

Seward State Parks Citizen Advisory Board

Minutes

Wednesday, February 17, 2021 5:30-7:30 pm

Teleconference

I. Call to Order

- A. Call to Order: Chair Griswold at 5:32 pm
- B. Minutes taker: Cliff Reid
- C. Roll Call: Bob Barnwell, Carol Griswold, Nick Jordan, Mark Luttrell, Cliff Reid, Tess Tulley
- D. Board members absent: Paul Paquette
- E. State Park Staff: District Ranger Jack Ransom
- F. Public Present: Kari Anderson, Briana Murphy
- G. Minutes Approval for January 20, 2021: Nick moved, Cliff second, unanimous
- H. Agenda Changes and Approval: No changes, unanimous

II. Public Comments: Kari Anderson expressed thanks to the board members for their work and stated that she supports the kelp farm and sustainable development but is worried about the impact on recreational users and other businesses in the same area. She said it's a good idea but the wrong location and would like to see it moved to another area.

Briana Murphy from the kelp farm received the submitted comments and heard the concerns. She was glad to get that perspective. She offered to clear up any misconceptions about the operation of the kelp farm. Discussion moved to Old Business.

III. Board Contact and Correspondence: Nick reported a new board member inquiry; he gave them an application and contact information. Carol received comments that vehicles parked alongside boat launch were cited for illegal parking despite lower parking lot not plowed and upper parking lot driveway dangerously icy. Discussion moved to Local Issues.

IV. Reports:

- A. Staff Report and Report/Update from Jack Ransom:
 - Statewide parking fee increase from \$5 to \$10 on hold for now.
 - Fuels reduction in Soldotna campgrounds will likely be funded again, extending Mike Burmeister's season. He will return to work on March 1. Jack noted continuing COVID restrictions on bunkhouse use.
 - The 2022 budget was submitted. Jack requested a Luke parking pay station for the upper parking lot where there is power.
 - Recreation Trails Program \$1.6 million grant does not include anything to rehabilitate the CHSRA trails. The \$75K CHSRA grant award will be announced in March.
 - US Army Corps of Engineers confirmed stream by North Beach Ranger Station is safe for drinking water
 - There may be funding for an archaeologist to resurvey Fort McGilvray this summer to help further the stalled and long-overdue National Historic Registry nomination. Recognition of the nomination will be celebrated.

- WWII rifle owned by Jack Turnbull will be going on display at the museum with the rest of the Turnbull collection. Thanks to Mark for his work with RBHS (Resurrection Bay Historical Society).
- Website updated to warn about possible access issues to Tonsina PUC during high tides. Haines and Juneau state parks reported similar beach erosion problems, and advise building PUC as far inland as possible.
- Homer Electric Association received a license from FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) for the Grant Lake Hydro Project. The involved property will be “de-parked” and revert to DMLW (Division Mining Land and Water) management. The Kenai Area Management Plan and Kenai River Plan will be amended. Mark asked for clarification as this is the first time he has heard it was Park, even though he has followed this issue for years. Jack noted that anything that flows into the Kenai River system is considered Park as part of the Kenai River Special Management Area with an ILMA (Interagency Land Management Agreement). This includes Kenai Lake, Skilak Lake, Russian River, and Snow River.

B. Committee Reports

1. Tonsina Mining Issue: The frustrated Board wanted to know how to minimize the impacts of the miner in the park ie camping, Argo, equipment storage, etc while still collaborating with him and enforcing litter and resource protection. Jack noted it is legal to camp at the beach, even with the campground within less than half a mile. Fires are also allowed below ordinary high water. Parks can't deny access to public land. He will work with miner to relocate equipment out of sight in back of campground. Tonsina is under an ILMA agreement for access and also manages the tidelands 100' out from ordinary high water. Jack noted that the state parks usually lose on access for legal activity across state park land but he will ask a departmental lawyer if an ATV is allowed below OHW and other access issues. Jack will also pursue getting a permit on record with an expiration date to tidy up the operation including access to mining claim, anadromous stream crossing with stipulations approved by ADFG, proper disposal of garbage, camping standards, Argo/equipment storage, etc. There will be small fee. Special permits have 29 standard stipulations issued by the Soldotna multiagency office. Cliff will ask ADFG if miner has a 2021 permit to cross the stream.
2. Local issues (Nick): Parking tickets/unplowed lot: Jack noted local contractor is paid to plow and sand the upper parking lot as it's a designated tsunami evacuation route, and felt they are doing a good job. He appreciated any support from the Board for him to assist with winter maintenance. Carol offered to write a letter for Board approval by email. Nick was in contact with the Lowell Point Community Council re: parking signs and enforcement. He plans to attend their meeting on February 18th and will report next month.
3. Website and Interpretation: (Carol): committee ended.

V. Old Business:

1. Kelp Farm update: 2/5/21 From Brent Reynolds, DRN: After the Public Notice, DNR and AFD&G is working with the applicant to find another location for their proposed farm. This will end up being an amended Preliminary Decision that will go back out for Public Notice and anyone who made a comment during the first Public Notice will receive a copy of the Amended Preliminary Decision.

Briana stated that they have decided to move the kelp farm to a different location due to complaints including ADFG concerns about sportfishing conflicts. A new committee was created to work with Briana to explore possible alternate sites such as Agnes Cove or Pony Cove. Bob, Cliff, and Tess volunteered to serve.

2. Land Water Conservation Fund revised letter to Legislators was emailed by Chair.
3. Tonsina Mining comments update by Dave Charron: none provided yet.

VI. New Business:

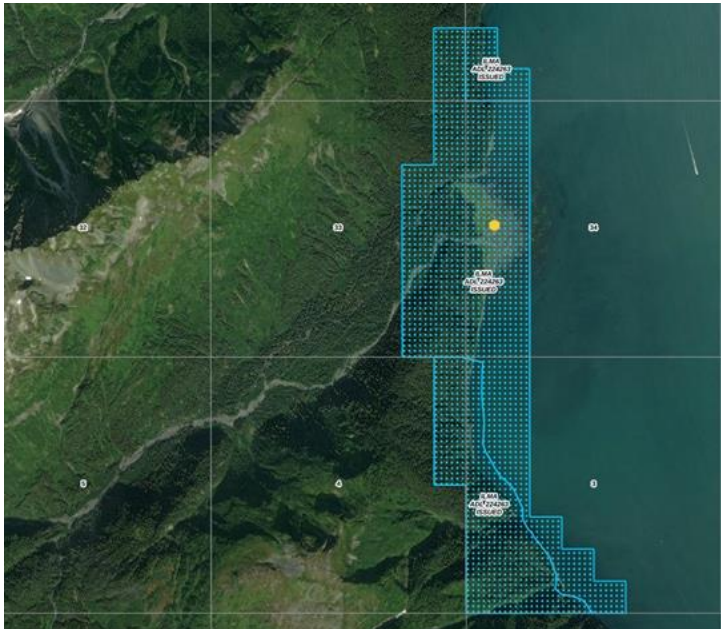
1. Follow-up on previous request that ADFG Advisory Board provide no fishing signs for N and S Fork bridges: Cliff will contact ADFG Advisory Board.
2. Request Director designate a 200-yard-wide corridor as critical habitat closure along N and S Fork Tonsina Creeks (Carol): after a discussion, Jack suggested waiting for a departmental lawyer opinion to see if this would help protect the streams and banks from the beach to state lands. Access for the miner would still have to be allowed.

VII. Public Comments:

VII. Adjournment

- A. Board Comments: Bob was interested in more information on the Grant Lake hydroelectric project and state parks connection. Carol thanked the public for attending and new Kelp Farm committee members for assisting Briana.
- B. Date/Location of next meeting: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 at 5:30 pm. TBA
- C. Motion to Adjourn: Nick moved, Tess second, unanimous at 7 pm

Tonsina Point, including the tidelands within the map below is managed by the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation under an Interagency Land Management Assignment ADL 224263



Sent: Tuesday, April 14, 2020 8:05 AM
Lowell Point Community Council
Subject: RE: Petition & Signature pages –
Jim,

During the meeting on Feb 12th you had asked a couple of questions that required research on my behalf. Those questions were as follows.

1. Are we able to restrict the public access to the beach to pedestrian traffic only?

Unfortunately, we are unable to block a public right of way in any way.

2. Is it possible to place arrows beneath the “No Parking” signs indicating where it is illegal to park?

There is a process within borough ordinance that must take place prior to installing “No Parking” signs. After careful research we were unable to find any documentation that the existing signs were placed according to that ordinance. The first step for that process is for the residents to provide a petition. Your community has done so and submitted that petition to the RSA. Next your petition must go before the Road Board for their approval of the signs. This item has been added to the agenda for the road board meeting in May. Once the board approves the signs you will be required to submit a “Sign Request Form” On this form you will request which arrows you would like placed on which signs. Upon the Directors approval, the RSA will purchase the arrows and install them.

I hope you find the answers to your questions helpful. If you have any further questions feel free to send them my way. The next board meeting will be on Tue May 12th at 7 pm via Zoom. There should be a link on the borough website if you would like to attend.

Chris Erb
Kenai Peninsula Borough East Roads Inspector