

## Homer Soil & Water Conservation District

### “Cook Inlet Watershed Health Project”

*FY03 Grant Award: \$130,000*

*Project Match: \$98,723*



#### **Description and Purpose:**

This project's purpose was to protect waters at risk from nonpoint source pollution in the Cook Inlet basin. The project goals were to increase public awareness and understanding about protecting water quality, collect scientifically credible water quality data and perform water quality analyses to facilitate sound resource management decisions to protect waters at risk. In addition, this project maintained a quality assurance management system to coordinate citizen-based monitoring efforts throughout the Cook Inlet basin that could then be adopted by other citizen-based groups throughout Alaska. The project proposed to meet these goals through two complementary components:

**Component A:** Gather professional level, in-depth water quality and flow data from four Kenai Peninsula salmon streams (Anchor River, Deep Creek, Ninilchik River, and Stariski Creek), and coordinate an information and education program targeted toward residents and communities in these four watersheds.

**Component B:** Use Cook Inlet Keeper's established citizen-based monitoring program as a model to foster and guide similar monitoring efforts, and as a basis to provide quality assurance support and oversight for other citizen-based monitoring projects in the Cook Inlet basin. This component included two discrete and complementary documents: 1) a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) which outlines procedures and protocols citizens must follow to collect defensible data; and 2) a Quality Assurance Management Plan (QMP) which details the quality assurance that is necessary to manage and oversee multiple groups implementing citizen-based water quality monitoring projects.

#### **Evaluation of Environmental Benefits:**

The project's success at providing environmental benefits were determined by the following measures:

- Number of citizens trained to monitor water quality,
- Number of water quality sample stations regularly monitored,
- Number of Cook Inlet communities in which volunteer monitoring occurs as a result of project support,
- Achievement of goals established in the QAPPs for both components of the project,
- Initial identification of water quality status,
- Number and diversity of monitoring partners,
- Distribution and use of Annual Water Quality Summary Reports,
- Number of citizens attending educational outreach events,
- Distribution of quarterly District newsletter,
- Requests for assistance from groups, agencies and private landowners regarding water quality issues,
- Number of hits on CIK and HSWCD web sites which displays water quality data and reports related to this project,

- Agency, scientific, and public interest in and use of water quality data.

**Deliverables for this project include:**

- Annual Water Quality Status Summary Reports for both components
- Lecture series brochure and outline
- Powerpoint demonstration about community involvement in water quality issues
- Draft of Ninilchik Community Plan
- Four newsletters
- Updated Landowner's Development Guide
- CRPC Sustainable Development Plan
- Final Report on Effectiveness of the Citizens' Environmental Monitoring Program
- Revisions to QMP and QAPP and associated SOPs as needed
- Formal partnership agreements with Cook Inlet groups
- Refined database with STORET interface



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