

Natural Resources Committee
4/16/2008
7:30 a.m.
GFCC Conference Room

Attendance: Tom Bundtzen, chair; Gale Skaugstad; Cal Skaugstad; Rick Schikora; Dick Bishop; Roger Burggraf; Bill Brophy; Jason Turner, David McDowell; Jack Wilbur; Dana Novak; Rhonda Boyles; Joni Scharfenburg; Chad Gerondale; and Michelle Gibson.

1. **Call to Order:** Tom Bundtzen called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.
2. **Roll Call For NRC Members.**
3. **Introduction of Guests.**
4. **Approval of 4/2/08 Minutes:** Motion to approve: Bill Brophy; second: Roger Burggraf; approval: yes
5. **Program:**
 - a. Final discussion and approval of Resolution Opposing Anti-Mining Initiatives
 - i. Discussion: David McDowell, Tom Bundtzen, Bill Brophy, Rhonda Boyles, Roger Burggraf, Cal Skaugstad
 1. Change wording to reflect opposing the Anti-Mining Initiatives.
 - a. Strike out water quality component wording in the title. State of Alaska already has some of the toughest water quality laws in the country. Industry doesn't run rampant.
 - b. Also, in fifth whereas, change wording from zero discharge of process waters to reflect requirement to meet drinking water standards.
 2. The two listed are the ones of primary concern, now there is a fourth one on Fisheries Habitat Protection.
 3. Change addressees to include State Chamber, Resource Development.
 - a. Maybe do cover letter as resolution more powerful.
 4. Already existing regulations on book that adequately protect fisheries habitat—explain that.
 5. Also upcoming Sustainable Salmon Policy, could hit us with water quality requirements in special fisheries committee
 6. Motion to approve with modifications: Roger Burggraf; second: Dick Bishop; approved: Yes
 - ii. Need Natural Resources committee presentation on predator control issues
 1. There is a presentation on Alaska's Intensive Management Law and Predator Control at the Noel Wien Burley tomorrow, 4/17, at 7:00 p.m.
 2. Paul Metz wants to talk about carbon sequestration research next time.
 3. Rick Schikora said Golden Valley would like to give a program on energy costs
 - a. Could do on May 21—3rd Wednesday in May

- b. Committee discussion of BP-Conoco Phillips “Denali” Gas line action plan—tabled. Presentation on this topic at the Alliance meeting today so can talk about it at the next meeting
- c. Easement issues on BLM land-use plans—Dick Bishop, Tom Bundtzen, David McDowell, Rick Schikora
 - i. 17B Easements on Alaska Native Corporation Land Selections
 - 1. Provision for access across Native Land Selections passed in 1971 in Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA). Purpose was to have a mechanism to provide access across or through land selections from the point of public access or use. Think it has been one of the best kept secrets in ANCSA, and has not vigorously pursued by the agencies like the State and BLM.
 - 2. Key provisos in the process of establishing these easements is that they be identified and approved before the conveyance of native and state lands. There was a bill passed in Congress that accelerated the process of conveyance for both to be done by 2009.
 - 3. Native Corporations have to make priority selections, and make that request to BLM. If conveyed without easements, virtually impossible to go back and get an easement unless there is a serious public access process. Native Corporations are in the final phases of identifying, and easements have to be settled before conveyances are made.
 - 4. BLM is in the process of reviewing 17B easements—recommendations were made as far back as 30 years ago and nothing has been done. In the current time frame, the AHTNA Corporation land is being reviewed—have substantial chunk of Southcentral of Alaska, overlapping areas people use. Provided map showing these lands are.
 - 5. Deadline for public comment is 4/28. The BLM is holding an Open House meeting tomorrow from 4 – 7 p.m. at the office on University Avenue to inform people about the easements and invite public comments. This process will go on—once their land matters are settled, then on to Doyon this summer. Same questions pertain—what will final priority of lands made, and then easements.
 - 6. BLM is obligated to take into account landowners and public interest for access. Have heard from landowners on a regular basis, but not heard much from the public. If there is not public input now, there is a good chance that a lot of these easements won’t be recognized and reserved for public uses.
 - 7. Questions: Tom Bundtzen, Dick Bishop, David McDowell, Rick Schikora, Cal Skaugstad, Roger Burggraf
 - a. 17B any surface access, or restricted to recreational use?
 - i. Provide public access from point “a” to point “b.” Land is still owned by the Corporation.

- Potential for regulation of use easement—
can't hunt, trap, or fish on easement.
- b. How does this tie in to RS2477—is there overlap with it?
 - i. 17Bs specifically related to Native Corporations, and RS2477s apply anywhere.
 - ii. In some cases could potentially be the same. 17B recognized in ANCSA, and in some cases not on identified trails. Greatest amount of advertising comes from Native Corporations every fall when they say stay off our lands except for 17B access. These are very important issues.
 - iii. Can be linear access, or one acre or less site staging area or trail head. Instances in case of AHTNA selections where either the opportunity to retain trailheads seems to be disappearing—transferred lands once used to AHTNA corporations, or not identified as important for public access. Like on lands across the parks highways
 - iv. Fish and Game has a group of people whose focus is to maintain access of 17B and RS2477 for hunting, fishing, and other recreational activities. Haven't heard anything about what Fish and Game is doing in this latest round of native selections.
 - c. The State Citizens' Advisory Commission was reconstituted last year, and 12 members were appointed and met for the first time in February, and now working on getting a position description for an Executive Director. Access issues will also be under the Commission's purview—need more people understanding and supporting funding issues. The next State Citizens Advisory Commission on federal areas will be held here in Fairbanks—will get information out about that.
 - d. How active are professional guides in this?
 - i. Interesting situation because more and more are signing leases with Native Corporations to be able to guide on their lands.
 - ii. It affects village corporation lands, and they had to have their priority selections completed by 2007, so they have already done it.
 - e. Other thing is BLM Eastern Interior Resource Management Plan—Public meeting on Tuesday,

April 22nd, from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. in the Borough Assembly chambers

- f. Recommendation for action?
 - i. With regards to AHTNA deadline for public comment of 4/28, at least take a look at it and submit to BLM whatever concerns have in particular with regards to specific access routes that are important to the public.
- g. Wonder who in BLM recommends and decides on easements as to which ones reserved and not. Also concerned about liability aspects of 17B easement
- h. Will find name of Access person at Fish and Game
- i. What looking for—to identify route or end points?
- j. Looking for actual routes and many have been suggested, but few have been mapped or specifically laid out. Question of identification and reservation of 17Bs by 2009, but don't know if includes mapping.
- k. Selection doesn't preclude public use—it is precluded when public land is conveyed.

6. Old Business

- a. None

7. New Business

- a. Roger Burggraf talked about the Mayor's message at yesterday's GML the cost of energy crisis that Fairbanks is in and that if things continue the way they are, Fairbanks will become an undesirable place to live, and it's something that has us all wondering. Coal is the cheapest fuel, and need to get HCCP running. Hydroelectric, biomass, coal to liquids, but big question is takes a lot of capital to start these up. Also, tomorrow evening Bjorn Lomborg is giving a presentation at Davis Hall at 7 p.m. on issues around global warming.

End of meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle B. Gibson