Kachemak Bay State Parks Citizen Advisory Board Meeting
Draft Minutes
December 9th, 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, Beaver Nelson, Jeffrey Lee, Carol Harding, Kirsten Dixon, Marc Romano, Patrick Miller, Robert Archibald, Kevin Walker, Jack Blackwell, Jason Okuly and Pam Russell
   b. Agenda - Agenda approved as written
   c. Minutes - Minutes approved as written

2. Public Comment
3. Visitors
4. Committee Reports
   a. State Park - Jack provided the following update:
      ● The Commissioner of DNR has issued an intent to adopt Kachemak Bay Management Plan. Everyone on the board should have received an email with that information and a hard copy of the plan.
      ● The Governor is planning on releasing the proposed budget next Tuesday, December 15, 2020.
      ● Pam Russell also added that State Parks has released Intent to Bid proposals for the Anchor River/Stariski and Captain Cook grounds. Deadline for receipt of proposals is January 19, 2021 by 2:00 p.m. Alaska Time. We are also accepting bid proposals for both Anchor River and Deep Creek tractor launches until January 4th, 2021. Please contact me for more information.

   b. Operations Report - Jason provided the Board with the following report:
      ● Clear alders along Diamond Creek Road
      ● Dig and move Sea Star outhouse
      ● Grewingk Lake Storage area compliance efforts – 4 storage units requiring annual permit.
      ● Presentation at Friends Annual Meeting
      ● Community Council Meeting
      ● Tutka Bay crab fishery patrol – remove pots in violation
      ● Eric Clarke and Carter Forney on seasonal leave
      ● Winterize boats
      ● Plow and sand park units/bunkhouse

Friend’s Report – Robert Archibald reported to the Board the following:
• The annual meeting was held on December 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 2020 via Zoom. There were approximately 33 people in attendance. The board members for the group were reappointed and then officers were appointed as follows: Kathy Sarns-President, Dana Gregoire-Vice President, Laura Kelly-secretary and Robert Archibald as Treasurer. Also discussed were the group’s goals and objectives for the coming year and the group’s accomplishments for the year.

• There was discussion about the Great American Outdoors Fund and Land and Water Conservation grant issues that the state is having without receipt authority and a grant administrator to administer the funds. There is a lot of enthusiasm to write letters to the Governor and Legislators to ask for money to be appropriated for this.

• The Friends had over 3000 hours of volunteer time in the park for 2020.

• Sue Christiansen reported that she had a conversation with Allyson O’Hara who has been working with Chris Beck from Alaska Trails to send a letter. They are requesting that the letter not be sent until December 18\textsuperscript{th} so that the Alaska Trails group can get a list of talking points together for everyone to ensure the message is consistent going to the Governor and Legislators. So, watch your email on the 18\textsuperscript{th} for the message to send for your support for this funding. This is a statewide effort by the Alaska Trails group.

• Sue commented that the 1.7 million match that the state needs to come up with for the Great American Outdoor Fund can come from non-profits, private organization such as REI and all of the volunteer hours provided in the park such as from the Friends Groups.

• The Kachemak Bay Citizen Advisory Board sent a letter of support in November to the Governor and Legislators.

c. Water Trail Annual Report on Adopted Camp Sites – No Report

d. Eveline State Recreation Site Annual Report –Cameale Johnson gave the board the following report:
  • Eveline is in great shape for skiing. The snowshoe trails have been put in and signs are posted.

c. Kachemak Bay 50\textsuperscript{th} 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-Marc Romano suggested that this topic be removed from the agenda until Spring when Eric is back on staff to have discussion about future trail plans.

g. Habitat Committee –Nancy Hillstrand gave the Board the following report:
  • Nancy’s company ordered some of the Bear Wise informational cards from the Bear Wise Company. They have such things as playing cards and posters. Nancy ordered a few extra cards to share with the State Parks and other groups such as The Friends Group, in hopes of getting more information out to the public about bear awareness.
  • Renting out bear spray to visitors to the park: Nancy was going to talk with Mako to see if this something he would be interested in.
  • Some posters were sent to Nancy from the Park Service to review. The hope is to create one that fits Kachemak Bay. These would be put up to inform visitors on
how to take care of their garbage. A rough draft will be developed for State Parks to review to see if this would work in the park.

- Nancy is working with the National Estuarian Reserve to get a list of plankton and phytoplankton. This list would be included in the Kachemak Bay Management Plan.
- Nancy will submit wording in the Management Plan regarding the Dark Sky and that the Kachemak Bay State Park was serious about it. Next in the process will be to have some Dark Sky parties once we are able to get together again.
- Sue Christiansen would like to see a bear education station out on the Homer Spit. This would allow visitor and residents alike to watch some films about bear awareness. Nancy has received some films from Fairbanks that she would like to have everyone review to determine which one would work best. She is currently proposing stations at Coal Point and maybe at Mako’s Office on the Spit. This would be a looped program that would include bear tips and some short videos. Other places will also be considered. Another idea is placing card racks that would include bear safety information cards for the public to view prior to going out into the park.

4. Old Business
   a) Kachemak Bay Management Plan: Jack reported to the Board the following:
      - DNR has scheduled two public meeting dates for people to supply input. The first meeting is on December 14th, 2020 and the second is on January 5th, 2021. There are two separate times these meetings are scheduled: 12pm to 2 pm and 5pm to 7pm each day. This is a time for the public to comment on the intent to adopt Management Plan. There is also another work session with the Kachemak Advisory Board members only on January 6th, 2021 at 12 until 2pm.

5. New Business
   a) Shafford Height access road- Jack reported to the board that the State of Alaska has received a permit application to develop a 7-foot wide walking/ATV trail on the established public easement. The trail would be between Wyoh and Sundance Avenue. This would allow access for the landowners in the Shafford Heights Subdivision within Kachemak Bay State Park. State Parks will work with the landowners to identify a better access into the subdivision. There was a public process that helped identify the current public easement as access into the subdivision. The current easement has been established and recorded. A Director Determination was developed for the easement and states that “DNR will have the authority to design, construct and maintain improvements within the easements through the agency’s action or by another party through a permit issued by DNR.” Shafford Height Subdivision is currently land locked and does not have road access into their property. Jason Okuly shared a map of the area and some pictures of the area as it exists today. There is currently a stairway and bridge with a foot path that locals are using to access the property.

   Steve Schultz explained that the landowners are not able to pay for the easement to be a borough-maintained road. So, it was discussed between all the landowners and it was agreed that a 7-foot-wide trail would be adequate for the landowners to bring supplies in and access the property.

   Jack asked if all the landowners agreed with the trail.

   Steve said yes, they had a meeting with all the owners, and they agreed to build a trail. There are also plans to install a culvert or bridge to cross over the streams. That would be determined when designing the trail.

   There is a small parking area on Wyoh Way and Langhus Street. There were several items of discussion such as parking and ATV use which will have to be decided as the process moves
forward. Steve Schultz and the landowners will work with Jason Okuly on the design of the trail. The landowners will work with park permitting for the use of ATV.

Sue Christensen moved to support the permit and have the landowners work in conjunction with State Parks in designing the trail. Patrick seconds the motion.

The permit application has the support of the Citizen Advisory Board.

b) Parker Sorenson—A permit application was submitted for landings at Upper Hazel Lake, Grewingk, Gore Point lake, Kinnikinnik and Port Dick Lakes and the Glacial plateau between the Dorshin Glacier and Southern Glacier. The purpose for the landings is for recreational back country skiing and climbing.

In the current Kachemak Bay Management Plan a fixed wing aircraft is conditionally compatible in many of the areas. The new Management Plan states you cannot land in the natural zones except at Upper Hazel Lake. This will be by permit only. There are other statements in the Plan that limit lights and zones.

Jason Harriman from Fish and Game is opposed to landings because Kachemak Bay State Park and State Wilderness Park currently contains a healthy population of mountain goats. Mountain goats are most sensitive to disturbance and have the highest mortality during the winter and early spring months when backcountry skiing is at its peak. We have addressed this issue concerning helicopter skiing in the past. The attached permit is for skiers to gain access to remote locations in the heart of mountain goat wintering and kidding habitat. Mountain goats’ winter at two main types of locations: below tree line on steep slopes with good escape terrain and windswept ridges near steep slopes with good escape terrain. The first type of area is usually the end points for ski runs and the second is the beginning point. This permit allows landings on several frozen lakes within the Wilderness Park in the midst of goat habitat for the purpose of an activity that has been shown highly detrimental to mountain goat populations. The management units on the Kenai Peninsula that have high backcountry skiing and snow machining use are the only areas on the Peninsula where we have not been able to recover mountain goat numbers to natural levels despite ceasing all harvest activity.

After further discussion several questions were developed to ask Parker Sorenson for clarification of the following: number of people, type of aircraft, size of engine on the aircraft, more specific map of the landings, and log number of trips and people for 2020. Keep a log of the trips and number of people for 2021.

Marc Romano would like to have more information before considering moving the permit forward.

Nancy asked if special stipulations can be added to the permit for time, places, number of people and flights.

Flying into the backcountry is for private use only. When paying someone to fly you out to back country ski, it becomes a commercial operation. If you do own a plane and want access to the backcountry, you must obtain a special use permit for the plane, not the activity of skiing.
Jack Blackwell would like to have more conversations with Jason Herreman from Fish and Game and ask additional questions that both State Park staff and the Board have for Parker Sorensen.

Pam will put a list of questions together to include:

1. The number of landings and people he brought in 2019.
2. The specific landings spots need to be identified
3. Does he plan on changing from skis to floats and use the permit year-round?
4. How often does he plan on going into the park?
5. Type of aircraft and size of engine?

This activity is compatible with the current regulations outlined in the new Management Plan by special use permit only except in the cultural zone.

State Parks plans on having a follow up conversation with Fish and Game and send a follow up question for clarification to Parker Sorensen the applicant.

How many permits have been issued to private owners? Less than 5.

7. Comments of the Public
8. Comments of Board Members:
   - Patrick thanked State Parks for the opportunity to discuss the permit application regarding airplane use in the park.
   - Aron would like to have the Board write a letter requesting more time for Eric Clarke. He currently works 7 months a year. It would be great if he could work an additional 2 or 3 months. Some of the points for the letter would be if the ILMA goes through for Cottonwood Eastland there would be many trails that would need to be developed. There are also several projects throughout the park that need attention that Eric could take care of if he was able to have additional months. Robert asked that Aron send the bullet points.
   - Kevin Walker noted that the new Management Plan does recommend more time for the technician in Kachemak Bay.
   - Jack Blackwell stated that the staff working for the park is top notch and he appreciates all the work they do. Jack agrees that it would be nice if State Parks could give some more time to many of their seasonal staff. But due to budget restraints that is not currently possible. An increase to the budget would have to happen first.
   - Kirsten commented that with a little elbow grease the Intent to Draft Management Plan can be the jewel of the State Park and we are heading in the right direction. Increase revenue is something she would like to look at and there are many creative ideas to help with that process.
   - Robert thanked everyone for showing up tonight and taking the time to look at the new Management Plan. Send in your comments.

9. Adjournment-The next meeting is Wednesday January 13, 2021 at 5:30 via Microsoft Teams.