

Klawock AC Meeting February 8, 2023

Call to Order: 6:22 pm

Roll Call:

Total Members: 15

Number needed for a quorum: 8

Klawock AC Members	Officer	Present	Absent	Expiration
Dennis Nickerson	Chair		x (excused)	June 2024
Nick Nickerson	Vice Chair		x (excused)	June 2024
Kurt Whitehead	Secretary	x		June 2025
Tylo Kennedy			x (excused)	June 2023
Mike Kennedy		x		June 2023
Irving Langmaid		x		June 2025
Brenda Leask			x (unexcused)	June 2025
Tom Leask			x (unexcused)	June 2023
Tom George			x (excused)	June 2025
Al Edsall		x		June 2023
Mark Tollfedt		x		June 2024
John Priddy			x (excused)	June 2024
Katie Rooks		x		June 2025
Roby Medina		x		June 2025
Madison Stumpf		x		June 2024

Moved and seconded to reinstate/leave Brenda Leask and Tom Leask on the AC.

Discussion:

Three missed meetings in a row should constitute removal from the AC. In the future, the secretary will make sure to note whether the absences are excused or unexcused.

Vote:

Unanimous approval to keep Brenda and Tom on the AC.

ADFG Staff present:

Craig Schwanke sport fish biologist, **Boards Support Henry Leasia** (online).

Guests present: Luke Dillard

Approval of Agenda:

Moved and seconded to approve the agenda for 2.8.2023.

Vote:

Unanimous approval

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:

Moved and seconded to approve the meeting minutes from 1.18.2023.

Vote:

Unanimous approval

Reports:

Chair: None

ADFG: Craig Schwanke: The lingcod harvest limits on charter boats will remain one the same as prior years but the slot limit will decrease by 5". Also talked about the change in waterfowl seasons that will be closed Dec. 1-14. It will open Sept. 1, close from Dec. 1-14 and open again from Dec. 15-30.

Kurt Whitehead: Board of Game: Kurt represented the Klawock AC, Will Pattison represented the East POW AC, Mike Douville represented the Craig AC and Elijah Winrod and Mike Kampnich also represented POW so the BOG meeting in KTN was well represented at the meeting. There were a few proposals that passed Seasonal Residents report. Kurt went to JNU Feb. 1 & 2 and met with 23 legislators about the seasonal resident issues we are having on POW and in SE AK. Increasing the residency requirements to purchase a resident fishing/hunting/trapping license.

Public Comments: None

Old Business:

The following resolution was read at the meeting.

Killer Whale Lawsuit Against SE Trollers**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 commercial fleet in Alaska; and

Whereas between 2000-2018, the troll fleet landed on average 3.02 million pounds of Chinook salmon each year at an average value of \$11.7 million; and

Whereas between 2000-2018, Chinook accounted for 44% of the troll fleet's annual ex-vessel earnings on average and in 2015 made up 58% of the fleet's income; and

Whereas approximately 1,450 fishermen/women earn income directly from the troll fishery, including skippers (permit holders) and crew, with total direct, indirect and induced labor income estimated at \$28.5 million; and

Whereas, in 2018, the residents of the Prince of Wales Island-Hyder Census Area (Craig, Klawock, Thorne Bay, Coffman Cove, Hydaburg, Metlakatla, Kake and other communities) landed 17% of the Alaska resident troll Chinook harvest and 15% of the total troll Chinook harvest value; and

Whereas in 2021, Craig ranked 30th in the nation for commercial seafood landings (21 million pounds) and 52nd in value (\$22.7 million), out of 137 of the nation's top fishing ports; 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 filed by the Wild Fish Conservancy against the National Marine Fisheries Service threatens to close the Alaska winter and summer troll fisheries despite those closures 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 troll fishery is closed; then

Therefore, be it resolved that the ADFG Klawock Advisory Committee urge in the strongest possible terms that:

NMFS and ADFG commit the necessary resources to effectively defend Alaska's fisheries and the 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 Department of Law and the Congressional delegation to protect Alaska's fisheries from present and future misdirected or malicious lawsuits.

ADFG Klawock Advisory Committee

Moved and seconded to approve/support the above resolution.

Discussion:

Irving: Where is the WFC getting their info?

Mark & Ed: Misunderstanding about where the SE AK kings spawn. There's not enough good info. For example, what are the orca eating during the winter? There a plenty of places in SE AK where we can put kings without impacting any natural runs.

Kurt: There is a lot of pollution in Puget Sound.

Katie: There are genuine concerns about why the wild chinook are declining and there is hard evidence that the chinook population is close to triggering an endangered species act petition.

Mike: We don't want kings in the Klawock river competing with the sockeye.

Irving: There are kings that go up the Klawock but not many and they don't make it over the falls.

Vote:

Unanimous support

New Business:

Next SE board of fish meeting will be in 2+ years so we have plenty of time discuss future proposals.

Moved and seconded to send Mike Kennedy to the upcoming Board of Fish meeting on March 10-14, 2023. The representative will travel on Mar. 9 and return on March 15, 2023.

Vote:

Unanimous approval to have Mike Kennedy represent the Klawock AC.

Irving: Bears are hurting the deer population on POW.

Mike: Eagles take a lot of deer as well.

Kurt: ADFG determined that bears eat about 40% of the fawns but afterwards they don't get many. The DNA wolf scat analysis study done by ADFG has shown that wolves on POW have been eating a lot more black bear as the deer population declines. Wolves eat over 55 different species of food. In 2007 there were 12 big game hunting guides on POW when the Forest Service allocated black bear guides in all of SE AK. There has been no growth in the guiding industry in SE AK since 2007. In fact, there has been attrition due to many of the guides getting out of the industry. Kurt is the only black bear guide that lives on POW. The other 4 POW guides are from Sitka, Wrangell and Ketchikan. Gave background info on the guiding industry and black bear management pre and post 2013 when the

management changed to the current system. Most everyone feels the current management system works well. The next SE board of game meeting will be in 3 years so we have plenty of time to work on proposals.

Irving: There weren't many bear hunters in '20 & '21 due to Covid. Hopefully the deer population will improve in the next few years.

Kurt: Adult male black bears can defend themselves from wolves better than younger bears and bears in dens that wolves can easily dig out. Spoke about Steve Bethune's black bear radio collar study done around 2011 and bear denning preferences. He will find the study and share it with the group. The bears prefer to den under large trees that are totally dry. They also den under large root wads but the one common theme is dens are totally dry. Bears are nesters that drag in duff, leaves, twigs to line their bed.

Next meeting date: To be determined

Meeting adjourned: 7:27pm

Minutes recorded by: Kurt Whitehead

Minutes approved by: Kurt Whitehead

Date: 2.8.2023