

Kenai River Special Management Area Advisory Board
***** Meeting Minutes*****
Thursday November 13, 2014
5:30 p.m.
Gilman River Center
Soldotna, AK

I. CALL TO ORDER

1. **Roll Call:** Joe Connors, Clayton Holland, Monte Roberts, Brenda Trefon, Teri Carter, Andrew Carmichael, Sean Wedemeyer, Brent Johnson, Jack Blackwell, and Tim Stevens.

Bobbie Jo Skibo was telephonically

2. **Minutes Approval:** Approved as written.

3. **Agenda Changes:** Joe Connors added under old business agenda item discussion about the committee process and policies pertaining to committees.

Approval: Agenda was approved as amended.

- II. Public Comments/Presentations:** Matt Connors of the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge is the new program manager for the visitors' services. He replaced Janet Schmidt. Matt transferred from a Minnesota Fish and Wildlife Service refuge and is excited to be in Alaska. Matt will be a USFWS representative that will attend the KRSMA meeting on a regular basis.

III. REPORTS

1. Agency and Government Reports:

A. State Parks –Jack Blackwell provided the board members with the following report:

- Pillars dock was removed on Monday October 13, 2014.
- A piling at the Pillars launch was repaired. It appears a weld failed and made the piling unsafe, and after further inspection of the other remaining pilings additional repairs may be made.
- The department had an initial meeting with the Department of Fish in Game in developing a site plan for Hanson Property located on river mile 31 of the Kenai River. The Funny River community secured funding for a site plan last session and the department has \$35,000 to begin the process. Currently this area is closed to fishing. Some of the ideas being proposed are boardwalks and possible boat launch. The property was purchased by EVOS and has restriction but it is been proposed in the agreement to be developed for recreation.
- Kenai River Ranger Jason Okuly has accepted a new position in Kachemak Bay State Park. He will begin his new position on February 1, 2015.
- One of the state park maintenance workers Levi Superman has resigned his position. Parks will be recruiting for the position.
- Advisory Board Recruitment: The interview committee consisted of Jack Blackwell, Claire LeClair, Brent Johnson, Andrew Carmichael, Rick Koch and Ted Wellman. The committee interview six applicants on the October 31, 2014. After the interviews the committee identified each applicant's strengths and weaknesses and sent these to the commissioner for his review and appointment.

B. DEC –Tim Stevens provided board members with the following report:

- DEC has not submitted the integrated report to the EPA which is required every two years. This report contains information on state of Alaska waters and if they are meeting the state water quality standards. Some of the waters listed as impaired may come off the list and other may go on the list. The Kenai River was being considered as being listed as impaired for turbidity. At this time there is no indication if the Kenai will be listed or not.

C. ADF&G –No Report

D. USFS/Chugach–Bobbie Jo Skibo had no report.

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Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, Department of Natural Resources, in cooperation with the Kenai Peninsula Borough



E. US F&WS- Matt Conors provided board members with the following report:

- The board is invited to the soft opening of the new Kenai National Wildlife visitor center on February 27, 2015 at 5 p.m. This is to give all the partners a chance to see the center before it opens.
- The Refuge is looking forward to working with Soldotna and Kenai visitors to work together in providing the best experience to all visitors.
- The grand opening is in May 2015. The center will be offering a Saturday showcase with local artist and classes highlighting outdoor skills.

F. City of Kenai-Sean Wedemeyer-No Report

G. City of Soldotna –Andrew Carmichael provided board members with the following report:

- The city has started a hydrological study for Swift water campground for future improvements, such as access and bank improvements.
- The city is also currently working with State Parks and Department of Fish and Game in establishing a connecting trail on the state property that is located between the Soldotna visitor center and Centennial Campground.

H. Kenai Peninsula Borough- Brent Johnson reported that he has currently been reappointed as the KRSMA board for the next year.

C. Committee Reports

- President's Report**-Joe Connors reported that there is committee process the board follows. He also recommends that all board members participate in the committee process. Today there were three committee meetings; the habitat, guide advisory and housekeeping. The process of the committees is to receive a recommendation and work the recommendation through the committee, which is then moved to the board for a vote. Then action is moved up the ladder to the director's office. It is recommended that all board members participate in these committee meetings.
- Guide Advisory**-Joe Connors reported that there was a guide committee meeting. There were eight participants and the main topic for discussion was what State Parks can do to raise revenue. The state currently has a budget shortfall and is looking at increased fees for decals, public use cabins and commercial operators fees. There was a discussion about implementing a fishing "stamp" for sockeye fishing on the Kenai River. The committee had specific questions about how this could work and Jack Blackwell and Robert Begich will follow up on this.
- Habitat** – Brent Johnson reported that the habitat committee met and there were approximately ten people present. The discussion started with juvenile king salmon in the Kenai River. Adam Reimer and Robert Begich from the Department of Fish and Game attended. Adam reported that they have submitted a proposal to start conducting studies on juvenile king salmon in 2015. These will be multiyear studies and the funds are part of the Chinook Salmon Research Initiative. The group also discussed the pike eradication that has been occurring on the Mackey Lake system. This year the department of Fish and Game is working on the West component in 2014 and the East component of the lakes in 2015. They currently have a trap in Soldotna creek to make sure that none of the Pike enter the Kenai River.
- River Use** – No Report
- Legislative/Government Activities** – No Report
- Board Development/ Nomination** – No Report
- Agenda/Board Structure/Housekeeping** – The committee met, to discuss the current bylaws related to board nomination. The committee was presented with three sets of bylaws, the current bylaws, a tracked set that was developed by recommendation staff and a set by Rick Koch. The commissioner asked that the board review the bylaws and make changes by the end of December. It was determined that the two draft bylaws were similar in concept and will be merged for review by the committee. Proposed changes include that recruitment begin in January, the applicant be interviewed by the board, the interview team will forward strengths and weaknesses to the commissions, terms will expire in June, and a policy will be developed that outlines the nomination process. The policy would give the procedures of how the process should proceed.

The policy would not be in the bylaws but adopted by the board. The committee is hoping to have the something for the board to vote on in December

IV. OLD BUSINESS:

1. Proposed Bylaw Changes for Advisory Board Recruitment/Committee Process- this was covered under committee reports.

V. NEW BUSINESS:

VI. CORRESPONDENCE:

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT:

VIII. ADJOURNMENT:

a. Board Comments:

1. Brent Johnson is very optimistic about the future of the board.
2. Joe Connors commented on the great work that has been accomplished by Rick Koch work on the bylaws.
3. Jack Blackwell commented that the work on the Pike eradication in Mackey Lake system and the habitat this work will open up in the future.
4. Andy Loranger wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.
5. Clayton Holland commented on the Habitat committee guest Adam Reimer and the interesting topic about Chinook salmon studies in 2015 and a possible information sheet for land owners along the Kenai River.

