

**Kenai River Special Management Area
Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
Gilman River Center
Thursday, March 08, 2012, 5:30 p.m.**

I. CALL TO ORDER

- A. Members Present:** David Carey, Jack Sinclair, Tim Stevens, Bruce King, Ricky Gease, Andy Szczesny, Brenda Trefon, Bobbie Jo Kolodziejski, Kyle Kornelis, Brent Johnson, and Jason Pawluk.
- B. The Minutes** from the February 9, 2012 were approved as written.
- C.** Agenda was approved as written.

II. Public Comments/Presentations

III. REPORTS

A. Agency and Government Reports

- a. State Parks, Jack Sinclair,** Buccaneer Energy company has pulled out of all State Park land at this time. They are no longer operating or purposing to operate any of the exploration or seismic work on State Park lands. At the next meeting, I will bring a detailed deferred maintenance list. Our director went to Juneau and made 42 different contacts, he has done well. Right now there are 3 park ranger positions that are being considered throughout the state to be restored. One is the Olsen Pond, up in Fairbanks, our Kenai River ranger, and a Kachemak Bay ranger. It may get into the budget, but it all comes down to what the Governor agrees on. Looking for a new contractor for the Anchor River Recreation Area, it's on the web right now as a request for proposals; it's going out for bid on a contract for another 7 years. Our Anchor River Tractor Launch, it is under a new operator, Todd Barman; unfortunately, tractor launch fees will go up again this year. We have a new Kenai River Ranger, Jason Okuly; he is at the Academy right now, down in Sitka.
- b. DEC, Tim Stevens,** unfortunately we did not get our peered review report of our Kenai River Turbidity Report. It was due to us at the end of February. Our contractor has had some difficulties with the peer reviewers getting it in on time. We are hoping to have it in by the end of March. We are hoping to go out to public notice with our integrated report here this month and trying to meet with commissioner, to get his go ahead. The AQWA grants closed on the 21st of February. We received two applications for the Kenai River. One was from the City of Kenai, who is going to partner with the Kenai Watershed Forum to monitor the beaches during July and August for bacteria. The other was from the Kenai Watershed Forum, a 2-year grant where they would do water quality monitoring on the Kenai River, twice a year, once in April and once in July. We should have some kind of notification of whether they got selected or not in the next week or two.
- c. ADF&G, Jason Pawluk,** a press release came out today for the Soldotna Creek Drainage Invasive Northern Pike Control for public scoping meetings. We have three dates on the press release, two on a week day, Thursday March 22, 2012 and one on March 24, 2012 at the Environmental Education Center building at the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters. The department has contracted USKH, a multi-discipline design firm, to facilitate the public meetings. We are encouraging the public to show up. The timeline for this is, this fall we are doing Stormy Lake in September. We plan to do the public meeting scoping this year and do pike control a year later, 2013. It will probably be a multi-year event.
- d. USF&WS, Janet Schmidt / Andy Loranger,** was not present.
- e. USFS/Chugach, Bobbie Jo Kolodziejski,** gearing up for the season. We have the Streamwatch program and the expansion of that being successfully implemented. Kenai Watershed Forum did receive a grant this year to support the expansion, which was with the sustainable salmon fund. Next year, we hear they are not going to receive the funding of this type of work, so we are going to we are going to be looking at a way to fund our volunteer coordinator. If you have any leads or ideas please let me or Robert Ruffner know. We are going to implement the Streamwatch program like we did last year. If the funding goes through, we are developing a visitor's guide for the lower river and the different sites the stream watch operates on. We are working on a sign that could go at each stream watch site. We are hoping to work with new technology, QR codes, you can click your smart phone on and it takes you to a

website for more information. We are also going to have public service announcements, with radio ads going out to talk about some of those key messages about Streamwatch. One that is kind of interesting is the felt sole wader's message. We want to make sure we are getting the right information out. Starting to think about how we are going to educate people. The last thing, the Russian River 5-year Action Plan to Decrease Human Bear Conflict is in draft form and we have a meeting on April 3rd, 2012, to try to get it to the final version and then onward to the Commissioner of Fish and Game, the Regional Forester of the Forest Service, and then the Regional Director of Fish and Wildlife Service.

- f. **City of Kenai, Sean Wedemeyer**, was not present.
- g. **City of Soldotna, Kyle Kornelis**, new fish cleaning station at Centennial Park has been approved and the council did appropriate funds for it.
- h. **Kenai Peninsula Borough, Brent Johnson** wrote a resolution in support of park ranger position.

B. Committee Reports

- a. **President's Report**, was not present.
- b. **Guide Advisory**, did not meet.
- c. **Habitat, Bruce King**, met again today, talked about turbidity issues. Talked about timelines for potential listing, whether the Kenai is impaired or not. It's a complicated process, in a nutshell, DEC would recommend to EPA a potential listing normally by April 1. So essentially, because the turbidity report produced by the Kenai Watershed Forum is undergoing peer review, they won't make that deadline. That report to EPA occurs every 2 years. Barring some action in between, then it would be put into the integrated report in 2014. However, the turbidity report, peer review will be completed essentially by the end of the month, at about the time the peer review document will be completed, there is a comment period opening on the integrated report that will be submitted, which doesn't include the Kenai. To the best of our knowledge, the first time that DEC will start the discussions to determine whether there is an impairment decision for the Kenai River; will occur sometime between this summer and the end of the fiscal year. For the board, if we want to get involved in this discussion, we will put off until this fall. In the interim, for the April meeting, we would like to present a letter to the board for their consideration to send to DEC so that we formally request that they bring us up to speed on the timeline the results of the report after we reconvene in the fall. We would like for someone from DEC to update us on everything that has occurred over the course of the summer. For May, the habitat committee will be coming to the full board with a packet we have prepared, that essentially is a frequently asked questions section summary of information that we have learned, the timeline, the appropriate regulations that govern water quality standards, and a list of potential options from a habitat perspective. We will have the packet ready for the May meeting. With any luck, we will have the final peer review report available for members of the board.
- d. **River Use, Bruce King**, we had a short meeting, going to have habitat committee discuss turbidity issues. The other thing we discussed was methods for reducing use on the river. The one thing that we are going to attempt to do is get a good understanding of what parks is going to be able to do this summer in terms of moving us down the road of understanding what crowding means on the Kenai River, time and area crowding on the Kenai.
- e. **Legislative/Government Activities**, nothing to report.
- f. **Board Development**, nothing to report.
- g. **Agenda/Board Structure/Housekeeping**, nothing to report.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

V. NEW BUSINESS

VI. CORRESPONDENCE

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

A. Board Comments

B. Date/Agenda of Next Meeting April 12, 2012 at 5:30 p.m.