

Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee
12/15/2021 Meeting Minutes
Fairbanks ADF&G Conference Rm.
1300 College Road
Fairbanks, AK

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

II. Roll Call:

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

III. Introduction of Guests: Reed Morisky, Mackenzie Mitchell, Al Barrette, Diane Leinberger, Chris Stark, Bruce Ervin, Lenny & Diane Jewkes, Jim Simon, Karen Gordon, Matt Stevens

Fish & Game Staff Present: Tony Hollis, Mark Nelson, Katie Sechrist, Andy Gryska, Deena Jallen, Shane Ransbury, Christy Gleason

IV. Comments

Chair Comments: Report from Western Arctic Caribou Herd Work Group meeting today, WG voted 3-11 against WSA 21-01

Vice Chair: none

Trapping: none

Game: none

Fish: none

AC Member Comments: none

Public Comments: Al Barrette, new biz, class at UAF called Hunt-ology (Business, Science and Philosophy of hunting), professor Margaret Kepper (Peggy) will come to Jan AC meeting to discuss.

Chuck: Chitina Dipnetters Association (CDA) in talks with Ahtna on restoration project on Haley creek basin, putting in bathroom and new turnaround parking area. Ahtna asking for support. Concerns are over damage to trail with garbage collection, will trail be shut down, alternatives to vaulted toilet and dumpster (they want CDA to pay for that at \$60K/year using dipnet permit funds– Obrien Creek, Haley Creek, 2016 legislation fees. CDA pays already for services using \$15 dipnet fees, approx. 7,000 permittees/year.

Al Barrette: do we get D-J funds for the \$15 dipnet permit fees?

Chuck: No

V. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes: approval of Nov. 17, 2021 minutes by unanimous consent

VI. Approval of Agenda: approved by unanimous consent

VII. Old Business: none

VIII. New Business:

Department/AWT Update: Christy Gleason – introduction of new staff, Shane Ransbury, commercial fisheries.

Tony H: finished 20A moose survey Sunday, quite challenging with weather, snowing or really cold or windy. Like to cut off moose surveys by Dec 5th due to bulls dropping antlers. Had to extend time this year, haven't run numbers yet, possible lower bull:cow ratio. Will bring #s to the Jan. meeting. Minto Flats MGMT area cow hunt still open, 7 taken so far, quota is 15. Slower this year.

Kirk: is there a correction factor for doing later survey due to bulls dropping antlers?

Tony: Not really, won't feel as confident with later survey as to # of bulls. Good portion was before antlers were being dropped. Still get good idea of what's going on.

Katie Sechrist – Wildlife Conservation Hunter Access Program update: couple projects in the area, one in particular is construction project to replace Fortune Creek bridge on Cache Creek rd. Matt Stevens here from Forestry (collaborator). Starting in May will do large P-R access project. Start in May, replace bridge, road improvements. Ideally be out end of August in time for fall hunting season. Million

dollar plus project. Will get word out, spread the news to bear baiters/hunters.

Levi: is this Dept generated or did it come from the public?

Katie: Dept generated in collaboration with Forestry, been on books for a while.

Kramer: Have used Cache creek road for a while, in past have been maintained and funded by Forestry, because of logging. Glad ADFG is involved, but why isn't Forestry funding it?

Katie: Good question, it is a state forestry road, understand that forestry doesn't have adequate funds, came up with match with forestry. Forestry staff involved and committed to maintaining road long term.

Al: glad we can use P-R funds for this, and it's why we should be able to use D-J funds for Chitina dipnet projects.

Bill Larry: what is projected life of new bridge?

Katie: Think it is 20 years but should last longer

Chris Stark (board of forestry, represents environmental side). Lots of hunters use that road. Upgrades happen when Forestry gets funds. Forestry can't do much road stuff, and bridge was toast. Thankful that ADFG jumped in to help using P-R funds.

Katie: one other update on education and safety improvements at South Cushman rifle range. That is moving fwd and on track, will be constructed this summer.

Facility will be closed, hopefully open in August. Large million dollar project.

Kirk: glad to see that happen, important facility for hunters.

Katie: application period open, let us know of any access needs.

Matt Stevens: Fbks/Delta forester, not a whole lot to add. Value of timber limiting factor in funding improvements to forestry roads. About 300 miles of forestry road to maintain, any help we can get is much appreciated.

Introduction of new members, Austin Smith and Bill Larry:

Bill Larry: owner of Alaska Fun Center, been on AC a long time, also a trapper.

Interests in hatchery issues

Austin Smith: originally from Tennessee, stationed at Ft Greely, wants to get involved more in issues.

Fisheries Issues: Gale Vick: Does everyone have a copy of BOF summary? [was passed around] We went through all the proposals the AC had supported, vs the ones we opposed. Spoke about those actions at BOF meeting. Mackenzie Mitchell here tonight to answer any questions. Chuck/John do you have questions for Mackenzie?

Chuck: proposal 18, extend boundary of lower district. CDA supported your appointment to BOF, so did AC. We (CDA) submitted one proposal to BOF to benefit fishery. You voted no, reasoning was it dealt with safety issue, congestion of boats, reasoning I heard was confusing, not what proposal was about. Alleviate congestion was purpose of proposal. Amended proposal twice with 2 RCs, so it would have better chance of passing. Very disappointed.

Mackenzie: sorry to disappoint you, proposal was written to remedy danger and congestion, when I spoke with Sommerville, he didn't believe it would alleviate the

problem. Way proposal was written, don't understand the congestion or danger issue when you can continue to drift...seems more allocative in time and area.

Concurred with Dept and Troopers.

Chuck: Sommerville refuted by Klaus...

Discussion...

Al: I found it hard too to see how it was allocative

Jeff Lucas: have drifted that area, one of the safety concerns was when we hit markers we were done and went back up to drift again.

Kirk: never dipped out of a boat down there.

Gale: thanks Mackenzie for her service, important as we go into AYK proposals to have conversations with her. Lots of issues about food security, thanks Mackenzie for comments on prop 19. Mackenzie, any questions to us?

Mackenzie: more than happy to speak to anyone re the Cordova BOG meeting, just trying to make myself available to answer questions.

Kramer: Cordova not a fair place for meeting, too many commercial interests

Virgil: question whether any staff or hatchery admin said about my proposals?

Mackenzie: one proposal addressed something said at prior meeting, consensus was there was no proof of Virgil's claim.

Siegfried: want to touch on something. Most of CDA actions were addressed by Chuck, goes into what Kramer said about meeting in Cordova. As observer at meeting, where it went foul was one commercial fisherman after another lined up at committee of whole saying same talking points, three days into meeting we were a day behind. Other thing I noticed, safe line at meeting...when board member gets across that line they are surrounded, usually by comm fishermen. Mackenzie very rarely came across that line.

Gale: few comments on discussion, one other contention meeting in Cordova is cost to get there, other board members complained that proposers were not at meeting to speak to their proposals. And they would not weigh them as much because of no shows. One board member was not even there, even via teleconference. We should address the BOF with comments, never seen this a meeting before. Does not encourage trust from public.

Asking Mackenzie if she is comfortable speaking about research committee.

Mackenzie: live in Fbks, happy to meet with any of you any time. Re research committee, now chair of that committee, trying to get some research projects going, working with ACs and stakeholders and others, perhaps get BOF to go on record endorse on projects.

Gale: roundtable summit on AYK salmon issues, big issue is funding for research. What can board do vs what they can't do re research and funding? Would like to invite Mackenzie to fisheries subcommittee meetings.

Kirk: heard a news spot about roundtable summit, Russian salmon issues, hatcheries in Russia

Gale: Joint Technical Committee for Yukon river panel. Will let Chris speak to that Chris Stark: on the JTC, working on reconfiguring escapement goal for Canada, was set at 45K in 2007. Presently the project is in Canadian hands, modeling to make

projections. New model will not tell panel what that # should be. Panel will pick “risk factors,” guess is we will be where we were before, amazing uncertainty on salmon stocks in western Alaska. Don’t expect tremendous change in border passage escapement goal.

Gale: work for JTC is for Canadian bound fish.

Chris: what is important is what is returning to the U.S. from Canada. Goal for panel will just be Canadian escapement

Date for next panel meeting is January 22-27, 2022.

Gale: Stan Zuray report on ichthyophonous to subcommittee. High percentage of Ich in salmon this year. Waiting for results from Rapid Research Center.

Deena Jallen: samples from last season studied, still don’t know things about Ich, how lethal is it, how prevalent is it upriver, where does mortality occur...plans to study it more.

Virgil: in 1999 Doyon wanted 30 king salmon filleted from District 5, fish were bad, many had Ich, you can tell when filleting if it’s bad, looks like pockets of pus all through fillet against backbone, has weird smell, have cooked some of it and it tastes horrible. Have found Ich in copper river fish, Dillingham, in different species of fish. Comes from eating infected herring. Research, however, showed no infected herring in Bering Sea, so salmon must be going south past AK peninsula to eat herring.

Gale: BOF hatchery meeting coming in March, one-day meeting, not regulatory.

Will be working on a lot of comments to bring to AC for Jan. meeting so we can get out on-time comments for the board.

Kirk: comments for Hatchery meeting due Feb 3rd (??)

Gale: also have AYK cycle coming up, proposals due April 11th. Will have new fisheries calendar at next meeting. Will get out minutes from last subcommittee meeting. Set date for next subcommittee meeting: Monday Jan. 10th in person/hybrid 6:30pm location TBD

Discussion on location for future meetings, larger venue than F&G conference room.

Game Trap recommendations on Region IV proposals:

Proposal 28: Support

Proposal 63:

Jim Simon: Fed community harvest system established by FSB, to work out harvest mgmt, only applies to federal lands. Moose & caribou. State harvest system...some proposals submitted because hunts shut down before quota is reached. Request to lift prohibition that. State CSH system developed by efforts from Ahtna villages, open to all AK residents, AHTNA wants to address their own needs. Understand why your AC doesn’t support CSH system. There are issues with it, complexities of fed subsistence system. No new people being added to CSH hunt. No conservation concerns.

Al: reserve right to comment later.

Bruce Ervin: live in Tok, Northway tribal member, works for TCC.

Jim Simon: do believe more participants will come aboard

Kirk: AC has opposed CSH hunt in the past. Don't think CSH system is well suited to Fbks users.

Virgil: put in for years for those when drawing permits, never could draw one, we represent Fbks area, not in best interest of our hunters.

Ask for unanimous consent TNA proposal 63 – agreed

Al: would ask Jim, do you thing the CSH system has been abused?

Jim: Can't identify any real abuse 16.05.330c upheld as constitutional to give priority for subsistence. Issue isn't going away. My personal belief is that state should be sovereign, get rid of fed control.

Proposal 69

Jim: Dept underestimates brown bears in Unit 13, suspect Dept will be supportive. No formal decisions yet.

Kirk: would support as long as Dept believes it is sustainable.

Mark: Dept believes most of additional harvest will be over bait.

Virgil: Spring bears good eating, support

Chuck: is proposal supposed to be pred control?

Al: question for Jim or Bruce, since no one from Dept online. What would be population objective to pursue something like this or not.

Jim: no real answer at this point.

Prop 69: support pending Dept comments

Prop 70: Mark – a no vote on any fall baiting

Jeff: yes, it opens opportunity

Levi: another element to help get moose, oppose

Kirk: same proposal few years ago, area crowded, user conflicts, concerns adding more opportunity in same time frame is too much

Virgil: went to first bear baiting class in Fbks. Dept thought baiting would be outlawed in short order. Gives ammo to antis to try to close bear baiting.

Al: as subsistence hunter and observer and bear baiter, I found baiting in fall less productive, as bears are more into berries and fish, vs springtime when little food available.

Prop 90 vote (TNA)

Mike: take up 76, I hunt ptarmigan there, seems like reasonable proposal. Asks to support

Levi: if we change regs now, we seem to always be chasing further changes with 3-year cycle

Prop 76 Support by unanimous consent

Proposal 86: Mat-Valley AC TNA

Prop 90: support pending Dept position

Jeff, Prop 100 want to bring up to full AC after ATA discussion.
TNA prop 100

Prop 206 discussion, roll call vote: 10-1

Prop 210/211 repeal CSH hunt: unanimous

Prop 213 discussion: TNA
Al Barrette, don't combine moose and caribou in discussion.

Prop 218 Support pending Dept comments

Schedule game/trap subcommittee:

WACH WG Report: Kirk & Mark

Other: none

IX. Adjourn: Chair at 10:20PM

Minutes Recorded by Mark Richards