

MEETING SUMMARY

September 23rd, 2019

Introduction – Kelly Cunningham and Raquel Crosier welcomed the group and Advisory Group Members introduced themselves. The following participants were present either in person or on the phone.

Participants

Robert Kratzer - Anglers Guide Service, Randy Lato - All Ways Fishing, Gray Struznik - OP Flyfishing, Patric Gaffney - Gaffney's Guide Service, Marc Bush - Twisted Waters Guide, Greg Kain - Kain's Flyfishing Adventures, Doug Saint-Denis - 365 Charters, Brett Rosson - Highliner Charters, Toby Wyatt - Reel Time Fishing, Jeff Brazda - Brazdas Fly Fishing, Blake Merwin - Gig Harbor Fly Shop, Steve Joyce - Reds Fly Shop. WDFW employees – Kelly Cunningham – Fish Program Director, Craig Burley – Fish Operations Division Manager, Chris Donely – Region 1 Fish Program Regional Fisheries Manager, James Losee – Region 6 Fish Program Fisheries Manager, Raquel Crosier – Fish Program Project Manager.

Charter

The group discussed the mission and wanted to add more explicit role of this group in consulting with the agency and helping educate agency staff on challenges facing the guide industry as well as opportunities for partnership. The group also discussed the advisory committees membership and suggested that we call out that this group is going to have mixed representation from both gear guides and fly guides.

Ground Rules

The group went through some ground rules prepared for other advisory groups and didn't have any additions at this time.

Meetings

Scheduling: The group requested that in-person meetings be scheduled for a full day, since most guides will have to cancel a client to be there they want to get as much content on the agenda as possible. They also requested that meetings be scheduled at least a month out and that we continue to do polls for the next few meetings while we figure out what days of the week work best for folks. Meetings locations will rotate to spread out the burden of travel and will reduce to quarterly starting in the new year.

Agendas: Meeting agendas will be developed by the group. Agendas won't include a formal public comment period but meetings will be open to the public with a value for transparency. If other guides want to attend they are more than welcome.

Logbooks

The group discussed some of the history and background on the new logbook reporting rule, walked through the new rule itself and then talked to the WDFW IT team about creation of a mobile application for reporting.

Feedback on the logbook app: The group provided advice on distinguishing between guided vs. non-guided trips, by requesting full data inputs for guided trips and just a check box for non-guided trips. Jeff Brazda suggested that there also be a check box or drop down to indicate guides working under an outfitter. The group raised concerns with site codes, especially for smaller water bodies that don't have a catch code. The group requested that the app be built to allow data inputs to be as quick and painless as possible, by making as many as possible auto-populating fields. Guides suggested that the app should allow guides to fill in most of the location data in the beginning of the day and the rest of the catch data at the end of the day. They also suggested that the app should summarize counts as you go, so you can see what you've input. The group also talked about enforceability and some of the challenges that other states have had that we want to learn from. The group volunteered to beta test the application to allow us to work out some of the kinks before it goes live January 1st 2020.

Work plan

The group discussed projects that they want to see this advisory group work on over the course of the first year. They recommended seven priority projects:

1. Logbooks – Helping with implementation, data collection, compliance, along with how we use the data to quantify contribution of guide industry and also potential impacts to resource, experience on the water, etc.
2. Accountability and professionalism – Developing higher industry standards to regulate the industry and improve customers experience as well as the reputation of the industry.
3. Improving work with co-managers and communication around fisheries outcomes – Improving agency communication on how forecasting works, how management decisions are made based on forecasts and developing a forum for guides to provide feedback on what they are seeing on the water.
4. Improving communication to guides – setting up a distribution list and developing a communication plan that outlines the types of topics to be shared with industry, the frequency and getting help from the advisory committee on content for those communications.
5. Building local relationships/ trust – connecting local agency staff to local guides to increase information sharing and improve management outcomes.
6. Education on key fisheries declines – provide more info on regulatory challenges facing certain fisheries, walk through case studies and develop a plan for improving communication on those fisheries to the broader angling community.
7. Opportunity - Look for ways to increase both harvest based and non-harvest focused angling opportunity wherever possible. Consider things like brood stock programs, catch and release fisheries, etc. and develop a few key projects to make progress on.

Summary

The group discussed the need to hold at least two more in-person meetings before the end of the year and reiterated that doodle polls would help scope dates and the earlier they have dates the better. Raquel committed to getting the group an updated charter, more information on the mobile app, dates and location for future meetings, as well as a draft work plan. Everyone joined in teasing Chris Donley and left happy.