.

## Recent Discussions

**Do we have land management tools to conserve this habitat diversity for salmon resilience?**

# Tools for Conservation

- ✓ Incorporate thermal refugia information into the current revision of the Susitna Basin Recreational Rivers Management Plan
- ✓ Maintain and/or improve water quality standard revised language for water temperature
- ✓ Ensure relevant science is available, discoverable, interpretable for agencies for permit reviews
  - Join us for Mat-Su Salmon Science & Conservation Symposium Nov 18<sup>th</sup> @ 3 pm for Data Transfer Session
- ➔ **Classify MSB parcels with thermal refugia as "watershed lands": a land classification that recognizes the importance of the land for water quality**
  - FWS 22-03 Resolution

Communicate to private landowners about stewardship opportunities



**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH  
FISH & WILDLIFE COMMISSION RESOLUTION SERIAL NO. FWC 22-03**

A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION RECOMMENDING MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY DIRECT ADMINISTRATION TO CLASSIFY KEY BOROUGH-OWNED PARCELS ON THE SHORE OF DESHKA RIVER AS WATERSHED LANDS TO PROTECT SALMON POPULATIONS.

WHEREAS, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC) has reviewed the outcomes of a recent study on the temperature of water entering the Deshka River from adjacent groundwater seeps; and

WHEREAS, this new information shows that certain parcels supporting the cold water inputs to the Deshka River are essential for maintaining healthy salmon runs on the river; and

WHEREAS, the FWC believes it is important that the MSB takes every available action to safeguard healthy salmon runs in local water bodies; and

WHEREAS, economic studies in our region in 2007 and 2017 show the significant positive economic impact returning salmon have on the economy of the MSB, that included \$56 million in direct spending benefits to the MSB in 2017 alone, and there are additional economic benefits from healthy wildlife and fish populations, both of which require adequate and quality habitat locally; and

WHEREAS, the MSB can classify these parcels as watershed lands in recognition of the water quality function they provide that

protects salmon habitat.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the FWC recommends the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly direct Borough Administration to bring forward legislation classifying key Borough-owned parcels on the shore of the Deshka River as "Watershed" Lands

ADOPTED by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Fish and Wildlife Commission this 19<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2022.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mike Wood, Chair

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
TED EISCHEID, Staff

(SEAL)

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH**  
**MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission**  
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Michael Brown, Borough Manager

PLANNING & LAND USE DEPARTMENT  
 Alex Strawn, Planning & Land Use Director  
 Vacant, Planning Services Manager  
 Jason Ortiz, Development Services Manager  
 Fred Wagner, Platting Officer

*Assembly Chambers  
 Dorothy Swanda Jones Building  
 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer*

**December 5, 2024**

**SPECIAL MEETING: Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G)**  
**Fishing Season Summary**  
 5:00 p.m.

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IN-PERSON: Assembly Chambers, DSJ Building

REMOTE PARTICIPATION VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS:

Join on your computer:

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 212 411 183 809

Passcode: wq6yVK

Or call in (audio only):

1-907-290-7880

Phone Conference ID: 956 490 599#

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. ROLL CALL – DETERMINATION OF QUORUM
- III. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & RECOGNITION

*"We acknowledge that we are meeting on traditional lands of the Dena'ina and Ahtna Dene people, and we are grateful for their continued stewardship of the land, fish, and wildlife throughout time immemorial."*

- IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

## VI. INTRODUCTIONS

- A. FWC Opening Statement (*5 min*)
- B. ADF&G Opening Statement (*5 min*)

VII. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (*three minutes per person – 30 min, may vary*)

## VIII. PRESENTATIONS

- A. Staff Report (*5 min*)
- B. ADF&G
  - i. Commercial Fishing Notable Highlights & Observations (*10 min*)
  - ii. Sport Fishing Notable Highlights & Observations (*10 min*)
- C. NOAA
  - i. Federal Inseason Management Report (*10 min*)

## IX. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

- A. Dialogue on Upper Cook Inlet Fisheries & FWC Questions (*30 min*)

X. ADF&G/NOAA/FWC FINAL COMMENTS (*10 min*)

## XI. NEXT MEETING DATE: Thursday, December 12, 2024 @ 4:00 pm Assembly Chambers

## XII. ADJOURNMENT

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## Season summary meeting questions for NOAA

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From Andy Couch <fishing@fish4salmon.com>

Date Wed 11/6/2024 7:24 AM

To Maija DiSalvo <Maija.DiSalvo@matsugov.us>

**[EXTERNAL EMAIL - CAUTION: Do not open unexpected attachments or links.]**

Maija,

I wanted to submit the following question ideas for NOAA to consider --if it is not too late:

Questions for NOAA:

How important is it for federal management of the Cook Inlet EEZ fishery to have a test fishery line similar to the Anchor Point line used previously by the State of Alaska?

Is there a better location for an inlet cross section test fishery line?

2023 had one of the poorest Northern Cook Inlet sport coho salmon catches since the Alaska Department started using its annual statewide harvest survey to estimate sport harvests in 1977. The 2024 Northern Cook Inlet sport coho salmon harvest appears it may be even worse, and Alaska Department of Fish and Game generated final spawning escapement projections for coho salmon at Deshka River ( ), Little Susitna River ( ), and full season coho salmon weir counts at Fish Creek ( ) and Jim Creek ( ) rank as some of the lowest on record. How will NOAA manage the EEZ fishery differently during 2025 to better ensure adequate Northern Cook Inlet coho salmon spawning escapements and a more reasonable salmon harvest opportunities for Northern Cook Inlet users?

Andy Couch

Fishtale River Guides

(907) 746-2199

[fishing@fish4salmon.com](mailto:fishing@fish4salmon.com)



Proposal Number	GMU	Priority Level 1=High 5=Low	Subject	Short Description	Support/Oppose	Additional Comments/Reasoning	Additional Comments/Reasoning
1	Multiple	5	Brown bear	Tag Fee Exemption	Yes	additional management options for ADF&G	Seems like a housekeeping Item for the department
2	9,11,13,14B,14C,16,17	3	Bear Bait	Season Extension	Yes	add. mgmt. options/ more hunting opportunity	Increased opportunity and increased harvest of bears
3	9,11,13,14B,16,17	2	Bear Bait	Cell Camera Use	Undecided	no wireless messaging/ check in person	Increase the efficiency of hunting with no negative benefit to the resource
4	9,11,13,14A,14B	3	Sheep	Create Archery Season	Undecided	safety/ minimal harvest increases/ hunter opportunity	With the decrease in sheep numbers an increase in opportunity is not warranted.
39	13B	3	Moose	Reduce Harvest	Yes	conservation and better mgmt. of moose resource	This would allow management of the moose in the area to Proactive rather than reactive and seems appropriate
40	13C	4	Moose	Increase Pop. Objective	Yes	allows better mgmt. of population	Same
41	13C	4	Moose	Reduce Harvest Objective	Yes	additional mgmt. tool for ADF&G	Same
42	13E	4	Moose	Reduce Harvest Objective	Yes	better mgmt. tool for ADF&G	Same
43	13A	3	Moose	Create Antlerless Hunt	Yes	additional mgmt. tool/ increased hunter opportunity	so long as survey data is collected annually and supports a continuation of the hunt
44	13C	3	Moose	Create Antlerless Hunt	Yes	see comments #44	Same as 43
45	13	3	Moose	Create Archery Season	Yes	additional mgmt. tool/minimal harvest/ hunter opportunity	This would help to align regulations and opportunity with Other GMU's in close proximity
46	13	2	Moose	Change Community Harvest	Undecided	emphasize non-motorized hunting	Would be interested to hear others' thoughts
47	13E,13B	3	Moose	Create Archery Season	Yes	ANY bull hunt could result in overharvest	If the department feels the population could support the allocated number of tags.
48	13	2	Caibou	Add Caribou as trigger to Intensive Management	Yes	develop trigger points to control hunting effort	Provide the department another tool to manage with
49	11,12,13,14B,20E	2	Caribou	Eliminate Nelchina Harvest	No	ADF&G already can close hunting/ regulation hard to undo	The department has the authority to close the hunt when needed and has shown to use it recently
50	13D	4	Sheep	Change DS135 to General Season	Undecided	defer to ADF&G recommendations	The department has a finer tuned management tool with draw tags currently
51	11	4	Sheep	Create Resident Only Hunt	N/A	defer to ADF&G recommendations	Defer to department
52	11	4	Sheep	Create Resident Only Hunt	N/A	defer to ADF&G recommendations	Defer to Department
53	13D	4	Sheep	Create Orchery Hunt	Undecided	Sheep numbers already in decline	If the department feels that this is a sustainable opportunity
54	13D	4	Sheep	Create Archery Hunt	Yes	tighten harvest requirements	This would align the regulations with surrounding areas
55	13D	4	Goat	Segregate Draw area into 3	N/A	defer to ADF&G recommendations	Defer to the department
56	13D,11	4	Goat	Create Archery Only Hunt	N/A	defer to ADF&G recommendations	Defer to the department
57	13	2	Brown Bear	Increase Bag Limit from 1 to 2	Yes	need to reduce bear numbers/ better predator-prey ratios	If the Department feels this is sustainable. This could be reduced back to one again if needed.
58	13	2	Wolf	Decrease Minimum Wolf Pop.	Yes	need to reduce predator numbers for better ratios	If the department supports the proposers data
59	11	4	Wolf Trapping	Legthen Trapping Season	N/A	defer to ADF&G recommendations	Defer to the department
60	11	4	Coyote Trapping	Legthen Trapping Season	N/A	defer to ADF&G recommendations	Defer to the department
61	13B	3	Ptarmigan	Later Start to the season	N/A	defer to ADF&G recommendations	Defer to the department
62	13A, 13C, 13D	3	Ptarmigan	Exend Season in the Spring	N/A	defer to ADF&G recommendations	Defer to the department
63	13B, 13E	3	Ptarmigan	Require Registration Permit	Yes	conservation mgmt./ improved data collection	This would be a great opportunity fro the department to Better collect data over and above the "wing program"
64	14A, 14B	1	Moose	Reauthorize Antlerless Hunt	Yes	mgmt. tool/ data collection	This would only reissue the department the authority
65	14A	2	Moose	Reduce Max Tag allocation	No	decreases mgmt. options and data collection	This decision should be left to the department.
66	14A, 14B	2	Moose	Create late season archery	Undecided	if adopted, eliminate early season	Would push a hunting opportunity deeper into the rut
67	16A	2	Moose	Create late season archery	Undecided	accessibility issues would keep potential harvest down	Same Reason
68	16B	3	Moose	Change Tier 2 Regulations	Undecided	potential for overharvest on ANY bull change	It would simplify the regs and better align with the substance type hunt the tier hunts are.
69	16B	3	Moose	Shorten Tier 2 Season	Yes	winter stress of population probable	This would reduce the season of a hunt that is extremely long as it is and help to reduce pressure on late season, stressed moose populations
70	14A, 14B	2	Brown Bear	Extend Hunting Season	Yes	reduce bear numbers/ harvest opportunity	would support prop 71 over 70 for 14B
71	14B	2	Brown Bear	Extend Hunting Season	Yes	see comments proposal #70	This would provide opportunity to match the bear bait regs
72	16	2	Black Bear	Eliminate Harvet Ticket Requirement	Yes	more opportunity to reduce bear numbers	This would reduce the resource of the department that could be used more effectively elsewhere
73	14A	2	Sheep	Change draw to General Season	Yes	help reduce sub-legal harvest/ conservation effort	Curious to see what the department has to say
74	14A	2	Sheep	Create Res Only Archery	Undecided	more pressure on already declining population	If the department supports
75	16	1	Wolf/Bear	Allow Dept. to reduce Population	Undecided	more predator control options for mgmt.	This would be an additional expense to the department that Is currently struggling. I support the idea but not now. The current aerial program is more cost-effective.
76	16	3	Brown Bear	Allow havest same day airborne	Yes	more mgmt. options to control bear numbers	This would align with current black bear regulations
77	14B	2	Brown Bear	Extend Season	Yes	encourage more bear harvest	Increase bear harvest
78	16	3	Wolves	Allow harvest same day airborne	Yes	encourage more predator control/ require registration permit	Increase predator control opportunities
79	14A	3	Wolves	Extend Trapping Season	Yes	defer to ADF&G recommendations	Increase predator control opportunities
80	16	4	Beaver	Impliment Sealing Requirments	Yes	data collection for better mgmt./ three-year time frame	This would provide the department with better data
81	14A	2	Trap Regs	Add additional requiemts/Within 2 mile cooridor of roads	Undecided	enforceability issues	36 hours is too short of time. I agree with the issue at hand I feel there's a better way to deal with it. This would also be nearly impossible to enforce.
82	14	2	Trap Regs	Establish 50 yrd Setback for traps near listed trails	Yes	helps minimize user conflicts	I don't know a lot about the listed trails. Seems like a good idea with good intent
83	16	3	Ptarmigan	Extend Season by 1 month	N/A	defer to ADF&G recommendations	Defer to the department
84	14A, 14B	2	Ptarmigan	Extend Season by 1 month	N/A	defer to ADF&G recommendations	Defer to the department

**ACR #1** – Close the trapping season for river otter in Units 14A, 14B, and 16.

**SUBMITTED BY:** Dewey Bitler

**CITE THE REGULATION THAT WILL BE CHANGED IF THIS ACR IS HEARD.**

Alaska Administrative Code Number 5 AAC 92.008. Trapping river otter, Central Alaska Units 14A,14B and 16.

**WHAT IS THE PROBLEM YOU WOULD LIKE THE BOARD TO ADDRESS? STATE IN DETAIL THE NATURE OF THE CURRENT PROBLEM.**

Lack of salmon to Susitna River drainage caused by the northern pike infestation. Northern Pike eat all the salmon fry. The main predator of Northern Pike is river otters, and their numbers are suppressed by a liberal trapping regulation. River otter start having their pups in January while the trapping season goes until March 31<sup>st</sup>. The river otter can eat 2-3 pounds of fish a day. We are spending millions of dollars on gillnetting Northern Pike when the river otter can do it for free. At \$100 a pelt it doesn't make sense to pull a predator like that out of the ecosystem.

**WHAT SOLUTION DO YOU PREFER?**

Central Region  
River Otter  
Area 14A, 14B and 16  
NO OPEN SEASON

In the future have a shorter season corresponding to mink with a limit of 2.

**STATE IN DETAIL HOW THIS ACR MEETS THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:**

- 1) To correct an error in regulation.**
- 2) To correct an effect of a regulation that was unforeseen when a regulation was adopted.**

We have to do everything we can to help the salmon. There are many problems causing the demise of the salmon. One problem is the Northern Pike infestation that was unforeseen. Everything that Fish and Game has tried has not worked. We need to use every tool available to combat Northern Pike. One tool is the river otter.

- 3) Does the request identify a biological concern for the population or a threat to meeting objectives for the population?**

Low numbers of salmon return to Susitna River drainage. Low numbers of river otter.  
High numbers of Northern Pike.

- 4) Does the request identify an unforeseen, unexpected event or effect that would otherwise restrict or reduce a reasonable opportunity for customary and traditional wildlife uses, as defined in AS 16.05.258(f)?

The benefits far outweigh any inconvenience this ACR would cause. It would make for better trapping opportunities in the future.

- 5) Does the request identify an unforeseen, unexpected resource situation where a biologically allowable resource harvest would be precluded by delayed regulatory action and such delay would be significantly burdensome because the resource would be unavailable in the future?

A delay would prolong the absence of salmon.

**WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF THIS PROBLEM IS NOT SOLVED PRIOR TO THE REGULAR CYCLE?**

River otter numbers will stay suppressed and Northern Pike numbers will increase.

**STATE WHY YOUR ACR IS NOT PREDOMINANTLY ALLOCATIVE.**

**IF THIS REQUEST IS ALLOCATIVE, STATE THE NEW INFORMATION THAT COMPELS THE BOARD TO CONSIDER AN ALLOCATIVE PROPOSAL OUTSIDE OF THE REGULAR CYCLE.**

**STATE YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE ISSUE THAT IS THE SUBJECT OF THIS ACR.**  
Hunter and fisherman. I do not want to see Northern Pike expand into lakes I fish for trout

**STATE WHETHER THIS ACR HAS BEEN CONSIDERED BEFORE, EITHER AS A PROPOSAL OR AS AN ACR, AND IF SO, DURING WHICH BOARD OF GAME MEETING.**

To my knowledge this ACR has not been considered before.



### 2025 BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE FORM

Please fill out and return to the Clerk’s Office:

[monika.antill@matsugov.us](mailto:monika.antill@matsugov.us) or 350 E. Dahlia Ave Palmer, AK 99645

**BOARD:** MSB Fish & Wildlife Commission

**MEETING DATES:** January 9; February 13; March 13; April 10; May 8; June 12; July 10; August 14;  
September 25; October 9; November 13; December 11

**MEETING TIME:** 4:00 PM

**MEETING PLACE:** MSB Assembly Chambers – back of room

**ADDITIONAL NOTES:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**CONTACT PERSON FOR MEETING INFO:**

**NAME:** Rebecca Skjothaug / Lacie Olivieri

**PHONE:** 907-861-8608 / 907-861-7851

**EMAIL:** [Rebecca.skjothaug@matsugov.us](mailto:Rebecca.skjothaug@matsugov.us) / [lacie.olivieri@matsugov.us](mailto:lacie.olivieri@matsugov.us)

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