

On-Time Public Comment List

Joint Board Committee Meeting | January 19, 2021

Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission	PC 1
Alaska Outdoor Council.....	PC 2
Alaska Trollers Association.....	PC 3
Anthony Taiber	PC 4
Ben Hughey.....	PC 5
Chandler O'Connell	PC 6
Charles Upicksoun.....	PC 7
Charlie Lean	PC 8
Chitina Dipnetters Association	PC 9
Chugach Regional Resources Commission	PC 10
Concerned Area M Fishermen	PC 11
Cordova District Fishermen United	PC 12
David Blake	PC 13
Debra Lynne	PC 14
Dennis Zadra	PC 15
Eric Jordan.....	PC 16
Hope Roberts	PC 17
Jacob Miller.....	PC 18
Jeff Farvour	PC 19
John Murray.....	PC 20
Jon Martin.....	PC 21
Karen Johnson.....	PC 22
Kenai River Sportfishing Association	PC 23
Kenneth Jones.....	PC 24
Lee House	PC 25
Leroy Cabana	PC 26
Mark Buchner	PC 27
Marty Remund.....	PC 28
Michael Mickelson	PC 29

On-Time Public Comment List

Joint Board Committee Meeting | January 19, 2021

Mike Mickelson	PC 30
Peter Bradley	PC 31
Peter Roddy	PC 32
Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation	PC 33
Resident Hunters of Alaska	PC 34
Richard Curran	PC 35
Richard Eliason.....	PC 36
Southeast Alaska Guides Organization.....	PC 37
Tad Fujioka	PC 38
Territorial Sportsmen, Inc	PC 39
Timothy Moore	PC 40
Timothy Murphy	PC 41
Tory O'Connell Curran.....	PC 42
Tracey Nuzzi	PC 43
Under Sixty Cod Harvesters.....	PC 44
John Renner	PC 45



Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission

PO Box 613 – Glennallen, Alaska 99588 www.ahtnatribal.org
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15 January 2021

Alaska Department of Fish & Game
Boards Support Section
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

To the Alaska Joint Board of Fisheries (BOF) and Board of Game (BOG) Committee:

Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission (AITRC) requests that the BOF delay its meetings for Prince William Sound/Upper Copper Prince William Sound/Upper Susitna Finfish and Shellfish so that it could be safely held in person. We similarly request that the BOG delay its meeting for the Southcentral region. Currently, the BOF meeting is scheduled to be held telephonically, at the end of March, while the BOG meeting has been postponed and has yet to be rescheduled.

AITRC was formed in 2011 to represent and support the eight Ahtna tribes on fisheries and wildlife management issues, working to build resource stewardship programs throughout the Ahtna traditional-use area. This area include GMUs 11 and 13, as well as the upper Copper and upper Susitna River basins. The current BOF cycle includes numerous proposals that would affect state subsistence, personal-use and sport fisheries on the Copper River. Holding BOF and BOG meetings remotely would make it harder for Ahtna tribal members to effectively participate in the state regulatory process. Some tribal members, especially elders, have limited access to technology, and find it more difficult to communicate by phone or internet, where connections can be spotty and nonverbal communication is diminished.

One of the benefits of in-person meetings is that they facilitate relationship-building between tribal members, fisheries managers, members of regulatory bodies, and other stakeholders. Through in-person interaction, members of different user-groups have the opportunity to work toward common understanding on the issues. Much of this comes from conversations that occur in the hallways, at lunch hour, and otherwise outside of the formal meeting program. Such relationship-building facilitates greater communication and mutual understanding between stakeholder groups, an important component of more effective fisheries



Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission

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management. This aspect of the board meetings will be entirely missing if the boards choose to conduct the meeting telephonically.

Thank you for considering our request. We appreciate the opportunity to address the board about our interests in fisheries and wildlife regulation.

Respectfully,

Odin Miller, on behalf of Karen Linnell

Karen Linnell
Executive Director
Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission



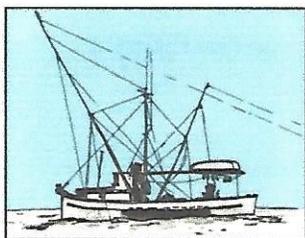
Submitted By
Rod Arno
Submitted On
1/14/2021 10:20:24 AM
Affiliation
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The Alaska Outdoor Council is a statewide conservation organization of hunters, trappers, fish gathers, and outdoor enthusiast. The Outdoor Council has had representatives participate in the Boards of Fisheries and Game process since they were created by the Alaska Legislature. Due to the 2020 outbreak of COVID-19 in Alaska and the state's implementation of safety precautions it's reasonable for the Boards to consider delaying scheduled Spring 2021 meetings to a later date in 2021.

Scheduling a web conference to allow Boards to act on proposals needing annual reauthorization under the Alaska Administrative Code makes sense. Proposals that may change the allocation of fish or game resources should not be conducted via a web conference. The boards allocation process works because users come face-to-face to hash out differences and compromise on regulatory changes. The public's opportunity to comment on the Departments position on their proposals is provided through oral comments before the boards and/or Recorded Copies (RC) during the meeting. These necessary opportunities would be complicated if participating in a Web conference. Worse yet the process could be overrun with; anti-hunting, trapping, game management, hatchery, or commercial fishing advocates who wouldn't otherwise be available to participate in the Boards process, thus extending the amount of time necessary for the boards to conduct oral testimony.

The Alaska Outdoor Council would be supportive of the boards meeting in a web conference to deliberate on statewide proposals only. An analysis of how that process worked may be beneficial in the future when funding costs prohibit the boards from traveling to statewide locations.



Alaska Trollers Association

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alaskatrollers@gmail.com

December 9, 2019

Glenn Haight, Executive Director
Alaska Board of Fisheries
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811

RE: SE Meeting postponement

Dear Mr. Haight and members of the Alaska Board of Fisheries,

Alaska Trollers Association (ATA) represents nearly 2,000 permit holders. Power and Hand Troll permits are 85% Alaska resident owned, which is one of the very highest proportion of resident-permit-ownership in our state. Our fishermen reside largely throughout the SE Island communities where there is little else going on economically so trolling is a significant part of the SE AK economy. Salmon trolling is over a century old and due to ever decreasing harvests, many trollers are diversified into other fisheries, such as shrimping or longline, to survive.

We are commenting again on the scheduling of the Board's upcoming Southeast meeting in light of the Covid pandemic. As April quickly approaches, we see increasing indicators that the virus is not abating. While some may be willing to risk illness, many will not and we see this as serious impediment to participation in a highly participatory process. We do not believe virtual meetings allow for the full spectrum of information sharing and public engagement in your regulatory process.

We urge the Board to postpone our meeting until January 2022 as there is really no imminent danger to the resource in further postponing any potential regulatory modifications in the eight months prior to January 2022 since the department (ADFG) has the ability to manage by Emergency Order (EO) if necessary. Also, any unused FY 2021 (July 2020 through June 2021) budget remaining can be re-appropriated through the legislative budget process for the FY 2022 budget.

We request your consideration of this postponement in order to maintain the integrity of the well-regarded and highly interactive Board of Fisheries process.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Amy Daugherty
Executive Director, ATA



From: [anthony taiber](#)
To: [DFG, BOF Comments \(DFG sponsored\)](#)
Subject: 2021 meetings
Date: Friday, January 15, 2021 8:31:28 AM

I don't think the 2021 BOF meetings can be conducted effectively via virtual platform. It is in the best interest of all to postpone meetings until they can take place IN PERSON. Please move to postpone. Thank you!

Anthony Taiber
Pob 1861
Petersburg AK 99833

...



From: [Ben Hughey](#)
To: [DFG, BOF Comments \(DFG sponsored\)](#)
Subject: Please postpone April BOF meeting
Date: Friday, January 15, 2021 8:26:44 AM

Hello members of the Board of Fisheries,

I am writing to urge you to take into account the worsening nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and postpone the Board of Fisheries meeting in Ketchikan this April. At the current rate of vaccination, there will likely still be hundreds of elders and vulnerable individuals who will be unprotected in April. Hosting a large gathering would irresponsibly put many community members at risk.

Postponing the meeting would provide time to make alternative arrangements, like transitioning the meeting to a virtual setting. Providing a platform that gives meaningful opportunities for remote participation, that gives careful thought to accessibility for all community members, would be the best option considering the enduring pandemic. Also, given the difficulty of travel in Southeast Alaska, a well-designed virtual meeting could greatly improve access and participation at BOF meetings and should be considered as a permanent solution.

Thank you for considering the public health and democratic impacts of your decision of when and how to host the upcoming meeting.

Best,
Ben

Ben Hughey
907-738-1252
Sitka, Alaska 99835



Submitted By
Chandler O'Connell
Submitted On
1/14/2021 3:04:08 PM
Affiliation

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Hello,

I am writing to urge the Board of Fish to postpone the 2021 Southeast and Yakutat Finfish and Shellfish meeting until it is safe to travel and gather in-person.

By April, we are still likely to be in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Alaska vaccination campaign. Meaning that an in-person gathering would likely be skewed to folks unconcerned about travel, thereby leaving out folks at higher risk of infection, including elders, those with pre-existing conditions, or those in communities with less access to medical intervention.

In general, I am supportive of incorporating virtual options into future BOF meetings, but as a supplement, not a replacement, for in-person participation. A dual model would help avoid barriers both from travel (cost, time, family/work obligations) and from lack of access to technology.

Please take all actions possible to insure that the BOF process is safe, accessible and equitable for all participants.

Thanks,

Chandler O'Connell



Submitted By
Charles Upicksoun
Submitted On
1/15/2021 3:36:14 PM
Affiliation
Surreel Saltwaters

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Valdez, Alaska 99686

Hello from Valdez, I am Co-Owner of Surreel Saltwater's fishing charters, and marine mammal cultural harvester. I am originally from Kotzebue. I run this sport fishing guide with my wife and 10 year old daughter.

I think that the Board of Fish and Board of Game meetings work best when the public and the Advisory Committees can provide input and feedback freely and in person. We think it will be extremely difficult to have meaningful meetings and discussions with the current format that is allowed. Zoom will not work when there are multiple groups and hundreds of individuals that want to participate. The impact of public testimony will be minimized when done with video.

The COVID 19 virus is still highly contagious and state medical experts still do not have it under control. The entire state of Alaska has been adversely impacted and it will be months/years maybe, before we return to anything resembling normal if ever. The vaccine timeline is still in flux and it might take 6-9 months before that is completed.

I am personally in favor of taking a break with Board of Fish and Board of Game meetings for this cycle and moving everything back at least a year. Meetings should be postponed until Alaskans can safely meet and travel to the communities throughout the state. It is difficult for some to have AC meetings via Zoom, it does not seem fair to the public or to the board to hold a meeting with this venue. There is still a fair number of fishers and hunters who do not use the internet sufficiently.

I also understand that there may be some proposals that cannot be paused like the cow moose hunt authorizations. I will participate in whatever methods are designed to cover the issues that cannot be postponed for a year (i.e., antlerless moose reauthorizations and brown bear fee tag exemptions).



Submitted By

Charlie Lean

Submitted On

1/8/2021 9:09:59 AM

Affiliation

Northern Norton Sound AC

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- The Governor has issued and re-issued mandate as it relates to Covid-19 and our communities are doing the best to follow them to stop the spread of the virus;
- Travel restrictions causes delays where one must quarantine for up to 14 days;
- The Northern Norton Sound AC prefers face-to-face meetings because:
 - Body language is important when faced with making informed decisions and
 - Opportunity for informal discussions during breaks
- Rural Alaska is at a disadvantage for web conferencing due to limited options for connectivity
 - Most rural hub communities are offered unlimited connectivity
 - All villages are not offered the same unlimited connectivity
 - Teleconferenced meetings are an option for addressing time sensitive local issues for the local ACs.



Submitted By
CHARLES W DERRICK
Submitted On
1/11/2021 10:04:42 AM
Affiliation

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The Chitina Dipnetters Association feels that all BOF & BOG meeting should be postponed to the 2021/2022 cycle as the covid 19 pandemic, as of recently, is no where near under control and hopes of all Alaska citizens being vaccinated will take most of 2021.



Submitted By
Hope Roberts
Submitted On
1/15/2021 3:22:26 PM
Affiliation
Chugach Regional Resources Commission

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Hello from the Chugach Regional Resources Commission team, in 2020, we developed an Inter-Tribal Federal Subsistence Cooperative Management Alliance which meets monthly with representatives from each Tribe to develop regional Tribal priorities for federal fish and game management.

It is our opinion that Board of Fish and Board of Game meetings work best when the public and the Advisory Committees can provide input and feedback freely and in person. We think it will be extremely difficult to have meaningful meetings and discussions with the current format that is allowed. Zoom will not work when there are multiple groups and hundreds of individuals that want to participate. The impact of public testimony will be minimized when done with video.

The COVID 19 virus remains highly contagious and state medical experts still do not have it under control. The entire state of Alaska has been adversely impacted and it will be months before we return to anything resembling normal if ever. The vaccine timeline is still in flux and it might take 6-9 months before that is completed.

CRRC is in favor of taking a pause with Board of Fish and Board of Game meetings for this cycle and moving everything back a year. Meetings should be postponed until Alaskans can safely meet and travel to the communities throughout the state. It is difficult to have AC meetings via Zoom, we cannot imagine trying to hold a Board meeting with this venue.

We also realize that there may be some proposals that cannot be paused like the cow moose hunt authorizations. We will participate in whatever methods are designed to cover the issues that cannot be postponed for a year (i.e., antlerless moose reauthorizations and brown bear fee tag exemptions).



Submitted By
Steve Brown
Submitted On
1/14/2021 10:33:57 AM
Affiliation
Concerned Area M Fishermen

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Dear Members of the Boards of Fish and Game:

Concerned Area M Fishermen (CAMF) is writing to ask that the Boards strongly consider postponing the current meeting cycle until the public can safely meet for in person meetings after the health risk from Covid-19 has passed. This would likely mean pushing the meeting cycle back by one year.

Although our regulatory area is not on the cycle this winter, we can speak, from long experience at Board of Fisheries meetings, that in person participation is vital to stakeholders and also to a healthy Board process. We feel that such participation would be significantly lacking with regulatory meetings held online, and the public would be deprived of the opportunity to interact with Board members outside of the limits of a 3 minute testimony. Everybody, public and the Boards, would be the poorer under such a scenario.

Quite frankly, most of the issues the Board may consider (at least in Fisheries) are allocative in nature, and are revisits of similar proposals considered under many preceding Boards. Unfortunately, these are the proposals that are often the most contentious, and are therefore the most beneficial for the public to be directly involved in--and also equally beneficial for the Board-- when it comes to weighing the merits of these proposals. For these reasons, CAMF feels the public is far better served by in person meetings, and we ask the Boards to schedule when full public participation is warranted.

Sincerely,

Steve Brown, President

CAMF



January 15, 2021

Alaska Board of Fisheries
Boards Support Section
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

Members of the Alaska Joint Board of Fisheries and Game,

Cordova District Fishermen United is a 501(c)5 non-profit organization that advocates on behalf of the commercial fishing fleet of the Copper River, Prince William Sound. CDFU is a regular presence at Board of Fisheries meetings and we value the established relationships we have built with members of the Board, members of various user groups around the state, and state employees during these meetings. We value and appreciate the open public process that exists with the current Board of Fisheries structure, and continue to have concerns as expressed previously in our letter to the Board of Fisheries in September.

Many organizations and state agencies have been stretched to the brink over the last 10 months, involved in critical planning processes and logistical challenges to ensure safe, continuous operations throughout the pandemic. Leaders from stakeholder groups continue to navigate the ongoing challenges presented, yet many remain in crisis mode as we move closer to the active fishing seasons with a pandemic still roaring full force. Postponing the meetings from spring to this coming winter, means that both individuals involved in spring fisheries and the organizations that represent them, can fully prepare and participate in the process as usual, without the distractions of juggling fishing, pandemic, and regulatory cycles concurrently.

Unfortunately, as the pandemic has progressed, the likelihood of a safe in-person meeting in March continues to decrease. Cases continue to rise, and at the time of this writing, Cordova has one of the highest current case counts to date. With vaccines on the horizon, but slow to roll out, there is hope for a regular, full Prince William Sound cycle meeting during the typical timeframe this coming December without the worry of putting participants and state employees at risk, and without the concerns that come with attempting to conduct these important regulatory meetings remotely.

Regarding virtual meetings for the Board of Fisheries, most regular attendees know that the



very open public process cannot happen without an in-person meeting. A virtual meeting to discuss regulatory language would degrade the quality of the meetings that the public has come to know and trust, and potentially exclude valuable perspectives due to a lack of technological access. Further, much of the cooperation between user groups happens during the breaks, at lunch, and after each meeting day, and the in person access to speak directly with Board members would be lost with a virtual meeting. It is simply not the same, and meetings may have very different outcomes without these important qualities.

Virtual meetings would be a complete shift from the openness of previous Board of Fisheries meetings, and has the potential to change the entire social fabric of the State of Alaska, particularly in coastal communities where regulatory changes in all fisheries have profound impacts on the people, the resource, and the economy.

With this in mind, we urge the Board to consider postponing the March meeting until December 2021. This inevitably and unfortunately means that regulatory changes will be delayed longer than is ideal, however, it also means that regulatory impacts to our fisheries will not occur without adequate, comprehensive, and valid public process and access to the Board of Fisheries meetings. Ultimately, the potential for better and greater public involvement and more fair regulatory outcomes will occur if the current meeting cycle is postponed.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our comments,

Chelsea Haisman
Executive Director



From: [David Blake](#)
To: [DFG, BOF Comments \(DFG sponsored\)](#)
Subject: Comments for January 19, 2021 Special BOF Meeting
Date: Monday, January 11, 2021 6:58:12 AM

Members or the Board:

I disagree with moving any meeting to web based or "zoom" based. Stakeholder involvement is needed to the Board of Fisheries process. Remote meetings limit Stakeholder involvement and participation. The remote meeting format changes the format of the Board of Fisheries meeting and will discourage or possibly eliminate some stakeholders from participating in the process. The Board of fisheries meeting normally brings together interested parties from multiple communities and viewpoints to discuss and hopefully resolve differences. I realize that there is higher risk for in person meetings due to the current pandemic, however with the vaccine roll out gaining momentum, the Vaccine should be available to most of the general public through out the 2021 year. This would mean with some safe guards in place postponing the meeting to normal format would be the best solution in these times.

Time of year that meeting are held are important for participation. I am a commercial fisherman in the Prince William Sound Area. The normal time for the Board of Fisheries meeting is December or January. If this meeting were to be scheduled for spring it would limit participation as our fishing season or preparation for the upcoming season could be underway and limit the ability for participation. The reasoning of this comment is that once on the grounds or in preparation for the season many of the participants would not have the venue or equipment available to participate as they would be away from their respected home or office. There is also the likely lack of connectivity depending upon where their fishery is located.

All participants, stakeholders, businesses, State agencies, and representative organizations have been faced with many challenges with the current pandemic and the continually changing regulations, mandates, and also fears which have taken their focus away from or discouraged participation in the proposal process. It seems that there is a light at the end of the tunnel with the vaccine and postponement of meeting until they can be held in a normal manner is the best for all involved in the process.

I appreciate the opportunity comment on this very important issue in order to keep the Board of Fisheries process open and fair to all interested parties.

Sincerely
David Blake



Submitted By

Debra Lynne

Submitted On

1/6/2021 12:20:19 PM

Affiliation

Tanana Chiefs Conference

Advocate for option 2 - An Online virtual board meeting with an option for taking testimony telephonically be adequate for conducting board meetings. Answer is Yes

Online virtual meeting would:

- Eliminate possible COVID-19 exposure
- Increase access for Rural and Urban Alaskans
- Increase participation from all over Alaska
- Gain more perspectives to expand solutions for decision-making
- Saves money for organizations in travel expenses
- Reduces cost for all Alaskans
- Increases the Budget for the State of Alaska BOG



Submitted By
Dennis M Zadra
Submitted On
1/15/2021 11:11:49 AM
Affiliation

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Cordova, Alaska 99574

I would like to see both Boards return to in-person meetings as soon as possible. This process is not very well served by remote or virtual meetings.



Submitted By
Eric Jordan
Submitted On
1/6/2021 11:17:37 AM
Affiliation

Phone
907-738-2486
Email
ericsarahjordan@gmail.com
Address
103 Gibson Place
Sitka, Alaska 99835

Sitka, AK Jan 6, 2021

Dear Joint Boards members, staff, and participating public.

My name is Eric Jordan, a lifelong Alaska resident, fisherman, hunter, and harvester. I have been involved in fisheries politics since I listened to my dad practice his speeches on the importance of voting for statehood and gaining control of our fisheries management in the mid 50's. I became involved in the BOF and BOG processes shortly after moving to Juneau in 1972. I have helped found numerous fisheries and conservation groups such as the Southeast Alaska Trout Fishing Association in the early 70's, the South East Alaska Conservation Council in the mid 70's, the Northern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association in 1977, and the Chum Trollers Association most recently. I have served 8 years on the AP to the NPFMC, the BOF, over 40 years on the Sitka Fish & Game Advisory Committee, and numerous fisheries and conservation Boards. I have held elected office to one or another fisheries or conservation group board or council continuously since the early 70's. So, I understand how important the Board processes are for conservation, management, and sharing of our fish and wildlife resources.

I applaud the decision by the joint boards to consider rescheduling the spring meetings during the time of Covid for multiple reasons but I will focus on the questions asked about in the announcement.

1. Conduct some or all of the meetings through web conferencing. I am familiar with zoom, google conferencing, and other web meeting teleconference tools through my involvement with many groups. Based on my experience and abilities with these technologies I believe they give great advantage to those of us more adept than many stakeholders I see struggling with the systems. Thus, in effect disenfranchising equal participation and voice in the processes. Plus, as effective as I am in communicating and using these technologies, I find them as a very poor and ineffective substitute for in person meetings which I know, as a former board member, and public participant, are essential for the best decisions. So, I strongly recommend no web conferencing except for emergency decisions that will do irreparable harm if postponed.

2. Should meetings be postponed until the 2021/2022 meeting cycle? I was involved when the BOF went from annual meetings for every area to staggering the meetings to every three years. I think it has mostly worked with the addition of the ability for ACR's. In SE fisheries proposals and processes where I am most involved, I dont see any conservation or management proposals that cant afford to be postponed till January or February. So, I strongly recommend postponing SE fisheries proposals until at least January or February of 2022. While I have already recieved my first shot of vaccine, many others will not likely be vaccinated by spring. Plus, many of us in SE Alaska are fishing in the spring. A spring meeting either in person or by web conferencing will disenfranchise me and many other stakeholders.

3. impacts on public by postponement. While there undoubtedly will be impacts by postponement my opinion is they are much less onerous than either in person or web conference meetings this spring.

Finally, those of us who harvest fisheries and wildlife resources in Alaska adapt to changes in weather, abundance, regulations, etc all the time. I expect the Boards to adapt to the reality of Covid 19 to protect the integrity and quality of our great Alaskan fishery and wildlife regulatory participatory processes by postponing the meetings.

Sincerely,
Eric Jordan



Submitted By
Hope Roberts
Submitted On
1/15/2021 3:33:20 PM
Affiliation

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19073225439
Email
hope@crrcalaska.org
Address
P.O. Box 3461
Valdez, Alaska 99686

Hello from Valdez, I am Co-Owner of Surreel Saltwater's fishing charters, I hope you all have a fantastic 2021.

I think that the Board of Fish and Board of Game meetings work best when the public and the Advisory Committees can provide input and feedback freely and in person. We think it will be extremely difficult to have meaningful meetings and discussions with the current format that is allowed. Zoom will not work when there are multiple groups and hundreds of individuals that want to participate. The impact of public testimony will be minimized when done with video.

The COVID 19 virus is still highly contagious and state medical experts still do not have it under control. The entire state of Alaska has been adversely impacted and it will be months/years maybe, before we return to anything resembling normal if ever. The vaccine timeline is still in flux and it might take 6-9 months before that is completed.

I am personally in favor of taking a break with Board of Fish and Board of Game meetings for this cycle and moving everything back at least a year. Meetings should be postponed until Alaskans can safely meet and travel to the communities throughout the state. It is difficult for some to have AC meetings via Zoom, it does not seem fair to the public or to the board to hold a meeting with this venue. There is still a fair number of fishers and hunters who do not use the internet sufficiently.

I also realize that there may be some proposals that cannot be paused like the cow moose hunt authorizations. I will participate in whatever methods are designed to cover the issues that cannot be postponed for a year (i.e., antlerless moose reauthorizations and brown bear fee tag exemptions).



Submitted By
Jacob Miller
Submitted On
1/13/2021 8:51:03 PM
Affiliation

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907-957-6245

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Hello-

I'm writing to express my concern over the currently scheduled BOF meetings in mid/ late April; I think it would be best to push the meetings off a year and let the Covid19 pandemic settle down a bit, the vaccination to be administered to a wider population and keep the larger percentage of the population safest, especially the small communities to where many folks will be returning to after the meeting. I think the smaller communities will have a tough time communicating and following along via a digital format in turn their voice won't be heard properly.

Bottomline: I think the meetings should pushed off for a year for the general safety of everyone.

Thank you for your time!



From: [jeff farvour](#)
To: [DFG, BOF Comments \(DFG sponsored\)](#)
Subject: 2021 SE BoF meeting timing
Date: Friday, January 15, 2021 11:28:48 AM

I am writing to request that the 2021 SE BoF meeting be postponed until it can be conducted in person in a safe and inclusive manner. I have actively participated in BoF for 20 years and find that by far, the most productive informed work is made in person when participants can have side meetings. This is often done over meals, before or after meals meals and during breaks- something that is nearly impossible to do web conferencing especially with sheer number of proposals to work through. By far, the best BoF decisions are made when meeting in person.

Having said that, there is opportunity to work through legitimate resource emergencies through ACR's but any new proposals should certainly be considered when we can safely and effectively meet in person.

Thank you for considering this important matter.

Sincerely, Jeff Farvour, Sitka



From: [John Murray](#)
To: [DFG, BOF Comments \(DFG sponsored\)](#)
Subject: Joint BOF and BOG work session
Date: Saturday, January 9, 2021 1:03:49 PM

I'd like to be put on record as a supporter of postponing BOF/BOG meetings until we can see our way clear of Covid health issues for the following reasons

- 1) I mostly follow SE meetings and see nothing that "has to get done".
- 2) I feel having in person meeting would put the public, Board members and staff in harm's way by following the current schedule .
- 3) As a concerned harvester and a long time member of the Sitka AC I feel having a ZOOM type meeting would not really work. As anyone who has attended these meetings ,there is no real alternative to meeting in person for the Boards, staff and the concerned users. The meetings tend to be fluid with much work being done in Committee meetings and coming up with compromise language that can help the process succeed.

Thanks you for your consideration John Murray F/V SEA BEAR Sitka 224 Observatory st 907
738 6212



Submitted By
Jon
Submitted On
1/15/2021 1:49:16 PM
Affiliation

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SITKA, Alaska 99835

Dear Joint Board,

I am a member of the Sitka AC where I represent the charter seat; my comments and opinions are only mine and do not reflect opinions of other members of the Sitka AC.

While the COVID situation poses many challenges to processes/meetings that have historically been held in person, I do not support postponing SE BOG or BOF for the current meeting cycle for the following reasons, 1) I have complete confidence in Board Supports/The Department's ability to successfully navigate an online format that allows equitable access to the meetings for all stakeholders, 2) I believe that an alternative format such as Zoom may actually provide greater access as stake holders do not have to travel to attend meetings, 3) The work that needs to be done this cycle does not go away, rather it will accumulate if we do not hold BOG/BOF meetings this cycle, 4) While fisheries and wildlife can be managed via EO (emergency order) in the mean time, it is my opinion that EO is a blunt instrument that will leave some stakeholders disadvantaged or may negatively impact their livelihoods, 5) There are very important proposals that deal with allocative issues, gear groups achieving TAC within their respective allocation, and conservation proposals that otherwise will be managed via EO which has broad implications as articulated above.

Albeit less than ideal, I strongly encourage BOG and BOF to do their very important work this cycle.

Thank you for consideration, Jon A. Martin



From: [Karen Johnson](#)
To: [DFG, BOF Comments \(DFG sponsored\)](#)
Subject: BOF/BOG meetings schedule
Date: Wednesday, January 13, 2021 4:25:27 PM

My name is Karen L. Johnson and I am a lifelong resident and commercial fisherman from Sitka, AK. I am writing to express my strong belief that the BOF & BOG meetings should be postponed until the 2020/2021 meeting cycle. I am a longtime member of our local ADF&G AC and know firsthand how important the public process is. The general public needs the opportunity to attend our meetings and I believe the public process which is so crucial will further be compromised by the Covid-19 restrictions. So much critical information will be lost by both AC members and the BOF/BOG if things move forward not to mention the negative impacts uniformed decisions could have on our resources and environment. I have already stumbled through the process of setting up ZOOM to attend a meeting and I know others who tried and are still having problems. People who do not have access to such technology or the internet/cell service to expend on it will be left out.

In summary I don't think anyone can properly represent the public whether it be an AC member or a BOF/BOG member in this current situation. There are too many gaps, too much information lost and that results in a breakdown of the very process we are supposed to be upholding.

Please postpone the meetings until the next meeting cycle.

Thank you for you time and consideration,
Karen Johnson



Submitted By
Benjamin Mohr
Submitted On
1/15/2021 4:03:58 PM
Affiliation
Kenai River Sportfishing Association

Phone
9072237635

Email
ben@krsa.com

Address
35093 Kenai Spur Hwy
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

The Kenai River Sportfishing Association (KRSA) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit fishery-conservation organization that works to ensure the long-term health and sustainability of fishery resources in the Kenai River, Cook Inlet and elsewhere in Alaska, through advocacy of sport and personal use fisheries and the promotion of science-based fishery management and conservation. KRSA has been engaged with the Alaska Board of Fisheries as a participant in the public process for many years and recognizes the value of this process in developing responsible management plans on behalf of all Alaskans.

KRSA is supportive of a return to a normal, in-person meeting schedule as soon as it is responsible to do so, and encourages the Boards to develop reasonable mitigation measures which may be implemented to speed a return to an in-person meeting schedule. While virtual meetings may be sufficient for the delivery of information, or for limited discussion, they do not allow for one of the most critical elements of a Board meeting: public engagement.

The ability for a board member to circulate among the public and engage on the topics under consideration in a less formal way are a considerable strength of the Board process. Alaska has been well served by Board of Fish and Board of Game members who “work the crowd”, hearing directly from Alaskans and facilitating informal negotiations between interested parties to find the best path forward for all. Delaying a return to in-person meetings could have a detrimental effect on established process, and on the effectiveness of the Boards.



From: [Kenneth Jones](#)
To: [DFG, BOF Comments \(DFG sponsored\)](#)
Subject: PWS meeting comments
Date: Monday, January 11, 2021 3:57:57 PM

Esteemed board of fishery members,

Please move the PWS/CR meeting date to winter. Having the meeting during active and open fisheries or having the meeting online will block user groups from participating. Please reschedule for January of 2022 when the pandemic is over and all fishery participants can safely meet in person to discuss the various and important topics.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this.

Kenneth B Jones
Samani Fisheries LLC
Cell : 9073603456
FV Serenity
FV Second Wind

This e-mail and any files transmitted with it may contain confidential material. This e-mail is intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom it is addressed. If you are not the intended recipient or have received this e-mail in error, please notify the sender by replying to the sender.



Submitted By
Lee House
Submitted On
1/15/2021 8:42:15 AM
Affiliation

Drawing from past Board of Fisheries meetings, it is clear that it would be difficult if not impossible to have a typical in-person meeting while also adhering to state and federal Covid-19 safety recommendations. This creates an unacceptable margin of risk for our communities and specifically the host community of Ketchikan. With that, I am requesting that the Board of Fisheries Meeting scheduled in Ketchikan in April 2021 be postponed until it is clear that the meeting can be held safely.

If the Board of Fisheries meeting is moved to a virtual venue, it is critical that it be carefully crafted to be inclusive and accessible. Over the last year, there have been many examples of virtual testimony and hearings leaving important voices to be heard out of the process by way of technology barriers and connectivity issues. If the meetings move to virtual, I request that a clear and transparent effort be made to be as inclusive as possible with a focus on accessibility, fairness, and equity.

Thank you for your consideration.



Submitted By
Leroy L Cabana
Submitted On
1/6/2021 12:22:07 PM
Affiliation
commercial fisherman

I am in favor of extending the PWS Board of Fishery meeting until at least October 2021. The ability to interact, have conversations and engage in normal BOF meetings without physical meetings due to the Covid pandemic justifies delaying the meeting. Vaccines are just now being distributed and it is unrealistic to believe the general public will be able to have in person meetings by March 2021. It is reasonable to believe the Covid pandemic will be behind us by fall of 2021. A couple hundred persons usually attend the PWS finfish meetings every 3 years. There doesn't seem to be anything on the current agenda that can not wait until the fall of 2021.



Submitted By
Mark E Buchner
Submitted On
1/15/2021 8:14:42 AM
Affiliation

Phone
5416477600
Email
nerka@bendcable.com
Address
P.O.Box 7819
Bend, Oregon 97708

I have been to numerous board of fish meeting for PWS since the late 1980's. You need to understand that the reason for in-person meetings is to instill the nuances of the people and the stake holders of the areas you are meeting for. This will not happen through a computer screen. You need to meet in person face-to-face with the people affected by the proposals you are considering. I have already purchased a plane ticket to arrive in Cordova on March 20th so that I can attend these meetings. I want to meet you guys in person as do all the other stake holders. I want and need to look you in the eye when I give my 3 minutes on the podium of what I beleive is important., just like I have done in the past. You cannot get the feel of what is happening through a computer screen. Either go through with the planned meeting or change the dates and or cycle.

On another note, this board is not legitimate. You have members who have not been confirmed so every proposal you rule on will result in a position that is not binding and will result in numerous legal actions. You have someone on this board who has never been to a Board of Fish meeting and you think think this is fair and balanced? You shoudl wait for legislative confirmation of all board members then reschedule at a time when all stake holders and interested people can attend. Thank you for letting me speak my opinion. Mark Buchner PWS fisherman.



From: [Marty Remund](#)
To: [DFG, BOF Comments \(DFG sponsored\)](#)
Date: Friday, January 15, 2021 10:44:33 AM

I recommend postponing the virtual spring BOF meeting until a post Covid in person meeting is possible. Sincerely, Marty Remund, Port Alexander, AK



Submitted By
Michael Mickelson
Submitted On
1/11/2021 7:27:56 AM
Affiliation
none

January 11, 2021

Members of the Joint Board Committee,

I encourage you to postpone all meetings until fall of 2021. Holding virtual meetings is not a workable solution; there are too many stake holders who want to participate. Additionally, being able to talk to board members is a critical part of the public process. There is not a way to facilitate this process virtually that is workable in a timely manner for participants or board members. At many meetings I have attended, contentious topics can be resolved by meeting with stake holders of differing viewpoints to discuss workable solutions during breaks in the meetings. Please postpone all meetings until we can safely meet in the traditional manner,

Thank you,

Mike Mickelson

Cordova, AK



From: [Mike Mickelson](#)
To: [DFG, BOF Comments \(DFG sponsored\)](#)
Subject: Board Support/ Covid 19 comments
Date: Monday, January 11, 2021 9:46:13 AM

January 11, 2021

Members of the Board of Fisheries,

I encourage you to postpone all meetings until fall of 2021. Holding virtual meetings is not a workable solution; there are too many stake holders who want to participate. Additionally, being able to talk to board members is a critical part of the public process. There is not a way to facilitate this process virtually that is workable in a timely manner for participants or board members. At many meetings I have attended, contentious topics can sometimes be resolved by meeting with stake holders of differing viewpoints to discuss workable solutions during breaks in the meetings. Please postpone all meetings until we can safely meet in the traditional manner,

Thank you for your consideration,

Mike Mickelson
Box 1504
Cordova, AK
99574



Submitted By
Peter Bradley
Submitted On
1/15/2021 12:02:28 PM
Affiliation
Herring Protectors

Given the strong possibility that an in-person Board of Fisheries meeting in Ketchikan could contribute considerably to the spread of COVID-19 throughout the region (even with precautions within the meeting hall) that does not seem like an appropriate course of action at this time.

I am in favor of either a postponed in-person meeting or an online meeting with access, open process, communication & documentation more or less commensurate to that of past in-person meetings.

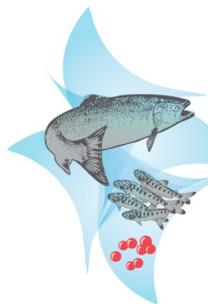
Thank you,

Peter Bradley



From: [Peter Roddy](#)
To: [DFG, BOF Comments \(DFG sponsored\)](#)
Subject: Joint board mtg
Date: Wednesday, January 6, 2021 9:02:52 AM

Please postpone regulatory meetings for one year. Informal and formal caucuses are an essential part of arriving at consensus on thorny issues. Zoom and Google meets are no substitute.



Prince William Sound
Aquaculture Corporation
DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE SALMON FISHERIES
FOR ALASKA AND THE WORLD



PC33
1 of 2

January 15, 2021

Joint Board Chairman, I am writing to the Joint Board on behalf of the Prince William Sound Aquaculture Board of Directors regarding the current conditions related to Covid-19 and the impact to BOF/BOG meetings. The unique system the State of Alaska uses to create regulatory change requires public participation at the highest level. Covid-19 unfortunately has forced Governments, private business and the general public into the arena of virtual communication. Recreating this public process in the virtual realm would unnecessarily restrict public communication with the Boards. Varying levels of communication capabilities exist across this diverse State, from fiber optic connectivity to Satellite to simply a dial up signal through a phone line. Because this communication gap exists, and in person meetings seem unreasonable currently, delaying the current Board cycle until the fall of 2021 seems appropriate. To create a level of fairness across all management regions of the State, pushing forward all Board meetings, except for emergency meetings and meeting the constitutional requirements which calls for each Board to meet at least once annually. This will create a onetime 4-year regulatory process which hopefully will push us to a point when in person meetings and normal communication channels will exist.

Best Regards,
Tom Carpenter
PWSAC Chairman

**DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE SALMON FISHERIES
FOR ALASKA AND THE WORLD**

P.O. Box 1110 · Cordova, Alaska 99574
P. 907 424 7511 · F. 907 424 7514

www.pwsac.com



Submitted By
Geoff Clark
Submitted On
1/13/2021 6:19:24 PM
Affiliation
Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation

Phone
9074247511
Email
geoff.clark@pwsac.com
Address
PO Box 1110
500 First St.
Cordova, Alaska 99574

The Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation (PWSAC) would like to formally declare its support for postponement of Board of Fisheries (BOF) meetings until the COVID-19 pandemic has subsided allowing for full and open participation by all stakeholders. Specifically, PWSAC supports rescheduling the March 4th, 2021 Hatchery Committee and the March 20th thru April 5th, 2021 Prince William Sound/Upper Copper River and Upper Susitna Rivers Finfish and Shellfish meetings.

Currently, the COVID-19 pandemic makes full public participation from stakeholders difficult and a risk to human health. None of the proposals for the upcoming meetings are emergency in nature and can appropriately be addressed later when the stakeholder participation can be safely resumed.

During the current pandemic PWSAC has instituted stringent policies and procedures to minimize risk to human health. The most effective policy to protect PWSAC's 120 employees has been to limit all non-mandatory travel and quarantine traveling employees for 14 days upon their return. This has been imperative for protecting our remote staff.

While we have been monitoring the COVID situation closely and see the recent release of the vaccine promising, there are still several trends globally that make us feel precautions need to continue until all employee safety can be assured for traveling and upon return to the workforce post travel.

Lastly, PWSAC believes the use of video conferencing limits participation and does not allow for open and direct dialogue between user groups that is a critical and normal part of the in-person meeting format.

Please consider our comments as you discuss the 2021 meeting cycle. We look forward to working with the Board of Fisheries and are happy to address any questions or concerns members may have in the coming months. We look forward to returning to a more normal meeting process soon.

Sincerely,

Geoff Clark

General Manager

Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation.



unapologetically FOR ALASKAN RESIDENTS

PO Box 60095, Fairbanks, Alaska 99706 (907) 371-7436
email info@residenthuntersofalaska.org web www.residenthuntersofalaska.org

January 11, 2021

Comments for Joint Boards Meeting

January 19, 2021

Dear Board of Fisheries and Board of Game members,

The comments below were sent to the Board of Game for the upcoming work session on January 21st, and we copy them to you now as we believe they are also relevant to Board of Fisheries as both boards consider the same scenarios.

Postponement of 2021 Meetings

Due to the ongoing pandemic and valid concerns of holding the Region IV and Statewide meetings in person this spring, RHAK supports postponing the meetings until 2022, and moving the entire cycle ahead a year. We believe the public will be unfairly disenfranchised if the board holds these meetings over web-conference.

If the board postpones the 2021 Region IV and Statewide meetings until 2022, we respectfully request that new proposals be allowed to come in for those meetings, along with new comments on those proposals. Essentially, an entirely new call for Region IV and Statewide proposals and subsequent comments, in addition to the existing proposals and comments.

Rationale: population and harvest data and individual hunting experiences change from year to year, and it is that data and experiences the public and the Department utilize when considering drafting a proposal. The board also considers this same information for board-generated proposals. It has already been nearly a year since the proposals for the 2021 meetings were sent in, and we already have new Department harvest and population data that the public and the Department should be allowed to review and then comment on with a proposal.

We are in unprecedented times and the board has already had to make some tough decisions due to the pandemic. And we believe those were the right call.

Any new proposals should not duplicate or serve the same intent as proposals already submitted, though updated data should be allowed to be added to an existing proposal.



We do indeed have the best public system of wildlife management in the country and we want to keep it that way. Please allow the public and the Department to send in new proposals for the Region IV and Statewide meetings by the May 1, 2021 deadline if the 2021 Region IV and Statewide meetings are postponed until 2022.

Sincerely,

Mark Richards
Executive Director Resident Hunters of Alaska



From: [Richard Curran](#)
To: [DFG, BOF Comments \(DFG sponsored\)](#)
Subject: Postpone SE BOF meeting
Date: Thursday, January 14, 2021 9:59:27 AM

Hello,

I have been a fisherman in Sitka for 40 years. I have participated in BOF meetings for over 20 years and have served on the Sitka AC for more than a decade. Please postpone the SE BOF meeting until next winter when we can hopefully meet in person. A virtual meeting does not allow for regular face to face conversations through the whole week. Consensus is generally reached through small interactions and builds through the week as ideas are bounced back and forth. Virtual platforms do not allow for this and tend to amplify the voices of a few people who are most comfortable in these online environments. That leaves out lots of voices and really ruins the whole process. It also silences folks that do not have technology available to them. Any true resource emergency could be dealt with through an ACR. I do not think new proposals should be solicited as this seems like a big burden on staff and there was extra time to submit SE proposals last spring. The most important thing is to wait until it is safe to hold in person meetings. Might be a good time to consider shifting to a 4 year cycle.

Thank you

Ricard Curran

Sent from my iPad



Submitted By
Richard Eliason
Submitted On
1/14/2021 6:00:47 PM
Affiliation
Comm fishermen SE

Phone
9077388111

Email
reliason@yahoo.com

Address
8475 E Gold Bullion Blvd
Palmer, Alaska 99645

COVID-19 has changed our lives short term, I ask that the BOF-BOG postpone any up coming meetings for one year.. I would hate to be infected with COVID 19 while attending a meeting that will effect my livelihood.

RI Eliason
Palmer, Ak.



Southeast Alaska Guides Organization

January 8, 2021

Chair Carlson-Van Dort
Alaska Board of Fisheries
1255 W. 8th Street
Juneau, AK 99811

Re: Scheduling considerations for Southeast Finfish meeting

Ms. Carlson-Van Dort,

SEAGO is a non-profit fishing industry organization working for the interests of Southeast charter guides and fishing lodges. We've authored one of the three king salmon management proposals to be considered by the board for the upcoming Southeast and Yakutat Finfish meeting rescheduled for April.

The timing of the meeting isn't ideal but is doable for SEAGO and industry members. However, we don't believe a virtual meeting is a good choice for dealing with important Southeast sport issues if COVID excludes an in-person venue. There may also be logistical problems in late April for sport attendees due to travel restrictions if the board concludes a physical meeting is safe.

From our perspective, there are no proposals or management issues that can't be dealt with post-fishing season (presumably after the next fall work session) if you decide it's best to postpone the meeting again.

Thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Forrest Braden".

Forrest Braden
SEAGO Executive Director
forrest@seagoalaska.org
907.723.1970



Submitted By
TAD FUJIOKA
Submitted On
1/6/2021 11:45:28 AM
Affiliation

Members of the Board of Fisheries and Board of Game:

My name is Tad Fujioka. I have served on the Sitka Fish & Game Advisory Committee as the Trapping representative since 2005, including two terms as Chair. I have personally attended and testified at multiple BoF/BoG meetings. Direct face-to-face communication, both on-record and off, is intrinsic to this uniquely-Alaskan means of establishing hunting and fishing regulations. It is conceivable that virtual communication could be utilized for a bare-bones process if necessary in emergency situations, or when the subject matter is very straightforward without need for subjective interpretation or judgment.

However, Zoom or other contemporary on-line meeting apps will in no way replicate the traditional process of physically getting representatives of all user groups together. Without a great deal of training of all parties involved, and not-yet-widely-available technology, the complexities of topics that are biologically, statistically or politically complicated will not be able to be communicated efficiently to board-members without direct back-and-forth in-person dialog. There will be minimal ability for groups to be able to directly negotiate with one another in a virtual setting. These factors will mean that board members will be repeatedly forced to chose between extreme initial positions while lacking critical first-hand or even second-hand information on the topic.

Alaska may someday get to the point of being able to have heavily-attended virtual public meetings where the all members of the public are fairly and efficiently heard, but to jump directly from our current system of traditional meetings to a fully (or even largely) virtual format in 2021 would risk board members making woefully uninformed decisions that would harm Alaskan fish and game management through at least the next board cycle, and potentially harm the resources much longer. Hence I respectfully request that that consideration of the great majority of Fish and Game proposals (including the three fisheries proposals that I have submitted this cycle) be postponed until large in-person meetings are safe for all Alaskan who wish to fully participate in this special process that you board members have volunteered to lead.

Thank you, Tad Fujioka



December 8, 2020

Alaska Board of Fisheries
c/o Glenn Haight
Executive Director
ADF&G Board Support Section
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

Dear Board of Fisheries Members:

The Juneau-based Territorial Sportsmen, Inc. (TSI) respectfully requests that the Southeast Alaska/Yakutat Board of Fisheries meeting originally scheduled for January, 2021 be postponed until effective safeguards can be developed and implemented to deal with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We believe virtual meetings do not allow for the full spectrum of information sharing and public engagement in the regulatory process, and we further believe it to be highly unlikely that meeting participants will be vaccinated by April 2021 (even if they choose to be), thereby creating a health risk to participants.

While virtual meetings have become used for bringing organizations and the public together in the face of the pandemic, we oppose virtual meetings as a venue for the Board of Fisheries process for the following reasons:

1. Southeast Alaska fisheries issues are diverse, complicated, and challenging for board members as well as for members of the participating public. Added to this is the fact that several new board members have come onboard since the last Southeast meeting three years ago. From our experience, personal interactions with board members at scheduled meetings is critically important for members of the public who have interests and insights on issues that they wish to share and have considered in the decision-making process.
2. Board proposals are often amended, sometimes multiple times, before their final adoption. Through Alaska's open board process, the public often helps to formulate and



guide final amended regulatory products through interactions with board members at breaks, by submitting timely Record Copies (RCs), and by participating in impromptu gatherings to develop acceptable and suitable regulatory language. This would all be lost if the upcoming SE Alaska meeting were to be held online, with the risk of promulgating regulations that lack the benefit of broad, critical, and useful input from various and diverse interests.

TSI believes the current fisheries regulations can withstand another season without the need for a board meeting. This belief is based on our knowledge that department staff has Emergency Order (EO) authority to address fisheries conservation issues in a timely manner, and with the knowledge that the Commissioner and Board both have Emergency Regulation (ER) authority to handle conservation, allocation, or other emergencies, including stocks of concern, without general board meetings.

As far as other areas of the state are concerned, the fairest way to deal with postponement of the meetings for this cycle is to postpone all areas by one year, effectively creating a one-time 4-year cycle for regulatory board meetings.

When the board takes up Southeast fisheries issues in January 2022, it can do so with direct and meaningful in-person input that is critical to sound decision making and the public process.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have questions about our request.

Sincerely,

Doug Larsen, President

Territorial Sportsmen Inc.



Submitted By
Timothy J Moore
Submitted On
1/15/2021 11:02:24 AM
Affiliation

Phone
9073998031

Email
seascapewe@gmail.com

Address
2979 Golden Plover
PO Box 1646
Homer, Alaska 99603-1646

Board Members:

My comment is that only Alaska Department of Fish and Game authored proposals should be possibly considered in a web conferencing meeting. It would compromise the Board process too much to consider all other types of proposals. The public would be disenfranchised without meaningful access to Board members in a web conferencing format.

In closing, I believe the regular scheduled area meetings should be postponed till next year. Our hopes that the Covid pandemic will decrease in 2022.

Sincerely,

Timothy J Moore



Submitted By
Timothy Murphy
Submitted On
1/11/2021 3:10:26 PM
Affiliation

To Whom It May Concern;

Regarding the potential to postpone the 2021 Board or Game/Fisheries schedule seems rather extreme and would lead to scheduling and budgetary issues and more than likely force the delay of the following years meeting schedules. All for a virus with a 99% survival rate on a per person basis? And with the vaccine readily available this would only put an unnecessary monkeywrench into state board planning.

Taking standard precautions, hand washing, masks, distancing, and even video conferencing all or in part with the public would make meetings safe enough. And if people are sick, tell them to stay home!

Id offer my 2 cents but I have to go FISHING first,

Sincerely,

Timothy Murphy



From: [Victoria OConnell Curran](#)
To: [DFG, BOF Comments \(DFG sponsored\)](#)
Subject: Postpone SE BOF meeting until it can be held in person
Date: Friday, January 15, 2021 12:10:30 PM

Hello,

I urge the Board of Fisheries to postpone their spring SE 2021 BOF meeting until such time that folks can meet in person. I worked for ADFG for over 20 years and was very involved in the BOF process and meetings. Since retiring I have also served on the local ADFG AC and the NPFMC AP. Having just been through 16 months of virtual meetings with NPFMC I do not think this is a good format for BOF. So much of what happens at the BOF is done in the hallways, at meals, during walks etc - totally outside the meeting period. To hold a virtual meeting takes away the opportunity for regular people to interact with the Board and other public in a meaningful way. Virtual break out rooms and other electronic meeting spaces do not provide the same access. People comfortable with public speaking, ecommerce, and zoom will dominate the meeting and discussion even if this is not their intent. Any true resource emergency can be taken up under an ACR. With the roll out of the vaccine we should be good to meet in person by next winter. That is not that long to wait to allow for an inclusive and productive meeting that allows for creativity and compromise.

Thank you,

--

Tory O'Connell Curran
Grateful to live on Lingít Aaní



From: [Tracey Nuzzi](#)
To: [DFG, BOF Comments \(DFG sponsored\)](#)
Subject: Joint Board Meeting Comments
Date: Friday, January 15, 2021 3:59:05 PM

Dear BOF and BOG,

Please consider postponing meetings where regulatory change decisions are being made.

What we value in AK's process is stakeholder involvement. Stakeholder involvement is paramount to the Board of Fisheries process as we know it. Remote meetings limit stakeholder participation and change the unique format of Board of Fisheries meetings and are an unacceptable alternative.

Online meetings pose logistical challenges such as the Committee of the Whole process, as well as limit the face-to-face interactions between user groups that are valuable during a Board of Fish meeting.

Not to mention the stress that us stakeholders are undergoing as parents, business owners, and diligent safe Alaskans, we need some time to get vaccines statewide and then get back to these important issues.

Thank you,

Tracey Nuzzi
Cordova resident



Submitted By
Hannah Heimbuch
Submitted On
1/15/2021 3:48:02 PM
Affiliation
Under Sixty Cod Harvesters

Members of the Joint Board:

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on meeting scheduling in response to Covid-19 complications. I am writing on behalf of the Under Sixty Cod Harvesters, a fisheries trade organization representing fishing vessels under 60 feet harvesting Pacific cod with pot gear in the Gulf of Alaska, Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands. Our members also harvest sablefish halibut, salmon and herring.

USCH supports a full delay of the boards' meeting cycle, until such a time that regular in-person meetings can resume. We recommend conducting virtual meetings for *only* those urgent items that cannot be delayed. Such items should be those identified as a timely management or conservation concern. It is important that there be ample opportunity for public comment on the decisions around what is taken up virtually.

We believe a delay is the right approach for several reasons. It is not yet appropriate to gather for in-person public meetings, and virtual meetings do not offer the level of robust engagement around which the Board process is designed. Public input and stakeholder engagement are critical towards the functionality and operations of the boards and resource management. We believe it would be better to delay by a year than to change to a fully virtual format (with the exception of urgent issues).

We also believe a delay is preferable to trying to incorporate missed meetings into a future cycle. This would place extraordinary strain on Department staff and Advisory Committee participants, along with the many other Alaskan stakeholders who participate in multiple aspects of this process.

We urge the Joint Board to decide on a delay at this meeting, providing some much needed clarity to fishery and game stakeholders as they plan for their ability to engage in this important process.

Thank you for your consideration,

Hannah Heimbuch, USCH

1/15/2021



Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

Please do not have a PWS BOF meeting via web conferencing. Please consider postponing all meeting cycles to a 4- year cycle for one full state BOF cycle, would mean postponing until 2021/2022 meeting cycle.

A one year delay in BOF cycle; compared to most citizens and board members COVID-19 experiences could be called benign. Everybody can live with their issues for one more year. There are no pressing biological concerns except for those already identified by the AC on the Copper Delta Coho ie 18 mile system.

Thank you

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Renner".

John Renner

Co-chair Copper River PWS AC