Dear Advisory Committee Members

With spring nearing it brings an enthusiasm for getting back to some of our favorite outdoor activities and enjoying the bounty of our fish and wildlife resources. We trust you take pride in your AC service, helping to make decisions that sustain these resources we all enjoy.

Hopefully the summer break from AC and board activity will renew your energy for the next meeting cycle. That cycle brings regulatory change for the Southeast and Southcentral Regions for the Board of Game, while the Board of Fisheries takes on fisheries regulations for the Aleutian Islands up to the Bering Sea, the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers, and statewide finfish.

As you read this early April edition, don’t let some of the articles fool you. It is true – BOF member Al Cain is not retiring and will serve another term; the BOF is holding a special meeting in April; the Valdez AC reactivated after several years of dormancy; and the Joint Board is meeting next cycle. The newsletter features the work of the Seward and Homer ACs sponsoring youth fishing events and it provides brief updates from the recent board meetings.

While the AC activity winds down over the next month, we want to thank you on behalf of the boards and the Department of Fish and Game for your time and involvement in this process.

Enjoy your summer.

Glenn Haight, Executive Director
Kristy Tibbles, Executive Director
Alaska Board of Fisheries
Alaska Board of Game
Alaska Department of Fish & Game

Alaska Department of Fish & Game
Boards Support Newsletter
Spring 2018

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Joint Board to Meet in Anchorage in March 2019

Have you heard? The Joint Board of Fisheries and Game is coming to town! The two boards will meet together March 21-25, 2019 to consider regulatory changes for advisory committees and the board’s processes (5 AAC Chapters 96 and 97). The deadline to submit proposals is May 1, 2018.

The last regulatory meeting of the Joint Board was in 2013. Both the Board of Game and Board of Fisheries come together to deliberate proposals and to discuss matters of interest to both boards. Since the Joint Board does not meet frequently this is the opportunity to bring issues before them. Some ideas to think about for types of changes are:

- Reduced regulatory work session days
- Increased Team Meetings
- Increased youth focus and involvement
- Increased outreach to non-traditional communities

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Board of Game News

The Board of Game met for the first time in Dillingham to address hunting and trapping regulations for the Central/Southwest Region. The board, staff, and visiting public were well received by the community and the students at the Dillingham Middle School. Board members were pleased to have the opportunity to hear from the area residents, learning about their culture and interests.

Actions of interest from this meeting included: clarification of the use of snow machines to position and harvest caribou in Unit 17, modification of the definition of community/group for the Copper Basin Area community subsistence harvest hunt; changes to the Fortymile caribou hunting seasons and bag limits; and the opening of a youth hunt for caribou in Unit 13. In addition, the board made several adjustments to big and small game seasons and bag limits across the region, all of which are noted in the meeting summary available on the board website, www.boardofgame.adfg.alaska.gov, under the Central/Southwest Region Meeting.

Four proposals will be scheduled for the next meeting cycle. The board deferred Proposal 123, as amended, which modifies the Clearwater Creek Controlled Use Area in Unit 13, allowing motor-accessed access to the Maclaren Summit Trail, and Proposal 155, which requests a new registration moose hunt for Unit 19A. Both proposals are slated for the March 2019 Southcentral Region Meeting.

The board passed a new regulation, starting in 2020, to require a deep water release mechanism on sport fishing vessels in Prince William Sound (this was also passed in Southeast). Many rockfish species have swim bladders which expand when brought from deep water. This presents them from submerging on their own. Deep water release mechanisms allow fishers to submerge rockfish to depth, which deflates the expanded bladder and allows the fish to live.

A number of other issues were discussed, including hatcheries, sea otter depredation in Southeast, the 2020 Upper Cook Inlet Finfish Meeting location, the potential for Sitka Sound herring pounding, and a number of issues related to the federal North Pacific Fishery Management Council.

To read more about the meeting, please visit the board’s website at www.boardofgame.adfg.alaska.gov and look for the Southcentral Region Meeting.

Southcentral Region Advisory Committees Sponsor Youth Fishing Events

The Homer Advisory Committee sponsored the Carmen Field Ice Fishing Day in early January at Johnson Lake. The event was a huge success with around 30 to 35 folks in attendance over the course of the day. At least 20 kids participated in the fishing and only caught a few fish, but the weather was good, and they consumed 50 hot dogs, lots of hot cocoa and many marshmallows. Some future fishermen were acquainted with the sport and will be encouraged to be part of the stewardship of our Alaskan resources for years to come.

The Seward Advisory Committee will sponsor a Kid’s Fishing Day on May 19 at First Lake Park. This event is an annual family friendly event where children ages one to 15 can come and enjoy a morning of fishing. The event starts at 8am and runs until noon, when the town horn sounds. Children can learn a life skill and have fun while doing it.

First Lake is stocked by ADF&G and children can bring their own poles or use one provided. Participants sign in upon arrival and receive a drawing ticket for some great locally donated prizes.

The Seward AChas sponsored this event for several years.

Valdez Advisory Committee Reactivates Under New Chair, Hope Upickson

The Valdez Fish and Game Advisory Committee was active for many years, but over time, participation began to wane and they did not meet for several years.

The University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) held a hunting and fishing advocacy training in April 2017. Under the leadership of Carrie Stevens, the UAF Tribal Management Program ran a Board of Game training class, during which students attended the Alaska Board of Game Statewide Meeting held in Anchorage. During the course of the board meeting, one of those students, Hope Upickson, began asking questions about the Valdez AC. Hope expressed a desire with Board’s Support to get that committee functional again.

In order for a committee to reactivate, they must hold a meeting with at least five people who are interested in continuing involvement in the Board of Fisheries and Board of Game process. In this instance, Hope was able to gather a group of people, including some of the former AC members. Not only was she elected to become a member, but she also became the new chair. Hope attended the Board of Fisheries meeting when it met in Valdez and brought her daughter to the Board of Game meeting in Dillingham to introduce her to the process as well. Hope has done a great job reactivating the committee and Board’s Support looks forward to the Valdez AC’s participation in the process.