

UNALASKA FISH & GAME LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES FOR FEBRUARY 20, 2017

CALL TO ORDER:

At 12:10PM by Chairman Kelty

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Frank Kelty Chair

Jennifer Shockley,

Shari Coleman,

Tim Mahoney,

Melissa Good, arrived at the meeting at 12:27PM

Don Goodfellow

Jeff Hancock, Alt.

ABSENT:

Roger Rowland

Mike Holman

Dustan Dickerson

Steven Gregory

GUESTS PRESENT:

Miranda Westphal, ADF&G Unalaska Office Area Management Biologist; Larissa Syverson, telephonically Taryn O'Connor-Brito ADF&G Support Dillingham, and Lisa Fox, ADFG Commercial salmon Kodiak.

1. ADDITIONS and Changes to the AGENDA:

Chair Kelty, under Old Business moved up Proposal 280 Unalaska Front beach subsistence salmon bag limit proposal ahead of the crab proposals; No objection by the committee.

2. APPROVE AGENDA:

Agenda was reviewed and adopted with the addition.

3. APPROVE PRIOR MEETING MINUTES:

Motion to approve minutes for August 16, 2016 meeting was made by Shockley, seconded by Mahoney.

Minutes were approved by voice vote 6-0.

4. ADF&G UPDATE:

Miranda Westphal, ADF&G staff: she updated the committee on the Opilio Snow Crab fishery and the Golden King Crab fishery in the Aleutian Islands. Ms. Westphal also

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advised the committee that state water groundfish fishery for the Dutch Harbor district for Pacific Cod would be opening shortly, with an allocation of 38 million pounds she expected about 20 vessels to participate in the fishery.

5. LEGISLATIVE:

- a) The Unalaska AC accepted the resignation of committee member Ms. Augie Kochuten. Motion made by Shockley second by Goodfellow Motion passed 6-0. Chair Kelty thanked her for her service to the committee and would send a letter to that affect.
- b) The Unalaska AC appointed Alternate Committee Member Jeff Hancock to fill the balance of Ms. Kochuten term. Motion made by Shockley seconded by Mahoney Motion passed 6-0.
- c) The committee discussed the upcoming elections scheduled for June 2017 and the need to fill the alternative seat, and the other 1 year board seats that will be coming up in June of 2017

6. OLD BUSINESS:

- a) **Review of Proposal 280 Unalaska Front Beach subsistence red salmon bag limit to be heard at the statewide crab meeting in Anchorage March 20-24th 2017.**

Proposal # 280 5 ACC 01.380 Subsistence fishing permits: Decrease the number of sockeye salmon that may be retained in the subsistence salmon fishery on Front Beach in the Unalaska Bay District to no more than 10 fish, as follows:
Motion to support by Goodfellow seconded by Mahoney.

Discussion, Unalaska AC proposal all committee members present in support.

Motion to support passed 7-0

- b) **Review of Alaska Board of Fisheries Statewide King and Tanner Crab Proposals 242-264 to be heard at the Statewide crab meeting in Anchorage, March 20-24th 2017**

Proposal #242 5AAC34.917 Saint Matthew Island section, Blue King Crab harvest strategy. Correct an error in regulation to accurately specify the percentage of mature male blue king crab used in setting the total allowable catch as follows:

Motion to support Proposal 242: made by Goodfellow, seconded by Mahoney,

Discussion, Housekeeping measure, ADFG proposal, no opposition.

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Motion passes 6-0

Proposals #243 through #249 No Action by Unalaska AC

Proposal #250 5AAC 35.506. Area J Registration Allow full retention of legal male C. Opilio Tanner crab incidentally harvested by vessels targeting C. bairdi Tanner crab in in the Bering Sea District west of 166' West long., as follows:

Note: Committee member Melissa Good has arrived at the meeting at 12:27PM 7 committee members in attendance.

Motion to support #250 by Mahoney second by Goodfellow

Discussion: Majority of the committee felt that this proposal would reduce handling mortality; and it wouldn't result in a large percentage of bycatch due to Bairdi crab pots being rigged with larger escape mechanisms allowing most opilio to escape threw the pot tunnels or escape rings in the pots. Opposition felt this could lead to high-grading on large opilio, and there could be catch accounting difficulty for ADFG. If there is no defined retention percentage in place there is the possibility of a harvester targeting Bairdi but taking large amounts of opilio instead of Bairdi, the target specie.

Motion passed 4-3

Proposals #251 5 AAC 35.510 Fishing seasons for Registration Area J. Change season closer date from March 31 to April 15 for C. Bairdi tanner crab in waters W 166' Long as follows:

Motion to support Good second by Goodfellow

Discussion focused on crab molt/mating timing issues, a major concern for ADFG the committee shared the concern.

Motion to support failed 1-6

Proposal #252 & #253 taken together, 5 AAC 39.645 and 5 AAC 39.670 Shellfish Observer Program. Allow a vessel carrying an onboard observer to rig, bait, and set gear for a new crab fishery before fully exiting the crab fishery for which the observer was briefed as follows:

Motion to support by Shockley second by Goodfellow

Discussion: The committee felt this was one of the benefits of the crab rationalization program and would be a cost saving that would have a positive economic benefit for the crab fleet, no opposition.

Motion to support passed 7-0

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Proposal #254 5 AAC35.521 Identification of Bering Sea Tanner crab. Amend the description of a hybrid Tanner crab so that hybrid designation is dependent upon the target Tanner crab fishery for which the vessel is registered as follows:

Motion to support by Goodfellow second by Hancock

Discussion: Majority of the AC felt that it is very difficult for harvesters and processors alike to accurately designate whether a Tanner crab hybrid is an *Opilio* or *Bairdi* species. The department wants the hybrid crab harvested and taken out of the fishery to slow down cross breeding between the species and many of the AC members felt that this is a good way to do it. It would also reduce vessel citations. Opposed agreed with ADFG concerns on catch accounting of the different species and high grading.

Motion to support passed 4-3

Proposal #255 5 AAC 35.506 Area J registration. Allow full retention of incidentally taken legal male *C. opilio* Tanner crab when a vessel is participating in the *C. bairdi* Tanner crab fishery east of 166°W long, as follows:

Motion to support by Good second by Goodfellow

Discussion: Majority felt that this would reduce handling mortality and wouldn't be a large percentage of *Opilio* crab taken as crab pots are rigged so that most *opilio* would escape out of the larger required escape mechanisms. More *opilio* are showing up east of 166° W long, increasing the possibility of handling mortality. Doing this is one of the benefits of a rationalized IFQ crab fishery. Opposed felt could lead to high grading on large *opilio* and cause catch accounting difficulty for ADFG. If no retention percentage is in place, this proposal could lead to a harvester targeting *Bairdi*, and retaining a large amount of *Opilio* instead of *Bairdi*, the targeted specie.

Motion to support passed 5-2

Proposal #256 5AAC 35.506 Area J Registration. Allow full retention of legal male *bairdi* Tanner crab incidentally harvested by vessels targeting Bristol Bay Red King crab as follows: 5AAC 35.506 (i) (2) should be amended to read east of 166°W as incidental harvest while the vessel operator is registered for the Bristol Bay Red King Crab fishery; a vessel operator that is registered to fish for Bristol Bay Red King crab may also retain all legal male *C. bairdi* Tanner crab taken incidentally during normal Bristol Bay Red King crab commercial operations.

Motion to support, Goodfellow, second by Mahoney

Discussion: The majority felt that this may not be a good idea, with the uncertainty that ADFG has with the *Bairdi* fishery now and that there would be a high amount of

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mortality it Bairdi were held in the same hold as king crab. ADFG's main concern was having no percentage limit in place for this fishery. They felt that this was not a good idea and would be open to a percentage of bycatch but not wide open. The case was made once again, that if this was enacted it would save on mortality in the handling of bairdi Tanner and you have a large stock of legal male crab on the increase now.

Motion to support failed 1-6

Proposal #257 5 AAC 35.510 Fishing seasons for Registration Area J. Extend the Bering Sea District Eastern Boundary for retention of C. Opilio Tanner crabs from 166°W long, to 165°W long, as follows:

Motion to support by Mahoney seconded by Good

Discussion: AC felt that this was a good proposal to move the boundary to the east by one degree, information from harvesters is that more Opilio are being seen further east and this proposal would allow managers to respond to species range shifts. This will open some new ground for this fishery and hopefully will be of some economic benefit to the harvesters.

Motion to support passed 7-0

Proposal #258 5 AAC 35.506 Area J registration. Extend the Bering Sea District eastern boundary for retention of C Bairdi Tanner crab 163°W long, as follows:

Motion to Support by Good second by Goodfellow

Discussion: ADFG has concerns of the impacts of King Crab bycatch if the directed biardi Tanner crab fishery moves further east into a sensitive Bristol Bay Red King crab area. Committee members were all in opposition of this proposal.

Motion to support failed 0-7

Proposal #259 5 ACC 34.925 Lawful gear for Registration Area Q. Specify that escape rings and mesh are placed on a vertical plane or side of the pot in the Saint Matthew Blue King crab fishery as follows:

Motion to support by Coleman seconded by Mahoney

Discussion: Housekeeping proposal by ADFG committee was in support.

Motion to support passed 7-0

Proposal #260 5 AAC 35.521 Identification of Bering Sea Tanner crab. Adopt by reference the ADFG Chionoecetes Crab quick Reference Guide for C. bairdi and C. opilio Tanner Crab as follows:

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Motion to support Shockley seconded by Hancock

Discussion: ADFG guide for identification of a Hybrid Tanner crab a housekeeping issue for ADFG that will be used by harvesters and processors.

Motion to support passed 7-0

Proposal #261 5 AAC 35.506 Area J registration. Allow *C. opilio* Tanner crab bycatch up to 5% retention in the Bering Sea District *C. bairdi* Tanner crab fishery east of 166°W long, as follows:

Motion to support by Good and seconded by Goodfellow

Discussion: This proposal came from ADFG and at the 5% level there was no support by the committee. A motion was made to amend for a retention amount of up to 25% of *opilio* in the *C. bairdi* Tanner crab fishery. Most of the committee felt 5% was too low and would put a burden on processors of having to change operation methods for such small amounts of crab and this proposal would decrease handling mortality. Amendment passed 5-2

Motion to support amended main motion passed 5-2

Proposal # 262 5 AAC 35.505 Description of Registration Area J Districts; 5 ACC 35.506 Area J registration; 5 ACC 535.50X Western Aleutian Tanner crab harvest strategy; Registration Area J 5 ACC 35.558 Reporting requirements for Registration Area J and 5 ACC 35.590 Vessel length restrictions. Develop a management plan for the Western Aleutian Tanner crab fishery as follows:

Motion to support by Good and seconded Shockley

Discussion: This proposal would setup a small boat Tanner crab fishery for vessels 60' ft. and under when the size of the resource justifies a fishery. The committee thought that adding language to the proposal that would allow a Commissioner permit to be issued would assist in getting surveys done that would be needed by ADFG to have a small fishery opened. We had amendment made, and seconded to add Commissioner Permit authority back into the proposal that amendment passed 7-0.

Motion to support amended main motion passed 7-0

Proposal #263 5 AAC 39.645 Shellfish onboard observer program. Reduce onboard observer coverage rates and change observer deployment periods in the Aleutian Island Golden King Crab fishery as follows:

Motion to support by Shockley, seconded by Hancock

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Discussion: No support for this proposal. This fishery has not had any surveys done, except for a recent industry funded survey. Very little is known about this species except information gathered from the observers. Committee felt now is not the time to reduce observer coverage in this fishery.

Motion to support failed 0-7

Proposal #264 5 AAC 34.625. Lawful gear for Registration Area O. repeals provisions allowing concurrent harvest of red king crab and golden king crab in Registration Area O as follows:

Motion to support by Good seconded by Goodfellow

Discussion: This is an ADFG proposal. This proposal repeals regulations in Area O the Dutch Harbor area; this proposal would not allow vessels to harvest IFQ and non IFQ Red King Crab and Golden King Crab simultaneously. The committee was in favor of the repeal of this regulation.

Motion to support passed 7-0

7. New Business

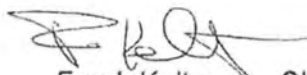
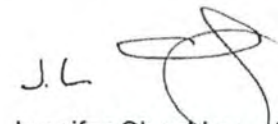
- a.) Discussion item on Board of Fisheries action at the Kodiak Board of Fisheries meeting on Bairdi Tanner Crab proposal 278 that failed to pass on a 3-3 tie vote. The committee also discussed possible future action by the BOF on the Tanner Crab harvest strategy at a future meeting later in the year.
- b.) Chairman Kelty asked the committee support to write a letter of support for Brad Davis, ADFG staff in the subsistence division; the letter was to US Fish and Wildlife Service in support of funding to collect data on the harvest and use of subsistence resources in Unalaska. Specifically, the project would be used to get a better understanding of the current harvest and use of salmon for home use. Household harvest surveys with a random selection of Unalaska households will produce community harvest estimates for all wild food resources; a set of more open-ended questions will collect respondents' observations related to environmental, climatic, and regulatory factors that may have affected fish harvests over time. Harvest surveys will also include questions related to household demographics, resource sharing, mapped locations of harvest areas, and observations of natural or social changes affecting access to resources.
- c.) Discussion item update by Chair Kelty, on information gathered at the ADFG Kodiak office on salmon weir construction and on applications that will needed to be submitted to setup a weir project in Unalaska.

8. Public Comment/Voice of the Membership: None

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9. **Next Meeting/Date and Time:** June of 2017 at the call of the chair

10. **Adjournment:** Motion made at 2:06PM no opposition.

		
Frank Kelty, Chairman	J.L. Jennifer Shockley, Secretary	Date
3/18/17	3/20/17	