

March 2014 Office Of Science Applications Update

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Updates and information about the Alaska Region office of Science Applications and LCCs.

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February Image Challenge Results

Congratulations to Shannon Torrence, who was the first to correctly identify the four-spotted skimmer dragonfly. Despite rumors that the mosquito is Alaska's state insect, the *Libellula quadrimaculata* holds that honor.

Thank you John Hudson and Jimmy Fox for the contest idea and image.

If you have a good idea for an icon contest, send it my way:

brett_parks@fws.gov

Landscape Conservation Cooperatives

Highlights from the LCC Network

The LCC Network consists of 22 LCCs and over 300 public and private partners throughout the US, and parts of Canada and Mexico. Well over 400 projects are under way or have been completed.

The Network's bi-monthly newsletter helps to bring together the conservation work of all LCC Network partners at the regional, national and international level. [Click here to subscribe.](#)

Western Alaska LCC: *Partnerships to Solve Alaska's Hydrological Data Conundrum*

Alaskan hydrographic data has challenged agencies and organizations for many years. The National Hydrography Dataset (NHD) is the fundamental data layer for science, management, legal, and virtually anything associated with locations of water features. In the lower 48, the NHD has a resolution of 1:24,000, but in Alaska hydrographic data is about 1/3 of that. Most of Alaska's hydrological data does not reflect changes that have taken place since the 1950s. Some inaccuracies in the data are so severe that streams or rivers appear to be a ¼ mile or more off from their current, true positions; in some cases leading to the digital appearance of the stream running upslope!

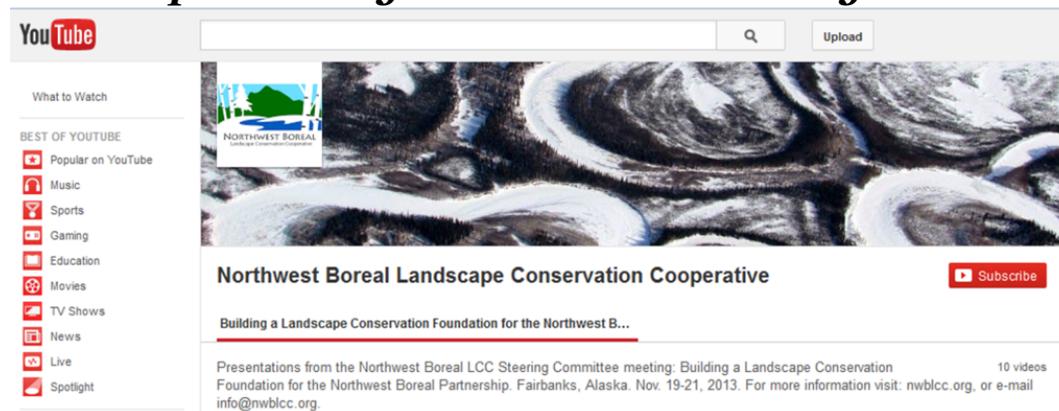
Reviewing, correcting and updating the NHD over Alaska's 365 million acres is a huge problem. Creating the state-wide, high-resolution imagery needed to improve the dataset has been seen as too big and too expensive for any single agency or organizations to take on. Agencies and organizations within Alaska have been correcting data layers in local copies as they initiate projects throughout the state. But the editing and uploading process to make these corrections available to all agencies and organizations is complicated.

WALCC led a multi-partner effort to secure [LCC Network](#) funding to work on resolving Alaska's NHD issues; partners included all [five LCCs in Alaska](#),

[Alaska's Fish Habitat Partnerships](#), [USGS' Alaska Climate Science Center](#) (ACSC) and [Alaska Science Center](#), and the University of Alaska, among others. This Alaska Hydrography (AK Hydro) project aims to bring Alaska's NHD up to Lower 48 standards by 2020. The project extends a collaborate approach developed by the award-winning [Southeast Alaska Hydrography project](#). The system provides a collaborative, streamlined means of getting partner's updates into the NHD. The system also provides an intermediary system that is easier for end users than the NHD. So far feedback and participation across the state has been hugely positive.

For more information on AK Hydro or details on upcoming training opportunities, contact [Joel Reynolds](#), WALCC Science Coordinator.

Northwest Boreal LCC Presentations: *Landscape Planning Conservation and Design*



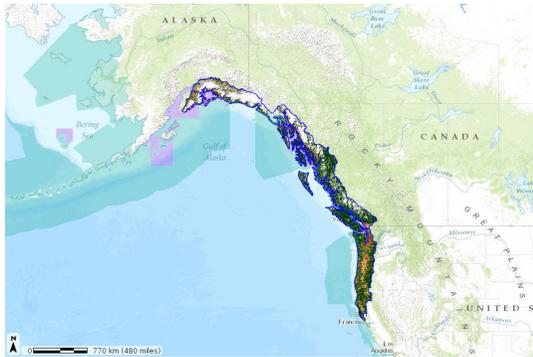
Several experts's presentations from NWB LCC's Building a Landscape Conservation Foundation for the Northwest Boreal Partnership workshop are now available.

To view, please visit the [NWB LCC's YouTube Channel](#). Each presentation has a brief description and can be viewed separately.

North Pacific LCC: *Conservation Planning Atlas*

The North Pacific LCC will soon be launching its brand new Conservation Planning Atlas (CPA). The CPA will function as a resource for multiple agencies and organizations working in landscape scale conservation within the NPLCC range. The CPA will allow users to find data and NPLCC funded projects, data layers for varying topics, mapping tools to visualize and overlay layers, and the ability to browse and search over 600 data layers. The CPA will also have a social aspect allowing users to create profiles and groups

CPA will also have a social aspect allowing users to create profiles and groups to collaborate and data share with other users and project layers.



Though not yet available to the public, The NPLCC will host two test-runs of the CPA on April 9 & 10. If you are interested in being a part of the initial test run, and providing feedback for this new tool please contact [Mary Mahaffy](#).

Arctic LCC: Will Birds Have Bugs When They Need Them?

Aquatic ecologists are working with the Arctic LCC to understand how a warming arctic climate may impact prey resources crucial to tundra-nesting birds. Myriad shallow ponds dot the tundra of Alaska's Arctic Coastal Plain; these fish-free aquatic habitats host an abundance of invertebrates - mostly larvae of non-biting flies called chironomid midges. The early-summer pulse of adult midges emerging from tundra ponds is a key food resource for avian consumers, including breeding adults and newly-hatched young of shorebirds and eiders. In the 1970s, Dr. Malcolm Butler documented the seasonal timing of insect emergence in tundra ponds at Barrow, Alaska. Since 2009, with support from the Arctic LCC and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Butler's team from North Dakota State University has assessed physical and biological changes in Barrow tundra ponds at both ends of a four-decade timespan. They've documented earlier spring thaw dates, warmer pond temperatures, and a longer invertebrate growing season. While the composition of the pond fauna has changed little, the overall timing of midge emergence has advanced by nearly a week. Newly planned work by a collaborative team of physical scientists, aquatic ecologists, and avian biologists will target the impacts of a potential future mismatch between the needs of breeding birds and their insect prey as the arctic tundra continues to warm.



Aleutian & Bering Sea Islands LCC: *Aleutians & Bering Climate Vulnerability Assessment*

The [ABS I LCC](#) launched the Aleutians and Bering Climate Vulnerability Assessment ([ABCVA](#)) earlier this this year to identify threats from climate change to species and resources in the ABSI region. Working with our partners at the [Alaska Ocean Observing System](#) and the [Alaska Climate Science Center](#) we have established 5 teams comprised of 30 top researchers and managers working in the region. These teams are: seabirds; marine mammals; fisheries/commercial fishing; terrestrial vegetation and socioeconomic and cultural resources. Over the next few months teams will work together to describe vulnerabilities for species and resources in part based on recently release climate downscaling [projections from the University of Washington](#) as well as [tools from the University of Fairbanks](#). We will use the results of this work to engage communities and stakeholders in the region this spring and summer to gather their perspectives on this issue—and ultimately use those combined products (science & stakeholder perspective) to outline further investments in climate information for the ABSI LCC.

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Brett Parks created list in order to archive and send.*

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