

ANCHORAGE BEAR COMMITTEE MEETING

May 11, 2005

9:00 a.m.-12:00 a.m.

Members Present: Lilly Goodman (ADF&G), Rick Sinnott (ADF&G), Jessy Coltrane (ADF&G), John McCleary (MOA), Walter Clevenger (Ft. Rich), Chris Garner (Ft. Rich), Mark Sledge (Ft. Rich), Bruce Seppi (BLM), Karen Deatherage (Defenders of Wildlife), Kat Putsay (Defenders of Wildlife), Dan Bosch (ADF&G), Jerry Lewanski (Chugach State Park), Herman Griese (EAFB), Craig Gales (Alaska Waste Transfer), Kim Babcock (AST), Thede Tobish (MOA), Doug O'Harra (Anchorage Daily News), Daryl Magnuson (EAFB)

Facilitator: Cindi Jacobson

Welcome and Opening Business

Cindi welcomed the group and the group introduced itself. The meeting summary from the previous meeting was adopted without changes.

Agency Reports

- Rick reported that there were 4 DLP black bears and 4 DLP brown bears in Anchorage. This was a record low for black bears and a record high for brown bears. Rick and Jessy issued 2 citations in 2004 and are ramping up to issue more this season. Rick is encouraging the removal of Saturday garbage collection and the early morning collection in bear neighborhoods. There was a general reminder from Rick to keep using the e-mail loop for citations issued.
- Herman said that EAFB trapped two black bears to remove their radio collars. They are also upgrading their dumpsters to be bear proof.
- Bruce reported that BLM had one black bear get into a canopy tent at Campbell Tract, and that a brown bear pushed the Science Center dumpster over. They are taking steps to put an electric fence around the dumpster.
- Craig reported that he is now a part owner of the new Alaska Waste Transfer and would like to work with the ABC on bear issues.
- John McCleary didn't have any pressing bear activity to report.
- Kat reported that Defenders of Wildlife implemented an extensive outreach in problem neighborhoods, which has been very helpful in spreading the bear-garbage message.
- Mark reported that they have a transient population on Ft. Rich, so education is a constant process with new people arriving at all times.

- Kim said that she believes citations to be the only effective deterrent to getting people to stop putting their garbage out early. She mentioned that there are AST captains that put their trash out early.

Municipal Plans

Eagle River Trail

Rick reported that last year ADF&G attended several meetings and field trips to discuss the proposed Eagle River Trail plans. Currently the plan is to build a trail from downtown Eagle River up the valley to the Nature Center. This trail would run primarily along Eagle River; however the last couple of miles could be along the current Eagle River Road, which would help keep people out of prime brown bear habitat. Rick predicts that this trail will result in an increased number of maulings or human/bear encounters with brown bears. At this time, some of the funding is not certain. There are federal dollars for an upgrade to Eagle River Road, and the last couple miles of trail along the road will be included in this project.

Parks and Recreation Plan

John said that the municipal strategic planning sessions wrapped up a week ago. The Parks Plan is in draft form currently, but is stalled in the approval process by the Planning and Zoning Committee.

Rick thanked Thede for including the bear habitat zones into the maps in the plans; however these zones seem to have been lost during the rewrites. The last draft didn't mention bears.

Title 21

Thede reported that the city is in the process of rewriting Land Use Codes, however it is a slow process. The Title 21 Draft is due out for review on June 21. This draft will include land use guidelines in regards to bears. Thede recommended to take the bear habitat map and draft guidelines for bears and create an overlay called the wildlife conflict zone. Updates of Title 21 will be on the Planning Department's website. Thede will send a draft to everyone.

Bear Cans

Jessy reported that the Rasmuson Foundation awarded money to the park foundation. Some of this money may be spent on installing bear proof garbage cans in city parks and greenbelts.

Karen and Lilly will work with Craig Gales to get educational signs on bear proof dumpsters that are put out in town.

Elmendorf/Ft. Richardson Brown Bear Study

Sean Farley (ADF&G) gave a presentation on the upcoming brown bear study to be conducted on Elmendorf and Ft. Richardson with funding from both bases. The study will look at habitat use and movements of brown bears on and adjacent to the bases. They will be putting out GPS collars on bears, targeting drainages from Peter's Creek to Girdwood, with the majority of the effort surrounding military lands. There will be ground-based and helicopter captures in the end of May. Bears will be trapped on military lands and collared. This study will provide fine-scale movement data that can be remotely downloaded every two weeks. This will provide us with almost real-time data. In addition, Sean and the military bases will be collecting hair and scat samples to generate the lowest possible number of different brown bears using areas on the base and in the municipality. There will be additional isotope work done to identify diet. There is money to put out 10 collars, and locations will be recorded every 90 minutes. These collars will automatically drop off at the end of the study.

Model Neighborhood Project

Karen reported on the model neighborhood project initiated by Defenders of Wildlife. They will initiate a pledge program in Eaglewood subdivision in Eagle River. Volunteers will go door to door to 950 houses to try and get people to sign a pledge saying that they will not put their garbage out before the morning of pickup. They will have a press release on Friday as part of Defender's National Bear Awareness Week. Kat mentioned that the success of the pledge program by doing a before and after assessment of the garbage problems in Eaglewood.

Karen also mentioned that they are looking into purchasing bear-proof garbage containers for people in the 68th St. area, which is consistently one of the worst bear neighborhoods in town.

Plans for 2005

ADF&G

Rick and Jessy plan to work with Sean Farley on the brown bear project to provide more information on brown bears in the Anchorage area. ADF&G will be ramping up enforcement with the city ordinance and state regulations/citations.

Waste Transfer

All trucks are equipped with tipper cart pickup devices. All the 96-gallon tipper carts have been distributed. The bear garbage cages can be rented for \$20/month. Craig said that they will fabricate these cages and perhaps the tipper carts. The red tag program was dropped, but Craig will reinstate it.

PSAs

Lilly had the PSAs made last year. Members of the ABC would like to revive them. It would cost about \$2000-3000 to have them revived through Alaska Broadcast. Lilly has some funding but requires more to revive the PSAs for this summer.

Needs for Upcoming Season?

Rick will compile summaries, agendas and tickler sheets from previous meetings.

Next Meeting

The date and time for the next meeting will be scheduled in the fall. The meeting will be sometime in October.

12:00 Meeting adjourned