



Big Lake Water Quality Improvement Project  
Community Check-In – October 4, 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.

### Action Plan Updates

Meeting participants provided a summary of activities and progress made on the action plan during the 2011 summer season.

### **Marinas**

- Burkeshore...
  - Conducted a self-assessment using Clean Harbor guidelines.
  - Gave out bilge pillows and got some back; these were incinerated using a Smart Ash Burner.
  - Held batteries for proper disposal.
- Other marinas
  - Shilanski Family Marina purchased and distributed bilge socks to their customers.
- In general, some folks noticed a difference on the Lake including less sheen and more folks using bilge socks.

### **State Launches**

- Water quality signs were erected.
- There were an estimated 1,000 launches (combined) at the North and South State recreation sites this summer (2011).
- State recreation campground hosts and the concessionaire directed boaters to the marinas for bilge socks.
- Launch site improvements
  - DNR has secured funding for replacement ramps at North, South and Rocky Lake and some parking lot, access improvements (together, about \$175,000).
  - There may be an opportunity to incorporate a design that addresses bilge issue, but we're unsure if that will be covered by the federal grant.
  - Wayne is going to bring ideas for ramp design to the engineering team – Can the boat launch incorporate environmental controls? (UPDATE from DNR as of 10/12/11: The funding is restricted to ramp replacement. Any additional activities, including design, will require additional funding which is not available at this time).
  - We still need funding for a sump and then we need an incentive for folks to use the sump (e.g., a pressure wash area where they can wash off their boats). Most people are pulling bilge pumps and away they go.

- The actual ramp construction project will have to go out to bid.
- Other comments regarding State launches
  - There are existing structural problems with the existing ramps not being able to handle the power of prop wash with big boats (replaced at Finger Lake but already blowing out).
  - Some repair shops are backing boats into the Lake to test and tune the engines.
  - Is there a body of best practices where marinas/launches have addressed this issue? Rachel will research examples of where ramps have been designed to account for diverting bilge dumping.
  - Holly in negotiations right now to potentially renew contract for 5 more years.
  - Individual campground hosts also worked well.
- Education campaign
  - Some education happened at marinas this summer and attendance at the Big Lake Community Block Party.
  - Other Cook Inletkeeper efforts under DEC grant
    - Launch host program is really starting in the spring – Catherine Inman and Rachel will work with 3-5 community volunteers to develop the program CIK is doing research on the right/appropriate education campaign. Initial survey findings/conversations revealed most folks don't know that Big Lake is polluted and most DO NOT want it to be that way (i.e., they want to know more and would support actions that will improve water quality).
    - CIK will develop a comprehensive communications plan.
    - The communications plan will be a critical tool in ensuring the right education and outreach for Big Lake.
    - The communications plan can be as simple or complex as the community wants it to be – For example, the current proposal consist of having launch hosts with some information, but the plan could be expanded to include developing a video showing effectiveness of bilge socks that is shown at the marinas and other related businesses in Big Lake. The DEC grant will cover the basics and additional resources could be useful to expand on the efforts.
    - There is an upcoming opportunity in the Mat-Su Health Foundation grant monies to supplement the DEC grant to do a more comprehensive communications plan. Rachel in her development of the communications plan agreed to include additional ideas.
    - There needs to be a local champion to:
      - ✓ Help shepherd the grant proposal process (writing and submitting preferably) – this person or group of persons could work with Rachel at CIK to refine the proposal.
      - ✓ Implement the communication plan.
    - Does the BLCC have any resources they can contribute to:
      - ✓ Identifying a local champion for items listed above?
      - ✓ Paying someone to write the grant?
    - Can we use the existing Big Lake Comprehensive Plan committee structure to do some of this work?

#### Other Summer Activity Updates

##### **Frankie Barker, Mat-Su Borough**

- Shoreline restoration projects
  - Alaska Department of Fish and Game has some funding to do cost share projects with residents
  - Amber Bethe from Fish + Game and a student intern worked on a project this summer with a Big Lake homeowner.

- A project was completed on Finger Lake (Mystrom property shore restoration) and the Youth Corps was involved.
- Rain gardens in the Valley
  - Fish and Wildlife has cost share money for residents to rain garden projects next summer (2012).
  - Big Lake Elementary, Meadow Lakes Senior Center are locations with existing rain gardens.

Immediate Next Steps

- Shelly getting in touch with BLCC to get on agenda. Includes:
  - Need community member to take on Mat-Su Health Foundation (Project Pitch window is November 29 to January 7) opportunity and/or pay grant writer. The grant could cover:
    - Communications plan
    - Kits for launch sites
    - Other water quality improvements including run-off
- Shelly will contact Maragrny Bogart Big Lake Chamber Secretary – let’s get sign on message board re: “Big Lake is polluted! Come hear more at the BLCC meeting on October 11<sup>th</sup>”
- Shelly will Doodle group to gauge group availability for an end of November/early December work session to work on action plan and expand the education efforts.

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