

# Soil and Water Conservation Districts' FY11 Annual Reports

---

*Prepared by the Natural Resource Conservation and Development Board*

The soil and water conservation districts in Alaska are created under the Department of Natural Resources and are governed locally by boards of volunteer supervisors. These pages contain the annual report of activities for the state's eleven districts for the fiscal year 2011.

## Table of Contents

Letter from the NRCDB.....	2
What is a Soil and Water Conservation District?.....	3
History.....	4
Number of Districts.....	5

## Soil and Water Conservation District Reports

Anchorage.....	6
Fairbanks.....	22
Homer.....	37
Kenai.....	54
Kodiak.....	59
Mid Yukon Kuskokwim.....	70
Palmer.....	76
Salcha Delta.....	82
Upper Susitna.....	91
Wasilla.....	109

This publication is released by the Department of Natural Resources, Natural Resource Conservation and Development Board, authorized under AS 41.10. The purpose of this publication is to inform the public, legislators, and soil and water conservation district cooperators about the activities of the soil and water conservation districts for fiscal year 2011. The cost per copy is \$28.61; printed in Anchorage, Alaska.



**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

November 29, 2011

Dear Interested Parties,

Please find in the following pages a compilation of annual reports for fiscal year 2011 as prepared by the Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Alaska. Soil and Water Conservation Districts are authorized under AS 41.10 to assist private land users with natural resource management matters. The Natural Resources Conservation and Development Board is authorized under AS 41.10 to inform and advise the DNR Commissioner of soil and water conservation district activities, programs, and project accomplishments.

The reports enclosed herein are provided for your information and offer a summary of the projects and accomplishments of the Soil and Water Conservation Districts over the past year.

Please take a moment to turn these pages and uncover some of the great work happening in communities across Alaska. Highlights include:

- Conservation planning
- Wildlife habitat improvement
- Natural resource education programs
- Forest management & wildfire mitigation
- Invasive weeds inventory & management
- Trail restoration and improvement
- Water quality monitoring and assessments
- Flood prevention and restoration

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact Shana Joy, Executive Director, at (907) 269-5007 or by e-mail at [Shana.Joy@alaska.gov](mailto:Shana.Joy@alaska.gov). Additional information about the Natural Resources Conservation and Development Board may also be found on the internet at: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/commis/swcdb/swcdb.htm>.

Sincerely,



George Woodbury,  
Chair

## **WHAT IS A SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT?**

Districts are state-authorized entities with authority to exercise the powers delegated by the Commissioner as provided in AS 41.10.130. Each district is governed by a five-member board of volunteer supervisors. The districts are assisted by the Natural Resources Conservation and Development Board.

As provided by AS 41.10.110, the DNR Commissioner is authorized to create districts in the state upon petition and delegate to the district supervisors of each district such powers as the Commissioner considers necessary to accomplish the purposes of soil and water conservation. The following powers have been delegated by the Commissioner to the district supervisors of each district:

- conduct land capability surveys and investigations of potential agricultural areas and of soil conservation and erosion control, including necessary preventative and control measures, in the state; to publish the results of these surveys and investigations and to disseminate information concerning the results of the surveys and investigations to prospective settlers and the general public;
- make technical guidance and other assistance available to settlers of new land to assure the development of the land in a manner that will permit it to be used in accordance with its capabilities and treated in accordance with its needs;
- carry out measures for soil conservation and erosion control within the state, including engineering operations, methods of cultivation, the growing of vegetation, and changes in use of land, with the consent and cooperation of the land user or agency having jurisdiction of the land;
- cooperate with, furnish assistance to, and enter into agreements with, a user of land or agency within the state;
- construct, improve and maintain soil erosion control and conservation structures as are necessary and practical for carrying out the purpose of this chapter;
- develop comprehensive plans for the conservation of soil and control of soil erosion within the state, cropping programs, tillage practices and changes in land use, and publish plans and information and bring them to the attention of users of land within the state;
- accept contributions in money, services, materials or equipment from the U.S. or its agencies, from an agency of the state and from any other sources for use in carrying out the purposes set forth in this chapter.

## **HISTORY**

The state of the nation's soil resources during the 1930's, a decade known as the Dust Bowl Era, inspired the establishment of soil and water conservation districts across the nation. When farm families arrived in the Great Plains states, such as Kansas, Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Colorado, they altered the landscape to suit their needs. These changes included replacing native grasses with agricultural crops and allowing cattle to graze on grounds less suitable for cultivation. When the U.S. entered World War I, the great demand for wheat to feed U.S. troops increased the conversion of even less appropriate land to agricultural use. In addition, the introduction of modern farm equipment allowed farmers to plow more land.

Such intensive manipulation of the land without conservation practices amplified the effects of the natural drought cycle on the Great Plains states. Crop vegetation, unlike indigenous plants, was not well suited for drought conditions. During the late 1920's and early 1930's widespread crop failure decreased ground cover. In addition, many farmers converted unsuccessful cropland to grazing land, where cattle trampled the already poor quality soil and thwarted ground cover renewal. The strong plains winds blew away unprotected topsoil.

By the mid 1930's, large dust storms were a common event across the Great Plains area that became known as The Dust Bowl. Displaced farming families migrated west to California in search of work and land. The once highly productive Great Plains reached a state of economic and ecological devastation.

In 1935, Congress made soil and water conservation a national priority by passing the Soil Conservation Act. This act established the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), referred to as the Soil Conservation Service at the time.

In 1937, President Roosevelt drafted a special recommendation to each state governor for the formation of local soil conservation programs. He suggested that the programs work on the local level directly with land owners. In 1937, North Carolina established the first soil conservation district, a precursor to soil and water conservation districts, in the Brown Creek Watershed.

The tone of the legislation is that of a volunteer, grass-roots organization which could function only with the permission of the land user. The original Territorial statutes and organization remained essentially unchanged when Alaska became a state in 1959. It was not until 1983 that many changes to the statutes were made. In 1983, the state was investing significant funds in agriculture. The changes established a statewide board (NRCDB) with regional

representation and changed the land occupier to land user (an individual who produces renewable resources and has a current cooperative agreement).

The AACD was organized in 1965 to help the Alaska districts do cooperatively what they could not do independently. In 1998, AACD incorporated with 501(c)(3) status.

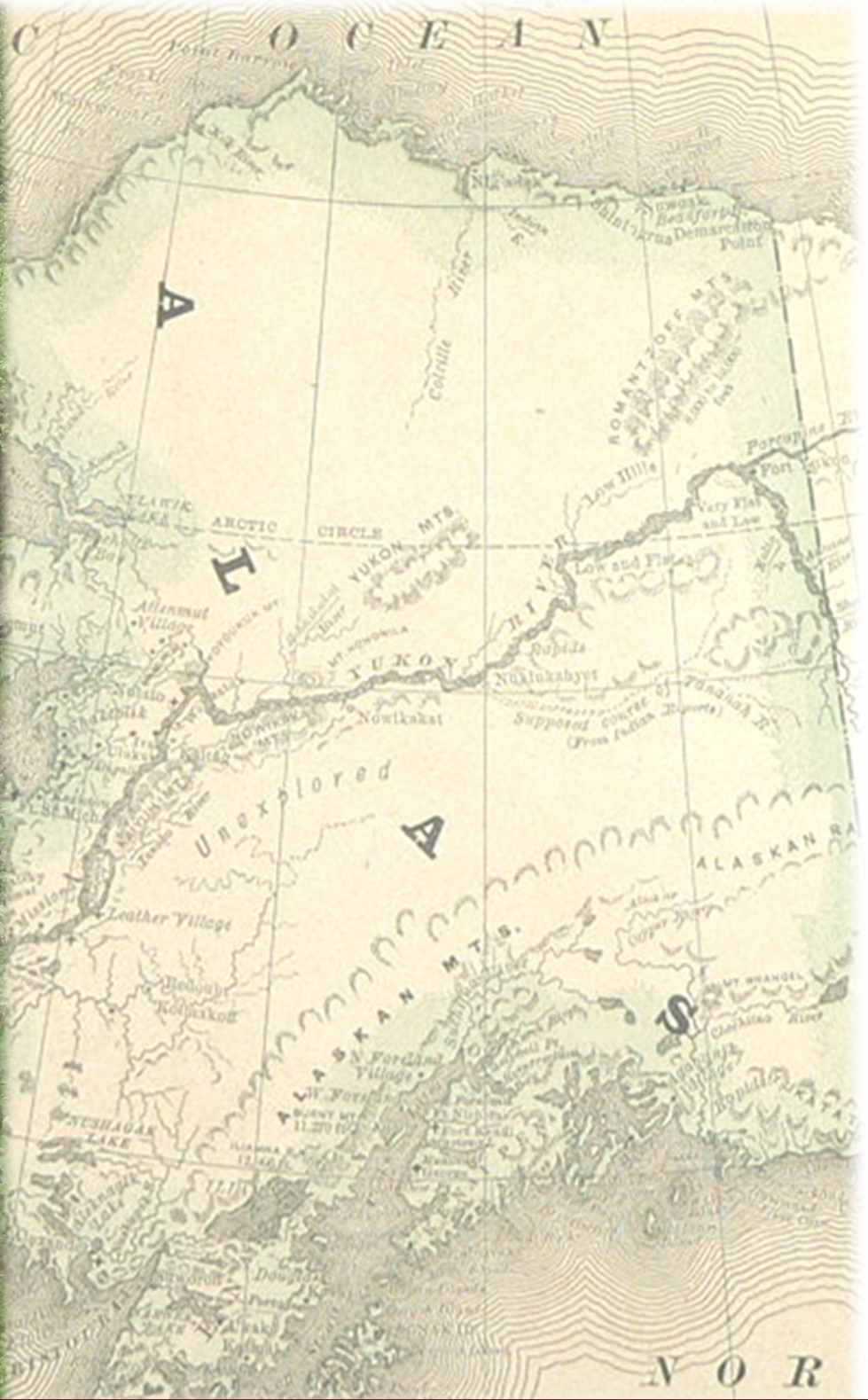
## **NUMBER OF DISTRICTS**

Today, there are approximately 3,000 soil and water conservation districts nationwide, whose boundaries encompass 98 percent of the privately-owned land in the 50 states. Considering that 70 percent of land in the U.S. is in private ownership, the role of local SWCD in natural resource management is quite significant.

In Alaska, there are currently 11 organized districts as listed below. With the exception of the Alaska SWCD (Alaska District), each district is governed by five land users from the district that serve three-year, uncompensated terms of office. The Alaska District encompasses the area outside of the 11 locally organized districts and is governed by the NRCDB. District boards, with area-wide input from landowners and resource user groups, establish annual and long-term conservation priorities for their districts. It is through these locally led planning efforts that state and federal programs are directed.

<b>SWCD</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>SWCD</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
Alaska	331,298,200	Kodiak	3,134,209
Anchorage	1,251,640	Palmer	1,572,804
Fairbanks	3,218,856	Salcha Delta	2,493,650
Homer	1,048,636	Upper Susitna	1,707,746
Kenai	298,430	Wasilla	2,493,650
Kenny Lake	206,522	Mid-Yukon Kuskokwim	9,793,700





# 2011 ANNUAL REPORT




**ANCHORAGE SOIL & WATER  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**



## The ASWCD Mission:

Supporting self-governance and  
private property rights, to assist  
landowners and managers with  
conservation and development  
through technical, financial and  
educational programs





## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Board of Supervisors & Team .....	4
Letter From The Chair.....	4
Anchorage Woodlot, Biomass Utilization & Composting .....	5
Active Property Management & Conservation Planning .....	6
Kincaid Sand Dunes & Coastal Refuge Cleanup .....	7
Policy Issue: Invasive/Non-Native Plants.....	8
Assistance to Consortium of Chugiak-Eagle River Community Councils, AMC 21.10 .....	9
Forage Directory .....	9
Peters Creek Flooding & Erosion Control .....	10
ASWCD Tidbits.....	10
2011 Poster Contest .....	11
Wildlife Natural Resources.....	12
What They're Saying About The ASWCD .....	13
FY2011 Financial Report .....	14
Current & Upcoming Policy Issues Affecting Alaska's Future .....	15



The ASWCD's boundaries are the same boundaries as the Municipality of Anchorage: from Portage to the Knik River, including the communities of Portage, Girdwood, the Turnagain Arm, Anchorage, Eagle River, Chugiak, and Eklutna

## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS & TEAM

Greg Bell, Chair  
Jon Nauman, Vice-Chair  
Linda Boggs, Treasurer/Secretary  
Fred Wolfley, Supervisor  
Bret Burroughs, Supervisor

\* Supervisors for the FY2011 period. In fy2012 Greg Bell resigned and Denise Chythlook was appointed until the next regular election. Bret Burroughs is the new Chair.



## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

As fiscal year 2012 begins and I look back at the accomplishments of fiscal year 2011, I am proud to belong to this district because I know we are truly making a difference in our area. From personal assistance with a variety of agency and non-agency issues, to our on-the-ground assistance to property owners, developers, and agencies, the District is showing that our qualified and confidential support and back-to-basics business plan works. This may seem like a no-brainer to some of you, but to others they can't understand why we would want to use our funds for projects and assistance directly to the community rather than paying for office space; or why the District operates through utilization and support of the private sector rather than having employees and building a bureaucracy.

It seems simple to us -- there are needs in our community that the District wants to fill, there are property owners that need technical and on-the-ground assistance without the fear of the ASWCD breaking their confidentiality, and there are limited funds -- so every dollar counts, every decision our board makes needs to be meaningful and serve those we represent, overhead and administration costs need to stay under 10% (standard is between 20-50%), we need to be accountable for every dollar spent, and integrity, transparency, accountability, protection of private property rights, and respect are the tenets we live by.

I look forward to this upcoming year, working for and with you. This is your District and we're here to help, but if you're expecting a bureaucracy, you're not going to find it here - we're just a bunch of property owners out to help our neighbors develop and take care of the natural resources in their control - hopefully along the way show that if you come from a place of respect, your actions will matter.

*Bret M. Burroughs*

# ANCHORAGE WOODLOT, BIOMASS UTILIZATION & COMPOSTING

In 2011, the ASWCD's Anchorage Woodlot began its fourth season under a self-sustaining business model that was implemented in the 2008 season.

The ASWCD has been involved with the Anchorage Woodlot since its inception in 2000, transitioning from the Anchorage Fire Department to ASWCD management beginning in 2005. In 2008 we completed our transition from being supported with federal grant funds to this self-sustaining model that secures the woodlot's operations as long as the community needs it.

With property owners being supported in their active management of their property and being wildfire-aware and active stewards of their land, the woodlot has become a cornerstone program of the community.

The ASWCD Anchorage Woodlot processes all brush, limbs, and other material dropped off, into a ground material (more than 2,500 tons a season), that is available to the community free of charge. All firewood and firewood-suitable logs are also picked up by the members of the community at no charge.

Since 2005, the Anchorage Woodlot has processed more than 15,000 acres of material.

The Anchorage Woodlot is made possible in partnership with Alaska Land Clearing, LLC and Municipality of Anchorage Street Maintenance, who graciously allow us to use their snow disposal site at 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue and C Street. Thank you!

Whether it be firewood and groundcover from the woodlot, composting, biomass to energy or heat, or biomass to value added product, the District has been supporting utilization in any form. Anchorage has tremendous biomass and compost feedstock resources, that are greatly untapped.

The ASWCD is currently helping several potential start-ups with business plans, providing technical expertise, supplying data, and/or support through their respective processes, testing, permitting, or exploration of the possibilities adventures. The ASWCD also teaches composting classes and is providing support to the community in their, and our, quest to become more self-sufficient and less wasteful of our resources.

Our prediction is that within a few short years (in some cases only months) Anchorage will see several small and large-scale operations taking advantage of the feedstocks locally available. Several of these startups are very exciting and we look forward to helping them come on line.

Material	Estimated tonnage per year	Seasonal variability
Household (Commercial and household)	13,373	Summer
Construction, Demolition and Land Clearing Waste	2,500	Summer
Food Waste	10,000	Summer
Manure	4,500	Year-round
Grass	15,748	Year-round
Other	24,174	Year-round
Total	41,800	Year-round





## ACTIVE PROPERTY MANAGEMENT & CONSERVATION PLANNING

The District is always available to the residents of our District to assist in become active managers and stewards of the natural resources in their control. Whether it be a Conservation Plan for an agricultural or non-agricultural facility or property, assistance with permitting, or technical support, we are helping property owners use and develop their land.

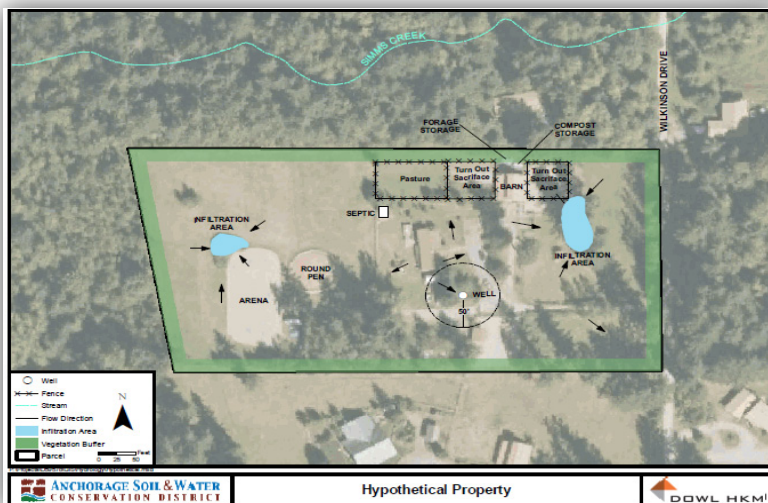
Conservation Plans provide several benefits for property owners, including making properties more chore-friendly and easier to manage, bringing them into compliance with Municipal Code, particularly the provisions of "The Large Animal Ordinance," and helping to provide protection under State law for agricultural properties within the Municipality.

The District team works one-on-one with property owners, in the strictest of confidentiality, to design and implement site-specific Best Management Practices, create vegetation and buffering strategy, manure and mud management plans, and to address drainage, erosion, or other natural resource concerns.

The ASWCD has worked with several manufacturers to assist landowners with planning and developing their plans to incorporate measures such as HoofGrid/StabiliGrid, a product that can be used to address some drainage issues, the prevention of mud and eroded areas,

construction of vegetated parking areas, roads and livestock pastures, slope stabilization, and many other applications.

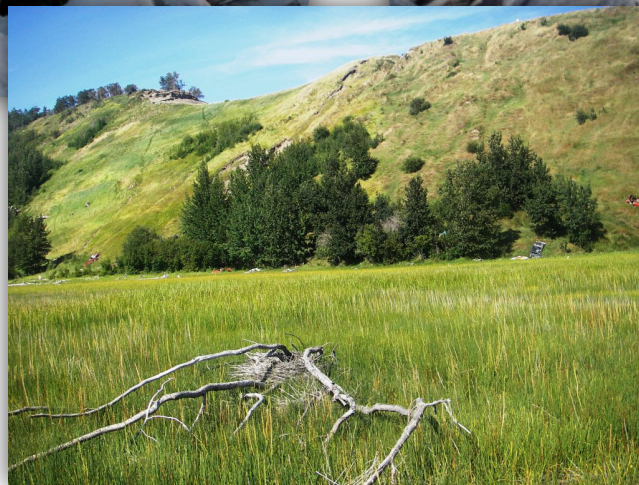
We also support forced-aeration composting that eliminates the need to turn compost piles, and dramatically reduces the time and effort needed to produce quality compost, backyard composting, and advocating for other alternative methods, new-to-Alaska technologies, and user-friendly options.





## KINCAID SAND DUNES AND COASTAL REFUGE CLEANUP

The ASWCD continues to support this project to clean up the bluffs and wildlife refuge below the Kincaid Sand Dunes with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Other supporters of this project are Friends of the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge, the Alaska Moose Federation, Granite Construction, GCI, Kincaid Racing Lions, Alaska Extreme 4-Wheelers, Anchorage Waterways Council, Anchorage International Airport, Anchorage Audubon, ConocoPhillips Alaska, Frontier Construction, Nordic Ski Association of Anchorage, Great Land Trust, Beeks Construction, NC Machinery, countless volunteers, and many others. This project has removed many tons of tires, vehicles and other debris.



## POLICY ISSUE: INVASIVE / NON-NATIVE PLANTS

This year the ASWCD continued its involvement in this issue. There are several agencies and non-profit organizations continuing to pursue and utilize significant federal funds that have been made available to the Invasive Plants cause. For more information see [www.aswcd.org/policy\\_discussion\\_IP010111.pdf](http://www.aswcd.org/policy_discussion_IP010111.pdf)

FY11 included the ASWCD issuing comments and giving input into both State and a Municipality draft plans. The State's (Division of Agriculture) has now produced a final version of this plan that is much more reasonable and rational than the initial draft, and we are encouraged with the State's efforts to step into a controlling position on the issue; however, the Municipality's draft plan is a disappointment. Municipal Parks and Recreation staff are responsible for this draft, which openly focuses on non-native species, going so far as to attempt eradication of Timothy and Alfalfa -- a species which causes absolutely no harm to wildlife or livestock, in fact, is a common livestock.

On the brighter side, we're now being asked where the discussion needs to go, now that people, and some agency-folk, are understanding our concerns as to where this movement was heading:

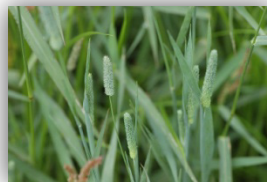
- attempted eradication of any plant thought to be non-native with a positive growth rate vs. truly injurious invasive plants, including species that we depend on and cause absolutely no harm to the environment
- that this is a States' rights issue and that State and local purview must be maintained vs. handing control over to federal agencies and setting our state up for impacts beyond those of the Endangered Species Act

To us the answer is clear: discussion needs to happen regarding the adopted list of priority species. The property owners, residents, business owners, stakeholders, experts, and involved agencies, need to systematically go through the species list being used ([www.fs.fed.us/r10/spf/fhp/invasive/invasiveness%20ranking%20report.pdf](http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/spf/fhp/invasive/invasiveness%20ranking%20report.pdf)), and discuss each species -- not with paying attention to whether non-native, but with a new focus of true impacts with emphasis on realistic expectations:

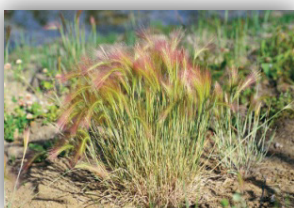
- Does this species cause actual harm to livestock or wildlife, or their habitats?
- Does this species cause the agricultural producers of the state damage and/or financial impacts because eradication from fields is necessary?
- Can this species be reasonably eradicated or controlled?
- Does this species provide benefits to humans, livestock, wildlife and/or the environment?
- Is this species serving a function that is necessary and/or improving an environmental situation?
- Do the means necessary for control or eradication have impacts that outweigh the benefits?
- Is the total eradication of this species a reasonable expectation given prevalence, spread, constraints and financial considerations?



Canada Thistle: justified listing - a species clearly causing harm, and spread is such that it can be eradicated, is on the SOA Prohibited List, eradication efforts are effective



Timothy Grass: should not be listed - arguably the most common livestock forage, crucial to agricultural interests, no harm to wildlife or habitat has been shown; however, benefits to wildlife and habitat have been shown



Foxtail Barley: should be listed - acceptable forage early in the season, after tops form proven harmful to animals and livestock, prevalence may make eradication impossible



Lambsquarters: should not be a targeted species - listed as non-native though there is evidence to the contrary, has cultural and food value. If remains on the list eradication would be impossible due to prevalence in all 50 states



## ASSISTANCE TO CONSORTIUM OF CHUGIAK-EAGLE RIVER COMMUNITY COUNCILS, AMC 21.10

The rewriting of Title 21, the Municipality's Land Use Code, has taken a decade, but is tentatively scheduled for its final Planning and Zoning Commission hearing in early October. From there, the Title will head to the Assembly for final edits and final adoption.

Recognizing the need to preserve these community values in Land Use Code, the property owners, residents, and business owners in the Chugiak-Eagle River (C-ER) area requested, and the Assembly granted, a separate chapter specific to the C-ER area....with the community writing its own chapter -- the absolute essence of self-governance and self-determination, and by Statute the District is charged with assisting in the settling of land....so how could the District say no when the Consortium asked for assistance.

The Consortium invested more than four years in research, talking to the community, community events and town hall meetings, a community survey by Dittman Research, and hundreds upon hundreds of hours in the collection, documentation, and justification of their data. This process produced draft provisions, and provided the Consortium with the background necessary to base their decisions on as they went through the District's process for the creation of the final formatted draft, which was completed in FY11. It is anticipated the Chapter will see its final processes and adoption in FY12.



### Separate Title 21 chapter applauded by local residents PNZ decision earns positive response

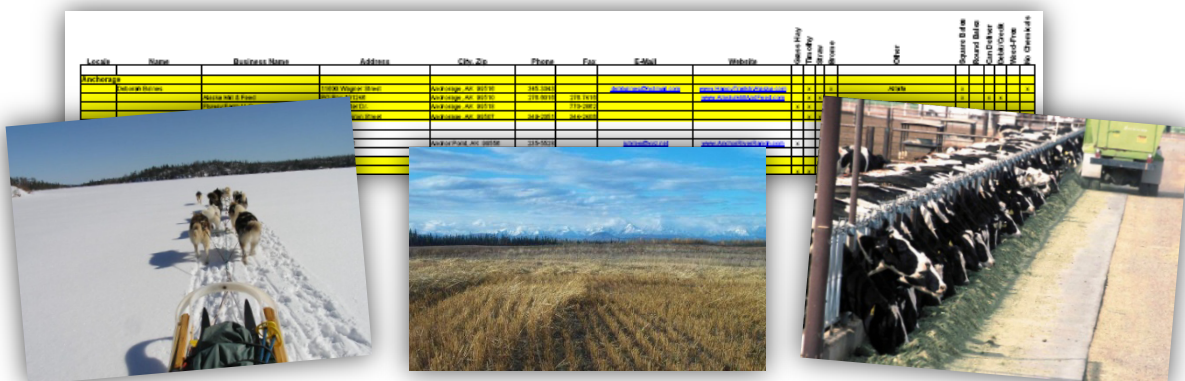
BY MIKE NESPER  
[Alaska Star](#)

Those in favor of creating a separate chapter for Chugiak-Eagle River to Title 21, which regulates municipal land use, had reason to celebrate Monday night.

The Anchorage Planning and Zoning Commission passed a motion requiring Chapter 21.10 be on the same level of review as the provisionally adopted chapters of the Title 21 rewrite by its Oct. 3 meeting. A round of applause followed the unanimous decision by the nearly 30 in attendance at Gruening Middle School.

## FORAGE DIRECTORY

The ASWCD continues its networking support between producers and uses. The ASWCD Forage Directory is a comprehensive list of local producers with detailed product information, with all contact information, farm website. The Directory is in its 4<sup>th</sup> year and we are often hearing, from farmers and end-users, how valuable the list has become and what a terrific marketing tool it has become for the farmers.



## PETERS CREEK FLOODING & EROSION CONTROL

The District continues its monitoring of our constructed portion of Peters Creek. Our project has been expanded to include additional areas that may be of concern or where there may be smaller issues that can be addressed now before the issues become significant, as happened at Starner Bridge Thanksgiving 2006.

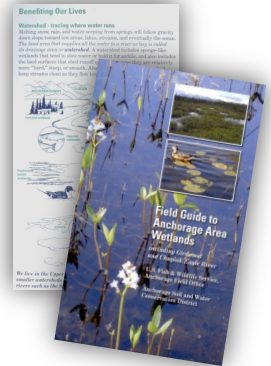


Continued monitoring of the section of creek that we altered has shown an end to the massive flooding that plagued that section for many decades, including the catastrophic flooding in 2006 when the District was asked to help. The District stopped the flooding and prevented the local access bridge from demolition, then followed with construction the following year.



## ASWCD TIDBITS

The ASWCD continues to supply organizations, agencies, developers, and private individuals copies of our *Field Guide to Anchorage Wetlands*. The guides show many of the plant and animal species living in the wetlands of the Municipality, including wetland maps of the Anchorage, Chugiak-Eagle River, and Girdwood wetlands. These books are perfect for on-the-ground educational opportunities for teachers and parents.



The ASWCD also performed several on-site assistance calls in FY11, three of which are significant issues the District has agreed to take on in FY12: a flooding problem, a needed drainage infrastructure project, and additional work on Peters Creek. Work to research, document, quantify/qualify the issues and concerns and prepare project details, including securing funding, were completed in FY11.

Some of the other assistance provided in FY11:

- A property owner asked for assistance with regard to an adjacent road project. The ASWCD acted as a mediator between the property owner and the agency involved.
- The ASWCD performed on-site meetings with the Municipality and others involved, in two creek-related issues.
- Upon the request of property owners, the ASWCD assisted and/or represented several property owners in varying issues with the Municipality and other agencies, including permitting, zoning, eminent domain, and regulatory issues.
- Continued our significant involvement in assisting a property owner / developer in a complicated property issue.
- Assisted several agencies, upon their request, in varying issues.



## 2011 ANNUAL POSTER CONTEST

The ASWCD's annual poster contest concluded in June. This year's contest asked entrants to draw the different forms of agriculture found in the Municipality, from Knik River to Portage.



This year's grand prize winner, also placing first in the 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade category, was McKenna Mitchell, 9<sup>th</sup> grade at Chugiak High (above left). An honorable mention, and also placing 2nd in the same category, was also given to Sydney Deering, 9<sup>th</sup> grade at Eagle River High, for this clever update to *American Gothic* (above right).

The other first place winners from each grade category are Francesca Locke, 1<sup>st</sup> grade at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School (below left); Emily Gage, 4<sup>th</sup> grade at Bear Valley School (below middle); and Sophie Wright, 6<sup>th</sup> grade at Turnagain Elementary (below right)



## **WILDLIFE NATURAL RESOURCES: ANCHORAGE AND RURAL ALASKA WORKING TOGETHER**

The District continued its support of programs and projects that benefit both Alaska's wildlife and Alaska's people. In supporting the Wood Bison Reintroduction project, which will bring back a species that used to help sustain Alaskans and has only been extinct in Alaska for less than 100 years.

The Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center (AWCC) herd arrived in November 2003 from the Yukon Territory in Canada and is part of a Wood Bison recovery program designed to reintroduce the species to Alaska under the oversight of Alaska Department of Fish and Game. All involved are currently working to 'bulletproof' the reintroduction so that extreme environmental groups cannot use the newly reintroduced bison to halt or in any way affect development and use of our state's resources.

Many people have worked together to make this happen for rural Alaska: The AWCC, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, ASWCD, Canada's National Recovery Team for Wood Bison, the Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Canada, International Union for the Conservation of Nature/Species Survival Commission- Bison Specialist Group, Alaska Outdoor Council, Safari Club International, the Wildlife Conservation Society, Tanana Chiefs Conference, Eastern Regional Subsistence Advisory Council, and Fish and Game Advisory Committees representing the three regions being considered for wood bison restoration. For more information see [www.alaskawildlife.org](http://www.alaskawildlife.org).

The ASWCD has also been a supporter of the Alaska Moose Federation (AMF) since the beginning. The AMF is working to improve our management of moose resources, a resource that in the past has been taken for granted, or sometimes just plain wasted. The AMF has succeeded in the creation of a rescue and relocation program that will help in returning moose populations to the number once relied on by rural Alaska and the implementation of a salvage program to recover moose killed on roadways, and in facilitating a paradigm shift in how agencies see this resource. Most Alaskans do not realize that moose populations across the state are significantly decreased, while Anchorage is overrun.

The orphan calf program is nothing new, just a return to how Alaskans used to utilize this resource. For example, the Copper River Delta out of Cordova received 24 orphaned calves between 1949 to 1958, relocated to an area which had no moose prior to this program. Since 1960, the area has harvested over 4,600 moose from this established herd.

Supporters of this effort include the ASWCD, Sampson Steel, Pruhs Corporation, NC Machinery, Alaska Mill and Feed, Native Village of Eyak, Tyonek Native Corporation, Sportsman's Warehouse, Surveyor's Exchange, Wendy's of Alaska, Great Northern Engineering, Granite Construction, Alaska Air Taxi, Alaska Highway Safety Office, Evert's Air Service, all of their outstanding volunteers, and many others. For more information go to [www.growmoremoose.org](http://www.growmoremoose.org).



## WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT THE ASWCD

### From an Anchorage developer:

"Working with the Anchorage Soil and Water Conservation District has been a journey. As with all journeys, there is usually a lesson learned and an experience that you can hopefully apply to your life; whether that includes business or personal choices. First of all, the District has educated me on community issues involving real estate ownership. Having worked in real estate for many years and having personally owned numerous properties, I was still unprepared for the complexity of owning wetland-sensitive and community-sensitive property. Without the District's assistance and direction, I would still be swimming in uncharted waters.

The District is using highly educated, extremely dedicated support who definitely think outside the box. Their knowledge of real estate ownership and the benefits and responsibilities involved is extensive. The District's support is also well-versed in the systems of our community and is a total resource for contacting and solving community issues. Their understanding of Anchorage's community issues and the agencies involved to govern these matters, are tools that are invaluable to me.

While the District and I are still on the journey to solve difficult problems, I know one thing for sure...the District has, and continues to be, a source of support and professional direction I am thankful to have. Without the District's knowledge, professional and supportive contractors, and abilities, I would have a difficult time achieving my development goals. If the District were able to serve more developers in my position, real estate developments could be accomplished with community support and satisfaction guaranteed."

### From an agricultural property owner:

"I wanted to take a moment to express my appreciation for your work with the Anchorage Soil and Water Conservation District. Upon moving to our new Anchorage horse property we had no idea the issues we'd be facing: working with neighbors, manure management, muni code compliance, etc. You both have been an invaluable asset to our family. You have helped us speak to our neighbors and have spoken to them on our behalf; you have assisted us in manure management in an arctic environment; and you have helped us know how to comply with all applicable codes. I truly cannot imagine navigating the year without your help. Thank you for this and much more. I look forward to continuing in our work to better Anchorage life with horses."

### From the Municipality:

"I would like to express my appreciation for the work being done by personnel, especially Ryan Stencel, from the Anchorage Soil and Water Conservation District. Our office is tasked with enforcing various municipal codes. We receive numerous complaints from Anchorage citizens regarding the operation of horse facilities within the Municipality. Normally complainants are concerned about the effects of contaminated runoff leaving horse facilities and entering either private or public property. On numerous occasions, personnel from the ASWCD have assisted our officers and have been instrumental in resolving these complaints. Ryan often acts as a mediator between affected property owners and provides common sense solutions acceptable to all. She has also been able to provide engineering expertise, through ASWCD's contract with DOWL HKM, when needed. ASWCD's preparation and distribution of the pamphlet "Anchorage's Large Animal Ordinance" is an outstanding example of the valuable educational work done by ASWCD.

I also appreciate the fact that Ryan routinely invites our officers to ASWCD sponsored conferences and presentations concerning horse facility management. Our attendance at these functions not only presents an opportunity for our personnel to increase their knowledge about horse facilities but also gives our officers an opportunity to interact with the local equestrian community in an informal setting that leads to a better understanding of the Municipality's role in insuring compliance with various codes as they relate to horse facilities.

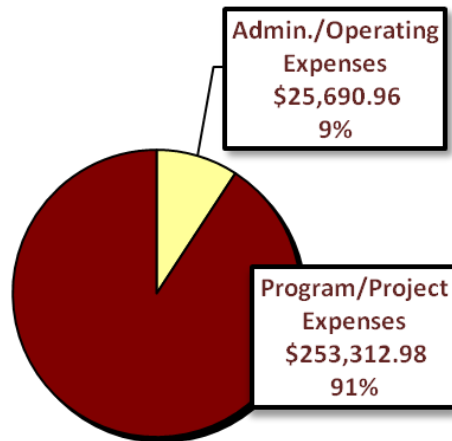
On a separate note, we have noted that ASWCD personnel are restricted by current legislative appropriation parameters from working with the smaller (less than 4 animals) horse facilities. Allowing them to work with the smaller facilities would benefit both the facility operators and the community as a whole.

Ryan Stencel and ASWCD have become invaluable resources for both the municipality and its citizens. We look forward to our continued mutually beneficial relationship."



## ANCHORAGE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT FISCAL YEAR 2011 FINANCIAL REPORT

Program/Project or Funding Source	Admin. / Operating Expense	Program or Project Expense	Total FY2011 Expenses	FY2011 Revenue
Admin	\$ 109.50		\$ 109.50	\$ 109.50
Anchorage Woodlot, 2010 Season	\$ 22.63	\$ 32,362.73	\$ 32,385.36	\$ 23,370.05
Anchorage Woodlot, 2011 Season	\$ 21.00	\$ 5,442.27	\$ 5,463.27	\$ 13,030.00
Composting	\$ -	\$ 2,700.00	\$ 2,700.00	\$ 1,280.00
Conservation Planning Program	\$ -	\$ 75,764.49	\$ 75,764.49	\$ 43,414.50
Consortium of C-ER Councils	\$ -	\$ 30,804.57	\$ 30,804.57	\$ 37,601.60
DNR Cooperative Agreement	\$ 100.00	\$ 1,227.58	\$ 1,327.58	\$ 2,000.00
Peters Creek Completion, FY11	\$ -	\$ 2,619.92	\$ 2,619.92	\$ -
Peters Creek, FY12	\$ -	\$ 1,017.87	\$ 1,017.87	\$ -
Potter Marsh Project	\$ -	\$ 4,637.50	\$ 4,637.50	\$ 4,000.00
SOA FY09 Operating Grant	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,153.49
SOA FY11 Operating Grant	\$ 2,234.92	\$ 19,316.65	\$ 21,551.57	\$ 12,372.36
Operating Account	\$ 23,202.91	\$ 77,419.40	\$ 100,622.31	\$ 120,544.53
TOTALS	\$ 25,690.96	\$ 253,312.98	\$ 278,894.44	\$ 258,876.03





## CURRENT & UPCOMING POLICY ISSUES AFFECTING ALASKA'S FUTURE

- **HB110 and SB49** - Governor Parnell's Legislation to amend the taxes Alaska levies against oil and gas revenue. This legislation may arguably be the single most important issue to impact Alaska's future.
- **Federal policies** - Federal policies, permitting issues, and continuing struggles with unintended consequences, and misapplication, of the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) - The ESA was intended to protect certain threatened or endangered species while their populations stabilized or increased. The American Bald Eagle is a legitimate and justified example. In recent memory however, the ESA has been used as a battle tool by extreme environmentalists to halt development and use of natural resources. Other federal issues such as those with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and/or fear of where regulations are headed is preventing many projects/business investment/expansion to fall stagnant for fear of additional and/or unreasonable regulations being imposed in the near future. The issues in this category are too numerous to discuss here, with examples in everything from fishing to non-native plants. A good source for discussion of some of these issues can be found at the Resource Development Council at [www.akrdc.org/issues/archive.html](http://www.akrdc.org/issues/archive.html). This item is affecting several projects/issues the ASWCD is involved in. Across the nation, and here locally, many projects are sitting on the shelf because businesses are concerned with current regulatory struggles, but seriously concerned about new regulations and over-regulation that seems to be happening and/or may be implemented within the near future.
- **Education** - Anchorage and Alaska's future is greatly dependent on the education issue. Some of the current positive moves have been for key players to understand the enormous value to vocational schools and training, Governor Parnell's grant program to qualified students to assist with college or vocational school expenses, and the Anchorage School District's beginning to support vocational education. However, for Alaska's future we need to continue these policies, expanding where needed, and to add more alternatives. Then, the final key to Alaska's future is to have a bright outlook within our state so that these young adults stay in Alaska - the brain drain must stop, we must stop exporting our young Alaskans - it is their vision, ingenuity, creativity, entrepreneurial values, expertise in development and use of our natural resources, and just their plain Alaskan spirit, is what will provide for Alaska's future. Another piece of important legislation (HB145) would provide a financial scholarship to parents who wish to, or need to, educate their children in private schools or other alternatives to the traditional school district. Locally, this becomes a concern because the ASWCD wants to see our locals stay here, rather than the constant incoming migration of experts, engineers, etc. from outside Alaska.
- **HB123** - If approved by the Legislature and Governor, will allow Soil and Water Conservation Districts (and property owners and developers through the Districts) access to low-interest funding for projects that improve water quality. This funding would be applicable for projects such as septic system maintenance/replacement, implementation of Best Management Practices or infrastructure to treat runoff or other water sources to improve water quality.
- **Land Use Code** - Within the Municipality, undoubtedly the most important legislation will be the adoption and implementation of the rewritten Title 21, Land Use Code. This update to the Code has been almost 10 years in the making and will be a deciding factor in all development and land use for Anchorage's future. Title 21 provisions must be financially viable, support private property rights and necessary land uses, and strike a balance between what we want future development to look like vs. what is actually do-able, financially and physically in Alaska's unique climate and other constraints because of our location. Title 21 also needs to be supportive of agricultural uses from backyard gardens to equestrian properties.

The current draft requires all commercial agriculture, including the common examples of the selling of eggs, raspberries from your backyard, or compost, are to become conditional uses in the R-6, R-7, R-8, and R-9 districts - the most common rural and agricultural properties. In existing code (as currently in place today) not only allows these functions on a R-6 property, current code also allows roadside stands in these zoning districts. If the Assembly implements the draft Code as now written, not only will there be a paradigm shift to the Municipality not being supportive of agricultural uses, but will cause significant financial and permitting impacts to those agricultural operations who do choose to do business.

- **States' Rights** - Although linked to the federal discussion above, this topic goes much further. What is the federal government constitutionally allowed to do and/or restricted to? What is the responsibility of the states? And what powers should states retain rather than allow federal control?



ANCHORAGE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

P.O. Box 110309 - Anchorage, AK 99511-0309

Phone: 907.677.SOIL (7645)

E-Mail: [aswcd@aswcd.org](mailto:aswcd@aswcd.org)

[www.ASWCD.org](http://www.ASWCD.org)



**Memorandum to:** *State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources*

**From:** *Fairbanks Soil & Water Conservation District*

**Subject:** *Annual Report of Accomplishments: July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011*

**Date:** *October 31, 2011*

### **Chairman's Report 2010/11**

---

Fairbanks Soil and Water Conservation District successfully moved into our own office space this year and we were able to expand our number of employees and our work area. Transition takes time and effort, but staff, supervisors, and customers are happy we have moved! FSWCD thanks the City of Nenana and Martin Gutoski with the Fairbanks North Star Borough who donated much of our office furniture and equipment. Utilizing the new space, we were able to host a “Natural Resource Showcase” to our interior delegation and other local decision makers. This program highlighted the district’s work and over fifteen other natural resource issues and projects within the district including Nenana Tochaket Agricultural project, Chena River habitat concerns, and a presentation from a Chinese delegation interested in Alaska potatoes. Our office was also host to the USDA Natural Resources Conservation local work group meeting which garnered suggestions for priority conservation issues in the area. Meetings, workshops and forums have all been possible because of the additional space. Expanded summer staff had room to work as well. The move has propelled FSWCD into a more productive, professional and customer friendly district “meeting the needs of the local land user for the conservation of soil, water, and related resources”.

#### ***Highlights of this year's work include:***

- Staff finished the 08 NRCS contract deliverables and began work on 09 deliverables as well as an NRCS agreement with the Fairbanks Field Office. This work included conservation planning, farm site visits, nutrient, and invasive plant management, forestry plans, continued work on a forage demonstration project and riparian and soil workshops.
- The discovery of Elodea, an invasive aquatic weed in the Chena Slough prompted FSWCD to take the lead in the establishment of a multi-agency and local participants work group to address the problem.
- Partnership with the USFWS in establishing schoolyard habitat restoration projects resulted in working with four new schools.
- The Nenana branch office continues to reach out to our borders assisting with projects in Nenana, Healy, Cantwell, Anderson and Minto. Other outreach included assistance to Ft. Yukon, Central, Manley, and Juneau.
- Locally, in partnership with CCHRC and the City of Fairbanks, a green infrastructure grant was completed and a new green infrastructure cost share grant for landowners was established by partnering with USFWS.

- Hundreds of children were reached with natural resource education efforts both in the classroom, after school programs and local events.
- Three new active board members include Todd Boyce, Dan Rees, and Karl Benson who bring varied backgrounds and experience to complement and promote the mission of the FSWCD “to serve its cooperators, private landowners and all citizens of the district by promoting wise development and conservation of natural resources”.



FSWCD Natural Resource Showcase



2<sup>nd</sup> Place Poster Contest Winner Cassidy Welsh

FSWCD goals include: prevention and eradication of noxious and invasive species, conservation of plant and soil resources, promotion of a viable agricultural economy, conservation and maintenance of water resources, conservation of forest resources, and relevant education and information for all clientele, personnel and partners. A new goal “promotion of affordable energy” was proposed by the board of supervisors. An additional goal was to assistance to NRCS Programs.

## **Goal 1: Prevention and Eradication of Noxious and Invasive Species**

---

### **General:**

- Coordination of Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) meetings. Cooperating agencies include: Cooperative Extension Service, US Forest Service, US Fish & Wildlife Service, Tanana Valley Farmer’s Market, Department of Transportation, USKH, Inc, and concerned citizens.
- Developed CWMA logo
- Participation in Alaska Committee for Noxious and Invasive Plant Management (CNIPM). 3 employees attended the CNIPM conference. Monthly teleconferences, listserv, and annual conference. Staff member, Darcy Etcheverry, increased CNIPM participation this year by joining the board of directors. CNIPM subcommittee participation: Weed Free Forage & Gravel
- Placement of an Invasive Plant Coordinator in the Fairbanks district as part of the Recovery Act program through AACD.

- Coordination of the newly formed Elodea sp. Steering Committee, which is working to manage the newly discovered *Elodea sp.* infestation in the Chena Slough. Work this year included establishing a survey program for 2011, seeking funding, and creating outreach information.
- Continued support of the Weed Cost Share program

#### **Technical Assistance:**

- Equipment lending program: Provided herbicide sprayers to 4 cooperators to help control invasive species.
- Weed Free Forage certification – No cooperators were certified in the Fairbanks district this year, but 3 employees received certification to certify fields weed free as part of the Alaska program. These trained employees will increase the district's ability to certify producers in the future as demand for the program grows.
- Provided bird vetch control information to 10 landowners.

#### **Inventory & Control:**

- Participated in a USFWS program to survey Fort Yukon roads with a locally hired youth crew
- 3 private landowners participated in surveys for invasive plants. Peat ponds – July 10 - 5 acres
- Participation in Tyonek survey and Juneau control work for invasive plants as part of the Recovery Act project.
- 27 acres of various invasive plants were pulled or dug at the Tanana Lakes Recreation Area during the Weed Smackdown
- Several small control projects were conducted for common tansy, *Tanacetum vulgare*, and reed canarygrass, *Phalaris arundinacea*
- With assistance from AACD Invasive Plant Program Coordinator, applied for herbicide application permits through the Alaska Dept of Environmental Conservation for 3 locations
- Completed DOT permitting process to install weed barriers for perennial sowthistle, *Sonchus arvensis*, on Chena Hot Springs Road

#### **Education:**

- Invasive plant booth at various community events, including: Tanana Valley State Fair (1,000 people), Northern Living Home Show (1,200), Alaska Farm Bureau meeting in Fairbanks (50), Sustainable Agriculture Conference (100), Randy Smith Garden Bazaar (50), Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce – Alaska Agriculture Day (100), Department of Fish & Game's Kid Day (200),
- Hosted a bird vetch lesson at the Outdoor Days education event at UAF that reached 240 students
- Invasive plant lessons, utilizing the Weed Wackers curriculum set, were provided to various classrooms throughout the school year, including classes at: Hunter Elementary, Hutchison High School, Denali Elementary School, and Effie Kokrine Charter School
- Nenana agricultural producers were contacted about a locally found cheatgrass, *Bromus tectorum*, infestation.
- Participation in UAF undergraduate thesis committee on *Elodea sp.* Mapping project



- Presentations about invasive plant management were given to various community organizations, including: Arctic Audubon Society, Tanana Valley Watershed Association, Fairbanks Rotary, Golden Heart Rotary, Harding Lake Association, Natural Resource Showcase
- Support for the invasive plant section of the 2011 Envirothon competition in Kodiak
- Invasive plant training with US Fish & Wildlife Service habitat restoration youth corps: European bird cherry, ornamental jewelweed, reed canarygrass, and Elodea sp. Identification and survey methods

***Print Material Created:***

- Elodea sp. general brochure
- Invasive Plants: Why You Should Care booklet
- Fairbanks CWMA poster for Alaska Invasive Species Conference



2011 Weed Smackdown



Darcy teaching an invasive plant lesson at Tanana Lakes Recreation Area education day with Hunter Elementary



Nenana Youth Crew Member Nick Mayrand instructing volunteer at 2011 Weed Smackdown.



Kayla holding up *Elodea* from the Chena Slough.



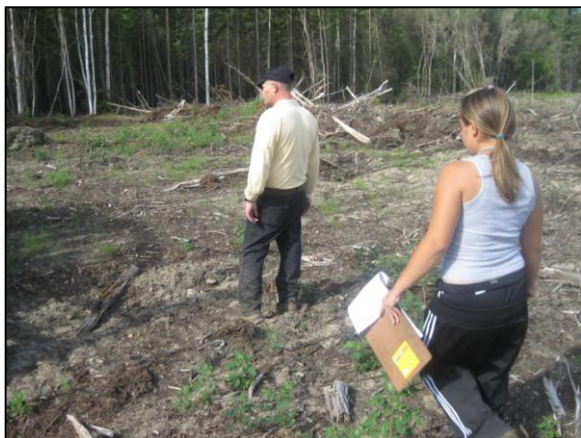
## Goal 2: Conservation of Plant and Soil Resources

### *Technical Assistance:*

- Provided 158 soil tests and nutrient management recommendations for 60 cooperators consisting of approximately 314 acres
- Provided technical assistance (planting recommendations, plant health advice, erosion control, etc...) to approximately 30 landowners/land managers.
- Provided forage testing for 10 cooperators (10 samples) and fertilizer/compost testing for 4 cooperators (4 samples)
- Equipment lending program: provided soil aerator to 6 cooperators
- Began 4 acres of wetlands and 2 acres of uplands restoration for Nenana Schoolyard Habitat Restoration Project
- Began 2 acres of upland restoration for Nenana Youth Initiative
- Began planning of restoration of 4 acres of uplands and 2 acres of trails for Tri Valley Schoolyard Habitat Restoration Project
- Began planning for restoration 4 acres of wetlands and 2 miles of degraded existing trail system, as well as restoring and enhancing traditional berry gathering locations (in progress) for Minto Schoolyard Habitat Restoration Project
- 100 pounds of worms were ordered and distributed through the vermi-composting in Alaska promotion
- See other work under NRCS contracts and agreements

### *Education:*

- Soils Lessons to 9 classrooms, approximately, 225 students
- Early Childhood Workshop – 20 adults
- Worm Composting lessons – 10 classes, approximately 250 students
- Denali After School Program – 10 lessons, approximately 20 students each
- Anne Wien Elementary After School Program – 10 lessons, approximately 20 students each
- Soil Testing Workshop – 8 adults



Nenana Restoration Project Team in the field.



Jessica Guritz performing a soil quality test in a brome hay field.



George Hitz using the soil aerator to improve soil quality and plant health in a hay field.



Joni Scharfenberg scouting for problems in a brome field.

### **Goal 3: Sustainable Agricultural Resources and Economy**

---

- 10 Site visits to landowners related to agricultural and other natural resource issues
- Assisted with 5 State Farm Conservation Plans
- Attended Delta Farm Tour (2 employees)
- Participated in Alaska Farm Bureau Annual Meeting
- Participated in and helped sponsor SARE conference
- Sponsored the Envirothon, Potato Festival, Chena Fest, and FFA
- Taste of Alaska event providing Alaska Grown food to 600 people
- Egg-cellent cooking lesson – eating locally produced eggs – 6 adults
- See other work under NRCS contracts and agreements
- Farm and Garden Display, Giant Cabbage Contest and Bucks for Bales Contest Sponsorship and Promotion– Jr. and Sr.

#### **Education:**

- 60 classrooms participated in Alaska Agriculture Day. Alaska Agriculture Day included farm tours, germination and plant science lessons, composting, plants and pollination and a special “where does it grow in Alaska.” Grades K – 3 received a complimentary book. Approximately 2,055 students and adults learned about Agriculture in Alaska in Fairbanks, Nenana, Healy, and Cantwell
- Denali After School Program – 30 lessons, approximately 25 students each
- Anne Wien After School Program – 14 lessons, approximately 20 students each
- 4H Grand Champion winner sponsors
- Chena Hot springs – Energy Fair – AK Grown Activities. Approximately 40 children reached.
- Alaska Grown Day outreach at TVSF – Trivia Wheel





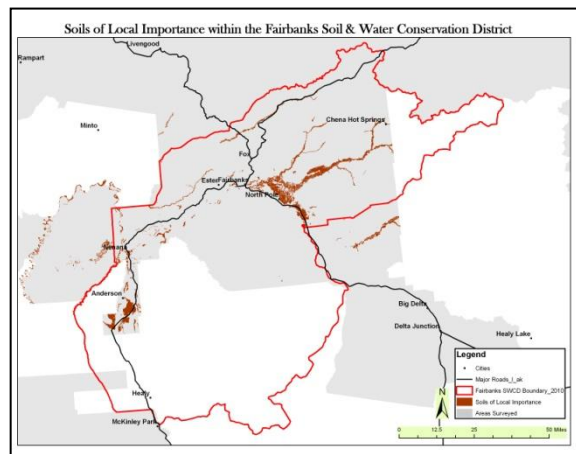
Jessica serving Alaska Grown food at the Taste of Alaska



A 4-H member at the Chamber of Commerce petting zoo



FSWCD Habitat Restoration Specialist Brent Mitchel at Tri Valley School AG Day



Map created showing soils of local importance (for agriculture) within the Fairbanks SWCD Boundaries

## Goal 4: Conservation/Maintenance of Water Resources

### *General:*

- Participated in Noyes Slough Clean-up
- Assisted with Tanana Valley Watershed Assoc water quality monitoring
- Riparian presentations to three groups

- Partnership with Storm water committee, (NPDES) partners include U of A, DEC, City of Fairbanks, City of North Pole, ADOG, FNSB
- Continued restoration and education work on Chena Slough
- Leading working group for aquatic invasive-Elodea
- Green Infrastructure Grant participation with Cold Climate Housing, City of Fairbanks, and GW Scientific
- Began new USFWS Green Infrastructure grant, cost share for local participants
- Rain garden planning and education
- Assisted NRCS with wetland determinations
- Provided water testing for one cooperator
- Three streambank restoration projects in partnership with USFWS
- Interpretive signage for Chena River salmon habitat in partnership with Pikes Lodge and USFWS

#### **Education:**

- Watershed, Water Quality and Slough Education at NPMS – 3 classes, 112 students
- Denali After School Program – 16 lessons, 20 students each
- Anne Wien After School Program – 16 lessons, 22 students each
- Chena Slough Water Tree Outreach – FNSB library
- Project WET education at ATEMC – approximately 30 adults
- Project WET – Fresh Water Week Workshop – 40 adults and 19 classrooms reached (475 students) in partnership with UAF Geography Department.
- Water Festival – 45 students reached
- Water Quality lesson - Outdoor Days approximately 120 students and 12 adults
- CHS Energy Fair – geothermal/hydrothermal lessons, 4 lessons- approximately 40 children
- Thread Early Childhood workshop - approximately 25 adults



Melissa Sikes at a Green Infrastructure Booth



Nordale Crossing Culvert





Private landowner streambank erosion problems.



Root wads being installed for restoration project

## Goal 5: Conservation of Forest Resources

---

- 4 Woodlot Walks, including topics such as tree health, fire safety planning, tree planting and transplanting. Advertising for the program was done in the FDNM and on the FSWCD website
- Technical assistance on forestry topics provided to approximately 30 cooperators
- 3 Forest Land Conservation Plans completed
- Annual tree and shrub sale with 16 different varieties sold
- Participated in Alaska Community Forestry Conference
- Attended biomass /bio-energy conference

### *Education:*

- Denali After School Program – 10 lessons, approximately 20 students each
- Anne Wien Elementary After School Program – 10 lessons, approximately 20 students each
- JP Jones Community Center: 1 forestry lesson. Approximately 10 students
- Forestry for the People – Speech and poster local area contest and state contest
- Forestry for the people poster winner display at Tanana Valley State Fair
- 150 - K – 6 educational materials provided to DNR for Tanana Valley State Fair outreach
- Thread Early Childhood Education Workshop – 15 adults
- Outdoor Days forestry lessons- approximately 60 students



Birch leaf miner at a woodlot walk downtown



A fire-wise treatment near a home in Fairbanks



Peter Simpson and Jessica Guritz teaching forestry lessons at Outdoor Days



Kayla Chardon (FSWCD intern) counting trees in a forest plot to determine trees per acre

## **Goal 6: Relevant Education and Information for all clientele, personnel, and partners**

### ***Public outreach and education:***

- Legislative open house
- Display booth at the Alaska Forum on the Environment conference in Anchorage
- Display booth at the Homeshow, as well as information about the green infrastructure program
- Display and information provided at the Garden Bazaar
- Participation in a variety of natural resource conferences (Tanana Chiefs Conference, Alaska Water Resources Association, Wood Energy, etc.)
- Collaboration with other organizations and agencies on a large grant proposal for green infrastructure project development



- Participation in Nenana area outreach programs including Nenana River Days, Railbelt Prevention Festival at the Park, Nenana Wellness Coalition Community Programs, and Nenana Head-start Family Nights
- Active outreach with Nenana City School, Nenana Head-start, and Nenana Community organizations, reaching 100+ community members
- Participation in Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce committees including Natural Resources, Urban and Rural, and Education

**Staff training:**

- Alaska invasive plants educator workshop
- Conservation planning, wetlands, pest management, nutrient management, water quality, and other NRCS training
- Grants writing
- NAAEE
- Project WET and PLT
- Bear safety/firearm safety
- Cultural resources

Educational programs and events for students and cooperators are listed under their respective topics. In addition to those items listed, the following lessons and programs were provided by FSWCD staff:

- JP Jones community Outreach: 2 lessons on conservation habits, approximately 16 kids, 4 adults participated
- School yard Habitat Program at Wood river Elementary School, North Pole Middle School and Two Rivers Elementary School including outreach, parent and staff committee formation and design plans
- Nenana Youth Initiative Grant employed 4 Nenana teens, both Native and non-Native, male and female on restoration crew
- Nenana Schoolyard Habitat Restoration Project
  - Included outreach and education affecting 100+ students, teachers, and staff
  - Partnerships formed with the Nenana City Schools, Nenana Head-Start, and the City of Nenana
  - Outreach to local farms and businesses including 10+ local farms
- Tri Valley Schoolyard Habitat Restoration Project
  - Primary partnership with the USFWS
  - Components of project include rain garden and fire mitigation
  - Outreach and education affecting 75+ students, teachers, and staff
  - Partnerships formed with the Tri Valley School, Denali Borough School District, Denali Borough, and the National Park Service
  - Participation in local school and community outreach programs including regular school staff meetings, parent organization meetings, and school activities
  - Outreach to local farms and businesses
- Minto Schoolyard Habitat Restoration Project
  - Primary partnership with USFWS
  - Outreach and education affecting 100+ students, teachers, staff, and the village community



- Partnerships formed with the Minto School, Yukon Koyukuk School District, and the Minto Traditional Village Council



FSWCD Habitat Restoration Crew examining Minto trail system for restoration project



Fairbanks Soil and Water Conservation Restoration Team on site planning rain-garden and restoration project at Tri Valley School.



Jessica and Penny at the 2011 Homeshow Booth



Staff at a 2011 Riparian Restoration Workshop

## Goal 7: Assistance to NRCS through contracts

Assistance was provided to NRCS through several contracts. Work was *begun* on the following deliverables:

- Forage Renovation Alternative Demonstration & Evaluation (This project demonstrates the benefits of soil aeration and urease inhibitor application on declining hay fields in interior AK)
- Forest Land Conservation Plans (3) including forestry training
- Outreach & Education



- Nutrient Management Planning & Assistance (5 nutrient management plans) including a workshop
- Soil Analysis Assistance and Recommendations
- Pest Management Plans (6) and Technical Assistance (10) including training and the development of publications
- Conservation Planning (2 plans and 2 workshops)
- Inventory and Evaluation (assistance to 7 cooperators through site visits)

Work was *completed* on the following deliverables:

- Soil Quality Assessments for 3 Landowners (including 3 nutrient management plans)
- Assist 4 landowners with the development, implementation and follow up of their nutrient management plans or soil sampling
- Pest Management Plans for 3 Landowners, Technical Assistance to 5 Landowners, and development of weed ID guides
- Inventory and Evaluation site visits to 15 cooperators
- Forest Land Conservation Plans for 3 Landowners
- Soils lessons to 10 classrooms, soils outreach at Homeshow and other events, and soils technical assistance to cooperators
- Conservation Plan for one cooperator

## Base Operations

---

- Monthly board meetings
- Budget and financial reports
- Grant administration
- General office work
- Updating and maintaining cooperator records
- Communications with AACD, NACD, NRCS, NRCDB and other partners
- Cooperator services
- Planning, promotions, fundraising, and grant writing
- Added 32 new cooperators
- Established new FSWCD office separate from NRCS



**FAIRBANKS SOIL & WATER  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

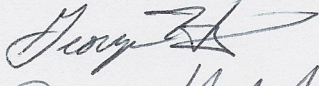
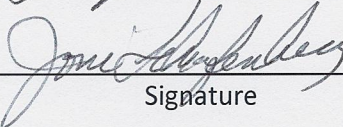
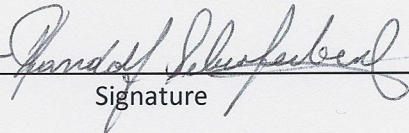
**July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011 Spending**

---

<b><u>SOURCE</u></b>	<b><u>Wages</u></b>	<b><u>Travel</u></b>	<b><u>Equipment/Supplies</u></b>	<b><u>Contractual</u></b>	<b><u>AMOUNT</u></b>
FSWCD Projects (163)	\$ 153,280.71	\$ 10,276.62	\$ 3,036.25	\$ 0.00	\$ 166,593.58
USFWS Chena Slough(140)	\$ 7,374.23	\$ 1,125.60	\$ 4,321.25	\$ 3,919.96	\$ 16,741.04
NRCS 2011 contract(159)	\$ 3,029.96	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 3,029.96
NRCS Remaining Contribution Agreement	\$ 11,707.50	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 11,707.50
USFWS Weed Smackdown Grants(240)	\$ 1,257.29	\$ 0.00	\$ 236.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 1,493.29
USFWS Partners-Youth Crew Agreement(241)	\$ 1,250.14	\$ 1,245.46	\$ 269.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 2,764.60
Elodea (242)	\$ 743.62	\$ 0.00	\$ 334.77	\$ 0.00	\$ 1,078.39
Tanana Valley Water shed (212)	\$ 1034.80	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 1,034.80
Green Infrastructure Grant (239)	\$ 646.80	\$ 291.85	\$ 456.34	\$ 0.00	\$ 1,394.99
Nenana City Schoolyard Habitat(230)	\$ 11,826.75	\$ 831.62	\$ 250.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 12,908.37
Anderson Riverside Park- Nenana River Habitat(229)	\$ 6,874.53	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 6,874.53
CMP Fbks(221)	\$ 1034.80	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 1,034.80
Fairbanks North Star Borough (ASP)	\$ 3,877.24	\$ 194.07	\$ 995.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 5,066.31
NRCS 08	\$ 22,226.64	\$ 1,295.00	\$ 1,102.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 24,673.64
NRCS 09	\$ 3,867.50	\$ 889.02	\$ 200.28	\$ 0.00	\$ 4,956.80
IPP Weeds(198)	\$ 18,978.70	\$ 506.71	\$ 3,978.45	\$ 0.00	\$ 23,463.86
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 249,011.21</b>	<b>\$ 16,655.95</b>	<b>\$ 15,179.34</b>	<b>\$ 3,969.96</b>	<b>\$ 284,816.46</b>



**Signatures**

GEORGE HITZ		10/31/11
TONI SCHARFENBERG		10/31/11
Report Prepared by (Print)	Signature	Date
RANDOLF SCHARFENBERG		10/31/11
District Chair (Print)	Signature	Date





Improving fish passage



Landowner's guides

## Homer Soil and Water Conservation District Annual Report Fiscal Year 2011



Education and outreach



Assessing wetlands



Memorandum to: Department of Natural Resources

From: Homer Soil and Water Conservation District

Subject: Annual Report

Date: September 30, 2011

This document represents the annual report of the Homer Soil and Water Conservation District (HSWCD) for fiscal year 2011 (July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011). This report fulfills a component of the cooperative agreement between the Alaska Department of Natural Resources and the Homer Soil and Water Conservation District, as specified in cooperative agreements with the Department of Natural Resources and the Alaska Association of Conservation Districts.

### PROGRAM GOALS:

## LAND USE PLANNING

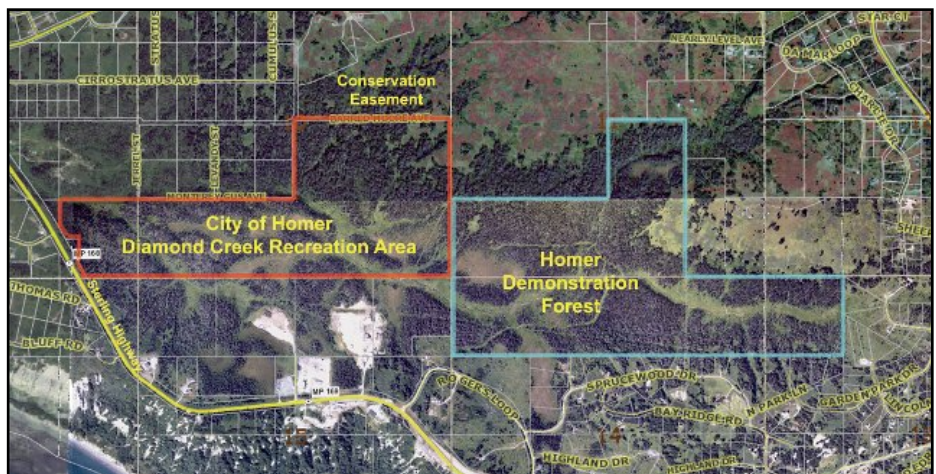
The Homer District promotes a watershed approach to understanding resource issues and implementing programs. The District endeavors to work collaboratively with local and state agencies, steering committees, non-governmental organizations, and others to support area-wide environmental planning efforts and to promote programs to encourage awareness and adoption of best management practices.

**GOAL 1: SUPPORT WATERSHED-BASED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING EFFORTS AND PROMOTE EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS TO ENCOURAGE AWARENESS AND ADOPTION OF BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES.**

***Objective 1: Encourage both private and public landowners to provide sustainable multi-use recreational opportunities.***

**Task 1:** *Work with the City of Homer, the Department of Natural Resources, and the US Forest Service to develop a plan for the Diamond Creek Recreation Area (DCRA).*

The DCRA is a 270-acre parcel acquired by the Kachemak Heritage Land Trust through the Forest Legacy Program and transferred to the City of Homer. The District began compiling information to help the city develop a multi-resource management plan for the DCRA, as required by the Forest Legacy Program.



The Homer District is working with the City of Homer's Parks and Recreation Commission to develop a management plan for Diamond Creek Recreation Area (DCRA). The DCRA borders the Homer Demonstration Forest, a tract that the District actively manages.

***Task 2: Work with Kachemak Heritage Land Trust (KHLT) to upgrade the Calvin and Coyle Trail.***

The Homer District, partnering with KHLT, was awarded grant funds through the Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, Recreational Trails Program, to improve the Calvin and Coyle trail in Woodland Park, which had fallen into disrepair. Trail upgrades include a re-route of the upper portions of the trail onto drier ground, installation of foot bridges at the creek crossing, and installation of two-plank boardwalks where the ground was wet. The trail winds through 29 acres of conservation land; the south end of the trail is bordered by the Beluga Lake wetland complex and the state's Homer Airport Critical Habitat Area, providing ideal wildlife habitat and excellent opportunities for wildlife viewing. The District augmented the trail by installing educational interpretive signs. These are targeted to elementary school-aged children because the trail borders Paul Banks Elementary School to the west. These signs are located along the trail and highlight topics such as forest succession, wildlife use, and local flora and fauna.



Interpretive sign along the Calvin and Coyle Trail. Information was developed with elementary school children in mind to benefit Paul Banks Elementary school, which borders the trail to the west.

***Objective 2. Promote Low Impact Development techniques to maintain private and public benefits of natural systems that provide green infrastructure.***

***Task 1: Work with the City of Homer to develop a cost-share program for designing and installing rain gardens within city limits.***



A bucket with the bottom cut out is used for percolation tests to help design rain gardens. Perc rate is used to help determine the depth of the rain garden and soil amendments to use.

HSWCD initiated a cost-share program to promote design and installation of rain gardens within the Homer area and developed public outreach materials to encourage participation. The US Fish and Wildlife Service is our principle funding partner in this effort. A rain garden is an area in the landscape—usually a depression—designed and modified so it will receive, hold, and filter rainwater (and snowmelt) running off roofs, driveways, lawns, or other “impervious” surfaces. Establishing rain gardens increases public awareness of management practices they can use to reduce stormwater, pollutants, and sediments running off their properties, as well as other ways

to support beneficial watershed processes. In FY 2011, the District completed two rain garden designs, one of which has since been installed.

## **WATER QUALITY**

Water quality projects continue to be a large part of the annual work plan—indeed water quality is a component of almost all our program objectives. This year the District has continued to provide technical assistance to user groups by assisting with trail design that protects water quality and has begun projects to restore fish habitats and to improve management of Kenai Peninsula wetlands.

### **GOAL 2: ENHANCE SALMON HABITATS**

***Objective 1: Assess, design, and replace culverts: identify poorly designed culverts at road/stream crossings that have negative impacts on local stream ecology and hydraulics and that obstruct salmon passage.***

***Task 1: In order to identify potential projects for the HSWCD to undertake, prioritize local culverts that create fish passage obstructions or degrade instream habitats in other ways.***

Poorly designed and installed culverts can result in damage to instream and streambank habitats that would otherwise be available to fish and wildlife. In anadromous streams, such damage reduces the quantity and/or quality of habitats used by salmon species for passage, spawning, and rearing, as well as of habitats used by other kinds of fish and wildlife. As problematic culverts are identified and replaced—eliminating the cause of habitat degradation—instream and streambank habitats can be restored. During the past year, District staff and the Board of Supervisors actively worked with Kenai Peninsula land managers, local organizations, and state agencies to assist in the identification of poorly installed culverts that act as barriers to fish passage or damage instream habitats in other ways. District staff took the opportunity to participate in training provided by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the US Fish and Wildlife Service on fish passage problems, needs, solutions, and designs, and on ways to restore streambanks.

***Task 2: Replace a poorly installed culvert on Beaver Creek Road with a bridge to improve fish passage (Anchor River watershed).***

Working in partnership with Cook Inlet Region, Inc. (CIRI) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) the Homer District replaced with a clear span bridge an undersized culvert on a CIRI-owned road. This culvert had been identified as a priority due to streambank degradation resulting from culvert effects on stream hydrology. Streamflow had been constricted by the improperly installed culvert, and outflow from the culvert was directed against a streambank with the effect of a pressurized hose or water cannon. This pressurized flow was scouring out a section of bank, creating a steep, devegetated, unstable bank face and increasing the channel's width-to-depth ratio at this point. This bank erosion and related channel alterations were degrading instream habitats. The bridge was installed in FY 2011, and the devegetated streambank has since been restored using soil bioengineering techniques.





Due to a poorly installed and undersized culvert, streamflow had been constricted, accelerating outflow and creating a “water cannon” effect. Pressurized outflow resulted in bank and channel degradation.



Project site after the culvert was removed and replaced by a clear span bridge.

***Task 3: Develop a plan to replace an undersized and improperly installed culvert on Stariski Creek under Tall Tree Avenue, near mile 153 Sterling Highway (Stariski Creek Watershed).***

With funding from the NRCS and working collaboratively with the Kenai Watershed Forum, the Homer District finalized engineering designs and obtained all necessary permits to begin replacing a culvert on Stariski Creek under Tall Tree Avenue, located near the community of Happy Valley. This project is scheduled to be completed during Fiscal Year 2012.

***Objective 2: Implement streambank restoration plans: identify anadromous streams District-wide whose streambanks need to be stabilized or restored to protect aquatic life and habitats, water quality, or to reduce flood damage.***

***Task 1: Monitor streambanks along an ATV crossing on the Watermelon Trail, northeast of Homer, Anchor River-Fritz Creek Critical Habitat Area.***

During the summer of 2010, the District successfully installed an ATV bridge and implemented a project to rehabilitate damaged streambanks at an in-water crossing of Beaver Creek, located in the Anchor River-Fritz Creek Critical Habitat Area. This project was extended into fiscal year 2011 with continued monitoring of vegetation and assessment of ATV use. This past summer, District staff completed trail reconnaissance beyond the bridge to determine restoration work needed at the next stream crossing.

**Task 2:** *Design a stabilization plan for a stretch of streambank along Beaver Creek, off Hutler Road, northeast of Homer (Anchor River Watershed).*

With funding from the USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Homer District completed a comprehensive restoration plan for a site along an unnamed road that crosses Beaver Creek (*see Objective 1, Task 2, above*). In preparation for restoration work scheduled for summer 2011, District staff participated in an Alaska Department of Fish and Game streambank restoration workshop.

### **GOAL 3: PROMOTE SOUND MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION OF WETLANDS ON THE KENAI PENINSULA.**

**Objective 1:** *Work with local organizations to encourage sustainable trail designs that protect wetlands.*

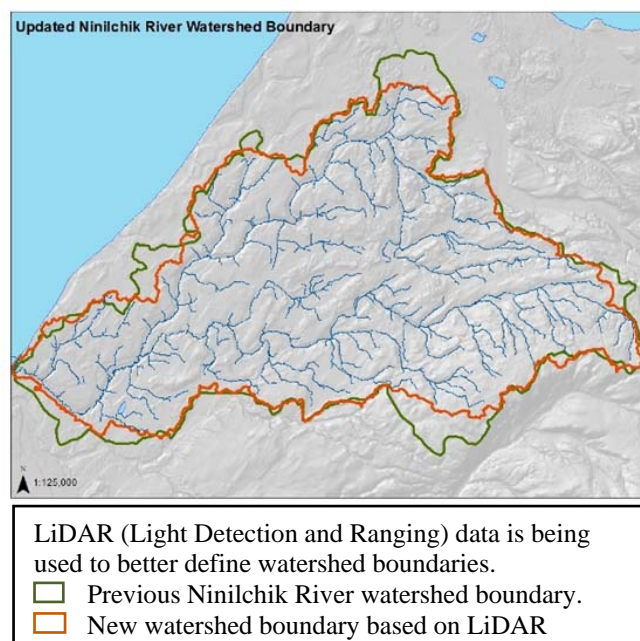
**Task 1:** *Continue working with state and federal agencies, Native organizations, and trails groups to address ATV/ORV-caused erosion that degrades wetlands and water quality in the Caribou Hills.*

The Homer District continued to provide technical assistance to local trail groups as they develop ATV trails. One organization we worked with is the Homer Snomads, a locally based, motorized trail group responsible for trail maintenance and upgrades on several trails in the Caribou Hills on the southern Kenai Peninsula.

**Objective 2:** *Collaborate with state and federal agencies, local governments, Native organizations, non-profits, and others to develop tools and programs that promote the conservation and sustainable use of Kenai Peninsula wetlands.*

**Task 1:** *Utilize LiDAR data to model surface hydrology of non-federal land on the Kenai Peninsula to develop a GIS data layer to be used in a wetland functional assessment.*

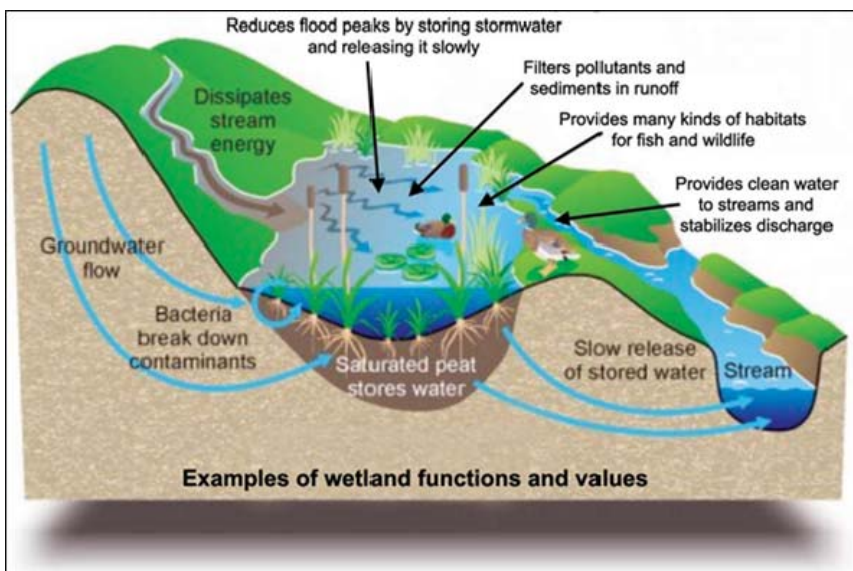
With a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Homer District began working with new LiDAR data to redefine Kenai Peninsula watershed boundaries and develop more accurate maps of drainage systems. Approximately 60% of peninsula watershed boundaries have been updated, and the District will continue this project through FY 2012. Watershed boundaries provide a GIS layer for an assessment of wetland functions and values (*see Task 2 below*).



**Task 2:** Using available information, conduct a landscape-level assessment of the functions and values of Kenai Peninsula wetlands; develop tools to make assessment results readily available online and to help landowners and managers incorporate this information in managing their wetlands.

In October 2010, the Homer District received a Wetlands Program Development Grant from the EPA to identify and assess functions and values of Kenai Peninsula wetlands. By synthesizing existing information from a variety of sources and utilizing wetlands maps developed by the Kenai Watershed Forum (accessible on the borough's online GIS), the District is assessing functions and values of wetlands on non-federal lands on the peninsula.

Three categories of functions and values are being assessed: hydrology, biology, and social/community. The long-term goal is to provide information useful to landowners, managers, developers, teachers, and others to help them better understand wetlands and to use and manage them in beneficial and sustainable ways. For more information, go to [www.homerswcd.org/projects/wetlands.php](http://www.homerswcd.org/projects/wetlands.php).



#### **GOAL 4: ASSIST THE NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE TO COLLECT DATA RELATED TO WATER SUPPLIES IN THE DISTRICT.**



Snow survey crew at the Nuka Glacier snow survey site in early March. Snow data is collected for the NRCS and is then used to forecast water supply.

**Objective 1:** Complete scheduled snow surveys and provide data to the NRCS.

**Task 1:** Assist with snow surveys.

The Homer District continued its long-standing cooperative agreement with the NRCS to assist in collecting data on snow depth and snow water equivalent (SWE). Measurements are used for streamflow forecasting. Snow pack was measured and data recorded December through March at several sites across the lower Kenai Peninsula.



## AGRICULTURE

The Homer District's Board of Supervisors continues to prioritize building on our strong tradition of providing support for lower Kenai Peninsula agricultural activities. The Homer District has been providing many kinds of assistance to local agricultural producers and other "cooperators" through a variety of services and programs. Working closely with our partner agency, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), we were able to assist a variety of producers in our district area. The Homer District has been a strong supporter of the NRCS high tunnel program and has provided staff time to assist in developing pest and nutrient management plans that meet the high tunnel program requirements.

### GOAL 4: PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES.

***Objective 1: Work with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to develop farm conservation plans for private property owners interested in installing conservation practices.***

***Task 1: Provide soil and forage testing services for use in developing nutrient management plans for agricultural producers.***

The Homer District provides soil testing as an ongoing service. With assistance from the University of Alaska Fairbanks, Cooperative Extension Service, we provide nutrient management plans to cooperators based on their objectives. Homer District has also worked with local hay producers to forage test their crops and upon request to certify hay fields as weed-free.

***Task 2: Assist NRCS with wetland determinations.***

Homer District has an ecologist on staff with extensive experience in conducting wetland determinations and delineations. These are often required to determine whether specific practices are eligible for NRCS cost sharing. During FY 2011, the District completed seven wetland determinations in response to requests from the NRCS Homer field office.



The District determines whether two sites meet the definition of a wetland.

## INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT

Invasive species are one of the foremost threats to local ecosystems. The Homer District continues to be a leader in increasing awareness and promoting management of invasive plants that are rapidly becoming a problem on the Kenai Peninsula. The District was able to add a full-time Invasive Plant Program (IPP) coordinator supported by funds that the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provided to the US Forest Service. Our IPP coordinator allowed us to (1) proactively survey for invasive species on non-federal lands across the peninsula, (2) increase our public outreach efforts, and (3) provide more one-on-one time with individuals seeking technical advice on how to eradicate or manage their invasive plants.

### **GOAL 5: MAINTAIN SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT INVASIVE PLANT PROGRAMS.**

***Objective 1: Collaboratively work with partners in the Kenai Peninsula Cooperative Weed Management Area (KP-CWMA).***

***Task 1: Provide staff time to coordinate activities within the Kenai Peninsula Cooperative Weed Management Area (KP-CWMA), hold annual workshops, and maintain a website with up-to-date management techniques.***

The KP-CWMA is an effective way of eliminating political and ownership boundaries when addressing invasive plants, which increases the probability of successfully combating their spread into natural areas. The Homer District takes a lead role in facilitating the technical advisory committee for the KP-CWMA and provides basic administrative support to ensure the long-term success of this organization. Last year we developed the KP-CWMA website (<http://www.kenaiweeds.org/>), sponsored the 11<sup>th</sup> annual KP-CWMA weed workshop held in Kenai, and provided staff to participate in work sessions to review the CWMA Strategic Plan. The Homer District looks forward to continuing to work closely with KP-CWMA partners to establish and implement additional programs to control invasive plants.

***Task 2: In collaboration with the KP-CWMA monitor, map and develop long-term strategies for controlling invasive species across the Kenai Peninsula.***

Based on priorities established through the KP-CWMA, the Homer District Invasive Plant Program Coordinator surveyed approximately 200 miles of roads that had not previously been surveyed for invasive plants. The baseline data collected during this inventory and mapping will assist program managers in prioritizing infestations and developing management approaches utilizing best available treatment methods. This information is also valuable for updating the KP-CWMA Strategic Plan (found at [http://www.kenaiweeds.org/user\\_images/KPCWMA\\_strategic\\_plan\\_with\\_appendices.pdf](http://www.kenaiweeds.org/user_images/KPCWMA_strategic_plan_with_appendices.pdf)).

**Task 3:** Continue public outreach about invasive weeds on the Kenai Peninsula. Increase public and agency awareness of the threat to natural ecosystems represented by invasive plants.

Public outreach has been a central feature of the HSWCD invasive plant program, and this past year was no exception. Outreach included information booths at the local farmer's market, the Kenai Peninsula State Fair, classroom visits in peninsula schools, and community weed pulls to heighten awareness of the extent of invasive species throughout the District.



A member of the District's weed crew stocks the informational kiosk at the Homestead trailhead with brochures on various invasive species.

**Objective 2:** Work with cooperators District-wide to manage invasive weeds that threaten to degrade natural resources on the Kenai Peninsula.

**Task 1:** Promote a cost-share program that encourages landowners to implement integrated pest management (IPM) on their lands.

The Homer District continued to promote a District-wide IPM cost-share program. We had three cooperators take part in this program, resulting in eradication of the only known infestations of both perennial sowthistle (*Sonchus arvensis*) and Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*) on the southern peninsula. We were also able to target bird vetch (*Vicia cracca*), a species of high priority due to its limited occurrence in the District.

**Task 2:** Compile and disseminate control recommendations targeting eradication of invasive and noxious weeds on agricultural lands.

During the past year, fall dandelion (*Leontodon autumnalis*) was targeted by the Homer District as a species of local concern, as this invasive is spreading rapidly through meadows, pastures, and along roadsides on the Homer bench. With funding administered through the AACD, we were able to purchase much needed equipment to assist local cooperators with control measures. Working with landowners, the District's invasive plant coordinator set up a series of trials to study the effects of different treatment methods on fall dandelion. Control sites were established to determine which treatments suppressed this invasive weed most effectively. Recommendations based on this research are currently being applied on several hay fields in the Homer area.





A hayfield on the Homer bench before (photo on left) and after (photo on right) treatment for fall dandelion (the yellow flowerheads in foreground on the photo on left).

***Task 3: Inventory and map invasive plant species near the Bradley Lake hydroelectric power plant, across Kachemak Bay.***

The Bradley Lake hydropower plant, located on the southeast corner of Kachemak Bay in a relatively pristine environment, is operated by the Homer Electric Association (HEA). With HEA support, the District's invasive weed crew spent several days scouting roads and other areas affected by power plant construction and daily operations. Although the team found few non-native plants, they found several patches of white sweet clover, (*Melilotus alba*), a high priority invasive species due to its ability to quickly spread in open gravel areas and its ability to create monospecific stands along rivers in south-east, southcentral, and interior Alaska. White sweet clover has been documented only three times on the southern Kenai Peninsula, and these infestations were just a few individual plants that were detected early and quickly eradicated.



White sweet clover found in the remote area of the Bradley Lake hydroelectric plant.

***Task 4: Provide the framework and training for agencies and organizations to strengthen the citizen monitor program for early detection of/rapid response to new invasive plant infestations.***

Homer District staff provided several training opportunities for individuals and organizations interested in learning how to identify invasive plant species and record locations of infestations. District staff instructed volunteers participating in the annual shoreline survey coordinated by the Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies, and held training

sessions for Kachemak State Park trail crews, Cook Inletkeeper citizen monitoring program volunteers, and members of the Homer High School FFA chapter.

**Task 5:** *Employ a mobile field crew to implement on-the-ground weed control, monitoring, and mapping of new infestations. Ensure the crew works collaboratively with Kenai Peninsula Cooperative Weed Management Area partners.*



Homer District's mobile weed crew. This crew traveled the peninsula assisting partners of the KP-CWMA with invasive species control efforts.

The Homer District employed a youth crew during the summer of 2010, consisting of four college students and one supervisor. The youth corps controlled 90 invasive plant infestations across the Kenai Peninsula. Their control efforts involved 16 different non-native plant species. The total acreage of invasive plants controlled by the youth crew is estimated at 66 acres. Data pertaining to control work will be entered into the Alaska invasive plant database known as AKEPIC; the AKEPIC inventory is listed on a website that is available for the public (<http://akweeds.uaa.alaska.edu/>).

## EDUCATION

The mission statement of the Homer District highlights the value of education in promoting the conservation and sustainable use of soil- and water-related resources. The Homer District puts a high value on education and outreach programs, which are geared to the needs and interests of diverse ages and audiences.

### **GOAL 6: PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND MATERIALS TO ASSIST THE PUBLIC IN MAKING INFORMED DECISIONS REGARDING RESOURCE MANAGEMENT.**

**Objective 1:** *Support natural resource education on the Kenai Peninsula.*

**Task 1:** *Provide organizational support for Homer High School's Natural Resources Technologies Class. Sponsor local Speech and Poster Contests.*

The Homer District continued its support of Homer High School's Natural Resources Technology Class and FFA chapter. District staff arranged for natural resource professionals to go into classrooms to prepare students for the annual Envirothon competition. The District participated in the National Association of Conservation

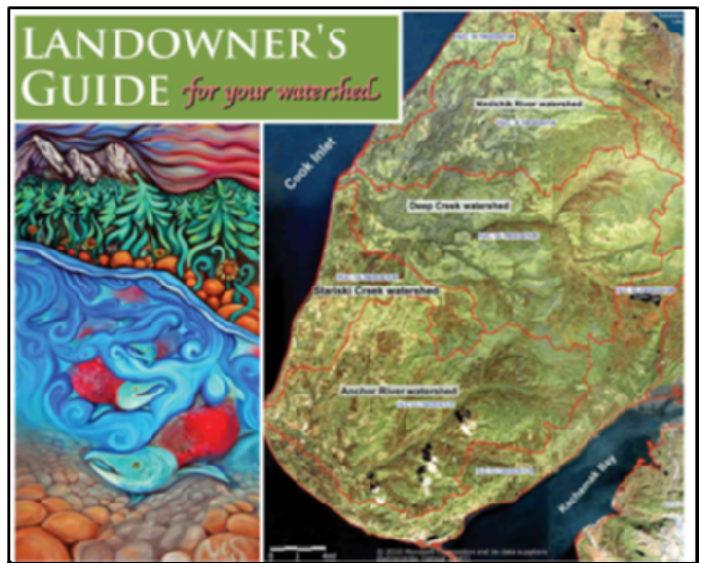


Districts' annual poster contest by sponsoring a local contest for students. The theme was "Forest for People: More Than You Can Imagine."

**Task 2:** *Increase landowner awareness and understanding of how their land use actions can affect salmon habitats in four watersheds on the lower Kenai Peninsula. Promote a stewardship ethic and provide landowners with key information on how to sustain salmon habitat quality and productivity.*

The Homer District received a grant from the Sustainable Salmon Fund, administered by the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development. The grant enabled the District to begin developing two informative, user-friendly, richly illustrated landowner's guides for four watersheds on the southern Kenai Peninsula: Anchor River and Stariski Creek watersheds and Deep Creek and Ninilchik River watersheds. The goal is to increase landowner understanding of how various land uses that are common on the lower Kenai Peninsula can affect salmon habitats, and what landowners can do to promote the health and sustainability of salmon habitats in their backyards, neighborhoods, and watersheds. For more information go to:

<http://www.homerswcd.org/user-files/landowners%20guide-overview-examples.pdf>.



The District began developing online landowner's guides for four watersheds on the southern Kenai Peninsula: Anchor River, Stariski Creek, Ninilchik River, and Deep Creek.

## FORESTRY

Forests contribute greatly to ecological systems and landscapes valued by the Homer District. We support and undertake programs to assist landowners to meet their management objectives while promoting the long-term health of forest resources. In addition, the District remains committed to combining our resources with state and federal agencies to assist them in meeting their programmatic goals as effectively as possible.

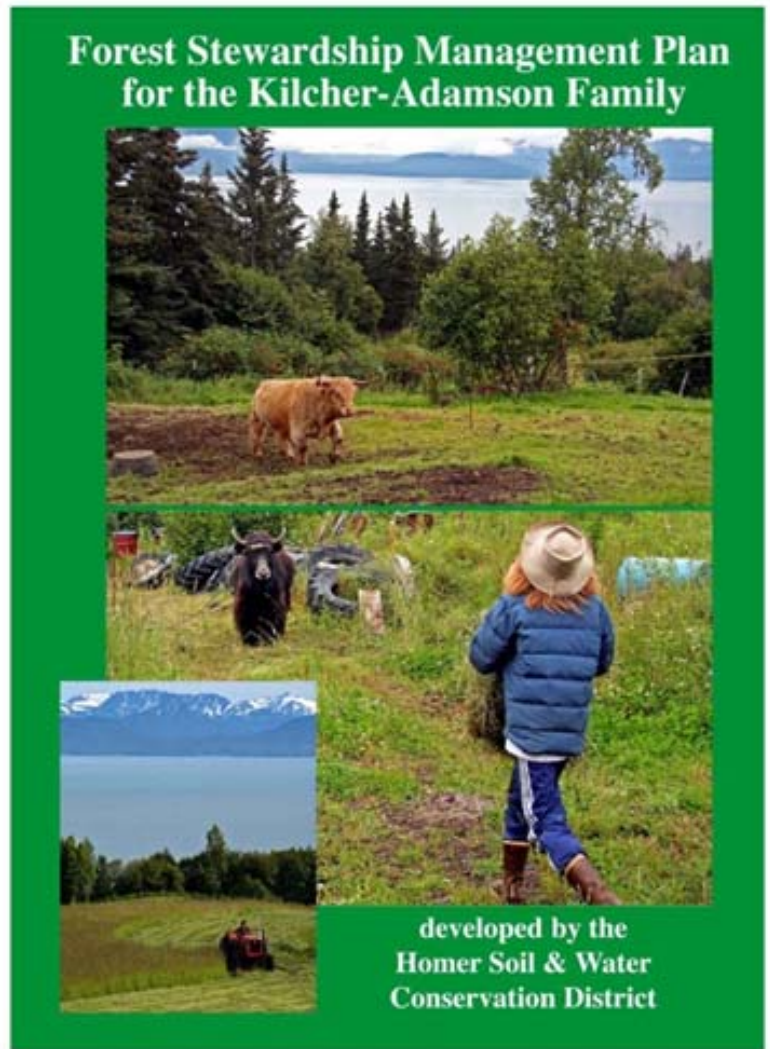
### **GOAL 7: WORK COOPERATIVELY WITH ALASKA DIVISION OF FORESTRY, UAF COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE, AND NRCS TO ASSIST IN PROVIDING FORESTRY RELATED SERVICES TO PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LANDOWNERS.**

**Objective 1:** *Work with local cooperators to provide resource inventories, develop forest stewardship plans, and assist NRCS in carrying out forestry-related Farm Bill programs.*



**Task 1:** Assist state and NRCS Foresters in working with local cooperators and other landowners to develop and implement forest stewardship plans.

This past year the District prioritized conservation technical assistance funds from NRCS to complete forest stewardship plans for private landowners. Five plans were completed in the Homer area. These provide resource inventories and management strategies to help landowners achieve long term productivity of their forest-related resources while protecting environmental quality.



**Task 2:** Facilitate Homer Demonstration Forest Steering Committee meetings. Initiate and coordinate efforts to reissue the Interagency Land Management Assignment/Agreement (ILMA) that established the Homer Demonstration Forest.



District staff members familiarize representatives from the Department of Natural Resources with the Homer Demonstration Forest.

In FY 2011, the ILMA expired that created the 360-acre Homer Demonstration Forest 25 years ago. The District, through its facilitation of the Homer Demonstration Forest Steering Committee, led efforts to ensure that the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) reissue the ILMA for another 25 years. DNR has now renewed the ILMA, ensuring that this valuable community resource can provide places for education, research, exploration, and recreation for another 25 years, as well as numerous and significant ecological services.

## ADMINISTRATION/MANAGEMENT

Soil and Water Conservation Districts, like the Homer SWCD, are organized under state statute AS 41.10. Each district is governed by a board of supervisors who are elected by qualified landowners as defined in AS 41.10.140. Homer SWCD is a member of both the Alaska Association of Conservation Districts (AACD) and the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD). The AACD assists the Homer District by providing administrative and personnel services.

### **GOAL 8: MAINTAIN A DISTRICT OFFICE, PROVIDE OVERSIGHT AND GUIDANCE TO ALL HOMER DISTRICT PROGRAMS, DEVELOP CONSERVATION PROJECTS, AND SEEK FUNDING.**

*Task 1: Provide office personnel to run day-to-day operations of the HSWCD. Hold monthly Board of Supervisors meetings and encourage input and participation of local landowners and land managers who have resource interests or concerns.*

The Homer District maintained a fully staffed office, with five fulltime and four seasonal employees. The District Board of Supervisors held monthly meetings, open to the public, many of which were attended by landowners and land managers interested in providing feedback to our programs or in asking for assistance. The District website (<http://www.homerswcd.org/>) and newsletters continue to reach a wide audience, promoting and explaining our programs.

*Task 2: Maintain financial records, document expenditures and receivables, maintain program budgets, and make available financial reports to the HSWCD Board of Supervisors and the AACD.*

The District Manager oversaw and administered all District programs and projects, including program budgets and documentation of expenditures. Financial reports have been submitted on a monthly basis for Board review.

*Task 3: Research, apply for, and administer grants for District projects. Coordinate available educational, financial, and technical resources to better meet the needs of local land users involved in protecting and conserving soil, water, and related resources.*

The Homer District has been able to successfully partner with local governments, federal, and state agencies, non-profits, and Native organizations to strengthen existing programs and to gain support for new programs. Through successful partnerships, the District has been able to consolidate efforts and run programs efficiently. The District has secured grant funding to support many of our efforts, usually with valuable endorsements from our conservation partners. The District leverages its funds received through the State Legislature, and volunteer support, to provide the match needed to secure many grants that we are awarded.

**Task 4:** *Provide administrative assistance to the UDSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, on Farm Bill-related programs.*

The Homer District through a cooperative agreement with the NRCS has employed a full-time administrative assistant to help with increased Farm Bill program participation in the Homer field office.

**Task 5:** *Promote development of board capacity, travel to bi-annual conferences of the Alaska Association of Conservation Districts, and recruit new board members.*

The Board of Supervisors provides review and general oversight of all District programs. In FY 2011, the board also served in advisory capacities to several local and state agencies, including the Division of Agriculture, the City of Homer, and the Kenai Peninsula Borough. The board works closely with staff from the NRCS Homer field office to provide input on their programs and priorities and to alert them to resource issues, concerns, and opportunities within District boundaries.



Homer District Supervisors review maps of a proposed logging project near Homer's Bridge Creek reservoir.



## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

PROGRAM	Personnel	Fringe	Supplies	Travel	Contractual	TOTAL
Landuse Planning	\$12,132	\$1,213	\$ 2,183	0	\$ 3,920	\$ 19,448
Water Quality	\$75,953	\$8,396	\$12,209	\$ 795	\$72,100	\$175,453
Agriculture	\$14,376	\$1,437	\$ 1,000	\$ 450	\$ 1,018	\$ 18,281
Invasive Plants	\$49,704	\$4,971	\$ 6,000	0	0	\$ 60,674
Education	\$16,021	\$1,602	\$ 676	\$ 500	0	\$ 18,799
Forestry	\$ 6,143	\$ 614	\$ 1,200	0	0	\$ 7,957
Administration	<u>\$23,356</u>	<u>\$2,535</u>	<u>\$ 7,709</u>	<u>\$1,570</u>	<u>\$ 800</u>	<u>\$ 37,970</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$199,685</b>	<b>\$20,768</b>	<b>\$33,977</b>	<b>\$3,315</b>	<b>\$77,838</b>	<b>\$335,583</b>

## SOURCES OF INCOME:

USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service	\$49,498
Alaska Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development	\$15,491
Alaska State Parks – Recreational Trails Program	\$12,347
Kenai Peninsula Fish Habitat Partnership	\$ 8,447
US Fish & Wildlife Service – Cooperative Agreements	\$88,551
US Fish & Wildlife Service – American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds	\$41,640
US Environmental Protection Agency	\$53,610
US Forest Service – American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds	\$37,073
US Forest Service – Invasive Plant Program (AACD)	\$ 2,300
Legislatively Appropriated Funds (AACD)	\$10,500
Natural Resources Development and Conservation Board (DNR)	\$ 2,000
Homer Soil & Water Conservation District unrestricted funds	<u>\$14,126</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$335,583</b>

Signatures

Tara Schmitt  
Report Prepared by

[Signature]  
District Chair

Tara Schmitt 10-12-11  
Signature Date

Chris Rainwater 10/13/11  
Signature Date

EDWIN O. KILCHER  
District Board Member

[Signature] 10-11-11  
Signature Date

## Kenai Soil & Water Conservation District

### Board of Supervisors

**Chair** – Kerry Nelson

**Vice Chair** – Steve Albers

**Secretary** – Michelle Martin

**Treasurer** – Larry Marsh

**Photographer** – Bill Johnson

### Staff

**District Manager** – Heidi Chay

**Invasive Plants**

**Coordinators** – Jen Kain and Brian Maupin

### Partners

Natural Resources Conservation Service

US Fish & Wildlife Service

Kenai Peninsula Resource Conservation & Development Inc.

Kenai Peninsula Food Bank

Central Peninsula Garden Club

Kenai Watershed Forum

UAF/Cooperative Extension Service

4-H

Homer Soil & Water Conservation District

Resurrection Bay Conservation Alliance

Kenai Peninsula Cooperative Weed

Management Area

Kenai Peninsula Fish Habitat Partnership

### Rental Equipment

Meri Crusher, for clearing and tilling

Truax No-Till Drill, for re-seeding

John Deere 660 Roto Tiller

McHale Square Bale Wrapper

John Deere 45-gal. tow-behind sprayer

Buckeye Vegetable & Flower

Planting Tools:

- Bed shaper
- Chisel plow
- Spring tooth harrow
- Plastic mulch/drip tape layer
- Low tunnel plastic wrapper
- 2-row vegetable & flower planter
- Mulch row remover

### Contact Us

110 Trading Bay Rd., Suite 160

Kenai, AK 99611

(907) 283-8732 x 108

[kenaiswcd@gmail.com](mailto:kenaiswcd@gmail.com)

[www.alaskaconservationdistricts.org](http://www.alaskaconservationdistricts.org)



## Kenai Soil & Water Conservation District 2011 Annual Report



### Cover Photo

Barley harvest at Ionia, Inc., by Bill Johnson

### Photo Credits

Thanks to Bill Johnson, Jen Kain, Heidi Chay, Karen Dearlove, Nancy Veal, UAF Cooperative Extension Service, and the Alaska Association of Conservation Districts



# GROWING FOOD SECURITY

*Partnering to promote agriculture, conserve farmland and increase food security*



*High tunnels...*

- Extend the growing season in an environmentally-friendly manner
- Improve soil and water quality from reduced fertilizer and pesticide use
- Reduce energy consumed for food transport
- Protect crops from damaging weather and pests
- Improve yields and crop diversity

***Aiming high with high tunnels.*** Low-tech high tunnels are cutting edge technology when it comes to increasing food production in Alaska. Since 2010, the Kenai SWCD has partnered with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to promote high tunnel agriculture through efforts such as the High Tunnel Demonstration Project at the Kenai Peninsula Food Bank, high tunnel tours and educational gatherings, assistance with required record-keeping, and an e-newsletter for Central Peninsula High Tunnel Growers.



***Assisting individual landowners.*** The Kenai SWCD helps its cooperators develop Conservation Plans upon request. Conservation Plans are tailored to the land user’s changing needs over time. They provide clear guidance based on best practices for goals such as land clearing, erosion control, wetlands and habitat preservation, agricultural development, and pasture management.

# ORGANIZATIONAL RENEWAL



**The Kenai SWCD began 2011** with a newly-elected board and renewed energy to contribute to the goal of wise land use. In the year ahead, a new website and an on-line equipment reservation system will raise our visibility and increase efficiency. Efforts to contain the spread of invasive plants will continue, with a focus on promoting Weed Free Forage both as a business-opportunity and as a wise land use practice. We are actively coordinating with partner organizations and farmers who share the goal of taking practical steps to strengthen the local food system. And we are looking ahead to consider how the changing climate will affect food production on the Kenai Peninsula. Finally, we look forward to reaching out to new communities and working with new partners such as the Kenai Peninsula Fish Habitat Partnership.



# PLANTING THE SEED

*Good stewardship of natural resources starts with inspiring young people*



***Growing like weeds.*** Many of the 700 visitors to the Kenai SWCD's kid-friendly displays on invasive plants at the Kenai River Festival and the Kenai Peninsula State Fair this year were curious kids -- ripe for learning how to better care for the environment we call home.

***Connecting kids with farmers.*** Local students are challenged to think about where their food comes from and get fun, hands-on experience with farm animals and farm living through the "Ag in the Classroom" curriculum and annual field days put on by Kenai SWCD in partnership with 4-H and the Cooperative Extension Service.



***Equipping producers.*** The Kenai SWCD maintains an inventory of agricultural equipment that is beyond the means of most local producers to buy. (See back cover for list.) Over the past year, we have improved rental access, maintenance, and record-keeping, resulting in better service for local hay farmers, peony growers, high tunnel growers and others.

***Facilitating cooperatives.*** The Kenai SWCD successfully organized a cooperative fertilizer order among 15 hay-producing District cooperators, resulting in substantial savings for all.



***Partnering to promote sustainable agriculture.*** We partnered with the Kenai Peninsula RC&D District, Inc. and eight other organizations to put on a hugely successful *Ag Forum* in April, 2011. The event drew over 80 producers and concerned citizens to explore and prioritize the policy changes and infrastructure improvements needed to promote local agriculture. Renowned Bethel farmer, Tim Meyers, called the gathering "*the most exciting group I have ever been around.*"



# FIGHTING ALIENS

*Working with willing landowners to prevent the spread of invasive plants*



**Spread the word, not the weed.** Engaging the public is essential to stopping invasives. In June of 2011, the Kenai SWCD worked with partner agencies to raise awareness of invasive plants through the peninsula's first Weed Smackdown, an event that targeted Common Tansy on the Kenai Soccer Fields. Common Tansy can cause moose to abort their calves, and its rapid spread can cause major headaches for hay farmers.

**What is an invasive plant?** Invasive plants are non-native species that spread rapidly and have negative impacts on fish, wildlife, agriculture or human health. Reed canary grass is of special concern on the Kenai Peninsula because of its ability to choke off salmon spawning streams. In years past, the Kenai SWCD has partnered with the Homer SWCD and Kenai Watershed Forum to map the extent of this problem.



**A new tool in the toolkit.** The Kenai SWCD purchased a 45-gallon tow-behind weed sprayer with 7-ft. boom and conducted a sprayer trial during the 2011 growing season to eradicate Orange Hawkweed, a favorite flower of unwary gardeners and wildflower enthusiasts. Also known as Devil's Paintbrush, this invasive moves into meadows and wetlands where it spreads aggressively, forming dense mats that crowd out native plants and reduce forage value for grazing.



**Introducing Certified Weed Free Forage** As of 2011, the Kenai SWCD offers free inspections to hay producers seeking Weed Free Forage certification. Using weed free forage in dog yards, livestock operations, road-building and stream bank restoration projects where mulch is required is an effective way to prevent the spread of invasive plants along trails, roads and waterways.

**Assisting individual landowners.** The Kenai SWCD provides Pest Management Plans to cooperators and other willing land owners upon request. These plans provide specific guidance for controlling invasive plants using the least toxic, most effective means possible.



# Kenai Soil and Water Conservation District

July 1st, 2010 to June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2011

## Annual Report

## Budget Summary

Goal/Project	Personnel	Fringe	Travel	Supplies	Contractual	Other	TOTAL
1. Agriculture							
2. Agricultural Equipment				337.74		734.95	1072.69
3. HT Project/Conservation Plans	12662.50	1257.38		1579.00	10240.07		25738.95
4. Trails Inventory	48.00						48.00
5. Integrated Pest Management	3594.25	359.42		124.55			4078.22
6. Education and Outreach							
7. Administration (Other:fees, utilities, insurance)	15722.75	1500.85	100.00	95.87		2503.22	19922.69
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	32027.50	3117.65	100.00	2137.16	10240.07	3238.17	50860.55

### Sources of Income

Equipment Rentals	3497.00
Ag Forum Ticket Sales	80.00
State FY11 Grant	21250.00
DNR Cooperative Agreement	2000.00
NRCS FY09 Contract	20400.00
NRCS FY11 Contract for Food Bank Demonstration High Tunnel	12038.75
Bank Interest	5.18
<b>Total Income:</b>	59270.93





## Kodiak Soil & Water Conservation District

---

518 Marine Way, Suite 206, Kodiak, Alaska 99615  
Phone: (907) 486-5574 Fax (907) 486-5586

**Memorandum to:** DNR/NRCDB  
Shana Joy, Executive Director, NRCDB  
Department of Natural Resources  
Office of the Commissioner

**From:** Kodiak Soil and Water Conservation District

**Subject:** Annual Report of Accomplishments

**Date:** September 27, 2011

This represents the annual report of the Kodiak Soil and Water Conservation District (KSWCD) for fiscal year 2011 (encompassing the dates between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011) as required by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Alaska Association of Conservation Districts (AACD).

The KSWCD assists land managers and supports cooperators by coordinating and implementing programs for the conservation and use of soil, water and related resources throughout the Kodiak Archipelago.

Highlights of this year included continuation of our partnership with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Coastal Programs for the fish passage culvert assessment project. We also continued to provide outreach and technical assistance through a contract with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The Alaska Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding for invasive plants ended during this time period but we were able to keep our invasive plants program active with grants from the Alaska Association of Conservation Districts (AACD) Invasive Plants Program (IPP) and the USFWS Partners Program. These and other projects accomplished throughout the year have been documented in this report.

A new Project Coordinator was hired in April to assist with existing projects and write new grants for continued natural resource service to the Kodiak area. A proposal was submitted to the EPA Wetland Development Opportunity Program to develop a program to promote and support sound management and protection of wetlands in urban and rural communities on Kodiak Island. After the resignation of the District Manager, the new Project Coordinator has also taken over the implementation of a Farm to Schools Project funded through a State of Alaska Grant with the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development.

District expenses for FY10 totaled \$111,258.60 Regular expenses include staff wages, office and storage space rent, phone, internet access, vehicle maintenance, insurance, computer maintenance and support, and membership fees for the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD). A budget spreadsheet is included on page 9.

**Programs and Projects included in this report:**

Outreach and Education: FFA, Envirothon, Poster Contest, Ag in the Classroom, other events.  
Pest Management: ARRA AACD IPC, 2010 summer crew, 2011 Summer crew.  
Conservation Technical Assistance: High Tunnel program documentation and assistance.  
Fish Passages: Culvert Assessments  
Mercury Monitoring

## **OUTREACH AND EDUCATION**

### **FFA and Alaska State Envirothon Competition**



Envirothon competitors answer test questions referring to pine and spruce cones (left) and measure angle to top of a tree (right) at the forestry station. The sweatshirts were purchased with the assistance of a grant awarded to the KSWCD by a local Foundation. Kodiak partners (including KSWCD) hosted the State competition on April 18, 2011.

### **Poster Contest: Forests for People**



Deborah and Rafael Bitanga hold their certificates for winning both the Kodiak and AACD State competitions in their age categories (grades 7-9 and 4-6). Their winning posters will be entered in the National Association of Conservation Districts competition.



Mrs Ann Mudd's third and fourth graders (left) and Mrs Katie Prantner's first and second graders (right) with their poster contest entries.



## Ag in the Classroom



Young agriculture producers in Chris Hicks' Peterson Elementary class gave a project update to the Kodiak Garden Club. They planted and harvested potatoes, peas, carrots and other

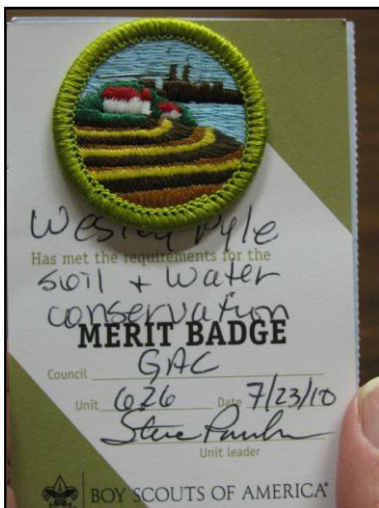
vegetables in their school garden. KSWCD provided the class with Ag in the Class information and visited their classroom to help celebrate Alaska Ag Day.



Dave Kaplan read to Kodiak Christian School students for Alaska Ag Day, the book was donated by the Alaska Division of Agriculture, Alaska Agriculture in the Classroom program.

(Dave Kaplan photo)

## Other Education Activities



The Soil & Water Conservation Merit Badge was earned by local Boy Scouts with the assistance of KSWCD and volunteer Jennifer Richcreek, here demonstrating soil texturing.

When Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) cancelled their annual Salmon Celebration, Peterson Elementary School stepped up to host their own natural resource educational event. Here a dry Bull thistle head is held delicately in a young hand (left) while kids puzzle over invasive species questions (below).



## Public Events



KSWCD Project Coordinator, Blythe Brown, discusses invasive plant control techniques with the public at the annual Kodiak State Fair (left). ADFG donated booth space for a KSWCD invasives display at ComFish (right).



Gary Freitag of the UAF Marine Advisory Program, inspects a sampling plate from the Kodiak harbor during the Community Monitoring of Marine Invasive Species Workshop (left). Kodiak Garden Club volunteer hands out invasive plant information with their maps for the annual garden tour (right).



## INVASIVE PLANTS



Stop the spread of orange hawkweed! This infestation was later sprayed with herbicide by the local Pest Management Company (left). Crab Fest Parade entry included the summer 2011 weeds crew leader Lauren Cooney (right) and three volunteer anti-weed protesters.



Blaine Spellman, AACD, points towards a hawkweed infestation on Monashka road which probably originated from dumped garden waste (left). Summer 2010 weeds crew gets a safety briefing before flying to a remote Kodiak site (right).



The 2010 weeds crew, AACD and ARRA IPC return from a local island after manually removing bull thistle from a beach area (left). The boat transportation was donated and therefore used as “matching” to our federal grant funding. The Kodiak ARRA IPC hosted other IPCs from around the state to complete several chemical control projects, here they mark Canada thistle locations at the Fairgrounds before herbicide application (right).

The annual Alaska Committee for Noxious and Invasive Plants Management (CNIPM) conference brings together grass roots organizations, professionals, researchers, interested public and funding agencies from across the state and nation. Here Bryce Wrigley, Salcha Delta SWCD District Manager gives the opening speech at CNIPM 2010 (right).



## **CONSERVATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**



KSWCD and NRCS staff participated in visits to two villages. The visits were facilitated by Koniag, Inc., a local native corporation. Akhiok residents came to share concerns and information about natural resource issues (left). Craig Sanders, NRCS, listens to Old Harbor residents while they map locations of resource concerns (right).



Mark Kinney, NRCS, spoke to a standing room only crowd at the second Kodiak High Tunnel Clinic hosted by KSWCD (left). The Kodiak Garden Club's 2010 annual garden tours included Board Supervisor Todd Dorman's High Tunnel (right).

Although NRCS no longer has staff permanently in Kodiak we were still able to receive some training and assist with implementation of program activities. KSWCD maintains a presence in the Kodiak office in order to respond to cooperator and public requests for natural resource related information, assistance and NRCS program applications.



### **Other Cooperator and Board Activities**



Bear Town Farmers Market vendors included several KSWCD Cooperators and Board members (left). Shana Joy, NRCDB Executive Director, speaks at the Spring 2011 AACD meeting (right).

### **FISH PASSAGE CULVERT ASSESSMENTS**



This old military culvert above Buskin Lake was determined to be inhibiting fish passage and is now planned for removal, the orange vests in the photo mark the approximate excavation width (left). Upstream of the same culvert, David Wigglesworth and Bill Rice, USFWS, stretch a tape demonstrating the natural stream width at high water (right).

### **MERCURY MONITORING**



Barbara Trost, DEC, removes glassware while demonstrating mercury monitoring sample collection techniques (left). The monitoring site at the Kodiak Fairgrounds after a snow storm, KSWCD has an agreement with DEC to manage this station (right).

**Financial Report for Fiscal Year July 1, 2010– June 30, 2011**

<b>Funding source:</b>	<b>Explanation:</b>	<b>Full Grant Amount</b>
<b>AK State # 118261</b>	Alaska Association of Conservation Districts Legislative Appropriation	\$21,250.00
<b>AK DNR #238</b>	Alaska Department of Natural Resources Agreement AS 41.10 Dues and District Operations	2,000.00
<b>AK DEC #237</b>	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation Mercury Monitoring Reimbursement For Services	6,367.00
<b>NRCS #8</b>	U.S.D.A. Natural Resources Conservation Service Work Contract	37,620.00
<b>NRCS #9</b>	U.S.D.A. Natural Resources Conservation Service Work Contract	32,273.20
<b>AACD IPP #22261</b>	Alaska Association of Conservation Districts Invasive Plants Program, Cooperative Weed Management Area	3,351.00
<b>AACD IPP #19861</b>	Alaska Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds, 2010 Summer Weeds Crew	40,000.00
<b>USFWS Weeds #244</b>	U.S.D.I. Fish and Wildlife Service Partners Program, 2011 Summer Weeds Crew	25,000.00
<b>USFWS Fish #233</b>	U.S.D.I. Fish and Wildlife Service Coastal Programs, Fish Passages and Culvert Assessments	28,464.00
<b>Kodiak Borough</b>	Kodiak Island Borough Non-Profit Grant Program	2,820.00
<b>UAF CES</b>	University of Alaska Fairbanks Cooperative Extension Service, 4-H office and storage space	3,600.00
<b>Alaska Leader</b>	Alaska Leader Fisheries Foundation Grant for State Envirothon sweatshirts	1,000.00
<b>Farm to Schools</b>	Alaska State Capital Projects funding approved June 2011 but not implemented during this Fiscal Year.	\$15,000.00
<b>KSWCD savings</b>	Covered unreimbursed and non-project specific expenditures until State money became available.	



Total Expenditures for Fiscal Year July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011							
Funding Source	Personnel	Fringe	Travel	Supplies	Contract	Operations	FY11 Total Expenses
AK State # 118261	\$15,497.50	1,502.74	50.00	0	0	0	\$17,050.24
AK DNR #238	0	0	193.36	0	0	1,806.64	2,000.00
AK DEC #237	4,038.21	411.63	252.41	38.71	0	0	4,740.96
NRCS #8	3,410.00	314.75	0	2,646.35	100.00	0	6,471.10
NRCS #9	6,904.75	688.88	0	176.58	0	0	7,770.21
AACD IPP #22261	3,052.50	297.66	0	0	0	0	3,350.16
AACD IPP #19861	21,346.65	2,797.23	2,064.29	1,609.35	0	0	27,817.52
USFWS Weeds #244	2,391.99	234.80	0	0	0	0	2,626.79
USFWS Fish #233	4,197.45	428.74	723.58	0	17,730.00	0	23,079.77
Kodiak Borough	0	0	0	0	0	2,820.00	2,820.00
UAF CES	0	0	0	0	0	3,600.00	3,600.00
Alaska Leader	0	0	0	1,000.00	0	0	1,000.00
KSWCD savings	2,715.58	2,076.00	0	56.13	0	4,084.14	8,931.85
Total Expenses	\$63,554.63	8,752.43	3,283.64	5,527.12	17,830.00	12,310.78	\$111,258.60
Other sources of funds or services to Kodiak District:							
ARRA AACD IPC	AACD Weed Coordinator worked on District & occupied District office but was not supervised at District level.						29,411.25
MASST	Alaska work training program provided Administrative Assistant twenty hours per week.						11,180.00
Grand Total Benefit to District							\$151,849.85

<b>Staff Hours by Funding Source</b>	<b>Hours</b>
AK State #118261	741.0
AK DNR #238	0
AK DEC #237	205.0
NRCS #8	142.0
NRCS #9	321.0
AACD IPP #22261	142.0
AACD IPP #19861	1,130.0
USFWS Weeds #244	360.0
USFWS Fish #233	180.5
Kodiak Borough	0
UAF CES	0
Alaska Leader	0
KSWCD savings	83.0
<b>Total District Staff Hours</b>	<b>3,304.5</b>
ARRA AACD IPC (Not a District Employee)	1,426.0
MASST (Not a District Employee)	1,040.0
<b>Total Staff Hours Benefit to District</b>	<b>5,770.5</b>

Note: These hours and income statistics do not include volunteer and in-kind services of KSWCD Board Supervisors and other conservation project partners.

**Board members and staff during this time period:**

Chris Flickinger, Chair  
Charles Dorman, Supervisor  
Nathan Mudd, Supervisor (term ended 12/30/10)  
Craig Stratman, Supervisor  
Marie Rice, Supervisor (sworn in 1/12/11)  
Bill Burton, Supervisor (sworn in 1/12/11)  
Todd Dorman, Supervisor (term ended 12/30/2010, continued active as alternate board member)  
Bob Mudd, Alternate  
Michelle LeBeau, District Manager (9/28/10 – 4/13/11)  
Blythe Brown, Acting Manager, Project Coordinator  
Dave Kaplan, Project Coordinator (started work 4/28/11)  
Stephen Bodnar, GIS Technician  
Corinne Ferre', MASST, Administrative Assistant  
Sara Persselin, AACD IPC, ARRA, (end work date 3/30/11)  
Wendy Wheatley, 2010 Summer Youth Crew leader (end work date 9/6/10)  
Max Smiley, 2010 Summer Youth Crew (end work date 8/19/10)  
Lauren Cooney, 2010 Summer Youth Crew (end work date 8/23/10)  
Lauren Cooney, 2011 Summer Crew (start work date 5/24/11)  
Zack Watkins, 2011 Summer Crew (start work date 6/2/11)



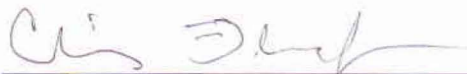
## Signatures



Report prepared by  
Blythe Brown, Project Coordinator

9/30/2011

Date



Chris Flickinger, District Chair

9/30/2011

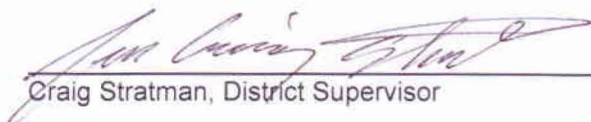
Date



Charles Dorman, District Supervisor

9-30-2011

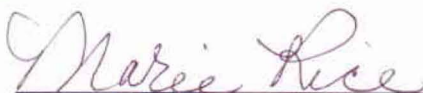
Date



Craig Stratman, District Supervisor

9-30-11

Date



Marie Rice, District Supervisor

9-30-11

Date



Bill Burton, District Supervisor

10/12/11

Date

Memorandum to: Dept. of Natural Resources  
Natural Resources Development Board

From: Mid Yukon Kuskokwim Soil and Water  
Conservation District  
P.O. Box: 88, Aniak, AK. 99557

Date: 09/15/11

This represents the annual report of the Mid Yukon Kuskokwim Soil and Water Conservation District for the fiscal year FY10, as required by the Dept. of Natural Resources, as specified in the cooperative agreement with the Dept. of Natural Resources and the Alaska Association of Conservation Districts.

**Highlights:**

- I. Provide Capacity Building for the Mid Yukon Kuskokwim Soil and Water Conservation District***
- II. Provide Conservation Technical Assistance to MYK landowners***
- III. Develop Stream Bank Erosion Survey in the Mid Yukon Kuskokwim Soil and Water Conservation District***
- IV. Continue High Tunnel Demonstration Project***

**Programs & Projects**

The Mid Yukon Kuskokwim Soil and Water Conservation District conducted its annual assessment of progress toward completion of the FY11 Plan of Work.

**Goal I: Provide Capacity Building for the Mid Yukon Kuskokwim Soil and Water Conservation District.**

Assessment: Monthly meetings by the Board of Supervisors of MYK SWCD have been held, including elections and swearing in of new board members. Meeting minutes provided to NRCDB.

**Goal II: Provide Conservation Technical Assistance to MYK landowners**

Assessment: MYK SWCD provided plan maps to document areas of invasive weed infestations and worked with landowners in the process of invasive weed eradication. MYK SWCD also worked with gardeners in the application of accepted conservation practices in gardening such as crop rotation, nutrition management, pest management, etc.

Forest Stand Assessments are being conducted for landowners to determine age of forest stand, species composition, seedling count, condition of tree stand, and timber stand evaluation.

Forest Stand Assessments provide data for landowners who are not only interested in the condition of the forest stands, but suggested treatment and optimum products that can be harvested from stand such as saw logs, pulp, firewood, cull or leave for wildlife.

A study is in the process of initiation to determine if there are any detrimental effects of untreated sewage on aquatic species such as salmon fry in the area of the sewage being discharged. MYK SWCD is incorporating the assistance of appropriate state agencies in the completion of this study.



**Goal III: Develop Stream Bank Erosion Survey in the Mid Yukon Kuskokwim Soil and Water Conservation District**

**Assessment:** MYK is in the process of completing riverbank erosion in the villages of Aniak and Kalskag on the Kuskokwim River ( see attached draft of Aniak Slough Riverbank Erosion Survey) copies of River Bank Erosion Surveys will be provided to affected landowners and appropriate agencies and municipal governments. Lathe markers were placed to determine rate of erosion, and GPS coordinates of areas of potential areas of erosion sites

MYK SWCD also worked with landowners during the Kuskokwim River ice breakup by provide GPS coordinates of sites of concentrated flow erosion sites for placement of sandbags, to prevent catastrophic levee failure. Statewide media coverage of MYK SWCD's River Bank Erosion Survey process was aired during process.

**Goal IV; Continue High Tunnel Demonstration Project**

**Assessment:** MYK is in the process of completing a High Tunnel Demonstration Project in cooperation with NRCS, Kuskokwim Native Association, ( KNA) Interior Rivers Resource Development Council and the Aniak Traditional Council, (ATC)

A 20X40 ft. high tunnel was erected at the ATC farm site to demonstrate the advantages of using such a structure to grow more diverse vegetable crops such as corn and also as a season extender for crops in this region. Mini greenhouses were provided from the Interior Rivers Resource Development Council to seven local gardeners to assist in starting crops for the high tunnel project. The mini greenhouses are also being used by gardeners as mini high tunnels to take advantage of a high tunnels season extending properties.

Comparison data is being collected to compare crops grown inside and outside of high tunnel, as well as temperature and humidity data, rate of growth and yield of crops. Data will be available on MYK SWCD's website.

Produce from the High Tunnel Demonstration Project is being distributed to individual local elders and also to the KNA Elder meals program.

**Financial Report: see attached**

**Signatures**

---

Report prepared by	Signature	Date
--------------------	-----------	------

---

District Vice Chair	Signature	Date
---------------------	-----------	------

---

District Board Member	Signature	Date
-----------------------	-----------	------

**Goal III: Develop Stream Bank Erosion Survey in the Mid Yukon Kuskokwim Soil and Water Conservation District**

**Assessment:** MYK is in the process of completing riverbank erosion in the villages of Aniak and Kalskag on the Kuskokwim River (see attached draft of Aniak Slough Riverbank Erosion Survey) copies of River Bank Erosion Surveys will be provided to affected landowners and appropriate agencies and municipal governments. Lathe markers were placed to determine rate of erosion, and GPS coordinates of areas of potential areas of erosion sites

MYK SWCD also worked with landowners during the Kuskokwim River ice breakup by provide GPS coordinates of sites of concentrated flow erosion sites for placement of sandbags, to prevent catastrophic levee failure. Statewide media coverage of MYK SWCD's River Bank Erosion Survey process was aired during process.

**Goal IV: Continue High Tunnel Demonstration Project**

**Assessment:** MYK is in the process of completing a High Tunnel Demonstration Project in cooperation with NRCS, Kuskokwim Native Association, (KNA) Interior Rivers Resource Development Council and the Aniak Traditional Council, (ATC)

A 20X40 ft. high tunnel was erected at the ATC farm site to demonstrate the advantages of using such a structure to grow more diverse vegetable crops such as corn and also as a season extender for crops in this region. Mini greenhouses were provided from the Interior Rivers Resource Development Council to seven local gardeners to assist in starting crops for the high tunnel project. The mini greenhouses are also being used by gardeners as mini high tunnels to take advantage of a high tunnels season extending properties.

Comparison data is being collected to compare crops grown inside and outside of high tunnel, as well as temperature and humidity data, rate of growth and yield of crops. Data will be available on MYK SWCD's website.

Produce from the High Tunnel Demonstration Project is being distributed to individual local elders and also to the KNA Elder meals program.

**Financial Report: see attached**

**Signatures**

HERMAN W. MORGAN / DIST. MGR. *Herman W. Morgan* 09/15/11

Report prepared by

Signature

Date

*Jerry Peterson*

*Jerry Peterson*

9/19/11

District Vice Chair

Signature

Date

*CLARENCE COTTER*

*Clarence Cotter*

9/19/11

District Board Member

Signature

Date



# DISTRIBUTING PRODUCE FROM HIGH TUNNEL PROJECT TO ELDERS

Mid Yukon Kuskokwim Soil & Water  
Conservation Project

P.O. Box 88  
Aniak, AK 99557





# Distributing Produce to Elders



# Vegetables



Leaf Lettuce



Sweet Peas



Onions



Cauliflower



Carrots and Potatoes



Cucumbers



Butter Crunch  
Lettuce



Zucchini



**Board of Supervisors**

Todd Pettit, Chair-  
Bruce Bush  
Don Berberich  
Arthur Keyes  
Doug Warner  
Tiny DePriest, Alt

**Staff**

Eric Wade, District  
Manager  
Dave Ianson, Project  
Conservationist  
Kelly Strawn: Pro-  
ject Conservationist  
Sierra Doherty: Pro-  
ject Conservationist  
AJ Hoffman: Project  
Conservationist  
Erin Hoffman: Pro-  
ject Conservationist

**The Palmer SWCD  
Board of Supervisors  
meets the third Tues-  
day of each month at  
5:00 p.m. at the  
Palmer Office**



Palmer Conservation District Office  
in beautiful downtown Palmer



What is this? Eskimo Potato or Wild Sweet Pea? Dave Ianson is figuring that out near the Knik Glacier while assisting AJ Hoffman and Sierra Doherty with the Sustainable Salmon project funded by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Below Sierra and AJ (center) with Casey Dinkle, from the Plant Material Center, are happy to be in the mountains.





## School Yard Habitats and Outdoor Classrooms

Palmer Soil and Water Conservation District worked at the Valley Pathways School in Palmer to develop a bioswale to capture parking lot runoff and to stabilize embankments on the school property. The project, funded by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and coordinated by Dave Ianson, will be continued in

2012 and will add the planning for a trail from the school to the Crevasse-Moraine hiking trail. The photo to the right shows one of the hillsides in early stages of growth. The hillside was planted with help from the students at Valley Pathways and the staff at the Plant Materials Center.



## BEEES

There are certain pursuits which, if not wholly poetic and true, do at least suggest a nobler and finer relation to nature than we know. The keeping of bees, for instance.  
Henry David Thoreau





## Palmer Soil and Water Conservation District

How are the bees doing was the buzz around the office this summer. The Natural Resources Conservation Service funded a project to increase pollinators in the state. The project was a success and was funded again for 2012.

Kelly Strawn coordinated this project .



## Envirothon

The Palmer Soil and Water Conservation District was the managing agency for the Alaska Envirothon in 2011. The event was an unqualified success. Sierra Doherty coordinated this statewide event which was held in Kodiak. Below is the winning team from Kodiak that competed in the North American competition in New Brunswick in August. The Envirothon was funded with major donations from the Palmer Soil and Water Conservation District, the Salcha-Delta Conservation District, and the Fairbanks Soil and Water Conservation District. The Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge and Visitor Center contributed significant in-kind donations to the project. Many other agencies also contributed to this project. On the right, coordinator Sierra Doherty gets outdoors.





## Palmer Soil and Water Conservation District

FY 2011

### Revenue

Alaska Fish and Game	\$ 23,693.00
Canon	\$ 2,750.00
DNR	\$ 2,000.00
Fish Wildlife Service	\$ 9,407.00
Mat-Su Borough	\$ 4,258.00
NRCS	\$ 59,613.00
Earned Income	\$ 157,634.00
SWCDs	\$ 8,825.00
US Forest Service	\$ 3,918.00
	\$ 272,098.00

### Expenses

Personnel	\$ 201,879.00
Travel	\$ 16,645.00
Supplies	\$ 9,356.00
Equipment	\$ 13,534.00
Contractual	\$ 49,189.00
	\$ 290,603.00

## Palmer Soil and Water Conservation District

### Jim Lake in the Knik Public Use Area

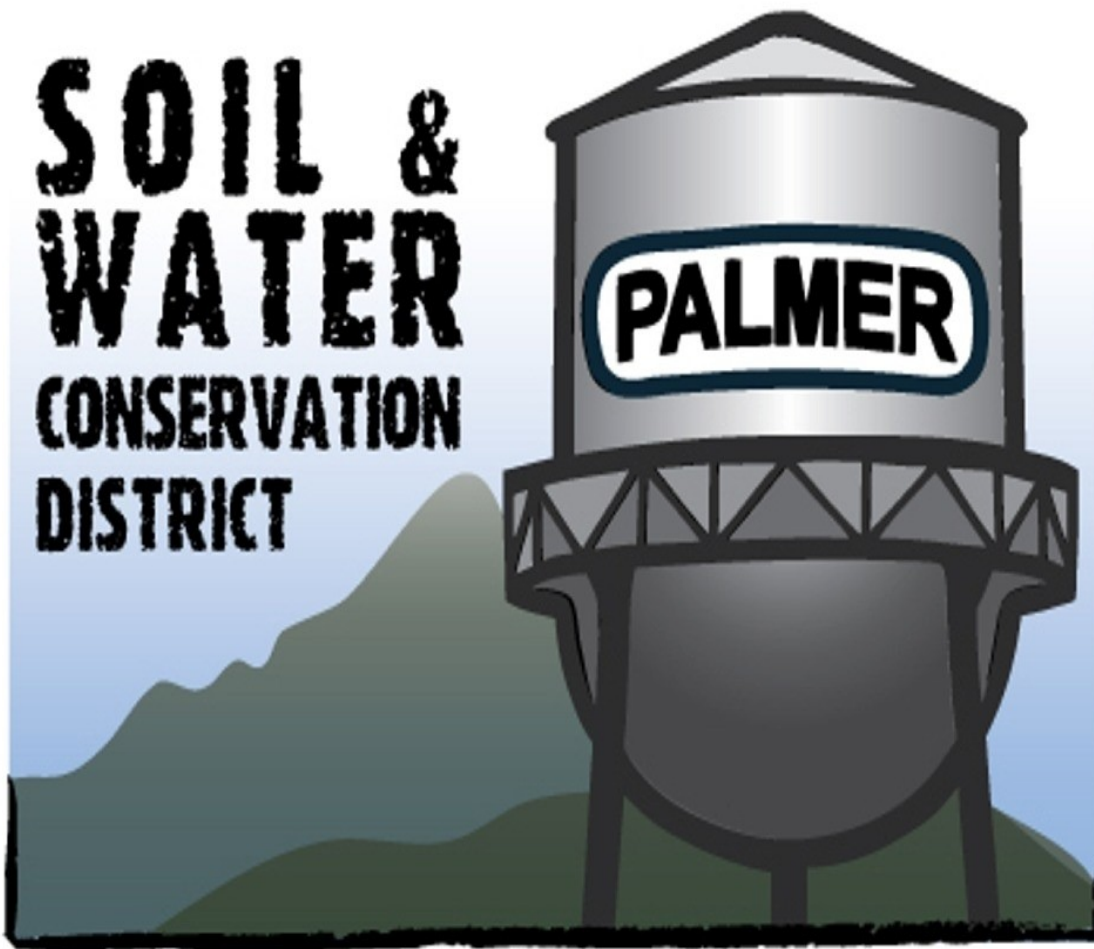


The Palmer Soil and Water Conservation District has begun work in the Knik Public Use Area. Above is a view of the public launch area at Jim Lake. The District is pursuing funds to restore this area and install an improved launch, camping and parking area.

We finished it!! The District received funds from the Mat-Su Borough to redirect and improve a trail for hikers from Maud Road to the Jim Lake Overlook. The trail zig-zags through the forest at about a 11% grade to a very special place in the valley. Below are photos of boulders being placed at the trail head and hikers nearing the overlook.







259 S. Alaska Street, Palmer, Alaska 99645

Memorandum to: Department of Natural Resources

From: Salcha-Delta Soil and Water Conservation  
District

Subject: Annual Report of Accomplishments

Date: 9/30/2011

Note from the Chair:

The following report briefly discusses some of the activities, projects, and programs conducted by our District. Many other worthwhile efforts could not be included in this report due to space. The Salcha-Delta SWCD meets the conservation needs of many businesses and individuals throughout the state.

We continue to be committed to eradicating noxious weeds in our District operating several programs to support that goal including weed pulls, certified hay and straw, pest management planning, noxious weed inventory, and an aggressive spraying program.

We have several programs that focus on conservation and wise development of our natural resources including water quality testing, nutrient and pest management, conservation planning, conservation education, and cost-share for soil sampling. We invest in research as a District as well as in collaboration with UAF and ARS researchers to support Alaskan agriculture. We co-sponsor the Farm Forum, an annual farmer-oriented symposium, and conduct numerous outreach efforts.

We work closely with the US Army to maintain their training lands by hardening trails, creating and maintaining wildlife habitat, providing technical support for future planning, and assisting with Environmental Impact Surveys and environmental assessments.

We partner with local, state, and federal agencies to address watershed concerns. We continue to monitor the Harding Lake Restoration Project, a successful effort to restore wetland habitat and Northern Pike spawning areas. We are still working with NRCS to resolve the Clearwater Watershed Project deficiencies.

The District supports the local agricultural community. Our Alternative Fuel Program promotes the use of renewable fuels including bio-mass, barley fuel, and bio-diesel production. We support local food production and processing efforts to improve food security in Alaska and reduce the carbon footprint of what we eat. The District is working with ADF&G and landowners to see what can be done to mitigate the damage to crops caused by bison.

We support agriculture development, science-based resource management, and responsible conservation efforts by land managers.

Rex Wrigley



*This is the annual report of the Salcha-Delta SWCD for fiscal year 2011, required by the Department of Natural Resources as specified in cooperative agreements with Salcha-Delta Soil and Water Conservation District and the Alaska Association of Conservation Districts.*

## **Programs & Projects**

The Salcha-Delta Soil and Water Conservation District conducted its annual assessment of progress on the **2011** plan of work.

**Goal 1: Conservation Assistance:** By employing an Agricultural Specialist, the District will develop nutrient and pest management plans for cooperators and assist cooperators to implement them. Field visits will assist in improving soil sampling accuracy, calibration of equipment, appropriate application of fertilizer and herbicide, scouting and identification of pests, record keeping, and identify resource concerns and other practices to improve efficiency and productivity of farms.

**Assessment:** The District worked with area producers on Nutrient and Pest Management Planning for large and small farms and gardens. We worked with cooperators to help them identify pests, calibrate equipment, and maintain records. The District continues to gather data to improve nutrient planning by taking thousands of soil and foliage samples to assess the effectiveness of the nutrient plans and to improve our recommendations.

We continue to provide assistance to landowners by demonstrating proper sample collection, site visits, and nutrient recommendations.

Another project currently underway by the District is an Alternative Fuel Program. Alternative fuels most actively considered are those that originate from farm products or by-products, including barley, canola, canola meal, and biomass such as straw or grass.

As part of the Alternative Fuel Program, the District is working with Ft Greely on a bio-mass project using barley as a fuel source. If this project is approved, it will stabilize agriculture and stimulate the local economy. It will reduce the cost of heat at Ft. Greely by half and save up to 1.9 million gallons of fuel oil.

We installed autosteer units on three pieces of farm equipment this year to begin evaluating the potential for saving herbicide, fertilizer, and fuel by reducing overlap in farming operations. The study will run for three years, after which the equipment will be made available for use to farmers around the state. Data will continue to be collected from the larger area to update our study. Information on savings will be distributed to the farm community so each farmer can evaluate the potential cost/benefit to his own operation.

The District co-sponsored the Farm Forum with Cooperative Extension Service in February reaching about a hundred producers at the event and providing agricultural information as well as information about SWCD programs. The forum provides an ideal setting to share results of our trials, report on our activities, and gather input from area farmers.

To encourage soil sampling for nutrient management plans, we paid cost-share for soil sampling on nearly 7000 acres of grain and hay. By offering the incentive, we encourage the use of soil sampling as a management tool.

The District continues to work with area farmers and Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) to reduce the amount of crop damage from Bison. We continue to participate in numerous meetings over the past year to work toward solutions. In 2011, we continued to implement a bison management plan by controlling brush from the summer range and fertilizing 35 acres of bluegrass on the training ranges around Big Lake at Ft. Greely.



The District has renewed an offer of assistance to DNR and ADF&G to construct a barrier between the farms and the bison or some other suitable measure to prevent the continued crop depredation. In 2011, we implemented a cost-share program for fencing farmsteads in the area of bison depredation to prevent bison damage to machinery, buildings, and stored crops.

**Goal 2: Water Quality:** The purpose of the water quality testing is to provide baseline information for tracking changes in water quality of the Clearwater River and Harding Lake. Our aim is to provide science-based information about point source and non-point source pollution. A Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) has been developed with assistance of an environmental consultant. It has also been reviewed by DEC and Alaska Division of Water and Mining.

**Assessment:** Water quality on the Clearwater watershed was initiated in 2005. Water samples were taken 4 times a year in spring (April), early summer (June), late summer (August) and fall (October). The samples were taken at 4 locations, over a 12-mile section of river and one sample at Clearwater Lake. Tests are conducted for pH, turbidity, temperature, dissolved oxygen, conductivity, total dissolved solids, nitrate, nitrite, and phosphate. These tests are providing good baseline data for Clearwater River and Lake. In September 2010 water quality testing will begin at Harding Lake and will be a part of the SWCD water quality program.

At the end of each season the results of the tests are graphed and a report is submitted to the Board providing a summary of results from the year. A copy of this report is also sent to DEC.

**Goal 3: Noxious and Invasive Weed Control:** A priority of the District is to eradicate noxious weeds within the District boundaries. Early identification is crucial for identifying new invasive weed threats while they can still be controlled. We have a Rapid Response capability in the District for private land. This will be expanded to include public land. Early detection, coupled with aggressive, timely treatment is the best option for eliminating noxious and invasive weeds.

**Assessment:** The District continues its aggressive Noxious Weed Program. In FY2010, District hosted a position for an Invasive Plant Coordinator to educate the public about invasive weeds, control measures, and to perform weed control activities. This person was rehired during the summer of 2011 to continue invasive weed activities. An informational sign was commissioned and will be installed at the Canadian border. It is unfortunate that the State of Alaska was unwilling to accommodate the location of this important weed management tool, requiring that the sign be erected on private land adjacent to the Alaska Highway, rather than at the border. Clearly, the state is still not committed to addressing invasive weeds at the agency level.



The focus of the Noxious Weed Program has been the eradication of noxious weeds from the District. New infestations of Bird Vetch were discovered and eliminated. Some infestations along the Richardson Highway were mechanically controlled for this year, and these areas will be the focus of a permit application to treat with pesticides next year.



Noxious weeds in bags pulled by  
Cub Scout volunteers

Twenty-one people participated in a *Roadside Fest Weed Pulls*. Later, Cub Scout Pack 11 became Deputy WEED Sheriffs to teach others about noxious weeds in their community. Pack 11 also pulled nine bags of white sweet clover along the cemetery parking lot and four-wheeler trails.

Over one thousand acres were scouted and/or sprayed this year for Hempnettle, Perennial Sowthistle, or Birdvetch. Landowner awareness of noxious weeds in the community continues to increase resulting in increased reports of Birdvetch and Perennial Sowthistle sightings. This as a positive development because it means more eyes are looking

for noxious weeds.

We continue to implement a revegetation plan for Ft. Greely Garrison, which includes control of noxious and invasive weeds on the garrison. We met with the Midcourse Missile Defense installation about a difficult revegetation problem. Weed management efforts on military lands expanded this year to include scouting and spraying for noxious weeds on the Yukon and Donnelly Training areas.

Nearly 800 acres of barley was scouted for the Noxious Weed Free Straw Program to certify straw for use on public lands. About 65 acres of hay was also scouted for noxious weed free certification. Our goal is to be able to provide noxious weed free straw and forage for activities conducted within federal and state parks. Our experience has helped weed free certification programs get started around the state.



Hemp nettle in grain reduces crop yield

**Goal 4: Conservation Education and Information:** Raising awareness of conservation practices that everyone can participate in will help conserve our resources. Classroom activities, forums, newsletters, and several programs and projects that encourage families to participate together will help accomplish this. Other activities geared for students will educate them using a hands-on approach to teaching in the outdoors.

**Assessment:** The District was very involved in the area schools to promote agriculture and conservation programs.



Ag Day at Delta Elementary School

For Alaska Ag Day we joined with the Delta Farm Bureau to bring Ag in the Classroom to the entire Delta Elementary School. Over 400 students learned about local agriculture.

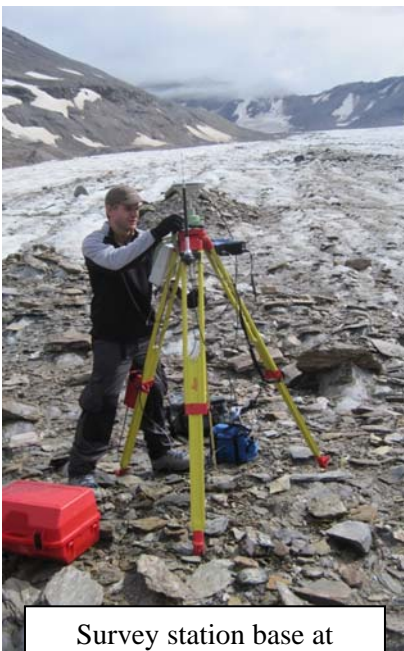
Soil Field Days were held for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade this year and conducted by our Soil Scientist. The students dug holes to learn about soil characteristics and learned to analyze the various soil strata they encountered.



Quartz Lake

We continued to sponsor the local FFA chapter, providing an advisor who taught them about natural resources, Parliamentary procedure, accompanied them on their trips, and prepared them for the state FFA meeting in Kodiak.

From Ag in the Classroom in Elementary school, to natural resource awareness in middle school, to FFA in the high school, we are offering a higher level of involvement in natural resource education in the District.



Survey station base at Jarvis Glacier

#### Goal 5: Watershed Planning:

The Clearwater and the Harding Lake watersheds impact fish and wildlife habitat, agriculture, recreation and public safety. Both watershed projects need significant investment in time and resources to solve the existing problems.

Assessment: The District expanded its boundaries to include the entire Delta River watershed. We have begun a resource analysis of the area to acquaint ourselves with the needs and resources of the new area. We hope this will enable us to better address our mission by looking at the watershed as a complete unit.

We partnered with the Cold Regions Research Engineering Laboratory (CRREL) and researchers from the UAF Water and Environmental Research Center (WERC) to study the watershed

Lost Lake Outdoor Conservation School is a three-day, two-night residential camp we hold each year at Lost Lake Boy Scout Camp, where the students learn about water ecology, boreal forest ecology, orienteering, Alaska History, and responsible development of natural resources. Team building activities and skits are used to encourage participation. All of the instructors are experts in their field and the curriculum meets Alaska State Standards for grade equivalency.



FFA trip to Alaska Envirothon in Kodiak



associated with Jarvis Creek and the Granite Mountains. This past spring, teams from these three organizations travelled into the Granite Mountains and up Jarvis Creek via snow machine to perform snow surveys and collect snow samples in order to study the hydrology of the watershed.

A few weeks later, another team travelled via helicopter to Jarvis Glacier to install semi-permanent markers to measure glacial melt and movement. The markers were installed by drilling a hole in the glacier ice approximately 7 meters deep using a steam drill. They were then surveyed using a survey-grade GPS system. In August, another team travelled back to the glacier to re-survey the glacier stakes and collect data from a weather station that was set up on the ridgeline above the glacier in the spring.



During the summer, personnel from the District collected water samples from different locations along Jarvis Creek for isotope studies to determine types of water sources into the system at different times of the year. The isotope analysis allows researchers to determine if the majority of water is coming from rain, melting snow, or melting glacier ice.

Ultimately, the collection and analysis of this data will allow land managers to better understand this extremely important watershed for the Delta Junction/Fort Greely area.

**Goal 6: Research Projects:** Collaborate with UAF and USDA/ARS researchers to address the following list of projects.

- A. Irrigation Trials for barley, canola, field peas
- B. Deep Nitrate Study
- C. Develop a fertilizer matrix for commonly grown crops
- D. Herbicide fate of aminopyralid and MSM in potato rotation.



**Assessment:** We compiled the above list of research needs for area farmers and met with UAF researchers to work on a collaborative effort to get the research projects underway. The research effort also includes crop variety trials, nutrient trials, and pest phenology research. The District has also assisted producer efforts to make locally grown food more available to consumers in order to reduce our carbon footprint and open new market opportunities for Alaskan farmers. The irrigation trials are combined with a deep nitrate study to see whether irrigation results in nitrate movement in the soil.

A major project is underway to collect data related to phosphate and potassium needs of common crops. This involved over a thousand plant and soil samples taken from plots fertilized with different rates. Researchers from the University of Alaska are working with our Ag Specialist to determine crop needs for these nutrients and, combined with existing data for Nitrogen, to create a fertilizer matrix for making nutrient recommendations in Alaska.

**Goal 7: Achieve Stable District Operations (Indirect Costs)**

Diversify the funding sources coming in to the District to allow us to continue to perform our mission in the event that customary funding streams become unavailable. Provide staff training and planning to improve delivery of conservation assistance to cooperators and community.

Assessment: The District continued to look for ways to stabilize operations by diversifying funding streams. In FY2011, CTA funding was used for adoption of new technology, data collection to improve fertilizer recommendations, irrigation scheduling, and stabilization work for recreational trails. For a second year, we were awarded a grant from US Forest service for forest health, which was used to remove dead and damaged trees that provided Spruce Ips Beetle habitat.

We also contracted with NRCS to perform some of their wetland determinations and to assist with snow survey. We hired a contractor to assist with final paperwork to become a Wetland Mitigation Bank for Alaska. Any construction projects impacting wetlands are required to perform mitigation. Many times that mitigation takes the form of purchasing wetlands with “in-lieu fees” and setting them aside for protection. At present, there are no wetland mitigation banks in Alaska so all the in lieu fees go Outside. This designation will allow us to receive the in-lieu fees for construction projects in Alaska.



**Financial Report**

See attached report

**Signatures**

Bryce Wrigley  
Report prepared by

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

9/30/2011  
Date



Below are some of the projects we have completed in the past year for our Land Rehabilitation and Maintenance program with Department of Defense. Our contract with the military is to maintaining their training lands including wildlife benefits, erosion, water quality, and wetlands protection.



Grass seeding by crew, before and after



Chena golf course remediation before



Chena Golf Course after



12 Mile Crossing



12 mile crossing

Financial Report  
Salcha-Delta Soil and Water Conservation District

FY 2011

Income

NRCS CTA	133,478.00
Neuman discretionary grant	21,250.00
Farm Forum	751.00
State Stipend	2,000.00
US Forest Service	203,000.00
Interest	32,887.68

Total Income	393,366.68
--------------	------------

Expenses

**Outreach/Conservation Education**

FFA	4,031.73
Fair	201.25
Conservation Outdoor School	3,667.32
Classroom projects	1,098.82
Farm Forum	696.23
Poster Contest	410.00
Scholarship Program	5,000.00
Speech Contest	100.00
Outreach Contributions	15,484.79
Other Outreach	2,502.30

**Projects**

Berm Removal	572.00
Ag Research	37,846.55
Noxious Weed	1,119.44
Cost Share	570.48
Water Quality program	689.70
Repair and Maintenance	3,220.00
Fuel	1,992.40
Independent Contract Labor	

**Administrative**

Office rent	21,840.00
Insurance	2,490.00
Supervisor travel	960.00
Training	1,600.96
Postage	1,851.94
Advertising	284.50
Dues/registrations	1,426.00
Travel	17,405.63
Office Supplies	32,086.90
Phone/Internet	6,412.49
Meeting Expenses	460.16
Miscellaneous	1,458.04
Life and Health Insurance	31,412.70

Total Expenses	198,892.33
----------------	------------



Memorandum to: Shana Joy, Executive Director NRCDB

From: Upper Susitna Soil and Water Conservation District

Subject: Annual Report of Accomplishments

Date: September 13, 2011

This represents the annual report of the Upper Susitna Soil and Water Conservation District for fiscal year 2011 as required by the DNR as specified in cooperative agreements with DNR and the Alaska Association of Conservation Districts.

**Highlights of the year.**

**Programs & Projects**

The **Upper Susitna Soil and Water Conservation District** conducted its annual assessment of progress toward completion of the **2011** plan of work.

**Project 1: Land Suitability Reviews**

**Assessment:** Goal accomplished. Soil sampling and vegetation descriptions provide DNR with information that may enable an expansion of opportunities for agriculture in Alaska and ensure that a portion of public lands remain in agriculture production.

**Project 2: Upper Susitna Youth Conservation Corps**

**Assessment:** Goal accomplished. Project funding provided work experience for fourteen youth, ages 14-17, living in the Upper Susitna Valley. Work projects included a variety of conservation jobs with educational components to teach young people to become stewards of natural resources.

**Project 3: Watershed Health**

**Assessment:** Goal accomplished. Community based conservation planning was completed for Sunshine Creek, Montana Creek, and the Susitna River. Water temperature data was collected by using temperature loggers set in critical anadromous streams. Streams with a critical status are identified as hosing critical salmon spawning and rearing habitat. These efforts are provided in order to supply information about the best farming and fishing practices that will sustain high water quality and encourage future salmon sustainability.

#### **Project 4: Demonstration Farm**

**Assessment:** Goal partially accomplished. The YCC was going to be involved with planting Christmas trees and maintaining the farm, but because funds were not available for the farm program, this goal was not accomplished. However, the Board of Directors and the District Manager have been working on updating the Farm Conservation Plan and finding funding opportunities to provide work on the farm for the YCC.

#### **Project 5: Farmers Market(s)/Community Garden(s)**

**Assessment:** Goal not accomplished. Gardening and perishable food storage techniques were not provided to District Cooperators due to a shortage of funding for this project. In the future, this goal will be incorporated into the Farm Conservation Plan.

#### **Project 6: Invasive Plants Early Detection Rapid Response**

**Assessment:** Goal accomplished. The YCC worked to eradicate invasive plants across the Upper Susitna Valley and in the Hatcher Pass State Park. The YCC also participated in the education of the general public about the importance of controlling noxious plants in Alaska. Plants on private land were controlled as well as Borough and State Land after permission was granted from all land owners.

#### **Project 7: Upper Susitna Youth Conservation Corps Denali National Park**

**Assessment:** Goal accomplished. The YCC was able to go to Denali State Park instead of the National Park. The objectives were met and deliverables accomplished in the State Park. A Park Ranger from the Denali National Park joined the YCC for this trip and provided hands on educational opportunities to teach better conservation practices. The YCC also worked to control invasive plants while in the State Park.

#### **Project 8: Upper Susitna YCC Sunshine Creek Restoration**

**Assessment:** Goal accomplished. In an effort to prevent further erosion of the Sunshine Creek stream bank, willows were planted along the shoreline with a vegetation mat placed on top of the rows of willows. Additionally, aluminum metal grating walkways were installed over the willows and vegetative mats to prevent trampling and to give fishermen a place to stand and fish. Moreover, trails were sustainably built to allow travel between fishing holes and preventing further degradation of the hillside.



## **PROJECT #1: Land Suitability Reviews Proposed Agricultural Homestead Sites in Upper Susitna, Alaska**

**NRCS 2010-2011**

### **Agricultural Designations:**

***Deliverable #1 Goals.*** Using the land suitability review data already collected for the Willard Cash land plot, a wetlands delineation will be conducted. This delineation will describe the soil and vegetation for each broad wetland type based on hydrology and vegetation. The delineation will be made using the GIS mapping program.

***Accomplishments:*** Data has been entered into the GIS program and maps have been drawn for the Willard Cash land plot. The mapping project will continue into the winter of 2011-2012 and will include the agricultural designations component as the final step.

### **Land Suitability Reviews:**

***Deliverable #2 Goals.*** The Alaska Department of Natural Resources is proposing to offer 40,000 acres of state land for public sale through the Division of Agriculture homestead program. The sale of these lands is to encourage agricultural production and require land suitability reviews to ensure the land being sold will be productive agricultural land.

***Accomplishments:*** Land suitability reviews in the Nine Mile Creek land plot were conducted July 31<sup>st</sup> through August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011. These include soil samples and a vegetation layout for numerous plots over half of the proposed area. This data will be analyzed and entered into a database over the winter. The other half of the proposed sale area will be sampled in the summer of 2012.

### **Nutrient Management Plans:**

***Deliverable #3 Goals.*** Nutrient Management Plans will be conducted in the Upper Susitna Valley for a minimum of ten different land owners.

***Accomplishments:*** NRCS provided training online through AgLearn.org about plant nutrients and nutrient management plans. The online training portion will be followed up with an in-person training session that will be held at the Talkeetna Fire Station fall of 2011. The actual nutrient management plans will be conducted during the summer of 2012 after the trainings have been completed.





## **PROJECT #2: Upper Susitna Youth Conservation Corps**

**2010-2011**

### **Youth Conservation Corps Training:**

***Goals.*** To provide on the job training to fourteen locally hired youth between the ages of fourteen and seventeen. During the training the youth will be introduced to the skills and knowledge needed to successfully undertake the projects set before them this season.

***Accomplishments:*** The training included the history of YCC and CCC programs, YCC mission and goals, YCC member mid-season and end-season evaluations, work gear requirements, work projects, leadership roles and schedule, team building activities, safety and nutrition, physical fitness and sore muscles, camping and rafting gear, invasive plant identification, trail maintenance skills, and tool use and maintenance. Additionally, YCC members learned how to use bear spray and practiced spraying it.





### **Community Supported Agriculture Farm:**

**Goals.** To partner with the Birch Creek Farm to develop and start crops growing at a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Farm on private property. The YCC was hired to plant rows of outdoor crops and potted plants in greenhouses.

**Accomplishments:** The community benefited from the early start the plants had due to the YCC starting this project on their first day of work for the season. This farm serves Talkeetna area residents who do not have their own land and/or space to grow their own garden. The community members who benefited from this YCC project include hundreds of people.





### **Finger Lake Shoreline Re-vegetation:**

**Goals.** To partner with Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the Wasilla Soil and Water Conservation District to provide needed vegetation along the shoreline of Finger Lake.

**Accomplishments:** Planted willows along the shoreline of Finger Lake on private property with property owner permission. Dug two rows of trenches to plant willows in and added top soil to the dirt to allow for optimal survival. A vegetation mat was placed on top of the rows of willows to add herbaceous vegetation to the shoreline as well. All plants were thoroughly watered at the end of the project. Catherine Inman of the Wasilla SWCD offered a lesson to the YCC about the fish living in Finger Lake and why shoreline re-vegetation is important. She even trapped some fingerling fish and taught the YCC members how to identify them and how we are helping them survive.







### **Trapper Creek Bird Sanctuary Invasive Plant Tarping Project:**

**Goals.** To partner with the Palmer Soil and Water Conservation District under the Sustainable Salmon Partnership to tarp Reed Canary Grass (RCG). RCG has been known to grow across anagomous fish streams and prevent spawning salmon and other fish species from spawning upstream. The grass can grow so thick the fish are unable to swim through it.

**Accomplishments:** A large section along Trapper Creek that runs through the Trapper Creek Bird Sanctuary was tarped in an effort to kill the RCG and allow the fish to continue spawning in Trapper Creek. A test plot was also conducted where YCC members hand dug the RCG to determine if that was a successful means to eradicate this invasive plant species. After the area had been removed of vegetation, native grass seed was planted to determine if native grass could or would out-compete RCG.

**DIGGING GRASS:**



**RAKING ROOTS:**



**RE-SEEDING:**









### **Trail Maintenance on the X Lake Loop & Staircases Built on Canoe Portage Trail:**

**Goals.** To partner with the Mat-Su Borough to maintain a heavily used 5 kilometer trail in the Talkeetna Lakes Park. The X Lake Loop was built was a small machine approximately five years ago. However, the trail finishing never occurred and consequently the trail has suffered degradation since it was built. The canoe portage needs two more staircases installed to be complete.

**Accomplishments:** The YCC did finishing work which required moving materials from the inside of the trail, or the hump, to the outside edges of the trail where indents or ruts were left by the machine which built the trail. Water drainages were installed, bike jumps and corners were removed for the safety of walkers, and the trail now has a 3% out-slope which encourages water to drain off the trail rather than gathering on it. The two staircases were built and installed on the Tigger to Z Lake Canoe Portage Trail.



## **PROJECT #3: Watershed Health**

**2010-2011**

**Goals:** To partner with Cook Inlet Keeper to collect temperature data using temperature loggers in a variety of streams in the Upper Susitna Valley. Cook Inlet Keeper uses this data to monitor stream health and fish spawning habitats.

**Accomplishments:** The following creeks were identified by Cook Inlet Keeper and the Upper Susitna SWCD as being important to watershed health across the valley:

1. Byers Creek
2. East Fork of the Chulitna River
3. Troublesome Creek
4. Moose Creek
5. Chijuk Creek
6. Trapper Creek
7. Montana Creek
8. Alexander/Cache Creek

After each temperature logger was set, two maintenance site visits at each of the above sites during the summer season of 2011. All loggers will be left out until October 1<sup>st</sup> when they will be retrieved. All data from the loggers will be downloaded and sent to Cook Inlet Keeper in an excel format on or before December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011.





## **PROJECT #4: Demonstration Farm**

**2010-2011**

**Goals.** To experiment in healthy soil and water conservation, eradicate invasive plants that may be growing on the farm, and undergo forestry and agricultural practices while providing educational opportunities for Cooperators, the YCC, and the general public.

**Accomplishments:** There were no accomplishments made towards the goals above. The District was unable to secure funding this year to support the demonstration farm. Next year we will try again to secure funding for this project. One accomplishment made on the farm this year was putting up a gate that had fallen over due to hunters and fishermen crossing over the farm to recreate. Signs were posted that state: 'No Trespassing' 'Contact the USSWCD for Info' 'No Motorized Access – Walk in Only.'

## **PROJECT #5: Farmers Market(s)/Community Garden(s)**

**2010-2011**

**Goals.** To assist Cooperators in the identification and development of a central location where they can come together, share and distribute products, and unite to resolve common concerns. Also to assist Cooperators in the identification and development of community gardens to promote acceptable agricultural practices and education.

**Accomplishments:** There were no accomplishments made towards the goals above. Gardening and perishable food storage techniques were not provided due to a lack of funding for this project. In the future, this goal will be incorporated into the Farm Conservation Plan and be a part of the Demonstration Farm.

## **PROJECT #6: Invasive Plants Early Detection Rapid Response**

**2010-2011**

**Goals.** To partner with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the US Forest Service to eradicate invasive plants in the Upper Susitna Valley and the Hatcher Pass Park. Also, it will be a goal to educate the general public about invasive plants and why we are eradicating them. Property owners will be encouraged to participate and if they give permission to work on their private property, the work will be provided free of charge of land owners.

**Accomplishments:** Close to 45 acres were controlled this year by the YCC using manual methods of control. Many more acres were surveyed in order to find the invasive plants. Methods of control included hand pulling, digging, and tarping. YCC members participated in community events with a booth with information where the general public could learn about invasive plants. At the end of the year celebration for the YCC an invasive plant educational video was highlighted.



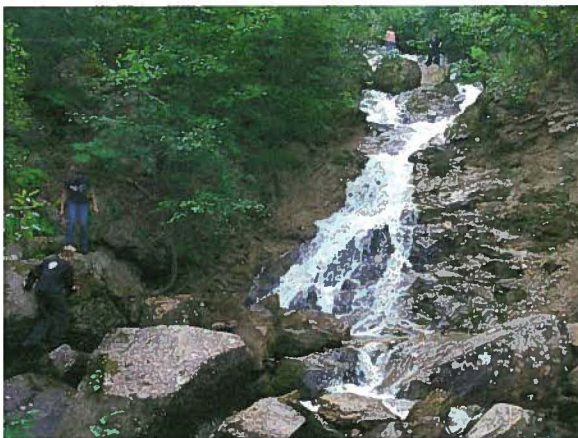


## **PROJECT #7: Upper Susitna Youth Conservation Corps Denali National Park**

**2010-2011**

**Goals.** To partner with the National Park Service, Denali National Park in particular, to conduct a camping trip to Denali National Park with the YCC. This will provide on the job training and experience in the fields of conservation, environmental restoration, and natural resource management.

**Accomplishments:** A camping trip to Denali State Park was taken at the end of the work season. A Park Ranger accompanied the YCC on the camping trip to provide education about the park and nature. Invasive plant surveys and controls were conducted as part of conservation in the Byers Lake area. A guided hike was included around Byers Lake with educational opportunities throughout the experience.





## **PROJECT #8: Upper Susitna Youth Conservation Corps Sunshine Creek Restoration**

**2010-2011**

**Goals.** To partner with the Susitna Community Council, Mat-Su Borough, State of Alaska, US Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to restore Sunshine Creek fishing area. Specifically, the shoreline of Sunshine Creek will be planted with rows of willows, the trails will be re-built sustainably, and metal aluminum grated walkways will be installed to maintain bank stability.

**Accomplishments:** There were multi-leveled rows of willows planted along approximately 150 feet of shoreline. On top of the willows, vegetation mats were placed to incorporate herbaceous plants for stream health. Fences were placed around the willows that did not have aluminum metal grated walkways installed over the plants and willow rows. The grated walkway allows sunlight to reach the plants and gives fishermen a place to stand instead of on top of the plants. Thus, fishermen can fish while plants can still grow on the shoreline and bank. The trails were washed out and muddy when we arrived. When we left they were lined with a felt material, small rock was placed on top of the felt to make a sustainable trail tread, and the trail was finished by placing signs up. The signs were for public education so the community could know why this project is important and what types of benefits will come from it.





**Financial Report: By Project*****Project #1: Land Suitability Reviews Proposed Agriculture Homestead Sites***

<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>Expensed to date</b>	<b>Today's Balance</b>	<b>Status</b>
NRCS D1 GIS	\$19,400	\$7,920.80	<b>11,479.20</b>	<i>Operating</i>
NRCS D2 LCC	\$64,000	16,780.83	<b>47,219.17</b>	<i>Operating</i>
NRCS D3 NMP	\$13,250	\$1,510.36	<b>11,739.64</b>	<i>Operating</i>

***Project #2: Upper Susitna Youth Conservation Corps***

<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>Expensed to date</b>	<b>Today's Balance</b>	<b>Status</b>
DNR 09	2,000.00	\$2,000.00	<b>\$0.00</b>	<i>Closed</i>
DNR 10	2,000.00	\$1,913.37	<b>\$86.63</b>	<i>Operating</i>
DNR 11	2,000.00	\$412.47	<b>1,587.53</b>	<i>Operating</i>
Community Supported Agriculture Farm	750.00	750.00	<b>\$0.00</b>	<i>Closed</i>
Finger Lake – AK Dept. of Fish & Game	1500.00	1500.00	<b>\$0.00</b>	<i>Closed</i>
Bird Sanctuary Tarping – Salmon Sustainability	750.00	750.00	<b>\$0.00</b>	<i>Closed</i>
Mat-Su Borough Talkeetna Lakes Park	\$100,000	27,964.32	<b>72,035.68</b>	<i>Operating</i>

***Project #3: Watershed Health***

<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>Expensed to date</b>	<b>Today's Balance</b>	<b>Status</b>
Cook Inlet Keeper 2010-11	2,000.00	\$2,000.00	<b>\$0.00</b>	<i>Closed</i>

***Project #4: Demonstration Farm***

<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>Expensed to date</b>	<b>Today's Balance</b>	<b>Status</b>
None	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	<i>Not Operating</i>

***Project #5: Farmers Market(s)/Community Garden(s)***

<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>Expensed to date</b>	<b>Today's Balance</b>	<b>Status</b>
None	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	<i>Not Operating</i>

***Project #6: Invasive Plants Early Detection Rapid Response***

<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>Expensed to date</b>	<b>Today's Balance</b>	<b>Status</b>
USFWS Invasive Plants Partners	\$25,000	12,747.65	<b>12,252.35</b>	<i>Operating</i>
US Forest Service IPP	12,207.76	11,283.01	<b>924.75</b>	<i>Operating</i>

***Project #7: Upper Susitna Youth Conservation Corps Denali National Park***

<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>Expensed to date</b>	<b>Today's Balance</b>	<b>Status</b>
NPS DSEC 194	\$8042.88 on 4/12/10	\$7,939.70	<b>103.18</b>	<i>Operating</i>
US Forest Service IPP	12,207.76	11,283.01	<b>924.75</b>	<i>Operating</i>

***Project #8: Upper Susitna Youth Conservation Corps Sunshine Creek Restoration***

<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>Expensed to date</b>	<b>Today's Balance</b>	<b>Status</b>
State Sunshine Creek Facilities 08	7,000.00	\$7,000.00	<b>\$0.00</b>	<i>Closed</i>
F&G Sunshine Creek	6,000.00	\$6,000.00	<b>\$0.00</b>	<i>Closed</i>
Susitna Comm. Council Sunshine Creek	\$10,300	10,300.00	<b>\$0.00</b>	<i>Closed</i>



**Signatures**

Laura Allen

Report prepared by



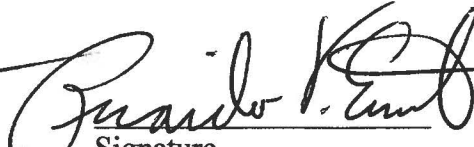
Signature

9-13-11

Date

Rick Ernst

District Chair




Signature

9-13-11

Date

Bret Hamrick

District Board Member



Signature

9-13-11

Date

Memorandum to: AACD/DNR

From: Wasilla Soil & Water Conservation District

Subject: Annual Report of Accomplishments

Date: September, 2011

This represents the annual report of the Wasilla District for fiscal year 2011, as required by DNR, and as specified in cooperative agreements with DNR and the Alaska Association of Conservation Districts.

### **Programs & Projects**

The Wasilla District has conducted its annual assessment of progress toward completion of the 2011 plan of work.

Goal 1: Provide Nutrient Management assistance to cooperators to ensure high quality, productive soils

Assessment: Goal accomplished, with satisfactory results. 53 soil samples were submitted; fertilizer and lime recommendations were provided to 14 cooperators. 2 manure samples were submitted and organic fertilizer recommendations were provided for 1 cooperator.

Goal 2: Provide Nutrient Management and Forage Management to cooperators, promoting best management practices for production of high quality crops

Assessment: Goal accomplished. Submitted 1 hay sample to lab for one cooperator.

Goal 3: Coordinate poster contest.

Assessment: Goal accomplished. Information was distributed to 20 schools, with each school receiving a copy of the PowerPoint prepared by District staff. District employees gave interactive presentations to 5 schools. 136 posters were judged, with awards presented for each category and winners were entered in the State competition. Winning posters were featured in a District newsletter. Many of the 7<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grade students enjoy participating in the poster contest, but there are no awards for that category. District staff selected outstanding poster and presented a certificate of honorable mention.



FIRST PLACE WINNERS:

K-1<sup>st</sup> grade  
Cosette GoGuen



2<sup>nd</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> grade  
Ben Bitler



4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> grade  
Alix Pawlak



7<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grade Honorable Mention  
Alina Tolmachev



Goal 4: Provide general office support for Conservation District activities

Assessment: Goal accomplished. The District Manager maintains a professional office that is efficient and well-organized, creating a pleasant atmosphere for employees and visitors. Bookkeeping activities, work plans, and reports were completed in a timely manner.

Goal 5: Implement outreach activities to raise awareness of the Conservation District's services and achievements to encourage new cooperators and to strengthen relationships with existing cooperators

Assessment: Goal accomplished. The Wasilla District gained 8 new cooperators in FY11. About 200 newsletters were mailed each quarter, and are accessible from the District's website. District Manager updated website monthly, including a calendar which lists board meeting dates. Board meetings are open to the public and public notice is given prior to each meeting. Sister agencies were invited to exchange information and share ideas with the District at their board meetings.

Goal 6: Pay dues and subscriptions

Assessment: Goal accomplished. Dues were promptly paid to NACD and subscription to the Frontiersman newspaper that provides good coverage of District projects was renewed.

Goal 7: Attend Conservation District and agency conferences to disseminate information and to gather valuable input and expertise.

Assessment: Goal accomplished. District was represented at both the Spring and Fall AACD Conferences. Information exchanged among the districts was considered to be informative and beneficial.

Goal 8: Invasive Plants Program

Assessment: Brochures and identification instructions were shared with water quality volunteers so that invasive plants could be identified and reported as stream sites were sampled. Surveyed Hatcher Pass Road with Upper Su SWCD Youth Conservation Corps and IPP Coordinator Blaine Spellman. Conducted two days of weed pulls and mowing for control of white sweet clover, vetch, oxeye daisy, and toadflax at Hatcher Pass, which continues to be monitored. A subsequent weed pull was completed with 100 Teeland Middle School students in September.

Goal 9: 2010 Salmon Partnership

Assessment: This grant has been completed. An ATV bridge was installed at the upper end of Wasilla Creek, along with revegetation, fencing, and signs. 40' of streambank along Cottonwood Creek was treated with a coir log and willow brush layering, topped



with vegmat and local plant plugs. Continued activities at the Hay Flats access of Cottonwood Creek included adding more native plants to the Scout Ridge overlook and transplanting local native sedges. Students were involved in all three project completions.

The education component of this project was also completed with students learning about stormwater runoff, pollution prevention, construction zone management, proper amounts and alternative lawn treatments, and planting grass strips and controlling animal waste near waterways.



#### Goal 10: Restoration

Assessment: Grant was completed in May. Restoration projects were completed on Wasilla Creek and the Little Susitna River at Sushana Road, as well as 60 linear feet on Cottonwood Creek with the help of students from Teeland Middle School. The rainy summer resulted in great success for revegetation. A 100' demo project was completed at the City Park, with revegetation of the bank along Wasilla Lake and the Upper Su Youth Corps assisted with the Finger Lake restoration project covering 128 linear feet.



Cottonwood Creek restoration



Finger Lake restoration

## Goal 11: Mat-Su Stream Gauge

Assessment: Grant completed June 30, 2011. Collected instream flow data from two sites, as well as two discharge sites, on Meadow Creek and Fish Creek. Water quality tests were also performed and results recorded from all sites.



### Additional Activities

Wasilla District Board Members are active in a variety of organizations that support their interests and their desire to promote conservation in Alaska, including, but not limited to, Mat-Su Resource Conservation & Development Council, Farm Bureau, AACD Board, Matanuska Creamery, Mat-Su Borough Planning Commission, Alaska Diversified Livestock Association, and the Board of Agriculture and Conservation.

### Financial Report

	Income Source	Budget	Actual	% Used
State	State of Alaska	\$21,250	\$21,250	100%
DNR	DNR	\$2,000	\$1,162	58%
Invasive Plant Program (IPP)	US Forest Service	\$5,800	\$5,800	100%
2010 Salmon Partnership	US Fish & Wildlife Service	\$25,954	\$25,954	100%
Restoration	US Fish & Wildlife Service	\$26,335	\$26,335	100%
Mat-Su Stream Gauge	AK Dept. of Fish & Game	\$9,133	\$9,133	100%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$90,472</b>	<b>\$89,634</b>	<b>99%</b>