

# Tanana Valley State Forest Citizens' Advisory Committee Meeting

October 27, 2016; 6:00pm-9:00pm

DNR, Large Conference Room

Fairbanks

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## ***DRAFT Minutes***

### **Attendees:**

#### State Employees

Tim Dabney (teleconference)  
Jim Schwarber  
Paul Keech  
Peter Talus (teleconference)  
Kelsey Stybr (DMLW)

#### Public

Robert & Rose Pagh  
Priscila Pharr (teleconference)

#### CAC Members (Representing)

Tom Malone (Forest Science)  
Dan Rees (Private Forest User)  
Milt Behr (Mining Industry)  
Jason Knoles- alternate for Al Pagh  
Fabian Keirn (Native Community)  
Brad Cox (Value-added Processing)  
Chris Stark (Environmental Interests)  
Reed Morisky (Tourism Industry)  
Thomas Nerbonne (Upper Tanana Valley)

**Minutes** from the previous meeting April 14, 2016 were approved.

### **Announcements:**

- Resolution presented recognizing the late Al Pagh- accepted by his son Robert Pagh on his behalf. The CAC received approval to rename East Rosie Creek Road to Pagh Road. The new sign will go up in spring time when the ground is not frozen.
- DOF will be giving a presentation summarizing summer work projects at the FIA end of the first season presentation on November 30 and December 1. The presentation will be at the Murie Building at UAF. Contact Matt Stevens at DOF to make attendance reservations.
- DOF has proposed changes to AFRPA, and written comments are due by November 23. Contact Marty Freeman or Tom Malone for more information.
- Paul Costello (former FNSB land manager) passed away in early October.
- CAC Membership contact information was reviewed and is being updated.
- John O'Brien would like to do a drone presentation at the next meeting.
- Members of the committee remembered Al Pagh's work and Paul Costello's instrumental work with developing the borough's timber sale program.

### **New Business:**

- Jim Schwarber gave an update on the gas line proposal through the TVSF. Jim is working on internal development and reviews of DOF reports regarding the planning process for both the ASAP and the Alaska LNG projects. Both go through the TVSF. Jim is also developing the mitigation process for access roads and material sites associated with both projects in the TVSF.

Some other big issues in the planning process include crossing the gas lines to access TVSF resources and expectations for salvage and timber sales resulting from right of way clearing developments. The AKLNG has an estimated 20-30 miles of pipeline proposed to go through the TVSF, and the ASAP project has proposed approximately 10 miles through the TVSF. Overall, the future development of both projects are unknown, however, both are moving forward with the preliminary planning stages. Please call Jim Schwarber by phone or email with comments on public use in the TVSF and the proposed gas lines.

- *Question: Will there be an associated service road?* Initial conversations talk about access points and minimizing road development. The issue is not firm yet.
- *Question: Have RS2477's been accessed?* Jim doesn't know and made a note of it to follow up on it.
- Tom Malone gave an update on the Galena Biomass District Heat project. It is the first district biomass heating project in Alaska. The project will heat 7 or 8 former air force buildings. Formerly heated by steam boilers but now will be heated with hot water from locally produced chips. DOF conducted an inventory and found a large resource close to town. They are currently harvesting birch, and letting previously harvested wet poplar dry. Galena has also requested biomass from adjacent State lands. The State lands are not currently classified however, so DOF has submitted a request for classification. Once the lands are classified, DOF can move forward with resource sale with Galena. The boilers have been installed and the hope is for them to be running by the middle of November.
- There is one vacant seat plus 4 other seats on the CAC whose terms expire on Dec. 31, 2016. Chris Maisch has appointing authority, so if you wish to be re-appointed or nominated please email that desire to Chris. Additionally, the hope is that Jason will formally fill Al Pagh's seat officially by the next meeting.

#### **Old Business:**

##### *State/Region update by Tim Dabney*

- Tim Dabney has moved to Palmer and is operating out of the Palmer office.
- Senate Bill 32 was signed into law on 7/19/16. Tim handed out an article written in July, and the summary is: The flexibility of the bill allows for DNR to provide more timber to local mills so the state can negotiate with local mills in contracts. The focus will be on the southeast. This will help local economy, but less money will be coming back to the state.
- Statutory change to .115, negotiated sales: Rather than small timber sales needing to be completed in one year, they now need to be completed within 2 years. The regulations need to be revised to reflect the new statute. *Question: Can contracts be awarded before the regulation changes?* Tim is unsure as of now unless a unique situation warrants it.
- FY18 update: DOF has two proposals being considered by the governor's office. Tim could not comment further. Chris Maisch is optimistic that DOF will get through with no additional cuts (DOF has been cut 42% over the last 3 years). Currently DOF has over \$3 million from timber sale receipts that can be carried over for 3 more years which help fund area forester positions.
- Update on the Annual Alaska Forestry Association meeting: Alaska Timber Task Force was an organization developed under previous administration, but it has been mostly inactive since. It's

on the agenda for an update in the next meeting. Tim gave updates on YTAP and ETAP and they both identified lands for consideration for legislatively designated areas as additions to the Tanana Valley State Forest. He also talked about the old growth/young growth transition project with the Forest Service. Senate Bill 203: Talks about Tongass ownership and management along with USDA transfer lands by quit claim deeds to the State. Also, the US Forest Service and Mental Health Trust land exchange will move forward after identification. A side note: The US Forest Service no longer has an appeal process; only “objections.” The State has submitted various “objections” in following the new process.

- DOF personnel changes: Andy Mack is the new DNR Commissioner. Mark Wiggins the new Deputy Commissioner and deals with mostly oil and gas related issues. Ed Fogels still works with DOF issues. DOF is looking to fill 2 positions in Ketchikan for timber sales. DOF has asked for permission to fill the Tok-Copper River Area Forester position.

#### *Update on the Fairbanks /Delta Area by Paul Keech*

- Mike Goyette in Delta is transitioning to working with timber sales. DOF is looking to hire another forester.
- Delta will have 5 more timber sales in 2017 (Mississippi salvage area, Healy area, and Healy Lake which has already had the best interest finding written for).
- Delta has a few small timber sales this winter in the Little Gerstle and Cummings Road areas. There is also a lot of work on the Pogo Road and other timber road “light” resurfacing projects. There will also be more work on the Delta West Road extension project with the Delta Salcha Soil and Water Conservation District. Delta has 61 personal firewood permits this past year. There were 24 fires in the Delta area this summer.
- Fairbanks area fall auction is coming up; there will be 5 new and 3 reoffer sales on the Salcha Winter Road. The Hastings over-the-counter sale is on hold because of access issues and they still need to obtain an easement. There were 345 personal firewood permits in Fairbanks, and 52 fires this summer. The Fairbanks area hired a new operator for grading logging roads, and they obtained a new grader from the military. It will hopefully be used for fire response next summer. Overall, the Fairbanks area has done a lot of road work recently: Cache Creek Road is finished. Both Cache and Standard Creek Roads have had right-of-way brushing. The Cache Creek Road has been separated from the Standard Creek Road projects from the contract.
- The FIA is done with its first season. Next summer there will be a 14-person crew working.
- Interesting note: a new record white spruce has been reported on the Tetlanika River. It is reportedly 42” diameter. Paul and DOF will be going out to measure it.

#### *Tok Area Update by Pete*

- Update on Tok school biomass project: The school purchased a new low pressure steam engine for supplemental electricity. It is intended to be used during the warmer temperature times during the shoulder season to cut costs. It has been installed and getting ready to start up soon.

- Joe Young's facility is not up and running, but hopefully it will be by next spring.
- Tok area had 95 personal firewood permits in 2016.
- Area sales: 2 Tok River sales, Dry Creek Salvage, 3 Porcupine Ridge, and 2 in the old 1990/2003 areas.
- They are putting together the combined 5-year schedule timber sales this winter.
- There is 1 vacant tech position.
- There were 2 project fires, and a busy fire season.

**Public Comments:**

No comments.

**CAC member comments:**

Fabian Keirn from the Native Community wants to hear more about the gas line crossings in the TVSF. Jim will keep the TVSF CAC updated.

The next CAC meeting is scheduled for **January 26, 2017** in Fairbanks.

Meeting adjourned about 8:00 pm.

TVSF CAC website: [http://forestry.alaska.gov/tvsf\\_committee.htm](http://forestry.alaska.gov/tvsf_committee.htm)