

**ROLES OF PLANNING TEAM
&
ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS**

**SUSITNA BASIN
RECREATION RIVERS MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Introduction

The following sections outlines the framework for revising the recreation rivers plan. Included are a description of the roles of the planning team, advisory board, , and plan staff; how these groups update the plan; how decisions are made and differences resolved; and the responsibilities of the individual members of each of these groups.

What is The Role of the Planning Team and Advisory Board?

The planning team and the advisory board are the major bodies responsible for the revision of the management plan. These bodies operate by consensus¹ to update plan resource data, policies, and management guidelines that are recommended to the commissioner and legislature for adoption. The responsibilities of these two groups and the general process used in decision making is as follows:

What are the Responsibilities of the Planning Team?

The planning team is responsible for the development of revisions to the management plan. The team consists representatives from the agencies that are directly involved in resource management in the planning area--Department of Natural Resources², Department of Fish and Game, Department of Transportation and Outdoor Facilities, Department of Environmental Conservation, and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. The team helps to collect and analyze resource data, and update land management policies contained in the resource assessment, management alternatives, draft plan revision, and the final revised plan. Planning team members will work closely with the advisory board through working groups, joint meetings, and reviewing advisory board recommendations. The planning team will work toward resolving differences within the team and with the advisory board.

What are the Responsibilities of the Advisory Board?

The board consists of thirteen members appointed by the Governor. Section 41.23.230(b) within the act which designated the recreation rivers describes the responsibilities of the advisory board, "The commissioner shall consult with the advisory board in preparing, adopting, and revising the

¹ Consensus in the recreation rivers planning process is general accord or agreement among members of the advisory board or planning team. Consensus is not synonymous with unanimous agreement. Both groups will make every effort to reach agreement on issues. The process for resolving major disagreements is described in sections that follow.

² Including the Divisions of: Mining, Land and Water; Parks and Outdoor Recreation; Agriculture; Forestry; and Oil and Gas.

recreation river management plan and regulations affecting use and management of the recreation rivers." Advisory board members will review, comment on, and make recommendations to the planning team on the planning process, resource assessment, management alternatives, draft revised plan, and the final plan revision. They will make recommendations to the planning team on these products.

What are the Responsibilities of the Plan Staff?

The primary role of the plan staff is to guide and coordinate the planning process. They often serve as facilitators at planning team and advisory board meetings. The plan staff organizes the public participation program and are responsible for finalizing all plan publications.

How does the Planning Team, Advisory Board, and Plan Staff Revise the Plan?

A revision is a permanent change to the management plan and is subject to the land planning requirements of AS 38.04.065 and AS 41.23.440. Following is a step-by-step summary of how a plan revision plan is developed:

- A. Public meetings are held to identify public concerns and to inform the public about the planning process.
- B. The planning team, and plan staff identify issues based on public comment; compile and analyze data on these issues; and develop alternatives and management guidelines to address the issues and prepare drafts of the plan.
- C. The advisory board reviews drafts and makes recommendations to the planning team on how the drafts should be modified.
- D. The planning team reviews the recommendations of the advisory board and develops a public review draft. Final decisions on drafts and the final plan will be the responsibility of the agencies or the planning team.
- E. The draft plan is released for public review and comment. At least two public meetings are held in municipalities and communities near the recreation river and the recreation river corridor.
- F. The public comments are reviewed and changes to the plan are made as appropriate and recommended to the Commissioner.
- G. The Commissioner adopts the plan and it is submitted to the legislature for review. The legislature reviews the plan. The plan is adopted within 100 days after submission to the legislature unless rejected by an act of the legislature.
- H. Any changes that are required to regulations based on the plan revisions will be drafted and go through the Administrative Procedure Act process.

How are Decisions Made in the Planning Process?

- A. In general, the plan staff in consultation with the planning team develop of the major plan products (plan alternatives, draft plans, and final plan). These are reviewed by the advisory board who makes recommendations to the planning team. The planning team is the group responsible for making final changes at the staff level when there is consensus.
- B. If the advisory board is unable to reach consensus on recommendations to the planning team, the different viewpoints will be presented to the planning team. However, the success of the project lies in the board and team's ability to achieve consensus on all or most issues.
- C. If a consensus cannot be reached by the planning team or if the consensus of the advisory board differs from the consensus of the planning team on major issues, the issue is sent to the division directors to negotiate a resolution.
- D. If directors cannot reach a resolution, the Commissioner of DNR is the final arbiter.
- E. The management plan revision is submitted to the legislature by the commissioner for review. The revised plan takes effect 100 days after submission to the legislature unless rejected by an act of the legislature.

What are the Responsibilities and the Roles of the Planning Team and Advisory Board Representatives?

- A. Planning team and advisory board members will be responsible for representing the full range of interests within their organizations or interest group. Individual planning team members will represent their state agencies. The borough representative on the planning team will represent the borough. Although advisory board members may belong to one organization that has interests in the planning area, they should represent the broader user group they represent as much as possible.
- B. Members are responsible for briefing supervisors/directors/borough on major decisions, issues, and the planning process ensuring that their comments reflect those of the government body they represent. Advisory board members are encouraged to meet with representatives of their user groups.
- C. Members are also responsible for keeping the team and board informed of concerns or actions within their government body or interest group which are relevant to the planning process.
- D. Members should have a grasp of statewide and local issues, policies, and technical information related to the management of the resources with which their organization is concerned. They should also be generally familiar with the policies and guidelines in the 1991 Susitna Basin Recreation Rivers Management Plan. Susitna Matanuska Area Plan and Southeast Susitna Area Plan.

- E. Planning team and advisory board meetings are the forum in which compromises are made between conflicting interests. Therefore, representatives must be able to make meaningful decisions that their agencies or user groups are likely to support. Planning team members should be at a high enough level to make decisions at the meetings.
- F. Members must be willing to listen to and understand other interests. They should be able to represent the general public interest and be willing to work out compromises rather than adopting the single viewpoint of a special interest group.
- G. Members should provide an objective viewpoint during the consideration of resource potential in the development of resource elements.
- H. As stated in Sec. 41.23.230 of the act, "Board members will serve without compensation and are not entitled to per diem and travel expenses authorized by law for boards and commissions under AS 39.20.180." The team and board will meet as needed to complete the plan revision. Meetings may be held virtually (primary means), but at least two public meetings must be held in person in area communities.

Organization of Planning Team and Board Meetings

All meetings of the planning team and advisory board will have an agenda which will be reviewed and revised as necessary at the beginning of each meeting. The meeting chair is responsible for ensuring that the team/board gets through the agenda, that all members have the opportunity to speak on each issue, and that discussions remain germane to the agenda topics.

**PLAN STAFF, PLANNING TEAM, ADVISORY BOARD,
AND THE PUBLIC**

PROCESS	STAFF³	PLANNING TEAM	ADVISORY BOARD	PUBLIC
Plan Structure	Develop draft work program, schedule, plan structure, and public participation program.	Review and comment on plan structure.	Review and comment on plan structure.	Review and comment on planning process at first round of public meetings.
Issues	Organize, conduct, and summarize public meetings. Draft list of issues.	Review comments and list of issues. Comment on and approve draft list of issues.	Review comments and list of issues. Comment on draft list of issues.	Provide comments at public meetings.
Draft Plan	Summarize comments; develop alternatives, write and publish draft plan and regulations.	Review comments on alternatives; review and approve draft plan.	Review public and agency comments and review and comment on draft plan.	Provide comments at public meetings.
Final Plan	Summarize public and agency comments on draft plan; write up and publish final plan; brief legislature and borough.	Review public and agency comments on draft plan; review and approve final plan that is submitted to commissioner, borough, and legislature.	Review public and agency comments on draft plan, review plan revisions; support plan in legislature.	Provide written comments.

³ Staff includes the project manager, assistant project manager, and other staff in the Resource Assessment & Development Section. The planning team includes representatives from DNR, ADF&G, DOT/PF, and the Mat-Su Borough. The Advisory Board includes 13 members appointed by the Governor.