

Sam A. Baker State Park

Annual Public Meeting

August 17th, 2024 Sam A. Baker Pavilion #1

Agenda Topics

Management

- Welcome and Introduction of staff and special guest
 - Led by Jeff Hand

Park Staff

- Parks, Soils and Water Sales Tax
 - Led by Michelle Soenksen she spoke of the importance of the sales tax to our operation, and how much support we have had over the years, and the need for continued support.
- Interpretive Programs and Outreach
 - Jeff Hand spoke about how many programs and outreach is not captured by our parks data sheet. Michelle puts on a tremendous amount of programming for park guests.
- Stewardship (Millers Ridge Unit) Feral Hogs Eradication Efforts
 - Jeff Hand spoke about how through the cooperative efforts between DNR, MDC and APHIS we had a successful aerial gunning operations for feral hogs this winter. In one instance a report of a sounder was received and the APHIS employee was able to mitigate the issue catching the reported number of feral hogs.
- Special Events Ozark Mountain Challenge
 - Jeff Hand gave a shout out to our concessionaires for helping make the Ozark Mountain Challenge a successful event. Jeff indicated that it was so successful that the event planners are already completing the paperwork to have the event again next year.
- Maintenance/CI Projects Completed and Future
 - Jeff Hand spoke about the upcoming pre-bid meeting for our upcoming cabin CI project. Cabins 1-4, 14 and 19 will be renovated. Jeff also spoke about ARPA funding for water lines in the cabin area and pressure reducers along the main line.
- Attendance thus far for the 2024 Season
 - Went over the number of camping nights sold.
- Seasonal Staffing and Volunteer Hours
 - Greg Combs spoke about how the budget effects seasonal operations. Greg explained that we only have legislative approval for a specific amount of dollars and hours to spend on personnel.
- Broadband update
 - Deborah Hand spoke about the local community trying to get funding for fiber optic internet service. She spoke about a survey that is integral to the allocation of the grant and how important it is for people to fill out and show the need in our region.

- Ongoing projects/partnerships
 - Highway Patrol Corporal Caleb Morgan spoke about the importance of our boat ramp to rescue operations up and down the St. Francis River. Caleb spoke of a recent instance where he could not launch his patrol boat and had to send a deputy on foot to find a man and his boy who were lost on the river. Caleb tried for forty-five minutes to find a spot to launch. Luckily the deputy found the man's abandoned kayak at the water's edge and found them trying to go cross country to find a way out.

Concession

- Company overview/summary of operations and neighboring facilities
 - Concessionaire David Turnbow brought up a concern about root wads and other snags in the river south of the park. David was wondering what could be done about them and the proper procedure for mitigation.

Conclusion Open Floor and Discussion