



Minutes

Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

January 29-30, 2021 – Webinar

Attendance

Commission

Larry Carpenter,
Chair
Barbara Baker,
Vice Chair
Donald McIsaac
Kim Thorburn
Molly Linville
James R. Anderson
Lorna Smith
Fred Koontz

Staff

Joe Panesko, AGO
Kelly Susewind, Director
Amy Windrope, Deputy
Director
Dr. Julie Watson
Nate Pamplin
Kessina Lee
Dr. Scott Pearson
Dr. Joe Anderson

Rebecca Bennett
Captain Jeff Wickersham
Laura Heironimus
Paul Dahmer
Jeff Burnham
Cynthia Wilkerson
Margen Carlson
Theresa Nation
Marlene Wagner

Derek Stinson
Taylor Cotten
Edward Eleazer
Mickey Agha
Ron Warren

Commission Staff

Nichole Kloepfer

Friday, January 29, 2021

Chair Carpenter called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

1. Call to Order

a. Commissioners' Discussion

Commissioner Thorburn attended winter WAFWA virtually this year and provided highlights from the conference.

The Commission welcomed the new commissioners. The new commissioners provided their backgrounds and thoughts on their new roles.

The Commission gave their final "thank you's" to Commissioners Smith and Kehoe.

b. Meeting Minute Approval

The Commission considered approval of the December 4-5, 2020, December 15, 2020, and December 18, 2020 draft minutes.

Commissioner Thorburn made motion, seconded by Commissioner Linville, to approve the minutes of the December 4-5, 2020 webinar as presented. All in favor. Motion passed.

Commissioner Anderson made motion, seconded by Commissioner McIsaac, to approve the minutes of the December 15, 2020 web conference as presented. Commissioner Thorburn abstained. All in favor. Motion passed.

Commissioner Thorburn made motion, seconded by Commissioner Anderson, to approve the minutes of the December 18, 2020 web conference as presented. All in favor. Motion passed.

c. Committee Reports - This Section constitutes the formal minutes from each of the listed committee meetings:

Fish Committee

Commissioners in attendance: Carpenter, Baker, Anderson, McIsaac, Thorburn, Koontz, Smith

Commissioner McIsaac reported 57 participants at the Fish Committee meeting, including the two standing members and 5 other Commissioners, and the following activity. The Writing Work Group and the Fish Committee reached a recommendation that the Commission adopt language revisions for Policy 3619 for the purpose of conducting a SEPA assessment ([draft for SEPA review](#)) and a revised [draft schedule](#) for the balance of the hatchery review process. The full Commission will discuss the issue under the Hatchery Policy Review agenda item on Saturday. Staff provided an update on the Non-Native Game Fish and Fisheries Policy Blue Sheet. An updated schedule and information on their newly formed ad hoc committee and policy frame work can be found [here](#). Staff briefed on the Willapa Bay agenda item that will be presented on Saturday.

Wildlife Committee

Commissioners in attendance: Anderson, Baker, Thorburn, Linville, Koontz, Smith, McIsaac

Commissioner Thorburn reported that the committee discussed an ADA motion on hunting points for elk and deer. The committee asked staff for more information on the issue before bringing it to the Commission. Staff provided a brief on the TransAlta lands transaction out of Lewis county. This will be a part of the Lands 20/20 briefing at the February 25-27 Commission meeting.

E-Bikes are an emerging issue on public lands. There is interest in expanding their use and there is a lot more information that needs to be gathered to move forward. There was grazing briefing in preparation of this meeting's agenda item. There was a short update on dog aversion training. It isn't ready to come to the Commission yet. Staff has been working on cougar public safety and there will be a special wildlife committee meeting in the next few weeks for the committee to be provided a cougar safety team update.

2. Open Public Input

The following people provided input on various topics:

Bob McCoy – Pursuit Training	Gabrielle Gilbert – Pursuit Training
Harriet Allen – Leadership Concerns	Dr. Susan D Kane Ronning – Pursuit Training
Mark Smith – E-Bikes	Ashley Seaward – E-Bikes
Cheyenne Smith – E-Bikes	Aaron Rhodes – E-Bikes
Morgan Gamble – E-Bikes	Bruce Barnes – E-Bikes
Michael Henderson – Fishing	Jared Barranco – Spring Bear/ E-Bikes
David Linn – Pursuit Training	Kelley Balcomb-Bartok – SRKW
Aaron O'Leary – Coastal Steelhead	Toby Cooper – Pursuit Training
Lynn Mason – Pursuit Training	Jerry Anderson – Pursuit Training
Ria Kinney – Pursuit Training	Debra Chase – Pursuit Training
Roxane Auer – Pursuit Training	Greg Hoskins – Pursuit Training
Buddy Woodbury – Pursuit Training	Chris Bachman – Pursuit Training
Robert Sudar – Joint WA/OR Meeting	Steph Taylor – Pursuit Training
Marie Neumiller – Pursuit Training	Sophia Ressler – Pursuit Training
Mike Herz – Spring Bear	Amaroq Weiss – Pursuit Training
Tino Villaluz – Pursuit Training	Gregory Holmes – Spring Bear/Pursuit Training
Rachel Bjork – Grazing/Pursuit Training	

3. Director's Report

The Director provided oral highlights on the following:

- New commissioners welcome
- Legislative session update
- North of Falcon

- WAFWA
- District 1 Cultural Improvement Plan
- Region 2 regional director recruitment
- Skykomish River negotiations

BREAK

4. WDFW Managed Non-lethal Pursuit Training Program – Decision

Rebecca Bennett, Community Outreach Liaison and Captain Jeff Wickersham, WDFW Enforcement asked the Commission for a decision the proposed nonlethal pursuit pass program.

Commissioner Thorburn made motion, seconded by Commissioner Linville to adopt WAC 220-412-130 with the recommended adjustments as presented by staff.

The Commission discussed the motion.

Vice Chair Baker made motion, seconded by Commission Koontz to table the decision for two months.

The second motion was discussed, restated, and called to a vote.

Commissioners Baker, Smith and Koontz voted yes, Commissioners Anderson, Thorburn, Linville and McIsaac votes no. Motion failed with a 4/3 vote.

The Commissioners then went back to the original motion, restated the motion, and called for a vote.

Commissioners Baker, Smith and Koontz voted no. Commissioners Anderson, Thorburn, Linville and McIsaac voted yes. Motion passed with a 4/3 vote.

5. Grazing Program Policy and WACs – Briefing

Paul Dahmer, Wildlife Area Section Manager, Jeff Burnham, WDFW Range Ecologist, and Cynthia Wilkerson, Wildlife Program Lands Division Manager provided the Commission with an overview of our Grazing Program on WDFW Lands, including newly developed draft guidance and a recommendation related to a scheduled February Commission decision on proposed changes to the existing WAC and Commission grazing policy.

6. ESHB 1261 Mineral Prospecting – Briefing, Public Hearing

Margen Carlson, Habitat Director and Theresa Nation, Environmental Planner provided a briefing on the Hydraulic Code rule proposal to implement ESHB 1261.

The following people provided comments:

Kim McDonald

7. Blue Sheet: Pinniped Conservation and Management – Briefing

Nate Pamplin, Director of Budget and Government Affairs; Kessina Lee, Southwest Region Director; Dr. Scott Pearson, Senior Research Scientist, Wildlife Program; and Dr. Joe Anderson; Senior Research Scientist, Fish Program presented an update on pinniped conservation and management efforts in the Columbia River and Puget Sound.

LUNCH

8. Commercial Whale Watching Position Statement – Briefing, Decision

Nate Pamplin, Director of Budget and Government Affairs, and Dr. Julie Watson, Killer Whale Policy Lead provided the Commission with a revised draft statement on their December 18, 2020 decision on commercial whale watching regulations for discussion and possible adoption.

The Commission agreed to withdraw their interest in the position statement and to not take further action.

9. Lower Columbia Sturgeon Population Status and Management Annual Review – Briefing, Public Comment

Laura Heironimus CRMU Sturgeon/Smelt/Lamprey Unit Lead provided the Commission an annual review briefing on lower Columbia River sturgeon population status, as stipulated within Policy C-3001, and discuss plans for 2021 fisheries.

The following people provided comments:

Greg King Butch Smith Rachel Bjork

The Commission approved the next steps of working with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to establish a short retention fishery similar to 2017-2020, and to target a public announcement of the open dates by mid-March, 2021.

Recess

Saturday, January 30, 2021

10. Open Public Input

The following people provided input on various topics:

Ron Reed – Pursuit Training	Ravae O’Leary – Coastal Steelhead
Frank Urabeck – Pinniped	Bruce Barnes – NAPs, Chronic Wasting Disease
Tim Coleman – Grazing/Spring Bear	Jocelyn Leroux – Grazing
Greg King – Columbia River	Laura Welp – Grazing
David Linn – Conservation	Mike Herz – Hunting
Butch Smith – Fisheries Management	Johanna Vanderlee – Spring Bear/Coyote Hunting
David West – Spring Bear	Ron Garner – Predation/SKW
Rob Larsen – Pinniped	Rachel Bjork – Pinniped/Conservation
David Moskowitz – Columbia River Salmon	

11. Oregon Vesper Sparrow – Briefing, Public Hearing

Derek Stinson, Wildlife Biologist, Wildlife Diversity Division and Taylor Cotten, Conservation Assessment Section Manager briefed the Commission on the Periodic Status Review for the Oregon Vesper Sparrow.

The following people provided comments:

Elizabeth Rodrick

A decision on this item will occur at the February 12 Commission meeting.

12. Hatchery Policy (C-3619) Review – Briefing, Public Comment

Ron Warren, Director of Fish Policy asked the commission to consider revisions to the November 6, 2020 public review draft, take public comment and discuss planned next steps in the Policy C-3619 review process.

The following people provided comments:

Alan Chapman	Greg King	Ross Bockhurst
Lisa Olsen	David Moskowitz	Jamie Glasgow
Butch Smith	Conrad Gowell	Ron Garner

The Fish committee brought forth a recommendation that included a revised schedule and guidance on policy language from the Writing Workgroup.

Chair Carpenter asked that at the next Fish committee they discuss the financial implications of the policy change.

Commissioner McIsaac made a motion in writing, seconded by Commissioner Thorburn that “the Commission approve the draft of Policy 3619 revisions recommended by the Fish Committee for an assessment of environmental impacts under the State Environmental Policy Act process, as well as the recommended schedule for further steps in the Policy 3619 review process.”

The Commission discussed the motion.

Commissioner Koontz made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Baker, to amend the motion to strike out the language” as well as the recommended schedule for further steps in the Policy 3619 review process.”

The Commission discussed the implications of the amendment and Director Susewind spoke to the staff activity and Co-Manager meeting process that would be expected to occur during February and early March.

Commissioners Smith, Koontz, Baker, and Linville voted yes. Commissioners Thorburn, McIsaac and Anderson vote no. The motion amendment passed with a 4/3 vote.

The Commission then took up the amended motion for a final vote.

All in favor. The amended motion passed unanimously.

13. Willapa Bay Salmon Management Policy (C-3622) – Briefing, Public Comment

Ron Warren, Director of Fish Policy, Chad Herring, Anadromous Resource Policy Analyst and Marlene Wagner, Anadromous Resource Policy Analyst provided information on possible policy language changes and a draft schedule for the balance of the Policy C-3622 review process and asked for policy guidance on the February agenda item on Willapa Bay 2021 activities needed for North of Falcon negotiations. The Commission took public comment and provided guidance on next steps in the process.

The following people provided comments:

Andy Mitby	Ross Bockhurst	Greg King
Butch Smith	Jason Lake	Lance Gray
Greg McMillan	Ron Garner	Commissioner Lisa Olsen

Representative Brian Blake

The Commission responded to the staff request for guidance on matters for the February Commission agenda item in two areas. For hatchery programs, the staff was asked to bring back information and options on the 2020 egg take that would preserve flexibility for long term policy decision making later in 2021. For 2021 fishery management, the staff was asked to bring back information on the following: current in-bay fishery impact rates equivalent to the 14% and 20% established in 2015, given the Pacific Salmon Treaty changes since 2014; changing 2021 fishery impact limits to include both ocean and in-bay fisheries; the effects of species prioritization designations for sport and commercial fisheries; what would be needed for an incidental take of chinook and coho in Willapa Bay fisheries; and providing for in-bay test fisheries in 2021.

The Commission also approved the staff recommendation to delay providing policy language alternatives until after the 2021 North of Falcon process, so that a formal revision of Policy 3622 can be considered in the July - November time frame.

14. Baker Sockeye – Briefing, Public Comment

Edward Eleazer, Region Four Fish Program Manager and Mickey Agha, PhD, Statewide Pink, Chum, Sockeye Specialist briefed the Commission on the status of Baker Sockeye.

The following people provided comments:

Rob Larsen Frank Urabeck

15. Miscellaneous and Meeting Debrief

In reviewing the draft agenda items for the February 25-27 Commission meeting, Commissioner McIsaac recommended that an executive session be added and that either the Big Tent or Executive committee develop recommendations to address problems associated with the increase in public comment and its effect on Commission agendas. There were no objections to these ideas.

16. Executive Session

This item was moved from Friday to the end of the meeting Saturday due to time constraints. Pursuant to RCW 42.30.110, the Commission met in executive session. No action was taken, and the public was not permitted to attend.

Chair Carpenter adjourned the meeting at 3:39pm.

Nichole Kloepfer 2/26/2021

Nichole Kloepfer, Executive Assistant