



Minutes

Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission March 16-18, 2023 – Hybrid Wenatchee

Attendance

Commission

Barbara Baker, Chair
Molly Linville, Vice Chair
Lorna Smith
Tim Ragen
John Lehmkuhl
Jim Anderson
Melanie Rowland
Steve Parker
Woody Myers

Staff

Joe Panesko, AGO
Amy Windrope, Deputy
Director
Anis Aoude
Eric Gardner
Brock Hoenes
Karen Edwards
Mike Livingston
Trevor Hutton
Julia Smith
James Brown
Joey McCanna
Kyla West
Captain Mike Sprecher

Guests

Bill Sharp
Phil Rigdon
Z Zubrick
Jayson Morris
Greg Meloy

Commission Staff

Nichole Kloepfer

Friday, March 17, 2023

1. Call to Order

a. Commissioners' Discussion

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

New Commissioners Myers and Parker introduced themselves.

Chair Baker made new committee assignments. They can be found on the [Commission website](#).

Commissioners shared their stories about Spring and upcoming events of interest.

b. Meeting Minute Approval

The Commission considered approval of the January 26-28, 2023, webinar meeting minutes, and February 17, 2023, web conference meeting minutes.

Commissioner Ragen made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Anderson, to approve the minutes from the January 26-28, 2023, webinar, as presented. All in favor. Motion passes.

Commissioner Ragen made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Anderson, to approve the minutes from the February 17, 2023, web conference as presented. All in favor. Motion passes.

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

Wildlife Committee

Committee members in attendance: Anderson, Smith, Rowland

Commissioner Smith reported that the committee discussed the [draft overarching Game Management Plan outline](#) and the [draft Game Management Plan Authority and Guiding Principles](#). Commissioner Ragen submitted [topics](#) for consideration.

Habitat Committee

Committee members in attendance: Linville, Smith, Lehmkuhl, Ragen

Vice Chair Linville reported that the staff provided an agency [overview of habitat protection and restoration concepts](#) in Washington.

Big Tent Committee

Committee members in attendance: Baker, Lehmkuhl

Chair Baker reported the committee discussed the [draft Conservation Policy](#) and dialogued about the [proposed draft](#) on the use of “best available science” to inform decision-critical questions through Commission decision making.

Staff will provide a copy edit of the draft Conservation Policy and work with the Communications and Public Engagement team on broad public distribution for feedback. Both the draft Conservation Policy and best available science conversation will continue at the April committee meeting.

Fish Committee

Committee members in attendance: Ragen, Linville, Anderson

Commissioner Anderson reported that the committee was provided a [Co-Manager Hatchery Policy update](#). Comments received on the policy as of March 1, 2023 can be viewed [here](#). Staff provided a briefing on the [North Pacific Fishery Management Council](#). Staff and committee discussed past Commission fish policies and discussed next steps. Staff placed an initial focus on the [Forage Fish Policy](#). Commissioner Anderson reviewed the agenda items for the April committee meeting.

2. Open Public Input

The following people provided input on various topics:

Josh Rosenau – cougar management	Sam Bruegger – welcome new commissioners
Mike Herz – wildlife/ecosystem management	Doug Boze – wildlife/ecosystem management
Mark LaRiviere – Case Inlet	Roxane Auer – cougar management
Dan Czarnecki – ecosystem management	Pat Arnold – Western Grey Squirrel
Gary Strassburg – ecosystem management	Susan Kane- Ronning – wolf conservation
David Linn – ecosystem management	David Moskowitz – Columbia River steelhead

3. Deputy Director and Regional Director’s Report

The deputy director reported on various meetings, Government to Government with Chehalis, Cowlitz, and Quinault tribes, and a legislative update. Brock Hoenes, Director for Region 2, provided a report on area activities.

Break

4. Land Transactions - Briefing, Public Comment and Decision

Karen Edwards, Real Estate Manager asked the Commission for a decision on three land transaction recommendations by the Department for the enhancement of conservation and public recreation opportunities, and hatchery operations.

No comment was provided on this item.

Commissioner Anderson made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Smith, to approve the land transactions as presented by staff. All in favor. Motion passes.

5. Reardon FFA Agriculture Group - Washington State Predator Management Presentation (Working Lunch)

6. Advisory Committee for Americans with Disabilities Report to the Commission

ADA Advisory Committee members provided a report to the Commission on the work they are doing within their regions.

Staff will work with Larry Delgado on finding regional leads and connecting on more volunteers to help do the work. Nate Pamplin will help further the policy issues the committee expressed, and the committee will come back to the Commission in the fall. A commissioner liaison will be identified to serve on the committee. The committee chair will participate in regional interviews.

7. Klickitat Hatchery Transfer – Briefing

Mike Livingston Region 3 Director, Trevor Hutton, Region 3 Fish Program Manager, Bill Sharp, Yakima-Klickitat Fisheries Project (YKFP) Klickitat River Coordinator Yakama Nation, and Phil Rigdon, Superintendent of Natural Resources Yakama Nation briefed the Commission on the proposed transfer of the Klickitat Hatchery property and facility to the Yakama Nation, who has been operating the facility under lease from the department since 2006.

8. Game Management Plan Update

The Commission continued to discuss aspects of the Game Management Plan and agreed on the overarching outline to allow staff to continue with plan development.

Recess

Saturday, March 18, 2023

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

9. Open Public Input

The following people provided input on various topics:

Sam Bruegger – Conservation Policy	Lynn Okita – wolf management
Mike Herz – Spring bear	Josh Caple – Spring bear
Rachel Haymon – cougar management	Lynn Mason – Klickitat cougar management
Gabrielle Gilbert – cougar management	Ryan Garrett – Ground Squirrel PSR
Gary Strassburg – Spring bear	Brant MacDuff – conservation practices
Amaroq Weiss – wolf management	Ann Prezyna – FWC procedure
Ben Rusch – Spring bear	Rachel Bjork – ecosystem management
Tim Coleman – predator management	Chris Carter – predator management
Emma Helverson – salmon policy	Will Christison – Spring bear
Hannah Thompson-Gardner – Conservation Policy	
Robert Sudar- Columbia River buybacks	
Mandy Carlstrom – North American Wildlife Model	

BREAK

10. Executive Session

Pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i), the Commission met in executive session to discuss with legal counsel representing the agency litigation or potential litigation to which the agency is,

or is likely to become, a party. No action was taken in executive session, and the public was not permitted to attend.

11. Petitions: Spring Bear and Black Bear Timber Damage – Briefing, Decision

Anis Aoude, Big Game Manager briefed the Commission and asked for a decision on three petitions that request the Commission to:

- “immediately begin Rule Making for the 2024 and future year(s) Spring Black Bear Management Hunts”.
- “immediately begin Rule Making for the 2023 Spring Black Bear Hunting on Public Lands using the same science, metrics, benchmarks and thresholds used in the Spring Black Bear Timber Damage Program (aka Spring Black Bear Hunts on Private Land)”
- “immediately begin Rule Making for the 2023 Spring Black Bear Hunts for the protection Ungulate Neonates from Black Bear Predation, Spring Black Bear Timber Damage on Public Lands and the protection of Humans, Pets and Property from Black Bear Conflict”.

Commissioner Ragen made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Lehmkuhl, to deny the petitions as presented by staff. All in favor. Motion passes.

12. Blue Sheet: Wolf Management Workshop Part 1 – Briefing

Julia Smith, Wolf Policy Lead; James Brown, Wildlife Conflict Section Manager; Joey McCanna, Region 1 Wildlife Conflict Supervisor; Kyla West, Human-Wildlife Conflict Analyst; and Captain Mike Sprecher, WDFW Police provided the Commission with a briefing on range riding coordination and funding.

LUNCH/BREAK

13. Blue Sheet: Wolf Management Workshop Part 2 – Briefing

Julia Smith, Wolf Policy Lead; James Brown, Wildlife Conflict Section Manager; Joey McCanna, Region 1 Wildlife Conflict Supervisor; Kyla West, Human-Wildlife Conflict Analyst; and Captain Mike Sprecher, WDFW Police provided the Commission a briefing on the Department’s other non-lethal tools, adaptive management, and conflicts/poaching in 2021.

14. Meeting Debrief and Future Meeting Planning

Commissioner Thorburn gave her thanks and closing comments as an outgoing commissioner. Other commissioners gave their thanks for her time on the Commission.

Commissioner Lehmkuhl presented a [blue sheet](#) for a briefing on the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation (NAMWC). The Commission approved the blue sheet unanimously.

Commissioner Anderson asked for more information on the Case Inlet Hatchery issue that was discussed during open public input. Staff will circulate an email to the Commission with details on the issue.

The Commission agreed to add a Skagit Elk briefing and a 90-minute Executive Session to the April agenda.

Chair Baker adjourned the meeting at 3:30 p.m.

Nichole Kloepfer 4/7/2023
Nichole Kloepfer, Executive Assistant