

**Whittier Fish and Game Advisory Committee  
Meeting minutes of March 9, 2013**

The meeting was held at the Anchor Inn and called to order at 1:15 pm by Chairman Jon Van Hyning

Members present were: Jon Van Hyning, Brad Von Wichman, Milt Stevens, Mike Durtchi, Gordon Scott, Steve Aberle and alternate Jim Norris.

Members absent and excused: Dave Goldstein, Ric Vrsalovic, Dave Pinguoch

Public present: Dave Walker, John Norris

ADF&G Staff present: Dan Bosch

Chairman Van Hyning read the minutes of the November 17, 2012 meeting and they were approved by unanimous consent.

Jon explained that the main purpose of the meeting today was to provide comments for upcoming BOF and BOG meetings. Conflicts in scheduling this meeting has put it past the written comment deadline for both meetings but Dave Pinguoch will be at the BOG meeting and can deliver our comments and any relevant comments about BOF proposals will be submitted as RC's.

Jon mentioned that he had talked to Dave Crowley, ADF&G Cordova, recently and Dave said our AC might want to look at and comment on BOG proposal #129. The proposal is from the Department and they are looking for support for it. The proposal seeks an automatic trigger for an antlerless moose hunt in game units 6C and 6A if a desired population is reached without having to seek approval each year. It was that the Cordova AC is strongly opposed to this proposal. After some discussion there was unanimous agreement that we did not have enough information to make an informed decision and we elected not to take up the proposal.

**Board of Game proposal comment**

Gordon Scott moved to open BOG **proposal #130** for discussion. Steve Aberle 2<sup>nd</sup>. The proposal is by Whittier AC member Dave Pinguoch and addresses black bear hunting in BOG Unit 6D, Prince William Sound. The proposal would allow hunters to harvest one boar every year but if a sow is harvested a hunter is disallowed to harvest a bear of either sex in the game unit the following year. Black bear harvests in recent years are exceeding (sometimes by a large margin) the desirable harvest of 350 bears yearly.

Discussion went back and forth about whether the proposal would be effective. It was noted that it is beyond many hunter ability to tell the sex of a bear before they shoot it.

Steve Aberle read the ADF&G Department comments and they were discussed. The Department has issued 'No Recommendation' for this proposal. Gordon Scott says he feels that Dave's proposal is aimed at slowing the harvest rate in the Sound and that that



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is a good thing. Many bear hunters in the Sound return every year so this proposal could be an effective tool. Gordon felt he could support a proposal that limited hunters to one bear of either sex every other year. **Question is called and the vote is 7-0 In Favor of supporting #130.**

Talk moved to a preliminary discussion for forming proposals for the 2014 Shellfish meetings. Gordon feels that the statistical area doesn't match very well with the three alternate commercial fishing areas. This past season commercial shrimpers did not catch their quota in the southern commercial harvest area but sport harvesters caught more than their quota. In past years commercial harvesters have taken up to 60% of shrimp in several of the statistical areas. A year ago the BOF passed their own proposal that not more than 25% of the catch in any one stat area can be from commercial harvest. Gordon wants to see this rescinded. The Board wanted to protect the resource but Gordon says some stat area's test fishing results have improved after a commercial harvest the year before.

**Board of Fisheries proposal comment**

Gordon Scott moved to put BOF **Proposal #243** on the table for discussion. Steve Aberle 2<sup>nd</sup>. The proposal is BOF generated and includes listing of ten species of fish as 'forage fish'. Pacific herring is included in this list. Mike Durtschi feels that despite language in the proposal could open the door to further restrict commercial herring fisheries. Dan Bosch of the Department is not sure what this proposal does. Department comments say that this will not affect commercial harvest of pacific herring but from discussion doubts linger. **Question is called and vote is 7-0 to Oppose this proposal.**

Other concerns discussed: Personal Use tanner crab fishery in PWS. Any efforts to open the fishery up more? Jim Norris expresses concern about locals fishing halibut every weekend of the summer and overharvesting the resource. Dan Bosch says that is a concern to be addressed by the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council. Dan says he can make inquiries about how to address the NPFMC about this issue.

Meeting is adjourned at 2:50 pm