

**Mat-Su State Parks
Citizens Advisory Board
Minutes
November 13, 2012**

The meeting was called to order by Greg at 7:00 PM

A quorum of the Citizens Advisory Board was present and due notice had been published.

I MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Greg Ronnback	Jim Von Bose
Doug Bourne	Larry Smith
Neil Fox	Dennis Mobley
Nicole Troyer	

MEMBERS ABSENT AND EXCUSED

Barbara Russell

STATE PARK STAFF PRESENT

Wayne Biessel, Superintendent
Kelly Brooks, Secretary to the Board

II APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY MINUTES

Nicole made a motion to accept October 9, 2012 minutes as submitted. Neil seconds. All vote in favor. Minutes accepted as submitted

III SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- Winter is officially here, but very little snow in most areas. Due to little snow and freezing temperatures many areas have very good ice skating conditions. Nancy Lake area has had a lot of skating activity on the canoe trail system.
- Hatcher Pass area has only a few inches of snow. Conditions are marginal for skiing, especially in the IMSHP and Archangel Road areas. However, there is not enough snow for snowmobiles and Archangel Road was closed to motorized access as of October 12. There has also been a skiing activity in the higher back country areas.
- The Matanuska Greenbelt committee recently met and there was a discussion to build a new ADFG headquarters in the vicinity, possibly like Creamers Field in Fairbanks. The three agencies are University of Alaska, Fairbanks, Alaska Department of Fish & Game and Safari Club International. In the same area the Matanuska Susitna Borough is actively working on planning for the Crevasse Moraine Trail System. The Mat-Su Borough and Alaska State Parks are working together to coordinate compatible trail systems for all users.

- The Rec Trails Grant application period is closing soon and office staff have been working hard to get them completed and submitted.
- Neil asked Wayne about ice safety on the Park System lakes. Wayne stated there has been activity in the Nancy Lakes area, Kepler, Bradley and Finger Lakes; he was not sure about Matanuska Lake.

IV COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Budget Committee (Greg, Nicole, Jim, Barb)

Barb, Jim and Nicole met recently and sent their notes and concerns to Greg. They will forward their questions to Wayne as soon as they clarify their topics of interest. Wayne offered to set up a training session for the Board on the Legislative and Budget process and its affect on Alaska State Parks. Wayne and Nicole will work together to coordinate an orientation/workshop for the board members

Nicole mentioned that UAF Cooperative Extension Service will offer a “Legislative Process Workshop” if there is enough public interest. She will forward information to anyone that is interested.

It was agreed that in the future, the typed Board minutes should be made available to the Board sooner than just before the next meeting. This gives the Board members ample opportunity to review the minutes while the information is still fresh on their minds. In addition, the minutes should be recorded digitally for reference purposes only, Wayne will look into obtaining a digital recorder. Literally transcribing the minutes is likely too cumbersome for staff, but it was agreed that having a digital recording may be helpful for the record. A question was raised about record retention.

b) Nancy Lake Plan Committee (Doug, Barb and Larry)

This committee has not met yet, however, they plan to meet as soon as the next Nancy Lake draft becomes available. Doug will let Greg know the status of this meeting and its outcomes.

V OLD BUSINESS

a) NLSRA Plan Comments

The comments are available on the web page if anyone would like to look at them. Brandon is more than willing to address the Board regarding his summations of the comments if the Board so chooses. At this time the Board said they would wait until the next draft becomes available to move on this issue.

b) Board Business Plans for Fall, Winter, Spring – no comments

c) Letter of Support – Rec Trail Grants, Trail Counters

Greg asked for the Boards approval to submit a letter of request for funds to purchase

trail counters. The counters are designed to be accurate in winter conditions and can be moved and used in other locations if needed. Mat-Su Parks is requesting 4 counters. The Board approves support and Greg will submit a letter.

d) Mile 16 Bike Trail

Doug commented that there was some public concern on the construction process of the Mile 16 Bike Trail. A member of the public was unhappy that a local person had not gotten the contract to build the trail. Wayne explained the process and why the SOA went with the designers and contractors that they chose (Alaska Trails have a state contract and they hired Happy Trails out of Fairbanks). Both the designers and the contractor have extensive experience in the design and construction of trails of this type.

e) Neil asked about funding for snow grooming in Hatcher Pass. Wayne explained that Matanuska Susitna Borough gave MatSu Parks a grant of \$24,000 to be used exclusively for snow grooming in the Hatcher Pass area.

Wayne explained the snow grooming issue is taxing for park staff to administer. They would prefer another entity (club, etc.) managed the grooming. There is a lot of public support and funding may be on the downside in the future. There has been some legislative inquiries on this issue to better serve the needs of the public.

VI NEW BUSINESS

a) New Hatcher Pass Regulation Status/Implementation Plan

Wayne explained the changes that are coming regarding the new boundaries for motorized access in the Hatcher Pass Management Area. After the plan is signed off by the Lieutenant Governor the Rangers can start staking the revised boundaries. However, the placement of the signs marking the new boundaries could take 3-4 weeks. The Plan could take affect as soon as mid-December. The SOA will be providing public education and e-releases regarding these boundary changes. Wayne is more than willing to talk with anyone about these changes. Please contact him to set up a meeting.

b) Starkey Wilson Passing (Donor of Independence Mine SHP) – Recognition?

Starkey Wilson was the last private mine operators of IMSHP. When he retired he donated much of his land to the SOA. He has been a major player in many aspects of Alaska's growth and development. There has been public interest in providing recognition for his efforts for both the IMSHP area and the SOA. The Board agrees to support this endeavor and it was suggested that possible a mountain ridge in the HP area be named after him, maybe a storyboard placed at IMSHP describing his endeavors/efforts.

VII NOTICES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a) “First Day” Events: Independence Mine Cross-Country Skiing
There will be a public event, cross-country skiing, held at IMSHP on January 1st. Skis and training will be provided at no cost to the public.
- b) Larry asked about the Board participating in a booth at the Spring Sportsman’s Show. He will contact Mary Anderson for any help she may need for the Friends of State Parks booth.
- c) Kelly will update Jim’s email address to jvbalaska@gmail.com and add Mary Anderson, Friends of State Parks to the contact lists.
- d) Next CAB Meeting: 7:00 pm, Dec 11, Palmer State Forestry Office

IX ADJOURNMENT

Neil made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Nicole 2nds. All in favor. Adjourn at 8:20 PM.