



Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District

MINUTES OF THE REGIONAL FISHERIES RESOURCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON FEBRUARY 7, 2013

Regional District Board Room, 3008 Fifth Avenue, Port Alberni, BC

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Bill Irving, Chairperson, Mayor, District of Ucluelet
Cindy Solda, Councillor, City of Port Alberni
Josie Osborne, Mayor, District of Tofino
Jack McLeman, Councillor, City of Port Alberni
Tony Bennett, Director, Electoral Area "C" (Long Beach)
Penny Cote, Director, Electoral Area "D" (Sproat Lake)
Andrew Day, West Coast Aquatic Management
Bill Shaw, DFO, South Coast Division
Don Hall, Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council
Lyle Price, Alternate Director, Electoral Area "F" (Cherry Creek)

REGRETS: Dennis Chalmers, Ministry of the Environment
John Jack, Councillor, Huu-ay-aht First Nation

STAFF PRESENT: Robert Gunn, Contractor
Tracy Bond, Administrative Assistant

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 1:06 pm.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOVED BY: Director McLeman

SECONDED: Director Solda

THAT the agenda be approved as circulated with the addition of late items as outlined for consideration. – Barkley Wild Salmon Working Group Minutes from January 25, 2013 meeting, - February 5, 2013 memo from Robert Gunn regarding Fishery issues to discuss with Mr. Andrew Thomson, Area Director, South Coast Division, Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

CARRIED

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

a. **Regional Fisheries Resource Committee Meeting – September 12, 2012.**

MOVED: Director Bennett

SECONDED: Director Cote

THAT the minutes of the Regional Fisheries Resource Committee held on September 12, 2012 be received.

CARRIED

5. CORRESPONDENCE FOR ACTION/INFORMATION

- a. Correspondence between the Minister of Fisheries and the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District dated December 31, 2012, September 19, 2012 and August 14, 2012 regarding the Area G Troll Fleet and the Pacific Salmon Treaty Mitigation Fund.

MOVED: Director Bennett

SECONDED: Director Cote

THAT the Regional Fisheries Resource Committee receive this correspondence.

CARRIED

MOVED: Director Solda

SECONDED: Director Cote

THAT the Regional Fisheries Resource Committee send a letter of invitation to Area G Trollers representatives to meet with the Committee to discuss the next steps with regards to the Pacific Salmon Treaty Mitigation Fund and that a letter be drafted for the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District Board of Directors approval to the Minister of Fisheries thanking the Minister for his December 21, 2012 response on the Area G Troll Fleet and the Pacific Salmon Treaty Mitigation Funds but requesting a copy of the progress report on the buyback and asking for further dialogue for the balance of the funds.

CARRIED

Bill Shaw, DFO abstained from the vote.

Andrew Day, West Coast Aquatic abstained from the vote.

- b. Correspondence between the Minister of Fisheries and the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District dated January 21, 2013 and October 11, 2012 regarding Clause 10.1 of the Revised Fisheries Act.

MOVED: Director Bennett

SECONDED: Director Cote

THAT the Regional Fisheries Resource Committee receive this correspondence.

CARRIED

MOVED: Director Bennett

SECONDED: Director Cote

THAT the Regional Fisheries Resource Committee recommend to the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District Board of Directors that a letter be sent requesting that during the national consultation with stakeholders around Section 10.1 of the Fisheries Act, the use of Fish Allocation for Financing Purposes, that the need for west coast salmon habitat restoration and salmon enhancement be included as legitimate activities for the use of fish funds.

CARRIED

6. REPORTS

a. Pacific Salmon Treaty Update A. Day

A. Day updated the Committee on the \$500,000.00 committed by the federal government to address impacts on WCVI communities associated with the PST Chinook Annex. West Coast Aquatic is to administer these funds and is working with DFO on a draft contribution agreement. A scoping study was completed last spring. The status of communities showed they were all in very different places and appropriate steps for these communities were identified. Next steps include the hiring of 2 economic development officers. West Coast Aquatic staff have recommended starting with 1 person and using the rest of money for specialists, but this subject to further discussion. Next steps include meeting with economic developers currently working to see what their jobs entail for information in the next round of hiring.

MOVED: Director Solda

SECONDED: Director Bennett

THAT the Regional Fisheries Resource Committee receive the Pacific Salmon Treaty Update.

CARRIED

b. Department of Fisheries & Oceans Update – B. Shaw

B. Shaw reported that Area G remains open for Chinook. From October 1, 2012 to March 2013 the Chinook allocation is 10,000. As of February 5, 2013, 5,000 Chinook have been caught. There were 22 vessels fishing in November 2012, 32 vessels in December 2012, 90 vessels in January 2013 and 7 vessels so far in February.

The 2013 salmon outlook is currently being presented to stakeholders and the stakeholders review will be completed by the end of February. Somas Sockeye returns for 2013 are expected near target although lower than 2012. Westcoast Chinook returns this year are expected to be 25 - 45,000, about the same as last

year. Wild populations of Chinook are of concern. Populations have either been well below target and/or declining for several generations. Westcoast Coho return are looking good for 2013 but are still restricted by the Fraser Area 24 Chinook concerns. Chum returns in 2013 are expected to be below target for wild stocks, although hatchery surpluses may result in gillnet opportunities. The Barkley Sound forecast for Chum is 54,000. There will be a limited gillnet Fishery in Barkley Sound.

The Economic Opportunity First Nations agreement was signed last year and the fishery was viewed very positively. Minister Ashfield was here for the DFO office opening and was very pleased with the presentation at the round table. DFO is looking for a 4 multi-year agreement. DFO is anticipating a second agreement in April and is targeting for April 15th.

Halibut TAC regulations will be similar to 2012. March 15th is the anticipated 2012 opening. Fish larger than 60lbs are to be released as DFO is trying to have the fishery maintain itself until fall. The mortality rate of released fish is 4 per cent. DFO will be monitoring in high areas as much as possible- i.e. - Port Renfrew, but they are very short staffed.

MOVED: Director Bennett

SECONDED: Director Osborne

THAT the Regional Fisheries Resource Committee receive the Department of Fisheries & Oceans verbal report.

CARRIED

c. Nuuchahnulth Tribal Council Update – D. Hall

D. Hall advised that there will be no commercial fisheries for the Herring Season. There has been a consistent decline of herring in the last few years and biologists have no idea why. Food & Ceremonial access for First Nations continues to be an on going issue. First Nations are not able to access the amount of fish needed with on-going population growth. Communities prefer home territory but in the past have been able to look to neighbours if supply is limited. DFO is becoming more and more restrictive with the granting of access to the fishing areas of neighboring nations, despite inter nation agreement. This is becoming very problematic and needs to be addressed.

D. Hall advised of an upcoming new issue the ceremonial harvest of sea otters. A management plan for a small number of sea otters has been approved by the First Nations and a request has gone to DFO for a licence for the purposes of ceremonial harvest. Prior to any harvest the Nuuchahnulth will reach out to area communities and try to communicate proactively to ensure no negative backlash. It is hoped this harvest will take place next winter but there is still much work to be done.

On Monday, February 4th a cross cultural workshop between First Nations and DFO took place. This was a very productive and positive day with cultural exchange. This workshop re-established relationships and First Nations would like to do this with other community groups.

The Ahousaht et al fishing case has been returned to the BC Court of Appeal and the expected 5 day hearing began during the week of February 11th.

MOVED: Director Bennett

SECONDED: Director Osborne

THAT the Regional Fisheries Resource Committee receives the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council verbal report.

CARRIED

d. West Coast Aquatic Update – A. Day

A. Day gave a brief overview of the origins of West Coast Aquatic. Fisheries are very important to this area, and this area is significant in BC – approximately thirty per cent of BC landed catch is in the WCVI area. There is a large knowledge base on fisheries and this area has shown considerable leadership. The Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District is the only Regional District with a fisheries committee. West Coast Aquatic was born out of issues concerning our oceans and a desire to address these issues. A. Day advised the Committee that West Coast Aquatic addresses and focuses on planning and management issues. They continue to work towards economic stability in our region. West Coast Aquatic is proud of their accomplishments.

A. Day reported that Marine Spatial Planning for the Barkley and Clayoquot Sounds is a major focus of West Coast Aquatic. This matches the right activities to the right locations and looks at the bigger picture.

The Marine Atlas is now complete and available in digital format on the West Coast Aquatic website. West Coast Aquatic is looking at doing a healthy oceans demo site and looking at a knowledge and innovation centre. Partnerships will need to be put together.

West Coast Aquatic has received letters of endorsement from many organizations on the Coast Strategy which has been the main keystone initiative over the last few years. Support from the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District is very much appreciated.

MOVED: Director Solda

SECONDED: Director Cote

THAT the Regional Fisheries Resource Committee receive the West Coast Aquatic verbal report.

CARRIED

e. **Agenda Items to be Presented to Andrew Thomson – R. Gunn**

MOVED: Director Bennett

SECONDED: Director Solda

THAT the Regional Fisheries Resource Committee receive R. Gunn's memorandum on agenda items for requested meeting with Andrew Thomson for discussion.

CARRIED

The Committee reviewed and discussed Mr. Gunn's memo to the Committee on possible agenda items for a meeting with Mr. Andrew Thomson, Area Director, South Coast Division, Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

The Fisheries Resource Committee would like to discuss possible community funding sources for enhancement and restoration concerns. Greater community involvement in local DFO decision making is important. Local government is a significant entity and should have a say on any advisories that impact our communities. Our communities have a lot of money tied to fisheries so regional involvement in DFO strategic and allocation advisory committees are paramount. The Federal Government has capped budgets and this has undermined the ability to move forward. Political choices are made and communities have no say. Questions to be asked include; is DFO looking only looking at traditional funding sources or are they going after new sources and are there other mechanisms to fund. The Committee would also like to let Mr. Thomson know that our communities are behind the Somass Basin issues. Past progress is also to be discussed.

f. **West Coast Local Issues**

B. Irving advised that a Harbour Authority Forum will take place in Nanaimo next week.

Pacific Rim 6 person advisory group to harbour authority –huge connection allocation, license decisions and local economic. The federal government is now doing a study on this. Although it took a while before they realized how important the local wharf and float infrastructure was to a community the size of Ucluelet. Both the commercial and sport fisheries are very important economically for west coast communities. DFO is moving away from the permit process.

MOVED: Director

SECONDED: Director

THAT the Regional Fisheries Resource Committee receive the West Coast Local issues verbal report.

CARRIED

g. **Alberni Valley Local Issues**

L. Price discussed the sockeye catch' in possession limits', which effectively restrict the number of fish a visitor can have in their possession, but does not impact a local in the same way. This can be seen as a disincentive for visitors to visit and can reduce length of stay.

MOVED: Director Bennett

SECONDED: Director Cote

THAT the Regional Fisheries Resource Committee receive the Alberni Valley Local Issues verbal report and the Minutes of the Barkley Wild Salmon Working Group dated January 25, 2013.

CARRIED

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. **Region Wide Fisheries Resource Database (2nd Draft) – R. Gunn**

Mr. Gunn presented the second draft of the Region Wide Fisheries Resource Database. Committee members are asked to review this document and advise Mr. Gunn of any additions members may wish. If any members have additional information please pass this information along to Mr. Gunn.

MOVED: Director Bennett

SECONDED: Director Solda

THAT the Region Wide Fisheries Resource Database (2nd Draft) be received.

CARRIED

8. ADJOURN

MOVED: Director Price

SECONDED: Director Solda

THAT this meeting be adjourned at 4:10 pm.

CARRIED

Certified Correct:

Bill Irving,
Chairperson