

“To provide education and leadership in the conservation and sustainable use of soil- and water- related resources through cooperative programs that protect, restore and improve our environment.”

Natural Currents

Local Conservation Solutions



Website Remodel

The Homer District has developed a website that's faster to load, easier to use, and more informative.

Check it out at:

www.homerswcd.org

Board of Supervisors

- Chris Rainwater, Chair
- Jim VanOss
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- Otto Kilcher
- Pete Roberts

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- Devony Lehner
- Debbie Alred
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- Shirley Schollenberg, District Manager
- Lindsay Winkler
- Caleb Slemmons
- Hansel Klausner
- Christine S'gro

PUBLIC ASKED TO WEIGH IN ON FOREST PLAN

The Homer District is seeking public involvement in updating the management plan for the Homer Demonstration Forest. The intent of this plan is to stimulate interest in and guide the utilization of the area for forest research projects, education programs and recreational opportunities.

The HDF is located in the Bay Crest Hill area northwest of Homer city limits. The land is owned by the State of Alaska and primary management authority was granted to the Division of Forestry in 1986. Since that time the HDF has been managed collaboratively by DOF, the Homer District, the

Natural Resources Conservation Service, US Forest Service, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. The original framework plan for the area was adopted by these entities and the HDF Steering Committee in 1992, and this updated plan endeavors to address the significant changes that have occurred in the area since that time.

Through a Community Forestry Program grant from DOF, the Homer District has prepared a draft management plan that is now available for public comment. The HDF is a valuable community resource and the

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HYDROLOGY DIAGRAMS COMPLETE

With the release of four new hydrology diagrams the District has brought better understanding of groundwater on the Western Kenai Peninsula.

Funded by the Homer District through an EPA grant, Restoration Science and Engineering (www.restoresci.com) has released cross-sectional depictions of four regional areas. Regions include Homer to the Caribou Hills, the Anchor River Watershed, the Deep Creek and Ninilchik River, and the Kenai River area.

The project was initiated to answer hydrologic questions stemming from

the complex nature of glacial processes that formed the Kenai Lowlands. Better understanding of groundwater flow in the area will aid managers and the public in assessing the importance of groundwater interactions.

This fall the Kenai Wetlands Working Group, an informal organization of area wetland scientists and managers, will review the diagrams and discuss how to further the understanding of groundwater hydrology on the western Kenai Peninsula.

Copies of the diagrams can be acquired through the Homer District Office.

Trail - Trials Trail Ride

A benefit for the
Kachemak Heritage
Land Trust



“Enjoy beautiful scenery on this 12 mile ride through the hills above Anchor Point while testing your skills to maneuver various trail obstacles.”

~Shirley Schollenberg,
Ride Organizer



To Join call Shirley at:
567-3467

HORSE RIDERS, OWNERS COTTONWOOD PARK IS FOR YOU

The Kachemak Bay Equestrian Association is rapidly moving ahead on their plans to develop a community park along East End Road to be known as Cottonwood Park.

The upper portion of the park will be developed for family activities and will include picnic tables and playground equipment. Plans for the lower portion include a riding arena, horse stalls and a trailhead that will access future equestrian trails that will lead to Skyline Drive and other local areas.

Equestrians in the area are very excited about this project. It is anticipated that, due to the mild Homer climate, the park will enable riders to extend their riding season by a couple months. Typically, the Homer area designated for the park dries up noticeably sooner in the spring and freezes later in the fall.

Cottonwood Park will be located near Jack Gist Recreational Park and plans are in the works for both recreational areas to share parking for activities.

“JAMMIN’ WITH SALMON, SWINGIN’ WITH SWINE, COME ON EVERYONE IT’S FAIR TIME!”

Sing this jingle at local businesses and you will be given an Alaska Grown token good for \$1.00 off admission to the Kenai Peninsula State Fair on Friday August 18th.

In addition, fair goers have an opportunity to earn another \$1.00 off the gate fee by participating in a recycling program on July 15th and 22nd. Sponsored by Marathon Oil, anyone delivering a recyclable item to the Homer or Soldotna landfill on those days will receive a token good for a \$1.00 discount at the gate on Sunday August 20th.

The Kenai Peninsula State Fair will happen August 18, 19, and 20th. A final

schedule of events will be released soon.

Cooperators are encouraged to exhibit their products and help promote agriculture on the Kenai Peninsula. Exhibit entries will be accepted Thursday, August 17. More information on exhibits can be gathered by calling the fair office at 567-3670.

Be sure to visit the District’s booth in the Farm Bureau Building. We’ll have loads of information on our many District programs and a new invasive weed display. Our weed guru, Caleb Slemmons, will also be on hand to answer questions about invasive plants and our soil testing program.



DISTRICT TO CONTINUE SALMON STREAM MONITORING

In an effort to determine the cause of rising water temperatures in the Anchor, Stariski, Ninilchik and Deep Creek Rivers, the District will continue to collect and analyze water quality data for these important salmon streams.

Monitoring revealed summer water temperatures are on the rise in salmon streams of the lower Peninsula. Alaska's State Standards for egg and fry incubation, and migration routes have been consistently exceeded. The Homer District collected air temperature data in 2005 to help determine how much variance in stream temperature can be explained by air

temperature. Preliminary results show a very tight relationship between water and air temperatures.

This project also focuses on several unprotected stream crossings on the upper reaches of Deep Creek. Through a stakeholder working group the 4-Corners area was identified as a high concern for water quality due to the many unprotected stream crossings.

Assessing and prioritizing the need for route relocation and/or hardening will serve to reduce water quality impacts from ATVs while still allowing access to area resources and recreation areas.

Field Renovator Available for Rent:



The Homer District still has equipment for lease to assist cooperators in renovating aging fields and pastures.

This equipment is best suited for use on hay fields that have considerable sod mat and are dry.

The renovator requires a 40hp tractor or larger.

Arrange to rent this and other equipment by contacting the Homer District office:

907-235-8177 x5

CARIBOU LAKE TRAIL AND RACE UPDATE

The Caribou Lake Trail is humming with activity after a late spring breakup caused muddy trail conditions well into June. Regardless, plans are still on for trial use and enjoyment this summer.

On Saturday, August 5th, the Homer District, the Coalition of Homer Open Space and Trails and Cycle Logical are sponsoring a mountain bike race to Caribou Lake.

Registration begins Saturday, 10 am at the corner of E. End Rd and Basargin Rd.

The race will end at the Lake with food and prizes for racers, volunteers and spectators. To get involved, contact Derek Reynolds, owner of Cycle Logical, at 226-CYCL. The District's website will be updated with more info on the race as plans are finalized.

COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS EDUCATION PROGRAM

Results of a survey sent out this past spring show the District's natural resource education program as a high priority to cooperators. As we gear up for a new year of the Natural Resources Technology Class at the Homer High School, we will organize a community advisory committee to help strategize

the program's goals and projects for the 2006-2007 school year.

If you're interested in getting involved please contact the District for more information. We look forward to hearing from you as we move forward with the new school year.

HOMER TRAILS WEEKEND

The first annual Homer Trails Weekend garnered over 200 participants on both the north and south side of Kachemak Bay June 3rd and 4th.

Highlights of the weekend included water taxi discounts to Kachemak Bay State Park, a slideshow by Dave Brann on his trail work in Lake Baikal, Russia, and numerous interpretive walks through our area's natural environment.

In the Homer Demonstration Forest, which is managed by the Homer District, 14 volunteers helped spread wood chips on the Homestead Trail, repair the roofs on outhouses and much more.

Thanks to the many volunteers and organizations that helped make the weekend such a success. We look forward to seeing you on the trail!

Forest Plan (Continued from page 1)

Homer District believes it essential that the public be involved with this process. Comments will be accepted until August 18th, 2006.

Copies of the draft are available online at www.homerswcd.org. Paper copies are also available for review at the Homer Public Library and the Homer USDA Service Center. For more information contact Hansel Klausner at 235-8177 x5 or hansel@homerswcd.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS & DEADLINES

August 18th - Comments due on the HDF Management Plan

August 18th, 19th and 20th - Kenai Peninsula State Fair

Still need a soil test? Contact Caleb at the Homer District office.



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www.homerswcd.org

*Meeting the needs of the local
Land User*