



KENAI RIVER

Special Management Area

"Working together...for the river"

ADVISORY BOARD

Kenai Region Office
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Soldotna, AK 99669
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Kenai River Special Management Area Advisory Board

*** Meeting Minutes***

Thursday November 12th, 2020

5:30 p.m. Gilman River Center

514 Funny River Rd., Soldotna, AK

I. CALL TO ORDER

- A. **Roll Call:** Joe Connors, Ben Mohr, Ron Rogalsky, Jeff Dolifka, William Tappan, Glen Arundell, Monte Roberts, Branden Bornemann, Andrew Carmichael, Brent Hibbert, Andy Loranger, Colton Lipka, Jack Blackwell and Sarah Aspens.
- B. **Minutes:** Minutes were approved.
- C. **Agenda:** Agenda was approved
- D. **Public Comments**
- E. **Presentation**–Cook to K-Bay trails– Shawna Popovici gave a presentation regarding a trail that would begin in Captain Cook SRA and end in Homer-Kachemak Bay State Park. The power point presentation is available upon request from shawna.popovici@alaska.gov

REPORTS

Agency and Government Reports

- A. **Alaska State Parks**–Jack provided members with the following update:
 - Fuels reduction work continued this month at Morgan’s Landing, Bing’s Landing, Funny River SRS, and Captain Cook. This work was completed by five seasonal Parks employees that were funded to work on this with a Division of Forestry grant and a separate DOF crew.
 - Eagle Rock boat launch has been closed for the winter. Pillars and Bing’s boat launches remain open.
 - This winter Parks Design and Construction will be advertising a project to build a caretaker cabin at Eagle Rock boat launch.
 - CARES Act funding has allowed Parks to keep seasonal staff working this fall providing additional maintenance and janitorial services.
 - DNR is working with DOT on creating an easement on land that is proposed for adding to KRMSA in Cooper Landing for the Sterling Highway, mile 45 – 60 projects.
- B. **DEC**– Sarah provided the board with the following report:
 - Data analysis and evaluation of waters submitted for inclusion in the 2020 integrated report is underway. A draft report with proposed decisions planned for spring 2021, a public comment period would follow shortly thereafter.
 - Data request for the 2022 integrated report will be issued late 2020. Any organization with water quality data is welcome to submit data for evaluation and inclusion in the integrated report.

- The request for proposals for 2021-23 ACWA grants proposals closed on November 9th. Across the state there were 15 applications submitted. Four of them were for the Kenai Peninsula, three for the Kenai River and one for the Anchor River. DEC will be reviewing those application in the next several weeks. Successful application will be notified around January 20th of 2021, if the project receives funding, they are set to start as early as March of 2021.
- The ACWA grant proposal cycle is a two-year cycle. The next opportunity to submit a proposal will be October 2022.
- 2021-2024 Triennial review underway - review of water quality standards in 18 AAC 70. The Triennial review can be found at <https://dec.alaska.gov/water/water-quality/triennial-review/> 60-day Public comment period starting October 2020 – ends November 30th at 5pm. If you have questions before then, contact Brock Tabor (brock.tabor@alaska.gov). Please submit questions 10 days before the end of the public comment period (November 20th).

C. ADF&G -Colton Lipka provided the board with the following report:

- The department is in winter mode and much of the staff is working on reports summarizing last summer.

D. USFWS-Andy Loranger provided the board with the following report:

- Refuge Staff is currently entered into a design contract for the improvements for the Jim's Landing boat launch located on the Upper Kenai River. The process appears to be moving along very smoothly and quickly. There have been several site visits to the area by the contractors and agencies. Fish and Wildlife is partnering with Fish and Game on the project and there is also a lot of public interest in the project. The goal of the project is to go from a primitive boat landing facility to a more developed on with a boat ramp area which is like what you see at Sportsman's boat ramp. This would improve traffic flow and to increase parking capacity especially on the South side of the highway.
- The contractor will develop some concepts which will be shared in a public meeting which is to take place sometime in early December. This will be a virtual meeting.
- Monte asked about the work on the end of Redoubt Ave. Andy responded that you will see an improvement to the boat launch area and the traffic flow, including parking development and improve sight lines in the area. Project should be completed in the spring of 2021.

E. USFS/Chugach National Forest –No Report

F. City of Kenai –No Report

G. City of Soldotna-Andrew Carmichael provided the board with the following report:

- The City is still deal with the removal of spruce bark beetle trees from Centennial and Swiftwater.
- Everything is closed for the winter. The staff is currently working on mitigation plans regarding the Covid 19.

H. Kenai Peninsula Borough-Brent Hibbert provided the board with the following report:

- The Borough met Tuesday night and had a report from Brenda Alberg and Jonna Beach on the Kenai Peninsula housing relief program. On October 13th the Borough assembly passed resolution 2020-70 appropriating \$ 2 million to help in individual housing and rent relief. The Borough partnered with Alaska Housing financing to help with the mortgage and housing relief funds and to give those to those have been economically affected due to COVID 19 in regard to losing jobs. This program was launched on October 22. The applicants were fully vetted with the help of Alaska Social Services department and Alaska Housing. The program ends of December 30, 2020.

II. Committee Reports

- a. President's Report-No Report
- b. Guide Advisory-Monte reported that we need to figure out the best way to meet via Microsoft Teams. Jack Blackwell recommended that we should schedule committee meeting at regular time on December 10th.
- c. Habitat Committee-No report
- d. River Use Committee- Report will be under new business
- e. Legislative Committee-Ben Mohr reported that the committee has not met but there are some items upcoming. With the impacts of Covid there is going to be some significant impact to the parks budget. We can anticipate a decrease in capital budget funds with the decrease in users' fees.

III. OLD BUSINESS- Update on Funny River Boat Launch selection process:

Jack Blackwell provided the board with the following report:

- Selection committee visited potential sites for developing a boat launch off Funny River Road,
- Committee will select two potential sites, one above and one below the Naptown Rapids.
- Committee is developing a summary report for the board to review which will be available for the board later this month.
- Recommend scheduling a work meeting with the advisory board on December 8 to allow for public comment, followed by a regular meeting on December 10.
- Pam and I met with the Funny River Advisory Planning Commission on November 5 and provided an update on this effort.
- Funny River Boat Launch Coalition sent the KRSMA advisory board a letter on November 8.
- Jim Harpring would like to have the summary and the meeting sent out to give the community time to review the information and have a meeting before meeting with Parks.
- Jack stated that the summary will be available by the 30th of November. The work session is scheduled for December 15th via Microsoft Teams at 5:30 to 7:30pm for the committee and all public members.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

1. Board Elections

- Joe Connors nominated Ted Wellman as president of the KRSMA board.
Bill Tappan seconds the nomination.
There was no other nomination; Monte Roberts asked that the nomination be closed and Bill seconded.
The board voted unanimously. Ted Wellman is the president.
- Bill Tappan nominated Joe Connors as the vice president of KRSMA board.
Ben Mohr seconded the nomination.
There was no other nomination; Monte Roberts asked the nomination to be closed and Ron seconded.
The board voted unanimously to have Joe Connors as vice Chair

2. Land and Water Conservation Update Rys Miranda reported to the board how The Great Alaska Outdoor Act affects State Parks. It is Federal Legislation that passed earlier this year authorizing federal funding in the amount of \$900 million to the Land & Water Conservation Fund. At the state level, that bumps up our portion to \$3.5 million per year. The major hurdle is the receipt authority to receive those funds. For more information about the program please visit the following website: <https://www.alaska-trails.org/funding-for-trails>
Ben Mohr made a motion to draft a letter to the Governor to support that the board write a letter to the Governor requesting.

1. Receipt authority in the budget to receive \$3.5 million
 2. Authority through this funding to hire a grant administrator and
 3. The State match of \$1.75 million to the Land & Water Conservation Funds.
- Joe Connors seconded the motion.
Motion passed unanimously

V. CORRESPONDENCE

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS-Ray DeBardelaben reported that the Guide Association had election and there is a new board in place. Ray DeBardelaben is the President, Kasey Loomis is Vice President. Other members of the board include Josh Hayes, Steve Redman, Luke Graham, Monte Roberts and Tim Hiner. Adam Wise is the public at large member of the board.

VII. BOARD COMMENTS -Joe Connors Thanked Jack for running an excellent meeting. Bill Tappan thanked Ted and Bill on the board appointments. Glen thanked the board for the board appointments.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT