

# Overview of Assessments and Impacts to Riparian Habitats in the Mat-Su Basin



*Mat-Su Salmon Science & Conservation Symposium, November 14, 2013*



*Libby Benolkin, Fish & Wildlife Biologist  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Anchorage Field Office*

# GLT Mat-Su Salmon Habitat Prioritization

## MAT-SU SALMON HABITAT PRIORITIZATION

Parcels highlighted in red signify high value salmon spawning, juvenile rearing, and overwintering habitat in 24 priority waterbodies in the MSB

Selected Parcels

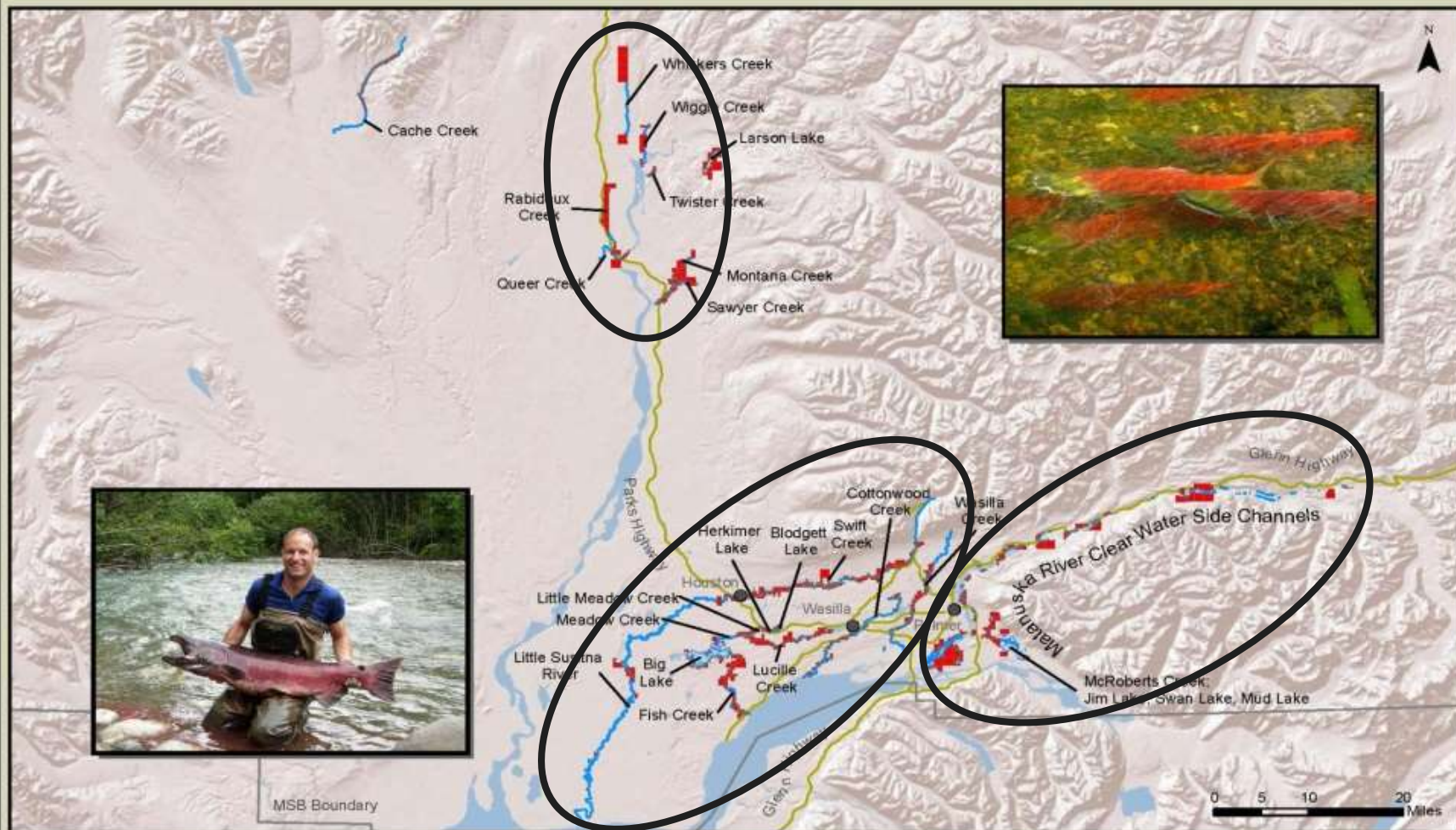
Mat-Su Borough Boundary

Selected Rivers and Streams

Selected Lakes

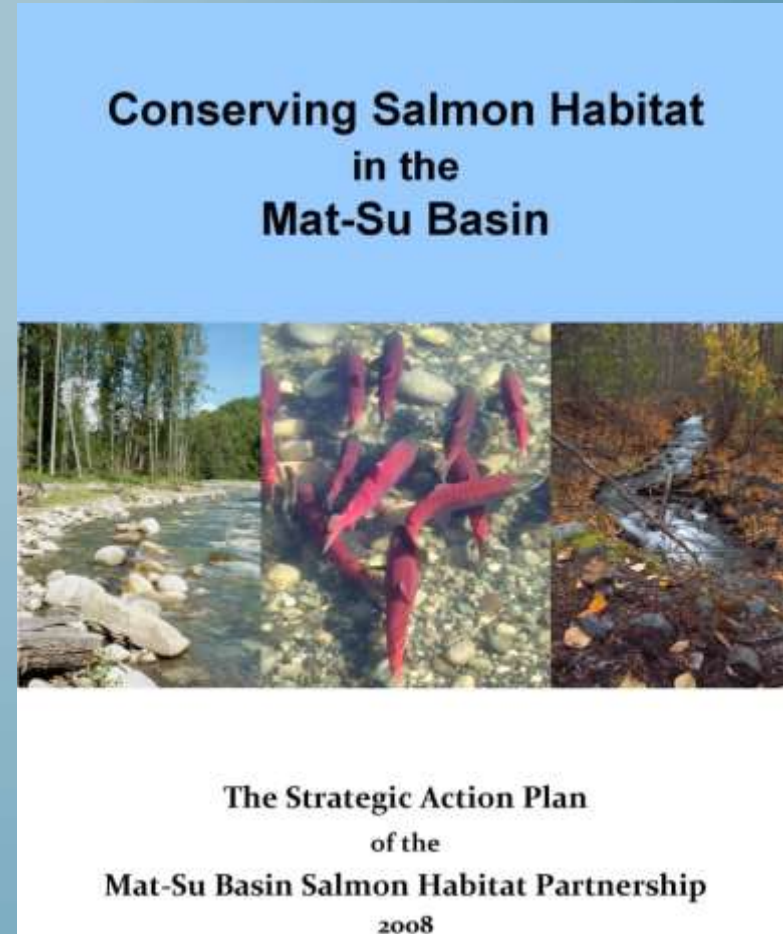
Major Roads

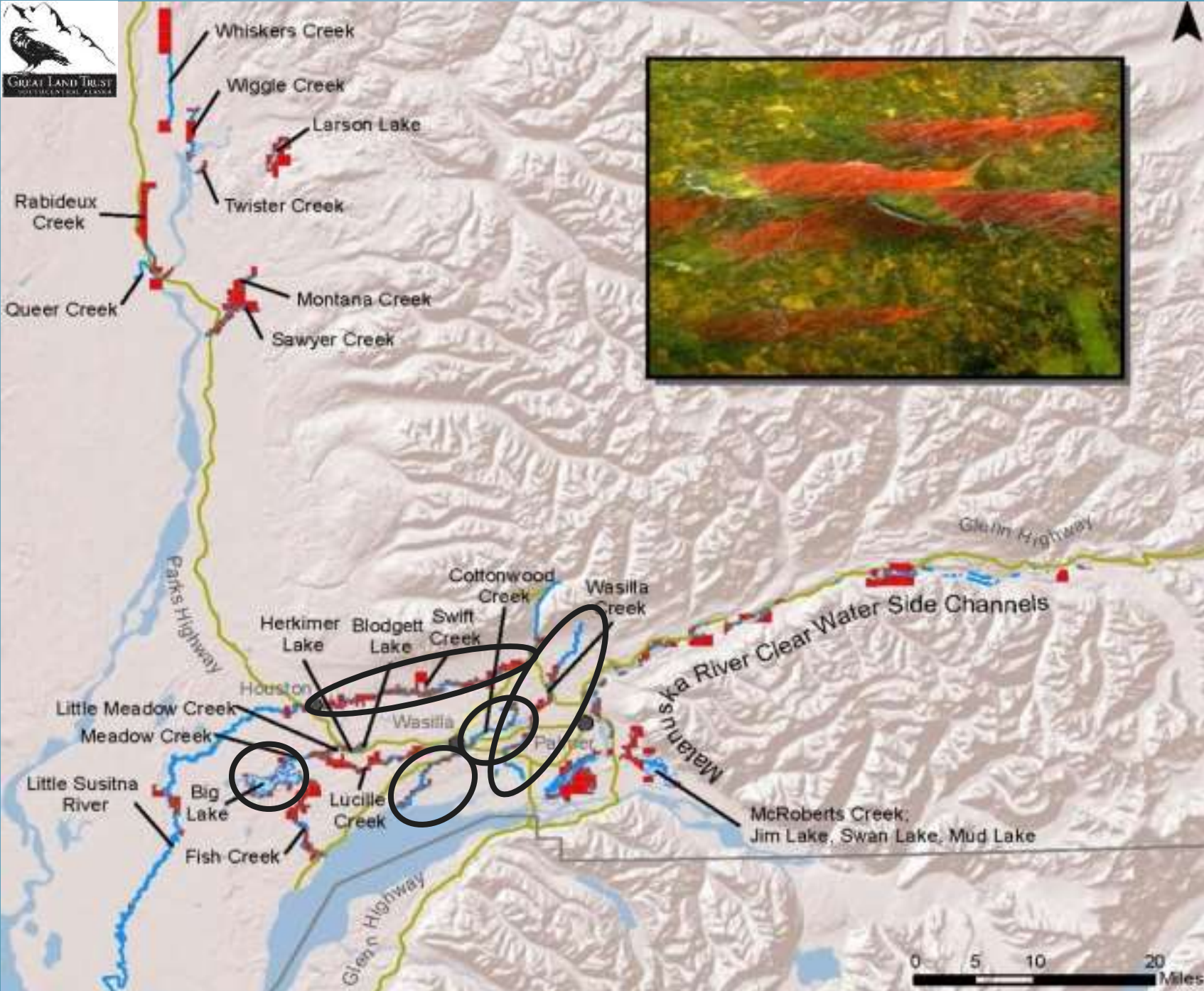
Cities



# Strategic Plan Objectives for Salmon Riparian Areas

- 1) IDENTIFY - 50% of salmon riparian areas by 2015
- 2) PROTECT- 10% of salmon riparian areas by 2015
- 3) RESTORE- 5% of salmon riparian areas by 2015





# Where are we?

## Wasilla Creek Mapping & Assessments – 2011

15.5 miles mapped & surveyed to:

- *Verify Stream Location*
- *Collect geomorphic & riparian habitat data*
- *Identify potential restoration opportunities*



# Where are we?

## Wasilla Creek Mapping & Assessments – 2011

47% of reaches had some type of human modification



# Wasilla Creek Landowner Outreach & Restoration

2013-2015

23 potential restoration opportunities identified & prioritized



# Cottonwood Creek Mapping & Assessments

2012-2013





# Cottonwood Creek Mapping & Assessments

2012-2013



Reed Canary Grass

Photo: Palmer Soil & Water Conservation District

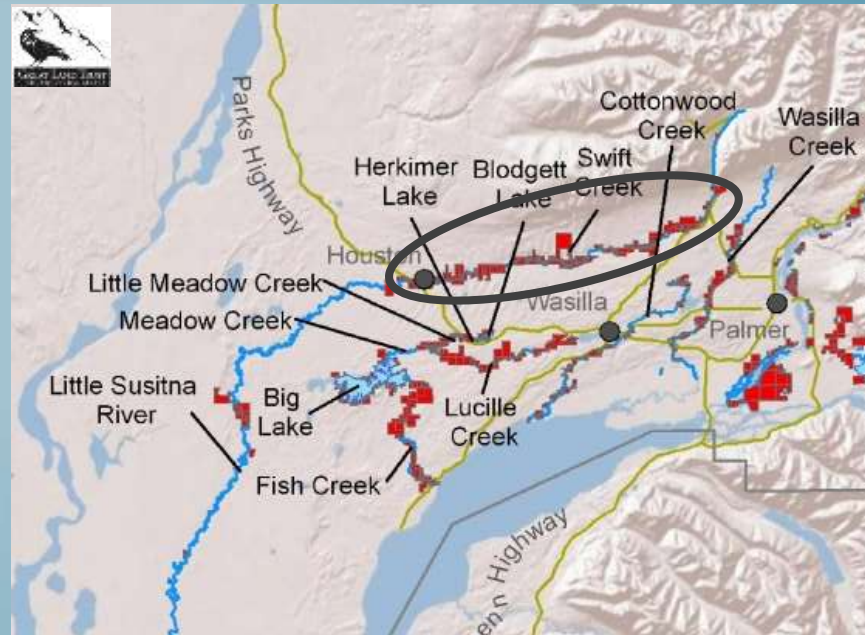
# Big Lake Mapping & Assessments

2013



# Little Susitna River Riparian Assessments

2013

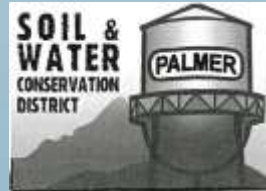
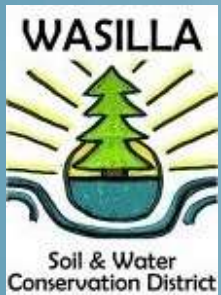


## Ongoing / Future Projects

- *Landowner Outreach & Restoration*  
*Wasilla Creek, Cottonwood Creek, Big Lake- 2015*
- *GIS database*  
*Compile existing riparian impact data -2014*
- *GIS Mapping & Salmon Habitat Evaluation*  
*Remaining 24 priority water bodies -2018.*

# Acknowledgements

## Partners:



## Field Surveys, Mapping, Outreach:

Joseph Phillips, Cameron Christiansen, Chuck Kaucic, Louisa Branchflower, Gooseberry Peter, Sierra Doherty, Catherine Inman, Bill Rice, Jeff Heys, Kristin Allgood