

Tanana Valley State Forest
Citizens' Advisory Committee Meeting - MINUTES
March 3, 2014; 6:00 – 9:00 PM

DNR, large conference room
Fairbanks

The call-in number for the meeting is 1.800.315.6338, access code 8473#

6:00pm Introduction of CAC Members and guests – Tom Malone, CAC Chair

CAC Members Present

Tom Malone, Forest Science
John O'Brien, Mining Industry
Paul Karczmarczyk, Fish and Wildlife Interests
John Rusyniak, Recreation Community
Reed Morisky, Tourism Industry
Fabian Keirn, Native Community
Al Pagh, Forest Industry
Jim Sacket, Lower Tanana Valley
Brad Cox, Value-Added Processing
Thomas Nerbonne, Upper Tanana Valley
Dan Rees, Private Forest User

CAC Members Absent

Division of Forestry (DOF) Staff

Doug Hanson, DOF
Kevin Meany, DOF
Mike Reggear, DOF
Al Edgren, DOF

Guests

Carol Hoewisch
Erin Batts
Aaron Steerle
AJ Wait, DNR
Bob Zachel
Tom Paragi, ADFG
Stu Pechek, DNR
Cassie Pinkel, Superior Pellet Fuels
Birch Pavelsky
Glen Holt, UAF CES
Caleb Conley

Tony Laloglin
Tricia Blake
Egil Fuellheim
Kristine Niles
Carey Gunn
Torsten Bentzen

Review and approve minutes of November 12, 2013 meeting – Tom Malone
Minutes were approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Alaska Wood Energy Conference, April 15-17, 2014

You can register online through the cooperative extension service. Early registration up through the 21st of March.

SAF technical session

Next session is March 26th, this will be confirmed after the meeting.

HB79

Bill was introduced this last Monday for the first time in the House. Did not move out of committee and is being held over for discussion. Looking for others to write letters of support or testify. Let Tom know if you want briefing papers on this bill.

Board of Forestry Meeting

This meeting will be held in Juneau March, 19-20.

NEW BUSINESS

Cache Creek Road - Kathryn Pyne, Jim Schwarber

Late last year a petition was submitted to encourage DOF to maintain this road for access. This is being brought to the advisory committee to help DOF investigate an appropriate response to the issue. We are investigating current land status and right-of-ways. This is the advisory committee opportunity to listen to public comments and gather facts on this topic.

Elections for 2014.

Tom Malone nominated for Chair. Nomination was accepted, unanimous vote.

Dan Reese nominated for co-chair. Nomination was accepted, unanimous vote.

OLD BUSINESS

CAC recruitment for an open seat – Tom Malone

Jim Sacket is leaving the Lower Tanana Valley chair after this meeting. Please send information to Jim Schwarber or KT about those interested in filling the open seat for the Lower Tanana Valley chair.

By-Laws amendment to limit discussion

The past vote did not reach consensus even though it passed. Discussion needs to continue on this issue until consensus is reached.

Delta Area Update – Al Edgren

Al Edgren gave a report on the 2013 activities of the Delta area. He showed a video of Superior Pellet timber harvest at the edge of the Delta River and chipping green tops for delivery to the school. Pictures also of harvest of Gilles Creek fire on Pogo Road. He gave an overview of NRCS projects, Mississippi fire salvage, and Quartz Lake blowdown. Forestry II position vacancy on hold pending reorganization.

Tom Paragi - Asked what is the status of the Fort Greely biomass project?

Mike Reggear- He had a conversation with Brian Hursh, cursory feasibility to the joint chief of staff asking for money to go to the next level of the project. Xylon energy is looking into a possible energy facility down there too.

Don't know how big the facilities, these questions need to be answered before they can move forward. Does the military want to get into biomass?

Fairbanks Area Update – Kevin Meany

Kevin Meany gave a presentation on current activities; 5 year schedule of timber sales currently under agency review; 96 open timber sales; many sale and road inspections; looking at reforestation, 44,000 spruce seedlings to plant ~300/ac; over the counter sales currently there are 18 sales, all of these have gone before agency and public review and are available to view on the website, looking to bring this number down and sell more at auction. Personal use firewood, currently 774 active permits for total of 2,750 cord, \$27,500 in revenue; new Two Rivers woodlot area; Snowplowing of fire areas-contracted snow removal for 6 personal use areas: standard ck, Nenana Ridge, Behind Skinny's, Cache Ck, Two Rivers, Mosquito Ck. -Two rivers was removed from contract 1.14.14.

Fortune creek bridge status is blocked, not officially closed. Engineer Ed Soto will look at this bridge when he looks at Cache Creek for feasibility of fixing the bridge.

Tok Area Update – Jeff Hermanns

There was a large contingent down from Fort Yukon to see how we harvest timber in the winter-time. Working with Tanacross Corporation for access to several projects for salvage harvest: Eagle Trail fire and Moon

Lake fire access. Finalized Johnson Slough, sold 800 acres to Interior Raw Fuel. Sold almost 2,000 acres of timber in the last week. Met with DNR land planning, working on TBAP, asked for increase of land designated forestry for timber harvest.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mark Long (On phone)- The forestry needs to maintain the structure and integrity of the road that was 'paved by the way of the loggers'. Petitioned Rep. Guttenberg

Al Pagh – Loggers are not supposed use this road, it is not title 17. The road was built for forestry, so even though logging use was trying to be limited the logging use couldn't be stopped.

Kristine Niles - Lives off of Seward Rd, and there is no way to access their homes except Cache Creek Road. There is a platted road for access, but that does not physically exist. There have been so many more firewood cutters and traffic has increased. Travel is difficult in the winter-time. An unofficial service area fund hasn't been successful thus far.

Bob Zackle—Been logging Cache Creek for 15 years, has no problem with the road being maintained. There is a curve at the bottom on the hill that isn't wide enough for a logging truck and another vehicle to pass oncoming. The easiest solution for concerns of safety is for those using the road to have CB radios. If forestry is going to maintain the road, they need to maintain it wide enough for logging trucks and other vehicles to pass on-coming. Thinks fish & game should contribute for funds to maintain the road, because bear hunters and fall moose hunters use this road heavily. Bikers coming down the trail onto the road, is unsafe.

Egil Fuellheim -Been out Cache Creek area for 15 years, plows road when the loggers don't plow it. During the winter, the road creeps in on you with the snow and safety is sketchy due to the increased use. Is it possible to at least keep the road clear in the winter-time to keep safety?

If Cache Creek is deemed an emergency exit, then subdivision funds can be used to maintain the road, but not to title 17 standards.

Carey Gunn - Got stuck on the road when no one was around to plow the road. Her daughter was out at Chena Hot Springs and had to stay with family for a week before she could get out. In the past, there wasn't much use on the nearby trail, but much more use now. It would just be helpful to get the road simply plowed. There is severe erosion on the road.

-Is now a multiple use road, this road was not intended for a multi-use trail. If the state decides to upgrade the first part to Sherman road to title 17, the first 2 ½ miles should be a multi-use road.

Torsten Bentzen - Borough sold the lots as accessible by 4 wheel drive all year round. That is not always the case.

Aaron Steerle - The recent fire on Murphy Dome road highlighted the safety of the subdivision. If the fire was someplace else, access out of the subdivision without access to Cache Creek Road would be impossible. It is great to have graders maintaining the road, but they have at times pulled up culverts and that is counteractive.

Erin Batts —The keystone service area grader would at times grade the road, but not anymore.

AJ Wait—The Cache Creek Road is not in the road service area, and can't be maintained if not paid for.

John O'Brien—During the recent ice storm people were using Cache Creek Road to get to Lincoln Subdivision as a safer access route.

Tom Malone—Getting money from the state Division of Forestry will be tough because of budget cuts. Timber sales can be put up in the area, but there is no guarantee that a sale will be made to fund the road maintenance.

Chris Maisch—Met with Rep. Guttenberg before session started about this road. Lincoln Creek subdivision did not originally have access via Cache Creek Road. It is the shortest route into town. The road was built under a silvicultural exemption and not for public use. To switch a road from a silvicultural road will need a wetlands fill permit. An engineer from the road engineering office will take a look at what it will cost to bring this road up to Title 17 standards. When the borough sold those bigger parcels in the subdivision, the state objected to the sale of those parcels.

Fabian Keirn—Can just a portion of the road be brought up to standards?
Chris Maisch- Only the access points would be upgraded

Because there were only 40 acre parcels, the road didn't need to be upgraded. First step is looking at the engineering piece and bringing it up title 17 standards. DOF could help with the aspect of determining the road as an emergency road.

Kevin Meany—Borough lands and forestry met on what it would take to upgrade the road. There are discussions between the agencies on how to approach the issue, but it is not as simple a topic.

Cassie Pinkel —With Superior Pellet, sales of compressed pellet logs started in February and this will give a greater use for aspen cottonwood. If this product continues to keep interest will look into mixed species.

CAC MEMBER'S COMMENTS

Dan Rees –Sees the Cache Creek Road issue as a growing concern. Addressing this issue is important as it will not solve itself. Don't see forestry as having the ability to maintain the road.

John O'Brien –Impressed with the Cache Creek residents approach to the problems.

Jim Sacket —There is a land advisory meeting with the borough soon. It has been a good experience serving on this board.

John O'Brien—Chena River summit coming up in May by the Tanana Valley Water Association. Dates are online. It is a good event for the community to get involved on what is going on in the Chena River.

Tom Malone- Cache Creek issue will be around for a while and is not the only logging road that people live on. We need to think about how to address all these other roads in the future.

Mike Reggear —Needs an updated email list for the new committee.

Tom Malone- Forest inventory analysis program will be coming up, this is important to have as we do more biomass projects. This will be close to 70 plots in the state forest. Plots will be lidar and spectral analysis. This would be worth having more of a detailed program at a future meeting.

SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING

Next meeting will be the third Thursday of October.

Consider a tentative date in May 15th for Eastern TBAP.

8:18pm

ADJOURN