

**Copper River Strategy Group Meeting  
November 23-24, 2009  
Buster Gene Memorial Facility  
Gakona Alaska**

**Meeting Report**



*“The last major fisheries left in North America is in Alaska. Other areas lack the diversity that Alaska has. Any change to one single spawning ground will impact the whole. We have to protect that diversity.”*

-Youth Participant at the November 2009 Copper River Strategy Group meeting

## **History and Intention of the Copper River Strategy Group**

The Copper River Strategy Group (CRSG) is made up of stakeholders of the Copper River watershed who have an interest in the status and well-being of the Basin. The CRSG focuses on issues related to salmon and salmon habitat, water and in-stream flow reservations, and development-associated impacts within the watershed. The CRSG meeting is open to all stakeholders of the Copper River watershed and the input and ideas of all is welcome.

The CRSG meetings serve to:

- Present project status reports and findings and solicit feedback on projects taking place in the Copper River watershed;
- Identify and present local-level, large-scale and small-scale issues and information needs that necessitate new and continued research;
- Develop project and program collaborations to address issues and information needs in the Copper River watershed;
- Facilitate cross-cultural and cross-boundary communication;
- Provide a venue for all participants to learn and acquire skills;
- Facilitate partnerships to increase the application and utilization of local observations and Ahtna knowledge in scientific research; and
- Maintain all aspects of ecosystem health – social health, environmental health, and economic health.

In 2005 and 2006, Ecotrust hosted a series of workshops in Anchorage Alaska called the “Copper River Workshop Series.” (Reports from the “Copper River Workshop Series” are available online at [www.ecotrust.org/copperriver](http://www.ecotrust.org/copperriver).) These meetings were instrumental in facilitating cross-cultural and interdisciplinary communications among stakeholders of the Copper River watershed. The Copper River residents who attended those meetings expressed an interest in having similar, smaller-scaled meetings in the Copper River region. The CRSG meetings evolved from the “Copper River Salmon Workshop Series” by Ecotrust and the CRSG meetings are an answer to that request.

At the first CRSG meeting, in May 2007, attendees agreed that resource allocation issues were not to be discussed at CRSG meetings because there are other venues (such as Board of Fish and Federal Subsistence Board meetings) to discuss such matters. Furthermore, basic meeting ground rules were established. These ground rules include:

- Respect one another and differences of opinion;
- Provide ample and varied opportunities for public participation;
- Listen and learn from all meeting attendees; and
- Share and use the information gained at the meetings with others.

These guidelines were upheld at subsequent CRSG meetings, including the November 2009 meeting.

On November 23-24, 2009, Ecotrust and Cheesh’na Tribal Council co-hosted a CRSG meeting at the Buster Gene Memorial Facility in Gakona Alaska. The CRSG meeting agenda (see Appendix I) was developed by a Planning Committee and was based on issues and information needs identified at past CRSG meetings. Joeneal Hicks facilitated the meeting and Erica McCall Valentine of Ecotrust provided additional facilitation assistance. Chantelle Pence of Copper River Consulting took and prepared the meeting notes.

The CRSG meeting commenced on November 23<sup>rd</sup> with an **Invocation** by Robert Marshall (Native Village of Tazlina) and a **Welcome and Acknowledgement of Tribal Elders** by Joeneal

Hicks (Native Village of Cheesh'na). Over the course of the two-day meeting, seven **presentations** were given on topics ranging from “Engaging the Youth of the Watershed” to “Working Together to Protect the Basin.” The meeting was facilitated to allow many opportunities for **discussion and exchanges of information**.

On the evening on November 23<sup>rd</sup>, CRSG meeting attendees enjoyed a **Harvest Dinner**, an **Honoring of Tribal Elders and Special Guests**, and a **Keynote Presentation**. Elders and Special Guests honored at the dinner included: Johnny Goodlataw (Tazlina), Robert Marshall (Tazlina), Donald Johns (Copper Center/Kluti-Kaah), Virginia Gene (Gakona), Harding Ewan (Gulkana), Walter Porter (Yakutat), Dune Lankard (Cordova/Eyak), Larry Mercurieff (Anchorage), and Joeneal Hicks (Mentasta).

The Keynote Speaker Walter Porter (Tlingit) inspired the meeting participants with his words of wisdom about approaching environmental issues and each other with compassion and kindness. Walter weaved traditional stories from around the world into his presentation, with a special emphasis on Tlingit and other Alaska Native stories. Everyone in attendance enjoyed the presentation. Glenn Hart from Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve recorded the presentation and has a limited number of DVDs available for distribution.

## **Copper River Strategy Group Meeting Presentation #1 – November 23, 2009**

**Presentation Title:** Who is Ecotrust?

**Presenter:** Erica McCall Valentine, Ecotrust Copper River Program Director

**Contact Information:** (907) 733-2625, email: [evalentine@ecotrust.org](mailto:evalentine@ecotrust.org)

**Website:** [www.ecotrust.org/copperriver](http://www.ecotrust.org/copperriver)

**Summary:** Headquartered in Portland, Oregon and spanning throughout the Pacific Northwest, British Columbia, and Alaska, Ecotrust's programs focus on forestry, food and farms, ecosystem resources, knowledge systems, Native programs, and fisheries. Ecotrust has created a substantial presence in the Copper River region with its place-based program and collaborations with local and regional partners.

The Ecotrust Copper River Program was founded in 2002 and is currently directed by Erica McCall Valentine. Dr. Allison Bidlack (Science Programs Coordinator), Analisa Gunnell (Chief Cartographer/GIS Analyst), and Craig Jacobson (Vice President of Native/Indigenous Programs) round out the Ecotrust Copper River Program Team. The Ecotrust Copper River Program works with communities along the Copper River to raise awareness about conserving Copper River wild salmon, provide information through research and information sharing, and to assist local groups in watershed protection.

Ecotrust also works throughout the basin to support the efforts and projects that local people have identified and are working toward. Ecotrust has tools such as technical writers, grant writers, GIS specialists and cartographers (map makers), and tribal and water law specialists to aid other programs and organizations throughout the basin.

Ecotrust began hosting gatherings of local conservation-minded residents, as a means of getting to know the people and projects that were happening at a local level, to bring quality data to the table, and to help identify where additional information was needed and wanted. For the past five years, Ecotrust has hosted the CRSG meetings. Ecotrust is willing to keep funding the CRSG meetings (or similar informational meetings) for two more years and there is an open invitation for local organizations to plan and host the meetings.

### **Discussion Points:**

- Ecotrust does not aim to own or do all of the work.
- Ecotrust has skills and services available to local organizations.

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## **Copper River Strategy Group Meeting Presentation #2 – November 23, 2009**

**Presentation Title:** Working Together to Protect the Basin: A panel presentation from Ahtna Incorporated

**Presenters:** Linda Tyone, Nick Jackson, and Gloria Stickwan

**Contact Information:** (907) 822-3476

**Website:** [www.ahtna-inc.com](http://www.ahtna-inc.com)

**Summary:** Ahtna Incorporated has a vested interest in the environment of the Copper River region because:

- The Ahtna people are the traditional stewards of the land;

- Ahtna Incorporated is the largest private landowner in the Copper River basin, and
- Ahtna Incorporated is a for-profit corporation.

The panel discussed the role of Ahtna Incorporated in the development and conservation of the resources in the region. Two main topics of conversation during the panel presentation were: (1) the Trans-Alaska Pipeline and (2) the Gulkana Hatchery. From an economic standpoint, Ahtna Incorporated is in business with the pipeline, and is grateful for the economic benefit to the region that the pipeline provides, but from an environmental standpoint, all panel members expressed concern about the potential of an oil spill from pipeline, and all expressed doubt in the Alyeska oil spill response plan as a viable means of protection. In regards to hatcheries, the general consensus was that there may be a time and place for hatchery fish, but only under highly controlled circumstances that pose little to no impact to the wild stocks. The panel expressed desire to know more about the impacts of hatchery fish on the wild stocks of salmon in the Copper River watershed.

#### **Discussion Points:**

- Part of responding to an oil spill is prevention. The best thing we can do is restore the pipeline. If we were able to form a citizens' advisory council we could demand that funds be available for the restoration funds.
- Building on the model created by the Copper River Watershed Project and Ecotrust, new models projecting what potential oil spills would look like are needed.
- Models created by Alyeska in their Contingency Plan (C Plan) are not based on data that has been field tested. These models need to be analyzed and ground-truthed.
- The Ahtna people have the opportunity to press the envelope to make sure there is public input... Indigenous people have a voice in protecting the wild/native stocks of fish. If the wild stocks are replaced by hatchery fish...Native people lose that right.
- The management of wild stocks needs to improve before more hatchery fish are put in. The fish are being managed with a priority for commercial use. The first run should go to Mentasta, to the subsistence users.
- It would be fairly easy to get all of the Tribes (along pipeline) to agree on an oversight committee...Some expressed a desire to form a multi-stakeholder group because we are more powerful together, but within that system, we want it to be recognized that Tribal stakeholders do have different rights.

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### **Copper River Strategy Group Meeting Presentation #3a – November 23, 2009**

**Presentation Title:** Engaging the Youth of the Watershed

**Presenter:** Kate Alexander, Copper River Watershed Project

**Contact Information:** (907)424-3334, email: [kate@copperriver.org](mailto:kate@copperriver.org)

**Website:** [www.copperriver.org](http://www.copperriver.org)

**Summary:** Copper River Watershed Project and Prince William Sound Science Center partnered, with other agencies (Wrangell Institute for Science and Environment and Wrangell St. Elias National Park and Preserve) to host a ten day exploration of the Copper River watershed with a group of teenagers from the region. One week was spent on the water as the group rafted down the

Copper River. During the evening the students engaged in informal lesson plans exploring a wide array of topics including: geography, salmon data gathering methods, salmon biology, oil spill response and the pipeline, and hatchery operations. The group also learned about the differences between upriver and downriver communities in terms of geography, culture, economy, and ecology.

At the beginning of trip each youth participant wrote down what they knew about the Copper River watershed, and then continued to update their journals throughout their tour with new information and perspectives. For example, the participants developed essays about the complexities of fish management. As the tour progressed and the group expanded their knowledge base they began to form a different view than what they started with, for example, every night the group would come together to talk about what they had learned, and on the last night, one youth member said that he changed his mind about what he had written the night before pertaining to fish management, due to his exposure that day to a Tazlina youth who shared with him her experience growing up with subsistence fish wheels. Bruce James (Wrangell Institute for Science and Environment) pointed out that "...the next generation is willing to change their minds and keep learning..." Plans are underway for a summer 2010 raft trip, and input and assistance is welcome.

**Discussion Points (quotes from Youth Panel):**

- The pipeline is important to the economy, but it must be regulated... it crosses five major tributaries. I never really thought about that before, about how it affects my life, the jobs, fishing, Alaska Natives...everyone.
- When you go out on the river you start to look beyond friends and work...it made me look at what God, or whoever created, and how amazing this place is.
- I realize that this trip was much more than just a float down the river. It was larger than enjoyment. I learned so much, it made me think outside of myself. There's a whole world out there that affects you, and you affect it.
- There's nothing like the power of place. Being on the river, you experience power of place. If you take the time to go down the river you will see first hand how amazing this river is, and how to come up with creative solutions for the issues.

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**Copper River Strategy Group Meeting Presentation #3b – November 23, 2009**

**Presentation Title:** Engaging the Youth of the Watershed

**Presenter:** Glenn Hart, Education Specialist, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve

**Contact Information:** (907) 822-7238 email: glen\_hart@nps.gov

**Website:** [www.nps.gov/wrst](http://www.nps.gov/wrst)

**Summary:** The Wrangell St. Elias National Park and Preserve hosts a program called the Youth Conservation Corps, which provides students an opportunity to work for 10-12 weeks in national parks. This unique program gives students an opportunity to see and experience the park first hand. The knowledge and skills gained through this experience will enable the youth to be more aware and active in conservation within the region.

Another program that is offered is the Youth Partnership Program (YPP), where the Park Service partners with non-profits to hire students (within parameters of program) age 15-18. During the summer of 2009, a successful YPP was developed between Copper River Native Association and the park service. Bill Hand, former employee of CRNA said that the program was "a huge

success, it motivated the kids, and was a very exciting program.” The young adults were empowered to do things in their own communities, and they still contact Bill about jobs.

The Youth Intern Program (YIP) is for young people ages 15-25 who make a commitment to work directly with the agency for two years, as a college intern. The youth interns spend a week in McCarthy and Kennicott, and one out at Nabesna. The students gain first hand knowledge about lakes, trails, streams, and history of place, so that when they are interacting with park visitors, they can give accurate information. This program takes place the first two weeks in June every year, and volunteers are welcomed and appreciated.

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### **Copper River Strategy Group Meeting Presentation #3c – November 23, 2009**

**Presentation Title:** Engaging the Youth of the Watershed

**Presenter:** Clair Scribner, Gakona Village Council

**Contact Information:** (907) 822-5777, [gakonaadmin2@cvinternet.net](mailto:gakonaadmin2@cvinternet.net)

**Website:** [www.nvgakona.com](http://www.nvgakona.com)

**Summary:** The second annual Youth Environmental Summit (YES) was held in May 2009 and was a great success. Seventy students from eight different communities attended the two day event that was held in Chistochina. Over thirty partners and volunteers helped to organize the event, which included hands-on activities that helped the youth make connections to their homeland, and begin thinking of conservation issues and opportunities. The YES activities included: gardening, community beautification, diamond willow carving, and learning about salmon habitat and alternative energy.

Another way that Gakona engages the youth is through the Community Garden Project that was implemented during the summer 2009. Besides basic gardening skills, the project teaches outdoor activities, nutritional education, connections to the earth, sustainable living, and community engagement. The people really noticed a difference in the quality of food that is grown in a local garden versus the produce they buy in the store. Next year the garden plots will be divided amongst individuals and families.

**Discussion Point:**

- Just ask the kids, they want to help out, it doesn't have to be anything big. We are teachers all the time. It doesn't have to be a big, structured activity.

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### **Copper River Strategy Group Meeting Presentation #4 – November 23, 2009**

**Presentation Title:** Copper River Watershed Radio Series

**Presenter:** Erica McCall Valentine, Program Director, Ecotrust Copper River Program

**Contact Information:** (907) 733-2625, email: [evalentine@ecotrust.org](mailto:evalentine@ecotrust.org)

**Website:** [www.ecotrust.org/copperriver](http://www.ecotrust.org/copperriver)

**Summary:** Story telling is a powerful way to raise awareness and to help people make a connection to place. With the assistance of local stakeholders, Ecotrust developed a radio series entitled, “Stories of Resilience: The Past, Present and Future of the Copper River”. The thirteen

different radio segments explore issues directly related to the Copper River watershed. The stories were collected with the help of an independent radio producer who interviewed people up and down river, and then captured the essence of the story in a three to five minute radio segment.

The radio stories can now be heard on the Ecotrust Copper River website ([www.ecotrust.org/copperriver](http://www.ecotrust.org/copperriver)). The audio file titles and topics include: Ahtna Management; Laura Hancock: Interview with an upper Copper River elder; Live with Salmon; Hatcheries; Harvest Management; All-terrain Vehicles (ATVs), Chickaloon's Moose Creek Restoration Project; Genetics; Culverts; Myth Busting; and What Salmon Give. The CRSG attendees listened to two of the radio segments and provided feedback to Ecotrust on story content and unanswered questions. Additional comments are always accepted regarding the other radio segments, so if individuals want to follow up and listen to the other segments, please send comments to Ecotrust.

The goal of Ecotrust is to air the radio segments on several different radio stations throughout the watershed and the state. There is already a strong interest statewide to air the radio segments. The radio series has not yet been distributed, but the plan is to have it be available by the first of the year.

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## **Copper River Strategy Group Meeting Presentation #5 – November 23, 2009**

**Presentation Title:** Water Resource Stewardship Plan

**Presenter:** Joeneal Hicks

**Contact Information:** [jhicksHTTS@cvinternet.net](mailto:jhicksHTTS@cvinternet.net)

**Summary:** At the June 2009 CRSG meeting, there was an expressed interest in researching the process, and pros/cons of creating a Tribal Conservation District within the Upper Copper River watershed – from the headwaters areas (Mentasta) down to Chistochina. In an effort to further explore this topic, Cheesh'na Tribal Council submitted a grant application to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Tribal Wildlife Grant program. The overall goal of this project builds upon the Cheesh'na vision to further develop the Upper Copper River Water Stewardship Plan; a plan that will investigate options and methods to protect the upper Copper River watershed area. Per the request of Cheesh'na staff, Ecotrust provided in-kind services and aided in the drafting of this proposal.

If this proposal is funded, resources will then be available to fully research the feasibility of creating a Tribal Conservation District in the headwaters area. One important component of the research is to hold meetings and gather public input. Joeneal stressed that this project is not about creating a new entity, it is just an opportunity to explore the different options for working together to protect the watershed. In addition to researching tribal conservation districts, this project also allows for extensive outreach and education efforts, particularly in the areas of teaching Tribal people about water rights and in-stream flow reservations. One possibility of this project is to develop a Water Rights 101 presentation to help explain the complicated world of water rights.

### **Discussion Points:**

- Cheesh'na could lend their experience (with water rights) to other communities through education.
- If people in Bristol Bay had water rights in place, they would have had rights to protect their rivers and streams against Pebble Mine. Securing water rights is an opportunity. If we were

to make a conservation district, we could use that district to work towards a goal of securing water rights.

- Less than 1% of Alaskan water has been allocated for various uses. There are lots of opportunities for local folks to put water reservations in place to preserve flow for drinking water and fish habitat.

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## **Copper River Strategy Group Meeting Presentation #6a – November 24, 2009**

**Presentation Title:** Opportunities for partnership and funding

**Presenter:** Jessica Milligan, AmeriCorps and Chantelle Pence, Copper River Consulting

**Contact Information:** (907) 259-4568, email: jescalynwm@yahoo.com

**Website:** [www.ruralcap.com](http://www.ruralcap.com)

**Summary:** The AmeriCorps Program is an opportunity that is available through RurAL CAP out of Anchorage. Non-profit organizations and Tribes can apply to host an AmeriCorps position in their community. After a potential recruit has been identified, the host organization and the recruit apply for the position. The host organization has to state their interest and ability to oversee the AmeriCorps position (they have to have a site supervisor and office space). The potential AmeriCorps member fills out an application and then goes through a phone interview process.

If the site and applicant are a good fit, RurAL CAP will provide a living allowance of around \$1200 per month to the AmeriCorps member, so they can be of full time service to their host community. At the end of one year of service, the AmeriCorps member graduates (some go on to a second year of service) and then receives a \$4,500 education award. There are two different branches of AmeriCorps through RurAL CAP, there is the RAVEN program which focuses on environmental issues, and the BIRCH program, focusing on community health issues.

### **Discussion Points:**

- When you have the right person, this program is an amazing resource for both the host community and the AmeriCorps member.
- It is important for the host community and the site supervisor to understand that this is not a nine-to-five job. It is a one year commitment for the AmeriCorp member to be of service to their community, this can happen at all hours of day or night, seven days a week. There is a general 40 hours per week that they must meet, but focus on results not hours spent per task.
- As long as you do a good job recruiting, and have selected a self-motivated and creative person, it doesn't take too much to be a site supervisor. Just don't try to micromanage or have them stuck in an office.
- The official recruitment deadline has passed, but there is a possibility that RurAL CAP will still accept strong applications. Charlie Ess is the person (at RurAL CAP) to contact. Information can be found on the RurAL CAP website.

## **Copper River Strategy Group Meeting Presentation #6b – November 24, 2009**

**Presentation Title:** Opportunities for Partnership and Funding: A video presentation of the “Partners for Fisheries Monitoring” program.

**For more information contact:** Palma Ingles, Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program Coordinator, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1011 East Tudor Road, Mail Stop 121, Anchorage Alaska 99503, [palma\\_ingles@fws.gov](mailto:palma_ingles@fws.gov), (907) 786-3870.

**Website:** <http://alaska.fws.gov/asm/fis.cfm>

**Summary:** The Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program was established to help provide information needed for management of subsistence fisheries on Federal public lands in Alaska. The Program funds projects that address research priorities identified by management agencies and local users from around the state.

Funding has been awarded to Alaska Native organizations, rural organizations, universities, Federal and State agencies, and private contractors. Projects include studies of the status of fish stocks, subsistence harvest and use patterns, and collection and analysis of traditional knowledge. The program also works to integrate Alaska Native and rural organizations into the management of subsistence fisheries resources through the Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program.

### **Discussion Points:**

- Since 2002, the Native Village of Eyak has hosted a Partner for Fisheries Monitoring Program position. From 2002 to 2007, Erica McCall Valentine was employed as the Southcentral Region Social Scientist. Since 2008, Keith van den Broek has been employed as the Southcentral Region Fisheries Biologist. Keith is actively recruiting interns and fisheries technician positions for the 2010 summer field season. Applicants have to be over the age of 18. Contact Keith van den Broek ([keith@nveyak.org](mailto:keith@nveyak.org)) or Autumn Bryson ([autumn@nveyak.org](mailto:autumn@nveyak.org)) at the Native Village of Eyak for more information.
- Copper River Watershed Project wants to create partnerships that support culvert restoration projects. (Contact Kate Alexander 424-3334).
- EPA Brownsfield Program- grants are due January 30, 2010 for sites that have already been identified, and are not Superfund sites (Information from Bill Hand).
- NRCS has funding opportunities available for tribal conservation projects. (Information from Doug Vollman)
- Through the U.S. Geological Survey, the Copper River Watershed Project and Ecotrust have money to install water gauges to monitor flow in the Tonsina and Klutina Rivers, respectively. (Contact Kristin Smith at the Copper River Watershed Project regarding the Tonsina River gauge and Allison Bidlack regarding the Klutina River gauge.)
- Copper Valley Development Association is pooling energy and resources for another junk car removal. Contact Arlene Rosenkrans 822-5111.
- The idea of hosting a training on government-to-government relationships was mentioned. For information on the training once held by the National Park Service, contact Barbara Cellerius at the Wrangell St. Elias National Park.

## **Roundtable Session/Group Discussions**

The original CRSG agenda was developed to end with a two-hour roundtable session which was intended to identify three key issues and information needs and then, in break-out groups, develop an outline for a two-page white paper describing each major issue. The group developed a list of topics that individuals/groups want more information on and/or would like to see taken up by an organization, or group of organizations. The list of topics can be found in Appendix II of this meeting report.

As the group was transitioning into break-out sessions, the discussion turned toward the function and future of the Copper River Strategy Group meetings. Furthermore, there was discussion on the role of Ecotrust in the Copper River watershed. Joeneal Hicks asked the group to respond to questions about the function of Copper River Strategy Group meetings, and Erica McCall Valentine reiterated the history and mission of Ecotrust.

### **Discussion Points:**

- Ecotrust is willing to put money on the table to figure out what to do. From what I gather they are willing to put forth about 2 more years of funding and then we keep this going. This process has allowed all of us to get together to figure out how to duplicate successes rather than duplicate mistakes.
- To me, fish is life, and on the Copper River that is true. I'm willing to work with anyone who wants to help keep those salmon. I had no idea about how bad the situation was until I went to the Ecotrust meeting in Anchorage. I wanted to make sure I made it here...We need a tribal water keeper.
- What was said about the benefit of this process, I think those things are great. When I start to become uncomfortable is when the discussion turns to decision making. There's other bodies in the basin ...The info sharing is great, the decision making makes me uncomfortable.
- Ecotrust came to Ahtna to see how they could help our people. The most important thing we can do is to open that door to start communicating with each other. When we get to know each other, it makes it easier to communicate and get work done. I'm glad they are here to help.
- The Copper River is one of the last remaining intact watersheds. There is great opportunity for the people to prevent the destruction of this river, as it has happened elsewhere. Ecotrust as an organization can work with local folks and local organizations to think about what are the issues are and then collaborate with local organizations and tribal councils to work towards a resolution.
- It needs to be a locally driven process, with local recognition and respect.

## **The Future of the Copper River Strategy Group Meetings: Moving Forward Collectively**

For those who have been actively participating in the CRSG meetings, there is a general consensus that the gathering provides an important function for networking and information exchange. Most of the people in attendance expressed an interest in seeing the CRSG meetings continue, though there was a discussion about changing the name. Ecotrust is offering to fund the meetings, or similar gatherings, for the next two years, and will do outreach to tribal councils and other local organizations who may want to host the meetings.

**Discussion Points:**

- Public outreach and education is a need.
- Let Tribal governments take lead.
- IGAP Coordinators can take lead on identify agenda items for next meeting, and work with councils on their own.
- Potential new agenda items: hydropower, land conveyance.
- Call it a list of topics, not an agenda. Timeline for gathering list of topics, by end of January.
- Suggestion of creating a Google group to keep everyone in the loop.
- Maybe a good step would be to have someone who knows this subject (water rights) well, answer questions. Perhaps Ecotrust is a good organization to go around and stage meetings, explain what water reservations are about through a variety of different venues so people can become aware of issues.
- May want to revise the name of this group.
- We can only focus on so much, so let's all do what we're the best at. As IGAP programs we are working together to focus our efforts toward regional planning.
- CRNA is applying for an IGAP grant and could be potential host.
- The meeting could rotate between different hosts.
- Perhaps the meeting could be combined with the energy summit in June.

# **Attachment I: Agenda for the November 23-24, 2009 Copper River Strategy Group Meeting**

## **Copper River Strategy Group**

Hosted by Cheesh'na Tribal Council and Ecotrust, Copper River Program

Buster Gene Memorial Facility  
Gakona Alaska

**November 23 – 24, 2009**

The Copper River Strategy Group (CRSG) is made up of stakeholders of the Copper River watershed who have an interest in the status and well-being of the Basin. The CRSG focuses on issues related to salmon, water & in-stream flow reservations, and development-related impacts within the watershed. CRSG meetings are open to the public.

### **November 23, 2009**

**8:30 am – 9:00 am**

**Casual Continental Breakfast**

**9:00 am – 9:45 am**

**Welcome & Invocation**

- Invocation
- Why should we work together? – Joe Hicks, Cheesh'na Tribal Council
- Ecotrust's role in working together – Erica McCall Valentine, Ecotrust Copper River Programs

**9:45 am – 11:30 am**

**Introductions** – Roundtable introductions & descriptions of our connections to the Copper River region, and briefing on projects & outreach

**11:30 am – 12:30 pm**

**Lunch**

- A walking tour of Gakona Village will be start at 12:10pm, led by Clair Scribner.

**12:30 pm – 1:45 pm**

**Working Together to Protect the Basin**

- A panel presentation by Ahtna, Incorporated

**1:45 pm – 2:00 pm**

**Break**

**2:00 pm – 3:30 pm**

**Engaging the Youth of the Watershed**

- Glenn Hart – National Park Service
- Clair Scribner – Native Village of Gakona
- Kate Alexander – Copper River Watershed Project & Prince William Sound Science Center

**3:30 pm – 3:45 pm**

**Break**

- 3:45 pm – 4:00 pm**                      **Copper River Watershed Radio Series**
- An interactive presentation of 2-3 of the radio segments produced to start to tell the story of the Copper River Watershed
- 4:00 pm – 4:45 pm**                      **Water Resources Stewardship Plan**
- Joeneal Hicks, Cheesh’na Tribal Council; Erica McCall Valentine and Allison Bidlack, Ecotrust
- 5:00 pm**                                      **Harvest Dinner & Keynote Presentation**
- Walter Porter, Tlingit Elder & Storyteller
- November 24, 2009**
- 8:30 am – 9:00 am**                      **Casual Continental Breakfast**
- 9:00 am – 9:15 am**                      **Opening Remarks**
- Joeneal Hicks, Cheesh’na Tribal Council
- 9:15 am – 10:00 am**                      **Opportunities for Partnership Funding**
- AmeriCorp – Jessica Milligan, AmeriCorps and Chantelle Pence, Copper River Consulting
  - Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program – A video presentation from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- 10:00 am – 11:30 am**                      **Roundtable**  
Identify issues and information needs, identify top three
- 11:30 am – 12:30 pm**                      **Lunch**
- 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm**                      **Strategy Groups**  
Participants will break into groups to discuss topics
- 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm**                      **Report Back**
- 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm**                      **Closing Comments**

## Attachment II: November 2009 Copper River Strategy Group Participants and Contact Information

Name	Organization	Phone number	Email address
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### **Appendix III: Roundtable Discussions: List of topics, issues and information needs as identified by CRSG meeting participants**

- How to educate legislators on our needs
- State presentation on water
- Gulkana as a wild and scenic river
- Migratory birds
- Copper River Basin area plan
- Sustainable communities
- Subsistence rights
- Wild salmon and hatchery interactions
- TAPS contingency plan
- Use and application of local and traditional ecological knowledge
- Language, culture, and spirituality
- Climate change and implications of change
- Hydroelectric power projects (Tonsina/Chitina)
- Land conveyance
- Fish Creek/Mentasta Lake restoration
- Conservation easements
- Conservation districts
- Recreational traffic on Copper River
- Human population increase and impacts on watershed
- Tribal Water Keeper programs
- Solid waste management/recycling
- Youth involvement
- Engaging and empowering communities
- Youth career opportunities
- Protection of traditional homelands
- Skill sharing
- Salmon ecology and habitat
- Educate Tribes on water rights issues
- Mining activity/potential activity
- What will the region look like in 50 years?