

Port Alexander Fish and Game Advisory Committee

January 8 2017

12pm Bear Hall

Meeting called to order at 12:15pm by Chair Cory Gifford

Present Chair Cory Gifford, Secretary Karina Browning,
Members Debra Gifford and Jamie Cordova.

Member absent Vice Chair Ryan Martain.

All Members present. Quorum requirement met.

Sarah motioned to approve the agenda as written. Debra
seconded. All in favor. Agenda approved as written.

Debra motioned to approve minutes as written. Jamie
seconded. All in favor. Minutes approved as written.

No Fish and Game staff present

Guest /Public present Sarah Cordova

New Business

Action Plan management options for addressing stocks of
concern: Chilkat river and King Salmon River.

AC members present proposed discussion during meeting would be focused on the actions plans of the stocks of concern for commercial fishing, specifically the troll fisheries. The majority of Port Alexander residents/fishermen are actively engaged and financially dependent on the troll fisheries. Without a troll fishery the majority of Port Alexander residents would be left with no way to make an income. Families would move, the populations would see a dramatic decrease and the school could be forced to close due to lack of funding because the Port Alexander School would fail to meet the requirement of kids needed to for the district receive state funding for the Port Alexander School. With no opposition, AC discussion at his meeting would be focused on the action plans regarding the troll fisheries.

The Port Alexander AC recognizes the Department of Fish and Game would like to reduce the harvest of Chilkat and King salmon River king salmon being these are listed as stocks of concern to the Department of Fish and Game. Skepticism that the Troll Fishery has little to any impact on the stocks of concern. It was agreed the AC would read and discuss all three action plan options thoroughly

for the troll fisheries and make a decision as an AC which option would be suitable for our local troll fleet.

Option A – Status Quo: Troll Fisheries

It was recognized that the Department of Fish and Game managed the 2017 spring troll fishery under EO to ensure escapement of king salmon originating from listed stocks of concern. The closure of Tebenkof Bay fishery and a reduction in Chatham and Little Port Walter fisheries brought financial loss to the Port Alexander Troll fleet. Every troller endured great financial loss during the region-wide closure of the spring troll fishery from May 29- June 14 2017. Ac was in consensus that a complete closure of Tebenkof Bay fishery could be manageable only with little or no restrictions in the Chatham and Little Port Walter fisheries.

Option B- Reduce Hours of Commercial fishing periods: Troll Fisheries

AC discussion on the winter troll fishery closing beginning SW 12, with section 15-A remaining closed through December 31, was focused on how such a closure would affect our fleet to have the ability to earn an income

when the weather is getting better later in the winter fishery making logistics for transporting fish to processors more feasible. The weather alone makes the winter fishery a difficult fishery for our fleet to actively engage in. There is no fish processor or ice services available in Port Alexander during the winter fishery.

Discussion on limiting our fleet during the spring fishery to THA or release sites leaves our local fleet with the options of Port Armstrong THA and Hidden Falls THA. Port Armstrong THA is a very small area that is mostly undesirable to a troller. It is such a small area that it could become crowded with only a few boats fishing the very small area. Hidden Falls THA is also undesirable to our local fleet, it can be a 1 or 2 day voyage to reach the Hidden Falls THA therefor making the Hidden Falls THA a very difficult and financially stressful area to actively engage.

AC discussion of the delaying of the summer troll king salmon retention opener was highly opposed. With no regular services of fish processing or ice services available in Port Alexander, the summer fishery is the time our local fleet has access to an abundance of

tenders will to service our local fleet. Our local Port Alexander Troll fleet depends on that July opener every year to earn and income. Our fleet also greatly dependent on the coho salmon fishing that can typically be good fishing right after the king salmon retention closure. Delaying in the July king salmon retention opener will greatly affect our ability to earn an income by our missed opportunity on the king salmon as well as the coho salmon.

Option C- Reduced Number of Commercial Fishing Periods: Troll Fishery

AC was in unanimous agreeance that option C was highly opposed for the economic factor alone would be devastating for our local fleet and community.

The Port Alexander AC reluctantly agrees that Option A in the Chilkat and King Salmon River Action Plans is the most suitable for our local troll fleet. Port Alexander AC would like express emphasis on Spring Management to achieve goals for the listed stocks of concern as an initial action.

Debra motioned to adjourn. Jamie seconded. All in favor.
Meeting adjourned at 1:55pm

Respectfully Submitted

Karina Browning Mulligan

Port Alexander Fish and Game Advisory Committee
Secretary