



Klawock AC Meeting December 13, 2022

Call to Order: 6:09pm

Roll Call:

Original members present before elections: 3

Total Members after election: 14

Number needed for a quorum: 7

Klawock AC Members	Officer	Present	Absent	Expiration
Dennis Nickerson	Chair		x	June 2024
Kurt Whitehead	Vice Chair	x		June 2025
Brenda Leask	Secretary		x	June 2025
Nick Nickerson		x		June 2024
Tylo Kennedy		x		June 2023
Mike Kennedy Sr.			x	June 2023
Tom Leask			x	June 2023
Irving Langmaid			x	June 2025
Al Edsall		x		June 2023
Mark Tollfedt		x		June 2024
John Priddy		x		June 2024
Katie Rooks		x		June 2025
Roby Medina		x		June 2025
Madison Stumpf		x		June 2024

ADFG Staff present:

Tessa Hasbrouck Unit 2 Asst. Area Biologist (online), Ross Dorendorf Unit 2 Area Biologist (online), Henry Lesia Boards Support (online). Craig Schwanke sport fish biologist.

Guests present:

Al Edsall, Mark Tollfedt, John Priddy, Roby Medina, Madison Stumpf, Katie Rooks(online), Miranda Hamme(online)

Approval of Agenda:

Moved and seconded to approve the agenda for 12.13.2022

Vote:

Unanimously approved

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:

Moved and seconded to adopt the meeting minutes from 12.15.2021

Unanimously approved



Reports:

Chair: None

ADFG:

Craig Schwanke gave a report on the fish proposals that passed at the last BOF meetings in March.

Prop 82: Modifies the provisions in the SE AK King Salmon Management Plan. Specifically, changes to resident and non-resident bag limits based on the SE AK winter troll fishery CPUE and adds provision that any unused balance of the allocation percentage of the annual harvest ceiling established by the Pacific Salmon Commission be allocated to the troll fishery. Annual limits are changed for nonresidents according to date and creates requirement of a harvest record as specified in 5AAC75.006. Area specific provisions for bag and possession limits are eliminated and limits now apply to the entirety of Southeast. A provision is added for resident priority for closures or restrictions.
Implemented by EO June 20,2022.

Prop 134: Adds language stating that a gill net or beach seine used for subsistence fishing may not block more than one-half the width of any bay, river, creek or stream.
Implemented Jan. 1, 2023

Prop 172: Changes the commercial pot shrimp fishing season from Oct. through Feb. to May through July.
Implemented May 15, 2023.

Prop 200: Close commercial fishing for Dungeness crab in the surrounding waters of the community of Klawock.
Prop 200: Closes sport fishing for Dungeness crab in the surrounding waters of the community of Klawock.
Implemented Jan. 1, 2023.

Prop 204: Closes sport fishing for Dungeness crab in the surrounding waters of the community of Coffman Cove.
Implemented Jan. 1, 2023.

Prop 206: Closes the Dungeness crab sport fishery in the vicinity of Whale Pass.
Implemented Jan. 1, 2023.

Prop 207: Closes commercial fishing for Dungeness crab in the surrounding waters of Whale Pass.
Implemented Jan. 1, 2023.

Prop 210: Closes commercial fishing for Dungeness crab in the surrounding waters of Hydaburg.
Implemented Jan. 1, 2023.

Prop 226: Prohibits retention of yelloweye, while allowing residents to harvest 1 Demersal Shelf Rockfish. Residents and nonresidents can harvest 1 slope rockfish.
Implemented by EO, April 14, 2022.

Other: None

Public Comments:

Roby Medina: Thanked the AC for passing the Klawock crab proposal that restricts crabbing in front of Klawock to locals only.

Nick Nickerson: Spoke with the mayor of Craig, AK about a recent lawsuit filed against the Alaska Trollers Association and the Alaska Longliners Association by a Washington based environmental group claiming the above organizations are taking too many fish and that killer whales/orcas are suffering as a result.

Kurt Whitehead: Will distribute the lawsuit info to the group after the meeting.

Old Business: None



New Business:

Elections:

Moved and seconded to hold elections.

Unanimous vote Yes.

Expired seats: Kurt Whitehead, Brenda Leask & Irving Langmaid's seats have all expired. They are all running for reelection unopposed.

Kurt Whitehead: I spoke with Irving and he would like to run again.

Henry Leasia: Are you nominating Irving?

Kurt: Yes

Nick Nickerson: Motion to nominate Irving Langmaid.

Henry Leasia: You don't need to vote for every individual separately and count votes if they are all unopposed and there is room on the AC. All members present that are willing to run can serve and will be unopposed.

Brenda, Kurt and Irving are all nominated, unopposed and reelected unanimously.

Other nominations:

Mark Tollfedt: Long time professional in the hatchery/fisheries enhancement industry for over 40 years. Local resident, subsistence user and angler that wants to serve on the AC.

Roby Medina: Born and raised on POW, resident of Klawock, local subsistence user, fishing, hunting, trapping background, is a charter guide and wants to serve on the AC.

Madison Stumpf: Charter guide as well, just graduated from college and wants to serve on the AC.

Katie Rooks: Local resident, subsistence user and charter guide that used to work for the FS for 15 yrs. Subsistence is her main interest. Wants to serve on the AC.

John Priddy: Local resident, subsistence user who traps, hunts, fishes and wants to serve on the AC.

Al Edsall: Local resident, subsistence user, angler, hunter and has a background in the AK fisheries enhancement/hatchery industry for decades.

Al Edsall, Mark Tollfedt, John Priddy, Roby Medina, Madison Stumpf and Katie Rooks were all nominated to run in elections on this AC.

Irving Langmaid, Brenda Leask, Kurt Whitehead, Katie Rooks, Roby Medina, Madison Stumpf, Mark Tollfedt, John Priddy & Al Edsall are all re-elected and/or elected to the Klawock AC.

All members are running unopposed and are approved by unanimous consent.

Kurt Whitehead: Gave background info why he drafted the wolf letter and shared his plan to release it.

Kurt Whitehead: Read wolf letter:

1st Wolf Letter as supplied to AC via email and hardcopy at the meeting:

The Wolves of Southeast Alaska should NOT be listed under the Endangered Species Act

On July 15, 2020, the Center for Biological Diversity, Alaska Rainforest Defenders and Defenders of Wildlife petitioned the Secretary of Interior/US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFW) to list the Alexander Archipelago Wolf in Southeast Alaska as Threatened or Endangered Under the U.S. Endangered Species Act. Petitioners also requested that critical habitat be designated for the wolves in SE Alaska concurrently with the species being listed. The USFW has jurisdiction over this petition. The 111 page document can be found online at www.biologicaldiversity.org and www.doi.gov. The thorough response from the State of Alaska/Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) has been filed but is not public info yet. USFW will make their decision between July and September of 2023.

If the wolf is listed under the Endangered Species Act, the Federal Government will takeover management from the state. This will end the legal taking of wolves and will severely curtail the hunting of deer, the preferred food for the wolves. There will be far reaching negative impacts on the residents of Prince of Wales Island (POW). This petition



threatens our way of life, our ability to secure food, our hunting activities and lifestyle, the economic development on the island and negatively affects the shared culture of our people.

The wolf population on POW dramatically increased after 2012 due to the change in wolf management by ADFG which was driven by the second petition to list the wolves filed in 2011. The first petition to list the wolves was in 1993 and now the third petition was filed in 2020. This continual black cloud petitioning process hanging over our island has negatively affected every resident of POW.

POW is home to 3500 residents that reside in 12 different communities ranging in size from 35 in Point Baker to over 1000 in Craig. POW is the third largest island in the US. The residents rely largely on a subsistence way of life.

Nearly half of the residents of POW are Alaska Natives, generally of Haida, Tlingit or Tsimshian heritage. Subsistence hunting, fishing and gathering are a very important part of their indigenous identity. Beyond the Native population, most of the other residents on the island practice subsistence activities as well, in order to feed themselves and their families. Without being able to obtain food that nature gives us, many could not afford to live here.

Deer hunting is vitally important to all Southeast Alaska residents and our subsistence lifestyle. We have relied on Sitka black-tailed deer for sustenance for thousands of years. The deer, salmon, crabs, shrimp and clams are basic elements of life on this remote island. Our family and friend relationships, mental and physical health and economic well-being all benefit from deer hunting. Our freezers are fuller and our lives are enriched when we can harvest deer. It does not matter ones heritage on the island, deer are a very important protein.

Groceries are expensive on the island. They are shipped up on a barge from Seattle to Ketchikan, then put on another barge to Thorne Bay where they are distributed by truck to the various stores. The cost to move the food is currently \$0.43/lb and \$0.82/lb if chilled or frozen. Currently, a gallon of milk is \$6.49, a dozen eggs are \$5.19 and ground beef is \$5.99/lb. On top of the high cost of food, gas is expensive, currently \$5.87/gallon and \$6.23/gallon for diesel. The bottom line is that food and fuel costs are a larger percentage of the family budget than in most places around the country.

POW has four grocery stores and the residents of the northern end of the island have to travel long distances over difficult roads to reach the grocery stores or fuel. Those in Coffman Cove drive over 50 miles to the store. Those in Whale Pass drive over 60 miles and it takes over two hours on dry roads. Those in Port Protection or Point Baker are on the road for over four hours one way. In the winter, some of the communities are cut off from the road system.

Other Southeast Alaska communities of Ketchikan, Wrangell and Petersburg travel to POW to deer hunt but since 2017, fewer and fewer off island hunters are coming to POW because the deer population has very obviously declined in the past ten years. Hunters have had to spend more time trying to harvest a deer.

At the same time, some of the subsistence foods that come from the sea are no longer available to users because of uncontrolled sea otters. Users without larger boats are generally unable to safely get to deeper waters to harvest Dungeness crabs because of depredation by sea otters in shallower waters. Sea urchins are almost gone in shallower water and clams are also heavily impacted.

POW has three big game animals: black bear, Sitka black-tailed deer and wolf. It is the only area in the state with just one good eating big game animal. POW does not have caribou, moose, elk, sheep, bison, mountain goat, or muskox.

Everyone agrees that wolves are an important part of POW and we enjoy seeing them, hearing them or just knowing that they exist here. Locals have documented wolves swimming between POW and Zarembo Island and almost every other island in and around POW. Wolves are very resilient and like any other population of animals, reasonable population management is important so that they may still be taken for their traditional uses, but also maintain their place in the food chain. ADFG has been very cautious and conservative in management of the wolves and the population has responded by growing to levels many see as too high. Certainly they are not in need of further protection.

Trying to accurately assess the population of wolves in a temperate rainforest has always been difficult. Recent harvests of wolves have shown that the past estimates were much lower than the numbers actually present. As



ADFG continues to refine the methodologies used to estimate populations and balance the populations with carrying capacity, the wolf population will continue to remain viable and healthy.

ADFG has provided thorough and exhaustive data and science proving the Alexander Archipelago Wolf should NOT be listed under the ESA.

The following organizations, businesses and people agree that the Alexander Archipelago Wolf should NOT be listed under the ESA.

Kurt Whitehead & Trina Nation Treasure Hunter Lodge Klawock, AK	Alaska Outdoor Council Anchorage, AK	Clinton Cook Sr. Tribal President Craig Tribal Association Craig, AK	Scott Van Valin Heidi Van Valin Island Air Express El Capitan Lodge
David & Cynthia Egelston Alaska Rainforest Adventures Thorne Bay, AK	Josh & Chace Anderson Fireweed Lodge Klawock, AK	David and Jen Creighton Shelter Cove Lodge Rainforest Auto Rentals Craig, AK	Chuck & Jeanette Haydu Kingfisher Lodge & Charters Craig, AK
DJ & Anne Hansen DJ's Alaska Adventure Rentals Klawock, AK	Ray & Elizabeth Douville F/V Faith Faith Fisheries Craig, AK	Ellen Hannan & Brian Castle F/V Renegade Craig, AK	Kirk & Katie Agnitsch Sure Strike Lodge Craig, AK
Mark & Beth Farrar Eagles Wings Wilderness Lodge Klawock, AK	James Heppe Jr. Heppe & Sons Construction Klawock, AK	Grace Heppe Heppe's Indoor Edition Klawock, AK	Rosey & Lisa Roseland The Salt Shack Thorne Bay, Alaska
Sam & Michelle Peters Slammin' Sam's Charters POW Electric & Repair Klawock, AK	Tim O'Conner F/V Virginia Rose Craig, AK	LeRoy & Tanya Johns F/V Chelsea Dawn Klawock, AK	Spencer & Hannah Richter F/V Resolution Craig, AK
Vaughn & Carrie Skinna F/V Annalyn Klawock, AK	Phillip & Danel Winrod F/V Aurie G Thorne Bay, AK	Shawn & Jill Kato-Yates F/V Nauti Lady Klawock, AK	Jason Clowar/Luther Jenson Adventure AK Southeast Thorne Bay, AK
Brad McMillan TTP Director Klawock Cooperative Assoc. Klawock, AK	Rob & Val Steward Changing Tides Inn Klawock, AK	Sean Tomkinson Passages Alaska Adventure Therapy Klawock, AK	Don & Teresa Busse Trophy Inn Klawock, AK
Ann Williams Klawock, AK	Jon & Debbie Winrod Webster Point, AK	Enoch & Elizabeth Winrod Ketchikan, AK	Sam Sawyer Thorne Bay, AK
Brian Ringeisen Anglers-Adventures Ketchikan, AK	Mike & Jan Bush B-3 Contractors Inc. Klawock, AK	John & Sheri Wylie Klawock, AK	David & Gail Winrod Hydaburg, AK
Chris Guggenbickler Wrangell, AK	Nichole Pope Naukati, AK	Kyle Berg & Courtney Nase Ketchikan, AK	Sharon Toman Whale Pass, AK
Clay Bezenek Ketchikan, AK	Matt & Pam Beck Whale Pass, AK		

Moved and seconded to support the wolf letter.



Discussion:

Katie Rooks: We should change some of the wording in the letter. I am opposed to the listing and if it happens it carries a lot of implications to our island and Southeast AK but I recommend we be careful about what is in the letter and how we go about opposing the petition. There are habitat issues, science issues, management issues etc. and the implication of your letter is that the wolf is entirely to blame for the lack of deer. We can get to the same conclusion but need to retool the letter to reflect a broader viewpoint.

Kurt Whitehead: Specifically, what parts of the letter do you disagree with?

Katie Rooks: Is willing to write a stronger argument to support our conclusion of opposing the ESA listing.

John Priddy: There's not a general consensus on why the deer herd is down but there is no logging on the islands of Fernando, Lulu, Noyes and Baker and believes the primary driver for the deer herd is wolves. There are other things affecting the deer but not on those islands that haven't been logged in decades. Believes the primary reason our deer population is low is because of the wolf. There has been a big jump in the predator population since 2012. Doesn't agree with calling them Alexander Archipelago wolves, they are Canadian wolves that migrated out to the POW islands. Gave more background on wolf management the past many years and is convinced the wolf is the main driver of the deer population.

Madison Stumpf: Wolves are the main problem. I've personally been seeing more wolves on our island and am very concerned that our subsistence lifestyle is suffering as a result of the wolves.

Kurt Whitehead: Do any of you have any specific suggestions on improving the letter? Wolves eat deer 365 days a year and are the major driver of the deer population. I'm firmly convinced that wolves are the biggest impact to our deer. Yes, we have stem exclusion.

Katie Rooks: Tens of thousands of acres are in stem exclusion. My suggestion is that we don't disagree but I don't think we should just use wolves as the culprit.

Nick Nickerson: I think a resolution would strengthen our argument. Lets strengthen our argument, then turn it into a properly worded resolution. Then we can submit it to the state and the feds. Petersburg is currently having the same issues with wolves that we are having. Wolves are killing dogs inside the Petersburg city limits. They are trying to list the wolves based on the opinion of one ex-ADFG biologist who is using his outdated data collected years ago. We need to continue gathering data and strengthen our argument. The info in the letter is spot on and if we improve it we can present it to the city council and the tribal council. I'm willing to put it in front of the city council and get their input.

Kurt Whitehead: If we can improve the letter asap and submit the letter it is a good plan.

Nick Nickerson: If we can do it after Christmas, then we can submit it to the tribal council.

Kurt Whitehead: We should leave the letter discussion until the end of the meeting and concentrate on the proposals.

Agreed to continue working on the wolf letter at the next meeting.

Proposals:

Prop 45-Raise the population objective from 150-200 to 250-350 wolves in Unit 2 and raise the threshold for closing the season from 100 to 200 wolves.

Tessa Hasbrouck: Neutral on changing the pop objective and opposed to changing the minimum threshold. Evidence suggests that population estimates are likely to be biased low, indicating that wolf management has been too conservative in years past. Agree that the objective itself should be reviewed but we are opposed to changing it right now. It is possible that the objective is to low.

Moved and seconded to Oppose.

Discussion:

Kurt Whitehead: Recapped the other POW AC's views and the opinions including Mike Douville who is likely the most knowledgeable wolf expert on POW as well as Ross Dorendorf. These props were all written by one ex ADFG biologist using outdated data.

Vote:

Majority 8-1 to support (Oppose the prop). Mark Tollfeldt votes in support.

Henry Lesia: If you can make the proposal to support the prop every time that makes it clear in the record exactly what you are saying. Asks that we always support the prop.



Kurt Whitehead: We did that last year on the other AC's but it was very confusing to many. But we will do it your way.

Nick Nickerson: Do you want me to chair?

Kurt Whitehead: Yes! Please! Thank you!

Prop 46-Lengthen the hunting season for wolves in Unit 2 to open Sept. 1. This would align the state seasons with the federal seasons.

Moved and seconded to Support.

Discussion:

John Priddy: This will align the fed and state seasons. This will only affect a small number of wolves harvested. This will simplify the regs and make it easier to enforce.

Kurt: It will give more opportunity for the deer hunters in the field to harvest a wolf with a rifle.

Tessa: We expect this to result in a small number of wolves being harvested with a rifle.

Nick: He opposes it since there will be trapping gear out during the deer season.

Kurt: The hunting season currently starts Dec. 1. This proposal will lengthen the hunting season. This prop will not extend the trapping season, just the hunting season.

Tessa: That is correct Kurt.

Katie: I'm hesitant to support it but it won't add many wolves to the harvest.

Kurt: I'm in support because it will give more opportunity to shoot a wolf which is very difficult.

Vote:

Passes unanimously. Support.

Mark: Any wolf shot also counts towards the total harvest, correct?

Ross: Yes, that is correct. How many members are voting?

Kurt: We have a total of nine voting members here tonight.

Prop 47-Require Wolf Harvest info to be reported within 48 hrs of recovery and sealing within 14 days in Unit 2.

Tessa Hasbrouck: The current reporting period is 7 days with a 15 day reporting period.

Moved and seconded to support.

Discussion:

Roby: Opposed to having the sealing restrictions become more restrictive.

Katie: What is being changed?

Group: This will make the reporting period shorter and it can be very difficult for our trappers if they are in remote areas out of cell range, on a boat and/or camping.

Kurt: Is in opposition.

Tessa: **Current regs:** The reporting period is 7 days and the sealing period is 15 days. This prop only impacts wolves harvested on state land.

Kurt: This is difficult for trappers if they are in remote areas. There are two different parts to this prop. There is a reporting period and a sealing period.

Ross: Current numbers on the wolf harvest is 29 but that is just for the call in period. The final count will be known on Dec. 31.

Kurt : What is ADFG's opinion of this prop?

Tessa: They are in support.

John: What percentage of federal lands are in unit 2?

Tessa: 80%

John: Why are the reporting periods different on the two different lands; federal vs state?

Tessa: The federal subsistence board did not like the call in period. That is why they are different.

Ross: Having a tighter call in period will give ADFG more accurate data.

Kurt: If this prop passes, would this help our argument to fight the ESA listing?

Ross: One of the criteria used to list the species is insufficient management which is a listable justification. A shorter reporting period will give us more accurate data sooner. So, yes it could help in that way.

Katie: This could absolutely be used in a comment and could help our cause to fight the ESA.



Kurt: What if we support it but suggest a 72hr reporting period. We can make it with our own comment.

Nick: Then we should oppose this motion and make a new motion.

John: There is a very small group of people that are trapping these wolves for all of our benefit. This will affect them much more than the majority of the trappers who harvest just a few here and there. There are less than 5 individuals on POW that catch the majority of the wolves for the benefit of all of us. This prop will disenfranchise those trappers. People don't realize how difficult, time consuming and expensive it is to catch a wolf and this will make it that much harder. He is adamantly opposed.

Roby: The more we restrict ourselves, we rarely get those changes back. We should be very careful.

John: Gave background on why there is a division between ADFG and trappers on PoW and spoke about some of the past history. Also does not agree with the name Alexander Archipelago wolf. They are just a Canadian wolf that swims out to the islands. Does not like it at all.

Tessa: The AA wolf is a known subspecies.

John: What does the science/dna show?

Tessa: I will send the AC that info.

Vote:

Fails unanimously. Opposed.

Prop 48-Change the methodology for setting the population objective for wolves in Unit 2.

Moved and seconded to support.

Discussion:

Madison: I support this because we haven't had accurate population estimates in the past so this prop might offer better estimates.

Kurt: What is the current methodology and what will this prop change?

Tessa: This prop suggests we use a PVA model which gives a loose output. PVA's are good at showing you what data you are lacking. This prop only wants us to use PVA's to estimate populations. ADFG is opposed to this prop. A PVA is a tool but is not the only tool and shouldn't be used by itself. We are using a different method that works better.

Ross: Our pop objective is 150-200 wolves. If this prop passes our pop objective would change to whatever the PVA tells us it should be.

Kurt: The main methodology to estimate the wolf pop is the hairboard study. ADFG is also in the beginning stages of incorporating trail cameras into the pop estimate. Hairboards alone don't capture the wolves in the pack that avoid the hair boards. We have asked ADFG to continue refining its methodologies. If we pass this prop, it will change the pop estimate dramatically.

Katie: If you don't like the pop estimates using hairboards, you will like this even less, guaranteed.

Vote:

Fails unanimously. Opposed.

Prop 49-Utilize the lower confidence interval of the wolf population for estimating the population in Unit 2.

Moved and seconded to Support

Discussion:

Kurt: Asked Tessa/Ross to give an overview. This would unnecessarily restrict hunters and trappers to get out in the field.

Ross: ADFG is opposed b/c it unnecessarily limits harvest opportunity. They are trying to make it more conservative and want to use the lower confidence interval of the pop estimate. We have learned that we have been biased low in the past and this prop will not be accurate and it will unnecessarily restrict hunter/trappers.

Vote:

Fails unanimously. Opposed.

Prop 50-Establish a population estimate and harvest limit based on PoW wolf population that excludes extrapolation from outer islands in Unit 2.



Moved and seconded to Support

Discussion:

John: This will change the wolf population estimate by removing the outer islands from the study. This is wrong.

Katie: How many folks trap on the outer islands?

Ross: The reason AWA proposes this is because most of the hair board study is not on the outer island due to logistics/Wx. They are saying we shouldn't be able to extrapolate the pop density on those islands. If passed this will lower the pop estimate. There are definitely wolves on those islands and it is appropriate to estimate the wolves on those islands. If passed this will limit harvest opportunity and lower the pop estimate.

Vote:

Fails unanimously. Opposed.

Prop 51-Establish a percentage of the Unit 2 wolf population that can be harvested on a sustainable basis, develop a harvest quota each season, require in-season reporting, provide the harvest in real time and allow 3 days notice before closing the season by emergency order.

Moved and seconded to Support

Discussion:

Kurt: What are ADFG's comments on this prop?

Tessa: ADFG is opposed, this prop. It seeks to go back to a quota system. ADFG has met or exceeded the wolf pop estimate every year. In short, our management is working.

Kurt: This prop will change many things.

Vote:

Fails unanimously. Opposed

Prop 52-Establish a harvest quota for wolves, between 20-35% of the estimated wolf population in Unit 2.

Moved and seconded to support

Discussion:

Kurt: Please give us ADFG's comments

Tessa: We are opposed to this for all the same reasons as the previous proposals.

Ross: This prop specifies that BOG will meet annually to make management decisions which is very burdensome.

Vote:

Fails unanimously. Opposed.

Prop 53-Establish an estimated unreported mortality rate for the Unit 2 wolves to be used for establishing the harvest quota.

Moved and seconded to support

Kurt: What are ADFG's comments?

Tessa: We are opposed. Our current management strategy is working. Setting an unreported mortality rate isn't important b/c our current system accounts for the animals coming into and out of the area.

Katie: There is unreported mortality of deer and wolf due to illegal harvest.

Tessa: We know unreported mortality exists but this isn't a major factor on how we manage wolves b/c our system accounts for the animals coming into and out of the area.

Ross: Gave more info but doesn't think this prop will help manage wolves.

Vote:

Fails unanimously. Opposed

Prop 54-Identify an area in Unit 2 for protected status for wolves.

Moved and seconded to support

Kurt: Please give us ADFG's comments.



Tessa: Gave more info why ADFG is opposed.

Discussion:

Vote:

Fails unanimously. Opposed.

We should discuss several other props that affect SE but need to do it later.

Select representative for Board of Game meeting Jan. 20-24, 2023:

Moved and seconded to have **Kurt Whitehead** represent the **Klawock AC** at the **BOG**.

Vote:

Passes unanimously. Support.

We will review the remainder of the proposals at our next meeting.

Nick: We need to get Dennis to draft a resolution for us prior to the tribal meeting.

Katie: I'm happy to help.

Kurt: Katie, I value your insight completely. You are excellent at writing, you are very knowledgeable and experienced, you care about POW and absolutely, we will enlist your help.

Nick: I would request to include Dennis on the drafting of the letter.

Next meeting is tentatively December 26 or 27, 2022.

Meeting adjourned: 8:28 pm

Minutes recorded by: Kurt Whitehead

Minutes approved by: Kurt Whitehead

Date: 12.13.22

Klawock AC Meeting December 27, 2022
Call to Order: 6:18pm
Roll Call:
Total Members: 14
Number needed for a quorum: 7

Klawock AC Members	Officer	Present	Absent	Expiration
Dennis Nickerson	Chair		x	June 2024
Kurt Whitehead	Vice Chair	x		June 2025
Brenda Leask	Secretary		x	June 2025
Nick Nickerson		x		June 2024
Tylo Kennedy		x		June 2023
Mike Kennedy Sr.		x		June 2023
Tom Leask			x	June 2023
Irving Langmaid		x		June 2025
Al Edsall		x		June 2023
Mark Tollfedt		x (online)		June 2024
John Priddy			x	June 2024
Katie Rooks		x		June 2025
Roby Medina		x (online)		June 2025
Madison Stumpf		x (online)		June 2024

ADFG Staff present:
Craig Schwanke sport fish biologist, Boards Support (online).
Guests present: Tom George
Approval of Agenda:
Moved and seconded to approve the agenda for 12.27.2022
Vote:
Unanimously approved
Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:
Agreed to approve the meeting minutes from 12.13.2022 at our next meeting.
Reports:
Chair: None
ADFG: None
Other: None



Public Comments: None

Elections:

Agreed to elect officers & review expiration dates at our next meeting.

Old Business:

Wolf letter

The Klawock, AK Fish and Game Advisory Council is grateful for this opportunity to participate in the public process about resource management in our state.

On July 15, 2020, the Center for Biological Diversity, Alaska Rainforest Defenders and Defenders of Wildlife petitioned the Secretary of Interior/US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFW) to list the Alexander Archipelago (AA) Wolf in Southeast Alaska as threatened or endangered under the U.S. Endangered Species Act. The first petition to list the AA wolf was filed in 1993. The second was filed in 2011. The third and current one was filed in 2020 also requests that critical habitat be designated for AA wolves in Southeast Alaska. The document can be found at www.biologicaldiversity.org and www.doi.gov. We would like to state that the recurring petition process takes time away from resource managers studying wolf populations and other important issues and is disruptive for certain residents. The signatories of this document believe that the AA wolf should not be listed under the Endangered Species Act.

Prince of Wales Island, the third largest island in the United States, is home to approximately 3500 residents that reside in twelve rural communities, ranging from 35 in remote Point Baker to over 1000 in Craig. Many residents rely largely on a subsistence way of life. Subsistence in rural Alaska means legally that residents can fish and hunt under bag limits that allow us to fill our freezers and pantries because we do not have access to goods and services that people who live in urban areas have. Traditional subsistence lifestyles have been and still are practiced by the Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian people who have lived here since time immemorial. Prince of Wales area census data from 2021 shows 41.6% Alaska Native residents, almost half the population in POW's communities.(1) Subsistence is a very important part of Alaska Native culture, tradition and heritage.(2) Deer hunting, as a major part of the subsistence lifestyle, is vitally important on POW. Our relationships, mental and physical health and food security are all improved by deer hunting. Deer hunting on POW is more important because this is the only populated area in the region with just one ungulate game animal; POW does not have caribou, moose, elk, sheep, bison, mountain goat or muskox.

Today, subsistence on POW is critical in terms of food security, as soaring inflation nation-wide has increased the cost of all goods and services. Shipping chilled or frozen food here costs \$0.82/lb. In Klawock this week, a gallon of milk is \$6.49, a dozen eggs are \$5.19, and ground beef is \$5.99 per pound. Additionally, gas is currently \$5.87/gal and \$6.23/gal diesel. The bottom line is that food and fuel costs are a much larger percentage of the family budget that average.

Information presented by Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) and other agencies at the 2022 Deer Summit on POW (October 13-15, 2022) show that the deer population has obviously declined in the past ten years. In 2012, hunters in Unit 2 averaged about 3.5 days of hunting effort per deer harvested; in 2022, hunters spent an average of 4.9 days trying to harvest a deer, according to hunt report survey data from 2012-2021.(3)

We acknowledge that the deer population is affected by numerous factors, including habitat loss from fifty years of industrial scale old-growth logging on POW.(4) We have noticed that, while ADFG reports link POW old-growth forest to healthy deer populations and state that the POWA deer population is in trouble, (5) Division of Forestry staff continue to describe the old-growth stands they cut here as low value and minimize their importance to deer and to hunters. (6) That doesn't agree with what we heard at the 2022 Deer Summit. We also acknowledge there is work to be done in terms of considering changing deer bag limits or seasons in response to population concerns.

While we acknowledge that POW is not the only place where the AA wolf exists, we do know that effects of management actions are felt more sharply on our island; in part, because it is an island. We have seen more wolves more frequently over the past decade, so we have questions about whether this trend is occurring in other places within the AA wolf's range. ADFG has been cautious and conservative, but to accurately assess the population of



wolves in a temperate rainforest has always been difficult. As ADFG continues to refine the methodologies used to estimate and balance populations with carrying capacity, we expect the wolf population will remain healthy. We know the AA wolf is a top predator of Sitka blacktail deer and is far from being endangered. Our personal observations and trends in ADFG data lead us to believe the wolf is thriving in our area. Recent harvests of wolves (7) have shown that past estimates were much lower than current numbers reflect.

If the AA wolf is listed under the Endangered Species Act, the federal government will assume authority over management, which will end legal trapping and hunting of wolves. If deer populations are decreasing, it doesn't make sense to list one of its top predators as endangered unless there is credible science and data that show good cause. ADFG has a growing list of data and science, including its own studies here on POW, proving the AA Wolf should not be listed under the Endangered Species Act.(8)

Everyone agrees that wolves are an important part of POW and we enjoy seeing them, hearing them or just knowing that they exist here. However, listing the AA wolf as endangered will not accomplish better management and will eliminate all legal take of the top non-human predator in an island ecosystem where Sitka blacktail deer is the only ungulate prey available.

We strongly oppose listing the Alexander Archipelago wolf as endangered or threatened.

The Klawock ADFG Advisory Council

Moved and seconded to approve the above wolf letter.

Discussion:

Irving Langmaid: Who filed the petition?

Katie Rooks: Told us who filed the petition. It is a public process which means that any person in the USA has a right to file a lawsuit regarding public lands.

Tom George: Doesn't like the Nov. 15 start date with wolf trapping due to the deer harvest/rut. He would like to see the start date moved to Jan. 1. This will greatly reduce the number of bears and deer caught in the traps. The number of deer caught in traps in Nov. is substantial.

Nick Nickerson: We don't have this letter in resolution form but maybe we can by the time of the BOG.

Vote:

Passes unanimously. Support.

New Business:

Nick Nickerson: Lawsuit against trollers and longliners. A Washington conservation group filed a lawsuit against the AK Trollers and AK Longliners on behalf of Orcas. We need to respond to this new Orca lawsuit as well as the wolf lawsuit.

Roby Medina: Asked about getting the exact info/facts so we can give an educated response on the Orca lawsuit.

Tom George: Spoke about the lawsuit and how there used to be so much more herring in all of SE AK. We are currently at a 10.4lb average on kings and the kings are starving because there isn't anymore herring. In years past, there was a lot more herring and now it's a drop in the bucket compared to what it used to be. This lawsuit should be targeting the trawlers out West that kill our juvenile king salmon. The herring needs to be protected around here, this is the food source for all the other fish. We need to quit harvesting our herring.

Kurt Whitehead: We will address the fishing proposals at our next meeting, right now we need to comment on the hunting props before the Jan. 6 deadline. Prop 201 was written to address the sea otter infestation in SE AK.



Proposals:

Prop 201: Create a sea otter management plan.

Moved and seconded to support prop 201

Discussion:

Roby Medina: One important issue is the fact that Alaska Coastal Natives currently need to meet a 1/4 blood quantum to be able to harvest otters and that is becoming more difficult. A solution would be to change the minimum requirement to harvest sea otters to "being enrolled in a Federally recognized tribe".

Nick Nickerson: Spoke about how this is a federal regulation under the marine mammal protection act. The state won't listen to us about the otter issue but something needs to be done. This is a state proposal regarding federal law so it won't go anywhere.

Katie Rooks: Doesn't support this prop.

Tom George: One solution might be able to have the tribal governments stamp the otter hides and be able to sell the hides afterwards.

Craig Schwanke: Gave background on why the prop was written to highlight a problem and spur discussion.

Vote:

Unanimously fails.

Prop 1: Require certified hunter safety education to hunt in Units 1-5

Discussion:

Irving Langmaid: Is not in support of this prop and gave background. It is a good concept but he has issues with the instructors/implementation in rural areas.

Al Edsall: There are a lot of people that don't have a clue what they're doing with firearms.

Katie Rooks: It is a good idea but is not in support of it in AK.

Nick Nickerson: Is not in support, he doesn't hear of any Accidental Discharges in AK.

Moved and seconded to Oppose.

Vote:

Unanimously opposed. Voted against prop 1.

Kurt Whitehead: Moving forward, we need to support every prop and if we don't like it, we vote it down. We shouldn't make a motion to oppose any props.

Prop 2: Require hunter orientation for hunting goats in SE AK

Kurt Whitehead: Opposed to this because nannies are legal, they taste good, they are difficult to judge and some folks want to take a nanny. The burden to comply with the prop would be significant.

Moved and seconded to support.

Discussion: None

Vote:

Unanimously fails. Opposed.

Prop 3: Remove the requirement for residents to seal black bear skulls in Unit 1-4.

Kurt Whitehead: Read the prop and is opposed to it for many reasons. Spoke about how the current system works well and allows ADFG to collect important data that is valuable to help manage our bears.

Moved and seconded to support

Vote:

Unanimously fails. Opposed.



Prop 5: Change the waterfowl season in Units 1-4 by creating a split season.

Kurt Whitehead: Asked Craig Schwanke to speak on it since they can hear him better and he's been at the other AC meetings and is a duck hunter himself.

Craig Schwanke: I am not a wildlife biologist but I can give more info. as I've been at the last several meetings discussing the same prop. Gave background info on why this prop came about and how the federal season is 107 days.

Kurt Whitehead: Lots of bird hunters like to hunt early for the migrating ducks/geese and there are also many that like to hunt late for seaducks. It seems the best two weeks to shutdown would be the last two weeks of Sept. but it is a difficult decision b/c SE AK is so large.

Roby Medina: Anything that is not during trapping season would be his preference but he doesn't have a favorite.

Tom George: Asked exactly what a split season was?

Craig Schwanke: Answered his question.

Tom George: It is tough to pick the 2 worst weeks of waterfowl season.

Craig Schwanke: Correct. SE AK is a big area so its different up around Haines than down here.

Tom George: Oct 16 is when geese are going by the Stikine but not out here. The first 2 weeks of Oct would be his vote to close the season.

Craig Schwanke: Yes, it's a difficult to get the perfect closure.

Irving Langmaid: Spoke about how it is not ideal to have a split season.

Craig Schwanke: The federal season is 107 total days and that is what we are working with and why it can't be longer.

Tom George: It's tough to get the perfect closure for all of SE AK.

Moved and seconded to approve.

Vote

Unanimously fails. Opposed.

Craig Schwanke: The department wants to know about dates as well.

Irving Langmaid: The last week of Sept and first week of Oct are his vote for a closure.

Nick Nickerson: The prop will create a split season

Prop 6: Lengthen river otter trapping seasons in Units 1-4 to Nov. 10-March 31.

Kurt Whitehead: Supports trappers completely but isn't an expert so he's glad Roby and Tom are able to speak on this prop.

Tom George: Is a life long trapper. Otter is one of his specialties. In the past, he has trapped 278 otter in one year. Fur is not prime on Dec. 1 but doesn't start to get really good until the 2nd or 3rd week of Dec. Lengthening the season past the end of Feb is as long as it should go. Pelts in March get singed and aren't prime. Is opposed to starting earlier than Dec. 1 and also opposed to trapping after the end of Feb due to fur quality. Has always put up exceptionally well cared for furs. Objects to this prop.

Moved and seconded to support.

Vote:

Unanimously fails.

Prop 7: Extend marten trapping season to align with wolverine season in Units 1-4 to Nov. 10-Feb. 28.

Kurt Whitehead: Asked Tom or Roby to speak to the proposal.

Tom George: Marten fur is not prime until Dec. 1 at the earliest but is in support of trapping them until Feb. 28.

Moved and seconded to support.

Vote:

Unanimously fails.



Prop 8: Extend marten trapping season in Units 1 & 2 to Dec. 1-Feb. 28.

Kurt Whitehead: Asked Tom to speak on prop.

Tom George: Is in support of the prop. Blue hide means the hairs of the pelt have not embedded in the hide and are not prime.

Moved and seconded to support.

Vote:

Unanimously passes in Support.

Kurt Whitehead: Didn't address the last statewide prop 4 regarding brown bear but asked if anyone has anymore props we want to discuss/comment on in the other regions.

Next meeting date to review board of fish proposals. Tentatively scheduled for Jan. 9-18. Comments are due by Feb. 23, 2023.

Kurt Whitehead: Asked if Tom George wants to be a member of the AC? If so, we can hold another election.

Tom George: Yes, he would like to be a part of the AC.

Kurt Whitehead: Great, we will hold another election at the next meeting and we will also hold officer elections at that time.

Meeting adjourned: 7:32 pm

Minutes recorded by: Kurt Whitehead

Minutes approved by: Kurt Whitehead

Date: 12.27.22