

Leisnoi Closes, Restricts Land Access

Wednesday, 03 March 2010

{audio}/images/stories/mp3/100303.leisnoi_lands.mp3{/audio}

Jay Barrett/KMXT

After decades of unrestricted use by the general public, lands belonging to Leisnoi Incorporated may now only be accessed by permit, except for in designated BLM easements that already exist in many areas.

Leisnoi is the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act village corporation for the Natives of Woody Island.

Frank Pagano, president of the Leisnoi board of directors, explains that one popular four-wheeler destination, Cliff Point on the south side of Women's Bay, is now completely off limits.

-- (Leisnoi 1 50 sec "Well, the Cliff Point ... for that purpose.")

Leisnoi also announced that starting Monday, Termination Point is closed to camping, off-road vehicles and hunting, though hiking is still allowed on the trail there. Long Island has the same restrictions, though sightseers there will need a permit. The trail to Saltry Cove is in a Bureau of Land Management easement and remains open to the public.

-- (Leisnoi 2 30 sec "All of the BLM easements ... then they're in violation.")

Pagano says the law suit Leisnoi has been embroiled in over the past 30 years created the situation where the corporation's lands have not received the stewardship they needed:

-- (Leisnoi 3 36 sec "For
30 years because of the ... what we're doing now.")

He says
those who are caught trespassing will be prosecuted. He says the corporation is
trying to take the long view, and hopes that through education, the trespassing
and damage to the property will eventually decrease:

-- (Leisnoi 4 24 sec "I
feel eventually that ... our rules on our property.")

In addition
to the closure of Cliff Point and restrictions elsewhere, Leisnoi is requiring
hunters to obtain a \$500 bear permit to hunt on its land, except in the Olds River
drainage and the Twin Creek-Rosalyn drainage, which remain closed. The corporation also has an
exclusive deal with Frank Bishop to provide big game guiding on its property. A
free permit is also available to cross Leisnoi lands to access state lands for
commercial guiding purposes. Pagano says maps showing Leisnoi lands are
available from Bishop.

###