



Humboldt County Fish & Game Advisory Commission MINUTES February 19, 2019

The Commission meets the THIRD Tuesday each month from 6:30pm through 8:30pm. Agenda items and supporting info should be mailed to HCF&GAC; PO Box 922; Ferndale, CA 95536; Phone 707.786.4902 email: nkaytis4@gmail.com up to two weeks following previous meeting. Held at the Elks Club on Herrick in Eureka

Attendance: Present: Ted Romo, Mike Zamboni, Brad Smith, Harry Vaughn, Phil Grunert, Patricia Lai, Wes Moore, Hollie Hall, John Clark, Kim Watson, Nancy Kaytis-Slocum, Secretary. Absent: Loren Furber, Denver Nelson, Kenny Priest. Our guest was Supervisor Steve Madrone. Currently, two openings on the Commission.

Meeting called to order by Chairman John Clark at 6:35 pm. Commissioner Brad Smith, a member of the Elks Club said we could use the facility, but could not use the bar unless an Elks member was present.

The minutes of the January 15, 2019 meeting minutes were approved as amended. MOTION (Hall/Vaughn). All in favor.

Guest Supervisor Steve Madrone was introduced. He relayed that Salmon Restoration in the Mattole River is working. They had the biggest run @ 4,000 adult salmon, and are still counting.

OLD BUSINESS

Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge: This has been a very slow year because of the federal government shutdown. However, last weekend was great – lots of water.

Oak and Meadow Management: Commissioner Vaughn reported that they have been rehabilitating a meadow, in Salmon Creek, by removing conifers, planting native bunch grass and planting native wildflowers from seed collected locally. Additional kestrel and bluebird nesting boxes have been installed. Local community members have been kept informed on the project as we proceeded. Building community awareness regarding the use of prescribed fire for future meadow maintenance is being pursued. Monitoring of the site is ongoing.

Vaughn noted from a project report written by Kyle Keegan. A \$10,000 grant was awarded to the Fools Farm by USFWS. Greg Gray (USFWS Fish and Wildlife Biologist) was the lead organizer and contact for the project. Focus was to remove conifers on approximately 5 acres of historic meadowland adjacent (north) of Salmon Creek Community School in the Salmon Creek Watershed, tributary of the South Fork Eel River. The main goals were to recover the grassland from invading conifers and reclaim and enhance an area that had high floristic diversity, while opening up habitat that could be used by grassland dependent species. The report goes into site evaluation, conifer removal, bird species observed before and during the project, conifer encroachment in meadows possibly equal increased deer predation; plant species composition under invading conifers; pile burning; tree girdling; snag spacing ideas, observations on conifer encroachment, wind dynamics and raptors; stumps, acorn caching Scrub Jays and possible oak regeneration; conifer encroachment; seed sowing strategies, conifer balds, duff and mycelial mats; a possible different approach to dealing with conifer balds and seeding; live bunchgrass plug planting and the conclusion that a project of this scale needs to be maintained with fire.

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Cannabis: Commissioner Hollie Hall reported that compliant farms have implemented best management practices and are doing a better job of keeping sediment out of waterways. On the county level, it is taking a long time to get permitted. 80% of cannabis industry in California are not permitted. She is hopeful that under Governor Gavin Newsom's leadership participation in the regulated cannabis industry will be incentivized.

Crab Fishing: Commissioner Zamboni a commercial crab fishing discrepancy between California and Oregon. Demoic Acid: 30 ppm and above shut down the Oregon season. California Crab fishers must gut the crabs if they are sending to Oregon. There is a meeting on 3/2 in Santa Rosa to discuss preventing whale entanglement due to abandoned gear. Fish & Game sends out ships after 7/15 to pick up lost equipment then fishermen have to buy them back. The Dungeness Crab Task Force closed the season in 1993 for demoic acid, and it hadn't been closed again until a few years ago. Three or four years ago demoic acid was high, and he believes it has to do with the huge amount of fertilizer in the water causing nutrient problems and algae blooms. Commissioner Hollie Hall remarked that there may be fertilizer at the river mouth but probably not 20 miles out.

Wolves: Previously Commissioner Wes Moore reported that the California Cattlemen's Association/Farm Bureau was trying to file a lawsuit regarding Wolves asking that they be de-listed. The lawsuit was rejected.

Elk Herd: a landowner group has been formed to discuss elk. Commissioner Mike Zamboni reported 76 on his property. 85 Elk tags were given, 82 were harvested in Del Norte on the PLM and Share Programs. The California Fish and Game Commission is supposed to vote on an additional 20 tags. Public land is so overgrown that the Elk just pass through. Public land has not been managed properly.

Salmon Habitat Restoration: Commissioner Vaughn reported on a local observation of over 20 coho salmon spawning in Anderson Creek, South Fork Eel River. Eric Stockwell has been hiking creeks and making observations of salmon and steelhead spawning in the Eel River Basin. Local community member's observations, in addition to California Department of Fish and Wildlife surveys, are pivotal to measuring salmonid populations in the Eel River. Vaughn feels restoration has paid off after 30 years.

Mountain Lion: Commissioner Moore reported on a bear fiasco. A half-eaten sheep was placed in a culvert trap. They caught a mountain lion.

Wind Energy: Commissioner Ted Romo reported that the Bureau of Energy Management, a Federal agency, didn't let anyone know that letters were due by 1/28/19 for Scoping.

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act: Commissioner Hollie Hall reported that the basin delineation has been finalized. Eel River Valley will be subject to regulation under the act, and the county has to form a plan. Supervisor Madrone added that Jacoby Creek is also targeted. He would like to see the county offer assistance to landowners to irrigate by shooting the water down instead of into the air. The County can apply for a grant from the State to develop a sustainable groundwater management plan. Eel River Valley has only two monitoring wells.

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Supervisor Madrone offered the information that Dr. Madje has spent 40 years studying stream flow, shallow vs deeper water, identifying summer low flow needs.

NEW BUSINESS

Wildlife Protection Act of 2019: Commissioner John Clark reported that animal damage control are the only licenses being sold. Trapping is supposed to be self-sustaining and it's not. He mentioned ADC/Fur license.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: Commissioner Mike Zamboni mentioned that the Department of Fish and Wildlife has started a recruitment program for hunting and fishing. Zamboni and secretary will work on a letter about this.

NEXT MEETING'S AGENDA

Klamath & Trinity Rivers new regulations to sport fishing – Kenny Priest.

Eel River Recovery Program – Phil Grunert.

Fish Farming – Ted Romo

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Brad Smith asked the commission if they would like to continue meeting at the Elks Club . MOTION (Zamboni/Smith) Continue meeting at the Elks Club. Brad Smith will inform the secretary of the monthly cost. All in favor. The secretary will be absent for the March meeting, Joan Romo agreed to take minutes.

ADJOURN 8:10 PM; Next meeting: March 19, 2019.

Respectfully Submitted:

Nancy Kaytis-Slocum, secretary.