

**Kachemak Bay State Parks Board Meeting**  
**Advisory Board Minutes**  
**May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2015**  
**5:15 pm**

1. **Members Present:** Willie Dunn, Steve Schultz, Beaver Nelson, Mako Haggerty, Carol Harding, Stan Lefton, Lindsay Wolter and Glenn Green, Nancy Hillstrand and David Martindale.

**Staff Present:** Ben Ellis, Jack Blackwell, Jason Okuly, Pam Russell, Eric Clark, Monica Alvarez and Nevenka Kitanovski

2. **Agenda Changes:** Approved as written.

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

4. **Public Comments/Presentations:** Jeffrey Lee gave a presentation looking at Kachemak Bay from a different elevation. This presentation was on Tutka Bay and the scenic views and that the bay is being used more and more for recreational use and does not support the commercial net pens. Jeffrey also gave the board a brief look at the Human Waste outhouses using a single crib system or a barrel system and wood chips for composting. The single crib system units are 4' by 4' by 4' two crib units with two sides for composting purposes. The second is a flying out the barrel system. This would be a three crib or barrel system that moves the toilet seat as the barrel fills up.

5. **Correspondence:** None.

6. **Introduction of Visitors:** Janet Klein, Jeff Lee, Toby Wheeler and Scott McCune.

7. **Committee Reports:**

- a. **Operations Report:**

Chief Ranger Jason Okuly provided board members with the following operations report.

Some of the highlights of the report included:

- The RPT crew is participating in chain saw training.
- Jason helped with a Game Warden camp in Soldotna with Fish and Wildlife. They taught 80 children about boating safety.
- Participating in teaching a children safe water event at Skyview High Schools.
- Went to an invasive plant species training. This includes methods on how to avoid spreading invasive plants. Educate State Park users.
- Work with the State Park office in Soldotna on volunteers agreements.
- Jason participated in ETT and EMT training.
- HOWL is working with State Parks on their agenda for the 2015 season.

State Park Specialist Eric Clarke reported that trails day is June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2015. The crews are planning a beach cleanup, a glacier hike, and to work on Grace, Sadie Knob, Alpine Ridge, China Poot and Coalition trails on trails day. On Friday night volunteers can go over to Halibut Cove Lagoon on Friday night to head out on trails first thing in the morning on Saturday. Two Kenai River Rangers will be down to help with the event. Eric also participated in the Alaska Trail Conference with keynote speaker David Bethkar. Salmon

Resources was the main topic. Eric is also working on the Saddle trail and the removal of fallen trees and improving on the trail conditions. Eric will send an e-mail to commercial operators keeping them informed of the trail progress.

Mako Haggerty asked about the status of the Halibut Cove Lagoon dock and ramp. Currently the existing dock and ramp is closed and state parks are working on temporary access. This includes putting the stairs down to the beach and the boats will have to be beached. Future plans include replacing all the pilings. This is not scheduled to occur until the end of summer 2015.

State Park Director Ben Ellis provided board members with the following report:

- The current budget update was that with the \$500,000 dollar shortfall and 78% of the budget is personnel. State Parks reduce the staff by three positions. One position was the Prince William Sound/Valdez Park Ranger position was eliminated. This placed the parks in Valdez area into passive management status. This means the restrooms will be locked but other services will continue. Public use cabins will still be available for rental and Blueberry Lake State Recreation area is currently managed by a concessioner. The outhouses at Worthington Glacier will be maintained for 2015. For the public and visitor there will very little or no impact to the services in the area.
- The Park Ranger in Valdez has currently accepted a position in Southeast in the Haines area. Ranger Travis Russell of Valdez will be transferring to Southeast to continue his career with State Parks.
- The Governor has currently had discussions about the possibility of a state government shutdown. The two possible times a shutdown could occur is at the beginning of the Fiscal year, July 1, 2015 or the second option would be when the department would run out of money. That would be an October or November time. At this time, this is very unlikely, but the possibility exists.
- Currently State Parks is working to stay within the budget that has been proposed by the governor. This will spread state park employees thin and may reduce services in several areas throughout the state.
- For the 2015 season several park fees have been increased. Some of the increases include commercial operator permit, boat launch decals, day use passes camping fee, per client fees and public use cabin. Also, a new park unit will be opening soon in the Mat-Su area. Fees are approximately 42% of the current operating budget and the projection for the 2016 season is to be 50% of the operating budget.

Area Superintendent Jack Blackwell provided board members with the following report:

- Jason Okuly has been appointed the new District Ranger II for Kachemak Bay. His position is effective June 16, 2015.
  - Draft plans for the Schaefer Heights subdivision road specification for access into the subdivision.
  - The pancake breakfast was a big success. Thanks for everyone's helps.
  - The Homer Bicycle Club has draft MOU for trails at the Diamond Creek State Recreation Area. This is currently being reviewed by management.
- b. Friends Report- Mako Haggerty reported that the friends have an approximately \$7,500 dollars in the Friends account. The meetings are held the first Monday of every month at the Cook Inlet Keeper office.

- There was a birding event that started at the beginning of the water trail. It was called birding with an Otter Eye. Only two people participated, but they have a great time.
- There was a Friendship walk with Richard Klein and only 4 people participated.
- June 6, 2015 is Trails day, with signups at HOWL. There are 6 or 7 projects on the list for completion.

**8. New Business:**

**9. Old Business:**

- a. Dark Sky: The board needs to start having dark sky events prior to submitting the application.
- b. Staff funding: No Report
- c. Kachemak Crack: No Report
- d. Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association Permit Application: The permit application that was submitted back in the summer of 2014, a director's determination was drafted in September 2014 denying the request. CIAA appealed the denial in September 2014. April 2015 the commissioner's office overruled the director's denial and issued a three year permit to CIAA to have the net pens in Tutka Bay. Soon thereafter the April 22, 2015 decision to allow the net pens was held in abeyance pending completion of a further review. No further action has been taken at this time.
- e. New management Plan update: Monica Alvarez and Nevenka Kitanovski, the new planner, reported that there have been many staff changes within the department. The process will take approximately 2 to 4 years for completion for the Kachemak Bay management plan.
- f. Vacating Diamond Creek ROW: Jack Blackwell had a teleconference with realty services and the next step is to have a discussion with the Head of the planning department for the Kenai Peninsula Borough Max Best. Max Best from the Kenai Peninsula borough recommended that State Parks start the application process for vacating the right of way.
- g. Geographic place names: Janet Klein continuing working on compiling the list. Janet would like to work with Jeffrey Lee and a map to put the names with the places on the maps.

Adjournment