

Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee
November 8, 2023 FAC Meeting Minutes¹ DRAFT
J.P. Jones Community Center
204 Rickert Street, Fairbanks, AK and Zoom

I. Call to Order: 6:01pm Chair: Mark Richards, Acting Chair

II. Roll Call:

	<u>CHAIR</u> John Siegfried	<u>VICE-CHAIR</u> Mark Richards	<u>SECRETARY</u> Mark Oppen retired	Jeff Lucas	<u>FSC Chair</u> Gale Vick	Virgil Umphenour	Mike Tinker	John Wisniewski
Present	X²	X	OPEN	X	X	X		X
Absent								
Abs/Excused							X	
	Levi Lewellyn	Austin Smith	Warren Guichici	Bill Larry	Mike Kramer	Chuck Derrick	Gabriel Davis	James Paine (alternate)
Present	X	X		X	X-OL	X	X	X
Absent								
Abs/Excused			X					
	Lance Nelson (alternate)							
Present	X							
Absent								
Abs/Excused								

III. Introduction of Guests: In Person

Lori Richards	Eric Anslinger	Jesse Wandling ³	Dave Simmons ⁴
Lance Nelson	Pete Buist	Alysa Johnson	Kresta Hallbrook
Tyrel Palmer	David Garcia	Al Barrette, BOG	Jennifer Yuhas
Richard Doering	Amy Davis	K. Davis	Josh Davis
Lori Gauldehaus	Anthony Binder	Dave Lorrington, BOG	

On-Line

John Haddix

¹ Transcribed by Gale K. Vick

² Delayed for an hour as, returning from Galena, arrived in time to vote on Board of Fish proposals

³ New CDA (Chitina Dippnetters Association) Chair, replacing Chuck Derrick

⁴ Member, Local #151

Fish & Game Staff Present (in person and on-line)

Board Support facilitator, Kyle Campbell

Mark Nelson, biologist ADF&G Wildlife Conservation

Brendan Scanlon, Northwest / North Slope fisheries area biologist (on-line)

Deena Jallen, ADF&G Yukon River summer season manager (on-line)

Tony Hollis, ADF&G Wildlife Conservation Division Area biologist

Andy Gryska, ADF&G Tanana Drainage Area Manager, sports fish area biologist

IV. Comments

Chair Comments: Mark Richards

Asked everyone to sign in to be eligible to vote in elections

Vice Chair: none

AC Member Comments: Chuck Derrick noted that he stepped down as president of CDA (Chitina Dipnetters Assn) but was still on the Board.

Public Comments: none

V. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:

October 11, 2023

FAC Fisheries Subcommittee, October 9, 2023

approved as amended by unanimous consent

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

VII. Old Business: none

Game and Trap Subcommittee: Mark Richards, SC Chair – deferred to after Fisheries

Caribou Arctic Working Group – discussion table until after elections

Fisheries Subcommittee : Gale Vick, SC Chair - discussion deferred until after elections

VIII New Business: ELECTIONS

Mark R: 6 seats are open

Can nominate yourself or someone can nominate you

Nominations:

Mark Richards: nominates John Wisniewski

Lance Nelson: nominates Mark Richards⁵

? nominates Mike Tinker

? nominates John Haddix⁶

Mark Richards nominates Austin Smith

? nominates Grabiell Davis

? nominates Lance Nelson

Prospective nominees gave their presentations

Kyle Campbell past out ballots. Write maximum of six names.

⁵ Executive Director for RHAK, Resident Hunters of Alaska

⁶ Has wildlife biology degree, former member of Tok AC

Mark: You can only vote six names but you can vote for yourself. Went off record at 6:27pm

Call back to order: 6:39pm

Election results: 3 year terms, except 1 seat that has 2 years remaining⁷

Mark Richards

Mike Tinker

Austin Smith – 2 year term

Grabiell Davis

Lance Nelson

John Wisniewski

John Haddix - Alternate

Mark Richards: Western Arctic Caribou Working Group (feds pay for lodging and travel)

December 13-14th Anchorage Marriott

John Seigfried, current FAC rep

John W said he could attend as rep

Jeff Lucas – alternate

Unanimous consent to support

Discussion of Board of Fish proposals: Gale Vick, FAC Fisheries SC chair

Proposals in Lower Cook Inlet Board of Fish meeting, end of November. Comments due on Nov. 13th. FAC generated Prop#43, asking for reduction of hatchery egg production.

Virgil: Gave background. (See proposal) In 1995 BOF asked Department of Law on authority, formed a Hatchery Committee of 3 members of the Board, to report at the 1997 Work Session. Dept of Law confirmed the BOF had authority. Worked on Sustainable Salmon Policy recommendations at same time. In 2000, a megaboard meeting because of fund restrictions to the Board. Area M, AYK, and Bristol Bay had to be conducted all at one meeting. 21 days, 12 hours a day. Hatchery management did not want to take action on egg production as Virgil was proposing so went to the Governor and promised to reduce egg production by 25% if the action was taken off BOF agenda. Virgil reluctantly agreed because of the extensive meeting. After that meeting and with a Governor change, the BOF actually increased egg permits by 42% over time to 2022.

Gale: to bring into present date – A group of us recently met with 3 of the most prominent Pacific Northwest scientists on hatchery production impacts in the Bering Sea (Asian – Japan, Russia, Korea) and GOA – where in Alaska we are the biggest producer of hatchery pinks. Those hatchery fish are competing with out wild stocks, causing loss of size in Chinook and run strength for all salmon species. Pinks now favored in ocean because of climate change. Dr. Greg Ruggerone, Dr. Daniel Schindler, Dr. Peter Westley, all at TCC Convention panel meeting last week. Dr. Ruggerone said that “Pacific salmon are more abundant today than ever in the past 100 years. 40% of adult and immature biomass at sea is from hatcheries (chum and pink salmon.)” Relate to ADF&G comments on Proposal #43:

⁷ Seat vacated by Mark Oppe resignation

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. Hatchery egg take levels are established through an iterative process involving department staff and stakeholders. Hatchery operations are permitted in a way that minimizes impact on wild salmon stocks and the commissioner can amend a permit if conservation concerns arise related to hatchery production. If there is a compelling reason to amend terms of a hatchery permit, the amendment should be based on analysis of data and there should be clear evidence the amendment will have a positive impact on wild salmon stocks. No evidence has been presented in this proposal to support the proposed reduction in permitted pink salmon egg take level.

Gale: As our public comments, we will be sending in reference to literally hundreds of papers that show evidence of hatchery impacts on wild stock. Everything stated in this Dept comments is not true. We are going to enumerate the reasons why. When the Dept talks about an iterative process they are talking about a fully integrated process between the hatcheries, the Dept, fishermen, fishing communities, marketing, processors. Critical for us to start making connections to hatchery production and loss of AYK salmon stocks. Important for us to push the Dept on this. We are also going to be talking to the legislature.

Virgil: They will take testimony in LCI in Homer but will deliberate at the Upper Cook Inlet Board meeting in January.

Mike Kramer: We are at a really pivotal point with the future of our salmon. The science is now undeniable that hatcheries are impacting wild stock. A new synthesis that just came out⁸, decades of work, hundreds of independent discrete studies, more than most people will read. People want sound bites. The science is so overwhelming that hatchery pinks of a detrimental impact. Shows odd years when pinks are more abundant vs. even years, everything in the ecosystems cycle suffer during the odd years. Easily measured. We have to do something soon. I am afraid current Dept leaders have their heads in the sand with a recurring mantra that “correlation does not indicate causation.” We can’t wait until new voices take over. This is what happened years ago when the Dept denied the impacts of unlimited mesh size on Chinook stocks. Hatchery pinks are detrimental to entire ecosystem. We can’t keep sustaining this level of hatchery production.

Gale: We have a lot of tentacle to this. At the BOF Hatchery meeting recently in Anchorage – Virgil was there and I listened online. Curt Chamberlain, attorney for Calista Corporation, gave excellent testimony against two statements the Dept often uses - “we have to have robust data” and that “correlation does not mean causation.” The issue for us is to disprove. We have so much to illustrate causation and we don’t have time, as Mike has just said, to fiddle around with this any longer. They will be deliberating on this at the Upper Cook Inlet meeting in January which gives us a lot more time to write extended comments.

Virgil asked about budget to send someone to January UCI meeting. Kyle Campbell noted that there was funding but we needed to decide which meeting.

⁸ *A Global Synthesis of Peer-Reviewed Research on the Effects of Hatchery Salmonids on Wild Salmonids*, John r. McMillan, et.al, Fisheries Management and Ecology, July 2023

Mark Richards: Motion for FAC to support Prop #43⁹
Second: ?
Approved: Unanimous consent

Gale Vick: Discussion on Prop #35, Pioneer Fisheries Homer, Nancy Hillstrand, on top of a lot of this. Kachemak Bay, protection of wild stock fisheries. Mark noted this was opposed by the Dept. This is part of a much greater problem. So I support.

Virgil: Motion to support all of the associated proposals approved by the SC on Monday night.

Gale: Tutka Bay Hatchery is at about 90-95% cost recovery and shellfish and other fish have been virtually wiped out in that Bay, Lagoon. Nancy Hillstrand has become a member of CIAA¹⁰, which is very likely in a lot of financial trouble. PNP¹¹ hatcheries can only get their revenue from certain sources – cost recovery, loans, enhancement taxes – and with the current price of salmon almost half of 2022, it is becoming increasingly harder for hatcheries to recover costs for debt service. Our concern is that the hatcheries are going to ask for increased production. Mark asked about cost recovery. Gale explained that hatcheries get cost recovery in THA/SHA¹² cleanup operations by contract fisherman (not common property). Most of the hatcheries in the northern region of GOA, common property fisherman are drift boats, contract fishermen are seiners. By (regulation) cost recovery is supposed to be capped at 30%. At Tutka, only a very few common property fishermen can prosecute that fishery. It's a ridiculous situation.

Virgil: CIAA is in debt already by \$18-19million and asking for another \$2million in State loans.

Mark: Are these hatcheries tied into sports fish as well?

Gale: That's a little complicated. The only sports fish hatcheries in the GOA are William Jack Hernandez in Anchorage, under Dingell-Johnson funds but there are some PNP hatcheries that raise Chinook salmon for remote release using DJ funds as well. Fairbanks Ruth Burnett Hatchery was tied in a funding issue a few years ago to support for Crystal Lake hatchery.¹³

Mike K: In the simplest terms, 90% cost recoveries is an unsustainable business model. They are just going to keep making more fish and the Dept is so entrenched with them because of decades of loan support. It is an untractable situation. Unbelievable they can harvest 90% of the fish they make and killing off wild fish and other species.

Virgil: That area around Tutka Bay in Kachemak used to have all kinds of shellfish. Now they have zero. Kramer noted it is a State designated shellfish hatchery but there are none left.

Motion: Virgil - To approve Prop #34, #35, #36, #41 and #43 as approved at the Fisheries SC meeting.

⁹ Technically did not need motion, was already previously approved

¹⁰ Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association

¹¹ Private Non-Profit

¹² Terminal Harvest Area / Special harvest Area

¹³ SSRAA – Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association

Unanimous consent to approve.
Gale will send in comments to Board of Fish.

Gale stepped out for 15 minutes to join Mat-Su AC on question for Proposal #43.

Tony Hollis, ADF&G, 20A and 20C boundary issue: Board of Game ACR#7

Submitted by ADF&G. In hunting regs (see map) along the Nenana River. In hunting regs, there is a line drawn, but the description of the boundary is the west bank of the Nenana River. Contention over line drawn for Lost Slough/ 17 Mile Slough essential the main channel. Needs to go to Statewide meeting for game boundary change, which would be March of 2025. So this ACR addresses mistake. See Google Earth map that shows flood channel. Maybe add 17 Mile Slough into reg. The implications are there are different moose hunting and brown bear regs in those areas that are affected by boundary maps. Tony – needs to be submitted so that it can be in Spring meeting otherwise has to wait for Fall 2024 proposals. Mark – 20A would be Deep Creek? Tony: correct. Would liberalize moose and brown bear seasons. Basically unenforceable. No violations to date.

Motion: Mark Richards – to support ACR#7
No objections. Mark will send in comments

Election of Secretary:

Austin Smith volunteered.

Motion: Levi – to elect Austin as Secretary of the FAC
No objections. Approved.

Game Trap meeting schedule – At ADF&G offices on College Road

Motion: Levi – to support, approved

November 15th, 6pm to go over Region IV proposals at Board of game

Mark: I would like to weigh in on bag limits,

Virgil supported to be FAC rep at the UCI - Upper Cook Inlet BOF meeting in January

Virgil discussed the BOF discussion at Work Session on changing the Cordova meeting to Anchorage. One BOF abstained so it became a no vote. So the meeting was scheduled again for Cordova. In statute we are supposed to have at least one meeting in a cycle in Fairbanks. We need to get hold of Interior Delegation and enforce. It would be cheaper to have in Fairbanks or Anchorage. People are easily stranded in Cordova. Virgil noted there is no BOF policy on abstentions. You are supposed to abstain when you have a conflict on a proposal but this Board member had no conflict.

Motion: Virgil – to appoint some FAC members to meet with Area legislators / Interior Delegation to enforce statute and have meeting in Fairbanks. Mike Tinker should be on this.

Second: ??

Motion approved by unanimous consent.

Mike Kramer – If the statute says that a meeting in Fairbanks once a year is required than we shouldn't have to bring political pressure. What obligations do the Boards have to follow statutes? I can't remember a full BOF meeting in Fairbanks.

Virgil: We had an AYK meeting here years ago

Al Barrette: Statute: 16.05300 (b) ¹⁴

John Siegfried arrived from Galena.

Next Fisheries SC meeting: December 11th, Monday 6pm virtual only

Gale: Thanks to Kyle Campbell for all his support and help.

Jeff Lucas - Wood Bison meeting next week. Will be representing (which option?)

Mark R noted Wayne Heimer mentioned at lunch today that weather is determinant factor and all this won't come into play until wood bison have a harvestable surplus. Is there still a trespass agreement in Innoko area? (some portion inaudible) Al B noted current management plan. Gale asked about how Innoko herd was moving between land ownership. Jeff responded that herd seems to be staying on State land. Brief mention of Plains Bison herd in Delta. Levi Llewellyn noted that the new hunting regs for Delta bison dropped off the requirement for an sex trigger. Jeff thought it would be good to have Delta area biologist to join our next meeting.

Mark R: Western Arctic Caribou herd meeting Dec 13-14th. John S. and John W are going to discuss schedules to see who can represent the FAC. Jeff Lucas will be second alternate. Holly wants names tomorrow morning to run through feds to get travel paid for.

Mark: Motion: John W is prime and John S is alternate

Approved by unanimous consent

Next full FAC meeting: December 13, 2023 6pm

Meeting adjourned at 7.47pm

¹⁴ Alaska Stat. § 16.05.300

(a) Each board shall hold at least one meeting a year and as many other meetings as it considers necessary. Each board shall select the time and place in the state for the transaction of business. Each board shall maintain its office at the principal office of the department. (b) In addition, the Board of Fisheries shall hold at least one meeting or hearing a year in each of the following general areas: (1) Upper Yukon - Kuskokwim - Arctic (2) Western Alaska (including Kodiak) (4) Prince William Sound (including Yakutat)

Alaska Board of Fisheries Lower Cook Inlet Meeting Proposals

November 28-December 1, 2023 | Homer, AK

Proposal Number	Proposal Description		
Support, Support as Amended, Oppose, No Action	Number Support	Number Oppose	Comments, Discussion (list Pros and Cons), Amendments to Proposal, Voting Notes
<i>Note: Effective September 2019, when abstentions occur, the action or decision of a majority of the remaining members at a meeting at which a quorum is present is an act of the committee. For example, a vote tally of 7-6-2 means the motion carries. Members abstaining from voting must provide an explanation that is included in the committee record.</i>			
1	Amend the Upper Cook Inlet Summer Salt water King Salmon Sport Fishery Management Plan (This proposal will be heard and public testimony will be taken at both the LCI and UCI meetings and deliberated at the UCI meeting)		
2	Amend the <i>Upper Cook Inlet Summer Salt Water King Salmon Management Plan</i> (This proposal will be heard and public testimony will be taken at both the LCI and UCI meetings and deliberated at the UCI meeting)		
3	Amend the management plans for the Upper Cook Inlet Summer and Kenai River late-run king salmon fisheries (This proposal will be heard and public testimony will be taken at both the LCI and UCI meetings and deliberated at the UCI meeting)		
4	Amend the management plans for the Upper Cook Inlet Summer and Kenai River late-run king salmon fisheries (This proposal will be heard and public testimony will be taken at both the LCI and UCI meetings and deliberated at the UCI meeting)		
5	Allow fishing from shore in the marine waters adjacent to Ninilchik River and Deep Creek year round		
6	Create a management plan and establish a guideline harvest level for the lower Cook Inlet summer salt water king salmon sport fishery		
7	Prohibit snagging and spear fishing for king salmon in Seldovia Harbor and Lagoon until June 24		
8	Prohibit snagging in Seldovia Bay		
9	Review management options in the Cook Inlet Winter Salt Water King Salmon Sport Fishery Management Plan		

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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, Voting Notes
10	Modify king salmon limits in the Cook Inlet Winter Salt Water King Salmon Sport Fishery		
11	Allow Alaska resident anglers to use two rods for salmon		
12	Modify the North Gulf Coast King Salmon Sport Fishery Management Pla		
13	Create a management plan for the Anchor River, Deep Creek, and Ninilchik River king salmon sport fisheries		
14	Modify the Ninilchik River hatchery king salmon limits and season		
15	Extend the area open to hatchery king salmon on the Ninilchik River		
16	Expand the boundary of the Ninilchik River Youth-Only fishery		
17	Expand the boundary of the Ninilchik River Youth-Only fishery		
18	Modify rockfish bag and possession limits		
19	Reduce rockfish limits in Cook Inlet - Resurrection Bay		
20	Reduce Lower Cook Inlet rockfish sport limits		
21	Reduce Lower Cook Inlet rockfish sport limits		
22	Establish a sport fishing closure for rockfish in Cook Inlet from June 1 - July 31		
23	Reduce Lower Cook Inlet lingcod sport limits		
24	Remove limits for spiny dogfish in Cook Inlet waters		

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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, Voting Notes
25			Reduce Cook Inlet commercial and sport rockfish harvest limits
26			Reduce Cook Inlet commercial and sport lingcod harvest
27			Open the Cook Inlet commercial sablefish season earlier
28			Change gear group allocation in the <i>Cook Inlet Pacific Cod Management Plan</i>
29			Prohibit use of helicopters to transport anglers to select Cook Inlet waters
30			Add provisions to allow for subsistence harvest of herring spawn on kelp
31			Extend the China Poot personal use fishery season dates
32			Move the China Poot personal use dip net regulations under the Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Fishery Management Plan
33			Redefine the Kachemak Bay Personal Use Dip Net Fishery area
34			Create a Kamishak Bay Purse Seine Fishery Management Plan
	13	0	
35			Create a <i>Kachemak Bay Wild Fish Priority Management Plan</i>
	13	0	
36			Amend the Tutka Bay Lagoon Salmon Hatchery Management Plan
	13	0	
37			Modify legal gear in the Trail Lakes salmon hatchery management plan
38			Modify legal gear in Lower Cook Inlet special harvest areas
39			Amend the list of waters closed to commercial fishing for salmon in Cook Inlet
40			Amend waters closed to commercial fishing for salmon

Alaska Board of Fisheries Lower Cook Inlet Meeting Proposals

November 28-December 1, 2023 | Homer, AK

Proposal Number	Proposal Description		
Support, Support as Amended, Oppose, No Action	Number Support	Number Oppose	Comments, Discussion (list Pros and Cons), Amendments to Proposal, Voting Notes
41	Close a portion of Tutka Bay to commercial fishing for salmon		
	13	0	
42	Readopt the <i>Bear Lake Management Plan</i>		
43	Amend Basic Management Plans (This proposal will be heard and public testimony will be taken at both the LCI and UCI meetings and deliberated at the UCI meeting)		
	13	0	
256	Repeal the no bait regulation and allow the use of non-roe bait for salmon, other than king salmon (5 AAC 67.022). <i>Formerly ACR #9, accepted at the 2023 work session.</i>		
257	Amend the Southeast Alaska King Salmon Management Plan to align with new methods to set catch limits adopted by the Pacific Salmon Commission. <i>Formerly ACR #11, accepted at the 2023 work session.</i>		
258	Amend the Southeast Alaska King Salmon Management Plan to align with changes adopted by the Pacific Salmon Commission to maintain the troll and sport fishery allocations. <i>Formerly ACR 12, accepted at the 2023 work session.</i>		
259	Manage the SEAK king salmon sport fishery to not exceed the annual sport fishery harvest allocation. <i>Formerly ACR #13, accepted at the 2023 work session.</i>		

Adjournment: 7:47PM

Minutes Recorded By: Gale K. Vick

Minutes Approved By: Draft – will be approved in December

Date: 11/12/23