



Big Lake Water Quality Improvement Project
Community Action Plan + Funding Work Session – November 29, 2011
Meeting Notes
Facilitated by Shelly Wade, Agnew::Beck Consulting

Summary of Agenda Topics

Welcome + Introductions

Meeting participants introduced themselves. Shelly Wade gave an overview of the purpose and topics for the Community Work Session.

Communications Plan Overview

Rachel Lord with Cook Inletkeeper gave an overview of the 2011-2013 Community Action Plan. Key messages included:

- The *Big Lake Water Quality Improvement Project Action Plan* was the main background document used to develop the Communications Plan. The Communications Plan builds from actions identified in the Action Plan with a focus on educational and outreach actions/tasks.
- This is a “living document” meant to be reviewed and revised by the community as needed.
- The plan is organized by Talking Points, Current Boating Resources, Objectives and Tasks and covers a three-year timeframe.
- Under each Objective, there are a number of tasks. These tasks were developed from feedback heard during Big Lake Water Quality stakeholder meetings and other interviews. Some of the tasks have been funded by an ADEC Alaska Clean Water Action Grant. Other tasks are currently “unfunded”.
- The Communications Plan was developed to assist the community as they move forward with current and existing actions and relevant funding opportunities.

Community Discussion

Community Awareness + Participation

- It’s still a challenge to get people to the Big Lake water quality meetings. However, residents do respond when told “Big Lake is polluted.” The two Talking Points that communicate this message clearly are (perhaps good messages to highlight in future outreach products):
 - “Big Lake is listed as polluted by the state for petroleum hydrocarbons – oils and fuels.”
 - “The pollution in Big Lake can be clearly tied to heavy boating and personal water craft activities, especially during sunny days when many people are out on the water.”
 - “Every boater and PWC user can do something to help reduce the amount of fuel and oil in Big Lake.”
 - “Using absorbent pads and bilge pillows is an easy and effective way to do your part.
 - “Pollution from oils and fuels is harmful for fish and other life in the lake, and can be harmful to people as well. By protecting Big Lake from hydrocarbon pollution we can

protect the fish and other life that live in the lake and ensure clean water for our families!"

Launch Area Improvements

- The first item of discussion and a clear priority for the community are facility improvements at the launch areas to address bilge dumping. Specifically, the community would like to pursue funding for a bioremediation project that works in conjunction with a well-designed launch to decrease the amount of petroleum hydrocarbons that are dumped into Big Lake via bilge dumping activities at the State launch sites.
- The community is ready to take action. Proposed strategy is as follows:
 - Get a quote from a local contractor (Tim n the approximate cost to do the bioremediation project at the three public launch sites (North Shore, South Shore and Mat-Su Borough site).
 - Include the quote in an updated letter (originally drafted and submitted by Dan Mayfield to get funding for launch redesign) to Senator Neuman and Representative Huggins.
 - Request Representative Neuman and Senator Huggins discuss the request with DNR to expedite the funding process for the design and construction to include funding for environmental controls (e.g. bioremediation project).
 - It is critical to get this in front of the representatives now, before they leave for Juneau.
- This discussion item was limited because DNR State Parks was not present at the meeting. Without State Parks representatives at the meeting, it was difficult to discuss the bioremediation project in the broader context of the launch redesign that has already been funded (that currently does not include funds for environmental controls).

Mat-Su Health Foundation Healthy Impact Grant Proposal

- Meeting participants discussed a number of tasks for inclusion in the grant proposal. They were as follows:
 - Bioremediation projects at launch sites
 - Unfunded tasks in the Communications Plan including:
 - Develop Facebook page for area-wide clean boating outreach
 - Develop and send lakeshore stewardship/clean boating packets to all landowners in Big Lake
 - Engage K-12 in clean boating and water quality
 - Increased spill response capacity at public launch ramps
 - Maintain campground bulletin boards with clean boating information
 - Three part-time, flexible or full-time positions during the summer months (May – September) to implement the Communications Plans tasks outlined above, plus:
 - Work with Catherine Inman on the volunteer host launch program to send a consistent message
 - The FT staff option provides an economic development and capacity building
- Discussion regarding lead entities/supervisors for the Mat-Su Health proposal, as well as grant implementation included the following key points:
 - The Mat-Su Health Foundation grant will not allow simple pass throughs – the entity that applies for the grant needs to be engaged in the work outlined in the grant proposal
 - Big Lake Chamber of Commerce is a good candidate for the following reasons:
 - They are a local non-profit
 - They have the infrastructure for taking on new staff, including space to house 3 FT staff during the summer months
 - Their board members have been active members in development of the Big Lake Water Quality Improvement Action and the Big Lake Comprehensive Plan

(2009), so there is a good understanding of the land use and environmental issues as well as priority actions to improve Big Lake water quality.

Immediate Next Steps

- Margaret and Dan will coordinate on the bioremediation/launch redesign cost estimate and submit letter to legislative representatives.
- Seth and Floyd will collaborate to write the project pitch for the Mat-Su proposal (due no later than January 6th).
- Shelly or Cindy will attend the Big Lake Chamber of Commerce monthly board meeting on December 13th to support Margaret in discussion of Chamber as the grant lead entity and supervisor to potential new hires that will work on water quality actions (identified above).
- Rachel will contact Catherine and Holly to share meeting results and discuss potential for expanding/partnering on launch host activities.
- As a contingency plan, Cindy will schedule a teleconference to follow the December 13th Chamber meeting, just in case the Chamber board does not agree to act as the lead for the project. The purpose of the teleconference will be to discuss other options (e.g. variation on Cook Inletkeeper or another logical non-profit entity). **Note: Teleconference Scheduled: 6 pm, Dec. 15th**
Call in number # 800 315 6338 code: 3066.

Community Action Plan + Funding Work Session Attendees:

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