

McCarthy Area Council April Meeting Minutes



Mission: *McCarthy Area Council is a nonprofit organization committed to improving the lives of locals and visitors in the McCarthy-Kennecott Area*

Specific Objectives and Purposes: *The specific objectives and purposes of this corporation shall be (1) to provide structure for discussion, decision-making and planning on issues faced by the McCarthy area community; (2) to receive and administer funds for community projects and for the administration of the public affairs of the McCarthy area community.*

Date: April 27, 2023, 6:30 pm at Porphyry Place and by Zoom

Members present: *(in person)* Erin McKinstry, Mark Vail, Jeremy Pataky, Arlene Rosenkrans, Stephanie Sever, Greg Fensterman, Matthew Shidner, Victoria Tanner, Keith Rowland, Laurie Rowland, Jon Erdman, Tamara Harper *(virtual/phone)* Julie Truskowski, Michelle Latvala, Pete Senty, Dave Syren, Patt Garrett, Cindy Hendel, Elizabeth Schafer

Others present: *(in person)* Malcolm Vance, Nik Merlino, David Rowland *(virtual/phone)* Patty Yould, Eric Yould, Jamie Hart, Geoff Downes, Paul Hanis, Livvi Lantry-Wacht, Mark Wacht, Amanda Swinehart, Barry Hecht, Laura Boniek, Joshua Scott, Jason Masse, Dub Evans, Colin Warren, Kelly Bay, Natalie Bay, Julia Chester, Chris Chester

Call to Order (6:00pm) with a quorum of at least nine members present at Porphyry Place and online.

1. Approval of agenda
 - a. Request for changes or amendments to agenda: None
 - b. Motion requested: Move to approve the meeting agenda (Matthew Shidner)
 - i. Second: Stephanie Sever
 - ii. Summary of discussion: Clarification that items can be added to agenda after it's approved.
 - iii. Vote: Unanimous in favor
2. Approval of September 2022 membership meeting minutes
 - a. Request for changes or amendments to minutes: Add Laurie Rowland's name to members present.
 - b. Motion requested: Move to approve the September minutes as amended. (Mark Vail)
 - i. Second: Laurie Rowland
 - ii. Summary of discussion: None
 - iii. Vote: One abstention, all else in favor
3. President's report and announcements (Nik Merlino)
 - a. Nik welcomed the new MAC Board of Directors: Nik Merlino, President; Thea Agnew Bembem, Vice President; Matthew Shidner, Treasurer; Erin McKinstry, Secretary; Members-At-Large: Chris Chester, Greg Fensterman, Jeremy Pataky, Hannah Rowland, Greg Runyan, Stephanie Sever, and Julie Truskowski
 - b. Nik thanked Wrangell Mountains Center for hosting the past few MAC meetings. He also thanked Keith and Laurie Rowland for offering their home, and thanked Blackburn Heritage Foundation for the many years MAC had meetings at Tony Zak's. The Blackburn Heritage Foundation no longer wants MAC to host meetings at Tony Zak's, so MAC is looking for a long-term spot. MAC has been in communication with other nonprofits, like EMS, about alternative options.
 - c. Nik reviewed some of MAC's accomplishments from 2022: \$40,000 in funding for the KMVFD Fire Hall, established the large grant process, the board developed a conflict of interest policy, and MAC worked with NPS and Rowcon to approve a temporary fix for the road at the swimming hole.
4. Treasurer's report (Matthew Shidner)
 - a. Financials:
 - i. ~\$12,000 checking, ~\$14,000 savings, ~\$114,000 in four CDS=~\$174,000
 - ii. Spent in 2022: ~\$11,000 small grants (kids camp is still open, ~\$1200); ~\$13,000 general operations (outhouse repair, insurance and fees, admin, outhouse operation and usage, swimming hole fix, etc.)
 - iii. Received in 2022: CAP Grant ~\$27,000; \$843 dues and outhouse donations
 - iv. Income minus expenses, MAC saved ~\$4,000, which is reported on the state form.
5. Small Grants/ECI (Erin McKinstry)
 - a. Erin reminded everyone that funding is available for community projects through the small grants program (up to \$2400 per project) and the essential community infrastructure grant program (up to \$30,000). Applications

and guidelines are available on the MAC website (<https://www.mxycouncil.org/get-involved>) or in paper form at the mail shack. Email Erin at mccarthyareacouncil.secretary@gmail.com with any questions.

6. Community partner reports
 - a. KMVFD (Chris Chester)
 - i. The KMVFD received 2 grants this year, including a \$200,000 line item in the federal budget for the fire hall. There are many requirements and steps in the funding process, and they recently completed the environmental assessment portion. The KMVFD is awaiting information from the steel manufacturer for doors and windows and is working to engineer plans for the building, so the concrete can be poured later this summer or early this fall. Additionally, Chris aims to have the steel package ordered and hopefully delivered by the fall. It takes 8-10 weeks from order to receipt. The KMVFD plans to start construction of the building next year. The second grant is a 4-year administrative grant to help with training and retention. For example, funding for attending the Chiefs' Conference and for firefighter physicals.
 - ii. Training will begin in May and is tentatively scheduled for the third Saturday of the month.
 - b. Kennicott-McCarthy Recreation Alliance (Jon Erdman)
 - i. Playground Grant Completion Report: Jon gave a report to close out the playground grant (\$1354). The money went toward playground picnic tables and a bench as well as the nonprofit filing fees. Thanks to Chuck Schuetze for donating his time to get the nonprofit certified with the IRS. For more information, see the attached report.¹
 - c. WMC (Jon Erdman)
 - i. WMC has been in communication with a Valdez nonprofit called Advocates for Victims of Violence. They're offering to come to McCarthy and host a virtual training free of charge. The trainings would focus on sexual assault prevention and sexual assault response. Dates aren't set yet, but they're looking at mid-June. Reach out to Jon (jon@wrangells.org) if you have preferences on dates.
 - ii. WMC has many community programs this summer, including the arts programs, a bird walk with Mark Vail, the WMC Work Party, Mike Loso's glacier talk in Kennicott, and more. Find out more information on their website (<https://www.wrangells.org>).
 - d. KMXV Visitors Guide (Jeremy Pataky)
 - i. Jeremy is publishing the visitor's guide for the 8th time. He's running a little behind on publishing it, and estimates it will be ready by the third week of May. There's still a little time to put an ad in the guide. Reach out to Jeremy at kmxv.guide@gmail.com.
7. Old Business
 - a. Report: 2022 McCarthy Access and West Side Road Maintenance (Keith Rowland)
 - i. Keith gave the completion report for his 2022 small grant. He spent \$2,160 in small grant funds, with \$2,160 in matching funds from 18 contributors. That paid for two summer bladings and three winter plowings on the west side road and the access road to/from the service bridge.
 - ii. There was a question about whether Keith donates any of his time for these proposals and whether the price would be similar for similar road projects in other parts of the valley. He said that similar maintenance projects would cost a similar amount.
8. ²New Business
 - a. Proposal: 2023 McCarthy Access and West Side Road Maintenance (Keith Rowland)²
 - i. Keith presented a proposal for two summer bladings and three winter plowings, for the west side road up to Don Welty's and the access to/from the service bridge. He's requesting the same amount as last year: \$2,160 in small grant funds with \$2,160 in matching funds. See the attached proposal for details.
 - b. Community Assistance Program Grant Application FY 2024 (Matthew Shidner)
 - i. Matthew is working on the State CAP grant application for FY 2024. He reports how we used last year's funds and how we plan to use this year's funds. It's okay if we use the funds differently than we projected we would. The state estimates we'll get \$25,012.22. As in the past, he's planning to put

¹ McCarthy community playground grant completion report

²Proposal for MAC Revenue Sharing Funds (McCarthy Access & Westside Road Maintenance)

- down \$5000 for fire, \$5000 for EMS, \$5000 for road maintenance, and \$10,000 for general administration. Categories include fuel, electricity, insurance, education, EMS, water/sewer, public safety, fire, road maintenance, general administration, and three blank categories.
- ii. Motion: Motion to approve the application that was presented today. (Mark Vail)
 1. Second: Tamara Harper
 2. Discussion: None
 3. Vote: Unanimous in favor
- c. Amendment to Bylaws, Tony Zak's/Blackburn Community Center (Nik Merlino)
- i. Anyone can propose a change to bylaws at any meeting. Changes are voted on two meetings after they're presented. Nik and the board are proposing changing the bylaws to remove Tony Zak's and Blackburn Community Center in three different places. See the attached proposed changes for details.³ Discussion will continue at the May meeting and go to a vote at the June meeting. Members expressed support for the changes.
- d. Online donations/dues (Erin McKinstry)
- i. Online donations and due payments are now available on the MAC website (www.mxicouncil.org). Dues are \$5 per year per person and can be paid up to 5 years in advance. Email mccarthyareacouncil.secretary@gmail.com with questions or comments on the process.
- e. MXY Yard Sale/Pioneers of Alaska (Patt Garrett)⁴
- i. Amanda Swinehart and Patt Garrett are hosting the yard sale on Saturday, June 11 from 11am-2pm in the yard of Tony Zak's. The ramp up to Tony Zak's porch is the free zone. Please haul it away if no one takes it. Clean up after yourself.
 - ii. Patt and others are trying to resurrect the McCarthy Igloo Chapter of the Pioneers of Alaska. Charter members need to have lived in Alaska 20 years and have a commitment to Alaska and McCarthy history. The Pioneers are returning from June 18-22, and Patt is hoping to host a ceremony. The main objectives in McCarthy are maintaining the cemetery and museum, although members will help decide the direction of the chapter. Email Patt at pmgarrett@hotmail.com for an application.
- f. Copper River Basin Area Plan idea (Kelly Bay)
- i. The State of Alaska released the draft of the revised Copper River Basin Area Plan (<https://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/planning/areaplans/crbapr/>). The proposed plan includes changing the designation of 17,000 acres of state land in the McCarthy area to settlement, meaning the state could sell the land to private individuals. The land is currently designated for public recreation, fish and wildlife habitat, and forestry, among other uses. It is located along the McCarthy and Nizina Roads (see attached map for details).⁵ Kelly is proposing that 8,000 acres of it on the Nizina Road could instead be made into a state park, with trails and recreation opportunities for visitors and residents. For more information, see the attached document.⁶
 - ii. Discussion among the membership ensued. Members discussed Kelly's idea and asked questions. Eric Yould clarified that they'd propose the idea to the state in a public comment. Further discussion about the overall plan ensued, including concerns about the impact the changes could have on the community and its infrastructure. The membership discussed whether the McCarthy Area Council should submit a public comment with a unified opinion. Many members thought a comment from the body may be more impactful than individual comments, but others worried about submitting a comment that doesn't reflect the diverse opinions of the membership and the community. One idea surfaced to keep the comment as neutral as possible, and urge the state to take individual comments into consideration and to keep the organization and community involved in the process. A previous planning phase did not explicitly include the McCarthy community. The comment wouldn't take a side on the issues discussed in the plan.

³ Proposed Bylaw Changes

⁴ MXY Yard Sale Flyer

⁵ Map_plan_update

⁶ Copper River Basin Area Plan Update_KB_Ideas

- iii. The board will draft a possible public comment from the McCarthy Area Council and present it to the membership at the May meeting for discussion. The public comment period ends on June 12. Mark Vail urged community members to participate, or they may not be able to comment later on in the process. Erin McKinstry will reach out to the state contact to request a recording of the virtual public meeting held on April 20. (Update on 5/2: the state will not release the recording until all public comments have been submitted, and they move to the next phase of the process).

9. Announcements

- a. Mail Shack Committee/Outhouse cleaner (Erin McKinstry)
 - i. MAC is seeking members for a mail shack committee to plan a remodel of the mail shack, particularly someone interested in being committee chair. MAC is also seeking one more outhouse cleaner for the summer. Cleaners are compensated for their time cleaning five outhouses once a week. Supplies and training are provided. A vehicle or four wheeler on the McCarthy side of the Kennicott River is recommended for transporting supplies. For questions or to volunteer, email mccarthyareacouncil.secretary@gmail.com. Help your community by volunteering today!
- b. Kenny Lake Library (Arlene Rosenkrans)
 - i. McCarthy residents are welcome to use the Kenny Lake Library and access the broader Alaska Digital Library, which includes ebooks and audiobooks. If you're interested in signing up, email kennylakelibrary@yahoo.com.
- c. Mail shack packages: As we move into the busy part of the season, please retrieve your packages when they come in. The mail shack has limited space.

10. Adjourn

- a. A motion was made to end the meeting (Stephanie Sever). The motion was seconded (Matthew Shidner). The meeting adjourned at 7:48 PM.

Minutes taken by Erin McKinstry, Recording Secretary

McCarthy Community playground grant completion report:

Phase 2: Picnic Tables, Bench and KMRA Filing Fees

Name(s) of sponsor(s) and contact information

Kennicott McCarthy Recreation Alliance

President: Hannah Rowland, 907-259-5648 , hannahroserowland@gmail.com

Board Members: Cheryl Antenucci, Jon Erdman

Project completion description:

In Late September and early October Zac Barret and Michelle Lindsay helped Hannah Rowland to construct a picnic table for the playground. Tools were borrowed from David Rowland and Keenan Hermann helped assist in the cutting of wood to the size and angle needed.

After the first table was successfully built, the 2nd table and bench were completed a week later by Hannah just before the rain really started to come. Umbrellas were purchased for the picnic tables and were stored over winter by the Wrangel Mountain Center, they will be installed early summer along with completing a few finishing touches on the tables. There will need to be a bracing put on the tables to prevent collapse under s a heavy snow load and bolts will need to be tightened and possibly replaced if they stick out after the wood has shrunk, we do not want a danger of scrapes from the sharp points and shaving them might cause metal shavings to get into the playground surface.

Over the winter Chuck Schuetze donated time as an attorney to help establish KMRA as an organization and file with the IRS to become a certified 501C3 non-profit. In a speedy 18 days after submission, the application was approved and KMRA is now officially a tax-exempt public charity.

Budget For the project:

Funds requested from MAC: \$1,354.00 56%

Value of donated labor and money: \$1050.00 44%

Total project cost: \$2,404.00

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped with this project.

Proposal for MAC Revenue Sharing Funds

Sponsor: Keith Rowland
Box MXY #51
McCarthy, AK 99588
(907) 554-4498

Date: April 24, 2023

Project: McCarthy Access & West Side Road Maintenance

Explanation: The West Side Road provides year-round access for many McCarthy area residents.

This proposal would fund two summer bladings and three winter plowings, from John Adams' residence to the end of the West Side Road (Welty's driveway). It also funds the vehicle bridge bypass from John's runway (Stop sign) to the McCarthy Rd. east side.

Cost Breakdown:

12 hr	160M Road Grader (summer blading)(6 hr ea)	\$2160.00
12 hr	160M Road Grader (winter plowing)(4 hr ea)	<u>2160.00</u>
	TOTAL Cost for one year	\$4320.00

Requested funds from MAC: \$2160

Matching funds solicited (50%): \$2160

Respectfully Submitted,

Keith Rowland
Member, McCarthy Area Council

List of Bylaw Amendment Proposals

ARTICLE 4: MEETINGS OF MEMBERS SECTION

SECTION 1. PLACE OF MEETINGS

Current - Meetings of members shall be held at the Blackburn Community Center (also known as Tony Zak's) or at such other place or places as may be designated from time to time by resolution of the Board of Directors.

Proposed - Meetings of members shall be held at a McCarthy location as designated by resolution of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE 5: DIRECTORS

SECTION 7. PLACE OF MEETINGS

Current - Meetings shall be held at the Blackburn Community Center, (also known as Tony Zak's) unless otherwise provided by the board or at such other place as be designated from time to time by resolution of the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors may conduct a meeting by using conference telephones or other electronic devices that permit simultaneous communication between the Board members, and Board members present by means of such equipment are deemed present for all purposes under these bylaws.

Proposed - Meetings shall be held at a McCarthy location as designated by resolution of the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors may conduct a meeting by using conference telephones or other electronic devices that permit simultaneous communication between the Board members, and Board members present by means of such equipment are deemed present for all purposes under these bylaws.

SECTION 8. MEETINGS

Current - Meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the President, the Vice-President, the Secretary, by any two directors, or, if different, by persons specifically authorized under the laws of this state to call special meetings of the board. Such meetings shall be held at the Blackburn Community Center or, if different, at the place designated by the person or persons calling the special meeting.

Proposed - Meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the President, the Vice-President, the Secretary, by any two directors, or, if different, by persons specifically authorized under the laws of this state to call special meetings of the board. Such meetings shall be held at the place designated by the person or persons calling the special meeting.

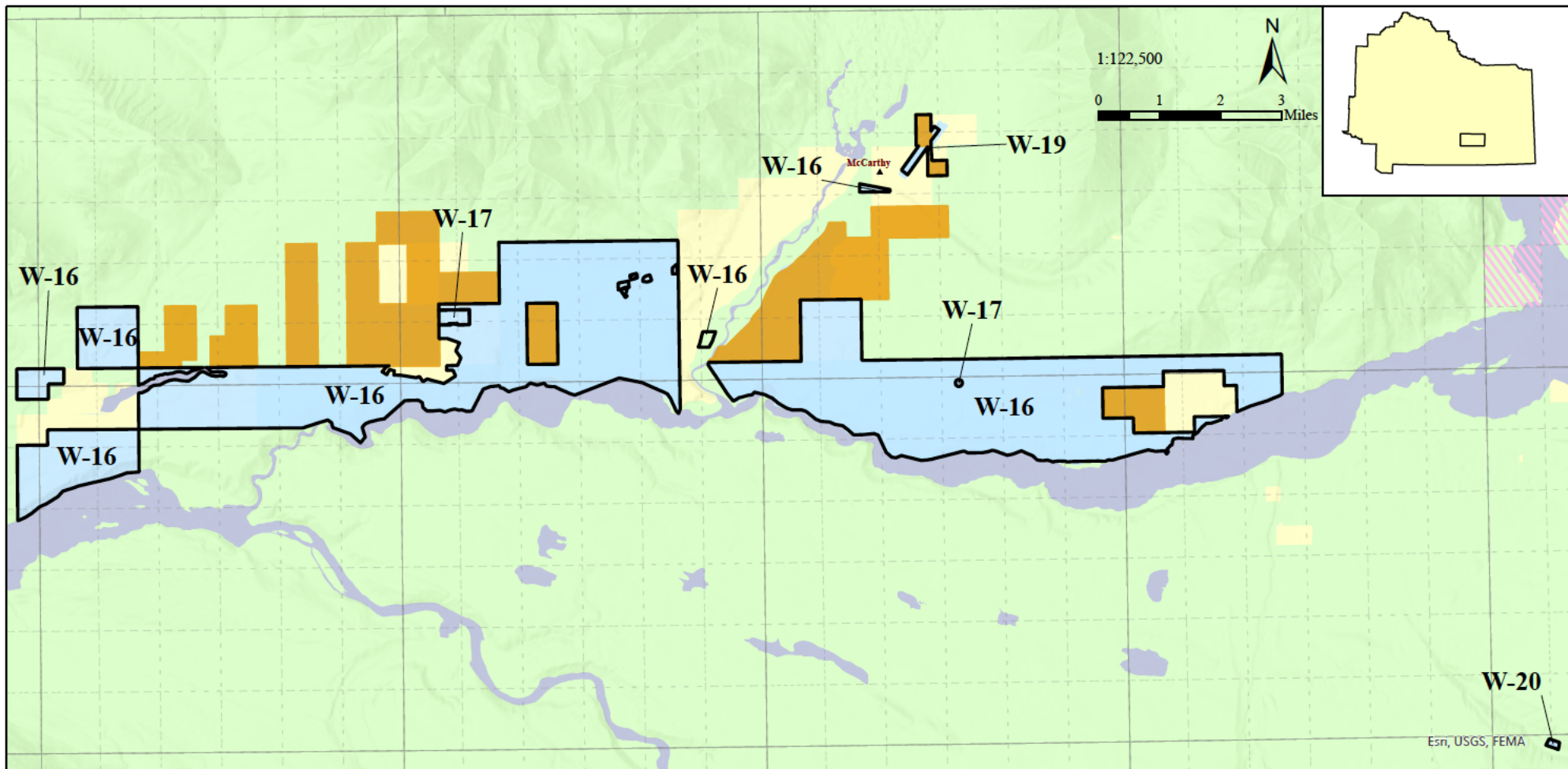
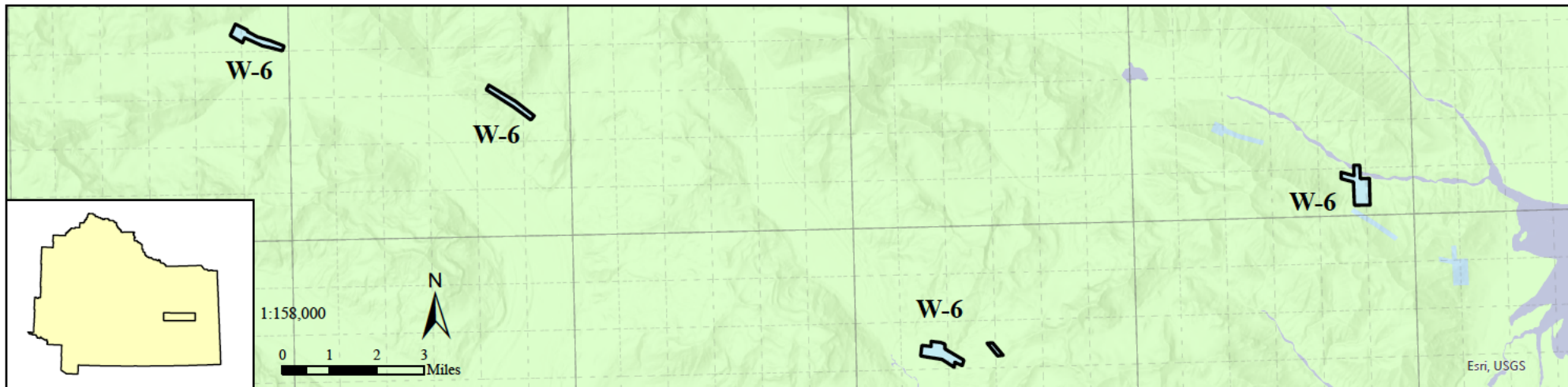


Start gathering your unwanted stuff and save the date:

MXY COMMUNITY YARD SALE!

**SATURDAY, JUNE 10
11a - 2p @ Tony Zak's**

Books - Clothes - Cabin goods - and more!



**Copper River Basin
Area Plan
Map 3-6.2
Wrangell/McCarthy Region
Boundary and
Unit Boundaries**

- CRBAP Planning Units
- Wrangell/McCarthy Region
- State Land
- Private Land
- Other Federal Land
- Lakes and Rivers
- University Land
- Native Selections

Unit Designations

- W-6 Rm
- W-16 Se
- W-17 Ma
- W-18 Pr
- W-19 Pr
- W-20 Rm



Land use designations only apply to land owned by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, as indicated by the management units on the map. Due to size, some management units may not display on the map. There are some small private parcels contained within management units, but designations do not apply to non-state lands. This map is for graphic representation only and intended to be used only as a guide.

Created: January 2023
KF, DNR, DMLW, RADS
Projected Coordinate System: NAD 1983
UTM Zone 6 North

Random thoughts for Nizina River State Park classification for land at end of Nizina Road

Land at end of Nizina road and on the North side of the Nizina River appears to consist of approximately 8,000 acres of State Land and is being proposed as "Settlement" classification in the Copper River Basin Area Plan. This classification is a change from the present 1986 plan that maintains this area as "Public Recreation and Wildlife Habitat." The new proposed classification would allow for the selling of the land for private ownership. Perhaps a better option for this piece of land would be to maintain its existing land classification so that the land could be reserved for development as a future State Park.

At the present time, tourists to the McCarthy area have two options to enjoy the surrounding area: the road to Kennicott, and access to the back country by way of airplane or raft. However a third option would be for the State to develop the land at the end of the Nizina road for a park. Access would be by way of the existing DOT road, and development of hiking, biking and ATV access trails into the proposed State park area. Without going into the issues of development, below are some of the advantages of preserving the area for development as the Nizina River State Park (Public Recreation and Wildlife) as opposed to the proposed Settlement classification.

If classified as "Settlement," this would foreclose the option for developing the land for public recreation purposes, but the Nizina River Park would enhance tourist opportunities. The Nizina River Park would include a trail system that would allow for exploration and enjoyment of this large tract of wilderness land to include:

A long trail system along the Nizina River bluff possible connecting to the trail up Sourdough Ridge and somehow dropping down to connect with the Green Butte Trail to take hikers back to McCarthy

Public access to the Nizina Canyon at the confluence of the Kennicott River.

Access to the Nizina River and gravel bars for camping, picnics, and rafting.

Development of a hiking trail that would allow access to Sourdough Ridge and Peak, The Sourdough Rock Glacier and ultimately to McCarthy.

Hiking along a historic gold trail that once included the longest bridge in Alaska, washed out in the early 1930s but still with three spans sentinel on the Nizina River floodplain.

Enhanced opportunity to see wildlife such as moose, bear, wolf, Lynx, birds, and other critters.

At this point all activities center on Kennicott because there are trails and roads established. The McCarthy area lacks any trails that would interest visitors. The addition of a State Park in cooperation with NPS could establish a valuable addition to our local tourism industry as well as the local population. It could take some of the focus off Kennicott and spread out the pressure on use of the Root Glacier Trail and the Donoho Basin. These are just some random, preliminary thoughts to throw around. I welcome any input.