

**Kenai River Special Management
Area Advisory Board**

Thursday, January 12, 2006

5:30 p.m.

Kenai River Center

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Roll Call

Members Presents: Joe Connors, Richard Dykema, Floyd Heimbuch, Ken Lancaster, Richard Hahn, Rick Wood, Keith Kornelis, Robin West, Tom Vania, Jack Sinclair, Paul Shadura, Pete Sprague, Ted Wellman, Brenda Trefon, Tim Stevens.

Members Absent: Deb Cooper, Ted Forsi and Jeff King.

B. Approval of 12/08/05 minutes

Approved as written.

C. Agenda Changes and Approval

Ken Lancaster approved 2 agenda changes:
Add Matt from DOT; and Gary Williams from Coastal Zone Management.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. DOT BRIDGE UPDATE- MATT

Matt reported that the cofferdam has all the reinforcement in the bottom and all the steel has been put in place for the construction of the center pier. They are ready to pour cement when the temperature will allow. If everything goes as schedule they will remove the sheets for the cofferdam around the 3rd week in February. They would like to have these removed before there is any significant ice damming on the cofferdam itself. The girder fabrication is proceeding as scheduled.

Dick asked how the steel is made warm enough to pour the concrete. With the help of Enstar gas, they have been able to set up 2 very large heaters to warm the steel.

B. Coastal Zone Management - Kenai River Easement status-Gary Williams

The Kenai River Access program has been long standing, but Gary stated he may have some momentum behind the project and will be moving fairly quickly to find some resolution to the project. The River Access Project grew out of the Kenai River Comprehensive Management Plan in 1997. This plan stated that there was not a comprehensive means of managing or determining what kind of management should go on with respect to access points, easements and right of way to the Kenai River. He noted that trampling of the riparian zone was going on and it would only become worse over time. The design of this project was to respond to that. The Planning Department at the borough did respond by writing a DNR grant. The grant required that each access point be identified by their nature, determine a management regime and come up with a memorandum agreement among those agencies that have management responsibility to determine how one would nominate an access point that needs management.

Each access point has been identified, studied and the management regimes have been identified. The study is at the point where all the agencies need to discuss the issues and problems that would ultimately be dealt with in a memorandum of understanding with all the parties. Gary had a presentation of all the public access points along the Kenai River. They have set up a program that identifies all the points on a map. When a specific point is selected a picture of the easement is presented with information that includes the type of easement it is, where it is located, improvements and encroachments, the type of activity that is happening along the access, soil, vegetation, slope, etc. The study covers from Kenai Lake to the Warren Ames Bridge but excludes federal access points.

The next step is to coordinate a meeting of all the agencies. Robert Ruffner will facilitate this meeting and is scheduled with DNR Habitat, Parks, Mining, Land and Water, Fish and Game, ADOT, City of Soldotna, City of Kenai, and Fish and

Wildlife. The meeting date is for late February or early March.

C. Accomplishments and Goals work session-Suzanne Fisler

Ken summarizes the points that were discussed at the work session before the regular meeting. Still on the list to work on is:

1. Second half of the boat wake study.
2. Concerns over ultra lights and floatplanes using the Kenai River as part of safety.
3. Addition of anadromous streams.
4. New User fee for all users on the river.
5. KRSMA Land additions.
6. 50 Horsepower review.
7. Working group package.

If you would like to add anything to the list, please notify Ken Lancaster, Jack Sinclair or Suzanne Fisler.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Commercial Operator Committee Reports- Joe Connors

The Commercial Operators Committee met today. 12 people in attendance and it was a productive meeting. 3 issues were discussed. The first was the proposal to create a Kenai River Guide board that was basically a sub committee of the KRSMA board. In fact it would become the existing Commercial user committee. Everything included on the proposal was passed unanimously with the addition of one point. There would be terms for the members that are selected for the board. There should be some sort of staggering of the terms, so all the appointments would be for 3 years except for one of the Kenai River Professional Guide Association and one from the general public would be two-year terms. This is a nine person body that represents the KRSMA Advisory Board, ADF&G, Sport Fisheries Division, A DNR Parks Division and a representative from the rental Boat industry. Two people each will be from the Kenai River Professional Guide Association. Several of the positions would be appointed by each of the agencies and the others

would be selected through an application process. This will be done through Parks, which in turn would rank the candidates and then the information would be brought back to the KRSMA board for final approval.

This board would advise on a variety of issues that concern the guides along the river.

Ted moved to adopt Joe's proposal to establish a Kenai River Guide Board.

Dick Hahn seconded the motion.

Robin asked Jack Sinclair for his thoughts about the Kenai River Guide Board. Jack said this would help with some of the suspensions and also other problems, concerns or incidents that may happen along the river.

Robin then asked about the name of the board. Would this cause a problem calling this a board with the public? Is there a suggested different name? It was decided to be named the Kenai River Guide Advisory Board. This was passed unanimously.

Joe brought up the topic about fishing tournaments. Bill Berkhahn talked about the crowding on the river and how to improve education.

Jeff King put together a fact sheet for the 50 horsepower motors on the Kenai River. Joe discussed some of the key points on the fact sheet. This is just for discussion not a motion. More information needs to be reviewed before a motion will be presented. This will be discussed more in March.

B. Regulation Updates-Jack Sinclair

The regulation package has been forwarded to the Department of Law office and waiting for the final package. The 3 year payment is not going to move forward. Joe said it is the thoughts of many guides that if the package does not happen soon then implementation should occur in 2007. It is taking too long to finalize.

The board requested a tally of the public responses on the regulation to be presented at the February meeting.

C. Buy Back Updates-Brenda Trefon

The committee met in November. Brenda took the suggestion back to the Kenaitze members and she did a draft program fact sheet. This sheet was not official, it is a working document. The goal is to have the project going in 2006.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

VI. ADJOURNMENT

A. Board Comments

Ted Forsi commented that we went through the priority list and identified some of the areas the board would like to work on for 2006. Ted sincerely hopes that we have a commitment from parks, specifically the director. He noted the lack of response from the Commissioner's office to board letters. "This working group thing irritates the dickens out of me because we adjourned in March of 2005 and were expected to come back in September 2005." The second phase of the program specifically stated the charter was to develop a fair and legal way of developing a numerical limit for guides. We realize in the session that we did not have efficient data to move forward with that premise. It was agreed that in March we would get the data and move forward into the second phase. There has been no communication as to what may happen to the second phase of the working group. Ted does not want to waste his time.

Dick said the 2 new proposals about mixing zones are in the Senate. He asked if the board would send a copy of Suzanne letter stating the position of the board on mixing zones. Jack commented that there might be a presentation on the boat wake study by Lance Trasky at February meeting.

B. Date/Agenda of Next Meeting

February 9, 2006