

Fort Rousseau Causeway State Historical Park



Management Plan – PUBLIC MEETING SUMMARY

4/21/2010

Attendees:
Harvey Brandt
Jayson Christner
Bill DeArmond— <i>Sitka Historic Preservation Commission</i>
Matt Hunter
Annemarie LaPalme— <i>USFS, Sitka Ranger District</i>
Deborah Lyons— <i>Sitka Trails Works, Inc.</i>
Don Mackinnon
Bob Medinger— <i>Sitka Historical Society and Museum</i>
John Sherrod
Linda Speerstra— <i>U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, Alaska District</i>
Marlys Tedin— <i>Sitka State Parks Advisory Board</i>
Marge Ward— <i>Sitka State Parks Advisory Board</i>
Facilitator:
Kathlene Rowell— <i>Alaska State Parks/Project Planner</i>
Division personnel:
Jim Bunting— <i>Alaska State Parks/Parks Specialist, Sitka</i>
Mike Eberhardt— <i>Alaska State Parks/Southeast Area Parks Superintendent</i>

Summary of Comments and Topics Discussed

- Access to Mahknati Island
- Land access to the park
 - Make it clear in the plan that there was land access to the causeway in the past
 - The division is keeping the possibility of land access on the table, while continuing to foster a good relationship with airport managers
- Recommended locations for access points
 - The only developed access proposed at this time is in Whiting Harbor; the type and exact location will not be detailed in the management plan; dock could be removed in off-season
 - Non-developed access could be recommended in other areas, principally for kayak landings
 - Mooring buoys—liability, maintenance?
- On map showing park boundary with the airport—don't extend the line into the water, it's confusing

- Environmental cleanup update—recent studies on Nevski and Reshimosti – update from Deborah Lyons, Sitka Trail Works, Inc.
 - Sitka Trail Works has grant funding for trail improvements, but need to finish environmental assessments and cleanup before major work can be done
 - Dump areas on Virublennoi and Reshimosti – post-war dump sites
 - Would be nice to drive onto the islands to do the cleanup
- High priority—Implement the environmental cleanup plan that Sitka Trail Works is developing with DEC
 - Repair causeway to facilitate maintenance – can this be done in coordination with airport reconstruction?
- Width of trails—four feet is not wide enough for an interpretive trail and to facilitate maintenance
- Preservation Planning – a discussion of how the management plan and preservation plan will work together
 - Preservation plan supports the management plan by providing specific recommendations for how to preserve historical features of the park. Its recommendations do not supersede the management plan.
- Need guns in the park –purpose of the fort was to defend Sitka and Sitka Sound with guns
 - Exhibit guns similar to Fort Abercrombie in Kodiak; ideally there would be guns on Sasedni and Mahknati
 - Missing a huge part of the story without guns
 - Example – Fort Columbia in Washington State
 - There are other six-inch guns out there, and 20mm and 155mm guns
- Interpretive topics—ensure that the topic of “cutting edge technology” is addressed in interpretive projects
- Solar, wind energy—make recommendations for energy independence
- Vegetation management plan is needed
 - Vegetation will be managed to support the cultural zone land use designation
- Need an interpretive panel on one of the islands that has a good view of Mahknati in order to share stories with visitors who are unable to go out there; Virublennoi could be a good place
- Possibly too many interpretive panels recommended for Makhnati Island
- Need volunteer programs and on-site presence to limit vandalism