

On-Time AC Comment List

Fairbanks Advisory Committee..... AC01



Fairbanks Fish & Game Advisory Committee

Interior Region Fish & Game Advisory Committees

Kirk Schwalm
Chairman
PO Box 83825
Fairbanks, AK 99708

Central
Delta Junction
Eagle
Fairbanks
GASH
Koyukuk River
Lake Minchumina
McGrath

Middle Nenana River
Middle Yukon River
Minto-Nenana
Ruby
Stony Holitna
Tanana-Rampart-Manley
Upper Tanana Fortymile
Yukon Flats

November 12, 2020

To: Alaska Board of Game

Re: November 18, 2020 Agenda Change Requests and Other Topics

Dear Chair Hoffman,

The Fairbanks Fish & Game Advisory Committee took up several of the Board of Game's November 18, 2020 agenda items at its November 9, 2020 zoom meeting.

First, the committee supported Board Member Barrett's request for emergency regulations allowing Unit 13 permit holders to harvest 40-mile caribou this winter. Most of the comments were in support of the additional opportunity in the unusual time of super abundance. Additionally, the winter hunt does not present the same crowding or environmental issues that concerned the public in this years fall hunt.

Next, the committee did not support ACR 7, to increase the use of targeted hunts for 40-mile caribou. While the committee is sensitive to the concerns raised by the public after this years fall hunt, and is committed to working with the public to alleviate those concerns, it did not believe the ACR criteria was met.

The committee did support ACR 3, based on the biological concern meeting the ACR criteria. Comments in opposition noted that full curl harvest creates no biological concern. Comments in support noted the winter hunt closure.

The ACR also supported ACR 2. The committee generally believed the pandemic is an unexpected event under the criteria. Comments in opposition noted it did not meet the criteria.

Sincerely,

Kirk Schwalm, Chair

Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee
11/9/2020 Meeting Minutes
Teleconference/Zoom meeting

I. Call to Order: Chair at 6:33

II. Roll Call:

	<u>CHAIR</u> Kirk Schwalm	<u>VICE-CHAIR</u> Mark Richards	<u>SECRETARY</u> Mark Oppe	Jeff Lucas	Gale Vick	Mike Quinn	Mike Tinker	John Wisniewski
Present	x	x	x	x	x			x
Absent							x	
Abs/Excused						x		
	Levi Lewellyn	John Siegfried	Richard Doering	Warren Guichici	Mike Bryan	Mike Kramer	Chuck Derrick	Virgil Umphenour (alternate)
Present	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Absent								
Abs/Excused								

III. Introduction of Guests: Al Barrette (BOG), Karen Brewster, Jim Sackett, Walter Brinkman, Dick & Mary Bishop, Reed Morisky, Sam Ferrara, Bruce Ervin, Sven Grage, Diana Weinberger (DNR)

Fish & Game Staff Present: Nissa Pilcher, Tony Hollis, Mark Nelson, SGT Potter (AWT)

IV. Comments

Chair Comments: none

Vice Chair: Just hope that everyone is familiar with ACRs for discussion tonight.

Trapping: none

Game: none

Fish: none

AC Member Comments: Chuck Derrick believes that shifting greater portion of Fortymile harvest to the winter hunt will adequately address many of the concerns regarding trail damage.



Public Comments: Dick Bishop believes AC should support ACR 7 brought up by Sarah Bear regarding Fortymile caribou hunt. Further discussion on how to learn from this year's hunt would be worthwhile.

Karen Brewster would also like the AC to support ACR 7.

V. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes: approval of Oct. 19, 2020 minutes by unanimous consent

VI. Approval of Agenda: approved by unanimous consent

VII. Old Business: none

VIII. New Business:

F&G Staff Reports: Unit 20B moose surveys will begin as soon as weather permits. First moose harvested in Minto Flats this weekend. Quota of 15 moose expected to be met soon.

AWT has been patrolling Fortymile winter hunt along Steese Highway. Activity has been slow since opening weekend.

Discussion of BOG Teleconference Topics: Al Barrette (BOG) spoke in favor of allowing Unit 13 subsistence caribou hunters to participate in other caribou hunts. Options could allow other household members (not subsistence permit holders) to harvest 2 Fortymile caribou, successful Unit 13 subsistence permit holders to harvest an additional Fortymile caribou. Move to support this request by Mark Richards, seconded by Richard Doering. Karen Brewster asks for clarification of the purpose of this proposal. It would allow additional opportunity for caribou harvest since Fortymile bag limit is currently 2 caribou. Chuck Derrick would like to know if this is only for the current regulatory year. If the Board does not act to make this permanent, it will only be valid for 120 days. Mark Richards asks if the Board expects an influx of out of area hunters if this proposal passes and if local communities have a position on this. Al Barrette states that he does not know what to expect based on access to the herd. Virgil Umphenour believes this may result in problems similar to Unit 20 antlerless hunts in the past that were abused through proxy hunting. Motion to support the proposal approved by unanimous consent.

Discussion of ACRs: Regarding ACR 7, Kirk Schwalm mentioned that the department already has discretionary authority to close portions of the Fortymile hunt. Mark Richards does not support this ACR because he does not believe it meets the criteria. Karen Brewster stated that in 2012 there was a targeted winter hunt, and this could be done in the future for the fall hunt. She also asks why this does not meet department criteria. Mark Richards believes that this does not meet several criteria, including that there is no biological concern. Dick Bishop believes that efforts to manage the size of the Fortymile herd will continue to result in the types of problems experienced this year until the herd size reaches management objectives. Too little attention is being paid to the effects of heavy vehicular traffic on state lands because in the past there seemed to be less volume of ATV traffic. Various land management agencies need to work together to



address this issue. Virgil Umphenour clarified difference between ACRs and petitions. Department will reject ACRs that do not meet the criteria. Karen Brewster asked how members of the public can request emergency Board action, and what the appropriate timing for that would be. Kirk Schwalm suggested contacting Board members directly through the BOG website. Al Barrette clarified the process of the Board generating a proposal. 2 members can add items to the Board agenda, but the full Board must approve further action. Mark Oppe states that many of the concerns behind this ACR can be addressed through existing discretionary authority to close zones/specific parts of the hunt area and better education/enforcement of ORV weight limits and off limits areas. Karen Brewster asked about the possibility of mitigating land damage through ORV registration. Motion to support ACR 7 by Gale Vick. Second by Mark Richards. Motion failed unanimously on roll call vote.

Al Barrette states that we need to think about what the population goals for the Fortymile herd are. High herd numbers will result in high harvests and high hunter participation in this hunt. Current management plan calls for population of 50-100,000 caribou. Tony Hollis believes Fortymile herd is probably declining. Other species are affected by the Fortymile hunt. More Fortymile caribou hunters put additional pressure on moose in this area, which has lower population density. Consistently having so many caribou hunters on the Steese will likely lead to additional restrictions on moose hunts in this area, including antler restrictions. The department has tools to address concerns with the Fortymile hunt when the numbers have come down.

Mark Richards asks for discussion of ACR 3, regarding closure of sheep hunting in Unit 19C for 2 years or to shorten the season. There may be a biological concern if existing regulations remain in place. Resident Hunters of Alaska oppose limitations on resident hunters in this area. Mark Richards believes the ACR does meet the criteria, but only non-residents should be limited. Mark Richards moves to support ACR 3, seconded by Mike Bryan. Mike Kramer believes that harvesting of full curl rams does not have a negative impact on overall sheep populations. Any ram does have a significant effect on sheep populations. He does not believe that harvest in this area has resulted in population decline. Virgil Umphenour agrees regarding the impact of full curl ram harvest on sheep populations. Kirk Schwalm called the question. Roll call vote, AC opposed to ACR 3 by vote of 9-2.

Virgil Umphenour asks for discussion of ACR 2 allowing transfer of 2020 Unit 24D moose permits to 2021 or to allow permit holders to reapply for 2021. These hunts were negatively affected by COVID this year, and the permit holders should have an opportunity to hunt. Motion to support ACR 2 by Virgil Umphenour, seconded by Mark Richards. Roll call vote, AC supports the ACR 2 by vote of 10-1.

Schedule Game/Trapping Subcommittee Meeting: Mark Richards has spoken to Jeff Lucas and suggests Nov. 23 and/or 24. Meeting will be on Zoom. Both dates acceptable to AC members. Motion to hold the subcommittee meeting at 6PM on Nov. 23 by Mark Richards, seconded by Chuck Derrick. Approved by unanimous consent.

Other: Mike Bryan asked about 2021 permit draw application. Do number of applications reflect number of hunters or number of times people put in for the hunt? Tony Hollis clarified that this is the number of times people put in for each hunt.

IX. Adjourn: Chair at 8:21

Minutes Recorded by Mark Oppe