

Seward State Parks Citizen Advisory Board

Minutes

Wednesday, December 16, 2020 5:30-7:30pm

Teleconference

I. Call to Order

- A. Call to Order: 5:31pm
- B. Minutes taker: Tess Tulley
- C. Roll Call: Bob Barnwell, Carol Griswold, Nick Jordan, Mark Luttrell, Paul Paquette, Cliff Reid, Tess Tulley
- D. Board members absent: none
- E. State Park Staff: District Ranger Jack Ransom
- F. Public Present: David Charron, Fairbanks
- G. Minutes Approval for November 18, 2020: Paul moved, Cliff 2nd, unanimous
- H. Agenda Changes and Approval: No changes. Nick moved, Bob 2nd, unanimous

II. Public Comments: None

III. Board Contact and Correspondence: Carol: friends hiked out to Tonsina on December 15 to view the 13.1 high tide at the North Fork Tonsina Creek bridge, but it didn't cover the ramp. Nick noted the high tide covered the ramp on south side of the bridge on December 14 at a 13.6' high tide.

IV. Reports:

- A. Staff Report and Report/Update from Jack Ransom
 - Hiked out to Tonsina a few times the previous week to view the high tides. We might want to consider some new signage about it for the trail.
 - Noticed a few decorated trees for the holidays, one done by Nick Jordan's family and other possibly by a group of local trail runners.
 - Cliff Reid helped Jack clear the downed trees from the last heavy snow on December 9 to the top of the switchback, which he greatly appreciated.
 - Mike noticed that there was a new COVID-19 criteria requirement for the Recreation Trail Grant trail funding and followed up in time to submit the \$75,000 request even though he was on seasonal leave. We should know more about the grant award by January. Thanks, Mike!
 - New damage was noticed after the fall rain/floods on the Tonsina Trail and out at the Derby Cove cabin bridge; the water blew out one bridge and needs rebuilding. Callisto Canyon cabin made it through two flooding events, one in October and the December snowfall. Fortunately, the creek diverted north, away from the cabin. Old flooding damage is still present. Jack is hoping to use \$45K State Homeland Security funding to relocate Callisto next year. Funding will also go to reinforce North Fork Tonsina Bridge and foot bridges along switchback to help with drainage.

- Tonsina Cabin – The shoreline from the South Fork Tonsina bridge to just south past the cabin to the bedrock continues to erode dramatically. Old growth spruce and the ghost forest trees are falling. The largest spruce tree by the cabin knoll with the PUC sign blew over parallel to the shoreline. Root balls and felled tree barriers had no effect; the knoll bank continues to slough. If erosion continues, cabin may need to be moved back. Bob asked about the cause and whether this was excessive erosion. Jack started noticing the erosion problem in that area about 4 years ago with 200-year old trees falling, and believes the erosion picked up after the earthquake in 2018. The high tide now goes over the beach berm and into the beach grass. Jack is not sure why it is happening or at this rate; it's not happening anywhere else on coast. Possibly isostatic uplift, unstable soil on the alluvial fan, loose soil. At low tide, gravel berms are developing at the mouth of the creeks. No idea when or if it will stop in that area. The situation is being monitored. Cliff noted that the satellite images on Google shed some light on the area, that most of the deposition of the alluvial fan is from the South Fork, not the North Fork, and the erosion might have to do with the gravel deposition in that area.
- No word on the Kelp Farm proposal. Comments from the public are still being submitted.
- New Caines Head interpretive signs look great and are in production.

B. Committee Reports

1. Tonsina Mining Issue: Carol noted that mining and watershed conflicts have been an issue since CAB's first meeting, documented with a 9-page summary and photos. She would like to move forward with a more formal request to halt the current permit holder and any future permits. We would then be able to pursue acquiring the area for the park. Cliff emailed photos to Samantha Carroll at DNR about mining claim mess. She responded and forwarded Cliffs' email to Stephen Buckley. Cliff invited them to tonight's meeting. (It was at this moment in the teleconference we realized David Charron of DMLW was on the call.) Cliff also went to Cathedral Fall earlier in the week and everything seems to be the same, meaning bad, and is currently covered in snow. Brian Blossom of ADFG responded via email to Cliff stating that there is no permit allowing the miner to cross the anadromous stream with his ATV.
2. Local issues (Nick): None
3. Website and Interpretation: (Carol): While researching mining issue, Carol realized our SCAB State Parks webpage needed to be reorganized and corrected. DNR webmaster Mario promptly fixed the errors.

V. Old Business:

1. Seward CAB Bylaws: Carol requested a Board motion to request input on DNR by-laws: Cliff moved, Bob second, unanimous that Carol request Jack Blackwell to allow Board to have input on standardized new By-laws.
2. Seward State Parks Citizen Advisory Board email account update: Carol reported that a separate CAB email account would cost money and for the low amount of use, she is willing to continue to use her private email account to receive public input.

VI. New Business:

1. Formal request to expand CHSRA to include Tonsina watershed and proposed addition in Kenai Area Plan (including proposed kelp farm waters): Mark hoped the miner's permit would not be renewed next year: there is no ADFG permit, many violations of the General Allowed Uses include permanent occupancy, buildings, litter, solid waste, equipment, and trash; and that part of the Tonsina watershed should be included. Since layering ILMAs is not favored and the Legislative action is only for up to 640 acres (one square mile), could we cherry-pick the low elevation drainage to protect it?
Paul suggested we all apply for mining permits and tie it all up until it is protected. At this point, David Charron was given the floor to speak to the mining issue. See attached notes.
2. Carrying capacity of LPSRA and CHSRA discussion- Postponed until January.

VII. Public Comments: See David Charron attachment.

VIII. Adjournment

- A. Board Comments: Mark recruited a possible new board member for this fall. Bob thanked David for his informative comments; Nick noted it was great information to think about. The Board is thrilled to finally have information and a responsive contact.
- B. Date/Location of next meeting: Wednesday, January 20, 2021 at 5:30 pm. TBA
- C. Motion to Adjourn: Paul motioned, Tess second, unanimous.