

Skeena Fish Advisory Committee (SFAC)
Terrace Best Western Inn

March 30, 2008

Chair- **Mark Beere (MB)** (briefly – to ~10:30 am); **Denys Bell (DB)**
Attendees - See Appendix A

1000 hrs - Commence

- Welcome, introductions
- A brief note regarding code of conduct
- The chair discussed the Ministry's wish to appoint a non-government chair for this SFAC meeting
- DB offered to fill the position for a period on **one year** with the aim of making this committee as effective as possible
- **Gene Allen (GA)** nominated DB
- Many seconded the nomination
- DB becomes SFAC chair for 2008 meeting for a period of one year
- DB commented on the importance of committees and why he has chosen to participate in addition to stressing the importance of MOE Regional Manager participation
- **Ken Franzen (KF)**: expressed a desire for the Canadian approach to running the SFAC
- **Jim Culp (JC)**: expressed the desire to keep the committee operating on a consensus approach
- DB expressed the need for a consistent list of members and contact information and noted that he favours the 'shotgun' approach to the distribution of information
- **Sharon Robertson (SR)**: chooses a limited membership in the interest of maintaining effectiveness while not limiting the number of 'gallery' participants
- SR reminded committee members of the agreement reached at last year's meeting: a limited membership with a process for providing advice
- **Gord Wolfe (GW)**: doesn't want the gallery to overcome the discussion
- **Mike Langegger (ML)**: it had been agreed upon at an earlier meeting that there would be a seat left open for a northern representative (i.e. Atlin or Telegraph Creek)
- DB emphasized that this is an advisory committee and not a decision making committee
- ML needs to receive regulation proposals early so that representatives can go back to their constituency groups for feedback

1040 hrs

- Call for additional agenda items
- GA expressed a desire to review the unlimited use of single craft fishing vessels for non-residents citing the ability of anglers with these vessels to shore up entire stretches of classified waters, particularly the Kispiox and Bulkley rivers

1045 hrs

- **Miles Stratholt (MS)** presentation re. FFRAC (Freshwater Fishing Regulations Advisory Committee)
- FFRAC is the provincial regulations committee
- BCWF has a representative that sits on the committee
- There is an upcoming meeting this April

1050 hrs

- KF: enquired as to why the lake trout and stream trout and char regional regulations proposals were not FFRAC first and then regional
- MS: relayed that FFRAC was aware of the regional announcement advising of the potential for an upcoming process

- DB: emphasized the need for FFRAC information/minutes to be sent to SFAC members and it was requested that the FFRAC membership be known to SFAC members
- MS: conveyed that he is looking to set up a web page for dissemination of FFRAC related information but would distribute a membership list to SFAC members in the interim

1100 hrs – Review of SFAC 2007–01-12 proposals – MB read proposals and Regional Managers' recommendations aloud

- DB: wants to ensure that all available information is accessible to committee members as it becomes available – preferably well in advance of the SFAC meeting
- GW: wants a 'more professional' approach from fisheries biologists and expressed a need for MOE to quantify 'subjective statements'
- **Rick McDiarmid (RD)**: commented that drift boating, catch and release fishing and nets are the big issues on the Q.C.I. and noted a decline in resident anglers while guided anglers are operating as they always have
- RD also expressed a concern that if the ministry continues with the process of harmonizing regulations that there may not be a single fishery left
- **Eckard Mendel (EM)**: noted that while diving at the Telkwa-Bulkley rivers confluence area that 60% of the hooks he recovers are treble hooks – he also noted the lack of interest from Canadian Tire to stop selling treble hooks
- ML would like to see a note in the regulations synopsis that advises against the use of treble hooks in catch and release fisheries
- **Darryl Struthers (DS)**: stated that an angler 'can currently fish 6 single barbless hooks' in reference to a lack of legislation pertaining to the single barbless hook regulation and lures (minute takers'/Provincial Regulations Co-ordinator, Thomas Ovanin's note: When a "single barbless hook" restriction is in effect, all hooks must be single-pointed and barbless (treble hooks prohibited). There may only be one hook, one artificial fly OR one artificial lure ATTACHED TO THE LINE. However, we do not have the authority to control the number of hooks per "artificial lure" (a term not defined in the BC Sport Fishing Regulations), therefore the CO is correct in saying that the number of hooks is not regulated, as long as he is referring to the number of hooks per lure, NOT the number of hooks attached directly to a line - which is limited to one.)
- **Proposal 2008-01**: Proponent **Sam Moroski (SM)** re-wrote the proposal to read **single hooks only in Management Units 6-1 through 6-9, excluding 6-3.**
- SM: in favour of a single *barbless* hook regulation but did not want to jeopardize the success of the proposal –the barbless option should be considered an alternate if that point becomes an impediment
- **The committee recommended that the proposal be forwarded to the Regional Manager**

1330 hrs

- **Proposal 2008-02**: The proponent, **Brian Patrick (BP)**, was not present - the proposal is that **fishing not be allowed from March 1 – May 31 in the Lakelse River from the C.N.R. Bridge upstream to Lakelse Lake**
- **Randy Dozzi (RD)** commented that he is familiar with this fishery and most anglers target cutthroat trout, not steelhead
- ML: noted that a conservation concern has not been demonstrated
- **The committee did not recommend that the proposal be forwarded to the Regional Manager**
- **Proposal 2008-03**: The proposal from proponent, BP, is that **a total bait ban be in effect when fishing for wild steelhead in BC**
- DB: the proposal was a non-starter
- RD: supports the proposal
- SR: supports the proposal

- GA: supports the proposal
- GW: the proposal was excessive overkill
- ML: don't remove opportunities – steelhead are already managed very restrictively

- **The committee did not recommend that the proposal be forwarded to the Regional Manager**

- **Proposal 2008-04:** The proposal from proponent EM is to allow the use of two rods/lines per person for use in ice fishing on lakes in Region 6
- MS committed to bringing the proposal to the attention of the FFRAC
- Will be taken to BCWF representative Larry Pew (sp?) to carry forward to the FFRAC also
- **The committee recommended that the proposal be forwarded to the Regional Manager**
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- **Proposal 2008-05:** The proposal from proponent GW is to open the upper 3 km of the Zymoetz River downstream of McDonell Lake to angling
- **Jeff Lough (JL)** spoke to the vulnerability of this early run timing summer steelhead population to angling given that the fish have been demonstrated by radio telemetry studies and MOE observations to hold in this area
- RD: need to protect this population – catch and release angling impacts populations over time
- JC: populations are now lower than they have been historically
- GW: friends that currently fish this area relate that access is challenging due to dense bush and a failing access road
- **The proposal was withdrawn and a request made by the proponent to forward it to the Quality Waters working group dealing with the Zymoetz River for their consideration**

- **Proposal 2008-06:** The proposal from proponent GW is to allow the use of bait to capture chinook salmon in the Morice River downstream of the Lamprey Creek confluence from June 16 – July 31
- ML: bait on 4/0 and larger hooks is too large to capture bull trout incidentally
- JC has a problem with bait use in this area
- ML: angler effort has decreased and this opportunity may help recruit anglers
- MB noted that the angling closure on the upper Morice originated with the DFO to protect chinook that had successfully migrated into the upper watershed – the province benefited from and maintained the no angling regulation to protect blue listed bull trout that stage in the upper Morice, as per the MSc thesis work of Melinda Bahr (UNBC, March 2002)
- **The committee recommended that the proposal be forwarded to the Regional Manager**

- **Proposal 2008-07:** The proposal from ML is to receive clarification as to the manner and direction of how decision makers apply resident priority and opportunity over that of non-residents and angling guides...(see original proposal)
- **Dan Rollert (DR):** support with caution – concerned re. tourism et cetera
- KF: need a clear written statement to guide how specific management issues are dealt with
- RM: agrees with KF – wants clarification
- **The committee recommended that the proposal be forwarded to the Regional Manager**

- **Proposal 2008-08:** The proposal from ML is that anglers under the age of 19 do not require an angling licence
- MS: the ministry has been looking at a new licensing structure – loss of revenue was the issue
- SR: it is currently inexpensive to angle in comparison to other activities and this proposal would represent a loss of revenue
- **The committee recommended that the proposal be forwarded to the Regional Manager**

- **Proposal 2008-09:** The proposal from ML is that all non-resident anglers be guided on all classified waters in Region 6 (with accompanying criterion – see original proposal)
- This was deemed to be a Quality Waters Issue to be considered for information purposes only

- **The committee does not recommend forwarding the proposal to the Regional Manager**
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- **Proposal 2008-10:** The proposal from RM is **to allow the retention of 2 cutthroat trout (none under 30 cm) from the Tlell River**
- JL: there are no procedural/legal impediments to proceeding with this proposal
- **The committee recommended that the proposal be forwarded to the Regional Manager**

1600 hrs

- GW presented his vision for the SFAC which included initiatives that the public can participate in, more detailed submissions from MOE staff well prior to the meeting, with risk assessment information

1605 hrs Meeting adjourned