



Kachemak Bay State Parks Citizens' Advisory Board
95 Sterling Hwy, Suite 2
Homer, Alaska 99603

Kachemak Bay State Park Citizens Advisory Board Minutes
December 13th, 2023
In Person + Virtual Meeting

Call to Order at 5:30pm

Roll Call – Board Members Attending - Robert Archibald, Sue Christiansen, Nancy Hillstrand, Curtis Jackson, Kevin Walker, Glenn Seaman, Kirsten Dixon, Louis Dupree, Meg Ciccarella, Aron Peterson, Yarrow Hinnant.

District Ranger Jason Okuly

Not in Attendance – Stephan Payton, Glenn Seaman (Both Excused)

Public Comment

Derek Reynolds

Visitors - Jason Harriman – ADF&G

Discussion on Wildlife issues in the Park,

Trapping in the Park – Our proposal put forth to limit trapping on Diamond Creek and Saddle Trail was passed by the BOG. On the Grewingk Glacier Trails there is now a 100-yard setback on those trails, but the BOG inserted conditions that traps can still be used here if they are 3 feet above the ground or enclosed in a box, underwater, enclosed in ice. One of the only trapping limitations passed in the past 20 years.

Species hunted are black bears and mountain goats—an average of 9 hunters per year and 1-2 moose yearly. Bait stations have increased slightly in the past year due to outer coast from commercial hunters (permitted through ADF&G)—no conflicts regarding bait stations according to Jason. Bear baiting is in the spring. DLP usually is in the fall. 1 brown bear was shot in Sadie Cove (the first brown bear since the 60s). Mountain goat numbers are increasing. Harvest is stable, with around 30 per season. There are 980 goats in the park (as of 2019). Trapping is minimal in the Park. Most are for river otters – about four otters per year. Reported martin sightings in the Park but nothing confirmed. Wolverine harvest is 1-3 in the park. Wolverine populations are healthy. Wolves – 1 harvested in 2022. Coyote numbers are high and healthy. Black bear spiked in 2021. Numbers came back down in 2023.

There were some questions about bait stations within the Park. Research that has been done does not support the idea that baited bears will be more inclined to seek human food at a campsite. There were questions about why there are bait stations in the Park. Any changes would need to be passed through the Board of Game. The conversation moved to beavers and the past over-harvest of them. There is legal and illegal beaver trapping, particularly around Caribou Hills. There is no driver for ADFG to repopulate the beaver population.

State Park Reports

Superintendent Report - Hans Rinke on Christmas Break
No Report

Operations Report – Jason Okuly

Kachemak Bay Research Reserve – Has some overlapping boundaries in their management plan with Trails in Cottonwood/Eastland Unit.

Parks did not put up signs regarding personal watercraft as that regulation has been overturned.

Working to dispose of older items from evidence.

Jason attended the Board of Fish meeting – reg changes were noted.

Met with Ski Club regarding their MOU. Ski Club wishes Friends to take over Eveline SRA summertime trail maintenance. Friends will not meet until January, but there is an informal opinion that this will be declined. Parks will be inclined to let maintenance go during the summer and let it become a winter-only maintained trail.

Helicopter permits are under discussion. HEA has requested blanket approval for helicopter landing for power line repairs. Big game violations are happening on the outer coast. Met with Land Trust regarding land acquisitions. Some inholdings are of interest to Parks.

Cater Forney is doing training with SERT training and training to become a field officer.

Rockfish limits reduced to 3 / China Poot season extended from June 15 to August 14. Commercial fish operators in the Park must obtain a permit to fish in Park waters.

Drones in the Park – restricted in recreational areas (i.e., Grewingk Valley). In natural zones of the Park, they are authorized.

Trails Meeting Report – Discussion on parking at Cottonwood Eastland.

Cameale Johnson had discussion on parking at Cottonwood / Eastland. Lots needs to be sorted out.

Friends Report

Fundraising dessert auction \$2039.00 split with Water Trails. The first ski of the year to be at Eveline SRA on January 1 at 1200pm.

Water Trail – No report

Cottonwood / Eastland – Aron (inaudible)

Carter Forney Working to get permission to have volunteers clean up the east end of Elmers Way where discarded equipment has been left on Park Property. This may happen in the spring.

Habitat – Nancy did not have good connectivity.

Old Business

Personal Watercraft Lawsuit – The judge reinstated the Ban on PWCs in the Kachemak Bay & Fox River Critical Habitat Area. The State asked for reconsideration of this decision. The Judge has 30 days to decide reconsider his decision.

State of Alaska is expected to appeal an adverse decision against the defendant.
(ADF&G)

New Business

State Parks opened a public comment scoping for personal watercraft and unmanned aerial vehicles for all State Parks. Rules vary from park to park throughout the State. Sue moves that we take a position on this issue that each Park is unique and there should be legislative mandate with no regulation changes. Aron seconded it. Our park is legislatively mandated for scenic value. Nancy requested a 60-day extension.

Saddle Trail Land Update – Chris Little at Conservation Fund.

A letter was sent out to the Board. Chris included language to protect the Saddle Trail donation.

Public Comment –

Jeannie - Drones in Park – drones are easy to obtain; maybe in the future, an overwhelming number of drones will be in use. Jeannie thanked Cameale for her work with the Cottonwood Eastland trails.

Aron asked about e-bikes in the parks – they are restricted at present. Bikes are authorized in Diamond Creek.

Board Comments

Kirsten – participated in the Friends fundraiser. Requested that Jason send Kirsten the recording.

Nancy - Prefers Zoom, but the State of Alaska uses Microsoft Teams.

Curtis – Seldovia person is working on the Search and Rescue team. Curtis will report next month.

Aron – (partly inaudible) Sue will take on notices on KBBI

Kevin – Teams training might be valuable.

Robert – Drones are being used recreationally now. Permits are complicated. Weather presents a problem for a limited time permit.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:30pm

Next Board Meeting

January 10, 2024, at 5:30pm. Trails Meeting at 4:00pm

Transcribed by Kirsten Dixon.