



# Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District

## MINUTES OF THE REGIONAL FISHERIES RESOURCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, MAY 16, 2013

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

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

**REGRETS:** Dennis Chalmers, Province of BC  
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 10:06 am.

### 2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

*MOVED BY: Director Solda*

*SECONDED: Director Bennett*

*THAT the agenda be approved as circulated.*

**CARRIED**

### 3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

a. **Regional Fisheries Resource Committee Meeting – February 7, 2013.**

*MOVED: Director Bennett*

*SECONDED: Director Solda*

*THAT the minutes of the Regional Fisheries Resource Committee held on February 7, 2013 be received.*

**CARRIED**

#### 4. PETITIONS, DELEGATIONS & PRESENTATIONS

- a. **Mr. Andrew Thomson, Area Director, South Coast Division, Fisheries and Oceans Canada regarding areas of mutual concern.**

*MOVED: Director Bennett*

*SECONDED: Director Solda*

*THAT Mr. Andrew Thomson, Area Director, South Coast Division, Fisheries and Oceans Canada be invited to address the Regional Fisheries Resource Committee.*

**CARRIED**

Mr. Thomson thanked the Committee for the invitation to attend the meeting and advised that he will be happy to attend future meetings should he be available. Mr. Thomson answered questions from members of the Fisheries Committee.

1. Are there community funding sources and mechanisms there to aid our local enhancement and restoration concerns – ie: hatcheries?  
Mr. Thomson advised that the salmon enhancement budget has been static. In the last 3 budget cycles the Fisheries Department have gone through cuts but the Salmon Enhancement Program (SEP) budget has been maintained. A new program to assist in habitat restoration programs will begin this Spring, with 10 million dollars set aside nationally for this. Mr. Thomson believes the Pacific Region is in a unique position to be able to take advantage of some of this funding.
2. What is the future DFO's revised of Use of Fish Policy?  
Basics projects from past years will be funded for track 1, e.g. the PST test fishery has been rolled over, but the true meaning of this new legislation is still to be determined. For 2013 everything will keep going as in the past. The design of policies and guidance will come with public consultation which will determine with how best to deal with this new tool. DFO is conducting a Pilot Project in Cowichan. There will be a 2 day workshop focusing on the Chinook return and other species into the Cowichan River. A strategic approach on how we access what is limiting the returns. DFO is looking at possibly doing this in Barkley and Clayoquot Sounds as well. Sharing of information is of enormous benefit. Andrew Day advised that on June 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> West Coast Aquatic will be doing exactly what Mr. Thomson is discussing.  
There was a discussion on use of funds for Track 2. Ocean ranching may be considered under Track 2 but one of the problems with ocean ranching is assigning public property to private interests. Net pen rearing behind port boat house is moving forward.
3. What is the possibility of using more of the salmon sports license fees for enhancement?  
In 2013 the full \$6 tag fee will go to the Pacific Salmon Foundation.
4. Committee members inquired on the possibilities of greater community representation on DFO Management and Harvesting Advisory Committees.

Community representatives were not invited to meeting regarding Hake joint venture fisheries, at which policies were recommended that were detrimental to the interests of shore based processors.

Mr. Thomson apologized for the oversight. The Fisheries Committee members realize there may have been a mistake but the problem is there is an email list that leaves community representatives off. Why is this? The joint venture is a critical issue to West Coast Communities and this type of error is suspicious and concerning. Mr. Thomson feels in terms of community representation on DFO advisory committees the overall approach must be looked at, possibly a more structured and formal approach and a look at where the best seats for community representation are. Mr. Thomson will discuss with his DFO superiors and maybe follow up with this at a future meeting.

5. There was a discussion on the Pacific Salmon Treaty buy back. Mr. Thomson will get back to the Committee on how much of this has been used.

## **5. CORRESPONDENCE FOR ACTION/INFORMATION**

### **a. MINISTER OF FISHERIES AND OCEANS**

April 19, 2013, response to January 29, 2013 correspondence regarding the 2012 T'aaq-wiihak salmon demonstration fishery and upcoming 2013 season.

### **b. ALBERNI-CLAYOQUOT REGIONAL FISHERIES COMMITTEE**

April 10, 2013, letter to Kathy Scarfo, Area G Troll Fleet regarding the Fisheries Committee offer of assistance.

*MOVED: Director Bennett*

*SECONDED: Director Osborne*

*THAT correspondence a-b be received.*

**CARRIED**

## **6. REPORTS**

### **a. Department of Fisheries & Oceans Update – (Verbal)**

B. Rusch, DFO, Port Alberni, provided a verbal update for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Area 23 Chinook forecast is just under 70,000 for the Somass which is quite a bit less than originally forecasted. The recreational fishery in the canal will close August 1<sup>st</sup>, the rest will be the same as last year. There will be no commercial fishery. Sockeye is quite a bit lower than forecast, only 350,000. This leaves room for a commercial fishery but at lower levels. In terms of management for area 23 the recreational fishery started May 1<sup>st</sup>. From May 1 to June 14, 2013 the limit is 2 a day and from June 15, 2013 a limit of 4 a day. The Maa-Nulth Fishery began this weekend. Area G opened on April 25<sup>th</sup>

and fishing continued until the closing at midnight on May 15<sup>th</sup>. Approximately 26,000 fish were caught. All year 36,000 fish caught. 76 boats maximum are active on any given day. The fishery will re-open in late August or early September. The TAC is 41,000. Regarding herring there are no final numbers yet but good spawning was observed in certain WCVI locations. There were early spawns (late Feb./early March) and fairly late spawns (late March.) Nootka had the most significant spawn. There was quite heavy coverage, probably the best in years.

A. Thomson advised that on April 1, 2013 the Fisheries Protection Program became regional. DFO is trying to stretch the recreational halibut fishery until fall, the maximum size of fish to be caught is 60 pounds.

**b. Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council Update – D. Hall (Verbal)**

With regard to the T'aaq-wiihak fisheries, D. Hall advised that the local DFO staff have been good to work with. The problems seem to come from Ottawa. The Nations requested a modest increase for their 2013 fishery including Chinook and other salmon and groundfish but this has not happened. The NTC requested that the 20 per cent holdback provision be removed from their fishery. Instead DFO reduced the already meager allocation to the five Nations from last year for the 5 Nations. Last year was 47000 pieces. This year the TAC, less the 20 per cent, is 37000 pieces. The fishing area was defined by the court decision but DFO is imposing additional constraints. The preliminary response a fishery request by the five Nations to pink salmon by DFO is no. DFO are saying the First Nations must follow the rules of Area G but the First Nations do not have the same amount of area to fish. Dealing with DFO is very frustrating. Decisions seem to be coming from Ottawa and Department of Justice. The NTC is looking at the Ling Cod TAC but DFO constraints are making it next to impossible to fish. Hopefully when the Court of Appeal ruling comes down it will be favourable for the NTC. At the moment it is hard to remain optimistic.

**c. West Coast Aquatic Update – A. Day (Verbal)**

A. Day updated the Committee on the Coastal Strategy and the marine spatial planning, salmon, float homes, and economic development. As part of the Coastal Strategy West Coast Aquatic have been working to produce marine spatial plans in Clayoquot and Barkley Sounds. The MSP Framework is being finalized and a Terms of Reference will be circulated for sign-off. In terms of salmon, this has been a difficult spring with the forecasted lack of Sockeye and Chinook, but the various parties have worked hard together to find solutions and stay focused on building a long term strategic plan and improved management framework. In terms of economic development WCA hosted a special session in early May. It was well attended and positive, with a number of next steps identified and keen interest to keep getting together. The

float home issue continues to be a difficult issue but the parties are coming to the table and working through issues.

PST Mitigation Economic Development Funds: West Coast Aquatic has been working with DFO and had a Draft Contribution Agreement for \$500,000 with respect to the PST mitigation funds. When WCA requested an update on how this was proceeding they were told that DFO was not going to continue with this Draft Agreement and would be posting on their website for bidding. A. Day read the email from Patrick Mahaux of DFO regarding the decision. WestCoast Aquatic Management Association will be required to enter the bid process and can only hope that they will be successful.

*MOVED: Director Bennett*

*SECONDED: Director McLeman*

*THAT the Fisheries Committee send a letter to DFO giving the history of the Draft Contribution Agreement with regards to communities between DFO and West Coast Aquatic, expressing our support for West Coast Aquatic and mentioning West Coast Aquatic pilot.*

**CARRIED**

A. Day noted that WCA will not lobby or advocate on behalf of local governments on this matter; they can supply factual information.

**d. West Coast Local Issues – B. Irving/T. Bennett/J. Osborne (Verbal)**

T. Bennett advised that the Coastal Community Network will be meeting onsite with Julia Passage float homes owners in early June.

J. Osborne advised that Tofino had just had their first Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting for the first time ever. For the first time in 15 years a sea otter has taken up residence in Tofino Harbour. Just finishing up on the paving project – new stairs and approach to boat ramp.

B. Irving advised that the two moth balled fish plants are once again open and processing for about 10 months of the year. This is 80 new jobs. A new business has started in Ucluelet. They will be raising live had fish in tanks to get them a little bigger before processing. There are 3 bus loads of workers now coming into Ucluelet each day from Port Alberni because of lack of affordable housing on the West Coast.

*MOVED: Director Bennett*

*SECONDED: Director Solda*

*THAT verbal reports a-d be received.*

**CARRIED**

f. **Alberni Valley Local Issues – P. Cote/ J. McLeman(Verbal)**

P. Cote discussed invasive species in Sproat Lake. The koi are spawning at the moment, they like shallow warm bays with lily pads. Something needs to be done very quickly as there is a very short window of opportunity. A. Thomson thanked P. Cote for bringing this to his attention. He advised that DFO have mechanisms to deal with this type of problem. No promises but will look into this. P. Cote advised that there are thousands of koi and some are 20 pounders. There are also Sun Fish and Bull Frogs and they are in the same bay as the koi right now.

*MOVED: Director Cote*

*SECONDED: Director Solda*

*THAT the Fisheries Committee send a letter to Andrew Thomson, Area Director, South Coast Division, Fisheries and Oceans Canada regarding the koi problem in Sproat Lake and to follow up within 2 weeks.*

**CARRIED**

Also find out who to contact in the BC Ministry of Environment regarding this issue.

J. McLeman discussed the Port Alberni waterfront, the tidying up of the plywood plant land and the Port Alberni Port Authority dock that now has more access.

*MOVED: Director Cote*

*SECONDED: Director Osborne*

*THAT these verbal reports be received.*

**CARRIED**

**7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

a. **Region Wide Fisheries Resource Database (3<sup>rd</sup> Draft) - Handout**

R. Gunn discussed the database with the Committee and requested that any changes or additions be sent to him within the next 10 days. An electronic version of the final draft will be sent to Committee members when the Minutes are sent out. Mr. Thomson advised that Mount Waddington has done a similar study and this is on their website.

*MOVED: Director Solda*

*SECONDED: Director Osborne*

*THAT the Region Wide Fisheries Resource Database (3<sup>rd</sup> Draft) be received.*

**CARRIED**

**8. NEW BUSINESS**

*MOVED: Director Irving*

*SECONDED: Director Solda*

*THAT the Fisheries Committee send a second letter to the Province expressing the importance of having Provincial attendance at our meetings.*

**CARRIED**

**9. ADJOURN**

*MOVED: Director Cote*

*SECONDED: Director Bennett*

*THAT this meeting be adjourned at 12:50 pm.*

**CARRIED**

Certified Correct:

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Bill Irving,  
Chairperson