



## FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION

### Minutes of the January 15, 2009 Meeting

#### Attending Members

Crystal Norris  
Brock Dolman  
Jo Bentz  
Al Ferris  
Andrew Pozzi  
Jeff Holden  
Martin Bauman  
Gene Gaffney  
Jim Lynch

#### Absent Members

Ned Hill  
Dave Cook

#### Others

Doris Duncan, Sonoma County Wildlife Rescue  
Hal Arbit, Sonoma County Wildlife Rescue  
Carrie Kramlich, Sonoma County Wildlife Rescue  
Karl Menard, UC Davis Bodega Marine Lab  
Steve Riske, Department of Fish & Game  
Stacy Martinelli, Department of Fish & Game  
Stefan Parnay, Ag. Commissioner's Office  
Alex McVicker, Ag. Commissioner's Office  
Dagny Thomas, Ag. Commissioner's Office  
Paul Olin, UC Cooperative Extension

Chairperson Crystal called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m.

#### Adoption of Minutes

Crystal asks if there are any additions or corrections to the November 2008 minutes. There are none. Andy Pozzi makes a motion to approve the November 2008 minutes as presented, with a second by Al Ferris. Motion carried.

#### Correspondence

- A. Correspondence from California State Fish & Game Commission regarding various regulatory actions
- B. Summary funding report from Paul Olin, UC Davis Sea Grant Extension, for grant #129, *Russian River Coho Movement and Survival Investigation*
- C. Email from James Swan, Snow Goose Down Productions, regarding "Endangered Species" documentary premiere at the Sacramento International Sportsman's Expo
- D. Invitation from the El Dorado Fish & Game Commission to the first meeting of the "County Fish & Game Commissioners of California Association"
- E. Article from *DFG (Department of Fish & Game) News* regarding Coho recovery at the Warm Springs Hatchery
- F. Article from *DFG News* regarding poaching and selling deer for profit in Sacramento area
- G. Article from *DFG (Department of Fish & Game) News* regarding Sonoma County abalone poaching case arrests
- H. Article from *Russian River Monthly* regarding the bacteria study in Dutch Bill Creek that mentions the grant award from the Fish & Wildlife Commission
- I. Article from *California Outdoors* regarding using cattle as hunting blinds

## **Financial Reports**

In November 2008, the Abalone Fund received \$75.00 from Central Collections, with a current month fund balance of \$9,481.95, and a fiscal year fund balance of \$12,000.00. The General Fund received \$3,056.29 from Superior Court, and \$425.07 from probation, with a current month fund balance of \$171,981.77, and a fiscal year fund balance of \$44,277.94.

In December 2008, the Abalone Fund received \$100.00 from Central Collections, with a current month fund balance of \$9,581.95, and a fiscal year fund balance of \$12,000.00. The General Fund received \$2,856.12 from Superior Court, and \$425.06 from probation, with a current month fund balance of \$175,191.84, and a fiscal year fund balance of \$44,206.83.

Al Ferris makes a motion to approve the November and December 2008 financials as presented, with a second by Andy Pozzi. Motion carried.

## **Old Business**

There is no old business.

## **New Business**

**Claudia Luke, Assistant Director, and Karl Menard, Public Display Coordinator, of the Bodega Marine Laboratory, are requesting a grant in the amount of \$4,500.00, for *Public Education Display Aquaria*, first reading.**

Karl Menard thanks the Commission for the past grant award during the 2007/2008 fiscal year. He explains that the grant monies lasted longer than they expected. Bodega Marine Lab received matching funds for the last grant award from the Commission.

They now have all three of the display aquaria set up, including the one that had previously been under repair featuring an "Under the Dock" theme, which displays juvenile King Salmon.

The three priorities of the Marine Lab are: marine research, university education, and public education. They also study climate change and carbon dioxide levels.

They average around 10,000 visitors annually. The cost of operating the lab averages \$20K to \$25K annually which doesn't include utilities. The University of California pays the utility bills for the facilities, which greatly assists with keeping operation costs to a minimum.

Karl states that the project has guaranteed matching grants if \$4,500.00 is awarded by the Fish & Wildlife Commission.

Andy Pozzi asks Karl who the matching donation guarantors are. Karl says that there are two research scientists from the Bodega Marine Lab that have committed to match funding up to any amount the Fish and Wildlife Commission awards. They also have some private donors that have shown interest in contributing to the continuance of the program.

Crystal Norris asks if any of the students trained via grant funds from the Commission's award last year were involved in any of the elementary school student science symposiums. Karl states that the

students trained as volunteers for the laboratory are trained only for the exacting work involved in the maintenance and upkeep of the lab.

Jo Bentz asks how long the students' lab training is good for. Karl says that the Federal training lasts for three years, and some of the other training is only good for one year. Jo then asks for some background information on the lab students trained with the previous grant award. Karl says that one of the students has now become a full-time employee of the Bodega Marine Lab, and one of the students (still in high school) has joined the Bodega Marine Lab dive team, which is hard to accomplish, no matter what the student's age. He says all of them start as volunteers.

Gene Gaffney asks Karl about the breadth of schools covered regionally with the public education programs. Karl states schools come from Sonoma County, but also from Berkeley, Oakland, San Francisco, and Mendocino.

Andy Pozzi asks Karl for clarification about the "Required tour cost..." line item in the budget information. Karl explains the \$2 per student/\$5 per adult fee is an encouraged fee and not mandatory, but does represent another source of income for the lab. Karl states the average cost of maintaining the public education program over the last five years is around \$26,000, but last year they managed to do it for \$20,000.

Crystal states this is the first reading of the grant request and the second reading will be at the February meeting.

**Doris Duncan, Executive Director, Sonoma County Wildlife Rescue (SCWR), is requesting a grant in the amount of \$16,104.00, for *Mountain Lion Enclosure*, first reading.**

Doris Duncan introduces her guests: Carrie Kramlich, SCWR Board President; Stacy Martinelli, Department of Fish and Game; and Hal Arbit, SCWR Volunteer.

Doris passes out revised grant application packets to the Commission and explains the amount of the grant request has been reduced from \$27,147.00 to \$16,104.00, due to donated labor and reduced cost of materials. US Coast Guard, the SAC crews, SCWR volunteers, and US Army Reserve engineers will donate most of the labor, and Di Franco Fencing has reduced their bid for the cost of fencing materials and installation. They have also received more donations from their members and the public since the original request was submitted. She was also able to obtain lowered or discounted bids from many of the vendors for services and building supplies.

Stacy Martinelli, DFG, explains that the Department of Fish and Game is in support of this project. They believe it is a valuable pathway to address public education issues related to livestock preservation in the local community and for education in local schools.

Jo Bentz asks about the health of the male cub that had an injury to its paw. Doris explains that they had to amputate the paw up to the left shoulder, but that he seems to be recovering well so far. She also says that the female cub that had a fracture to her left femur is doing really well.

Crystal asks about the size of the enclosure. Doris says that they have designed the enclosure to be 100 feet by 30 feet, which will include the safety space between the cage and public viewing. They are required by Fish & Game and USDA to have a three-foot barrier, but are designing this enclosure to have a four-foot barrier. They are burying the chain link fence three feet into the ground and using

a nine-gauge chain link. Crystal says she has spoken with Chuck Tracy (a mountain lion rehab specialist in Southern California) about suggested chain link size for the enclosure. He also told Crystal he feels the proposed dimensions of the enclosure are not big enough. Doris says the minimum requirements are 10 feet x 30 feet, however, the enclosure will be 100 feet by 30 feet. Crystal states that Chuck has concerns about the domestication of cubs to adult animals.

Gene Gaffney asks about Leopards, Etc. in Occidental. Doris has been out to their facilities and is working with them to help develop the SCWR enclosure. They have mountain lions at their facility and currently use nine-gauge chain link for their enclosures.

Doris explains that Stacy Martinelli will be overseeing the project on behalf of DFG, and Pam Swift with DFG will be the attending veterinarian. Stacy says DFG will have full oversight over the facility and are very confident they will ensure public safety according to the enclosure design Doris and SCWR have set forth.

Andy Pozzi asks for confirmation regarding the fact that DFG is setting forth the guidelines and requirements for this enclosure and the care of the cubs, but they are not contributing any funding to the project. Stacy confirms this.

Andy then asks if the case has gone to court yet. Steve Riske says the case is actually a Napa County case that originated in San Jose, and that it is still in the preliminary pre-trial stages.

Al Ferris asks if Napa County plans to prosecute this case. Steve Riske says that the Napa County district attorney Rich Zimmerman will be looking to prosecute. Steve has requested restitution to Sonoma County for the cubs' care, if Napa County is awarded any monies from the case.

Andy asks Steve how much was submitted to the courts for restitution. Steve says he believes the restitution amount is around \$27,000. Doris explains most, or all, of any court fines recovered would go directly to DFG for veterinary bills, as DFG has covered the cost of all veterinary care for the cubs to date. Andy suggests that Doris submit to the prosecuting district attorney the total costs of the project for reimbursement.

Andy then asks Doris how SCWR plans to finance the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the cubs over their lifespan. Doris explains that they are accepting ongoing public and member donations, and that Sonoma County Animal Care and Control has been bringing them dead deer (road kill) on an ongoing basis to feed the cubs. DFG has also been supplying confiscated deer that are no longer needed. DFG also just bought SCWR a new freezer to store prepared venison.

Alex McVicker asks what the expected lifespan is of the mountain lions in captivity. Doris and Stacy reply that the average lifespan is about 20 years.

Doris says that they are now doing school tours by appointment only. They just received their USDA permit so that they may operate as an educational center.

Stacy Martinelli adds that DFG receives numerous calls daily regarding mountain lion sightings. She feels that this educational opportunity would be a great thing for Sonoma County residents.

Carrie Kramlich, President of the Board, SCWR, states that the Board realizes that this project is a potentially huge liability, and that if they didn't feel confident in Doris and DFG, that they would not have approved the project.

Martin Bauman asks what happens to the enclosure once they reach maturity and pass on. Carrie states that they would repopulate it with new mountain lions. Doris says that they could also repopulate it with bobcats, as that is what the enclosure was slated for prior to the arrival of the cubs.

Crystal states that the grant request is a large chunk of the existing fiscal year budget, and that the Commission would probably not be able to award the entire amount. She says that this is the first reading of the grant request and that the second reading will be at the February meeting.

### **Fiscal Year 2009-2010 Budget**

Crystal and Jim Lynch attended a budget meeting with Stefan Parnay and Alex McVicker of the Ag Commissioner's Office; Andy Pozzi was unable to attend. Crystal explains that when they were creating next year's budget, they did a five year average of income and expenditures to assist with figures for the '09-'10 fiscal year.

The Abalone Fund had a '08-'09 projected revenue budget of \$6,000.00, and \$5,500.00 was budgeted for the '09-'10 fiscal year. \$12,000.00 in expenses was budgeted for '08-'09, and \$10,000.00 was budgeted for the '09-'10 fiscal year.

The General Fund had a 2008-2009 projected revenue budget of \$45,750.00, and \$50,155.00 was budgeted for the '09-'10 fiscal year. \$65,750.00 in expenses was budgeted for '08-'09, and \$65,000.00 was budgeted for the '09-'10 fiscal year.

Andy Pozzi makes a motion to approve the 2009-2010 fiscal year budget as presented with a second by Al Ferris. Motion carried.

### **Reports and Comments**

#### **Commission –**

Andy Pozzi asks the Commission to consider returning to the practice of setting a fixed amount per fiscal year for the wildlife rehab projects. He suggests that they consider doing more outreach. Jim Lynch agrees with regards to their doing more outreach. Crystal says that she has concerns about the size of the amounts awarded to SCWR over the years compared to other rehabilitation groups.

Al Ferris spoke with Pierre Gadd recently and Pierre asked how everyone on the Commission was doing. Pierre may come back in to sit in on a meeting soon.

Brock Dolman mentions an article about Russian River brood stock that has been released. Brock made a video of the release. The creek is really dry and not many have been seen, but there may have been a possible Coho Red sighting.

**Public –**

Steve Riske, DFG, mentions the recent big abalone case that was in the newspapers regarding 33 abalone that were confiscated. They had been running surveillance on the perpetrators for a long time. Crystal asks if they used any of the equipment that the Commission paid for. Steve said they did.

Paul Olin, UC Davis Sea Grant Extension, thanks the Commission for their support with the Coho Salmon movement and survival investigation. He says the first marine invertebrate to be declared an endangered species was the white abalone and the second will be the black abalone. Paul suggests the Commission consider holding one of their meetings at the Bodega Marine Lab.

Stefan Parnay, Chief Deputy Agricultural Commissioner, announces that the new Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer, Cathy Neville has started effective December 31<sup>st</sup>. Cathy comes from San Diego County, where she has over 25 years experience with the Agricultural and Weights and Measures divisions. Cathy could not make it to the meeting this evening, but looks forward to meeting the commissioners at an upcoming meeting.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dagny Thomas

Secretary