



**Sonoma County Fish and Wildlife Commission
Meeting Minutes
January 19, 2012 – 7:00PM**

Commissioners Attending:
Crystal Norris
Al Ferris
Andrew Pozzi
Jim Lynch
Jo Bentz
Don McEnhill
Brock Dolman

Commissioners Absent:
Jeff Holden
Caroline Christian
Darius Anderson
David Cook

Others:
Demitri Esquivel, DFG
Susan Kirk, P.L.A.N.
Joan Vilms, P.L.A.N.
Elliott Doss, DFG
Sue Ostrom, Ag Comm
Tony Linegar, Ag. Comm
Ed Hoener, SCSO
Ann Gallagher-White, DA
Paul North, P.L.A.N.
Ryan Watanabe, DFG
Al Gerhardt

Chairperson Norris called the meeting to order at 6:59 p.m.

Adoption of Minutes

Crystal Norris asks if there are any additions or corrections to the November 2011 minutes.

Jim Lynch asks that the November 2011 minutes be amended to show he did not second the motion to accept the November 2011 minutes, as he was absent from the November 2011 meeting.

Don McEnhill asks that the Chinook salmon counts reported on page 5 of the meeting minutes be changed from 15,000 to 1,500 salmon counted last month (October 2011).

Andy Pozzi makes a motion to approve the minutes as amended, with a second by Al Ferris. Motion carried with 7 'Ayes', and 4 'Absent'

Correspondence

The following correspondence was received:

1. Changes on Mammal hunting regulation.
2. Ocean Salmon Sports Fishing
3. Listing of the American Pika
4. Black Cat Woodpecker
5. Public notice with the cedar buckwheat
6. Commission coming up in February, possibly extending the closure on the Abalone.

Financial Report

In November 2011, the Abalone Fund received \$25.00 and \$50.00 in December, 2011 from Central Collections for a fiscal balance of 76.80 in the Abalone Fund.

The General Fund received in November, 2011 \$1,995.43 from Superior Court, \$47.95 from Probation and in December \$1,994.78 from Superior Court, \$155.56 from Probation with a fiscal year budget balance of \$37,118.36.

Jeff asked how our collection rate was as opposed to previous years. Crystal mentioned it is very slow and that we are probably down, but we have gotten some funds from District Attorney's office. These funds have offset some of the fines we've received in the past but overall our collection rate is down this year.

Don McEnhill made a motion to accept the financial reports as presented seconded by Jim Lynch. Motion Carried with 7 'Ayes' and 4 'Absent'.

The 2012-13 Budget was presented and discussed. Abalone Fund income is projecting income at \$500.00 and expenses at \$500.00. General Fund projections are based on 5 year averages with income at \$45,300.00 and expenses at \$56,450.00

Al Ferris made the motion Jim seconds. Motion carries 9 'Ayes'.

Crystal welcomed the new Agricultural Commission, Tony Linegar. Tony introduced Sue Ostrom, Chief Deputy Ag Commissioner and then spoke about providing support for the F & W Commission and is open to discuss the number of meetings per year and stressed that he is glad to be here and excited to be here. It's been a real busy first few weeks.

Sue Ostrom spoke about being excited to be here and help keep the county as diverse as possible and she will attend the meetings and please contact her through out the year.

Old Business

Second reading on Paula Lane Open Space Land Acquisition on their closing costs. Susan Kirk, of P.L.A.N, is requesting a grant in the amount of \$5,000 for closing cost on the City of Petaluma's Paula Lane Open Space Land Acquisition.

Jo Bentz, Thanks Susan for the work they've been doing and the many years of work to get to this point. She appreciates the work with American Badger and Petaluma to preserve the wildlife corridor. In addition to education this commission can support future grant proposals to you if you want to buy plants or supplies in management plan. We also look towards restoration and that might be a good fit. I am interested in giving you the full amount of your grant.

Al Ferris comments, he has issues of giving money for plants. He suggests when they are ready to purchases plants they check with the County Jail who has native plants and could get a good price.

Susan Kirk mentions that most of the projects will be using volunteers and money is the bottom line. It is very important to the Petaluma City as well. Also Susan was not aware of the money to support the Badger taxidermy to Wildlife Fawn Rescue and she has spoken with Marj Davis and will be collaborating on educational programs.

Joe Bentz moves to support the \$5,000 Jim Lynch seconds. Motion carries with 5 'Ayes' and 2 'No's' (Al Ferris and Andrew Pozzi). Motion passes Grant # 160.

Scholarship Sub-Comittee:

Jo Bentz gives update, no progress that we know of at this time. Jo will contact Caroline to discuss. Al states the Scholarship letters have been mailed with a March 31, 2012 deadline.

Crystal asks committee to keep the scholarship talks moving forward.

New Business

Meeting frequency:

Crystal states that having less meetings would help cut cost of Ag. Staff. A discussion follows with suggestions of dropping one meeting during the summer August or September.

Andy Pozzi asks if we can have 9 meetings per year. Crystal mentions that because we have the 2 month process of grants it might be difficult for the applicants. Crystal

suggests we could try it for a year. Crystal would like the scholarship committee to take back most of the scholarship work that would help alleviate some of the office work.

Al would like the option to call a special meeting if one is needed. Crystal states the bylaws allow that as long as the meeting is posted prior to the meeting.

Jim Lynch makes motions to go from 11 to 10 meetings with either August or September being the other month. Brock seconds the motion. Motion carries 7 'Ayes'

Funding Request Application in the amount of \$2,675.52 from Sonoma County Sheriff's Office-Marine Unit, regarding Russian River Enforcement first reading.

Ed Hoener from So. Co. Sheriff's Dept. is requesting funds for a second Mokai boat... Their goal is to be able to put 2 law enforcement officers on the river to do patrol's to check for F & W game violations. Wardens would be available to work along side and we would have reps from Sherriff's. The additional \$2,000 needed to purchase the Mokai comes from the sale of another boat?

Ed states the craft is strictly for the guys to get up and down the river in challenging areas. Summer bridges, summer dams, etc. The other vessels are too heavy, this Mokai is light and comes with a trailer but most of the guys can drag around the obstacles and they can go down and upstream launch in Healdsburg in a.m. and go all the way down to Guerneville and come back.

It is a very good PR tool, people come up and say what in the world is that and where can I get one? This gives us the opportunity to interact with the public.

Ed asks if the Commission could purchase the vessel and then give it to the Sherriff's Dept. Crystal states she will have to check with the Ag. Office. Ed finally state that he will bring in the current Mokai at the next opportunity when weather permits. Sonoma County in the fist in the state of California to own one.

Crystal states that this is the firs reading and the second reading will be next month.

David Bannister, Laguna Foundation, received a grant for the purchase of a used truck for the restoration program.

David brought in a picture of the truck and thanked the commission for the money to purchase the truck. The truck will be working this Saturday for the 3rd annual tree and restoration project. He thanks the commission's generosity. The vehicle is a 2003 and has approximately 80k. They put a water tank in the bed to assist in vegetation projects and water the plants.

Jo Bentz inquires about the stakes are in a grid pattern. David states the trees are planted in rows so we can mow the weeds. Natural selection will change the look of it.

The stakes will come out after a year. They've been planting through the month of December. Jo asks what kinds of plants. David replies Valley Oak, Oregon Ash, Coyote Brush and the like. Don McEnhill mentions that he hasn't had much luck with the Oregon Ash. Oregon ash has worked well for planting with their organization.

Board Reports & Comments

Jim Lynch: We really need this rain. Our younger son, Humboldt state grad, wildlife biologist in Humboldt county and was accepted to the Fish and Game Academy. He is up there at Butte College for 27 weeks. His first assignment will be down in the San Simeon area before he can transfer. Jim says San Simeon sounds pretty good to him.

Don McEnhill: Interesting weather we are having. They've been seeing Buffleheads, Coots and one other duck on the river they usually don't see in the area.

Brock Dolman: Hopes the rain opens the creek up, a ton of Coho came up earlier but they have been stuck at the bottom end of Dutch Bill Creek. In the old Jack London place in Glen Ellen he was happy to see 3 beautiful beaver dams. It appears that Beavers moved firmly into Spring Lake. He ask that other keep an eye peeled in the Laguna keep your eyes peeled out if you see them out in the lower end. We'll be tracking their movement. Beaver and Coho are buddies that go a long way back.

Al Ferris: Talked to the hatchery up in Oroville and they had a bear year with the salmon. The feds came in and said you are only allowed so much of these eggs and destroy the rest.

Andy Pozzi: Nothing to report

Crystal Norris: States we have a new commissioner, Al Gerhardt, who will be appointed to represent 5th District replacing Gene Gaffney.

Al Gerhardt introduces himself saying he is not appointed yet. Al says he is born and raised here in West County, been in the county for 73 years. I've farmed out in the occidental area.

He is welcomed aboard and everyone looks forward to your participation.

Public Comments:

Anne Gallagher-White: Just observing.

Demitri Esquivel, DFG: Things have been busy, a couple of people hunting without licenses. They've had to chase out the foot accesses in the Laguna and now there is a lot less shooting. They are also going after the commercial guys, crabbers. Don McEnhill mentions there is some funding to help education with the boating and educating the boaters and recreation guys. Is there something I can take back?

Demitri says the best thing they can do is have GPS, because there aren't any landmarks out in the water. Andy asks if anyone has developed a GPS for out in the water? Demitri says he hasn't heard of that but he uses Google Earth and has a print out of where the closures are in the water. Demitri mentions that his department is working on new maps for the MPA's.

Jim Lynch asked Demitri why they don't have Abalone cards online yet. Is it due to the closures? Demitri was not aware that they weren't available.

Crystal mentions that Untied Anglers is on the Fish & Game Commission agenda with regards to the marine protection area probably challenging the suit. Don McEnhill mentioned he thought the suit failed.

Unknown public speaker from Washington State: They are fighting marine laws up north, we don't deny the need for the area but don't support the closure forever. Don McEnhill says the law says every area must review every 5 years. Marine protection areas being closed, discussion had around Marine protection area.

Unknown public speaker # 2: I was just visiting and interested in learning to clean up the tributaries and Russian river. Don McEnhill and public member will get together to discuss working groups, such as The Soyotme RCD which is working on the habitat enhancement.

Ryan Watanabe, DFG, District Fishery Biologist for the Department of Fish and Game. I am just here observing.

Elliott Doss, Fish Habitat Specialist from Fish & Game. I work in the reservoir system here with warm water species. Just here observing and through the website seen some of the grants and feel positive towards some of the work you are doing.

Susan Kirks, Paula Lane Space and Land Acquisition, thank you very much for the grant money and we look forward to coming back and giving more information on the project and the success, we pledge to put your grant to good use.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Gretchen Melendy
Acting Commission Secretary