

Anchorage Waterways Council

"Citizens Environmental Monitoring Program"

FY 03 Grant: \$ 60,000.00 Project Match: \$ 40,018.00



Description and Purpose:

The Anchorage Waterways Council's (AWC) Citizen Environmental Monitoring Program (CEMP) involves citizens with hands-on watershed stewardship by connecting them to the water resources in their local areas. By using credible protocols to inventory baseline water quality in the waters of Anchorage and detecting and reporting changes in water quality through tracking long term water quality trends, the AWC can better report water quality issues. The AWC is also

coordinating with other citizen-based water quality monitoring groups in South-central Alaska and sharing technical assistance to ensure credibility of monitoring projects. These efforts put water quality information into the hands of the public and decision-makers as a tool for community development and resource management. During the grant performance period the AWC enhanced the agency usability of the data collected and added important additional sites as identified in both the DEC's nonpoint source pollution strategy and the DEC Alaska Clean Water Actions Program. The AWC collected much needed water quality data in a cost-effective manner and helped promote watershed stewardship in the local community.

Several of Anchorage waterbodies are listed as impaired on the State's 303(d) list as not meeting state water quality standards for fecal coliform bacteria. The AWC did more discreet monitoring on several creeks to collect bacteria data for lab analysis of fecal coliform, E. coli, and enterococci. These results were given to the DEC for use in developing TMDLs for Anchorage streams. The QAPP was updated as needed for the new sampling procedures.

Evaluation of Environmental Benefits:

The CEMP training program was evaluated through surveys distributed to both the participants and the volunteer trainers at the completion of training. These survey results were compiled and presented to the CEMP coordinator and any suggestions for improvement to the training program were incorporated into the program and also communicated to the other citizen-based water quality monitoring groups in Cook Inlet.



Monitoring program feedback was gained from current monitors through bi-annual meetings, where the CEMP coordinator and volunteer monitors met to give their feedback, trade tips and stories and share data updates. Information gathered through these meetings was incorporated into the "Annual State of the Creeks Report". This report included data collected through the CEMP, an evaluation of the data results, and other information indicating the overall health of individual watersheds in Anchorage.

Current monitors were re-certified as required in the Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) protocol and collected data was checked through QAPP and Standard Operating Procedures. The data submitted by the volunteer monitors was reviewed by the coordinator for quality and adherence to the QAPP. Management of the database for this program included regular communication with partner groups, the EPA, and ADEC to ensure consistency and compatibility with monitoring data being collected across the state.

Deliverables:

- Written project report with formatted data
- Contributed information to CIIMMS database
- Photographs of project
- An updated version of the QAPP and
- the 2003 State of the Creeks Report

Project Contacts:

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