

# **Paxson Advisory Committee**

**11-7-2014**

## **Meiers Lake Roadhouse**

I. Call to Order: 6:45pm by John Schandelmeier

II. Roll Call:

John Schandelmeier, Advisory Chair

Greg Swope, Secretary

Gary Alcott, Member

Lee Harper, Member

Mark Schlenker, Member

Members Absent:

Alan Echols; (excused)

Number Needed for Quorum on AC: 4

List of User Groups Present: N/A

III. Approval of Agenda:

IV. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:

From meeting date....

V. Fish and Game Staff Present:

Frank Robbins, ADF&G Glennallen

Scott Maclean, ADF&G Glennallen

VI. Guests Present:

Dave Wilson, Meiers Lake

Andrea Wilson, Meiers Lake

Donna Russell-Swope, Paxson

VII. New Business:

Board agreed to only comment on Proposals with direct impact on Game Unit 13 and surrounding areas.

**ADF&G Proposal to change Board of Game from 2 year cycle to 3 year cycle like Board Of Fisheries.**

All Members Opposed this Change.

Greg: Be as responsive as possible. Keep it 2 years

Mark: 3 year BOF cycles are okay. Fisheries are

more stable than Game. 2 Years makes sense for Game, especially given changing environmental conditions.

John: We need to be very responsive to changing weather and hunt pressure. Keep shorter cycle

Lee: Keep it 2 years

### **Federal National Park Service Proposals**

Comments on the following two issues to be sent to [Barbara\\_cellarius@nps.gov](mailto:Barbara_cellarius@nps.gov)

Regulation – NPS proposal on prohibiting the taking wolf when they are not useable, black bears with artificial lights at dens and bear baiting are all supported by this Advisory Committee. We also support the proposal prohibiting the use of drones for any purpose in National Parks and Preserves. The support for these proposals was 4 in favor with one member abstaining.

The Paxson Fish and Game Advisory Committee strongly opposes the recent Federal opening of portions of the Paxson Closed Area to subsistence hunting. This closed area was set aside fifty years ago as a viewing area for a few big game animals. It is also an area that the Nelchina caribou herd uses

regularly as a migration path during their October migration. Hunting in this narrow constricted corridor has the potential to seriously change the patterns of this very vulnerable, important herd. He would like to petition the Federal Subsistence Council to reinstate the hunting prohibition in this locally important area.

We would also like to remark that we believe the Federally unencumbered lands within the Clearwater Controlled Use area need to retain their non-motorized hunting status.

The opening of the Paxson Closed Area and Clearwater Creek Closed Areas to Federal Subsistence Hunting.

Opposed by All Members.

Garry: Hunting has been banned for a number of years. No need to change. Dangerous due to number of animals and proximity to highway.

Greg: Paxson Closed Area is a Funnel for Game animals. Best to leave it closed.

## **Review Proposals – 2014/2015 Alaska Board of Fisheries Proposal Book**

### **Proposals 33 – 43 (Chitina Dip Net Proposals)**

John: What we have is working. Not sure about Micro-managing. Let the experts handle the escapement. Sockeye returns are great. Can't control Chinook survival rate once out in Ocean. There will always be user groups that want a few more fish.

Greg: Fisheries need to look at "Big picture."

Lee: What we have is working; leave it alone.

### **Proposal 53:**

Lee: Supports proposal. Not enough fish are being caught in Summit Lake

John: Supports proposal for Summit Lake only. Believes that we can try it for 3 years. Opposed to changing on Paxson Lake due to the potential for higher fishing pressure and

inaccurate reporting. (Paxson Lake has a campground and fairly high tourism pressure; these anglers don't have accurate reporting as they are here for a day and gone.

Greg: Opposed. Believes that actual fish catch levels are not being accurately reported.

Garry: Opposed. Already enough fishing pressure on Paxson Lake.

Mark: Abstain

**Proposal 54:** All members oppose: 5 grayling or 10 per day is not a subsistence issue.

Greg: Hard to enforce

John: Leave regulation alone. If you need more fish, one extra salmon equals 5 grayling.

Cottonwood gGrove, Haggard and Coleman Creeks cannot take the extra spring pressure.

**Proposal 56:** Supported by all members.

All members were in support of ADF&G making these decisions based on best available information.

## **Review Proposals – 2014/2015 Alaska Board of Game Proposal Book**

Proposal 58:

All in Support. This is our proposal; we believe it very important for the overall health of the local eco-system.

Proposal 59:

All in Support. This is also very pertinent. The fall moose count in this area bears out what we, as a Committee, have been saying for the past 3 seasons.

Proposal 60:

Unanimously opposed. We are opposed to cow moose hunts that have the objective of showcasing what a great job predator control has been doing. (at the expense of all other populations)

Mark: Opposed to micro managing game animal

populations.

John: Cow Hunts are a result of IM Policies. Would not be necessary without the over-aggressive IM

Greg: Keep regulations simple. Don't add layers of additional hunts to manage moose and caribou #s

Proposal 61: Comments—this has been okay on the past. Current special winter hunt is taking it's place?

No Opinion

Proposal 62: Drawing permit proposal for caribou.

Greg, Mark, Gary and Lee Are opposed to a new class of hunter in Game Unit 13. Already

Enough hunting pressure

John: In favor. Why exclude non-resident hunters? Good for local businesses and the caribou population is meeting or exceeding subsistence requirements.

Proposal 63:



## No Opinion

Proposal 64 and 86: proposal to divide the Nelchina caribou hunt;

Opposed by all unanimously.

John and Mark: Already confusing. Hard to manage. Better to keep it all one hunt; we never know where the caribou will be. They may be largely inaccessible during a given portion of the season.

Garry, Lee and Greg: Too complicated. Keep it the way it is.

Proposals 65 – 83, 85:

Opposed by All

John and Mark: Community Subsistence Hunts are based on allocation. They set up two tiers of hunters based largely on artificial communities. We are opposed to all community hunts.

Greg: No science behind Community hunts. Seems that it is all local politics

Proposal 84:

Supported with the following Modification: Establish

a limit at the discretion of ADF&G. We support this only if only if there is no Community Hunt or Winter moose hunt in Unit 13.

Garry: Keep hunts simple. No Community Hunts.

Greg: Let ADF&G determine hunt limits

Mark: Get rid of all these different hunts. Make management simpler and more effective.

Proposal 87: proposal requiring caribou hunters to only hunt moose in Unit 13.

Supported by all Board Members; This has never been a good proposal. It puts unnecessary and artificially high hunt pressure on Unit 13 moose. It degrades hunt quality within the area.

Proposal 88: Changing subsistence determination.

Opposed by all Board Members.

All members: Another micro-management proposal that does not have the evidence or accurate data available to be successful or fair.

Proposal 89: Tier II proposal.

Opposed by all Board Members.

All members: There are presently no Tier II hunts within Unit 13. Another micro-management proposal

Proposal 90 and 91: Goat Permits

Opposed by all Board Members

John: The hunt is already over subscribed

Mark and Greg: The current drawing permit system is working.

Proposal 93 and 94: Brown Bear baiting

Opposed by all Board Members. Bait Stations tend to be located near roads and close to populations. This proposal habituates

bears to cabins and people. There is already an occasional issue with Brown bears and cabin damage along Paxson Lake. Bait stations in the area have potential to make things much worse.

Proposal 95: Ptarmigan proposal.

Supported by all Board members; this is our proposal. While somewhat complicated, it addresses all of the current ptarmigan issues. Our main concern is

protecting the populations along the Denali Highway while still allowing sustainable harvest. The August 20 opening date is absolutely imperative for protecting young birds in this area that are not large enough to eat. This area has a much later nesting window than areas farther south and at lower elevations. Many of the chicks are still peeping on the 10<sup>th</sup> of August!

### **Review Proposals – 2014/2015 Supplemental Document Alaska Board of Game**

Proposal 198: Modifying the drawing cow moose hunt

Opposed by all Board Members

Lee, Garry and Greg: Too many variables

Mark: Results in taking calves. (cows are pregnant-you are taking 2 moose every time you shoot a winter cow.)

John: Micromanaging, however, the proposal does address the population objectives that we support. (comment: pregnant cows usually survive the winter. Calves already born have a pretty low survival rate; maybe

we should not shoot the ones that are making it....)

Proposal 199: IM wolf management

All Board Members would support if the wolf population objective is changed to 200—spring count.

Proposal 200: Moose population objectives for Unit 13

All Board members support with following modification: Change the moose population objective in Subunit 13B to 4000 – 5000. Copper Basin Committee did not address the population objective in this sub-unit.

John and Mark: This change is based on local knowledge of current and ongoing browse and potential winter conditions. See our proposal #59.

Meeting adjourned at 10:45 pm.