

SOUTHWEST ALASKA CONSERVATION COALITION
Board Meeting Minutes
March 13, 2008

I. Introduction

Glenn Elison called the SWACC Management Board meeting to order at 9:12 a.m. at the Bristol Bay Native Corporation office in Anchorage.

Board members present: Tom Hawkins and Tiel Smith (BBNC); Tim Troll, Nushagak/Mulchatna-Wood/Tikchik (NMWT) Land Trust (by telephone); Glenn Elison, The Conservation Fund; Nanci Morris, Katmai Fishing Adventures (by telephone). Board members absent: Susan Flensburg (sick), Randy Hagenstein (scheduling conflict), Joe Klutch. Others present: Marjorie Dunaway, NMWT Land Trust.

II. Review Agenda

Tim suggested discussing the Board strategic plan under “VIII. National Fish Habitat Partnership Application.” Tom Hawkins moved to approve the agenda as modified. Tim Troll seconded. Motion passed.

III. Minutes

Tom moved to approve the minutes from the March 28, 2007 Management Board meeting. Tim seconded. Motion passed.

IV. Election of Officers

Glenn moved to reelect the same slate of officers. Tom seconded. Motion passed. Tim Troll is Chairman; Glenn Elison is Vice-Chair and Coordinator; Tom Hawkins is Secretary-Treasurer.

V. Information Items

Moore Foundation Grant

Glenn met yesterday with Aileen Lee in San Francisco. The Moore Foundation is funding a number of salmon projects, including The Nature Conservancy’s (TNC) work on the Nushagak, Pebble Mine-related projects, work in Southeast Alaska, a large research project through University of Montana, and others. Progress has been slow in meeting the existing commitments of the current grant because it’s been difficult to engage the village corporations, and federal matching money has been harder to acquire, with the pressure against earmarks. Aileen will ask the Moore Board to consider Glenn’s request of extending the grant for another year, to 2012.

Habitat Conservation projects

Glenn described recent acquisitions, which include some in the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge, on the Kwethluk River, on the Alagnak, in Lake Clark National Park, and at the mouth of the Agulukpak in Wood-Tikchik State Park. There are about ten parcels in various stages of appraisal and negotiations. Tim added that we recently closed on a 120-acre parcel on Keefer Creek using Moore, TNC and private funding. TNC and the NMWT Land Trust have gone through an elaborate process with different entities to prioritize Native allotments in the Nushagak watershed. The Land Trust will prioritize the top 20 at its May meeting which will become the target parcels outside conservation units. Tim is pursuing another parcel at the mouth of Old Man Creek. If the appraisal is

reasonable, the Land Trust will enter an agreement with the allottee to hold the property until we raise acquisition funds.

NMWT Land Trust Update

Tim noted that the Land Trust Board will meet at the end of May.

Washington, D.C. Visit

Glenn will meet with John Katz, NOAA, and other folks next week to request funds for property acquisition. The Board discussed the Aleknagik Natives LTD (ANL) acquisition. Total cost of the acquisition is \$9.75 million; \$7 million is committed to the project. Glenn explained that the remaining \$2.75 million was in the NOAA budget for 2008 up until the conference committee, where the budget was cut and the line was drawn just above the Agulowak project. NOAA thinks we can still expect to receive \$1 million. BBNC is eager for the Agulowak deal to move ahead and will do what they can to facilitate that. Glenn expressed concern that the funding is stale and some grants have had to be extended. It's hard to raise additional federal money when much is yet unspent. Glenn is pushing to close the deal at the end of May or early June. ANL still has to hold a shareholder vote. Glenn will meet with the ANL Board and others on March 22 to discuss the acquisition as well as Bryce Edgmon's proposed bill to extend the Park boundaries.

Media Outreach and Coverage

There were two good articles recently, one in "Fly Fisherman" in December, and one in "Gray's Sporting Journal" in January. Both are posted on the website.

Fund Raising Activities

In 2007, The Conservation Fund (TCF) got a five-year renewal of the Moore Foundation grant. It's expected that will be extended to 2012. BBNC contributed \$75,000 toward allotment acquisition last year. Woolrich Corporation also donated \$75,000. Shikar Safari Club International and the Dallas Safari Club have donated a total of \$170,000.

Website status / Use

The site gets steady hits. Glenn welcomes comments and suggestions.

Other Activities

There are a variety of allotment acquisitions in progress; Pebble mine is increasingly a big part of the discussion. Glenn has been invited to talk to the new roundtable the Pebble Partnership is establishing. BBNC has also been contacted. The Pebble Partnership has brought in the Aspen Institute to help with the meetings. Nanci attended one as part of a Nunamta conference this past weekend. The Pebble Partnership has committed \$5 million to the region over five years. The granting agency also handled funds for Nunamta, but has asked Nunamta to find another agency. Tiel commented that he met with Pebble Partnership and Keystone folks last week. He and Glenn noted that the Keystone folks were out of touch with local players and issues. Tim noted that the Moore Foundation indicated that TNC should look to the \$5 million sustainable salmon fund as a source of funding.

VI. Agulowak River Conservation Easement

Glenn reiterated that he is hoping to close the deal by early June. Tiel said BBNC will have the final subsurface edits within the next couple of weeks. The last hurdle is taking

the proposal to the ANL shareholders. They want to have informational meetings prior to the vote. The March 22 meeting will be for the Board to review the project, after which informational meetings and a vote can be scheduled, hopefully before fishing season.

VII. Nushagak River Watershed Planning TNC / Land Trust

Tim reported that the plan is complete. Priority allotments have been identified. There are MOUs with three Nushagak River corporations. In the next six to eight months, Tim hopes to work with Koliganek Corporation to define a conservation map for their lands. The goal would be to do this with all corporations on the river. Koliganek is a good place to start since their lands are adjacent to more important salmon habitat, and they seem very receptive to the discussion. TNC is also trying to implement the strategies outlined in the conservation plan. They have located two sites for instream flow reservations, one on the Mulchatna and one on the Stuyahok. The strategy is to establish priority application dates, with the knowledge that it will take up to five years to gather data to support the reservation.

VIII. National Fish Habitat Partnership Application / Update

Glenn explained that this concept has been discussed for ten years. It's a takeoff on the North American Wetlands Conservation Association (NAWCA). Over the last 25 years, Congress has appropriated \$3 billion through NAWCA, with additional matching private and corporation funds. The structure is implemented through joint ventures and partnerships, with projects like the Atlantic flyway. It's been very successful, Congress likes it, and it brings lots of stakeholders to the table. NAWCA recently funded an acquisition for the St. George Corporation.

Glenn was asked to be involved last spring. He met with people last summer to explore the idea and made a presentation to the NFHP Board in October. Trout Unlimited, as well as various state agencies were represented. Subsequently there was a call for partnership applications. Mat-Su has been approved as a partner. Tim and Glenn submitted a partnership application in December. The NFHP Board identified three issues with our application – the lack of a strategic plan, government agency representation on the board, and the need for a scientific technical committee.

Tim explained that our application was filed knowing it didn't quite fit NFHP's criteria but the application was submitted so that we could get clarification on some of the requirements – particularly what the NFHP Board considered a "strategic plan." Tim went to Florida to discuss the application. It was clear NFHP want us to be a part of the organization because we fit the definitions and success that they'd like to be able to point to. The NFHP Board said if we expand the SWACC Board to include state and federal agency representatives, set up a technical committee, and provide a basic strategic plan, they would review and likely approve our application.

With the NFHP there will be funds available over the next several years, for operations and project funds. Tim noted the Land Trust has volunteered to serve as staff.

IX. Expansion of the Board

Glenn recommended representatives from US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and maybe the National Park Service (NPS) be added to the

SWACC Board. All but NPS have been interested in serving on the Board. Glenn reiterated that, in order for us to be approved as a partner, we need a strategic plan, agency representation on the Board and involvement in partnership, and some dealings with the scientific underpinnings of the whole effort. We don't need a big scientific effort (like is common in other parts of the country), because there have been so many land use plans done for the area.

Glenn moved to include USFWS, The Nature Conservancy, the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the US Geological Survey (USGS), and ADFG on the SWACC Board. Tom seconded. Glenn will draft an invitation letter for Tim's signature.

Other potential Board members to consider include Jerry Liboff, Russell Nelson, Harry Kalmakoff, Jr., Bobby from Port Heiden, Alvin Boskofsky, Myron Nanning. Tim suggested the Land Trust could contact its Council of Advisors for ideas. Glenn will send out invitation letters.

Tim prepared a draft strategic plan which includes five strategies as well as project selection criteria. The appendix outlines the extensive planning efforts that have already been completed. Tim moved to approve the strategic plan. Tom seconded. Motion passed.

Glenn suggested discussion of the organization's name. He feels that the Southwest Alaska Salmon Habitat Partnership is more descriptive than SWACC and moved to use the SWASHP name in the strategic plan and other documents. Tom seconded. Motion passed.

X. Technical Committee Re-start

Glenn will take care of this, possibly by re-invigorating the dormant technical committee. The hope is to get the agencies to carry it.

XI. Communications

Recent articles were mentioned previously. Glenn said there will be celebrations and publicity when the Aleknagik Natives LTD, deal is signed.

XII. Other Business

There was none.

XIII. Next Meeting schedule

The next meeting will be subject to the call of the Chair, but may need to be in 30 to 60 days to review the Board application. Tim suggested trying to meet when the Land Trust holds their annual meeting in December. Tom noted that BBNC has a Board meeting May 29 – 30.

XIV. Adjourn

Tom moved to adjourn. Glenn seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 a.m.