



Minutes

Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting September 22-24, 2022 – Ocean Shores Hybrid

<u>Commission</u>	<u>Staff</u>	<u>Attendance</u>		<u>Commission Staff</u>
Barbara Baker, Chair	Joe Panesko, AGO	<u>Staff</u>	Marlene Wagner	Nichole Kloepper
Donald McIsaac	Kelly Susewind, Director	Ken Warheit		
Lorna Smith	Amy Windrope, Deputy	Chad Herring		
Tim Ragen	Director (Friday only)	Scott Kissel		
John Lehmkuhl	Chad Jackson			
Jim Anderson	Taylor Cotton			
	Derek Stinson			
	Jeff Lewis			
	Kelly Cunningham			
	James Losee			

Friday, September 23, 2022

1. Call to Order

a. **Commissioners' Discussion**

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

Chair Baker announced that Commissioner Thorburn would not be in attendance for the meeting.

Commissioners Lehmkuhl, Ragen, and Anderson attended a region stakeholder field trip to the Blue Mountains. They found the experience educational.

Commissioner Smith shared that she had an enjoyable Discovery Bay tour.

Commissioner McIsaac provided a Columbia River Chinook, steelhead, and sockeye salmon abundance report.

b. **Meeting Minute Approval**

The Commission considered approval of the August 4-6, 2022, webinar meeting minutes and August 26, 2022, web conference.

Commissioner Lehmkuhl made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Ragen, to approve the minutes from the August 4-6, 2022, webinar as presented. All in favor. Motion passes.

Commissioner Lehmkuhl made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Ragen, to approve the minutes from the August 26, 2022, web conference as presented. All in favor. Motion passes.

c. **Committee Reports - This Section constitutes the formal minutes from each of the listed committee meetings:**

Habitat Committee

Commissioners in attendance: Committee members Lehmkuhl, Smith, Ragen, Commissioner Baker, and Anderson

Commissioner Lehmkuhl reported that staff provided a report on the state land's visitor use and economic value impacts. The information presented can be accessed on the meeting page [here](#).

Big Tent Committee - Commissioners Baker, McIsaac, Lehmkuhl, and Commissioners Anderson, Smith, and Ragen

Chair Baker reported that the draft director's delegation discussion was tabled until another meeting. Staff provided a briefing of the State Wildlife Action Plan and copies to the commissioners. The committee reviewed [the FWC Policy spreadsheet](#). The committee agreed to repeal Commission policies that are no longer needed. Staff will present a motion during future meeting planning on Saturday for those policies that will be repealed. The committee discussed version 8 of the [Draft Conservation Policy](#) and agreed that additional work needed to be done. The draft policy will also be addressed in the next Big Tent committee meeting.

Fish Committee

**Commissioners in attendance: Committee members McIsaac, Ragen, and Anderson
Commissioner Smith, Lehmkuhl, and Baker**

Commissioner McIsaac reported that the committee discussed the - [Cowlitz Hooking Mortality Study](#) and further discussion on the [C-3622 Willapa Bay Salmon Management Policy Option Review](#). There were no recommendations from the committee. Potentially under future meeting planning, there is a recommendation for a special Fish committee meeting on November 18 to get a Coastal Steelhead Proviso Compliance Update. There is an interest in having a Special Fish committee meeting later in November on the Lower Columbia River Salmon Recreation Fisheries.

Wildlife Committee

Commissioners in attendance: Committee members McIsaac, Linville, Ragen, and Commissioner Smith

Commissioner Smith reported that David Trimbach provided an overview of structured decision-making as it applies to a potential Spring Bear Policy. After discussion, the committee agreed to decide on a Spring Bear Policy by the end of 2022. The Spring Bear policy discussions will move from Wildlife Committee to the full Commission. The first step will be to develop a survey to gather Commissioner feedback to inform the policy. Commissioners Baker and Thorburn will collaborate to co-create a survey and subsequent potential for a workshop with David Trimbach staff by October 14. Commissioners have until September 30 to provide survey questions to David Trimbach; the results will be discussed at the October meeting in Colville. Based on the survey results, David will propose the next steps.

An update on the Game Management Plan was tabled until the October Wildlife committee meeting.

Open Public Input

The following people provided input on various topics:

Denis Desilvis – Period status reviews	David Linn – Public disclosure requests
Sam Bruegger – Conservation policy	Frank Urabeck – Coastal Steelhead
Dan Wilson – Conservation policy	Martha Hall – Game Management Plan
Charlie Whitwam – Spring bear seasons	Mike Herz – Spring bear
Rachel Bjork – Smackout wolfpack	Ryan Garrett – Spring bear policy

Brad Thomsen – Spring bear policy Wes Hoppler – Coastal Steelhead
Hannah Thompson – Gardner – Smackout wolfpack

Director's Report

Director Susewind provided an overview of current events, activities, and impact meetings within and about the agency.

- Buyback information session meetings started this week.
- An update was provided on Smackout and Leadpoint packs.
- The first Razor Clam Digs scheduled for September 22-26 were canceled due to a spike in marine toxins.
- September 24 is National Hunting & Fishing Day. Celebrated the fourth Saturday of September to recognize generations of sports people for their contributions to conserving our nation's rich sporting heritage and natural resources. This year, WDFW will host an online celebration using [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), and [blog posts](#) to showcase the work of WDFW and partners to foster ethical hunting and fishing and to promote diverse hunting and fishing opportunities in Washington for new hunters, anglers, and shellfish
- September 24 is also National Public Lands Day, the nation's largest single-day volunteer event for public lands. This is also a "fee-free day" when a Discover Pass is not needed on lands managed by WDFW, State Parks, or the Department of Natural Resources.

Director Susewind introduced the new Region 6 Director, Chris Conklin. Chris provided some of his history personally and with the agency. He also provided an overview of what Region 6 has to offer.

Chelan River Rulemaking - Briefing, Public Hearing

Chad Jackson, Region 2 Fish Program Manager, briefed the Commission on a proposal to open a previously closed section of Chelan River by allowing only catch-and-release fishing, using only barbless hooks with no bait.

The following person provided a comment:
Representative Brian Blake

This item will be decided at the October 7 Commission web conference.

Break

Brown Pelican Periodic Status Review (Maintain) – Briefing, Public Comment, Decision

With Deputy Director Windrope, Taylor Cotton announced that it was Derek Stinson's last day. Deputy Director Windrope shared an overview of Derek's tenure with the agency.

Taylor Cotten, Conservation Assessment Section Manager, briefed the Commission and asked for a decision on the recommendation to maintain the status of the Brown Pelican.

The following person provided comments:
Denis DeSilvis

Commissioner Lehmkuhl made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Smith, to move that the Brown Pelican maintain its current status as an unlisted species in Washington as recommended by Department staff. All in favor. Motion passes.

Western Snowy Plover Periodic Status Review (Maintain) – Briefing, Public Comment, Decision

Derek Stinson, Diversity Division Biologist, briefed the Commission and asked for a decision on the recommendation to maintain the status of the Western Snowy Plover.

The following person provided comments:
Denis DeSilvis

Commissioner Lehmkuhl made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Ragen, to move that the Snowy Plover maintain its current status as an Endangered species in Washington as recommended by Department staff. All in favor. Motion passes.

White Pelican Periodic Status Review Rule Amendment (Down listing) – Briefing, Public Hearing

Taylor Cotten, Conservation Assessment Section Manager, briefed the Commission on the amendments to WAC 220-200-100 that would reclassify the white pelican from "threatened" to "sensitive" in the state of Washington.

The following people provided comments:
Denis DeSilvis Martha Hall

This item will be decided at the October 7 Commission web conference.

Cascade Red Fox Periodic Status Review Rule Amendment (New listing) – Briefing, Public Hearing

Jeff Lewis, Wildlife Biologist, briefed the Commission on the amendments to WAC 220-200-100 that would classify the Cascade red fox as "threatened" in the state of Washington.

The following people provided comments:
Denis DeSilvis Martha Hall Rachel Haymond

This item will be decided at the October 7 Commission web conference.

Lunch

Coastal Steelhead Update (Season Review, Prospects, and Process for Next Season) – Briefing, Public Comment

Kelly Cunningham, Director of the Fish Program, and James Losee, Region 6 Fish Program Manager, provided the Commission with a review of the 2022 season and prospective status for the 2023 season.

The following person provided comments:
Ravae O'Leary

Executive Session

Pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) and RCW 42.30.110 (1)(g), the Commission met in an executive session. No action was taken during the executive session, and the public was not permitted to attend.

Recess

Saturday, September 24, 2022

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

Open Public Input

The following people provided input on various topics:

Erik Prestegaard – Eel grass preservation	David Linn – Wolf rulemaking
Ross Bockhurst – Willapa Bay habitat concerns	Marlisa Dougan – Willapa Bay habitat concerns.
Dan Wilson – Spring bear	Donna Albert – Biodiversity concerns
Joan Beldin – Lands & wolf management	Martha Hall – Climate change/PSRs
Rachel Bjork – Wolf management	Rachel Haymon – Carnivore management
Rebecca Durr – DFW mission	
Hannah Thompson-Garner – Game Management Plan	

C-3622 Willapa Bay Policy Review– Briefing, Public Comment

Marlene Wagner, South Coast Policy Lead, and Ken Warheit, Fish Health and Molecular Genetics Lab; Chad Herring, Anadromous Resource Policy Analyst; Kelly Cunningham, Director of Fish Program, provided a briefing on the status of the Willapa Bay Policy review, and the Commission will take public comment on the future process and schedule of the policy review.

The following person provided comments:

Ross Barkhurst Marlissa Dougan Andy Mitby

The Commission supports the development of Alternative 4. A draft of Alternative 4 will be presented to the December Fish committee and brought to the full Commission.

Meeting Debrief and Future Meeting Planning

The Commission discussed items immediately before, during, or after the meeting and considered future agenda planning.

Commissioner McIsaac provided a report out on the last Executive committee meeting. The committee was provided an update from Commissioner Thorburn on the progress of the Directors Evaluation Ad Hoc committee, debriefed the previous blue sheet presentations from Commissioners, and discussed some clarifying best practices moving forward. The committee was also provided in-house agency updates and agreed that the FWC policy reviews could move forward to the committee and the Commission.

Due to repeated interest from Commissioners about Hatchery management. The committee recommended a half-day Special Commission Workshop on Hatchery Production Changes in January 2023.

The Commission approved the 2023 Commission meeting dates.

Staff provided the repeal motion language for FWC Policies C-3003, C-4001, C-5001, and C-6005.

Commissioner McIsaac made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Baker, to repeal the following four Commission policies:

C-3003 Puget Sound Groundfish Management

C-4001 Budget Reductions FY2009-11

C-5001 Timber/Fish/Wildlife Forestry Module Negotiation Guidance, and

C-6005 Master Hunter Program

All in favor. Motion passes.

Commissioner McIsaac made the following suggestions for the upcoming Commission meeting agendas.

Adding the following Fish committee agenda items to the Colville meeting:

- Coastal Steelhead 2022/23 season options
- Terms of Reference for the January Workshop on Hatchery Production.

As an entire agenda item, he requested that the Terms of Reference for the January Workshop on Hatchery Production Changes be a briefing and planning decision.

Adding the following Fish committee agenda items to the Clarkston meeting:

- Coastal Steelhead Proviso Package
- Willapa Bay Salmon Management Policy review: Alternative 4 Development

Adding the following Fish committee agenda items to the January 2023 meeting:

- Policy Obsolescence Review assignment
- North Pacific Fishery Management Council Policy: review staff prepared "one-pager" about high-level policy guidance
- Willapa Bay Salmon Management Policy review: Finalize Alternative 4

Commissioner McIsaac requested that the following agenda items be scheduled for special Fish committee meetings:

- Lower Columbia River Salmon Recreational Fishery Review
- Coastal Steelhead Proviso Compliance Update

Chair Baker adjourned the meeting at Time 12:15 p.m.

Nichole Kloepfer, Executive Assistant