



Kachemak Bay State Parks Citizen Advisory Board Meeting
Draft Minutes
November 10, 2020
Virtual Meeting with Microsoft Teams at 5:30 pm

1. Call to Order

- a. Roll Call -Aron Peterson, Nancy Hillstrand, Sue Christiansen, Curtis Jackson, Jeffrey Lee, Carol Harding, Patrick Miller, Robert Archibald, Kevin Walker, Jack Blackwell, Jason Okuly and Pam Russell
- b. Agenda- Agenda items included moving Stonehocker Creek to under visitors. Agenda approved as amended
- c. Minutes-Aron Peterson corrected the spelling of Rotone to Ratone. Minutes were approved as amended

2. Public Comment-Mako Haggerty gave a public comment regarding how important State Parks. He believes the State Park budget is not going to get any better. Mako is very concerned about State Parks and how much budget they will receive. "Please remember that State Parks plays a vital role in the community."

3. Visitors-Stonehocker Creek-Jack Blackwell gave a brief overview of the Stonehocker Creek flooding and how it has affected the power line near the Woz. Jack shared a google map of the area with photos of the affected area. The easement pre-dates the park and the powerline supplies power to residents on the southern portion of Kachemak Bay State Park. About 5 years ago Stonehocker Creek started to flow down the power line easement. We have been working with Homer Electric, Fish and Game and State Parks have been working together to help resolve the problem. Brad Zubeck shared a fly over video that was taken on October 21st, 2020, to show the flow of water down the power line. It also showed the sheet pile wall that was placed in the area with super sacks which has currently failed to stop the water from flowing down the power line. The agencies are currently working with HEA to place H-pile and rip rap around each of the poles to reinforce the structures as the water flows around the poles. The sheet pile, bridge and all material will be removed from the park. State Parks would like the powerline removed from the Park and be replaced by an underwater cable to service the southern area of the Park. State Parks would like to work with the State's fisheries department to enhance the silver salmon stock in the area. Brian Blossom was happy that Silver Lake and Creek appeared clear in Jack's photo. This creek was nominated for the anadromous stream catalog in 2001 on an aerial survey that was completed by Nikki Scarzy. According to the counts back then, there were 16 adult Coho in Stonehocker, 17 in Silver creek and 100 in upper Silver Creek in the lake. In 2019, Brian Blossom set three fish traps at the bridge on Stonehocker for approximately one hour. In one trap there were 16 dolly and 2 juvenile coho. There is no other data to date for this area. Curtis Jackson asked if the sheet pile wall was intact and how much money has been spent on the current project? Brad responded that the sheet pile is still in place and Troy Jones retrieved about 14 super sacks that had floated down Silver Creek. A rough ballpark estimate is about 1.5 to 2

million dollars has been spent on the project so far, starting back 5 years ago. This is the total amount spent for the complete project starting 5 years ago.

Sue Christiansen asked when the power line was installed and when did the creek start to flow down the powerline? Jack Blackwell responded that the powerline easement was issued in 1964 and it began to flow down the powerline 5 years ago. The exact construction of the powerline is unknown, but it was before the park was established in 1970.

Cook-to-KBay trail – 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.

4. Committee Reports

a. State Park- Jack provided the following update:

- The Kachemak Bay Management Plan revision is about ready. The planning team has been very busy updating and revising the plan. It should be ready as soon as the commissioner's office signs off on the plan. There will be a 60-day public review. We will then schedule a work session with the Advisory Board, once the Board has time to review the plan and come up with a list of suggestions. There will also be a public meeting on Microsoft Teams or some other platform. Once the plan is released there will be a media release and public notice. The draft plan will be released online.

b. Operations Report- Jason provided the Board with the following report:

- Boats: 8M Naiad is having its hull welded. A weld on the stern failed allowing water into the hull. Our small landing craft trailer has been updated with a new axle because of age and rust of the old axle.
- Maintenance: Installed a gate at DOT on Bay Crest Hill. This is where we store our boats. This gate is for added security of State property. Installed signs at Diamond Creek SRA; Speed Limit 10mph, no ATV, and no fires. Marked the WOZ trail along the HEA power lines. Cut brush around the entrance of Diamond Creek, cleaned up nails from pallet fire.
- General Operations: Pulled trail registers – they have not been counted as of this date.
- HEA: Conducted a site visit of the HEA Easement; super sacks were washing away; the diversionary wall is sheering and being undercut. HEA is going to remove all items placed in the park and will work to shore up existing power poles. Super sacks that have washed down river are actively being removed.
- Complaints: Duck hunting in Sadie Cove – sounds like a war zone.
- Enforcement: Crab pots out of compliance X 4 – attempt to contact pot owner/permit holder, one pot seized. Fire at Diamond Creek – found ID on ground, juvenile would not provide any information, informed of regulations.
- Ranger Station Host: Installed traction on slippery tread. Installed metal casing around sign at Goat Rope – to prevent bears from damaging the sign. Cut vegetation to China Poot Lake, marked trail route around flood, cleared brush in the estuary. Marked trail route along Lagoon Trail and Moose Valley. Patched insulation under Ranger Station. Cleaned chimneys and prepped Public Use Cabins for winter, replaced batteries in smoke alarms. Fixed outhouse stairs at West Cabin. Fixed Public Use Cabin stairs at West Cabin.
- Shafford Height application from Steve Schultz. There is currently a Director's Determination to allow the 4 landowners to access across state park land by

developing a road that meets Borough standards. There are currently 4 landowners who are unable to build the road. They now would like to develop an ATV trail to access their property. A map and permit application will be presented at the December meeting.

Friend's Report – See attached report. Kathy Sarns also reported to the Board the following:

- Friends Volunteers in 2020: put in approx. 1400 volunteer hours.
 - Purchased tool trailer, as well as 2 gas Stihl brush cutters, an electric chainsaw, folding saws, loppers, pruners, rakes, hardhats, gas cans, first aid kits, misc. trail tools, all used this summer to clear trails GoFundMe Program helped pay for tools & trailer.
 - Purchased Liability Insurance, required in order to have volunteers working safely under the "Friends" umbrella.
 - Chainsaw and Gas Brusher safety courses, with the help of State Parks, Friends had one chainsaw course for 4 trail volunteers and one safety briefing for Gas Brusher operators and trainers.
 - 100s of Trees cut and removed from all trails after very high winds last winter.
 - Cleared brush part way up from Humpy Creek to Emerald Lake.
 - Diamond Creek Trails are now some of the best trails in Homer, thanks to Homer Bike club volunteers headed up by Derek Reynolds & Cycle Logical Bike Shop.
 - Grace Ridge is hike-able & cleared from both North and South Trailheads. Thanks to Friends Volunteers. On Trails day 10 volunteers put in 120 hours to clear the south side of Grace Ridge Trail.
 - Sadie Knob is cleared and hike-able from both North Eldred and South Eldred Trailheads to the TOP of the Knob. Approximately 400 volunteer hours were put in by Friends of KBSP volunteers and we used the new Friends equipment as well as borrowed some State parks tools when needed. Many water taxis donated rides and one crucial drop off was donated by Maritime Helicopters that allowed us to clear the very overgrown TOP of Sadie Knob! (could not have done it otherwise!)
 - Annual Friends meeting December 2, at 5 pm on Zoom.
 - A copy of the full report is available upon request.
 - Carol Harding thanked all the volunteers and the hard work they have completed. Jack Blackwell also commented that 1400 volunteer hours is very impressive. Thank you to everyone.
- c. Water Trail Annual Report on Adopted Camp Sites – Cathy Sarns reported to the Board the following:
- Pre, mid, and post season maintenance on our adopted sites: Cottonwood / Eastland and Kayak Beach.
 - Trail clearing, latrine maintenance, tent platform railing installed, litter pick up, public outreach and even a bit of fire suppression in a coal fire on the beach at Falls Creek.
 - Research and supporting submission of an application to DNR for the ILMA which would allow for development of parking and trailhead facilities at the Cottonwood / Eastland Unit of KBSP.

- The Water Trail was an active participant in planning and celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Kachemak Bay State Park.
 - New Bear Box at Halibut Cove Lagoon, Leisure Lake Trailhead.
 - Work has started on a new 5 Year Plan, and we saw the first completion of an End to End (and Beyond), (14 day trip from the End of the Spit, around the bay to Seldovia, Point Pogibsi, a big crossing to Diamond Creek then on to Bishops Beach by Caleb Rausch on an Epic journey).
 - A copy of the full report is available upon request.
- d. Eveline State Recreation Site Annual Report –Cameale Johnson gave the board the following report:
- The big Eveline sign fell over after a big windstorm. It was determined that the base of the sign was rotted out. The new sign has been rebuilt and should last several more years.
 - There have been several trees that have fallen in the area. These have all been removed or are in the processes of being removed.
- e. Kachemak Bay 50th celebration-Robert reported to the Board the following-There is still some interest in having an event next year when we can all get together again. More information to come on that.
- f. Trail Committee-No report
- g. Habitat Committee –Nancy Hillstrand gave the Board the following report. The group has done some investigation and have shared this with the Board.

BEAR AWARE WITHOUT REINVENTING THE WHEEL

There is a myriad of excellent information available for us to use. We will need to standardize for the best available science and experience, to maximize safety of people and bears and minimize confusion of details still in debate. Now we need to implement while we educate about the major values and connections as populations fluctuate between the flora and fauna food webs. 1. INVESTIGATE 2. ORGANIZE 3. ACT is the Bear Wise protocol. We can begin to investigate and organize and then be ready to ACT by next season.

A full copy of the report is available upon request.

- h. By Law Committee Report & Discussion-No report.

4. Old Business

- a) Diamond Creek Update-Rys Miranda commented that there has not been very much movement on this project at this time. State Parks was moving forward with the project until the 2018 earthquake took place. That really diverted FEMA resources and several other projects were put on hold. The hope is to get this area back to a stage that it would hold up to future weather events. The department was funded to complete a feasibility study. Four alternatives were developed, to rebuild the trail or make the existing trail better. Making the trail better made the most sense and the request was made to FEMA. The department is currently waiting for FEMA to approve the funding to move the project forward.

5. New Business

- a) Resolution 2020-3, The Importance of Sound in Today's World and Promoting Best Practices.

- Aron Peterson recommended that we should add fixed wing to the resolutions. This should be added under the Whereas, the Kachemak Bay State Park is experiencing an increase in demand for rotary and fixed wing.....
- Carol Harding recommended adding Jet Ski to the resolution but was not sure where to put it. Jet Skis are loud. Carol highly supports this proposal and its importance. Carol feels natural sounds are vanishing resource and very, very important to protect Carol also noticed in the document that there is nothing in front of the word sound. She proposed to place the word “natural” in front of the word sound. Sound could be anything, manmade or natural. We need to designate what sounds are appropriate.
- Nancy Hillstrand stated that this is a seriously critical issue in the United States. It is a new and upcoming thing. Nancy suggested that the Board vote on this resolution or vote that sound and sound scape is critical to the park.
- Jeff Lee commented that when he wrote the resolution, he did hit just rotary because of the bigger things in the area. He also wanted to add jet skis or anything that makes sounds. Jeff commented that this is about the 3rd time he has tried to bring this to the Board over the last year or year and half and for some reason it always gets kick out. He would like to see this resolution pass with adding fixed wing, jet skis and natural sounds to help define and make the document clearer.
- Jeff requested the Board to vote on the resolution and if there needs to be additional resolution Jeff is willing to work on those.
- Carol Harding thanked Jeff Lee for developing the resolution.
- Jeff Lee developed a website call KBaysoundscapes.org. Kachemak Bay Soundscapes works to inventory the natural soundscape of the Kachemak Bay and Lower Cook Inlet region. In order to educate the broader public about the importance and value of sound as an integral dimension of experiencing wildness we produce audio explorations of Kachemak Bay that include the soundscape recordings, natural history, and local area resident’s ecological knowledge. This is just the beginning of something that can be developed into more projects and education.
- Nancy recommended that they add manmade sounds to the resolution.
- Carol noticed the document reference cultural soundscape. What are cultural soundscapes? She also listened to the audio portion on the website and thought it was a great idea to collect audio sounds. The more sounds the better.
- Robert will get with Jeff Lee and Carol and use the word natural sounds. Robert also recommended that this resolution only address rotary aircraft and that fixed wing and jet skis should be a separate resolution.
- Jeff agreed that there should be separate resolution for jet skis and rotary aircraft. On the cultural aspect, they are going to be a building of recordings of sounds that will be used to educate the public about the importance of sound.
- Carol Harding asked how is sound addressed in the Management Plan?
- Jack Blackwell stated that it is not a major focus in the Management Plan. After talking with the planning team, we incorporated best practices and recommendations into permitting. State Park’s does not manage airspace in the park. We can just put in best management recommendation into the commercial permit stipulations as well as recreational and private pilots. The best way to get this information out is through a list of best practices to hand out to the park users. There is not a line item in the Management Plan for this and we are beyond the point to add this to the Plan. When the Plan is released, the Board can make that

recommendation to add Soundscapes to the Plan. We are not going to add anything to the Plan that is almost finalized.

- Nancy made a motion that we vote to protect the Soundscape of Kachemak Bay State Park. The Board adopted this resolution with the amendments to broaden and strengthen the resolution.
 - Carol Harding seconded the motion.
 - Robert commented that this is resolution 2020-3 “The importance of Sound in Today’s World” Promoting best practices. The document contains several citations and various studies that are indisputable on effects of habitat, bear, sheep and other wildlife. “This is a great resolution.” We can take some of this information and have discussions with Fish and Game.
 - Nancy made a motion that we vote to protect the Soundscape of Kachemak Bay State Park. With changes from sound to natural sounds.
 - Carol added it is a vanishing resource.
 - Carol seconds the motion.
 - The motion passed unanimously.
- b) Land & Water Conservation Fund Update- Rys Miranda reported to the Board how The Great Alaska Outdoor Act affects State Parks. It was Federal Legislation that had passed earlier this year authorizing federal funding in the amount of 900 million dollars to the Land & Water Conservation Fund. At the state level our portion bumps up to 3.5 million dollars per year. At the state level 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>

Jack commented that the issues for State Parks are receipt authority, a grant administrator, and we need funds to match. This needs to get into the Governor Budget.

Nancy made the motion the we write a letter to the Governor requesting

1. Receipt authority in the budget to receive 3.5 million dollars.
2. Authority through this funding to hire a grant administrator.
3. The State match of 1.75 million to the Land & Water Conservation Funds.

Sue Christiansen seconds the motion.

Motion passed unanimously

This should be sent to all the local legislatures.

7. Comments of the Public

8. Comments of Board Members:

- Carol Harding gave thanks to Jeff Lee for his work on the Soundscape Resolution and to Kathy Sarns and all their volunteer hours. Great Work.
- Nancy thanked Jeff Lee and Kathy for all their work.
- Patrick Miller thanked Kathy and the volunteers for all hard work in the Park.
- Aron Peterson commented they had some walks at Cottonwood Eastland. There has been 16 people and a lot of excitement about creating trails in the area. Call Aron for more info.
- Kevin Walker gave thanks for all the volunteers and excited about the Land & Water Conservation fund.
- Jack Blackwell commented that there was a lot of topics on the agenda and a lot of good work. Thank you everyone.

- Robert will work to get the resolution and letter out.

9. Adjournment-The next meeting is Wednesday December 9th, 2020 at 5:30 via Microsoft Teams.