

Kachemak Bay State Parks Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
October 11, 2017

1. Call to Order:
 - a. Roll Call: Board Members; Aron Peterson, Nancy Hilstrand, Mako Haggerty, Glenn Green, Robert Ostrom, Steve Schultz, Jeffrey Lee, Carol Harding, Sera Baxter. Staff – Jack Blackwell, Ethan Tyler, Eric Clarke and Brad Garasky.
2. Minutes: The minutes were approved.
3. Agenda Changes/Approval: The agenda was approved.
4. Public Comment/Presentation: None?
5. Correspondence: None?
6. A. Committee Reports- Staff gave the following update:

Director Ethan Tyler gave a short summary that he is a 17 year Alaskan and his background is in tourism. He currently lives in Girdwood, married with one daughter. This included public relations and business development side of things. He has little experience in non-profit and for the last three years has been in the state system running the State's Economic Development department. He is an outdoors person and is an avid user of the State Park system.

Brad Garasky reported that the Kachemak Bay Critical Habitat Management plan meetings have started. A representative from Alaska State Parks is not on the board, but there is a representative from Department of Natural Resources. Jason has committed to attend the meetings once a month as a member of the public. The meeting announcements for dates and times will be posted on the Fish and Game website.

Due to high water and large amounts of rainfall it was reported that the septic system had failed at the hatchery. State Park staff has been unable to visit the site but Ranger Okuly has been in contact with Cook Inlet Aquaculture manager Gary Fandrei.

The State Park trail crews are done for the season. Eric Clarke has been working on finalizing the RTP grants for the year. Eric has also been coordinating removing any gear that may have been left in field.

Jason Okuly attending the Kachemak Bay watershed stake holders meeting. The committee was soliciting information about the management plan. Jason reported that a new DNR planner has been hired and that time is being spent bringing this person up to speed on all aspects of the Kachemak Bay plan revision.

State Park staff spent about a week performing some maintenance on the Overlook cabin. Every year the staff tries to pick one out of the six cabins in the park for major maintenance.

A large Boy Scout Troop 555 that entailed 19 volunteers work on the Coalition trail. This trail goes from Halibut Cove Lagoon to China Poot Bay. This troop would like to adopt this trail and perform annual maintenance to keep the trail clear of brush and debris.

A permit was submitted for monitoring the fault lines around Grewingk Lake. This would entail setting up cameras in the Grewingk valley and some metal posts along Alpine Ridge. This would be monitored for ground movement in the area. This research goes in conjunction with the recent group that went out and did a study to the Grewingk Lake and determining the depth of the lake and possible future tsunamis out of the lake. The lake is approximately 500 feet deep.

A permit was issued to Aron Peterson from the Kenai Peninsula Borough for the cutting of vegetation along Elmers way on the State Park parcel. The area is from East End Road to the park, just along the easement line.

National Public Lands day was celebrating on Saturday, September 30, 2017. There was a small celebration out at Dimond Creek honoring all the volunteers in the State Park. There was 25 people in attendance including Representative Paul Seaton that presented Retired Park Ranger Roger MacCampbell an honorary citation for his 31 years of services in the State Park.

State Parks has been working in conjunction with the Alaska Coastal studies for the last month on beach cleanup around Kachemak Bay State Park. They are currently on beach cleanup number four in the park.

Jack Blackwell reported they wanted to thank the Friends Group for coordinating Public Lands Day. They also recognized the volunteers and all their work in the park.

The Kachemak Bay planning team was in Homer the end of September. They spent time across the bay looking at things first hand, on the ground which resulted gathering additional information and knowledge when developing the plan. A new planner has been hired that will be working on completing the draft of the K-Bay plan.

B. Friend's Report- Mako Haggerty reported that the group had a meeting on September 11th and October 2nd 2017. The next meeting is scheduled for October 30, 2017. The Friends group sponsored the Public Lands Day at Dimond Creek. Robert Archibald with a group of volunteers put up the Cook Inlet Keeper/Kachemak Bay Conservation Association sign in front of the property. Friends of Kachemak Bay State Park has an office in the building. A friend's sign will also be placed outside soon.

Mako also had a legislative meeting with five other folks in attendance to discuss how they can work with the legislature in communicating their concerns. This includes funding for the State Parks, not only in Kachemak Bay but around the state. The group has developed several ideas, one in which to hire an organization to take a survey of state park users. Some of the questions would be what did you like or dislike about the park. This would help in developing the points of interest to the legislature. The group would also like to develop an interactive trail report. This would entail developing an application for devices that you could put in information about the trails. The annual membership meeting is scheduled for December 6th, 2017 at the Islands and Oceans Visitor Center. Kenny Dollar who paddled from Seward/Resurrection to Kachemak Bay will provide a presentation of his trip. The water trails group is still working on trails along the coast.

On September 24 through the 28th there was a work party working on the trail at Halibut Lagoon area working on the cabin. All the work on the cabin was completed by volunteers. The Friends group had a booth at Salmon Fest to spread the word about the park. Firewood sales located at the top of ramp two sold about \$1500.00 dollars' worth of firewood.

Homer Chamber of Commerce has new leadership Debbie S and has a great interest in the water trails in the park specifically and the park in general. She would like to expand their outreach in promoting the area. Jack Blackwell is going to reach out to the Homer Chamber to schedule a presentation to the chamber board regarding the State Park and the economic values it generates for the Homer area.

7. Old Business – None?

8. New Business

a. Diamond Creek picnic area. Mako Haggerty reported that he thought it would be great to start the discussion of possibly developing a picnic area in the area around the head of the trail. One of the areas that still needs work before proceeding with plans for the area is the road right of way needs to be vacated. Mako would like to see a plan developed for the area for future use.

b. Deferred Trail Maintenance. Mako Haggerty reported what we like about or dislike about the park. Water taxi operators that transport visitors over to the park to hike the trails are receiving complaints about the condition of the trails. Mako just wanted to remind the advisory board that they need to remind management that funding is needed to maintain the trails. Currently grant money is used for construction or development of trails. These grants cannot be used for maintenance of the trails. Currently the trails can only be maintained with volunteer help.

9. Comments and Discussion by Visitors. Alan Parks commented that he also being a Water Taxi driver receives complaints pertaining to condition of the trails. Alan also recommended that it would be helpful to receive a blueprint detail how a plan is developed and how public comment is included in the process. He likes the idea of a draft coming out and allowing the public to comment instead of a plan that is from top management down. The more you involve the public the more, the better for all to be able to accept what is adopted. The Tutka Taylor trail name needs to be readdressed. Adopt a trail program is something we need to look at.

Kevin Walker is currently submitting a RTP grant application for the completion of the Tutka Taylor Trail. They have currently put 3800 hours in the completion of the first phase of the trail.

Kevin also commented about the Tutka Hatchery septic system failure. The system is very complex because the fish waste must go through several processes. A failure of this type of system could be catastrophic.

Roberta Highland representing the Kachemak Bay Historical Society. They manage Overlook park and keep it as natural as possible. Every year the society has the Shorebird festival bird hike. The Society is the first test program to have management over a state park unit and this is a way the state can save money is by having other organization manage some of the units.

Roberta read a letter concerning the wildlife and the amount of dead pinks that have appeared around Tutka Bay and other areas in Kachemak Bay State Parks.

A member of the public made the following comment: Developing the two management plans of both the Critical Habitat and the Kachemak Bay State Park plan is good as long as there is dialog between parties. So, they understand what is going on. Some of the big topics at the Critical Habitat meeting is the personal watercraft decision coming from the top down. Very disconcerting. Is this a political argument? The pink salmon did school up this year and therefore they were hard to capture in the commercial nets. NOAA is doing a study for carrying capacity pertaining to fish runs. It would be great if there was an outhouse at the bottom of the road at diamond creek road. Credited Christina the Volunteer coordinator for all the splendid work.

Willy Dunne Illegal craft landing have been going on for years. Glad to see enforcement. Human waste appears to be more noticeable at Grewingk Lake and Upper Hazel Lake. Question about the permit application at the new lodge at China Poot area. It is outside of State Parks.

Liz last name? commented that you put a lot of effort in the trails that are heavily used and that is because they are maintained and that maybe more effort needs to be put on other trails to spread out the use.

10. Comments and Discussion by Board Members

Jeff Lee asked for clarification on what trails Liz was concerned with. Sadie and Humpy trail and Mallard bay area.

Mako Haggerty would like to have Cook Inlet Aquaculture attend the board meetings to discuss all State Park issues not just the ones that pertain to the Tutka Bay Hatchery.

Nancy gave the board information pertaining to the dead pink salmon in Tutka Bay and results of a dissolved oxygen test taken at the same time.