



95 Sterling Highway, Suite 2, Homer, Alaska 99603

Website: <http://www.kachemakbaywatertrail.org/>

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Adventure Beyond the End of the Road

A 125-mile water trail that inspires exploration, understanding and stewardship of the natural treasure that is Kachemak Bay

Alaska has many rivers and lakes to enjoy but not many water trails. Perhaps the closest is the Swanson River Canoe Trails.

In 2011 Dave Brann, a long time Alaskan educator, trail enthusiast and native of Maine, brought the idea of a water trail in Kachemak Bay to the forefront.

A working group came together in December 2011 and work began on what is today, a developed organization enhancing the public experience on the bay.

Entities that supported the development of the water trail were the cities of Homer & Seldovia, Chambers of Commerce from both cities, NOAA, Kachemak Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve and Friends of Kachemak Bay State Park. There were many citizens who added positive comments also.

This project really took off when Dave talked with the National Parks, Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program, (RTCA) folks at the Alaska Trails Conference. RTCA came on board with our organization and with their help we developed our organization, The Kachemak Bay Water Trail, which was easier said than done.

On June 6 2012 we had the official ribbon cutting ceremonies in both Homer and Seldovia.

Our next hurdle was the issue of becoming a non-profit or working with one to facilitate a mechanism to apply for grants. With the help of Steve Cleary, Alaska Trails became our first fiscal agent for our first grant to develop a web site.

We soon discovered this pass-through arrangement could become burdensome so we considered other solutions. Forming another non-profit in Homer presented obstacles, being many of us were already on boards.

Several members of our Steering Committee were Board Members of Friends of Kachemak Bay State Park and suggested rather than becoming a non-profit, we could join with Friends under their 501 C3 Non-profit status. In 2014 we officially became a partner with Friends of Kachemak Bay State Park, which has strengthened



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both organizations. The Board of Friends increased in size to accommodate 2 members from the Water Trail.

Our joining with Friends brought us closer to Kachemak Bay State Park as the Water Trail goes through many miles of State Park. We have worked with State Parks to develop a volunteer group to help with trails and campground maintenance. We have adopted Chugachik Island in the State Park and continue to improve the campsites and trails on the island.

In 2012 The Kachemak Bay Water Trail was recognized by the President Obama's Administration, as a Project of Americas Great Outdoors, one of two in the state of Alaska

The Kachemak Bay Water Trail received a Project Excellence Award from the Society of Outdoor Professionals in 2015.

The Kachemak Bay Water Trail Steering Committee continues to educate, promote and improve all areas along the Water Trails 125 miles. Ideally that means an area to pull out and camp every seven to ten miles. Water safety has and will continue to be a major topic for us.

The continued partnering with city, state and private entities will continue.

- We encourage private operators to become a member of the trail, hence we will list there operation and provide a link on our website

We will continue to work with Friends & Kachemak Bay State Park Management to help maintain, enhance and develop campsites & trails. With funding from Kachemak Bay Conservation Society, Friends purchased 8 bear-proof food containers for campgrounds

- We will promote water safety and stewardship of the bay and state park through brochures and public events.
- We continue to seek out grants to improve all aspects of the Kachemak Bay Water Trail and it's infrastructure. The latest is the Water Trail Pavilion on the Homer Spit. This was a collaboration of The City of Homer, The Rasmuson Foundation, Homer / Kachemak Rotary, and private individuals who provided funds or labor to erect the Timber- Frame Pavilion.



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With that I will end and entertain questions.