

CHUGACH STATE PARK CITIZEN ADVISORY BOARD

Hybrid Electronic Microsoft Teams, 5:00 pm

BP Energy Center

Agenda for April 13, 2026

Regular meeting #4

1. Call to Order: 5:01

2. Roll Call:

Kyle Shedd	present
Bill Britt	present
Robin Dublin	present
Tyndall Ellis	excused
Rob Clark	excused
Sarah Brey	present
Clark Saunders	present
Kristin Vantrease	present
Alison Smith	present
Irene Turletes	present
Mark Miner	excused
Gus Gustafson	excused
Gabbie Jordan	present
Joe Hackenmueller	excused
Open position	

3. Changes to Agenda & Approval: None. Moved/seconded by Bill/Alison, approved.

4. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes: Moved/seconded by Gabbie/Kyle, approved.

5. Public Comments:

- a. Acknowledged email from Bill Sherwonit and email from Casey Durand (attached)

- b. Shaun Sexton: is interested in Justin's discussion about trail priorities for this year
- c. Bill Sherwonit: would like to re-emphasize the points in his email to the board about making the ad-hoc nature of the wildlife committee.

6. Old Business:

- a. Powerline Pass Reroute Letter of Support
 - i. Justin outlined the new Indian Valley Trail and how it connects to the current Powerline Pass Trail.
 - ii. ½ rule for terrain grade vs. trail grade is the maximum sustainable grade
 - iii. Additions to letter:
 - 1. Ask Zack Fields to continue to work with the CAB as design progresses and keep us updated of significant changes
 - 2. Explain that the CAB is not supportive of a mechanized built trail in the alpine and to keep the width light in the alpine (Class 2). Although this will increase initial cost, it will lessen the aesthetic impact of the trail.
 - 3. Require user conflict mitigation strategies as an improved trail will create more bike and pedestrian traffic.
 - 4. Point out that Indian Valley trail access doesn't have bathrooms or other facilities, therefore a future improvement to the parking lot should be considered. Only 20 spaces right now.
 - 5. Include signage where it transitions from pack and saddle to bike and hike at the pass.
 - 6. Edit for new letterhead
 - iv. Moved/seconded by Gabbie/Clark
 - v. Approved with edits listed above
- b. Basher Trailhead Design
 - i. Bill gave history of CASA and bonds including work on Basher Trailhead

- ii. 35% design meeting had two possible designs for 60 parking spaces
- iii. 65% design meeting reduced parking spaces to 45
- iv. CASA Advisory Committee encouraged to increase back to 60 spaces, even though Muni Parks approved 45 spaces
- v. Assembly is taking up this issue tomorrow with resolution to increase back to 60-space design, otherwise funding will be halted
- vi. CSP Access Plan says it's a large access, 40-80 spaces
- vii. Entry and egress from road needs longer line of sight
- viii. If interested, individuals can provide comment before tomorrow evening's assembly meeting
- ix. Basher CC initial resolution supported up to 45 parking spaces
- x. Bill sits on the CASA Advisory Board and explained political geography of the project and CASA support
- xi. Justin expressed concern about the \$1.5 million bond for 60 spaces. If the project was reduced by 25%, where is the rest of the \$1.5 million going? For reference: Flattop Sunnyside will be 130 spots for \$2 million (\$17k per parking spot, unpaved)
- xii. This is an unprecedented assembly resolution at this point in the bond process
- xiii. Bill/Kyle move/seconded for CAB to comment in a letter to Huddle with our support of 60 spaces, or in line with the population demand
- xiv. Official process is to comment on the 65% design to Huddle. Feedback to the assembly will be a quick turnaround.
- xv. Robin expressed concern about the residents of Basher funding the road maintenance when usage is tripling and quadrupling. CAB explained that CASA includes mechanisms to fund road improvements in these areas to compensate.
- xvi. Amend CAB statement to include comment about future road repairs and, with intentions to improve Wolverine and Near Point in the future, they should plan for more traffic.

- xvii. Concern about the planned road crossing to Powerline trail at the current parking lot, suggests reroute of trail on opposite side of road
- xviii. Include suggestion of bike fix-it station and bike racks
 - 1. Kyle: yes
 - 2. Bill: yes
 - 3. Robin: no
 - 4. Sarah: yes
 - 5. Clark: yes
 - 6. Kristin: yes
 - 7. Alison: yes
 - 8. Irene: yes
 - 9. Gabbie: yes
- xix. Moved/seconded by Kyle/Sarah to present same letter to the Assembly
 - 1. Kyle: yes
 - 2. Bill: yes
 - 3. Robin: yes
 - 4. Sarah: yes
 - 5. Clark: yes
 - 6. Kristin: yes
 - 7. Alison: yes
 - 8. Irene: yes
 - 9. Gabbie: yes

7. New Business:

- a. Summer Break
 - i. Amend summer break to three months off: June, July, August
 - ii. Call special meeting if anything comes up
 - iii. Moved/seconded by Gabbie/Robin, approved

8. CSP Staff Report: Justin Dipaola-Allen, Ella Fitzwater

- a. Ella:
 - i. Staff is ready for transition to spring, closed snowmachine and fat bike access
 - ii. Maintenance staff performing snow removal as needed
 - iii. PUC checks/maintenance

- iv. Shout out to field staff for their hard work, hiring for new park technician (over 60 applications for one position)
- v. Early planning for upcoming projects and onboarding summer trail crew
- vi. Upcoming host orientation in mid-May
- vii. Training for staff: GIS mapping, Future Leader Summit, grant writing class

b. Tim Gurnett:

- i. First update since 9/9
- ii. Stats:
 - 1. 7 search and rescues that were responded to by park law enforcement, although more were conducted within the park
 - 2. 2 arrests
 - 3. 7 abandoned vehicles
 - 4. 160 hours of in person training
 - 5. Active shooter training and snowmachine
 - 6. 68 citations
 - 7. 1 felony trial in Kenai
 - 8. 9 citations defended in court
- iii. Houselessness remains an issue at trail heads, handled in various ways. Citations issued to out-of-towners, if working and living in their car they are directed to local services. Important to address those in crisis, as the camps multiply and grow quickly.
- iv. Unauthorized offroad use: Ptarmigan and Peters Creek, Glen Alps. Dirt bikes/ATVs.
- v. Hunting/fishing enforcement: 1 open case at Basher trailhead setting out traps. Weren't able to file any charges but don't suspect it will be an issue in the future.
- vi. Influencer with a special use permit was flying a drone too close to a dall sheep. Didn't understand the rules, no malice suspected.
- vii. Investigation regarding baiting wildlife for photography reasons.

- viii. Traffic offenses: park LEOs can assist with public safety issues outside the park.
- ix. Abandoned vehicles: the park is on the hook for the cost of removal. 7 vehicles impounded. 1 RV is still an issue.
- x. Underage drinking and pallet fires at various trailheads.
- xi. Dumping: Briggs Bridge is an ongoing issue and park is responsible for disposal and cleaning it up. \$200 fine with \$20 surcharge.

c. Justin:

- i. Park is currently hiring a park technician 1
- ii. Attended Trail Town toast and press release by IMBA
- iii. Attended CASA meeting for Basher Trailhead
- iv. Working with staff to extend fat biking season
- v. Reviewing Rabbit Lakes and Basher 65% design updates
- vi. Many special use permits requested the past month
- vii. Meeting with Spencer and Leo about hiring waivers for summer trail crew
- viii. Funding is project-based, will be working on Turnagain Arm trail
- ix. Letters for funding requests include bridges on new Indian Valley trail
- x. ADF&G BOG met at the end of March. Regarding changes that impact the park: BOG took those comments from Justin and CAB and set a healthy precedent for May 31st. This strikes a balance for consumptive vs. non-consumptive users.
- xi. Met about a new hunt within the park: on Highland Mountain, which can be accessed from Arctic Valley and Mt. Gordon Lyon. Bow and arrow black bear in month of October. Up to 25 draw tags, which is more than the area can support so it will probably be 5 bears. Not limited to weekday only and will require a special use permit.
- xii. Will have to put out the parameters for the hunt in the next book (2027). Hunter proficiency must be displayed to qualify for the special use permit.

9. Committee Reports:

- a. Access (Bill): None
- b. Budget (Tyndall): None
- c. Nomination (Gus): None
- d. Seward Highway Design (Alison): Climber's information page online lists all progress made since CAB submitted their public comment. Justin hasn't heard anything from DOT.
- e. Trails (Gabrielle): Trails Conference May 6-8
- f. Chugach Park Fund (Kyle): Trail Tails was a success! CPF signed a contract with Northern Trails Maintenance for summer work on Falls Creek Trail (owner Dusty is selling the business to a company employee).
- g. Outreach (Robin): None
- h. Wildlife Committee: Wait for information and opinions from Gus when he's back, as he was the former chair.

10. Adjournment: 6:53

- a. Moved/seconded by Gabbie/Alison

From: Casey Durand durandcasey@gmail.com

Subject: Re: Public Comments 3/9

Date: March 10, 2026 at 23:42

To: Michael Gustafson gusgustafson99577@gmail.com

Cc: Dipaola-Allen, Justin A (DNR) justin.dipaola-allen@alaska.gov, i.turletes i.turletes@gmail.com, Joe Hackenmueller jhackenm@gmail.com, Gabrielle Jordan gabrielle.jo27@gmail.com, Kyle Shedd kylershedd@gmail.com, Bill Britt bill@billbritt.us, Mark Miner mcminak@yahoo.com, Sarah Brey sarahbrey@gmail.com, Alison Smith alisonalaska3@gmail.com, Rob Clark 1robclark@gmail.com, Robert Tyndall Ellis tyndall.ellis@gmail.com, Robin Dublin radublin907@gmail.com, Clark Saunders clarksaunders@gmail.com, Kristin V vankristin@gmail.com, haley.johnston@alaska-trails.org

CD

Howdy, Thanks for the ask. I am always accepting of time in front of an audience. SO COME TO TRAIL TAILS ON THE 17TH!

Being both you and I referenced AK Trails, I have included Haley on this.

I am spending some of my hobby time and headspace, acting as an independent and private citizen, to legally secure a new access point in the North End of the CSP. I have mentioned in a previous public comment that I have a customer who is interested in supporting the development of a new access point to the amount of \$20k dollars. That won't get us much, but a lot can happen in 7 days with an excavator and a handful of cash! haha

AK Trails was the last group to put any effort towards Ram valley. They got a grant and produced a great study with a lot of great data that has been useful in starting my research. A great spring-board if you will.

My comments about FOIA requests and conversations in city offices were made in reference to these research efforts. Just typical property research and due-diligence of any land developer and investor, leading up to making my own report and action packet on the matter.

There is an interesting new tool available to the public now that was not available at the time AK Trails did their study. I am planning to leverage this new tool and use it to get the city to do most of the heavy lifting of legally securing the access point, from which to develop the new access site from.

Current focus is to build an actionable plan with full supporting documents to include a full step by step action package for the city, ask it be proofed and endorsed by the CAB, then submit it to the city.

If the group wants to know more, I think this would make a GREAT conversation as an agenda item. The CAB is the proper format to talk about this further and in greater detail and in compliance with the Alaska Open Meetings Act.

What we all just participated in should be part of CAB record, this is a Point of Order. per Alaska Open Meetings Act: "Reply-all" discussions are considered a **"serial meeting."**

Respectfully,
Casey Durand
907-575-7000

On Tue, Mar 10, 2026 at 6:16PM Michael Gustafson <gusgustafson99577@gmail.com> wrote:

Casey-

I was hoping you could expand on your public comments in re: Ram valley from last night's meeting.

There is some confusion in the CAB about your work vs Alaska Trails. Can you clarify for us what were you talking about with homeowners and doing at the records office?

Please reply all to this email.

Thanks,
Gus

From: Bill Sherwonit akgriz@hotmail.com
Subject: Some thoughts following Monday's CAB meeting
Date: March 10, 2026 at 20:52

BS

To: i.turletes i.turletes@gmail.com, Bill Britt bill@billbritt.us, jhackenm@gmail.com, vankristin@gmail.com, Mark Miner mcrminak@yahoo.com, Gus Gustafson gusgustafson99577@gmail.com, R Tyndall Ellis tyndall.ellis@gmail.com, Gabrielle Jordan gabrielle.jo27@gmail.com, sarahbrey@gmail.com, kylershedd@gmail.com, ted@alaskarockgym.com, Rob Clark 1robclark@gmail.com, clarksaunders@gmail.com, alisonalaska3@gmail.com, radublin907@gmail.com
Cc: Dipaola-Allen, Justin A (DNR) justin.dipaola-allen@alaska.gov

Greetings to you all,
Here are a few thoughts/observations I'd like to share in the wake of Monday's CAB meeting. I'm not sure I have the full CAB membership, but I think I have most current members.

First, while one or more members were apparently offended by Justin's comments about the proposed Rendezvous Ridge reroute and its location in the park's designated wilderness—and why it would be a "no go," for reasons he clearly explained—I greatly appreciate that he brought this to the CAB's attention. Maybe this could have been done earlier in the process, but as Justin has noted, he is still on something of a steep learning curve and playing catch-up at the same time. There are many issues demanding his attention and to me it's to his credit that he caught this before it went any farther. I would also suggest that this is something that the CAB and previous superintendent should have noticed much earlier in the process. I wasn't aware that the trail—and proposed reroute—are in park wilderness. But for as long as this issue has been before the advisory board, and as much discussion as there's been, it seems curious to me that no one caught this before Justin brought it to the CAB's attention Monday night. Or if someone did notice this, he or she did not feel it relevant enough to discuss. Or maybe it was discussed and discarded.

In the several months that I've been regularly attending the board's monthly meeting—I don't think I've missed a meeting since last summer—I've been struck by how eager the CAB has been to "grease the wheels" for the proposed reroute, even though the trail and park management plans make it clear that a regulation change--and a robust public process--would be necessary to proceed with the project. Maybe it's because the biking groups would put up both the money and the people to make it happen, when the park doesn't have much of either. I think it's fine for the CAB to support a project, but this seems so early in the process and the board has largely been informed--and lobbied--by one user group that has lots of resources and, to be honest, substantial political pull.

I know I may sometimes come across as "anti-bike," but in fact I'm for balanced use—and above all, an advocate for the park's wild values. I haven't been witness to the entire process for this proposed reroute, and apparently the previous superintendent suggested he supported the project and also that it would be a straightforward thing to accomplish. But it's clearly more complicated. I would ask members of the board to get "the full story" and be sure you have all the facts and understand the park regulations more fully before expressing such strong support for projects that may or may not even be possible, given the park's management plans and regulations that guide recreational uses. Even Monday, I couldn't understand why there was such a push to write an amended letter of support, when it seemed simplest—and to me made the most sense—to simply tell Will: before we can support your rerouting proposal, you need to put together something that is in accordance with the park's management plans and regulations. If Justin hadn't brought up the wilderness zone

management plans and regulations. If Justin hadn't brought up the wilderness zone issue, the board might have given its stamp of approval—which might have had to be rescinded at some point in the future, when someone else noticed the wilderness restrictions. Okay, enough on that topic. For those who've stayed with me to this point, thanks for considering my perspectives. (Again, I present these thoughts as a former CAB member and long-time park advocate.)

The second item I'd like to address: I don't understand why the wildlife committee has been made ad hoc. I missed the board's election discussions and votes, so I don't know the thinking that went into that. But to me the wildlife committee is one of the board's (and the park's) most important committees. We don't need to go any farther than this past month, when the CAB seemed ignorant of the Board of Game's upcoming meeting, and the need to address hunting (and other) proposals being made to the BOG. It's true that park staff, too, need to pay attention to this. But tracking Fish and Game's management of wildlife within the park is to me a primary responsibility of the board, partly because the presence of wildlife in CSP is one of the park's chief assets. To have easy access to the park's moose and sheep and even bears and wolverines (not to mention the many other species) is an amazing thing, especially given its close proximity to the state's urban center.

I would suggest the need--and value--of a wildlife committee that builds a solid relationship with the local area management biologist, right now Cory Stantorf. His appearance at the January meeting would have been an ideal opportunity to ask him about this month's BOG meeting, what he viewed as significant proposals affecting the park, and his position on various proposals (and his rationale for his positions). Hunts occur in the park for much of the year; in the spring and from late summer into fall. And at least some of those hunts affect other recreational activities, for instance the moose hunt that occurs in the South Fork Campbell Creek valley and assorted Dall sheep hunts, including a hunt in one of my favorite places, Falls Creek Valley. In the past, the creation of new hunts has proved controversial and the CAB has taken public testimony and weighed in on some of those hunts, including black (and eventually brown) bear hunts in McHugh Creek valley. I could go on, but I'll simply repeat my main point: to me, keeping track of the park's wildlife and their management should be a CAB priority.

End of rant (a reasoned rant I hope). Thanks again to those who've stayed with me—and for the opportunity to participate in the board process and express my opinions and perspectives. I do appreciate the importance of what you do and your investment of time and energy on behalf of the park and all it includes. Cheers,
Bill Sherwonit



CHUGACH STATE PARK CITIZEN ADVISORY BOARD

18620 Seward Hwy, Anchorage, AK 99516 Phone: 907-345-5014 Fax: 907-345-6982

April 14, 2026

To the Basher Trailhead Parking Lot Project Team:

The Chugach State Park Citizen Advisory Board (CAB) is a volunteer board composed of members of the public appointed by the Director of the Division of Parks & Outdoor Recreation. The CAB is not a decision-making body, but rather an *advisory* board. In that capacity, the CAB offers its opinion on developments material to the function and operation of the State Park in an effort to advise funders, community members, and Chugach State Park (CSP) management.

In that capacity, the CAB would like to voice their support for a parking lot design that provides at least 60 parking spaces at the Basher Trailhead. It currently contains 15 parking spaces and is frequently overflowing, with CSP users parking along the road. Without hard data to back up a decrease from 60 to 45-spots, the CAB struggles to follow the design logic. CAB has a few specific reasons to maintain the 60-spot design:

- Basher will be the only large CSP trailhead services east Anchorage, where south Anchorage has several 60+ spot trailheads.
- The Chugach Access Plan, one of the supporting plans to the CSP Management Plan, calls for a **large** vehicular lot at the Basher Trailhead, recommending that it be designed to “Enlarge and enhance the trailhead and parking are to the largest size that is reasonably feasible...”
- The CSP, in partnership with the Chugach Park Fund and others have planned substantial improvements to trails connected to and associated with Basher Trailhead over the next several years. The demand for access from this trailhead will increase from these trail improvements.
- Draft parking projections by Anchorage Parks and Recreation estimate that 60 spaces may not even be adequate

We feel that a 45-space lot will be immediately insufficient and a poor use of CASA funding. For these reasons, *we also suggest that the 60-space Basher Trailhead parking lot be designed with possible expansion in mind.*

In addition to supporting the 60-space Basher Trailhead parking lot, the CAB also supports a number of other related improvements.

- We recommend that the project design team consider rerouting the pedestrian crossing of Basher Drive at the existing parking lot to a location with a better sight line such as the

proposed parking lot entrance. This would require a minor trail reroute on the north side of the road, but would be an improved intersection for all.

- We suggest that a bicycle repair station be incorporated into the bike rack area.
- We recommend improvements to Campbell Airstrip Road and Basher Drive in anticipation of the increased use of the trailhead. This work is needed and does not appear to be funded by the existing bond. It should be considered for a future bond.

We appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on this trailhead - it is an exciting opportunity for CASA funds to have a major success in Chugach State Park access.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Irene Turletes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end.

Irene Turletes, Board Chair
Chugach State Park Citizen Advisory Board



CHUGACH STATE PARK CITIZENS' ADVISORY BOARD

18620 Seward Hwy, Anchorage, AK 99516 Phone: 907-345-5014 Fax: 907-345-6982

March 9, 2026

To whom it may concern:

The Chugach State Park Citizen's Advisory Board has reviewed the concept plan for a reroute of Powerline Pass. Thank you for your commitment for improving the park for all users. As you listed in the concept plan, the current Powerline Pass trail needs significant work to accommodate its managed uses on the south side of the pass.

The necessary work includes, but is not limited to, mitigating steep grades, overgrowth, and erosion. While the work required is extensive, please note that the Chugach State Park is not supportive of a mechanized-built trail in the alpine. This allows the trail to remain classified as a Class 2 trail. We understand that while this increases the initial cost of a new trail, it will significantly reduce negative aesthetic impacts within the park.

Although the Powerline Pass trail is managed for bicycle use in its entirety, the current bike traffic is limited due to current conditions. A rerouted and improved trail will significantly increase both biker and hiker traffic. Therefore, we would like to see user conflict mitigation strategies planned and implemented to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all users. In the CSP Trails Management Plan, pack and saddle access is only approved on the west side of the pass. Visible and clear signage signifying the end of pack and saddle usage is mandatory if the trail beyond the pass is attractive to traffic beyond hiking and biking.

When improved, Powerline Pass is likely to be a thru-trail experience for many users. The current parking lot in Indian is not suitable for higher traffic due to reduced parking spaces and a lack of facilities. The CSP Trails Management Plan implements suggested improvements when "opportunities, staffing, and funding allow." When there is an absence of facilities or overflow parking that interferes with the local neighborhood traffic, the opportunity for an enjoyable park experience by all is diminished. This aspect must be addressed before significant progress can be made.

If the above considerations are implemented, the CAB strongly recommends and supports this reroute. Please work closely with CSP and DNR staff throughout the design process. The staff of Chugach State Park ultimately determines how and when a concept plan will be implemented. Please continue to work with the CAB as design progresses and keep us updated of significant changes

We appreciate all special interest groups who submit improvement proposals for the park.

Thank you for your commitment to Chugach State Park,

CSP Citizen Advisory Board