



Minutes

Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission September 28-30, 2023 – Hybrid Yakima

Attendance

Commission

Barbara Baker, Chair
Lorna Smith
Tim Ragen
John Lehmkuhl
Jim Anderson
Melanie Rowland
Steve Parker

Staff

Kelly Susewind, Director
Amy Windrope, Deputy Director
Joe Panesko, AGO
Mike Livingston
Tom McBride
Kelly Cunningham
Tami Lininger
Kimmy Jarvela
Sam Montgomery

Guests

Joy Juelson
Melanie del Rosario
Hilary Wilkinson

Thursday, September 28, 2023

The Commission held a retreat with consultants from Triangle Associates. The topics that were focused on and discussed were commission processes, procedures, and Commissioner roles.

Friday, September 29, 2023

The Commission continued with their retreat until the regular meeting started at 1:00 pm.

1. Call to Order

a. Commissioners' Discussion

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

Commissioner Rowland attended a meeting in The Barn in Winthrop put on by several staff regarding a proposal to close some portions of the Methow Wildlife Area for deer winter range. Kudos to staff for a great presentation and interaction with the public. Great example of how well the department presents very difficult situations.

b. Meeting Minute Approval

- The Commission considered approval of the August 10-12, 2023, August 18, 2023 and September 8, 2023 meeting minutes.

Commissioner Smith made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Ragen, to approve the minutes from the August 10-12, 2023, hybrid meeting, as presented. All in favor. Motion passes.

Commissioner Ragen made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Smith, to approve the minutes from the August 18, 2023, web conference, as presented. All in favor. Motion passes.

Commissioner Ragen made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Smith, to approve the minutes from the September 8, 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:

Fish Committee

Committee members in attendance: Anderson, Linville, Anderson, Parker
Staff provided a briefing on the Coastal Dungeness Crab and Puget Sound Shellfish Rulemaking. They discussed the background, actions to date, timelines, stakeholder comments and next steps. The committee also discussed the North of Falcon season planning. The North of Falcon Policy will need to be revised as needed by the end of the year. The discussed the next several months and timing of topics coming forward.

Executive Committee

Committee members in attendance: Baker, Linville, Anderson

The committee discussed with staff the agenda for the upcoming retreat, changes needed to the Rules of Procedure document, delegation to the Director of the some or all of the 3-year season setting items, and the need for a better understanding of the differences between state and tribal policies.

2. Director and Regional Director's Report

The director reported on various meetings, and agency activities, and provided a budget and legislative update. Mike Livingston, Director for Region 3, provided a report on area activities.

3. Land Transactions - Briefing, Public Comment and Decision

Karen Edwards, Real Estate Manager asked the Commission for a decision on a land transaction in the Chester Butte Unit on the Sagebrush Flat Wildlife Area in Region 2.

There was no comment provided on this item.

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

4. Willapa Bay Salmon Management Draft Policy Review – Decision

Staff requested that the Commission adopt revisions to the Willapa Bay Salmon Management Policy (C-3622) that directs salmon fishery management within Willapa Bay.

Commissioner Anderson made a motion seconded by Commissioner Ragen to approve the policy as presented by staff. All in favor. Motion passes.

5. Coastal Crab and Puget Sound Shellfish Rulemaking – Briefing, Public Hearing

Staff briefed the Commission and held a public hearing on rule proposals for coastal crab and Puget Sound shellfish.

Larry Thevik provided comments on the item.

The Commission briefly reviewed the tentative meeting dates for 2024.

The Chair recessed the meeting at 4:31 pm

Saturday, September 30, 2023

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

6. Open Public Input

The following people provided input on various topics:

Seann Mumford - hunting	Joe Sheeran – wolves
Alex Baier – Lands, relationships	Nathan Osborn – Timber damage, wolves, CP
Claire Davis – Retreat, panels, comments	Adam Roll – hunting
Kenneth Zontek - wolves	John Rosapepe – wolves
Josh Rosenau – wolf rule	Kari Hirschberger – Cons. Pol, hunting
Ryan Whittaker - hunting	Kelsey Ross – hunting
Dane Czarnecki – Cons. pol, hunting	Marie Neumiller – Cons. pol
Josh Caple – CWD survey	Patricia Arnold – Gray squirrel
Ryan Garrett – FWC comments	Gary Strassburg – Cons. pol
Douglas Boze - hunting	Nick Larson – hunting
Mike Herz – CWD survey	Brian Leets – hunting
Mara Williams - hunting	Eric Lagally – wolf rule
Bryan Irwin – gillnets	Ann Prezyrna – wolf rule
Rachel Bjork – wolf rule	Kirby Wendt – hunting
Heath Heikkila – WB pol & CR buyback	Lon Ottosen – wolf rule
David Linn – wolf rule	Julia Zelman – wolf rule
Nello Picinich – CR buyback	Chris Hopfauf – hunting
Clarence Rushing – Con. Pol, BBTB	Benjamin Rusch – hunting

Commissioner requests after public input included:

- Commissioner Anderson requested additional information on the Chronic Wasting Disease survey.
- Commissioner Ragen encouraged the public to invite him to meetings.

7. Meeting Debrief and Future Meeting Planning

The following actions were captured from the meeting:

- Chair Baker outlined the agenda setting process.
- Commission Smith went over what was on the agenda for the Wildlife Committee meeting on October 9. She also asked about the upcoming field trip in the Habitat Committee meeting regarding Connectivity.
- Commissioner Anderson reviewed the items on the agendas for the Fish Committee for the remainder of 2023.
- There was discussion of the following topics for the Big Tent Committee; Conservation Policy and Best Available Science.
- Commissioner Lehmkuhl shared information on a meeting he and Commissioners Linville, Ragen and Parker had with the tribes and sportfishers on September 21.
- Commissioner Ragen shared his thoughts on how the retreat went.

Committee actions were captured during call to order, committee report outs, and are listed above.

Chair Baker adjourned the meeting at 11:28 am.