

**Kenai River Special Management  
Area Advisory Board Minutes  
Kenai River Center  
Thursday, April 9, 2009 6:30 p.m.**

**I. Call to Order**

- A. **Members Present:** Joe Connors, Ted Wellman, Brenda Trefon, Carol Padgett, Richard Dykema, George Heim, Jack Sinclair, Peter Micciche, Janet Schmidt, James Czarnezki, Wayne Ogle, Karen Kromley, Robert Begich. **Absent:** Milli Martin, Timothy Stevens, Adam Reimer, Bruce King. Guest: State Parks Director James King
- B. **The Minutes for March 12, 2009 were approved as written.**
- C. **Agenda Changes and Approval: Ted Wellman requested item C be added to new business portion of the agenda.**

**II. Public Comments:**

Will Madison expressed his concern regarding bank erosion on his property and provided a letter to the KRSMA board.

Ricky Gease, Executive Director of the Kenai River Sportfishing Association, spoke in regards to having a drift only boat launch on the Lower Kenai River.

Monte Roberts, President of Kenai River Professional Guide Association, commented on drift only boat launch on the Lower Kenai River.

**Presentation:** *Sterling Highway Mile Post 45 to 60.* Miriam McCulloch, Project Manager for DOT&PF, and Mark Dalton, HDR Alaska Project Manager. Mark Dalton reviewed three possible alternatives for the Sterling Highway Mile Post 45 to 60. Those three were the Juneau Creek Alternative, Cooper Creek Alternative, and the G South Alternative. Mark stated updated information can be found online at: [www.sterlinghighway.net](http://www.sterlinghighway.net).

**III. Reports**

**A. Agency and Government Reports**

**Jack Sinclair, ADNR/Parks;** Welcomed and introduced State Parks Director James King. Director King thanked the board for the work and dedication to the River. Sinclair reported the rangers are at training this week. Starting in May the Alaska Conservation Corp (ACC) workers and volunteers will be back at work. A Swiftwater Rescue Class will be taking place in May for the river crew. State Parks will be working with the Kenaitze Tribe setting up a site stewardship program at Slikok Creek for the summer. Jack asked to be put on next month's KRSMA agenda, in order to setup priorities for deferred maintenance. The state will be doing their 2011 capital budget preparations this summer. Jack stated that he would send out an email with a complete list of items on deferred maintenance for the Kenai River.

**Pam Russell, ADNR/Parks,** stated guides are starting to make appointments and come in for registering.

**Tim Stevens, DEC,** was not present.

**Robert Begich, ADF&G,** went over list of projects ADF&G has for the Kenai River drainage this summer. For king salmon, at River Mile 8.5, ADF&G will be doing their regular creel survey and running the king salmon sonar. Both projects begin May 16 and go thru July 31 or the end of king salmon season. They will be continuing genetic stock identification program on the middle Kenai River, above Soldotna Bridge to Moose River from mid-June through the end of king salmon season. Both early and late runs of king salmon are forecasted to be below average. For sockeye salmon, we will be doing the regular program at the Russian River weir. The division of commercial fisheries will be running smolt traps in the Russian

River from early May through approximately the last week of June. Also, they will have smolt traps at Kenai Keys, river mile 43 from early May thru late June. They will be running their sonar site at Mile 19 on the Kenai drainage. New for this year, we are going back in Upper River to do a rainbow trout abundance estimate between Jim's Landing and Sportsman's. Also, they are going to try to take a look at Crescent Creek grayling, doing some radio tagging of adults and monitor those fish through the summer and collect some baseline data. They are finishing Arc Lake rotenone evaluation and are planning to move on and do a rotenone (a piscicide) at Scout Lake. Also, they are working with the Fish and Wildlife Service fisheries assistance office to install a remote weir and remote video weir on Soldotna Creek to monitor Pike movement.

**Janet Schmidt, USF&WS**, very busy hiring seasonal employees and looking forward to being here for her first season.

**Karen Kromley, USFS/Chugach**, reported that Travis Mosley is the new district ranger for the Seward district. We are going to do a temporary fence at Russian River on May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Stream Watch volunteer orientation is scheduled for May 30th.

**Wayne Ogle, City of Kenai**, suggested that KRSMA talk about the Drift boat launch and the ecological effects. The coast guard has approached the City of Kenai about locating their boat for this summer. Wayne suggested that KRSMA approach The Coast Guard and lay out some type of program that they could work on cooperatively.

**Peter Micciche, City of Soldotna**, attended a planning and zoning meeting on April 1, 2009. There was a request for a variance, in which someone wanted to build on Riverside Drive. The commission thought it was closer than necessary, the board postponed the action, and they are requesting that the applicant come into the next meeting to encourage them to move back from the river. The developers for Soldotna Creek Park wanted to drain the parking lot into the grass instead of into the state's settling ponds; the City held fast so that would not occur. The City is working on reviewing parking ordinances. One of the major problems in Soldotna is wholesale removal of natural vegetation. The City of Soldotna has a parking ordinance that requires too many parking spaces per square footage. We are hoping to reduce that by at least one-third, we passed an increase in the required remaining trees and natural vegetation left on residential lots this year. The City of Soldotna is in the middle of the new Comp Plan development. Everyone is encouraged to stop by and pick up a questionnaire at the City of Soldotna. The first draft of the Comp Plan is due on September 2009.

**Milli Martin, Kenai Peninsula Borough**, was not present.

## **B. Committee Reports**

**Guide Advisory, Joe Connors**, did not meet today.

**Habitat**, did not meet today.

**River Use, Ted Wellman**, met today from 2:30-4:30 pm; Ted reported their primary task today was to provide advice to Doug Whittaker on a draft questions and topics for the recreation survey; the committee worked through it and provided the necessary advice. Also, the committee had a presentation from Will Madison and some discussion on how the river use committee might address some of the issues about alternative designs for fishing platforms and other areas. In addition, a proposal was discussed about making a change to PFD recommendation voluntary program, stating it should be changed to make it mandatory for canoeists and kayakers, to whom most of the fatalities have happened.

**Permits, Jim Czarnezki**, did not meet.

**Legislative/Government Activities** did not meet.

**Board Development, Jack Sinclair**, did not meet.

**Agenda/Board Structure/ Housekeeping**, did not meet.

#### **IV. OLD BUSINESS ACTION ITEMS**

##### **A. Results of Priorities set by board – Top 20 - KRCMP Issues from workshop**

Jack Sinclair reported the results from today's meeting, they decided on the Top 9 Kenai River Comprehensive Plan Issues.

Ted Wellman made the motion to pass Top 9 KRCMP issues.

James Czarnezki, seconded motion.

Peter Micciche made motion to switch #4 and #6, because the '50 habitat protection ordinance should have priority.

Amendment to Top 9 KRCMP issues passed unanimously.

Amended Top 9 KRCMP issues passed unanimously.

##### **B. Letter to Commissioners of Fish and Game, Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation**

The Department of Environmental Conservation has issued a request for proposals for the contract to do the turbidity study in July and August. Those are due April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Jim Czarnezki stated there would be a turbidity study and a letter does not need to be written.

##### **C. Board endorsement of the PFD guidelines**

Motion was made to bring recommendation before the board.

Brenda Trefon, seconded motion.

Ted Wellman made a motion to amend PFD recommendation to include PFD's to be mandatory for kayakers and canoeist.

Amendment was seconded by Richard Dykema.

Amendment to PFD guidelines proposal passed unanimously.

Amended PFD guidelines proposal passed unanimously.

##### **D. Statewide Teleconference Report- Sinclair**

Jack Sinclair reported that a statewide teleconference among all the state's advisory boards took place on March 18. Bruce King was the board's representative but is not in attendance at tonight's meeting. Sinclair encouraged the board to participate in future teleconference to stay informed on statewide issues for all advisory boards.

#### **V. NEW BUSINESS**

##### **A. Update on HEA hydro project**

Jack Sinclair reported the six-month progress reports from Kenai Hydro/HEA on the four creeks under permit for hydro studies on Kenai Lake, which include Grant Lake, Crescent Lake, Falls Creek, and Ptarmigan Creek. The reports explain what they have done in the last 6 months and what they intend to do in the next reporting period in the next 6 months. The one that is getting the most attention is Grant Lake. The reports reference engineering environmental studies, stakeholder outreach, and other agencies they have contacted.

Pam Russell stated they want to expand their stream gauges, fish with nets and poles in Grant Lake, and in the streams. They are proposing to do a rough trail along Grant Lake to get better access.

**B. Proposed Bylaw changes – Three year terms**

Joe stated the rationale for the three year term is consistent with other advisory boards.

Jack Sinclair referred to the draft with the options for phasing in the three year term proposal.

Joe asked the KRSMA board to take the proposed bylaw changes into advisement and to let him know if they would like to see it on next month's agenda as an action item.

**C. Discussion regarding Drift Boat take-out on Kenai River**

Ted Wellman asked KRSMA to endorse the concept of a drift boat take-out on the Kenai River and encourage the agencies to be involved.

**VI. CORRESPONDENCE - NONE**

**VII. PUBLIC COMMENT - NONE**

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**A. Board Comments**

Jim Czarnetzki stated the baseline testing will be April 28<sup>th</sup>, the July date is 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**B. Date/Agenda of Next Meeting May 14, 2009 5:30 p.m.**