

2015 Alaska Fish Passage Meeting

This past fall nearly 60 agency practitioners participated in the 2015 Alaska Fish Passage Meeting, convening leading Federal, State, and local engineers, transportation planners, hydrologists, biologists, and regulatory specialists to examine the plans, policies, and practice of fish passage management in Alaska. The Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership (SEAKFHP) hosted the 3-day meeting in Juneau, October 13-15, 2015 to examine the state of the science and practice of assessing, maintaining and restoring fish habitat connectivity through road crossings in the region. With over 5,000 inventoried culvert barriers on fish streams across local, state, and federal ownerships, maintaining current fish passage regulatory policies, design and implementation approaches, and performance monitoring schemas are critical to maintaining habitat connectivity.

As road infrastructure in Alaska improves and expands, maintaining and restoring fish passage at road/stream crossings will remain a top priority for both transportation planners and aquatic habitat managers. Inventories of fish passage barriers on Federal (USFS, FWS), State (ADOT&PF), private (ANCSA Corporation) and municipal road systems in Alaska have been largely completed over the past 15 years. Advances and refinements in fish passage assessment, prioritization, design, and construction have also occurred across the region as awareness of fish passage issues has increased. While progress has clearly been made, nearly ten years have passed since the last comprehensive review of fish passage management in Alaska.

The first two-days of the 2015 Alaska Fish Passage Meeting covered topics of fish behavior and movement, fish passage assessment and prioritization, fish passage design and fish passage authorities and policy in Alaska. The 3rd day of the meeting convened a smaller group focusing in on specific fish passage related tasks resonating interest among the group for future work group collaboration. 10 unique work group tasks were discussed are proposed as possible future actions by meeting attendees and others as part of reestablishing an Alaska Fish Passage Working Group. Links to informational resources and meeting presentations can be found on the meeting archive provided on the SEAKFHP website at: <http://www.seakfhp.org/resources/fish-passage-in-alaska-resources-and-publications/>