

Copper Basin Land and Resource Managers Meeting

March 1, 2017

Next meeting – October 4 @ 1 pm

Bureau of Land Management – Dennis Teitzel

- Staffing:
 - New GIS Specialist – Mike Lindsay
 - GFO Field Manager – Dennis is leaving
 - Summer Seasonal Hires:
 - Combination of local hires, returning hires, SCAs, PWSC Interns GS and Wage Grade hires. (Total = 11)
 - Positions to be announced
 - Maintenance Seasonal
 - Mining Compliance/ Haz Mat
- Subsistence:
 - Federal Caribou season closes March 31
 - Reports due by April 15
 - 3170 permits issued
 - 448 harvested total - average
 - 283 males/ bulls
 - 165 females/ cows
 - Special Season – October 15 – October 20
 - About 220 Caribou harvested
 - Federal Moose season is closed (Aug 1-Sep 20)
 - 1384 permits issued
 - 99 harvested – highest harvest we've had to date
- BLM NEPA Actions:
 - Have 19 projects that are being actively worked on
 - Valdez Creek Mining Company, LLC
 - VCM submitted an amendment to their plan of operations. Will be out for public comment soon.
 - Copper Valley Telecom
 - Submitted an application to install a buried fiber optic cable from Gakona Junction to Delta Junction. Will be out for public comment soon.
 - MARS
 - Received request from miner in Rainy Creek area for access across the Delta Wild and Scenic River in order to access state mining claims.
 - Oil Spills
 - Mile 180 Richardson
 - Mile 164.4 Richardson
- Lands and Realty
 - In the process of finalizing the ongoing Slana Land Sales. Should be completed in the next month or so.
- Recreation:

- Tangle Lakes Campground Entrance – will begin looking at a new design this year
 - Complete construction in next couple of years
- Swede Lake Trail Head Outhouse is complete and open
- Resources:
 - Gulkana Water Rights – Working on securing Gulkana water rights for resource and recreation purposes. (application in to the state)
 - AIM – Assessment, Inventory, and Monitoring Strategy Program
 - Completed 38 sites last year in the Valdez Creek Area
 - Take base line data and then return every few years to monitor change
 - Continuing inventory in Valdez Creek Area this field season
 - Also creating sites in Tielkel Area and eventually into Haines
 - Forestry
 - Tielkel Block – Currently have 5 commercial operators; 3 that are very active
 - They are cutting salvage wood from beetle kill
 - 120 active Personal Use Wood Cutting Permits
- Partnerships:
 - Copper Basin 300: Great teamwork between BLM and Ahtna to help with a checkpoint this year at Sourdough.
 - Upcoming Events
 - April 1-14 - NPS Chosen Frozen Winter Camp at Paxson CG
 - April 1 - WISE/BLM Family Ice Fishing Day at Silver Lake
 - May 2 – Earth Discovery Day
 - June 6-8 – Youth Environmental Summit at Kenny Lake School
 - June 22-25 – Project Healing Waters
 - July 11-13 – Aquatic Ecology Camp at Silver Lake
 - July 15 – Copper Basin Weed Smackdown
 - July 20- 29 – Copper River Stewardship Project. Applications are out and are due back by March 31.
 - August 1-4 – Geology Camp in McCarthy (with WISE and Wrangell Mnt. Center)
 - BLM-WISE Hikes throughout the summer occurring most Thursdays
 - NPLD – looking for a project. Let us know if you have a need or idea to consider!

ADF&G - DWC – Heidi Hatcher

- Successful Caribou, Sheep, Bison, Goat counts
- Extended Caribou season to September 30
 - Fall estimate 47,600
- Completed two Moose surveys in November and December
 - Got composition data for all sub units
- Starting snow surveys (partnering with NRCS)
 - Working on getting moose captures to augment collars in Alphabet hills
- Waiting for snow to do wolf count in Unit 13
- Board of Game issued emergency regulations for current caribou bag limit
 - Bag limit was doubled to two Caribou per household for any Tier 1 or CC001 permit holder
 - Also gave a registration hunt that State may be implementing before regular season closes March 31.
- Board of Game meeting – March 18- 21st
 - At Bible College in Glennallen
 - 44 proposals (info available online) – there will be opportunity for public input

- Board of Game meeting for Copper Basin and surrounding area in February 2018
 - Proposals are due May 1st
- State-wide Board of Game meeting November 2017
 - Proposals due May 1st
- Division of Forestry –
 - Alphabet Hills burn
 - Could burn as early as 2018.
 - Working on final analysis
- Trying to get more involved with outreach and partnerships in the community
 - Offering support for other programs!
- Hunter safety course and bow hunter safety course coming up in the Spring
 - Tentative date for bow hunter safety: May 13 in Glennallen
 - Tentative date for basic hunter safety: May 25 in Glennallen
 - Online portion must be completed before course date for either course.
- Working on Publication specific to Nelchina Caribou Herd. Unsure when that will be released; hopefully in the next couple of months.

Copper Country Alliance - Ruth McHenry and Cliff Eames

- New Copper Country Alliance bags – for Sale
- Paper bags have replaced plastic bags at IGA (significant change in land fill plastic)
- Pipeline oversight.
 - Numerous tanker truck spills are occurring recently. Citizen oversight group is working on the issue.
 - Alaska DEC, with Alaska DOT and the Federal EPA, will be putting on workshop for truckers at the end of this month and beginning of April.
 - Agencies are looking at possible preventions and lessons learned.
- Interested in NPS Back Country and Wilderness Stewardship Plan.
 - Planning process has been extended.
- Local resident has organized a group who are asking the State of Alaska to designate a non –motorized winter recreation area at far north of Thompson pass.
- A big thank-you to the several non-profits and agencies who are sponsoring trips and events for youth.

Ahtna, Inc. – Sarah Daszkiewicz and Bruce Cain

- In December, President Obama authorized the Secretary of Defense to convey 4,000 acres of HAARP land to Ahtna, Inc. in the Gulkana Area.
- Currently working with the BIA to install six highway Ahtna interpretation signs along highway pull-outs.
 - Design will be completed this summer and signs will be installed in the Summer of 2018.
- Sailors Campground (previously known as Sailors Pit).
 - Working on revamping camping spots and installing new signs.
 - Will include RV pull through spots.
- Continuing to working with the BLM complete 17b easement trail inventory.
 - Inventoried 5-10 trails during the summer of 2016.
- Working on Gulkana land transfer.
 - Returning part of former Gulkana Village land back to Gulkana.
 - Hoping to build a campground and boat launch to trade to the State of Alaska for the Gulkana land.

- Bruce Cain, working with AITRC, is working on a Moose Management Plan. AITRC is assessing Ahtna traditional use territory landscape to help develop that model.
- Staffing
 - Hired a Land Resource Manager – start in May
 - Interviewing two full-time Natural Resource Technicians in mid-March through April
 - Will be hiring two part-time NRTs to help with projects
 - Recruitment will begin in May

Native Village of Chickaloon – Gary Hay

- New Moose Creek Campground – Mile 55 on Glenn Hwy
 - Spent last 2 years redoing campground
 - New vault toilets
 - New covered gazebos with picnic tables
 - About a dozen developed campsites with tables

BLM Branch of Pipeline Monitoring – Kevin Kearney

- Hired additional Operations and Maintenance Specialist for Fairbanks Field Office.
 - In the process of hiring additional O&M Specialist for Valdez Field Office.
- Getting into field season with work on rivers and flood plan maintenance with Alyeska Corporation.
 - Monitoring various things Alyeska is doing in terms of remediating riverbank erosion, etc.

DOT

- Projects coming up
 - Tok Cutoff
 - Rehab project anticipated for completion in FY18 from mile 38- 50
 - Costs for rehab 25 million
 - McCarthy Rd
 - Mile 27 Chokosna Bridge replacement.
 - In design with anticipated construction after FY19
 - \$5.7 million
 - Richardson Hwy
 - 65-80 rehabilitation
 - After FY19
 - \$20 million
 - 115-148 rehab and widen
 - After FY19
 - \$60 Million
 - 173-185 reconstruction and widening
 - After FY19
 - Just under \$21 million.
 - Ruby Creek Bridge replacement
 - FY17
 - \$10 million
 - Tazlina Wayside riverbank stabilization
 - Blasting for rip rap for stabilization
 - Completed by end of construction season this year
 - 159-167 reconstruction and widening.
 - Anticipated to begin construction FY 17.

- Multiple phases (2-3 seasons to complete) because of cost
 - \$37 million
- 167-173
 - Reconstruction and widening
 - \$57 million
- 175-185
 - Reconstruction and widening
- 35-65
 - Resurfacing
 - Begin in FY17 dependent on funding
- 80-82 Tonsina Hill
 - Resurfacing and drainage improvement in FY17
- 82-115 resurfacing
 - Being construction FY17
- Tazlina Pathway project is moving forward, survey crews have been out. Will move forward to design FY18
- Going to be having a call for projects on TPP program in the next few weeks
 - Will be taking nominations

DNR Denali Block Manager - Candice Snow

- Will be working on a couple projects in TLAD this field season
 - Land Mark Gap Trail
- Hoping to get out a Scoping Notice at the beginning of the summer for a loop trail that would pass by 7-mile lake and would connect Glacier Summit Trail to ____.
- Glacier Gap and Land Mark Gap trailhead designs have been completed.
 - Hopefully a priority in next couple of years to install and complete trailheads.
- Rusty Lake Trail – working on reroute
 - Two possible routes
 - One on BLM land other on state land.

WISE – Robin Mayo

- Upcoming WISE and Partner Events
 - Science Lecture “Our Furry, Nocturnal Friends in the Sky – Bats in Alaska’s National Parks” with Paul Burger, NPS Alaska Regional Office. Friday, March 3, 7pm, Prince William Sound Community College Glennallen Campus.
 - Science Lecture "Critical Connections: Conservation of Migratory Birds in Alaska's National Parks" With Laura Phillips, Ecologist, Denali National Park and Preserve Friday, March 10, 7pm, Kenny Lake Public Library.
 - Slana School In-Class Science and Evening Lecture with Bird TLC of Anchorage Tuesday, March 21st. Lecture 7pm, Slana School
 - Family Ice Fishing Day. Saturday, April 1, 10am-3pm. Silver Lake. Volunteers Needed!
 - Children and Nature Network Conference, Vancouver BC. April 18-21 Robin will attend and present a poster on partnerships for environmental education
 - Earth Discovery Day Tuesday, May 2, 10am-2pm, Wrangell-St. Elias Visitor Center. Volunteers needed!
 - Science Lecture “Lampreys of Interior Alaska” with Andres Lopez, UAF Fisheries May 19th, Gakona

- WISE/BLM Summer Hikes will be Thursdays, whenever we don't have something else....
 - Youth Environmental Summit June 6-8 Kenny Lake School presented by Native Village of Gakona
- Edible and Useful Wild Plants Workshop June 16-18 with Janice Schofield. Kenny Lake.
- Project Healing Waters June 22-25 Wounded Veterans Fly Fishing trip to Tangle Lakes
- Aquatic Ecology Camp July 11-13
- Copper River Stewardship Program July 20-29
- Geology Camp with Wrangell Mountains Center August 1-4

Copper River Watershed Project – Kristen Carpenter

- Upriver Wild Food __ April 29th at American Legion Hall
 - Taking nominations until then for a Watershed Hero
- Working on putting applications together to restore fish passage at high priority sites
 - Little Tonsina river
 - Crystal Creek on McCarthy road
- Working on Traveling by Story projects
 - Workshop in April
- Story telling in Gakona in April
- ROAR in April – will be putting out call for volunteers
- Copper River Stewardship Program 0 July 20-29, 2017

Copper River Watershed Project (Invasive Weeds) – Chantel Caldwell

- Working with local pilots to discuss outreach efforts for Elodea prevention and control
 - Will have an Elodea booth at Valdez Fly In.
- Hiring a new seasonal Invasive Plant Technician for the Copper River Basin.
 - 400 hours of work with possible extensions.
- Copper Basin Weed Smackdown – July 15

DNR Planning - Tyler Fanning

- Copper River Basin Area Plan – revision
 - In draft preparation stage. Put on hold in order to focus efforts on other projects in the state. Anticipating one year delay.
 - Website on DNR site. <http://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/planning/areaplans/crbap/>
 - Can view map with planning boundary, comments made during scoping; check website frequently for updates.
 - Scoping public comment period has closed but can email crbaprevision@alaska.gov.
 - Will be another public comment period when they release draft