

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
MSB Fish and Wildlife Commission
Regular Meeting: May 9, 2024
DSJ Building, Lower Level Conference Room/TEAMS
MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Andy Couch called the meeting to order at 4:02 PM.

II. ROLL CALL – DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Present:

Andy Couch

Pete Probasco

Gabe Kitter

Larry Engel

Bill Gamble – left at 5:49 pm

Kendra Zamzow

Jim Sykes

Howard Delo – arrived at 4:12 pm

Absent:

Tim Hale

Quorum was established.

III. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

AC read the land acknowledgement:

"We acknowledge that we are meeting on traditional lands of the Dena'ina and Ahtna Dene people, and we are grateful for their continued stewardship of the land, fish, and wildlife throughout time immemorial."

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

PP moved to approve the agenda; seconded by GK.

Amendment by LE: Discuss NDSN memo (in meeting handout) under the EEZ agenda item.

No objection, motion passed unanimously as amended.

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

PP moved to approve the April 11th minutes; seconded by LE.

No objection, motion passed unanimously.

VII. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Stephen Braund – Northern District Set Netters

Neil DeWitt – member of the public

Ben Americus – Chickaloon Native Village, new fisheries biologist, from Cordova

Chennery Fife – Trout Unlimited

VIII. STAFF/AGENCY REPORTS & PRESENTATIONS

Staff Report – Maija DiSalvo

Chair’s Report – AC

Discussion about communications with ADF&G Commissioner regarding stocks of concern, king salmon ESA petition, attendance at the NDSNA meeting, and state management of the drift gillnet fishery.

Waterbody Setback Advisory Board Report – KZ

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. ADF&G Game Season Summary Meeting

B. NOAA Fisheries

i. Comments re: Cook Inlet EEZ Proposed 2024 Harvest Specifications

Main Motion: PP moved to approve the letter as drafted; seconded by LE.

Amendment by AC: say “we appreciate federal effort to have the EEZ fishery on same day as regular openings of the state fishery for conservation purposes.” – under FISHING PERIODS as a second bullet on red page 11; seconded by KZ.

No objection, amendment passed unanimously.

Amendment by JS: add “subsistence” to the list in the first non-italicized section on Red page 10; seconded by LE.

No objection, amendment passed unanimously.

Amendment by AC: on red page 9, after last non-italicized line, add the phrase, “italicized throughout the document” to clarify reference to amendment 16; seconded by LE.

No objection, amendment passed unanimously.

Main Motion: No objection, motion passed unanimously as amended.

ii. Gulf of Alaska Chinook – Petition for Endangered/Threatened Status

iii. Northern District Set Netters Association Response/EEZ Management

HD moved to draft a letter of apology to NDSNA for the overstatements, and relay that FWC will do our best to communicate better in future prior to public statements; seconded by PP.

Amendment by AC: will also notify ADF&G Commissioner through a second letter.

No objection, motion passed unanimously as amended.

PP moved to create a work group, made up of HD, GK, AC, to review draft letter written by AC; seconded by HD.

No objection, motion passed unanimously.

LE moved to contact Colton Lipke with ADF&G to ask how they intend to manage the commercial fishery in relation to the EEZ (LE will draft correspondence and HD will review); seconded by JS.

No objection, motion passed unanimously.

Items Pending Updates:

- a) State Legislative Budget – JS gave an update on the legislative process and funding requests for ADF&G projects in the MSB; FWC interest in having reference documents to back up funding requests in the future (how much has been spent on fish passage, pike eradication, etc.).
- b) Susitna Basin Recreational Rivers Plan Update – No update
- c) Beaver Meadows Subdivision – No update
- d) Float Plane Development – list of tasks for applicant to complete for Army Corps permit, deemed an inadequate application.

X. NEW BUSINESS

A. Stock of Concern Designation

Discussion of submitting an agenda change request ahead of the August 14th deadline and about connecting with the Wild Fish Conservancy regarding ESA submissions, and the importance of data gathering to create a compelling argument.

HD moved to submit a stock of concern request to the board for king salmon in Cook Inlet.

Amendment by HD: change main motion to “Northern District” instead of “Cook Inlet.”

No second, motion fails.

Request to keep on future agenda.

B. 2025 CAPSIS Update

**JS moved to extend the meeting 15 minutes; seconded by PP.
No objection, motion passed unanimously.**

**KZ moved to form a work group to work on CAPSIS request, consisting of PP, AC, and GK; seconded by PP.
No objection, motion passed unanimously.**

C. National Fish Habitat Partnership Board

Palmer Visit – August 1, 1:00-5:00 pm; HD volunteered to present to the board regarding work the FWC has done in collaboration with the Matsu Basin Salmon Habitat Partnership.

D. Susitna Watana Hydro Project

Thank you to the Susitna River Coalition for the work in preparing the report, tied into broader energy issues; request to keep on agenda for future discussion.

**JS moved to extend the meeting an additional 15 minutes; seconded by PP.
No objection, motion passed unanimously.**

E. House Bill 169 – Fisheries Rehabilitation Permit

Will continue to monitor progress and potentially have on agenda in future.

F. House Bill 368 – Clean Energy/Skwentna Coal Project

JS reported that it has been in finance committee in house since 3/22/24 and may not come up this session.

XI. MEMBER COMMENTS

PP – Summer is short, enjoy it with family and friends.

HD – good meeting; active year for FWC – did a lot of good things, flood gates are just opening for what we could get involved with.

KZ – appreciate the meeting; learned a lot, addressing declines in kings and cohos – important and thorny; providing updates to Chickaloon on all of our meetings; appreciates JS staying on top of budget process.

GK – has homework cut out for me; if FWC sees anything I might learn from, send it to me; passion for kings and learning about the process.

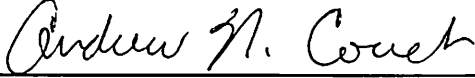
JS – thank you for all the work and for the staff support; will continue to stay informed and be involved with the budget process.

LE – has been a heavy year with involvement, pleased to have been a part of the FWC; new, young views and ideas, commission has come together; have put forth great work; good crew, happy to have a new Assembly person showing up.

XII. NEXT MEETING DATE: ADF&G Game Summary – Thursday, June 6, 2024 @ 5:00 pm

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

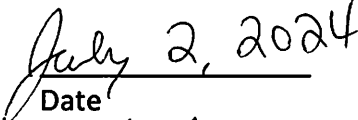
HD moved to adjourn; seconded by LE.
No objection, motion passed unanimously.
Meeting adjourned at 6:30 PM.




Andy Couch, FWC Chair



Maija DiSalvo, Planning Division Staff



Date



Date