

Wrangell Institute for Science and Environment Annual Report January 1 - December 31, 2005

Presidents Report

Looking through the Annual Work Plan for 2005 I'd say we did a pretty good job of meeting many of our goals. We continued present programs and initiated and carried through new ones; we started a web site; participated in summer camps with National Park Service and Copper River Native Association; presented river etiquette programs (Leave No Trace) for the Gulkana River; Explored opportunities with Princess Lodge; expanded the lecture series to six lectures; submitted successful grants; had a successful membership drive; had a fund raiser; and published a newsletter. Other goals that didn't get covered will be incorporated into the 2006 Annual Work Plan.

This year WISE has grown and implemented some new programs, acquired substantial grants for programs and welcomed many members that have given generous support for our day to day operations and programs. WISE board members attended training sessions and networked with people that are willing to mentor us and others that are willing to support our organization and/or lead us to others who would have an interest in WISE. I would like to thank all the board members for giving of their time, expertise, participation, and leading WISE to contacts that help grow the organization. WISE is becoming known State wide as we hear in conversations at meetings, conferences, and training sessions. WISE lost a board member this year. Devi Sharp retired and left the area to take up sailing and adventures with her husband. She is greatly missed and WISE is searching for someone to take her place. Glenn Hart took the initiative and created a WISE web site: www.wiseorganization.org. Thank you, Glenn for getting this started. One of the goals for 2006 is to continue to work on the construction of this web site.

Programs

Salmon Project

WISE received a grant from the National Park Foundation (NPF) for \$10,000 for the Kenny Lake 2nd and 3rd grade program: "From the River and Classroom to the Sea and Back – Documenting the Life Cycle of the Salmon". Students traveled by ferry to Seward where they visited the Sea Life Center and studied aboard the Kenai Fjords Tours Marine Classroom Vessel. Students raised salmon eggs in their classroom and released the fry into a lake after the trip to Seward in May. A documentary DVD will be available to teachers, the public, and at the Park Service visitor center. Video and camera equipment was also purchased with the grant. The DVD is being produced during the winter of 2005-2006 and the final project report will be submitted by July 2006.

Outdoor Skills with Copper River Native Association (CRNA) Teens

WISE partnered with CRNA and the National Park Service to teach winter survival skills to CRNA teens. The activity took place at Pippin Lake, Mile 83 of the Richardson Hwy. Teens were taught how to make fishing poles out of sticks, strings and hooks. Holes were drilled in the ice and they learned how to ice fish. They also discovered tiny shrimp in the lake and used those for bait, abandoning the commercial bate. Snow shelters were built on the ice and they learned that it takes a lot of energy and time to build one. They

also learned what a caribou track looks like and how the hooves help them travel through the snow.

Earth Discovery Day

This was the third successful year for this program held at National Park Service grounds, mile 106 Richardson Hwy. This year the program was expanded to include 4th grade students and the structure was changed to accommodate all three grade levels (4th, 5th, 6th). There were three circles of four stations for each grade level. This also makes it easier to keep these stations the same from year to year, as no child would repeat any station. We were able to have three presenters from the Bird Treatment and Learning Center with three different birds for each grade. This new system worked well. There were 124 students. WISE received \$500 each from Alaska Conservation Foundation and Wells Fargo Bank for this program; \$650 of tools for teaching from Leave No Trace, Inc.; along with much in-kind support.

Leave No Trace

The Leave No Trace program was initiated this year and went over very well. Janelle Eklund and Paul Boos presented the program to a church group, led by Daniel Solie, that floated the Gulkana River. Arlene Rosenkrans and Glenn Hart presented it to the CRNA teens during a salmon camp program along the Copper River. There was a Leave No Trace station at Earth Discovery Day and it was presented to the public at Kennicott through the support of Wrangell Mountains Center.

Nabesna Day Camp

WISE board members, Carla Schierholt, Wendy Langseth, Paul Boos, Glenn Hart, and Janelle Eklund participated in the Wrangell St. Elias National Park and Preserve Nabesna Day Camp for youth 1st grade through junior high. Stations were set up at Twin Lakes campground, on the Nabesna Road, and students learned about squirrels, voles, and other small animals. Each group presented their findings to the Elders through skits and readings.

Changing Seasons

This was the third successful year for this program. This program was held at Slana School, Glennallen School and Kenny Lake School. Other schools attended at the various locations. There were four stations that students rotated to. This was the first year we had rain, which happened only on the first day at Slana in the morning. We only had two shelters that were borrowed from the Park Service. The other two stations set up in the gym of the school. After lunch the sun came out and all four stations were set up outdoors. The weather cooperated at the other two schools. The last day of the program WISE received a \$4,000 check in the mail from Alaska Community Foundation for this program, which will be used for 2006. We will be able to buy shelters and other supplies, along with hiring a contractor to oversee the program. This will be a great help.

Kenny Lake Trails Project

WISE board members met with Arlene Rosenkrans of Resource Conservation and Development and Kenny Lake school teachers to implement an interpretive trail project

for the schools new educational trail. These board members met later with Arlene Rosenkrans to plan an interpretive presentation for the different grade levels. Paul Boos will introduce the power point, which was used for the Glennallen Trails Project, to 4th grade through high school students. Janelle Eklund and Glenn Hart developed a puppet show for the K-3 grade classes. These presentations will be given to the students in January 2006. Puppets are being purchased for this project and to be used for future learning tools.

Lecture Series

Late winter, spring, and fall WISE, in partnership with Wrangell St. Elias National Park and Preserve, Prince William Sound Community College, and High Active Auroral Research Project Science Outreach program, had many good lectures with speakers coming from Fairbanks, Anchorage, Palmer, Juneau. Topics included Invasive Plants, Morel Mushrooms, birds, tsunamis, climate change, and 7.9 Denali Fault Earthquake.

Earth Day

Paul Boos put together a great WISE display with pictures and captions. Janelle Eklund set up a "booth" out of the back of her vehicle at the Earth Day Fair in front of Parks Place in Glennallen on April 22. Brochures, newsletters, donation envelopes, business cards, and a sign up sheet were also displayed. Janelle talked with many people and made some contacts for WISE membership and interest in programs. One person is a river guide and was interested in the Leave No Trace program.

Training

WISE is a member of the Foraker Group, a group that helps strengthen non-profits in Alaska. They offer great training sessions at reasonable prices. In May Janelle Eklund attended the Ethical Leadership for Non-profits class in Anchorage. This training went over the different types of leadership, important documents, and sexual harassment. The important documents section helped clear up some things with the bylaws and also stressed the importance of having written policies and procedures in place.

In August Janelle Eklund and Glenn Hart attended the Funders Forum in Anchorage. The forum mostly talked about capital grants and how to approach funders. During the networking session Janelle was introduced to Willie Karidis, executive director of Denali Foundation. Willy is willing to mentor WISE on fee based programs and becoming self-sustaining. This was worthwhile in itself. WISE had a teleconference with Willy in September and will be meeting with him in January 2006.

On December 5, Paul Boos and Janelle Eklund attended Foraker training in Valdez on Budgeting for the Future and Understanding Financial Statements. This training was excellent and made things clearer as to budget/financial committee, structure, and presentation.

A full report was written for each one of these training sessions.

Fund Raiser

WISE had a food booth at the Kenny Lake Fair on August 13. Volunteers that helped in the kitchen and organized the fund raiser were Carla Schierholt, Bev Oatman, Dee Dee Wilson, Michele Wygant, Chris Miller Hill, Patty Pierce, Barb Tipton, Paul Boos, and Janelle Eklund. We cleared \$685. The WISE display unit, brochures, donation envelopes and newsletters were also on display. Five people signed up for more information.

A Special Thank You to the following Sponsors, Partners, Members, and Volunteers for their time, resources, donations, and use of facilities:

Grants: Alaska Community Foundation - \$4,000; Alaska Conservation Foundation - \$500; Leave No Trace Tools for Teaching - \$650; National Parks Foundation - \$10,000; Wells Fargo Bank - \$500.

Partners, Members and Volunteers: Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game, Alaska State Troopers, Dr. Carl Benson, Bob & Nancy Boos, Bureau of Land Management Glennallen Field Office, Barbara Cellarius, Gale & Jack Chapman, Cooperative Extension Service, Copper River School District and 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th Grade Teachers, Gateway School District and 2nd and 3rd grade Teacher, Cliff Eames, Cecil & Dolores Eklund, Janelle Eklund and Paul Boos, Chris Miller Hill, Kenny Lake Soil and Water Conservation District – Doug Vollman, Lil & Terry Gilmore, Kristen Guinn, Kay Hackney & Fred Decicco, Glenn & Suanne Hart, Wendy & Ronal Langseth, Mike Loso, Louise & Gordon Marshall, Suzanne McCarthy, Bonnie McLeod, Ramone McCoy, National Parks Conservation Association, Charles Nuipok, Bev Oatman, Karen Ottenbreit, Smitty Parratt, Patty Pierce, Prince William Sound Community College, Project Learning Tree – Emily Binnian, Resource Conservation & Development-Arlene Rosenkrans, Barbara Rudio, DeAnne Sabol, Carla Schierholt, Kristy Sholly, Ben Siefert, Devi Sharp, Cynthia Sherman, Dr. Daniel Solie, Jim Stratton, Mike Swisher, Marci Thurston & Ben Shaine, Barb & Will Tipton, Dave & Gay Wellman, Fred Williams, Sandy Williams, Dee Dee Wilson, Michele Wygant, SAPA Christian Center, University of Alaska HAARP Education Outreach, Wrangell St. Elias Employees Association, Wrangell St. Elias National Park and Preserve

And thank you to all the numerous chaperones – parents and volunteers - that helped during Earth Discovery Day and the Changing Seasons Program.

Financial Statement

See attached WISE Profit and Loss with previous year comparison

For day to day operations in-kind hours from board members and some volunteers was \$30,120. In-kind gas mileage from board members was \$2,020. In-kind services from all other agencies, organizations, and volunteers were about \$40,000.