

CHUGACH STATE PARK CITIZEN ADVISORY BOARD

(Hybrid-with in person at Potter Section House/Microsoft Teams Electronic Meeting)

DRAFT--Minutes of the January 13, 2025 Meeting REGULAR MEETING #1. Call to Order:

Vice-Chair Irene Turletes called the meeting to order at 6:00PM

2. Roll Call & Introductions:

Present: Bill Britt, Rob Clark, Gus Gustafson, Kyle Shedd, Tyndall Ellis, Sarah Brey, Kristin VanTrese, Clark Saunders, Irene Turletes, Joe Hackenmuller, Ted Phelps, Stephanie Rice

Excused: Mark Miner, Marcella Dent, Gabrielle Jordan

Absent:

Staff: Ben Corwin, Superintendent

Public: Judy Caminar, Nancy Pease

Ben Corwin announced a change in Meeting Location and Time. New Location is BP Energy Center and meetings will start at 5:00 PM

3. Changes to Agenda & Approval: Agenda was approved with addition to new business (HLB 2025 Work Program) made by Shedd. Approved/seconded by Rice/Gustafson.

4. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes: Minutes of the December 9, 2024 meeting were approved as written on motion made/seconded by Shedd/Ellis.

5. Public Comments:

- None

6. Old Business:

a. Crow Pass Update - Interior Trails - Christine Byl and Gabe Travis on hand to discuss upcoming 2025 trail season. Interior Trails provided a trail prescription in 2024 with various projects along the Crow Pass trail. 2025 will focus on the Perch Reroute and Chutes and Ladders Reroute. This is aligned with parks needs. Both of these sections are at risk of being lost in the near future. Brushing will also be performed if sufficient crews are available. Interior Trails expects to be in the park for 8 hitches. A hitch is 8 days. They plan to minimize entrances to new trail sections until the section is 100% ready. Then the entrances will be connected with existing trail. This is to avoid hiker/construction interaction. Also working a plan to keep tools/camp safe while they are out of the park between hitches. Working to get public buy in from Alaskans as the changes will alter the trail route. They will fix significantly degraded areas.

7. New Business:

a. HLB 2025 Work Plan - HLB 2025 work plan includes a potential disposal of HLB parcel 2-147. A private individual applied for the land and HLB may dispose via a competitive bidding process. Heritage Land Bank is a municipal organization that holds land for the city for future use and they periodically sell land to raise revenues. HLB 2-147 borders CSP in upper Potter Valley. No road access, however, there is potential park benefits if the parcel is maintained in city ownership. A Potter Valley 1999 Land Use plan requested that the parcel to go to CSP. This has never occurred. There is concern that the private land owner has deliberately tried to prevent access to CSP in the past and their application to HLB may be misleading. This parcel along with several others held by HLB were highlighted in the discussion and all were incorporated into a letter to HLB against disposal of HLB 2-147. All present voted in favor of sending the letter.

8. Staff Report: Ben Corwin

Events and Public Engagement

This month has been busy and productive, with successful events, SAR operations, and progress on staffing and infrastructure projects.

- First Day Hike: The event was a great success! Public feedback was very positive, and park staff's efforts were great in making this event happen. I think the public was keen on knowing if there are public outreach events like this one.
- Eklutna Lake's froze, there was a big turn out New Years Weekend for ice skating. This led to exceptionally high visitor turnout. Parking fees collected at Eklutna totaled \$4,325.
- All snowmachine areas remain closed.
- No major damages reported from the recent storm. Staff is out assessing parking lots, facilities and trails.
- Trail erosion on Turnagain Arm, just south of McHugh

Staff:

- Tim, Ella, and Kellan attended a day of water rescue and survival training from Luc Mehl at Goose Lake which came in handy during our Eklutna Lake patrol when there was hundreds of people skating on the lake.
- I attended the NASPD, National Association of State Park Directors leadership school in WV last week. It was great to meet colleagues from across the country and see how Alaska State Parks compared to theirs.
- Staff has been cohesive and working well together.
- Seasonal campground host recruitment is underway. Ella has been soliciting interested and qualified applicants.

LE: (5 SARs in the past month)

- DEC 12 Ranger Ford followed up on a report of a black bear out of its den near Campbell South Fork. Did not find a bear or get any more reports.
- DEC 13 Ford cited an individual for vandalism for cutting a tree down in Indian Valley.
- DEC 21 Ford used a new snowmachine at Glen Alps for a SAR request that he received from AWT. Ford

was able to locate the SAR patient on Hidden Lake Trail. He was not adequately dressed for the weather and had lost a shoe. He was mildly hypothermic and lost. Ford brought him back to Glen Alps Trailhead where he had an ambulance waiting to warm him up and evaluate him.

- DEC 28 SAR at Eagle River Nature Center for a woman with an injured leg. Ranger Gurnett and Ford used a four-wheeler to get her back to the ERNC.
- JAN 4 Ranger Gurnett and Ford cited two males for riding dirt bikes on the ice of Eklutna Lake.
- JAN 2-5 Ranger Gurnett and Ford patrolled Eklutna Lake on ice skates and contacted many people. They contacted some people who were flying drones over the lake and told them that was not permitted. They conducted a lot of traffic control to ensure flow of traffic and adequate parking in the area due to very large numbers of visitors.

9. Committee Reports:

- **Access (Vacant):** 2025 CASA Bond to likely include Basher Trailhead. This was laid on the table for approval at the next Assembly Meeting. Two options. One for a study and one that included both study and funding for a lot. There is also a rough plan in the works for a multi year capital improvement plan.
- **Budget (Tyndall):** Governor's budget is out. No significant changes to parks operating budget.
- **Nomination (Vacant):** One new position is available at Mercella is moving to Vermont. Gus discussed current applications and a possible conflict of interest with one applicant.
- **Seward Highway Design (Stephanie):** Projects planned for 2025 construction include left turn lane and North bound deceleration lane into McHugh Wayside and improved signage for trailheads. Environmental Assessment still scheduled to be submitted to DOT at the end of December; public review likely not begin before end of January, 2025.
- **Trails (Irene):** N/A
- **Chugach Park Fund (Vacant):** Trail Tales is on the 21st of January and benefits go to CPF.
- **Wildlife (Gus):** N/A
- **Planning (Rob):** N/A
- **Outreach (Rob):** N/A
- **Ram Valley (Vacant):** Haley working on it. Scoring matrix was completed and a longer trail from closer to Eagle River was near the top. Gus explored this option on foot and expressed enthusiasm for this option.
- **Homicide Peak Name (Irene):** Committee recommends another organization may be better to pursue a name change. Going to reach out to Bill P who made a previous push to change the name of Yuyaq'Ch'ex.

10. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn made/seconded (Ellis/Rice) at 8:10PM.

Next CAB meeting February 10.