

MINUTES

WASHINGTON FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION MEETING

December 2-3, 2011

Natural Resource Building, Room 172
Olympia, Washington

ATTENDANCE

COMMISSION:

Miranda Wecker, Chair
Gary Douvia, Vice Chair
David Jennings
Connie Mahnken
Chuck Perry
Rollie Schmitt
Brad Smith

COMMISSION STAFF:

Tami Lininger
Erin Gariépy

Greg Schirato
Joe McCanna

Ron Warren

Dan Budd

Bruce Bjork

Craig Burley

Kirt Hughes

and other Department Staff

DEPARTMENT STAFF:

Phil Anderson, Director
Joe Stohr, Deputy Director
Bill Frymire, AGO
Nate Pamplin

Public:

Dave Kuno
David Montoya
Laurence R. Ruff
Walt Christenson
Linda Saunders
Diane Gallegos
Fred Martinsen
Carroll Rieck
Jack Field
Tony L Wells
B. Dezihan
Bill Vincent
Wendy Spencer
Bruce Roberts
Mary Margaret O'Connell
Tom Gallegos
Alex Moskwa
Jillary Cooley

Heather Hilf
Mary Ann Murphy
Peggy Macki
Kim Young
Sherri Hill
John Farrar
Roberta Smith
David Graves
Fred Martinson
Jim Goldsmith
George Ziegler
Danielle Hanfer
Tony L. Wells
Jan Sharkey
Perry Huston
Ruth Musgrave
Dale Bristow
Shelly Bristow

Jessica Biles
Charles Biles
Steve Brown
Sarah Poinsett
Steve Aksumit
Kaye Adkins
Wendy Danielson
Nick Bromen
Erik Wriber
Donna Snow
Tim McElwee
Kaitlin McElwee
Phil Andersen
Mark Pidgeon
Story Warren
Demel Curry
Shawndra Michell
Michele Beal-Erwin

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2011

Chair Wecker called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Call to order

1a. Commissioners' Discussion

- Association of Fish and Wildlife Agency (AFWA)
- Conference Call scheduled with Marty Loesch, Chief of Staff, Governor's Office

1b. Directors Report

- Performance Review & Delegation of Authority – tabled until after Item 11 Executive Session
- Coastal Crab Fishery
- Hatcheries
- Hunting season results
- Pacific Salmon Commission
- US-Canada Pacific Whiting Treaty
- Budget

2. Open Public Input

The following individuals provided oral testimony on items of interest of concern during this portion of the meeting:

David Montoya - Sturgeon
 Dave Kuno - Sturgeon
 Jack Fields - Wolves

3. Enforcement Program Overview – Briefing

Chief Bruce Bjork briefed the Commission on the current structure, expertise, challenges, and proactive approach to protecting our natural resources and the public served.

4. Fish Program Overview – Briefing

Jim Scott briefed the Commission on the current structure, expertise, collaboration and proactive approach to protecting, conserving and restoring fish and shellfish and the ecosystems they depend on.

5. Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities Report

Bill Vincent, Americans with Disabilities Advisory Committee Chair presented the required legislative report, detailing the effectiveness of the advisory committee including, but not limited to, the participation levels, general interest, quality of advice, and recommendations as to the advisory committee's continuance or modification to the Commission for approval.

6. Proposed Land Transactions – Decision

The Commission considered various land transactions presented by Dan Budd, Real Estate Section Manager, Wildlife Program for the protection of critical fish and wildlife habitat, enhancement of public recreation opportunities and responsible property management:

The Department is recommending the following actions:

- Proposed Acquisition of 2 acres in Mason County
- Proposed Acquisition of 95 acres in Wahkiakum County
- Proposed Acquisition of 40 acres in Grant County
- Proposed Timber Thinning on the Scotch Creek and Sinlahekin Wildlife Areas
- Proposed Acquisition in Asotin County

Commissioner Douvia moved, seconded Commissioner Perry to approve all lands transactions as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

7. Private Lands Program Overview – Briefing

At the request of the Commission Greg Schirato and Joe McCanna provided an overview of the Private Lands Program, including focus areas, funding sources and opportunities, and examples of improvements to habitat, hunter access and watchable wildlife opportunities.

8. Sportfishing Regulations 2012-13 – Rule Briefing

Craig Burley briefed the Commission on the upcoming Sportfishing rules and regulations for the 2012-13 season.

9. Executive Session

Pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i), the Commission will meet in executive session to discuss with legal counsel representing the agency litigation or potential litigation to which the agency is, or is likely to become, a party. No action will be taken in executive session, and the public is not permitted to attend the executive session.

Saturday, December 3, 2011

10. Adoption of Wolf Conservation & Management Plan – Decision:

Nate Pamplin presented the draft Wolf Conservation and Management Plan for approval.

Commissioner Jennings moved, seconded by Commissioner Smith to adopt the Final Recommended Wolf Conservation and Management Plan for Washington as the recovery and management plan (Recovery Plan) for the gray wolf pursuant to WAC 232-12-297 and incorporate amendments in Attachments A, B, and C. Motion passed unanimously.

11. Executive Session

Pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(g), the Commission will meet in executive session to review the performance of a public employee.

12. Summary of Commission Requests

- ESA listing Puget sound killer whales briefing
Commissioner Schmitt moved, seconded by Commissioner Smith, to approve request. Motion passed unanimously.
- Colockum Elk Heard – wildlife committee discussion, Commission briefing
Commissioner Douvia moved, seconded by Commissioner Perry to approve request. Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioners and Director reviewed pending Commission requests.

13. Miscellaneous and Meeting Debrief

Wolf Recovery and Management draft document
WAFWA meeting

Chair Wecker adjourned the meeting at 12:50

EKG

These minutes plus the audio recordings constitute the full minutes.

Erin Gariépy, Administrative Assistant

Attachment A

MODIFICATION: RECOVERY OBJECTIVES

The gray wolf will be considered for downlisting to sensitive when 12 successful breeding pairs are present for 3 consecutive years, with:

- 4 successful breeding pairs in the Eastern Washington region,
- 4 successful breeding pairs in the Northern Cascades region, and
- 4 successful breeding pairs distributed in the Southern Cascades and Northwest Coast region.

The gray wolf will be considered for delisting when 15 successful breeding pairs are present for 3 consecutive years, with:

- 4 successful breeding pairs in the Eastern Washington region,
- 4 successful breeding pairs in the Northern Cascades region, and
- 4 successful breeding pairs distributed in the Southern Cascades and Northwest Coast region.
- 3 anywhere in the state

The Department is directed to implement these amendments by making the necessary corresponding changes throughout the Recovery Plan.

Attachment B

MODIFICATION: WOLF-LIVESTOCK CONFLICTS

1. I move that the Recovery Plan element regarding “lethal control by state/federal agents of wolves involved in repeated livestock depredations” be amended as follows:

Allowed during all listed statuses and after delisting, consistent with federal law. During all listed statuses, WDFW may consider issuing a permit to a livestock owner (including family members and authorized employees) to conduct lethal control if WDFW does not have the resources to address control.

[This removes the land ownership designation for this plan element for permits issues to livestock owners if WDFW does not have the resources to address control.]

The Department is directed to implement these amendments by making the necessary corresponding changes throughout the Recovery Plan.

2. I move that the plan element regarding “caught in the act” lethal permits be allowed on private and public land and thus would be amended to read:

Allowed by livestock owners (including family members and authorized employees) on private land and public grazing allotments they own or lease at all listed statuses, with an issued permit, after documented depredation (injury or killing) in the area.

The Department is directed to implement these amendments by making the necessary corresponding changes throughout the Recovery Plan.

Attachment C

MODIFICATION: WOLF-UNGULATE CONFLICTS

1. I move that the plan be amended regarding wolf ungulate conflicts as follows:
During any listed status, if the Department determines that wolf predation is a primary limiting factor for at-risk ungulate populations and the wolf population in that recovery region is at least 4 successful breeding pairs, it could consider moving of wolves, lethal control, or other control techniques in localized areas.

Under this form of management, wolves would be controlled by moving them to other areas, through lethal control, and/or with other control techniques. While wolves are recovering, non-lethal solutions will be prioritized to be used first. Before deciding to proceed with this type of management, WDFW would consider the status of wolves statewide as well as within the specific wolf recovery region where the ungulate impact was occurring. The extent of wolf control undertaken would not be sufficient to push the region's overall wolf population below delisting objectives and put it at risk. Management decisions of this type would be based on scientific principles and evaluated by WDFW.

The Department is directed to implement these amendments by making the necessary corresponding changes throughout the Recovery Plan.

2. I move that the paragraph regarding at-risk ungulate population be amended as follows:

For the purposes of this plan, an at-risk ungulate population is any federal or state listed ungulate population (e.g., Selkirk Mountain woodland caribou, Columbian white-tailed deer). An at-risk population would also include any ungulate population which falls 25% below its' population objective for two consecutive years and/or if the harvest decreases by 25% below the 10 year average harvest rate for two consecutive years. In ungulate populations without numeric estimates and/or without management objectives, the department will rely on other factors of information to assess a decline, such as harvest trends, hunter effort trends, sex and age ratios, and others.

The Department is directed to implement these amendments by making the necessary corresponding changes throughout the Recovery Plan.

Attachment D

MODIFICATION: RECOVERY OBJECTIVES:

1. I move that the Recovery Plan objectives for delisting be amended as follows.
In addition to the delisting objective of 15 successful breeding pairs distributed in the three geographic regions for 3 consecutive years, that another scenario where the gray wolf will be considered for delisting is when 18 successful breeding pairs are confirmed, with:
 - 4 successful breeding pairs in the Eastern Washington region,
 - 4 successful breeding pairs in the Northern Cascades region, and
 - 4 successful breeding pairs distributed in the Southern Cascades and Northwest Coast region.
 - 6 anywhere in the state

The Department is directed to implement these amendments by making the necessary corresponding changes throughout the Recovery Plan.

Stand-Alone Attachment

MODIFICATION: INITIATING STATUS REVIEW

1. I move that the Department may initiate a status review prior to achieving the 3 consecutive year requirement for the Recovery Objectives. The Commission would not consider final action until after achieving the Recovery Objective.

The Department is directed to implement these amendments by making the necessary corresponding changes throughout the Recovery Plan.