



MEETING MINUTES
July 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
 Michael Hart, D4
 Brian Mallard, D2
 Vernon Gladney, D1
 Tim Fitzgerald, D3
 Jim Athersone, D3 (attended by phone)

STATE FISH & WILDLIFE REPRESENTATIVE(S):

Lt. Justin Gaioran CDFW

PARKS & RECREATION STAFF PRESENT:

Michelle Roberts

EXCUSED/ABSENT:

Ed Ayers, D2

GUESTS PRESENT:

Sarah McCulloch, Stanislaus River Salmon Festival Planning Committee

A. CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS

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

All

B. SALMON FESTIVAL FUNDING REQUEST

The 14th annual Stanislaus River Salmon Festival in Knights ferry is a free event although there may be a charge for parking this year. Costs such as advertising, signs about the festival, tee shirts that are part of the youth art project, and calendar contest which is the biggest expense. There will be approximately 300 calendars needed to be printed this year which will be an estimated cost at \$3.62 per calendar with a total of \$1,085 that includes the discount from Dittos Copy Center. The calendars are of children’s drawing art contest depicting art on how to preserve salmon or plant trees. Only 15-16 art projects can be included in the calendar. Most of the participants are from schools in the Stanislaus and upper Stanislaus area. Award ceremony giving out Great Valley Museum tickets and other donations given away. A possible 5,000 will attend the festival, depending on the weather. Vendors are mainly non-profit or for profit local, small, natural resource vendors focusing on children’s activities. There will be a cost for food. Vendor permits cost are saved for future festivals to maintain free admission. It will be held at the same location at 10am-3pm on Saturday, November 9, 2024. Expenditures for the calendars will be approved under FISH AND GAME CODE 13103 (a) education relating to fish and wildlife.

ACTIONS & REPORTER

Sarah McCulloch

Tom Sexton made the motion to purchase 300 calendars for the 2024 Stanislaus River Salmon Festival. Brian Mallard seconded, and Michael Hart abstained due to personally

knowing the owner of the copy center. The motion was unanimously carried

C. FISHERIES REPORT

ACTIONS & REPORTER

Bernard Aguilar was unable to attend.

Bernard Aguilar

D. ENFORCEMENT REPORT

ACTIONS & REPORTER

For the past couple of months, there have been zero patrols in Stanislaus County due to personnel transfers. It has been difficult to maintain staffing. There will be two upcoming graduates from the academy. They will be going Patterson and Turlock at the beginning of next year.

Lt. Justin Gaioran

Financial Statement – Cases are either getting kicked out of court, dismissed or diversion. Only a small portion of the money collected is going to the Fish and Wildlife account. Of the 71 cases processed June through August of 2023, 33 were dismissed, 31 went to warrant, 2 pled no contest, 7 received fines and the highest fine amount was \$250. This is the new way courts are run. Some issues may be due to all misdemeanors and felonies are processed through the District Attorney’s office which are not often, and many cases in traffic court are dismissed.

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

ACTIONS & REPORTER

Jim Atherson made the motion to accept April 25, 2024, minutes. Tim Fitzgerald seconded. The motion was unanimously carried.

Phil McKay

G. TREASURER REPORT

ACTIONS & REPORTER

There is a \$6.52 increase in the last quarter’s balance with a total balance of approximately \$59,000. There are steps on getting information as to why deposits are less than in the past. Fines are divided between Fish and Wildlife and the Stanislaus County Fish and Wildlife Committee.

Kern Hunewill

H. CORRESPONDENCE REVIEW REPORT

ACTIONS & REPORTER

According to the preliminary report, Elk and Pronghorn hunting tags will be available.

Jim Atherstone

Chronic deer wasting disease has become a concern. Possible measures to prevent disease from entering the state include checking the border for deer, elk and pronghorn being transported from out of state. There is also a provision for checking for or banning out of state deer hunting altogether. The regulations prohibit any importation of antlers because they may have had contact with the brain matter of the animal. Importation documents are completed at the border which generates possible inspection and follow up. Chronic wasting disease is a neurological disorder that affects the brain and spinal column in deer, elk, and pronghorn. The disease is mainly found in Wyoming, Colorado and Montana; however, there have been reported cases in Inyo and Madera counties as recent as May 7, 2024.

Invasive plant species could impact Stanislaus County, so the proposed regulation have been referred to the Tuolumne River Trust organization to follow up with the department. Water hyacinth is an invasive plant that grows in slow and warm running water. San Joaquin County had a program for spraying for the plant, but spraying has subsided. The best control of the species is from high water flows and cold temperatures.

I. WOOD DUCK PROJECT REPORT

ACTIONS & REPORTER

There are 20 wood boxes at Dos Rios. During the last nesting season, there were 121 eggs; 42 hatched which is a 35% success rate. Better than last year. The Modesto Police Range has 6 wood boxes. There were 41 eggs; 29 hatched which is a 70% success rate. That is a 44% success rate at both places combined.

Phil McKay

The purchase of wood box materials for the Boy Scouts was agreed during the last meeting. Materials have not yet been purchased. Waiting for the Boy Scouts to submit a

proposal for the building and placement of the new boxes.

State parks accept only natural material in their parks. Because wood boxes are not considered natural, there is an ongoing discussion between parks and river partners to allow for wood boxes to be used. May have to move several of the boxes from a higher traffic area to lower traffic area. Will not add more boxes until the decision is made.

J. VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

ACTIONS & REPORTER

Michael Hart

Working with CSU Stan State and Modesto Junior College to conduct a field study for wood duck boxes. Both schools were initially eager, but there has been no follow up. No response to emails for a tour. The nesting season is in January, so holding off on building and putting up boxes since students are needed to monitor.

K. WOODWARD RESERVOIR FISH HABITAT PROJECT

ACTIONS & REPORTER

Jim Atherstone

Suggested making a topography map to indicate high water marks in irrigation season and low water marks in the winter which is September through March. This would indicate the depth to place the habitat around the reservoir. Once elevation and possible placement are determined, a meeting with SSJID, Stanislaus County, and the water treatment plant manager, and other sources to determine exact placement. SSJID is requesting nonorganic, as opposed to organic material to prevent organic material from clogging the screen/filter at the water treatment plant. Will meet with SSJID and water treatment plant manager to determine where they can be placed.

L. KNIGHTS FERRY KID FISHING DAY

ACTIONS & REPORTER

Tom Sexton

The Army Corp hosts the fishing day. The event may need to be in winter or early spring when the water conditions are optimal. The hatchery is willing to donate trout. Another possible idea is an above-ground pool and fish out of the pool. Bass Pro has hosted a similar type of event. Could reach out to Bass Pro to donate the pool. Tuolumne River Trust has the gear and equipment needed. The pool could be set up in the Modesto or Ceres area for local kids to attend. The City of Modesto could be a possible sponsor.

M. OTHER BUSINESS – FGC Section 13103

ACTIONS & REPORTER

Phil McKay

For the annual environmental award, there was a concern regarding how to pay for the plaque. The 2023 award was ultimately funded by donations from the committee. The funds from the committee’s account were not allowed. The regional Fish and Wildlife manager denied using the funds and so did the county because it was considered a gift rather than an activity. Possible future ideas instead of presenting an award would be purchasing equipment that is used in environmental work. The committee is looking for ideas for next year’s award.

N. ADJOURNMENT & NEXT MEETING

ACTIONS & REPORTER

Phil McKay

There being no further business, Tom Atherstone motioned to adjourn the meeting and Tim Fitzgerald 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:

October 24, 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*