

## East POW AC Fish & Game Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes 2.11.2023-Thorne Bay

Call to Order: 3: pm by Perry Olson

### Roll Call:

East POW AC Members	Officer	Designation	Present	Absent	Expiration
Perry Olson	Chair	Coffman Cove	x		June 2024
William Pattison	Vice Chair	Whale Pass	x		June 2024
Kurt Whitehead	Secretary		x		June 2025
Kris Anderson			x (phone)		June 2025
Jim Beard				x	June 2023
Matt Beck			x		June 2023
Della Colburn		Kasaan		x	June 2025
Dave Egelston			x		June 2025
Amy Jennings			x		June 2025
Kim Redmond		Thorne Bay	x		June 2023
Doug Rhodes			x (phone)		June 2024
Dave Roberts				x	June 2025
John Ryan			x (phone)		June 2024
Ray Slayton				x	June 2024
Dick Stewart			x (phone)		June 2023

**15 total Members, 11 are present**

**Number needed for a quorum: 8**

### ADFG Staff Present:

Craig Schwanke ADFG sport fish biologist

### Guests present:

### Approval of Agenda:

approve the agenda.

### Vote:

### Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:

Already done

### Reports:

Chair:

ADFG:

Will Pattison: BOG meeting

## **Kurt Whitehead: Seasonal Residents and Wolf Letter**

### **Public Comments**

#### **Elections:**

#### **Old Business:**

#### **Wolf ESA Letter**

The Klawock, AK Fish and Game Advisory Council is grateful for this opportunity to participate in the public process about resource management in our state.

On July 15, 2020, the Center for Biological Diversity, Alaska Rainforest Defenders and Defenders of Wildlife petitioned the Secretary of Interior/US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFW) to list the Alexander Archipelago (AA) Wolf in Southeast Alaska as threatened or endangered under the U.S. Endangered Species Act. The first petition to list the AA wolf was filed in 1993. The second was filed in 2011. The third and current one was filed in 2020 also requests that critical habitat be designated for AA wolves in Southeast Alaska. The document can be found at [www.biologicaldiversity.org](http://www.biologicaldiversity.org) and [www.doi.gov](http://www.doi.gov). We would like to state that the recurring petition process takes time away from resource managers studying wolf populations and other important issues and is disruptive for certain residents. The signatories of this document believe that the AA wolf should not be listed under the Endangered Species Act.

Prince of Wales Island, the third largest island in the United States, is home to approximately 3500 residents that reside in twelve rural communities, ranging from 35 in remote Point Baker to over 1000 in Craig. Many residents rely largely on a subsistence way of life. Subsistence in rural Alaska means legally that residents can fish and hunt under bag limits that allow us to fill our freezers and pantries because we do not have access to goods and services that people who live in urban areas have. Traditional subsistence lifestyles have been and still are practiced by the Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian people who have lived here since time immemorial. Prince of Wales area census data from 2021 shows 41.6% Alaska Native residents which is almost half the population of POW's communities. Subsistence is a very important part of Alaska Native culture, tradition and heritage. Deer hunting is a major part of the subsistence lifestyle and is vitally important on POW. Our relationships, mental and physical health and food security are all improved by deer hunting. Deer hunting on POW is important because this is the only populated area in the region with just one ungulate game animal; POW does not have caribou, moose, elk, sheep, bison, mountain goat or muskox.

Today, subsistence on POW is critical in terms of food security, as soaring inflation nation-wide has increased the cost of all goods and services. Shipping chilled or frozen food here costs \$0.82/lb. In Klawock, a gallon of milk is \$6.49, a dozen eggs are \$5.19 and ground beef is \$5.99 per pound. Additionally, gas is \$5.87/gal and \$6.23/gal for diesel. Food and fuel costs are a larger percentage of the family budget than the average household.

Information presented by Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) and other agencies at the 2022 Deer Summit on POW (October 13-15, 2022) show that the deer population has obviously declined in the past ten years. In 2012, hunters in Unit 2 averaged about 3.5 days of hunting effort per deer harvested; in 2022, hunters spent an average of 4.9 days trying to harvest a deer, according to ADFG hunt report survey data from 2012-2021.

We acknowledge that the deer population is affected by numerous factors, including habitat loss from fifty years of industrial scale old-growth logging on POW. We have noticed that, while ADFG reports link POW old-growth forest to healthy deer populations and state that the POW deer population is in trouble, Division of Forestry staff continue to describe the old-growth stands they cut here as low value and minimize their importance to deer and to hunters. That doesn't agree with what we heard at the 2022 Deer Summit. We also acknowledge there is work to be done in terms of considering changing deer bag limits or seasons in response to population concerns.

While we acknowledge that POW is not the only place where the AA wolf exists, we do know that effects of management actions are felt more sharply on our island; in part, because it is an island. We have seen more wolves more frequently over the past decade, so we have questions about whether this trend is occurring in other places within the AA wolf's range. ADFG has been cautious and conservative, but to accurately assess the population of wolves in a temperate rainforest has always been difficult. As ADFG continues to refine the methodologies used to

estimate and balance populations with carrying capacity, we expect the wolf population will remain healthy. We know the AA wolf is a top predator of Sitka blacktail deer and is far from being endangered. Our personal observations and trends in ADFG data lead us to believe the wolf is thriving in our area. Recent harvests of wolves have shown that past estimates were much lower than current numbers reflect.

If the AA wolf is listed under the Endangered Species Act, the federal government will assume authority over management, which will end legal trapping and hunting of wolves. If deer populations are decreasing, it doesn't make sense to list one of its top predators as endangered unless there is credible science and data that show good cause. ADFG has a growing list of data and science, including its own studies here on POW, proving the AA Wolf should not be listed under the Endangered Species Act.

Everyone agrees that wolves are an important part of POW and we enjoy seeing them, hearing them or just knowing that they exist here. However, listing the AA wolf as endangered will not accomplish better management and will eliminate all legal take of the top non-human predator in an island ecosystem where Sitka blacktail deer is the only ungulate prey available.

We strongly oppose listing the AA wolf as endangered or threatened.

The Klawock ADFG Advisory Council

The following list also supports the above letter

Alaska Trappers Association Fairbanks, AK	Alaska Outdoor Council Anchorage, AK	Clinton Cook Sr. Tribal President Craig Tribal Association Craig, AK	Scott Van Valin Heidi Van Valin Island Air Express El Capitan Lodge
City of Klawock Klawock, AK	City of Craig Craig, AK	City of Coffman Cove Coffman Cove, AK	City of Thorne Bay Thorne Bay, AK
City of Kasaan Kasaan, AK	Hollis Community Council Hollis, AK	ADFG Ketchikan Advisory Committee	ADFG Klawock Advisory Committee
Tim O'Conner Mayor of Craig VP Alaska Troller Assoc. F/V Virginia Rose Craig, AK	Ray & Elizabeth Douville F/V Faith Faith Fisheries Craig, AK	David & Jen Creighton Shelter Cove Lodge Rainforest Auto Rentals Craig, AK	Sam & Michelle Peters Slammin' Sam's Charters POW Electric & Repair Klawock, AK
Ellen Hannan & Brian Castle F/V Renegade Craig, AK	Scott Peakes & Elijah Winrod Northern Spell Lodge Klawock, AK	Josh & Chace Anderson Fireweed Lodge Klawock, AK	Kirk & Katie Agnitsch Sure Strike Lodge Craig, AK
Chuck & Jeanette Haydu Kingfisher Lodge & Charters Craig, AK	LeRoy & Tanya Johns F/V Chelsea Dawn Klawock, AK	Rosey & Lisa Roseland The Salt Shack Thorne Bay, Alaska	Spencer & Hannah Richter F/V Resolution Craig, AK
Kurt Whitehead & Trina Nation Treasure Hunter Lodge Klawock, AK	DJ & Anne Hansen DJ's Alaska Adventure Rentals Klawock, AK	David & Cynthia Egelston Alaska Rainforest Adventures Thorne Bay, AK	Shawn & Jill Kato-Yates F/V Nauti Lady Klawock, AK
Mike & Sarah Warner Coffman Cove Adventures Coffman Cove, AK	Daniel & Emily Peters F/V Sunlight Klawock, AK	Vaughn & Carrie Skinna F/V Annalyn Klawock, AK	Carter & Gretchen Jones Spindrift Adventures Klawock, AK
Jim & Jane Holien F/V Kenai Jane Klawock, AK	James Heppe Jr. Heppe & Sons Construction Klawock, AK	Grace Heppe Heppe's Indoor Edition Klawock, AK	Rich Trojan Trojan & Sons LLC Craig, AK

Don & Teresa Busse Trophy Inn Klawock, AK	Rob & Val Steward Changing Tides Inn Klawock, AK	Sean Tomkinson Passages Alaska Adventure Therapy, Klawock, AK	Brad McMillan TTP Director Klawock Cooperative Assoc. Klawock, AK
Jason Clowar/Luther Jenson Adventure AK Southeast Thorne Bay, AK	Melissa LaCour Log Cabin Sports Craig, AK	Mike & Jan Bush B-3 Contractors Inc. Klawock, AK	Mike Hamme Hamme's Quality Carpentry Craig, AK
Phillip & Danel Winrod F/V Aurie G Thorne Bay, AK	David & Gail Winrod Hydaburg, AK	Jon & Debbie Winrod Webster Point, AK	Enoch & Elizabeth Winrod Ketchikan, AK
Jim Baichtal Thorne Bay, AK	Ann Williams Klawock, AK	Justin Fitch Klawock, AK	Sam Sawyer Thorne Bay, AK
Clay Bezenek Ketchikan, AK	Mark & Beth Farrar Eagles Wings Lodge Klawock, AK	Brian Ringeisen Anglers-Adventures Ketchikan, AK	Kyle Berg & Courtney Nase Ketchikan, AK
Chris Guggenbickler Wrangell, AK	John & Sheri Wylie Klawock, AK	Matt & Pam Beck Whale Pass, AK	Nichole Pope Naukati, AK
Sharon Toman Whale Pass, AK			

**New Business:**

**Killer Whale Lawsuit Against SE Trollers**

Whereas commercial fishing is a mainstay of Alaska's economy and the largest private sector employer in the state; and

Whereas the troll fleet is the second largest fleet in Alaska; and

Whereas 44% of the fishing income to trollers is derived from their Chinook catch; and

Whereas commercial salmon trolling is a year-round contributor to the Southeast Alaska economy and sustains year-round employment in the fishing processing and support sector industries; and

Whereas including fishing, processing and all retailer multiplier effects, the troll fleet has a total economic impact of approximately \$85 million for the whole of Southeast annually, as measured in terms of total output; and

Whereas the lawsuit files by the Wild Fish Conservancy against the National Marine Fisheries Service threatens to close the Southeast troll fishery despite that closure providing no meaningful benefits to Southern Resident Killer Whales; and

Whereas the Wild Fish Conservancy has pledged to eliminate mixed stock fisheries and eliminate hatcheries; and

Whereas the communities of Southeast will suffer severe economic hardship if the Southeast troll fishery is closed; then

Therefore, be it resolved that the ADFG East Prince of Wales Advisory Committee urge in the strongest possible terms that:

NMFS and ADFG commits the necessary resources to effectively defend Alaska's fisheries and the Southeast troll fishery in particular; and

All necessary and available state, federal or private resources be made available to support lawsuit defendants and intervenors; and

The State of Alaska work with Alaska's Congressional delegation to protect Alaska's fisheries from present and future misdirected or malicious lawsuits.

ADFG East Prince of Wales Advisory Committee

**BOF Proposals:**

**Prop 154:** Allow the use of purse seine drums

**Prop 155:** Use of underwater spear and speargun

**Prop 156:** Prohibit the use of felt soled wading footwear

**Prop 160:** Require surrender of proceeds gained from the sale of wild king salmon caught in hatchery terminal harvest areas

**Prop 163:** Prohibit guiding in personal use finfish fisheries  
Currently it is not illegal to guide in personal use fisheries.

**Prop 164:** Establish registration and reporting requirements for personal use guides and transporters

**Prop 165:** Prohibit compensation for guide services in subsistence fisheries

**Prop 166:** Establish a statewide bag limit for personal use personal use (dipnet) fisheries

**Prop 167:** Require in season reporting of subsistence and personal use salmon harvest within 5 days of harvest

**Prop 168:** Extend emergency order authority to allow restrictions of sport fisheries in contaminated waters

**Prop 169:** Amend the list of banned invasive species.

**Next meeting date:**

**Adjourned: pm**

**Minutes recorded by:** Kurt Whitehead

**Minutes approved by:** Perry Olson

**Date:** 2.11.2023