



# STANISLAUS COUNTY FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMITTEE

3800 CORNUCOPIA WAY, SUITE D, MODESTO, CALIFORNIA 95358



## MINUTES

APRIL 25, 2024

3800 CORNUCOPIA WAY, ROOM H&I, STANISLAUS BUILDING  
MODESTO, CA 95358-9494

(Agendas can be found online at <http://www.stancounty.com/parks/fish-wildlife-committee.shtm>)

### COUNTY FISH & WILDLIFE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Tom Sexton, D1  
Kenneth Meidl, D4  
Kern Hunewill, D5  
Philip McKay, D5  
Ed Ayers, D2  
Jim Atherstone, D3  
Michael Hart, D4  
Brian Mallard, D2  
Vernon Gladney, D1

### STATE FISH & WILDLIFE REPRESENTATIVE(S):

Bernard Aguilar, CDFW  
JD Wikert, USFWS

### PARKS & RECREATION STAFF PRESENT:

Michelle Roberts  
Vinal Chand

### EXCUSED/ABSENT:

Lt. Justin Gaioran

### GUESTS PRESENT:

Chris Guptill  
Tim Fitzgerald  
Jasmine Velazquez, Field Rep B. Condit  
Jasper Cummins

### A. CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS

Phil McKay called the meeting to order, and introductions were made of all those in attendance.

*All*

### B. STANLEY WAKEFIELD PARK REPORT - OAKDALE

JD Wikert presented on the Stanley Wakefield Wilderness Area Salmonid Habitat Restoration Project. This project began in 2019 with completion in 2024 costing approximately \$2.7 million in grants. The goal of the project is to restore the ecosystem processes by getting the land and water to work together to improve seasonal juvenile salmon and steelhead and doubling the natural number of fish. This was accomplished by flat landing to create shallow rivers that move, preserving natural foliage, and revegetation of natural plants. Tours are currently available.

**ACTIONS & REPORTER**  
*JD Wikert, USFWS*

### C. ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD

Stanislaus County Fish and Wildlife Committee awarded Operation 9-2-99 the Stanislaus County's Fish and Wildlife Environmental Award for 2023. The founder and coordinator Chris Guptill has conducted 95 clean ups by organizing 4600 volunteers which have removed about 1.5 million pounds of trash.

**ACTIONS & REPORTER**  
*Phil McKay*

<p><b>D. FISHERIES REPORT</b></p> <p>Tuolumne River – Escapement is highest since 2016 with 1,341 Chinook. Could be due to ocean fishing was closed and more sustainable flows this year.</p> <p>Merced River – Escapement estimated at 2,371 compared to 75 last year. Increase is due to Fishery closure and more water in the spring, summer and fall months.</p> <p>Stanislaus River – Numbers down from last 1,617 in 2023 compared to 3,639 in 2022. Salmon fishing is closed due to low numbers.</p>	<p><b>ACTIONS &amp; REPORTER</b></p> <p><i>Bernard Aguliar</i></p>
<p><b>E. ENFORCEMENT REPORT</b></p> <p>Lt. Justin Gaioran was unable to attend.</p>	<p><b>ACTIONS &amp; REPORTER</b></p> <p><i>Phil McKay</i></p>
<p><b>F. APPROVAL OF MINUTES</b></p> <p>Kern Hunewill made the motion to accept January 25, 2024, minutes. Tom Sexton seconded. The motion was unanimously carried.</p>	<p><b>ACTIONS &amp; REPORTER</b></p> <p><i>Phil McKay</i></p>
<p><b>G. TREASURER REPORT</b></p> <p>The fund balance is \$59,000. Increase of \$38.00 in January and \$10.00 in March. Clerk Recorder will research the cases that were submitted to search for errors and figure out if there are errors or whether courts are dismissing the cases. Fines from the cases are a major source of income to the committee. The balance varies over time. Could go up or down depending on the cost of projects.</p>	<p><b>ACTIONS &amp; REPORTER</b></p> <p><i>Kern Hunewill</i></p>
<p><b>H. CORRESPONDENCE REVIEW REPORT</b></p> <p>Fishing Game Commission is implementing four new programs. One change is drawing and tags for Bighorn Sheep, Longhorn Antelope, and Elk. Another change is Wild Pig to multiple tags including changing the designation to game. Farmers and Ranchers who have property destroyed by pigs will be able to obtain permits easier. Migratory bird season will be shortened next year due to low bird population to allow for increased breeding.</p>	<p><b>ACTIONS &amp; REPORTER</b></p> <p><i>Jim Atherstone</i></p>
<p><b>I. WOOD DUCK PROJECT REPORT</b></p> <p>Numbers as of three weeks ago, which is prime nesting season, is: 20 boxes at Dos Rios with 121 eggs and 6 boxes at the training center with 32 eggs. Will check again in the next couple of weeks.</p> <p>Potentially provide funds for materials to local Boy Scout groups to build the boxes and install them in trees. Perhaps 20 extra boxes in Dos Rios. A program at MJC could enable volunteer students to monitor the boxes although do not know how many students per box along with potential site at San Joaquin National Wildlife Refuge near Dos Rios. Currently, 44 boxes are at San Joaquin Refuge. San Joaquin Refuge is requesting volunteers to be monitored.</p> <p>Could possibly get a couple of volunteers through the California Waterfowl Association to monitor the boxes to assist with the potential increase in the number of boxes. Will need to plan to monitor the boxes for next nesting season.</p> <p>Tom Sexton made the motion for Boy Scouts to build 20 boxes with total material fees of approximately \$650. Vernon Gladney seconded. The motion was unanimously carried.</p>	<p><b>ACTIONS &amp; REPORTER</b></p> <p><i>Ed Ayers</i></p>

**J. VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR – DOS RIOS EDUCATION PROJECT** **ACTIONS & REPORTER**

Met with Kaitlyn Jackson at Dos Rios about recreational ideas. One idea is getting elementary children outdoors in nature on field trips to Dos Rios State Park. A potential cost would be transportation. Example is using Storer transportation. The cost is \$90 an hour. Students could be dropped off and picked up or the bus could stay and wait. Another cost is providing lunches for the students. Could enlist the financial help of the Sheriff, Modesto Police or teachers applying for grants for educational purposes. For example, fourth graders can see the Hydraulic Cycle at Dos Rios instead of just hearing about it in the classroom.

*Michael Hart*

The objective is to get children outside to experience nature.

**K. WOODWARD RESERVOIR FISH HABITAT PROJECT** **ACTIONS & REPORTER**

The goal of the project is to increase fishing by adding habitat to the lake. One of the processes will include approval by SSJID and Stanislaus Parks and Rec due to the water belonging to SSJID and land belonging to Stanislaus Parks and Rec. Also, will need a lead to draft a scope and plan, material will need to be non-organic, installation will need to be between October – March, and the need to identify locations. Will need a project manager, price structure, process of permission, what type of habitat, how many fish and type of fish: bass, trout, crappie, carp.

*Jim Atherstone*

The committee will need to determine the return, the size of the project and the financial impact. Jim will conduct further research and report back.

**L. NEW COMMITTEE MEMBER** **ACTIONS & REPORTER**

New committee member, Tim Fitzgerald will be the 10<sup>th</sup> member to the committee. There were no questions or comments on the application.

*Phil McKay*

Tim runs G3 Enterprises and runs AG logistics Division covering all of California which includes grapes, nuts, and rice. He travels during the harvest season but can most likely be found at his desk during the off season.

Tom Sexton made the motion to accept Tim Fitzgerald as a new member of the Fish and Wildlife Committee. Jim Atherstone seconded. The motion was unanimously carried.

**M. OTHER BUSINESS – KID FISHING DAY/DEL PUERTO CANYON** **ACTIONS & REPORTER**

Kid Fishing Day is currently in Knights Ferry which the state only provides trout in February. Another option to Knight Ferry fishing day would be to provide fish, crappie, or blue gill, late in the year – fall - to the gravel pond by Orange Blossom as it is a warm water pond if the Army Corps agrees. Since it is an Army Corps of Engineers project, committee to provide some funds for fish and volunteers based on the Army Corps research and proposal. The fish would be brought in a net to keep them close to the bank where the kids would be fishing. When done, the net is pulled, and the fish can go through the pond. Army Corps has all fishing equipment although will need to get bait.

*Phil McKay*  
*Tom Sexton*  
*Vernon Gladney*

Tom Sexton will get more information to present at the next meeting.

The Committee is proposing a get together at Del Puerto Canyon to have lunch - maybe a BBQ - and check on the guzzlers. Del Puerto Canyon closes at the end of April and opens in November.

Will add to the agenda at the first of the year to consider a time after spring, rainy season.

**N. ADJOURNMENT & NEXT MEETING**

**ACTIONS & REPORTER**

There being no further business, Tom Sexton motioned to adjourn the meeting and Jim Atherstone seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously carried. The meeting was adjourned. The next regular meeting of the Fish and Wildlife Committee will be held on:

*Phil McKay*

**July 25, 2024, at 4 PM**  
**Rooms H&I, Stanislaus Building**  
3800 Cornucopia Way, Modesto, CA 95358

Prepared by: Michelle Roberts, Fish & Wildlife Secretary

209-525-6839

Agendas can also be found online at subject to staff's ability to post prior to the meeting. Materials related to an item on this agenda submitted to the Commission after distribution of the agenda packet are available for public inspection during normal business hours at the main office of the Department of Parks and Recreation, 3800 Cornucopia Way, Suite D, Modesto, CA 95358.



**STANISLAUS COUNTY**  
PARKS & RECREATION

*Tera Chumley, Director*  
*Phil McKay, Chair*