

Matanuska Valley Fish and Game Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes of 10/16/2024
VFW Post #9365, 301 E Lake View Avenue, Wasilla

- I. Call to Order: 7:04pm by Herb Mansavage, Chairman

- II. Roll Call
Members Present:
Herb Mansavage, Chairman
Dan Montgomery, Vice Chairman Game
Andy Couch
Austin Manelick
Hunter Hongslo
Danny Lewis
Steve Bartelli
Michelle Heun
Pete Imhof
Bruce Privett

Members Absent (Excused):
Dom Nickles
Casey Dinkel
Robert (Bob) Cassell
Ed Soto
Neil DeWitt
Birch Yuknis

Members Absent (Unexcused): 0
Number Needed for Quorum on AC: 8 members
List of User Groups Present: 0

- III. Fish and Game Staff Present:
Chris Brockman, Wildlife Biologist
Gerrit Van Diest, Wildlife Biologist

- IV. Guests Present:
Paul Warta
Bill Shank, Wasilla
Rod Arno, Alaska Outdoor Council

- V. Motion to approve the agenda made by Andy Couch and second by Pete Imhof. Mr. Couch moved to amend the agenda, for the committee to discuss and approve position on Agenda Change Request (ACR) 2 and ACR 3 for submission as record copies to the

Board of Fisheries — due to the first Matanuska Valley Advisory Committee (AC) meeting of the fall occurring one day after the Board of Fisheries Work Session comment deadline. Mr. Imhof second. Amendment and Motion approved without objection.

Mr. Couch also suggested nominating a committee Fisheries Vice Chair.

VI. Motion and second to approve previous meeting minutes of April 17, 2024

VII. Reports

a. Chair's report

- Chair Mansavage said there is a card circulating for Board of Game member Ruth Cusack, if anyone would like to sign.
- He stated he would like to get a roadmap out for reviewing Board of Fisheries and Board of Game proposals.
- Mr. Mansavage provided members with information on the proposal working its way through the federal regulatory system looking at creating a Section 804 Prioritization on those communities that hunt the Nelchina Caribou Herd.

b. ADF&G

- Chris Brockman has been working as the area game biologist out of the Palmer office, but he has also been filling in as the intensive management coordinator, and may accept the full-time position of intensive management coordinator— vacating the area game management biologist position in the Palmer office. Gerrit Van Diest will remain available in the Palmer office with the game division.
- Mr. Brockman reported there is not much data on the hunting season available yet. They are looking to get more information on the intensive related proposals.
- Chair Mansavage asked about reauthorize antlerless moose. Mr. Brockman said, for example, in Game Management Unit (GMU) 14A, antlerless for sometimes harvesting cows keeps the population healthy. There are more moose in 14A per square miles in the state.
- Mr. Brockman also discussed the twining surveys, objectives, and predator control. Mr. Bartelli inquired on any other things determining twining and Mr. Brockman said its correlated with nutritional condition of the landscape and severe winters.

c. Others

VIII. Public Comment

- Paul Warta stated he has concern for the antlerless moose DM400-DM401. Mr. Van Diest said 10 permits were issued. Mr. Couch stated that fishing

guides on the lower Little Susitna River had not seen many moose all summer, indicating the number of moose are likely very low between the Little Susitna and Susitna Rivers. He would feel more comfortable if the Department refrained from providing antlerless moose tags in this portion of GMU 14A — until moose numbers increase between these two rivers.

IX. Old Business - None

X. New Business

- a. Nomination for Committee Secretary
 - Mr. Couch nominated Michelle Heun for Secretary; seeing no others interested it was moved and seconded. Ms. Heun accepted.
- b. Members would like more discussion on reauthorize antlerless moose.
- c. Current Proposals for Board of Fisheries (BOF)
 - Chair Mansavage said scheduling of proposals should begin soon. He suggested meetings Wednesday, October 30 and November 20, 2024.
 - Mr. Bartelli suggested leaving Southeast proposals for the area AC.
 - Mr. Privett said the committee should look at sablefish (longline) fisheries proposals. He will look them over.
 - Chair Mansavage said the committee has until November 26 (BOF comments deadline) and feels 20-25 proposals can be reviewed during one meeting. He will contact Ms. Leila Williams, Board Support, Southcentral Region, to public notice the meeting. (Note: BOF comment deadline for Statewide Shellfish, PWS is February 25, 2025.)
 - Chair Mansavage brought up public participation in the meetings and believe there is value in both in person and remote (teleconference or Zoom participation) attendance. Mr. Couch made a Motion supporting comment participations on proposals available by two ways in all meetings. Motion was seconded. Members discussed pros/cons of each. Mr. Couch said department comments are often not available and its helpful to have a biologist.
Support: Mansavage, Couch, Manelick, Bartelli, Imhof, Heun
Oppose: Montgomery, Hongslo, Lewis, Privett
Motion passes. Chair Mansavage will contact Ms. Williams (Board Support) for more information.
- d. Current Proposals for Board of Game (BOG)
 - Chair Mansavage stated the committee should focus on proposals for Units 13, 14, and 16. The BOG comment deadline is December 27, 2024, for Central and SW Region meeting. (Note: BOG comment deadline for Statewide Regulations is March 7, 2025.)
 - He would like three consecutive Wednesday meetings, December 4, 11, 18, 2024, to review proposals by priority (Zoom meeting N/A). Members discussed reviewing chronologically for more organization as priority review

may be too scattered. Mr. Brockman said members definitely want to vote on antlerless moose draw permits as early as possible. Mr. Couch said antlerless hunts should be on a priority list each year. Chair Mansavage said a vote as early as October 30, is possible, but this action can be added to the November 20 meeting agenda.

- Chair Mansavage would like more department input on the Statewide Regulation proposals and the committee will take this up after the first of the year (2025).
 - e. Committee Expectations for Attendance
 - Chair Mansavage addressed committee attendance. He is hoping for more participation particularly when a member(s) misses three or more scheduled meetings. He stated it's more about overall multiple excused absences making less than 50 percent of the meetings.
 - There is currently a vacancy and an election can be held for the open spot at the November 20, 2024, meeting, or nominate an alternate for the seat.
 - The committee also needs to nominate a Vice Chair Fish, and this can be done at the October 30, 2024, meeting.
 - f. Other Fisheries and Game Business as Necessary
 - Mr. Couch made a Motion to support Agenda Change Request (ACR) 2, designating Susitna River drainage Chinook Salmon as a Stock of Yield Concern (defined in 5AAC 39.222(I)(42)) and adoption of a regulatory action plan to rebuild the yield from Susitna River drainage Chinook Salmon stock(s) throughout the entire drainage. Mr. Montgomery second. Mr. Couch provided committee members a thorough summary of ACR 2 and justification for committee approved position. Mr. Bartelli stated his support this Motion, as an action plan is needed our efforts at conservation go unheard. Members were provided a copy of the Record Copy submitted to BOF since the Matanuska Valley AC did not meet until one day after the BOF Work Session comments were due.
Support: Unanimous consent to submit ACR 2
Motion passes.
 - Mr. Couch made a Motion to support ACR 3, designating Little Susitna River coho salmon as a Stock of Yield Concern and adoption of a regulatory action plan to rebuild the yield from the Little Susitna River coho salmon stock. Mr. Montgomery second.
Support: Unanimous consent to submit ACR 3
Motion passes.
- XI. Select representative(s) for board meeting
- Mr. Couch expressed the need for representation at the BOF meetings December 10-16, 2024, in Cordova. He is unaware of a Matanuska Valley AC representative ever attending a Board of Fisheries meeting in Cordova — even though a significant number of Matanuska and Susitna Valley

residents fish in both the Upper Copper River and Prince William Sound fisheries. Because of the logistics of attending a Cordova Board of Fisheries meeting Mr. Couch suggested the Matanuska Valley AC may want to request the Board of Fisheries provide an option to participate both during testimony and groups of the whole by zoom or some other option. Chair Mansavage will talk with Ms. Williams (Board Support) about the options.

- XII. Set next meeting date
 - Wednesday, October 30, 2024
 - Wednesday, November 20, 2024
 - December 4, 2024
 - December 11, 2024
 - December 18, 2024

- XIII. Other

- XIV. Adjourn at 9:20pm

Minutes Recorded By: Michelle Heun, Secretary
Minutes Approved By: Herb Mansavage, Chairman
Date: November 6, 2024