

# CHUGACH STATE PARK CITIZEN ADVISORY BOARD

Hybrid Electronic Microsoft Teams, 5:00 pm  
Potter Section House

Agenda for December 8, 2025

Regular meeting #10

**1. Call to Order: at 5:00 pm**

**2. Roll Call:**

- a. **Present:** Mark Miner, Gus Gustafson, Gabbie Jordan, Joe Hackenmueller, Kyle Shedd, Bill Britt, Tyndall Ellis, Rob Clark, Sarah Brey, Clark Saunders, Kristin Vantrease, Alison Smith, Irene Turletes
- b. **Excused:** none
- c. **Absent:** none
- d. **Staff:** Justin Dipaola-Allen, Keith Wilson (Law Enforcement)
- e. **Other guests present:** Brad Meiklejohn (online), Mark Spano (online), Jonathan Strong (online), Bill Sherwonit, Shaun Sexton, Casey Durand, Rick Greenfield (online).

**3. Changes to Agenda & Approval:**

- a. Bill moved to discuss item B (non-CAB committee members) at the January meeting. Seconded by Gus, approved.

**4. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes:**

- a. No changes. Motioned by Mark, seconded by Alison.

**5. Public Comments:**

- a. Gus reminded the CAB and guests of the CAB's purpose from the DPOR Purpose and Intent document.
- b. Will Taygan (Chugach Mountain Bike Riders): Had three main points.
  - i. There is still confusion amongst the public between the types of wilderness vs. Wilderness designations in the park.
  - ii. He reminded the CAB of the history of bicycle management within the park. They used to be allowed anywhere snowmachines or other mechanized devices were allowed. There was a significant change in 2022. Bicycles are now their own managed use category and should be decoupled from other mechanized devices.
  - iii. Clarified that CMBR has never built a trail within the Chugach State Park. They do, however, provide maintenance to the Lower Eagle River Trail.
  - iv. Clarification questions: what were the historical trails approved for bikes? Typically, old roads, such as Powerline Pass and Rendezvous Ridge. Hemlock Burn is the only trail built specifically for bikes. Additionally, the popularity of fat bikes in 2022 sought to separate their use from snowmachines in the winter by providing an earlier season. Keith and Clark pointed out that prior to 2022, rivers and lakes did not allow bike riding when frozen.
  - v. There are inconsistencies within state law and park law regarding e-bikes. Keith clarified that Class 1 e-bikes are allowed in the park as they are considered a regular bike.

- vi. Suggestion for a bike use clarification agenda item in the future.
- c. Casey Durand (on behalf of Alaskan Glamping):
  - i. Was recognized as a Best Glamping Destination in the US and nominated for awards with the World Luxury Travel Awards.
  - ii. They have contributed \$2,900 to many local nonprofits in 2025, including Alaska State Parks and Alaska Trails.
  - iii. Alaskan Glamping contributed \$2,610 in permit and fees in 2025.
  - iv. Three different SWAT teams will be staying at the site for training this winter.
  - v. Casey presented a check to the Chugach Park Fund for \$680, which is the difference of the previously approved (then vetoed) \$2 increase in park user fees for each of the Alaskan Glamping guests.
  - vi. Tyndall accepted the check on behalf of CPF.
  - vii. Mark asked whether the sites stay up year-round. They do not, although there are some year-round structures.
- d. Bill Sherwonit (regular guest and temporary member of the Trails Committee):
  - i. Thanked the Trails Committee for welcoming him into the committee and is pleased with the new suggested guidelines for Rendezvous Ridge.
  - ii. He also asked Will for clarification and wanted to specify that there are some trails in the park that are open to bikes which were not originally roads, such as Wolverine Bowl and South Fork Rim.
  - iii. There are signs at beginning of the Middle Fork Loop and Wolverine Bowl that very clearly say "Fat Bikes Allowed," but the allowed dates are very small (which is November 15-April 15). He recommends that the signs be changed so that they are less misleading.
  - iv. Gus thinks the responsibility is incumbent on the rider. He puts them up seasonally at the Nature Center, but agrees that the signs could be changed on the next printing.
- e. Shaun Sexton (regular guest):
  - i. Would like an update on his request to alter the reservation system to allow a single bunk reservation at the Serenity Falls Hut.
- f. Brad Meiklejohn (Conservation Fund representative):
  - i. No comment on agenda items, as he is refraining to commenting "no" on things.
  - ii. "Yes" to the following: a wild park, improvements, a quiet park, taking care of what we already have before building new improvements, and stewardship.

## 6. Old Business:

- a. Rendezvous Ridge and Powerline Pass Reroute Concepts (Trails Committee)
  - i. The Trails Committee has been working on a Guidelines document to guide CAB members and members of the public through the process of requesting new or rerouted trails.
  - ii. Gus asked for clarification on what the CAB should be doing with the RR concept plan.
  - iii. Justin clarified the hierarchy of laws and encouraged the Trails Committee to look in the management plan and find something that's already open to bikes.
  - iv. Ben (former superintendent) had given CMBR the opposite direction of improving/rerouting a trail before the regulations would be changed.
  - v. Bill Britt asked theoretically, if someone had funding for RR, would another trail be prioritized first?

- vi. Hemlock Burn was opened to all other users before regulations were changed to allow bikes.
- vii. Shaun commented on the risk of accepting assistance from the private sector.
- viii. Tyndall mentioned that the Trail Plan is also a regulation, but Justin explained the hierarchy of regulation because the Trail Plan isn't signed by the Vice Governor.
- ix. Sarah asked for clarification on opening the entire Trail Plan to allow for bike regulations to be changed more efficiently.
- x. Bill suggested that Justin's clarification about regulation and prioritization needs to be written down and made available to the CAB.
- xi. Tyndall pointed out that we'll never be able to maintain everything before building new things. For example, Arctic Valley is a great way to divert traffic away from Glen Alps.
- xii. Irene reiterated our suggestion of a maintenance endowment fund and suggested tying our support to a maintenance agreement. STA has had issues maintaining their trails, which is why this is a present concern.
- xiii. Justin encouraged user groups and individuals to find more projects that don't require regulation change.
- xiv. Casey suggested a regulation change to remove the bike regulations and just have the superintendent close and open trails as necessary.
- xv. Shaun and Bill S asked Justin: one of the disagreements amongst the Trails Committee is whether the managed use for biking means it should be allowed.
- xvi. Next steps: the Guidelines document will go out to CAB members once Justin has had an opportunity to fact check. Next meeting we will vote on a letter of support, but remember AO360 has created a standstill no matter how the CAB votes.

**b. Non-CAB Committee Members (moved to January's agenda)**

**c. Committee Review**

- i. Conversation about whether some committees should become an ad-hoc committee.
- ii. Bill asked for clarification on committee's roles and responsibilities and how this applies to his committee (Access).
- iii. Seward Highway Design: becomes an ad hoc
- iv. Wildlife: becomes an ad hoc as Keith typically includes wildlife in his report
- v. Planning: becomes an ad hoc
- vi. Ram Valley: absorbed by Trails Committee
- vii. Discussion items:
  1. Addition of "Special Topics Committee?" Discouraged because the goal is to reduce committees.
  2. Tyndall encouraged keeping Seward Highway Design but Justin reassured that he'll keep us updated when things happen.
  3. Mark questioned the need for an Outreach Committee at this time.
  4. Justin suggested that Trails Committee keep an eye on the status of all trails. For example, the Turnagain Arm Trail landslide or the Greenbelt Trail with a swan pond. He encouraged the Trails Committee to be more involved in identifying trail maintenance that needs to be done. Staff is

demoralized because they don't have resources to make sure current trails are usable.

5. Part of the CAB is petitioning the legislature and private entities for funding
6. Bill asked specifically how committees can help. Justin explained that writing a letter of support for landslide mitigation on TAT can be helpful.
7. Tyndall explained that the CPF also tries to identify trails that need maintenance, but they aren't the best at identifying the volunteer and brushing opportunities for "hot spots."
8. Irene suggested adding a column to the Trail Management Plan to keep tabs on what needs addressing.
9. Mark asked for the top three items that need to be addressed, Clark suggested the creation of a Maintenance Committee.
10. Tyndall suggested a New Business item for January to address trail maintenance.
11. Tyndall moved to roll Ram Valley into Trails, redesignate Planning and Wildlife as ad hoc, and keep Seward Highway. Seconded by Clark.
12. Alison asked about a trail matrix that keeps tabs on all trails needing attention. Kyle said the CPF keeps a list of hot spots and big projects and try to coordinate with Justin to prioritize volunteer projects.

**7. New Business:**

- a. None

**8. CSP Staff Report:**

**a. Justin:**

- i. Park has switched over to winter ops. Park staff are focused on fixing locks, handles, and doors. George, the maintenance coordinator, said that all doors at Glen Alps can open right now (which hasn't happened in a long time).
- ii. Restructured operations to 2 personnel per truck to be more efficient and ensure facilities are getting maintenance.
- iii. Justin attended the Basher Community Council meeting, that trail head is on the ballot for a CASA bond in 2026.
- iv. Prospect Heights trailhead was paved but the pay station was put in the shade, so it keeps dying. Staff are rigging solar panels to keep it energized.
- v. Clearing trees from windstorm and ice storm. Clearing cob webs from the Eagle River shop and Section House.
- vi. Started a volunteer host recruitment for next summer.
- vii. Park staff attended SAR training last week.
- viii. Cut and chipped and cleared brush at Bird Creek PUC.
- ix. Eklutna Patrol Boar has been winterized and cleaned.
- x. Cameras and signs are being installed.
- xi. Sanding/plowing/maintaining outhouses.
- xii. Law enforcement has created a laminated ticket that encourages people to pay without penalizing them with an actual ticket.
- xiii. Tickets go to a general fund, whereas user fees go back to the park.
- xiv. Staff are preparing a first day hike at Thunderbird Falls.

- xv. Grooming at Powerline Pass when the snow falls. The goal is to attract people there.
- xvi. Staff also completed their mandatory cybersecurity training.
- xvii. There was a meeting with Forestry for a beetle kill mitigation project on the North Fork of Eagle River. That's a separate department from the Municipality.
- xviii. Question about RV at Briggs: Everything was traced back to a deceased person.
- xix. Mitigating dumping and vandalism is a huge priority for the park.
- xx. Shaun asked for an update on reservations for a single bunk. Justin met with the CEO of Aspira, the Reserve America platform. They said the platform isn't capable of that at this time but are working on a fix.

**b. Keith:**

- i. Law Enforcement has been monitoring some draw hunts in the park
  - 1. DM466: Upper Campbell antlerless moose, 5/8 harvested.
  - 2. DM467: McHugh antlerless moose, 3/5 harvested.
  - 3. RM435: closed early by EO after harvest quota met on 11/5.
- ii. Ranger Gurnett testified at a jury trial in Kenai on two separate days for a defendant arrested by CSP rangers on a felony failure to appear warrant at Bird Creek Campground in mid-September. Defendant was originally charged with 2 felonies and 8 misdemeanors.
- iii. Ranger Ford investigated a trapping violation complaint in Indian Valley. The trapper was contacted and corrected his marten set placements for a 50-yard minimum distance from trails.
- iv. Rangers contacted an individual near Middle Fork Loop who left dog food on top of a legally harvested moose carcass to get pictures of scavengers on a game camera. Individual was cited and is now a suspect in a similar case in Turnagain Arm area.
- v. A few fee compliance citations issued to people sleeping in cars in the park.
- vi. Three new PUCs are online.
- vii. ATV'ing is closed for the season at Bird Valley and Eklutna until April 1.
- viii. Staffing:
  - 1. Tim serves in the Navy Reserves.
  - 2. Kellan serves in the Coast Guard Reserves.
- ix. Question: will Eklutna lake freeze over completely this year for ice skating? Keith doesn't think so.

**9. Committee Reports:**

- a. Access (Bill): Assembly passed ordinance that fines landowners who prohibit users from using public land easements. CASA update: a bond on the spring 2026 ballot will include 1.5 million for parking lot at trailhead and additional funds for Lost Cabin Trail extension. There should be extra money for Stewart Trail signage. The first CASA meeting is tomorrow, where there will be a 35% update for Basher from last year's \$300,000 bond. There is plenty of political motivation to move this through. PTS is doing the design and they will get standard drawings from CSP. Lost Cabin is on the CPF work agenda for next year to compliment the improvements.
- b. Budget (Tyndall): Budget comes out in mid-December. The fees collected by the park are reallocated back to the Alaska State Parks by the Legislature. State Parks then

distributes that funding to each park. Because of this, CSP doesn't get all its revenue. The committee tried to address this a few years ago and was approved by the legislature but vetoed by the governor.

- c. Nomination (Gus): Robin Dublin is recommended for the partial term. The full term vacated by Ted will be filled soon. Motioned by Kyle, seconded by Joe.
- d. Seward Highway Design (): Justin spoke with the Director about this being a big priority for the Governor. Justin submitted a letter to the DOT before going on leave. Bill asked how we can see it. It will be included in the EA, which should be out soon.
- e. Trails (Gabrielle): significant update in old business.
- f. Chugach Park Fund (Kyle): Waiting to get final cost estimate back from Alaska Trails for Lost Cabin. They will provide Casey a list of potentially donated materials. Judy asked him to correct the record that volunteer events cost \$1,500 instead of \$1,000 per event. She also encouraged everyone to make a year-end donation.
- g. Wildlife (Gus): Corey Stantorf with ADFG will be at January's meeting.
- h. Planning (): none
- i. Outreach (Rob): stuff in the hopper.
- j. Ram Valley (Rob): Alask Trails is working through various trail designs and access points.

## **10. Adjournment: Gabbie/Tyndall**