

## **AGENCY BREAK-OUT SESSIONS – NPS NOTES**

### **Discussion Outline**

#### **AGENCY BREAK OUT SESSION - TWO HOURS**

We suggest that your group consider the following topics for discussion, set priorities for the most important issues to discuss, allocate an amount of time for discussion of each item, and designate a facilitator. In previous training courses, we have discovered that unless discussion times are actively monitored, overly long discussions at the beginning of the session can preclude discussion of important items later in the agenda.

*Important: Please have one person in the group take careful notes of the discussion, so that these notes/conclusions can be transmitted to all participants in the session.*

#### **Agency National Perspective**

What is happening in the national arena for the agency regarding water and water rights issues (e.g., funding, national priorities, etc.)?

NPS – Water Rights Branch has knowledge of NPS water rights issues nationwide; the Branch sets priorities for work and funding.

#### **Water Rights Status for the Agency**

- Very little work has been done to quantify, adjudicate and protect reserved rights, working on Chulitna River in Lake Clark and Indian River at Sitka NHS
- Working on Sitka, Lake Clark and WRST
- NPS has very few water rights through the state system; we have some at Wrangell St. Elias and a few other NPS units
- Many NPS units have not filed for state rights for consumptive uses
- Water Rights Branch has a system for tracking water rights, but it is not updated often

#### **Delegation and Accomplishment of Water Rights Work**

- Paul Burger (AKRO) reviews notices
- Paul Burger would draft protests
- No one has been responsible for filing for water rights
- Water Rights Branch maintains files in Ft. Collins
- Water Rights Branch (and AKRO) do the best they can to earmark funds and people to get work accomplished
- Paul Burger coordinates water rights issues in AK; most NPS personnel know this

## **Prioritization of Water Rights Work**

- Establishing water rights for constructed projects will start the prioritization process
- We are working in instream flow reservations in two areas now
- Wrangell St. Elias has the most pressing needs
- Unaware of other major threats or opportunities

NPS, WRB and AKRO work together to develop water rights strategy for AK parks

## **Water Rights Guidance and Training**

- Unknown if we have sufficient guidance since we are just starting; coordination and information exchange between federal agencies will be important
- Unknown if more field training is needed until we get further along; hopefully we know what we are doing!