

Mat Valley Fish & Game Advisory Committee
December 13, 2017
MTA Building, Palmer

I. **Call to Order:** 7:02 PM by Dan Montgomery, Acting Chair

II. **Roll Call:**

Members Present: Steve Bartelli, Mel Grove, Austin Manelick, Bob Marshall, Terry Nininger, Hans Nordstrom, Birch Yuknis, Mike Buirge, Dan Montgomery, Dave Young, Neil DeWitt, Chris Alderman, Danny Lewis, Chad Lipse, Tim Stephens

Members Absent: Andy Couch, Herb Manasavage

Number Needed for Quorum on AC 8: 15 members present: quorum met.

Approval of Agenda: Mel Grove motioned for agenda approval, was seconded by Bob Marshall- Agenda approved.

III. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:** Motion to accept the election meeting minutes by Neil DeWitt, seconded Birch Yuknis. Meeting minutes approved.

IV. **Fish and Game Staff Present:** Gino Deflate, Chris Brockman, Rick Mezion, Tim Peltier, Todd Rinaldi

V. **List of User Groups Present:** Rod Arno, AOC

Guests Present: Rod Arno, AOC

Persons To Be Heard:

Rod Arno: he criticized the MVAC for not sending someone to the BOF. Some good things at the meeting: Ahtna was trying to ban the use of boats for dip netters, this got shot down. Ahtna also tried to ban fishing for catch & release, this also was shot down. The AC can be thankful for Israel Payton and his positions; also, Reed Morisky has started to develop more backbone of fisheries issues. Regarding the Board of Game: this board has spent a decade wasting your money on caribou in the Nelchina Basin. He is asking the department to come up with criteria to match what Ahtna is asking for-to work toward elimination of community subsistence hunts for all Alaskans. Prop 92 would give all Alaskans an opportunity for hunting. It would be a really bad precedent to approve Ahtna's position. Steve Bartelli: he echo's this. At the special meeting in Glenallen every single AC voted to do away with the community harvest, yet the board voted to retain it. I don't know where else to go-even Ahtna reps were in support of taking away the community harvest. Birch Yuknis: at the BOF meeting he was very disappointed because our comments never got put in. Rod adds if you don't get your proposals in you can always go and comment in person. Steve: word last year was that Ahtna was trying to transfer some of their lands into federal trust; Rod: fortunately, Hilary was

not elected or it would be rolling out right about now. Ahtna is trying to have Ahtna lands included in federal lands.

Neil DeWitt: He sat in on the western caribou herd meeting. The current herd count is 239,055. There had been hope that they could add more hunters in the area. Also, there was a briefing from the NPS: Chris McKee, USFS wildlife division chief-office of subsistence management. They have 5-6 new proposals (in the Western Arctic Caribou Book). One proposal says federal public lands in unit 22,23 & 26a were to be closed to nonfederal subsistence users in the Northwest part of the state. Neil suggests the MVAC needs to write letters to let them know where we stand. 95% of the caribou were taken by local NW folks. There is no reason why we shouldn't be able to go back in there. All non-local residents are only 5 to 8 percent of the total hunters. Neil argued strongly for this at the meeting. Dan Lewis asked Neil if they have figured why the herd has declined so much Neil said they either didn't know or wouldn't comment. Dan Montgomery said he lived up there for several years. The population is right where it should be right now. The herds are coming through later. There is absolutely no reason to be closing to everyone but locals.

VI. Old Business:

VII. New Business: Dan Montgomery nominated Birch Yuknis to be our new secretary. It was seconded by Steve Bartelli. There were no objections-motion passed. Terry Nininger will remain alternate secretary.

VIII. Mat Valley AC review of BOG proposals 71-83:

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Proposal Number	Proposal Description		
Support, Support as Amended, Oppose, No Action	Number Support	Number Oppose	Comments, Discussion (list Pros and Cons), Amendments to Proposal
71	Allow the use of crossbows in restricted-weapons hunts		
Support	15	0	Steve Bartelli makes a motion to adopt (MTA), Seconded by Birch Yuknis. Mike Buirge says the only way he would support this proposal was if cross bow archers had to take an archery cross bow course. Chris Alderman notes that there is already a ADFG requirement to have cross bow hunters to take a CB course. Chris just trained ADFG personnel for this course. Steve would like to support this proposal: it adds another tool. Dan thinks it's a good tool.
72	Establish archery-only registration hunts for moose in Units 9, 11, 13, 14A, 14B, 16 and 17		
Oppose	6	9	MTA by Steve, 2nd by Birch: Neil: in his area there are a very limited amount of moose. Birch is adamantly opposed. Season is already long enough. Mel Grove: hunting is an opportunity-it's a short season: it offers a little extra opportunity and time and you can spread it out-why not. There is no biological concern. Bob Marshall would support-bow hunting; it is a lot more challenging-and takes a special skill. Hans is opposed. Steve is

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			also opposed. Steve: this AC has always been opposed singling out a specific user group and giving them an advantage. Danny Lewis: he is an avid archer and he opposes – season is long enough. Mel Grove: would consider himself special because he has a bow permit-if you have to take the course-he considers it increased opportunity. Todd Rinaldi (ADFG) the Dept. is neutral. If we increased the harvest in some areas that are marginal they may have to reduce other area harvest, some other hunts may suffer. Austin Alderman supports-thinks it will be beneficial-to avoid user conflict. Dan adamantly opposes-the quality of meat during this time period would be the worst of the whole season. A lot of these areas don't have a surplus of moose.
73	Establish archery-only registration hunts for Dall sheep in Units 9, 11, 13, 14A, 14B, 16 and 17		
Oppose	5	10	
74	Remove the nonresident bag limit restriction of one Dall sheep every four years in the Central/Southwest Region		
Oppose	0	15	MTA by Steve, 2nd by Birch: Danny is opposed. Todd (ADFG): does not specify resident or nonresident. Chad Lipse: it looks like another opportunity to exploit. Steve opposes. Austin: why not more opportunity-more money for the state. Birch: we have one of the longest sheep seasons in the nation. Mel is against. Dan is opposed: it would open all draw permit area where is already a limited opportunity.
75	Allow nonresidents to obtain one general season Dall sheep permit in a regulatory year in the Central/Southwest Region		
Oppose	0	15	MTA by Steve, 2nd by Birch: Birch is opposed to the change. Steve is also opposed: it increases the pressure. Dan is opposed. It is a good regulation already in place.
76	Reauthorize the brown bear tag fee exemptions for the Central/Southwest Region		
Support	14	0	MTA by Steve, 2nd by Birch: Todd (ADFG) The Dept. comments will be coming out next several days. Dan supports this proposal. Mel: we are giving money back because we don't have the matching funds. Dan: the state gave back \$ 2 million this year. Gino Delfrate (ADFG): the Dept. is asking for 36 million in spending authority. The Legislature wants the Dept. to spend it all but also telling the Dept. not to spend. It can't use money for enforcement or for construction. 1 member absent.
77	Reauthorize the antlerless moose draw permits in Units 14A and 14B and increase permit levels in Unit 14A		
Support	15	0	MTA by Steve, 2nd by Birch: Tim Peltier (ADFG): Unit 16a has 271 units able to be surveyed. There were 8,653 moose in 16A with a range of 7,200-10,100 The bull to cow ratio is 23 to 100., they manage for 15 bulls to 100 cows. We saw a ton of moose in places we didn't expect to see any. Mel: in unit 16a- ½ of the area is in predator control-it sounds like it is working. Tim: there have been pretty wimpy winters. Neil: Did you see any bear? Tim: None at this time.
78	Authorize an any bull draw permit hunt in Unit 14B		
Support	15	0	MTA by Steve, 2nd by Birch: Tim (ADFG): The Dept. supports this proposal. Currently harvest is below what it should be. This will increase opportunity. This is a new hunt. Todd (ADFG) Likely the population is higher than the estimate. Steve: Once it's in the

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			books it won't have to be approved anymore? Tim: that is correct. Steve:-this is fantastic –no biological concern.
79	Modify the hunt structure for Dall sheep in Unit 14A		
Oppose	3	12	MTA by Steve, 2nd by Birch: Dan: he would like to see more opportunity later in the season for those without aircraft. It would allow for some good full curl rams. All of this area is accessed by foot. Neil: it's hard enough to see if its full curl, and moving the 10% to 20%-now we got it lets leave it there. Todd (ADFG) The Dept. has the highest count in 14a since 2008. Tim (ADFG): They expected to see a decrease in horn length but didn't see that. The Dept. is officially neutral-The current management strategy hasn't resulted in a decrease. Steve: he is opposed- historically the AC has supported 10%. Steve also supports the great harvest opportunity. Dan: he is shooting for keeping nonresidents on a draw permit-he also favors the full curl hunt.
80	Open a resident registration hunt for mountain goat in Unit 14A historically this AC has pushed 10%, also like to opportunity		
Support	10	3-1 abstain	MTA by Steve, 2nd by Birch: Tim(ADFG) The Dept. is neutral-there is not a biological concern. The Dept. would like to keep the percentage at current levels. The Dept. harvest goal was met the last couple of years. Birch: the Dept. says it's hitting management goals with what they got. Dan: he considers this an opportunity to hunt without a permit for residents. In 2008-2017 nonresidents took 12%. Total 6% of goats are available for the hunt. Steve proposes an amendment to eliminate the 6%-let the Dept. set the percent. Dan:-this would be a registration hunt which would be subject to EO closure. Chad Lipse left the meeting.
81	Increase the bag limit for brown bear and allow the harvest of brown bear at black bear bait stations in Unit 14A		
Support	14	0	MTA by Steve, 2nd by Birch: Bob will support this –so many brown bears up there right now –they need to be weeded out. Tim (ADFG): the Dept. is neutral-there is no biological concern. Steve will support this proposal. 1 abstain?
82	Create a management area for the Mat-Su Borough's Government Peak Recreation Area in Unit 14A		
TNA passed 9 to 5	9	5	MTA by Steve, 2nd by Birch: Mike is opposed-he doesn't want to see any more restrictions. Todd (ADFG): the BOG could take this and create another management unit. Gino (ADFG): this is really complicated and may not help anything. The Borough would like to BOG to create a management area. Todd (ADFG):-the concern is that there has been some hunting in the area that should not be. It may have not had appropriate signage. Tim (ADFG): There is not a biological issue. Steve moves to TNA, Neil seconds.
83	Change the antler restrictions for moose hunting in Unit 16A		
Oppose	1	13	MTA by Steve, 2nd by Birch: Neil: in 16a people are shooting animals and not taking the meat and just left them lay. Steve is opposed-it eliminates the opportunity for someone taking a 50 inch but doesn't meet the brow tine requirement. Geno (ADFG): this method of recognizing a moose that is not in place anywhere else. The Dept. is currently making a new video that hasn't taken this into account. Tim (ADFG): the Dept. is neutral. May decrease the harvest. Danny: he –does a lot of hunting in 16- has not seen or harvested

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			many moose over 50 inches with 3 or 4 brow tines. Dan: he cannot support this proposal.

MVAC Member Comments; Mel: the halibut charters went over quota. The new regulations is 1 fish of any size, plus a chicken-second fish. This ties the boats at the dock on Tuesday and Wednesday: this just applies to charter boats not private boats. The Prince William Sound will go to one ling cod next season. Regarding the John Sturgeon lawsuit: it -will by-pass the 9th Circuit. It's such a liberal court, so they are appealing back to the U.S. Supreme Court. They Think they are a pretty good chance getting heard again.

Adjournment: 9:34

Minutes Recorded By: Terry Nininger
Minutes Approved By: Advisory Committee
Date: 1/3/2018 meeting