

Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee  
11/17/2021 Meeting Minutes  
Fairbanks ADF&G Conference Rm.  
1300 College Road  
Fairbanks, AK  
&  
Teleconference

**I. Call to Order:** Chair at 6:32PM

**II. Roll Call:**

	<b><u>CHAIR</u></b> Kirk Schwalm	<b><u>VICE- CHAIR</u></b> Mark Richards	<b><u>SECRETARY</u></b> Mark Oppe	Jeff Lucas	Gale Vick	Virgil Umphenour	Mike Tinker	John Wisniewski
Present	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>		<b>X</b>
Absent								
Abs/Excused							<b>X</b>	
	Levi Lewellyn	John Siegfried	Austin Smith	Warren Guichici	Bill Larry	Mike Kramer	Chuck Derrick	
Present	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>		<b>X</b>		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	
Absent					<b>X</b>			
Abs/Excused			<b>X</b>					

**III. Introduction of Guests:** Reed Morisky, Al Barrette, Dianne & Lenny Jewkes, Mackenzie Mitchell

**Fish & Game Staff Present:** Kyle Campbell, Christy Gleason, Deena Jallen, Mark Nelson, Tony Hollis, Klaus Wuttig, Andy Griska

**IV. Comments**

**Chair Comments:** AC election was smoother than anticipated. Further comments will be held until discussion of agenda items.

**Vice Chair:** none

**Trapping:** none

**Game:** none

**Fish:** none

**AC Member Comments:** none

**Public Comments:** Al Barrette appreciates Gale Vick's work on BOF proposal spreadsheet, but would like to know if there are AC comments to go along with it. Only record of Fisheries Subcommittee support or opposition to specific proposals was submitted.

**V. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:** approval of Nov. 10, 2021 minutes by unanimous consent

**VI. Approval of Agenda:** approved as amended by unanimous consent

**VII. Old Business:** none

**VIII. New Business:**

**Department/AWT Update:** Tony Hollis reported on 20A any bull & cow moose drawing permits. Any bull permits awarded were 920 in 7 areas. Harvest is 210; slightly down from last year. Cow permits issued were 260 in 15 areas; 34 reported harvested. Minto Flats registration cow hunt only 2 have been harvested so far (out of 15 permits issued). White Mountains sheep harvest was only 2 rams this year.

16 bull moose were harvested in the any bull Minto Flats hunt. Chuck Derrick asked about possible actions to increase this harvest in future years. Tony Hollis stated that the bull/cow ratio is currently a concern and needs to be addressed first. Total antlerless harvest in Minto Flats was 80.

John Wisneiowski asked about rams harvested in White Mountains & if they were full curl or stumpy. Tony Hollis reported that 1 was stumpy; likely due to mineral deficiency which is common in the White Mountains.

Al Barrette asked about hunter effort for sheep in 20A and White Mountains. Tony Hollis is not sure about this yet because not all reports have been submitted.

No current tally on Fortymile caribou harvest is available, but it is around 600.

Christy Gleason reports that a new program on salmon ocean ecology has been started. Group is active on Facebook and has been sharing new research projects they are starting as well as long-term monitoring projects. Project is being headed by Sabrina Garcia.

Trooper Eyester reported that most Fortymile caribou are along the Steese with a few on the Elliott. 3 poachers were caught about 25 miles into a closed area off the Elliott. Violations appear to be minimal at this point in the season; a more complete report will be available by the next AC meeting. Up to 5 AWT personnel have been working this hunt since it opened. Local residents along the Elliott are happy to see caribou in that area and hope to see them return in future years after not being present for many decades.

Chuck Derrick would like to know how many citations have been issued for going past lower limit of Chitina dipnet boundary. Trooper Eyester recommends talking to Glennallen troopers about this.

**Chatanika spearfishing report by Andy Griska (ADF&G):** For past 6 years 225 permits have been issued. Due to COVID application was changed to online last year and continued this year. 216 permits have been returned so far. 132 have fished with harvest of 600 whitefish out of goal of 1000. Cisco whitefish seem to have benefited from flooding in Minto Flats over last few years; anticipate bump in humpback whitefish numbers in the next few years. Number of permits may be bumped up to around 300 next year. Participation rate in this fishery has been consistently 50-60% and harvest objective has only been met one time. Most fishing seems to be by the Elliott bridge and Olnes Pond, with fewer fish reported by the bridge.

**Introduction of new members & officer elections:** New members not present at this meeting; so introductions will be delayed to future meeting.

Kirk Schwalm nominated Mark Oppe as AC secretary; seconded by Mark Richards. No other nominees; Mark Oppe re-elected.

Mark Richards nominates Kirk Schwalm as AC chair; seconded by Jeff Lucas. No other nominees; Kirk Schwalm re-elected.

Jeff Lucas nominates Mark Richards as vice-chair; seconded by Gale Vick. Virgil Umphenour nominates Levi Llewellyn; seconded by Chuck Derrick. Mark Richards re-elected.

**Quick review of proposals the AC supports or opposes & strategies for Board of Fish meeting (AC public comments have been submitted for discussion):** Gale Vick clarified that the AC supports all of the Chitina Dipnetters Association proposals. Department opposes all hatchery proposals that the AC supports pending further analysis.

**Discussion of BOF proposal 33 regarding rainbow trout on the Gulkana:** Klaus Wuttig reported on abundance estimates. Department believes exploitation rate would be around 20% and harvest would likely impact catch rates and size composition. Department numbers are based on 2005 data. Total population is estimated at about 14,000. No retention of rainbows has been allowed since 1991.

Kirk Schwalm's recollection is that this proposal was intended to spur interest in updating data on rainbow numbers in the Gulkana. Mike Kramer doesn't support harvest of rainbows in the Gulkana, but confirms that the purpose of the proposal was to spur research on rainbow numbers. 16 year old data is not useful, and conditions on the Gulkana have changed significantly with restrictions on kings. Historic harvest numbers on the Gulkana suggest that it can support some rainbow harvest, but reliable data is necessary to understand current conditions. Bag limit of 1 might be beneficial in dealing with incidental catch during bait season for kings.

Gale Vick believes that the real objective is a comprehensive survey of rainbows and steelhead on the Gulkana.

Gale Vick read the following comments sent by Mike Tinker regarding proposal 33: "The Gulkana Rainbow issues were originally manufactured by the department personnel close to the fishery. The observed fishery harvesting large fish was the outlet of Paxson Lake downstream a few miles. There were clusters of big rainbow, plus 20", that gathered there for the spawning kings. As the August kings came up after the sport fishing season for kings (July 20) the fish spread out down the main stem because kings were spawning in the main stem Gulkana.

The sport fishing in river after king season is minimal at best. Most years the only boat trailers at Soudough launch are the department (counting tower) and a few of us who play catch and release for rainbow above the forks. Sometimes you see another boat on 20 miles of river, mostly you don't. Mike and I realize that rainbow are fatally hooked on king gear during June and July. The proposal seeks to turn fish thrown away into fish eaten.

Any survey would be good information but it must take the movement of salmon into consideration. The previous look was way too short duration and only late in the summer. Surely a more comprehensive survey could be designed."

Reed Morisky asked if the Gulkana is on a list to have an updated count for rainbows. Klaus Wuttig stated that this is not currently on the horizon, but could be spurred by input from ACs and regional managers.

Chris Stark reported that in the past Trout Unlimited has sponsored counts and likely would again with ADF&G support.

General discussion of how to proceed with the proposal. Proposal could be amended or comments submitted explaining any numerical discrepancies. Motion by Gale Vick to submit RC comments incorporating comments from the AC tonight; seconded by Mark Richards. Motion approved by unanimous consent.

**Set a date for Fisheries Subcommittee meeting:** Subcommittee hybrid meeting on Dec. 13<sup>th</sup> with full AC meeting on Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> would not conflict with any comment deadlines.

**Set a date for Game/Trap Subcommittee meeting:** Comments for Region IV BOG meeting due by January 7th. Subcommittee will meet in person on Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:00PM to review central and southwest proposals.

**Discussion of the WSA 21-01 comments from Federal Subsistence Board meeting:** Mark Richards believes that the Board will likely take action on moose closures; anticipates a smaller closure area. Kirk Schwalm reported that many comments during today's meeting were not relevant to legal criteria used to make this determination. There appeared to be coordinated non-local support for the closure. Compliance with reporting requirements in this area are roughly 10% for locals. Increased compliance would improve quality of data and potentially benefit local users.

General comments by AC members regarding how FSB meetings are conducted and shortcomings in public comment process.

**Other:** none

**IX. Adjourn:** Chair at 8:38PM

Minutes Recorded by Mark Oppe