

Seward Fish and Game Advisory Meeting Minutes of October 12, 2017

1. Call to order 7:00
2. Roll Call:
Members Present: Bacon, Campbell, Carpenter, Casey, Clemens, Dubuc, Foldager, McCracken, Smith, White
Excused: Flood, Hatch, Hubbard
3. Approval of Previous meeting minutes: unanimous
Motion to adopt meeting agenda: unanimous
4. Correspondence: Diane Watson notified the AC about the 10/17 work session of BOF. Up for consideration is making Seward the meeting place for LCI BOF meetings in 2019. Will get an answer back on Tuesday. There have been letters of support from various organizations in Seward including Chamber of Commerce.
5. Introduction of committee members, agency reps: Jeff Salinger ADF&G Soldotna, AWT- Ken Acton
6. Citizens comments: none
7. Old biz:
Ken Carpenter gave a recap of kids' fish day. Success overall. Was able to solicit loaner rod donations, lots of prize donations- Fish House, Bass Pro Shops, Trustworthy Hardware, & Shimano. Safeway and 3 Bears donated food for the event. Grand prize drawing was held for a charter fishing trip. Attendees came from all over the state, including Valdez, Fairbanks and Soldotna. Ken sent thank you letters to donors
8. New biz:
Meeting authorization:
Casey moves, McCracken seconds authorization for Diane Dubuc to attend PWS BOF meeting on December 1 – 5 in Valdez

Fish Proposals:

Proposal 1- motion to adopt: Dubuc, second Clemens

Discussion involving continued concern over lingcod abundance. Seward AC was in favor of one fish bag limit on past board cycle. Smith expressed concern over more restrictive halibut regulations leading to increased harvest of lingcod by sport charter fishermen. Denise Hawks, author of proposal, then made public comment, noting that the same regulations for lingcod have been in place since 1993. Hawks cited the Thalhauser (ADF&G) report indicating declining sport harvest of lingcod since a 2010 peak. Hawks reiterated Smith's concern over increased harvest in response to heightened Federal halibut regulations. The Seward AC continued discussion in favor of adopting the proposal, also mentioning the importance of uniform bag limit regulations between PWS and NGC waters to lessen confusion over the legality of fishing both areas in one day and easing enforceability of the regulation.

Support

Yea: 8

Nay: 0

White and McCracken abstain

Dubuc made a motion to write a letter supporting Proposal 1 as written. Campbell seconds it. Motion passes. Dubuc will write the letter of support, to be included with Seward AC comments on PWS proposals.

Proposal 2

Dubuc: motion to adopt.

Dubuc & Smith do not agree with setting areas within PWS off limits to lingcod, as it is difficult to enforce.

Oppose

Nay: 7

Abstained: White, Carpenter, McCracken

Proposal 26

Dubuc motion to adopt

Dubuc and Bacon concerned for angler safety issues. Foldager expressed concern over public perception by nonresidents. White brings up the popularity of bow fishing in lower 48.

Oppose

Nay: 7

Abstained: Smith, Carpenter, McCracken

Proposal 213

Motion to adopt: Dubuc.

Dubuc supports adoption based on ADF&G confidence in bringing back the fishery, mentions opportunity for better data collection. AWT commented that Homer ADF&G regularly samples clams in K bay and Cook Inlet on low tides. Seward AC acknowledged that the clam fishery closure was more likely due to a catastrophic event, not overharvest. Therefore it should be reopened if clam populations have returned.

Supported unanimously

Proposal 214

Dubuc supports for same reasons as above, and for continuity between Personal Use and Sport Fish regulations

Support

Yeas: 9

Carpenter abstained

Proposal 216

Motion to adopt: Smith.

Smith supports this regulation to create a more effective management tool for ADF&G in season management. Campbell agrees with the proposal as written, mentioned past closure of this fishery & would like to see continuation of fishing opportunity.

Support

Yeas: 9

White Abstains

GAME PROPOSALS

Jeff Salinger: Gave report on moose harvest so far, harvest might be down a little bit, perhaps weather related.

Illegal harvest in unit 7 & 15: 42 this year, 70 last year- all but one in unit 15

Unit 7 2017 harvest: 5 in general hunt, one in federal hunt

Portage Area: one bull, three cows

Gave an overview of moose population density on the peninsula:

Unit 15C: 3 moose/sq. mi

Unit 15B: 1 moose / sq. mi

Unit 15A: not as many as B (see recording part 2 beginning)

Unit 7: "pretty poor"

McCracken: Why is GMU 7 so anemic in moose population- is it habitat?

Salinger: Mainly habitat, low reproductive rates. Recognizes predation as a factor, cites higher bear populations. The evidence ADF&G has points to habitat over predation.

White cites high number of observed adult Brown Bear at his bait station

Jeff Salinger provided info on radio-collared bears in areas around

Resurrection River, Lost Lake, Boulder Creek

Smith asks about information on Brown Bear DLP incidents:

Salinger listed DLP stats in unit 7: 0 in 2015, 8 in 2016, 5 in 2017

Proposal 5

Motion to adopt by White.

White: after reading it over, does not find it any more informative than previous regulation as written Smith mentions having issues with other regulations not being clear enough with regard to antlers

Lengthy & informative discussion over definition of palmation between AC, AWT, and ADF&G.

Salinger offers that there is currently no regulatory definition for a forked animal, this regulation defines a fork, as distinctive from a spike

Support

Yea: 5

Nay: 1

Proposal 92

Motion to adopt by Smith

Smith has concerns with community subsistence hunt, cites ample general hunting opportunity in areas open to CSH, concerned about abuse

Carpenter: 252 communities register for the hunt, and most are from near Anchorage. Also concerned about CSH abuse. What about game checkpoints?

AWT: this constitutes a roadblock: illegal under AK state law

Smith: CSH was put in place for increased opportunity to Ahtna people, now is being capitalized on by a more urban population

Supported unanimously

Smith motion to write an RC, Carpenter seconds it.

Proposal 24

Motion to adopt by White

White: Enjoys visiting bait station in off-season. Bears continue to visit the area after bait is removed. Uses tree stand and camera for purposes of wildlife viewing. Removal of tree stand too cumbersome

Opposed

5 opposed

0 in favor

Proposal 100

Motion to adopt by Foldager

Foldager does not want hunters to be restricted for moose hunting based on where they goes to hunt caribou. Campbell concurs, does not agree with locking moose hunters into an area where they choose to caribou hunt.

Clemens mentions one favorable thing about the regulation is that it takes pressure away from other areas. Hunters must make that tradeoff when they decide to participate in the Tier I caribou hunt.

Foldager: the current regulations force hunters who want both moose and caribou to spend greater amounts of time in the field hunting that area which can be cost prohibitive (money and time)

Support

Yea: 4, Campbell, Foldager, Smith, Carpenter

Nay: 3, Clemens, Casey, White

Abstained: Dubuc, Bacon, McCracken

Proposal 45

Motion to adopt by White

White: the video class was a step in the right direction- more education the better
Salinger: Statewide antler sealing requirements may create a burden on ADF&G staff in smaller offices located within areas of greater moose harvest. McCracken asks: could ADF&G create a fee for sealing and use revenues to hire seasonal field staff to seal antlers? AC discussion about the inconveniences of locating a AWT officer or ADF&G staff in the proscribed timeframe while prioritizing care of game meat. Clemens asks: is sealing for data collection or a deterrent to harvesting undersize moose? Salinger replied that is it more a deterrent.

Opposed

Nay: 9

Abstained: Carpenter

Proposal 155

Motion to adopt: Casey

Casey: would like to see the regulation remain on the books, eliminating it would be too permanent, hard to reintroduce. Leaving it on the books allows ADF&G to open it if the numbers are high enough

White: Has hunted here a lot & doesn't think there are enough animals there to support a hunt.

Support

Yea: 6

Nay: 3, Foldager, White, McCracken

Abstained: Bacon

Proposal 52

Motion to adopt: White

White: unfair to discriminate against nonresidents in predator management areas

ADF&G: neutral

Oppose

Yea: 0

Nay: 6

Schedule next meeting: April 2018

Move to adjourn 9:41

Minutes taken by Andy Bacon

Verbally approved by Chair

10/27/2017