

**Kenai River Special Management Area
Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
Gilman River Center
Thursday, January 12, 2012, 5:30 p.m.**

I. Call to Order

- A. Members Present:** Jack Sinclair, Joe Connors, Tim Stevens, Carol Padgett, Terri Carter, Andy Loranger, Brenda Trefon, Brent Johnson, Peter Micciche, Robert Begich, Bobbie Jo Kolodziejewski, Ricky Gease, and David Carey.
- B. The Minutes** from the December 8, 2011 were approved as written.
- C. Agenda Changes and Approval,** David Carey asked to add Election of Officers to item D, under Call to Order item I and move Old Business under IV to item II. Agenda changes were approved.
- D. Elections of Officers, Joe Connors, and our bylaws say that we elect President and Vice President in January.**

David Carey made motion to retain last year's president for this year.

Motion was seconded and vote was taken.

Passed unanimously.

Joe Connors made motion that David Carey be vice president.

Motion was seconded and vote was taken.

Passed unanimously.

II. OLD BUSINESS

1. Letter to the commissioner about the River Ranger position

David Carey made motion to bring letter to commissioner regarding River Ranger position to the board.

Motion seconded.

Peter Micciche made the motion to amend paragraph 4, and add the following two sentences, after the first sentence: "As demonstrated by the lack of overall citations issued in 2011 on an extremely heavily-used river (see attached), it is evident that enforcement on the Kenai River is inadequate and already understaffed. The loss of this ranger position would undoubtedly jeopardize public safety and resource protection within the Kenai River Special Management Area."

Regarding the "see attached" portion, the attachment will reflect Kenai River District Statistics from 2006 through 2011.

Vote was taken and amendment passed.

Ricky Gease made a motion to remove the first sentence in the third paragraph.

Vote was taken and amendment passed.

Vote was taken on document as altered.

Passed unanimously.

2. Resolution 2011-4, prohibit boat use behind the island at the Russian River Confluence

David Carey made a motion to bring Resolution 2011-4 to the board.

Motion seconded.

Robert Begich stated the open dates for the sockeye run are June 11th to August 20th.

House keeping change, on first paragraph change last sentence to read: "The prohibition would only be in effect when this section is open to sockeye salmon fishing."

Resolution passed as modified.

III. Public Comments/Presentations

IV. Reports

A. Agency and Government Reports

- a. State Parks, Ben Ellis**, director of State Parks, thanked the board for having him there today. Received funding for the first phase of the Kasilof River boat take out. Posted some tentative criteria on the web to receive public comments. Hope before spring they will have primary site selected and have decision by late spring. State Parks was notified by EVOS regarding the purchase of Eagle Rock, before the state can receive the money the legislature has to give the state permission to receive the money. Ben stated he was fairly confident it would be in the FY13 budget; before purchase can be made, the property has to be subdivided so owner can retain the home on subdivided property, once the property is subdivided, the land can be sold. Ben explained the reasoning behind cutting the Kenai River Ranger position from the budget. The governor had a target goal of cutting 1/3 of the 1000 vacant positions; originally it was casted that if the positions had been vacant for a year or more they could be cut. Each department was given a number of positions to cut, within each division. Within State Parks, we had 3 vacant Ranger positions, one in Mat-Su, one in Fairbanks, and one on the Kenai. The Kenai River Ranger position was eliminated. The loss of a Ranger position to some of the other areas would mean no ranger coverage several hundred miles within the Parks. Looked at the loss of the position that would have the least negative impact on the state. Met with Deputy Commissioner Ed Fogels yesterday, working with him to get that position back on the River. I know that this is an area that is very dear to this board. I encourage the board if they feel they can speak out, the board is here to provide the best input on the River. In the Governor's proposed FY13 budget for the Kenai Area, approximately \$80,000 has been added for dispatch services.

Jack Sinclair stated the river has been pretty quiet. Gave a brief overview of what is going on in the area. Homer has an advisory board for Kachemak Bay. Dale Bondurant has donated land to State Parks. His estate has donated nearly a quarter million dollars to the conservation funds of Alaska. In Anchor Point, we just paved a big portion of the launch area with help from Fish and Game. Ninilchik also has its own advisory board; they are busy working with us on issues. With all of the recent storm activity, we have lost our entire parking area at Ninilchik Beach; there is nothing except a small grassy area; the break wall protecting the harbor is badly damaged. At Captain Cook State Park in Nikiski, Nordaq is doing gas drilling out in the Refuge and is staging in the parking area; we have been working with Claire at the Refuge, on issues with this. Lots of people are going out to Grey Cliffs right now and really need that parking area. So you are aware, Buccaneer Application is in our packet tonight, please review the packet. It includes many park lands, borough, and private lands. We have a project going on at Seward, we are putting a new bridge at Tonsina Creek and are putting in a bid for that.

Pam Russell stated that the 2012 commercial operator packets are out.

- b. **DEC, Tim Stevens**, two things to report, we have gone out for FY13 ACWA(Alaska Clean Water Action) grant solicitation, which goes until February 21st, 2012. The State's integrated report with the status of the water quality will go out to EPA on April 1st, 2012.
- c. **ADF&G- Vania/ Begich**, the Stormy Lake Pike Eradication Project is up and running and scheduled for September 2012.
- d. **USF&WS, Andy Loranger**, received second installment of funding of visitor center at refuge. Construction in 2013 and 2014.
- e. **USFS/Chugach, Bobbie Jo Kolodziejski**, we are finalizing our 5 year action plan as it relates to human bear conflict at the Russian River. Currently working on a draft, we hope to have some internal reviews by the agencies and a final out in April. Not sure if we will have anything new to add in 2012, because we are up against some tight timeframes. With the Stream Watch expansion, very excited to get more funding for 2012 to support two coordinators, the Watershed Forum will have one of those coordinators and the Forest Service will have the other one. Stream Watch expanded to Bing's Landing, Centennial, Kasilof River, and Moose Range Meadows. It went really well and we are looking forward to 2012.
- f. **City of Kenai, Sean Wedemeyer**, was not present.
- g. **City of Soldotna, Peter Micciche**, stated the Soberg house is complete and the Kenai Watershed Forum is living there. This winter we are looking at dipnetting impacts. We are excited to have stream watch at Centennial Park this year. We have started our trails committee and we have a couple of partners in this room. I will be writing a letter to the Commissioner regarding the Kenai River ranger position. Thrilled to hear the money was given to state parks for dispatch position funding.
- h. **Kenai Peninsula Borough, Brent Johnson**, nothing to report. Will see about Borough Assembly also writing a letter regarding the Kenai River ranger position.

B. Committee Reports

- a. **President's Report, Joe Connors**, thanked members of the board for participating in committees.
- b. **Guide Advisory, Joe Connors**, met today and discussed Kenai River Guide Permit Stipulations. Our agenda dealt with roles and goals of Guide Advisory Committee, we also talked about the Ranger Position. There was a concerned voice about conditions of some of the Park facilities, the smaller parks, Big Eddy and Czekanski Parks and we have a responsibility for these parks in making them safe for users.
- c. **Habitat, Terri Carter**, met today; discussed Buccaneer Energy Application and one of the concerns discussed was the smaller tributaries would be hard to identify with the snow cover. The other issue was migratory birds that might be in the area. We also spent time on the turbidity study, identifying key points, and making those easy to understand in visual and applicable ways. Creating a Q&A sheet. We are looking at steps we can take to be more proactive in the future, to avoid being listed as an impaired water body.
- d. **River Use, Carol Padgett**, met today, discussed two areas of the River, mid-river, recognition about the growing concern of crowding. The other issue we discussed is the river use count, boat count, the daily count and ideally having that on a website so people know.
- e. **Permits**, did not meet. Pam Russell asked to remove this committee.
- f. **Legislative/Government Activities** did not meet.
- g. **Board Development**, looking at interviews next week for our final appointee for the board.

h. Agenda/Board Structure/Housekeeping, nothing to report.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Ricky Gease – Discussion about the Red Salmon/Habitat Stamp; the idea would be to require that anyone fishing on the Kenai Peninsula purchase a sockeye salmon stamp. It would be modeled after the King Salmon Stamp. Ricky is working on the process and will keep the board updated.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE - none

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT - none

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

A. Board Comments

Ben Ellis thanked everyone for their hard work.

Ricky Gease announced that the Kenai Peninsula Fish Habitat Partnership is putting out a call for skilled people who can serve on the partnership's science and data committee, which would be tasked to help out on science and data methodology and proposal review for technical merits .

Peter Micciche thanked Ben Ellis for being there.

B. Date/Agenda of Next Meeting February 9, 2012 at 5:30 p.m.