

**Kenai River Special Management Area
Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
Gilman River Center
Thursday, October 13, 2011. 5:30 p.m.**

I. Call to Order

- A. Members Present:** Joe Connors, Carol Padgett, Rick Wood, Andy Loranger, Bruce King, David Carey, Terri Carter, Tim Stevens, Brenda Trefon, Rick Koch, Ricky Gease, Bruce King, Bobbie Jo Kolodziejcki, Robert Begich and Jack Sinclair.
- B. The Minutes** for September 8, 2011 were approved as written.
- C. Agenda Changes and Approval:** Agenda was approved as written.

II. Public Comments/Presentations

Jeff King expressed concern about silver fishery.

III. Reports

A. Agency and Government Reports

- a. State Parks, Jack Sinclair**, things are slowing down for us; we have 32 applicants for the 2 vacant Park Ranger positions we have currently. Jacques is putting together a hiring team; they will be doing some interviews at the end of this month and are weeding the group down to a half a dozen or so. In your packet we put a little bit about the Outdoor Recreation Trail Advisory Board (ORTAB), they help advise the Department of Natural Resources on funding throughout the state for state trails and it is federal money that they basically they help advise the state on that pot of money is basically going down hill. We haven't had anyone from the Kenai Peninsula on this board in quite a while. We sent out this questionnaire that we are trying to get information about anybody that is interested in serving on the ORTAB board; so I included it in your packet in case you are interested. We just hired a new Trail Coordinator; her name is Darcy Harris and her introductory letter in on the front of the questionnaire. These questionnaires are due by the end of the month for consideration.
- b. DEC, Tim Stevens**, last month I told you that we were going out to get a contractor for a peer review of the lower river turbidity study. In our RFP we did not get any responses, so we are forced to go back out again and that closes on October 21st. The first time we went to term contractors, which we are required to do. Since we didn't get any responses, we have taken it out to a bigger audience of contractors and we are hoping we get a response back this time. If we can get it under contract, we hope to have a final report in February.
- c. ADF&G, Robert Begich**, it's still a busy season for us, we will be doing budget requests this month. We still have work on the river, rainbow trout live tags and some tracking being done until mid-November. Otherwise, we are off of the river pretty much here on the Kenai.
- d. USF&WS, Andy Loranger**, Thanked the board and the various committee members for the Watershed Symposium.

USFS/Chugach, Bobbie Jo Kolodziejcki, we have our Kenai River Russian River Collaborative Public Process coming up on October 25th here at the Gilman River Center from 6:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m. Have flyers if anyone would like to distribute. We are really looking at the public to come out and help with primarily some strategies for fish waste management, closures we have used, infrastructure needs, enforcement, regulations, and education. We have a lot of good feedback to date; we have about 200 people on our contact list that have been plugging into this process. The more we generate good ideas the better off we are going to be. The other thing was the 2011 season on the Russian River was pretty successful; we didn't have any brown bears killed or defense of life and property; we didn't have any injuries to humans. We did have close calls, which is pretty usual up there. A lot of people are still using the area even though it was a pretty slow second run. We still have a lot of people still using the area now for bear viewing; there are a lot of bears in that area. One of our bigger challenges this year was the use of firearms as deterrents to scare bears away. We had reports of at least 25 different times that was a concern to people, which is also something we are looking at in this public process. We had a considerable amount of vandalism this year. Another thing is our stream watch program and our

accomplishments for 2011, there should be a two page summary in your packets. In 2011, the Kenai Watershed Forum hired a Coordinator that was housed at the Gilman River Center and Forest Service hired a Coordinator, continued to do supervision of the program and we expanded to Bing's Landing, went to Centennial Park, and Moose Range Meadows. That was bringing in State Parks as a partner, City of Soldotna, and the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. We also had some volunteers, who went down to the mouth of the Kasilof River to help with some of the projects going on there. We spent more than 1,000 hours out on the ground, picking up 600 pounds of trash and monofilament line. We made public contact with over 4,000 visitors. We have a lot of great partners and appreciate the support of all of them. We had a lot of orientation and training time with our volunteers and got them as comfortable as possible. We recruited 24 new folks; we had 70 people in the program this season and 62 last year. Next year accomplishments will change, because now that we have things like sheds, which were donated partly by the Peninsula Shed Company and we have all the supplies do to the grant. Next year we were successful in getting more grant funding through the Sustainable Salmon Fund to support this effort. The other things in the outlook for 2012, we are creating an agency steering committee to help guide this program, there is definitely room for input, get in soon. By February or March we are going to have our annual operations plan. If you see an emerging issue that needs some volunteer support or an educational message that seems to really important to get out for the 2012 season, please let us know. We are going to have a consistent sign produced, hopefully a metal one, a habitat protection sign, so that every site that the stream watch program operates on while have some branding and recognition of this is a stream watch site and this is the common message, we want the messages to follow the fisheries and users. We are going to hit it hard starting with Kasilof at the beginning of the season when the fish go up river, our volunteers are going to be at those sites, when the anglers and the visitors see those same messages we hope that it is going to make a better impact. We are going to be doing habitat fencing, we did a lot of that fencing down at Moose Range Meadows this year and on the Russian and Bing's Landing, but we are really trying to get on top on that earlier, so it's easier to manage and people understand why we want these areas protected. We have public service announcements that are being produced right now that will have some key messages that will go to the Peninsula and Anchorage audiences. Some of the challenges we recognized were lots of snagging going on, a lot of issues with habitat degradation and people not really heeding the signage and putting bags, coolers, etc. all along the vegetation and fish waste management. We also produced the first ever Russian and Kenai River Visitors guide.

- e. **City of Kenai, Rick Koch**, the city is just wrapping up our end of the year personal use fishery discussions; we have a work session tomorrow night. This year was a really challenging year for the event that takes place at the mouth of the Kenai; most of you probably know that the commissioner decided to open the personal use fishery for 24 hours a day. It eliminated a lot of our opportunity to go down and mitigate the damages done everyday, such as trying to drag fish waste to a point down to the tide, it was by far the worst year we've had on the beach, it was the worst year we've had for public safety calls, fire department calls, it really taxed the cities resources for 3 weeks. People were in a good mood for the first week of the dip net fishery, after that the attitude changed to a more negative one. We are working on what hopefully will be a somewhat successful effort for dealing with fish waste. This year we had estimated 1.2 million pounds of fish waste on the beach that rolled in and out with the tide until it finally went away after the season was gone. Hope to be able to do a better job next year.
- f. **City of Soldotna, Rick Wood**, stated Mayor Micciche would like to have me report that they are evaluating the current regulation regarding the disposal of outside fish brought in the city park which a lot people from the dip net fishery are bringing more fish into the city parks and filleting them and throwing the carcasses there. He would like to be working with Streamwatch to make sport fisherman aware of how to dispose of their fish waste.
- g. **Kenai Peninsula Borough, David Carey**, thanked the Refuge for their wonderful 78th birthday celebration held a couple weeks ago. The Watershed Symposium was excellent. Thanked everyone involved in making the Watershed Symposium happen. On Monday, went to Anchorage, had a wonderful video conference with the Governor, his Chief of Staff and special aide. One of the four things that I took to him was the dispatch center and the idea of a grant to analyze who should run that, should it be the state or borough. Particularly mentioned the idea that we were not able to provide assistance to law enforcement personnel. We talked about the added troopers and a number of things. The other thing I took to the Governor was deferred maintenance. I had to be cautious because we as a body haven't approved it. On Tuesday the Assembly took a huge step, they finally got enforcement for the 50 foot overlay district for habitat protection and it passed unanimously. On Wednesday, attended the public comment meeting for the Kasilof River Boat Launch takeout, which went really well.

B. Committee Reports

- a. **President's Report, Joe Connors**, attended all three committee meetings today. There was a lot of good discussion in each of the committees. Met with the Mayor about a week and a half ago on the

legislative committee for the report you will have later tonight under new business. Excited because everyone seems to be working positively towards resolutions. Encouraged everyone to try to participate more in the committee meetings.

- b. **Guide Advisory, Joe Connors**, met today, only had 5 or 6 members present. Had some pretty good discussion and we are working on some issues.
- c. **Habitat Committee, Bruce King**, met today; the biggest topic was the Watershed Symposium and our thoughts on how it went and where it is leading. Gave a brief summary of the two day Watershed Symposium.
- d. **River Use, Carol Padgett**, met today and discussed a few items. We continued the discussion of the safety item that was brought to our attention last month regarding the Russian River ferry and the confluence of the Russian and Kenai River. We will be bringing this as a resolution to the board next month. The committee agreed to the recommendation about not allowing the boat transit between the islands and the river, which is Resolution 2011-4 and a final reading, will be brought to the board at the next meeting. The committee would like to hold off on resolution 2011-5 in order to review it further in order to truly understand if there is a safety zone that has already been established. Another item we talked about was the Bings Landing parking; there were issues on that again this year. Last year the River Use committee drafted a proposal to look at doing something different with the parking. The lower parking lot is set up with big parking spaces which are getting filled up with personal use vehicles versus boat trailers. There is definitely some interest in coming up with a resolution to help manage that. We had a request on a couple things; one was an update on the river activity count. Last year there was a discussion that Parks was going to count the number of people or boats at different points on the river. We just wanted to understand what those counts looked like. The River Use Committee would like to have an overview from Fish and Game of the management of the salmon run this year.

Bruce King made the motion to draft a letter for resolution to deal with parking problem at Bings Landing.

Ricky Gease seconded.

- e. **Permits**, nothing to report.
- f. **Legislative/Government Activities, Joe Connors** stated that he met with Mayor Carey a couple of weeks ago and we have in your packet Resolution 2011-6 that the board will be asked to vote on tonight.
- g. **Board Development, Jack Sinclair** stated board development will be bringing an item under new business on how the board should handle the lack of applicants for the 3 vacant positions.
- h. **Agenda/Board Structure/Housekeeping**, nothing to report.

IV. Old Business - none

V. New Business

Resolution 2011-3: Amending resolution 2010-2, Moving up the date for implementation of the boater safety course requirement from January 1, 2015 to January 1, 2018. Referred by River Use Committee.

Bruce King made the motion or the board to accept Resolution 2011-3.

Ricky Gease seconded.

Rick Koch stated that the City of Kenai would be support this resolution if amended to remove the KRSMA waters flowing over the city's submerged lands.

No amendment was made to Resolution 2011-3, vote was taken.

7 voted in favor.
1 opposed
1 abstained.

Resolution 2011-3 passed.

Resolution 2011-4: A Resolution in support of establishing a regulation prohibiting boats and other watercraft from using the south channel around an island at the mouth of the Russian River from June 10 to August 30, except for official agency use for resource management and public safety. Referred by River Use committee

First reading of Resolution 2011-4, final will be brought to the board at next meeting.

Resolution 2011-5: A Resolution in support of establishing a regulation that would prohibit the anchoring of boats within 300 feet upstream and 100 feet downstream of the Russian River Ferry, throughout the duration of the operating season. Referred by River Use Committee.

Resolution 2011-5 was put on hold by the Habitat Committee.

Resolution 2011-6: A resolution supporting the full funding of the KRSMA Deferred Maintenance list; in addition the resolution supports the capital request to build the Bing's Landing Angler Access parking area.

Discussed Resolution 2011-6 and removed Bing's Landing Angler Access parking area from Resolution.

Rick Koch made the motion that the board draft a letter to the commissioner and copy the governor, as well as the four chairs of finance and legislators that represent the lands that encompass the Kenai River, including Mike Chennault.

Vote was taken.

Motion passed unanimously.

Ricky Gease made a motion that the board write a letter to the DNR Commissioner seeking a reason why funding for the Bing's Landing Parking did not make his budget.

Vote was taken.

Motion passed unanimously.

New Business: Should the board consider amending the bylaws to deal with the current lack of applicants for the three vacant seats? Current bylaws require at least three applications for each vacancy; the board has received four total applications by September 30. Review the bylaws and consider a one year suspension or a permanent allowance for this situation.

By voice vote the board voted in favor of sending the four applicants that applied prior to the September 30 deadline onto the Director and Commissioner and not including the fifth one that was received after the September 30 deadline.

Jack Sinclair asked if anyone would like to be part of the discussion at Board Development meeting next month on November 10th, at 4:00 p.m. to talk about proposed changes to the board's bylaws.

VI. Correspondence

Joe Connors stated the board did get a response on the letter that was written and sent forward relative to the lack of dispatch opportunities. Response was that he should talk to the Borough or City Mayor.

VII. Public Comment - none

VIII. Adjournment

A. Board Comments

B. Date/Agenda of Next Meeting November 10th, 2011 at 5:30 p.m.