



ORTAB
Advisory Board
March 1, 2006
Teleconference



Teleconference commenced at 9:00 am

Members Present:

- Susie Byersdorfer-Kodiak
- Jenifer Kohout-Anchorage
- Erling Westlien-Willow
- Rich McIntyre-Sitka
- Ken Lancaster-Soldotna

Members Absent:

- Gia Hanna-Kotzebue
- Wendy Shiffler – Fairbanks
- Paul Sandhofer-Kenai
- Bobby Andrew-Dillingham

Staff Present:

- Margaret Brodie-Admin. & Grants Manager
- Samantha Carroll-State Trails Coordinator
- Lani Eggertsen-Goff-Grants Administrator
- Sam Means, Acting Regional Manager, Southcentral Region of Mining Land & Water

2005 Alaska Trails Initiative:

Staff provided board members with an update on the 2005 Alaska Trails Initiative (ATI) grants and status of all the grantees. Concerns were expressed on the grant term and what that means for grantees that are not currently under Grant Agreement. Grantees that are not able to get under Grant Agreement due to circumstances outside of their control will still be eligible for funding. For those grantees that are not compliant in getting under Grant Agreements funds will be reallocated.

2006 Alaska Trails Initiative:

Board members and Staff discussed the new grant cycle, what worked what did not and how we can improve on the system. Concerns were address regarding member review time and that they should be given a longer period of time to evaluate and score proposals. Members expressed a concern in the expectations in funding of phased projects. A letter of intent was suggested. This letter would be to the Board for existing grantees to be able to submit in lieu of an additional proposal to request funds. This would allow applicants who requested funds the previous year to reduce the work load for the applicant process.

A motion was made to allow ATI grantees to submit a letter of intent in place of a complete application. Vote taken; five (5) in favor.

For those grantees who are interested in seeking additional project phase funding, it was decided that Staff will put together a presentation to review 2005 grants from the previous year.

Easement Recording Project:

Staff from the Division of Mining, Land & Water introduced the project and provided an update. This project has been developing over the last five years. Trails were identified and a set of criteria was developed, which included high use of trail, regional networks & use and statewide networks. The Division would like to continue with this essential part of recreational access to trails and the grant program's customers. The Board was in support of this project and would like to see those efforts continue.

Iditarod Trail Committee (ITC):

ITC proposed to use allocated grant funds for avalanche efforts for the preparation for the 2006 Iditarod Race. Due to the recent fatality along the trail, ITC proposed to allocate \$10,000 of grant funds awarded for other work to go towards the avalanche safety efforts. Once the Division was contacted, Staff stated that it would be put in front of the Board for approval. ITC feeling the pressure to ensure safety of the race participants decided they could not wait for a determination on the grant funds and therefore expended funds to release avalanches along the race trail, prior to Board approval. It is the Division's policy to have project work approved by ORTAB and a Grant Agreement in place prior to the expenditure of grant funds. Therefore, this issue is null and void and the avalanche funding will not be included in the ATI grant for ITC. Board members were in agreement.

Board Members had difficulty understanding why there was a lack of funding for this type of known critical safety issue. Members agreed that the safety & educational proponent of the grant needs to be more visible in the community. There is an interest in avalanche awareness month and a proclamation making it more visible for the public as an issue.

Other discussions:

Members would like to see the score sheets adjusted to reflect safety more clearly. A scoring teleconference was requested to be set up prior to the next scoring meeting. The public benefits of grants needs to be increased. The Board would like to know how RS 2477 trails play into the Easement Recording Project.

Teleconference Adjourned at 10:00 am