

**Kenai River Special Management Area
Advisory Board**

Thursday, May 10, 2007

5:30 p.m.

Kenai River Center

I. CALL TO ORDER:

A. Roll Call

Members present: Ken Lancaster, Jack Sinclair, Joe Connors, Brenda Trefon, Curt Shuey, Richard Dykema, George Heim, Jim Czarneski, Rick Wood, Rich Koch, Jeni Evans, Tim Stevens

Members Absent: Ted Wellman, Richard Hahn, Gary Knopp, Robin West, Tom Vania

B. Approval of April 12, 2007 minutes – Minutes were approved as written.

C. Agenda Changes and Approval: Added were updates on River Quest Subdivision and the newly formed bylaws committee. Also, an update on the Kenai Watershed Forum baseline study by Jim Czarneski

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

A. Bridge Update-Matt Coullahan – Matt was not available to provide an update.

Cliff Chamberlain voiced his concern that no action has been taken to deal with the hydrocarbons in the river.

III. OLD BUSINESS

A. Guide Advisory Committee Report-Joe Connors. Two items were unanimously passed at today's meeting; the process recommended for emergency replacement of a guide and finalization of the guide complaint form.

Joe explained the short-term solution for guide replacement. The replacement guide would have to meet the following requirements:

- Already registered as a Kenai River guide.
- Selection would be from a pool of guides that have already gone through the guide academy.
- Minimum of one year guiding on the Kenai River
- Coast Guard licensed if applicable
- Guide fees paid

In future years, a regulation will need to be proposed and accepted for the process.

Other items discussed were updating guide stipulations, a possible seasonal pass for The Pillars, updating the boater safety guide, a report on the guide academy, a report on violations and the continued work on the public education process.

B. Guide Academy Emergency Provisions-Connors

Discussed above.

C. Guide Academy Report-Connors

Joe stated that this year there were 133 graduates of the academy. Of those 133 graduates, 86 were not required to take the academy this year.

Due to a misconception by some of the one-year guides from 2006, these guides did not realize that they needed to complete the academy before guiding in 2007. Consequently, a provisional one day course has been set up for these guides to fulfill requirements. These guides will still need to take the week long academy before the 2008 season.

D. Waterbody Recovery Plan status - Stevens

Tim stated that DEC is waiting for DNR's decision on the regulation package before his agency moves forward with a waterbody recovery plan.

Discussion followed with many board members voicing dissatisfaction with waiting any longer to begin the plan.

It was decided that a letter would be sent to the commissioners of DNR, DEC and ADF&G with the following points being made:

- The letter could be worded as a final report for the Board's last meeting of the year
- Copies of the letter would be sent to the borough, cities of Kenai and Soldotna and a press release to other publications
- It would contain wording of the importance of the health of the river. How are we going to limit and control hydrocarbons entering our river.

The letter will be drafted and forwarded to all board members for comment before submission.

E. Kenai River Center Update-Russell

Pam reported that there has been approximately 300 applications for permits processed at the Kenai River Center since January 1, and over 100 of these applications are for flood related damage. The Kenai Peninsula Borough has hired Suzanne Fisler as a temporary employee to assist the Borough with their permits.

F. Kenai River Flooding Update-Sinclair/Russell

Jack commended Pam on her efforts to deal with the influx of permits. He stated that a survey of the river from just above Moose River to approximately Mile 14 found very little debris in the river. Thanks to the assistance of the Spruce Bark Beetle office, a database has been cataloged which will be very valuable in the future.

The Borough is assisting the public in their clean up efforts by placing dumpsters in the land units along the river for disposal of flood related debris.

G. Highway Bypass update-Sinclair

Jack stated that a recent meeting was held in Girdwood to discuss the mile 45-60 highway bypass proposals. Many other agencies were in attendance. A map with a timeline will be posted in the conference room for anyone interested.

Jack said that there is still a lot of data that needs to be collected such as soil sampling, engineering studies and a need for wildlife crossings. The public comment period will continue until March 2008.

H. Riverquest Subdivision

Jade Gamble of DEC arrived and provided a report on her agencies work with the River Quest Subdivision. She stated that she has conducted several site visits. The residents continue to claim that the subdivision is being used on a seasonal basis only. She stated that monitors would be put in place to monitor wastewater discharge. The engineer still feels that the septic system will remain under the limits. There is an estimated 80 gallons per day wastewater usage. The nitrate sampling results for last July showed no nitrates detected.

I. Regulation Process update-Sinclair

Jack will draft the letter pertaining to the regulation process as earlier discussed.

J. Base Line Water Quality Analysis

At this time, Jim Czarneski provided the Kenai Watershed Forum Update. On May 1, water samples were taken from 21 sites along the river from Kenai Lake to the Kenai City Dock; July sampling is set for July 17. Since January, data collected from 2000 through 2006 are being summarized. Comments on the draft of this report should be done by June 1 with a final product being done by July 30.

Jim stated that there is a Memorandum of Understanding that is expiring soon between the Kenai Peninsula Borough, USFWS, KNWR, USFS, ADF&G, DNR, DEC, Cities of Kenai and Soldotna, Cook Inlet Aquaculture, Kenai Sportfishing Assoc., the Nature Conservancy and the Kenaitze Indian

Tribe. This MOU will be amended using information from the final water quality report.

K. Board Improvement and By Law Committee

Curt gave a report on the Bylaw Committee Meeting held today. The goal of the committee is to look at the way the Board works through different issues.

Some ideas brought up included:

- Having a board workshop to identify different issues to look at
- Board training to discuss different approaches to problem solving, familiarization with Roberts Rules of Order and discuss other options to conducting meetings.
- Reviewing the bylaws and refining them based on the Board's goals or purpose.

Jack also recommended inviting the new Director, James King, to visit this summer and also in the fall. As a past Executive Director of a non-profit trails group, he will be a great advocate in acquiring possible grant monies to develop the trail program. An invitation should also be extended to the Commissioner.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Summer Activities for Board Members-Sinclair. Jack extended an invitation to any board member interested in getting out on the river with him this summer to see how State Parks is operating.

Brenda added that on the second Saturday in July, there will be a beach cleanup on the Lower River that is being funded through a small grant from Alaska Coastal Studies. A barbeque will follow.

Jim Czarneski reminded everyone of the Kenai River Festival to be held June 9 and 10 at the Soldotna Creek Park site.

V. ACTION ITEMS

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

No comment

VII. ADJOURNMENT

A. Board Comments

Tim Stevens stated that he had copies of the Oasis Environmental Amended Final Report available.

Rick Wood stated that Centennial Park will be opening tomorrow.

Jack stated that The Pillars would also be open tomorrow.

George Heim offered a raft trip on the Upper Kenai, but if you want to fish, you'll have to pay!

Ken asked that a letter be sent to Commissioner Irwin inquiring if funding for the amended Kenai River Plan has been secured.

B. Date/Agenda of Next Meeting

Next meeting will be September 13, 2007 at 5:30 p.m. at the Kenai River Center.