

**SUSITNA BASIN
RECREATION RIVERS MANAGEMENT PLAN
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, May 25, 2022
10:00am-12:00pm**

MINUTES

The recording for this meeting is available [online](#).

I. Call to Order

- A. The regular meeting of the Susitna Basin Recreation Rivers Advisory Board was called to order at approximately 10:04 AM on May 25, 2022, via Microsoft Teams.
- B. Roll Call – Board Members Present: Nancy Conklin, Tim Dabney, Mike DeMaria, Mike Overcast, Emma Pokon, Joseph Wright (Acting Chair), & Stephanie Nowers
- C. Board Members Absent: Israel Mahay (excused), Don Redick, Bruce Knowles, and Aaron Benjamin
- D. Tim Dabney MOVED to approve the meeting Agenda. Mike Overcast SECONDED. PASSED without objection.
- E. Mike Overcast MOVED to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes from 4/20/2022. Nancy Conklin SECONDED. PASSED without objection.
- F. Tim Dabney MOVED to approve the Special Meeting Minutes from 4/29/2022. Nancy Conklin SECONDED. PASSED without objection.

II. New Business

A. Plan Process Update

- a. First meeting of the Planning Team on May 12
 - i. Monica Alvarez (DNR) gave the Board an update on the inaugural meeting of the Planning Team. The team met to discuss their role in the process, how DNR has been working with the board and to get feedback on the user questionnaire.
- b. Scoping – Meeting scheduled at Talkeetna Library June 15th
 - i. DNR is on target to kick off the scoping process and will be holding the first public scoping meeting at the Talkeetna Library at 6:00 PM on June 15th.
 - ii. Talkeetna Meeting will be public noticed by next week – Board will be informed
 - iii. There will be additional scoping meetings in Anchorage, Wasilla, and a virtual meeting.

B. Board Member Vacancies

- a. Discuss recommendation to Governor for removal of Bruce Knowles (Sport Fishing) & Aaron Benjamin (Mining) Board Members due to excessive absences
 - i. Mike Overcast MOVED to recommend to the Governor these two members be removed from the Board. Tim Dabney SECONDED. PASSED without objection.
- C. Susitna Basin Recreation Rivers Management Plan Review
 - a. Chapter Four Discussion – Implementation Chapter
 - i. Emma Pokon asked about areas recommended for designation as recreation rivers and areas recommended to be removed from the recreation rivers in the plan and what came about from those recommendations. Monica Alvarez (DNR) stated that those recommendations were never acted upon. Those are statutory changes and the Legislature would have to act to fulfill the recommendations for removal and additions to the Recreation Rivers area. Mike DeMaria asked if that was in process. There is potentially a package of proposed legislation that could advance next Legislative Session. Since the Board was inactive for 30 years, these items could not advance without Board input.
 - ii. Joe Wright asked about work being done by other agencies within the corridors. Monica stated that different agencies have different responsibilities in the corridors. ADFG does have regular fisheries work and DEC monitors water quality. She believes that the Little Susitna is listed as an Impaired Waterbody but that it may be up for review to delist.
 - iii. Tim Dabney and Stephanie Nowers would like a status update on all of the plan actions outlined in the chapter. Monica stated that some actions have occurred while others have not. Recommendations for addition/removal for the corridors must be done by the legislature and have not occurred yet. The Statewide Boating Safety Program was implemented and an update to the Susitna Area Plan was done. There are many actions that could not be done without the Board in place such as any changes to a regulation or the plan. The board was disbanded almost immediately after the plan was adopted so these did not occur. DNR staff will work on an update for the board on different recommended actions for other agencies/divisions.
 - iv. Emma Pokon would like to know if there are areas in the plan where the agencies/divisions would like to see more flexibility for pragmatic land management without having to make plan amendments.

- v. Mike DeMaria would like more info on the success of actions that were implemented and whether the public was involved.
- vi. Mike Overcast asked for clarification on what constituted a minor change. Monica stated that minor changes are technical errors or typos and do not change/modify and intent of the plan. Changes beyond that require a plan amendment and the board to be convened.
- vii. Joe Wright asked if the Trails Action Plan overlaps with the proposed West Susitna access road. Monica stated that she believes that today they would overlap but that she doesn't think that was something considered when the original 1991 plan was developed. Joe asked if there is a current trails plan for the area. Monica stated that there is not a trail plan for the river corridors as envisioned in the plan.

III. Comments from Members of the Public (Maximum 3 minutes/person)

- a. Sue Mauger, Becky Long, Melissa Heuer & Eric Booton called in to provide public comment.

IV. Comments from Board Members

V. Adjournment – Next Regular Meeting 6/22/2022

- a. Stephanie Nowers MOVED to adjourn. Tim Dabney SECONDED. Without objection, the Board adjourned at 10:45 AM.