

CHUGACH STATE PARK CITIZEN ADVISORY BOARD

(Hybrid-with in person at Potter Section House/Microsoft Teams Electronic Meeting)

DRAFT--Minutes of the June 10, 2024 Meeting

REGULAR MEETING # 6

1. **Call to Order:** Chair Haley Johnston called the meeting to order at 6:01PM
2. **Roll Call & Introductions:**
 - Present:** Haley Johnston, Dave Hart, Claire LeClair, Gus Gustafson, Mark Miner, Kyle Shedd, Tyndall Ellis, Rob Clark, Bill Britt, Irene Turletes, Stephanie Rice
 - Excused:**
 - Absent:** Ted Phelps
 - Staff:** Ben Corwin, Chugach State Park
 - Public:** Kevin Keeler, Adam Smith, Alanna Blough, John Fowler-all with the Anchorage Ski Club
3. **Changes to Agenda & Approval:** Agenda was approved as written on motion made/seconded by Ellis/Britt.
4. **Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes:** Minutes of the May 13, 2024 meeting were approved as written on motion made by Britt/ Ellis.
5. **Public Comments:** None
6. **Old Business:** None
7. **New Business:**
 - a. **Anchorage Ski Club-**Representatives with the ASC provided an update on current development plans which includes converting two existing covered picnic shelters into small public use cabins. Timeline for that project is completion in June 2025. Funding for the project has been secured and all work is consistent with the ASC's concession contract with DNR/Parks. Motion (Mark/Dave) for the CAB to submit a letter of support for the additional buildings, the two new public use cabins; there were no objections stated.
 - b. **Outreach (Rob Clark)-** As chair of the Outreach Committee, Rob has been thinking about how to increase the CAB's outreach. What kind of information do we want to share with the public and what kind of information do we want to receive from the public—is this a two-way conversation with information flowing in both directions? Also, how do people learn about the park—what information sources do they use to make their plans for outings? One specific idea would be to stage members of the CAB at a specific location (e.g., Glen Alps), publicize the time and do person-to-person outreach. Ben suggested that the Division's Public Information Office, Wendy Sailors, is a good resource for the CAB in how best to put energy into outreach and he will invite her to a future meeting. Ben noted that the information that would be most helpful to him would be real time condition reports from park visitors; suggestion that something like the Alaska Ski Trails Reports hosted by Cross Country Alaska is a

good model. Suggestion also made to target people who are not already park supporters/regular park visitors for outreach.

8. Staff Report: Ben Corwin

Updates

- Eklutna ATV lot expansion is still underway. The lot and trail are closed to ATVs by Director's Order until the 15th. Both will be paved later in the summer.
- Eagle River Campground Public Use Cabins are under construction. New cabins at Bird soon to be.
- The latrine upgrades are completed.
- Eklutna and Eagle River campgrounds open on the 17th. All Day-use sites are open.
- McHugh is slated to be completed by the end of next week.
- Bird Overflow campground is now open. CEA and the powerline reconstruction project is wrapping up.
- Seasonal trail crew (ACCs) brushing and clearing deadfall in Bird Valley and then headed to Peters Creek; project funded through RTP.
- Paving projects at two trailheads, Prospect Heights and Bird Valley going out to bid soon with work completed by September; project funding LWCF;
- Budget has been sent to the GOV; should know soon about increment for Chugach State Park and capital projects.

Staff

- Tim and Kellan, and 4 other rangers graduated DPS Academy. Their graduation was Friday, May 24th. All of the new rangers are participating in a two-week ranger transition course down on the Kenai. I have heard it is going pretty well. Then on to 8+ weeks of Field Training around the state.
- Ranger Levi left for APD on 5/24.
- 8 ACC trail crew began on 5/20; project funded through RTP.

LE nothing major to report.

Wildlife incidents of note

- Young very bold black bear reported at Glen Alps trailhead on Saturday jumping on the hoods of vehicles.
- Moose carcass(es) near Rainbow trailhead have been cleaned up. No more additional reports.
- Very aggressive moose reported on the Lower Eagle River Trail below Gruening Middle School last week.
- Dead moose carcass on the Albert Loop Trail.
- Update on the Brown Bear family at ERNC - Gus

9. Committee Reports:

- **Access (Dave):** Dave reached out to Roger Marks, who volunteers with the Glen Alps Limited Road Service Area (LRSA) and is coordinating the Hillside LRSAs to cue up projects for the next Chugach Access Service Area bond in 2025; also looking at Heritage Land Bank parcels for overlap with areas where CASA bond projects may come up.
- **Budget (Tyndal):** The \$346,000 increase for the CSP operating budget passed both House and Senate but not approved by governor yet. Lots of capital funding for projects in Chugach: \$500,000 for Flattop,

funds for design of a parking lot expansion at Arctic Valley, \$1 million for Ship Creek trail, \$1 million for Ram Valley, \$450,000 for public use cabins and \$60,000 for Peters Creek trail assessment.

- **Nomination (Dave):** Have two nominees to consider: Lee Hammermeister and Gabrielle Jordan. Lee is running for State Senate seat in Eagle River. There are currently three vacancies and there will be five more in December.
- **Seward Highway Design (Irene):** Irene would like to recuse herself from serving as chair of the committee since she works for HDR; Stephanie volunteered to take over as chair. Ben continues to advocate for reasonable access to park facilities located within the project area.
- **Trails (Irene):** Plans to coordinate with Jon Underwood for a site visit of the Indian Valley work in the Fall.
- **Chugach Park Fund (Haley/Claire):** Hidden Lake trail is the major project for the Fund this summer. Also developing a sign for the Hidden Lake trail, sponsoring six volunteer trail improvement events, and will be contracting with Kijik Corp. to complete an assessment of the remaining work needed on the Williwaw Lakes trail.
- **Wildlife (Gus):** Has had lots of interaction with area ADF&G biologist who has been great to work with and always responsive. A brown bear killed a moose near the beaver viewing deck at the Nature Center and cached it about 230 feet from the nature trail. Bear & moose safety training in Girdwood tomorrow night at 6PM. A few bear encounters on the Turnagain Trail; wants to get ADF&G to present at a CAB meeting in the Fall. Defense of Life and Property (DLP) incident on Mother's Day at the Nature Center resulted in the bear losing one of its eyes.
- **Planning (Rob):** N/A
- **Outreach (Rob):** See agenda item 7b.
- **Ram Valley (Haley):** Committee will work on scoring the alignments to determine a preferred one.

Next CAB meeting September 9.

10. Adjournment: Motion made and seconded (Shedd/Ellis) and approved with no objection 8:00PM.