

KMTA and CLWCP Meeting Sep, 6, 2018

Present:

Lia Slemons, Jessica Szlag, David Story, Janette Cadieux

GOALS FOR THE DAY:

- Touch base on the partnership
- Speak about available grant opportunities
- Answer questions KMTA has regarding the successes CLWCP has had recently
- Challenges of a small volunteer organization

Community Support:

- Vast majority of community supports CLWCP. A few wholly do not. Some are on a continuum between. The project on the whole is well supported.

CLWCP:

- How can we obtain grants and maintain productive working relationships with elected officials and agencies without becoming burdened or bogged down in the efforts given our wholly volunteer group?
- Safe non-motorized pathway is the goal from Resurrection Pass trailhead to Quartz Creek Rd. Separate from perhaps a motorized corridor that is used by OHV or possibly shared in winter.

Local Trails:

- A goal has been to write a trails plan for all-seasons. Girdwood Trail Committee recently undertook a multi-year effort to create their first trails plan. They received a KMTA grant for formatting and publication assistance and worked with KMTA's graphic designer.
- Martha Story is an excellent resource regarding local trails status and direction.
- In brief:
 - Carter to Crescent primitive trail: Hasn't been funded for upgrade despite the age of the trail.
 - Winter-use trails and business is desired for expansion by local business owners.
 - Biking is an area that CL has resources for but connectivity is lacking. Biking is complementary to existing business here but education is needed. USFS design standards would need to be changed for their trails to accommodate heavier/modern bike use. How can we tap IMBA International Mountain Biking Association? (Carcross, YT is a good example.) Needs to have stewardship component.
 - Bike partner might include Kenai Peninsula group at Tsalteshi Trails.
 - Trails that can impact user experience on Res Pass have limitations for USFS right now due to a study that resulted in a moratorium on expansion.

- Those trails that are a part of the national recreation system have been built/sustained to a higher standard. Other trails are not and cannot sustain increased traffic without higher damage.
- Is John Muir Trust active in Alaska? They've restored degraded trails in Scotland.
- Seward Nordic Ski Club is working to expand Nordic skiing opportunity at Devil's Creek wood cut area. Cooper Landing Nordic opportunities include Quartz Creek, Russian River, and Summit Pass.
- Slaughter Gulch trail is degraded because of overuse. Offers easiest access to alpine from Cooper Landing. Cecil Rhodes also has highway-visible degradation.
- STIP is under-utilized but CLWCP has tried in the past and found the effort unfruitful and frustrating. Similar pot of Federal Highways money, ATAP, will soon be accepting applications via same AKDOT points of contact.

Bypass of MP 45-60 Sterling Hwy:

- Continue to advocate for a safe walk/bike pathway on the "old" highway corridor for safety reasons.
- Cooper Creek bridge is a key structure just beyond MP 50.1 to the west that is unsafe because you cannot do anything but walk on the bridge with the traffic and there is no room between the lanes and guardrail. It is the tie to historical trails of Res Pass, Russian Lakes, Crescent Creek, Johnson Pass, etc. Cooper Creek Bridge is substandard.
- David has filmed 2-way traffic across the Cooper Creek bridge and other significant junctures.
- We have our Safety Path from Sunrise to AWA in some form or another. Built 1993 by local DOT crew. See website for history.
- Terri Marceron is retiring in Feb, 2019 but could be an important advocate for mitigation with the Res Pass that has been omitted from the DOT Bypass Plan. This mitigation might be additional to the Snow River ped/bike bridge that is in the plan already.
- Senator Murkowski might also be an ally for additional bypass mitigation focused on relevant community assets.
- While we would like to see a bike/ped bridge on Schooner Bend bridge to join Res Pass and Russian Lakes the key bridge to accessing the community and other assets is the Cooper Creek bridge.
- The State Parks (Jack Blackwell) and USFS both want to pursue work on Cooper Creek and have spoken with a community rep and KPB rep (Marcus Mueller) on including the bridge and road work that will be impacted by work on Cooper Creek.

KMTA can help:

- Jessica has background as an executive director for bike to work nonprofit, transportation planner, in Washington State.
 - Worked in ANC for Alta as a transportation planner.

- Strategic Plan for KMTA: Raise awareness of KMTA. Strengthen partnerships. Diversify funding sources. Develop education, trails, and other programs. Board engagement. Signature event.
- KMTA are in year 9 of a 15-year funded grant.
- KMTA: Do not do anything that the community is not asking for. (Note: CLWPC is a part of the KPB Transportation Plan not just a goal of the local community but the Kenai Peninsula.)
- KMTA would like to help lead groups to their goals through advocacy and possibly grant acquisition.
- Can KMTA look to the State to become a State Heritage corridor? They need to have demonstrated projects to prove their effectiveness. They also need to point to economic benefits of projects they have been involved with.
- How should CLWCP ask for assistance from KMTA? CLWCP and KMTA should be in regular communication through meetings, contact with Lia (Trails Coordinator), Cooper Landing Board rep (Martha Story)- can also help recruit additional Cooper Landing rep.
- Let's bring the stakeholders of CLWCP together again to do a 10-year reexamination of the plan. Bring folks together to examine the goals and priorities now that the Bypass is happening, making possible changes.
 - Jessica and Lia need to walk the Safety Path with David and Martha
 - Gather and demonstrate ongoing public support
- Joint interest in a special event, perhaps bike-anchored in Cooper Landing (and rotates through different corridor communities or trails) in fall (Sept/Oct) that includes stewardship in lead-up. Stewardship component might work with IMBA to use design standards for biking

Further partnerships:

- How to increase Cooper Landing business benefits of trail development?
 - Winter use
 - National designation as 'epic' via IMBA with increasing user options

Next meeting:

Oct 16, 2018 11:30 a.m. at J Cadieux's home