

# BRINGING BACK THE EKLUTNA RIVER

The Eklutna River once flowed freely from glaciers above Eklutna Lake to Cook Inlet and supported healthy salmon runs. Today, nearly all the water from Eklutna Lake is diverted and very little water flows downstream where salmon once thrived. A community-driven effort is underway to change that and bring salmon back to the river while maintaining flow for Southcentral residents' drinking water and electricity.

## WHERE DID THE WATER GO?

### 8.5 MILES OF RIVER WITH NO WATER

All of the Eklutna's water is currently diverted for electricity generation and drinking water. No water is released from Eklutna Lake into the downstream Eklutna River. However, thanks to the removal of the lower dam, salmon could now return to 8.5 miles of the river above Thunderbird Creek if water was returned to the river and fish passage was established.

### ANCHORAGE WATER & WASTEWATER UTILITY PLANT

AWWU purchases 10% of the water from Eklutna Lake to supply 90% of Anchorage's water. Water to the plant is provided by a pipeline connected to the Eklutna Hydropower Diversion paralleling the Eklutna River bed.

### HYDROPOWER PLANT

Owned and operated by Municipal Light & Power, Chugach Electric Association, and Matanuska Electric Association, the plant is fueled by water from Eklutna Lake piped through the Twin Peaks area. Electricity from the Eklutna Hydropower Plant accounts for 1-5% of electricity on the grid.

### EKLUTNA TAILRACE FISHERY

Stocked annually with juvenile coho and Chinook, the Eklutna Tailrace on the Knik River is a popular and accessible sport fishery.

Pipe diverts 100% of river flow.

90% to hydro plant via pipe

10% to AWWU plant via pipe paralleling the river

### EKLUTNA LAKE & UPPER DAM

Up until the Lower Eklutna Dam was built in 1929 and completely blocked salmon migration, the Eklutna River flowed freely from its headwaters above Eklutna Lake to the Knik Arm. Sediment accumulation very quickly rendered the Lower Dam obsolete. In 1955, and rebuilt in 1965 after the earthquake, the Eklutna Hydropower Project and Upper Dam was built to increase storage capacity at the lake.

### Historic riverbed is unable to support salmon

Alaskans must urge utilities to return water back to the river at levels adequate to support salmon

Pipe originating at Eklutna Lake releases 10% of flow for AWWU plant.

### LOWER EKLUTNA DAM REMOVED!

In 2018, an important first step toward restoring the Eklutna River was taken when the Lower Eklutna Dam was removed and 22 miles of salmon habitat was reconnected. Built in 1929 completely blocking salmon migration, the Lower Dam very quickly filled with sediment and became obsolete.

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A HEALTHY EKLUTNA RIVER IS POSSIBLE. IT'S UP TO ALASKANS TO MAKE IT HAPPEN.

