**BCFDF DIRECTORS VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES**

**FEBRUARY 22, 2021**

**Attendance:**

Shane B. Don T.

Rod C. Jason H.

Tony P. Pat A.

Nick M. Larry P.

Chris W.

**Meeting called to order at 7:10 PM by Rod C.**

Rod gave a eulogy to our recently passed Director Leigh McCracken.

The BCFDF has lost many Directors in the past few years and we must acknowledge their passing in a formal way. Their contributions were immense and we are thankful for their dedication. Details TBA

**Minutes of last meeting** had been circulated. Motion to accept as read by Nick M. 2nd by Don T. Adopted as read.

**Financial Report:**

Bank balance $25,000 we must have a Fundraiser to boost our finances. Hopefully in the fall. Our major contributors to the bank balance have been the Banquets and Memberships. Covid has really put a wrinkle in this for us.

**Skeena Report by Jason and Larry:**

Skeena Angling Advisory Team, no proposals forwarded for this year. A virtual meeting to be held 3/21

Lots of opposition to proposed bait ban from many groups. Comment by Shane B. that he feels that it will be pushed through by the Ministry.

Rod C. asked Jason H. if there was a common theme to this proposal.

Jason H. Reply was that there was no Science to back this up. Opposition letters represent 1,000’s of individuals.

Pat A. There is some immerging science from UBC (on Chinook) regarding condition of fish when caught pointing to hook size (gap), the larger hook, and the more damage to fish.

Jason H. Many studies on this have been done with strong indicators that hook size is a major factor, not bait use.

Rod C. A virtual meeting from Victoria with SFAB will be held tomorrow. Expected to last 1.5 hr.

Nick M. Some groups are saying bait fishing is wanted, are there others pushing for Fly only?

Shane B. Is this a Ministry proposal?

Larry P. Yes indeed a Region 7 A+B initiative and not from Victoria.

**Van. Island Report Shane B:**

Moderate returns of S/H. Low numbers in Feb. Heavy Angler numbers on Cowie due to collapse of Stamp and Gold Rivers. The West Coast USA Rivers are expecting the largest Coho returns since 2008.

Talks with 1st Nations re Piniped harvest should be promoted.

Rod C. has indication by email that a S/H recovery plan is underway. This is from above local level.

Pat A. There is no ability to do any enhancement on Gold River as the number of fish will not allow for this. Steelhead are the major target of predators as they are the largest species to out migrate from rivers and the returning adults are targeted. They are hit the hardest of all species.

**Thompson Okanagan Report by Don T:**

RAPP meeting will be held in near future.

Big Bar slide work is underway to install permanent fish ladder now that river levels are low, but extreme cold is slowing work.

Rod C. Fish are getting through naturally with the low levels.

Don T. Waiting on appeal re Minnie Lake case.

**Lower Mainland Report by Rod C:**

Gill Rd. 4x4 damage to side channels; there was a video circulating on this event which has brought together reps with most pertinent user groups of this area to view the damage done to habitat. C&P will install signage. This is an enforcement issue that DFO is responsible to fulfill. A follow up meeting is scheduled to take place in March. This is a big area used by many and it would be a shame to lose access to it. Our goal is to have all parties working together to protect fish habitat without stopping others from using the area for their recreation.

Our involvement with the ORC has been rewarding as we are getting more support on fisheries issues. Reconciliation issues have now been flagged to them.

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**Lower Fraser Collaborative Table: (Yale to Tssawassen)**

TOR has been established and 95% complete. More involvement from 1st Nation reps needed as only 5 of 23 bands participated. LFFA will get back to all bands. This is the largest working group which has been formed to deal with Fish access.

Shane B question, has noticed a growing alliance of 1st Nations against non natives fishing. We need to prove our point by acquiring proven studies which show catch & release is not the be all end all Demon when there are other factors which effect survival of fish.

Pat A. A 3 year study on better informing the public on proper fish handling practices, hook size caused damage, agrees with Shane B. that most are unaware of the damage caused by their internet posts re grip and grin photos and fish out of water.

**FRSA Report Chris W.**

The demo fishery court case is moved to March 9. Presently setting up defense and waiting for officer’s notes. A few of charged Anglers have now had their gear returned. We have a new web developer and are working on setting up a new membership program.

Update from Nathan B. re damage to fish caused by predation or other causes is being recorded. Anglers have been asked to submit photos of fish which show damage. Presently there are 30 photos showing damaged fish. These photos show seal predation is the major cause. Of all the fish weighed in at Fred’s Fishing Store, 60% showed damage. The feeling is this evidence proves seal damage to fish is a major concern. The FRSA has about $50,000 in bank account. These monies are going to be used to fight court case as a Lawyer has been retained and keep this organization afloat. Shane B. feels that 1st Nations are the only way to get the seal population under control.

Chris states they are contemplating reaching out to SSBC to push this forward if they can. Rod C. reminded Chris that SSBC represents Fish, not Anglers. The #1 item is Predator control and would be better served by Fraser River Collaborative Table involvement.

**SFAB Main Meeting Report Pat A:**

Salmon Allocation Policy TOR has been established. Attempting to understand our rights going forward with Reconciliation process and DFO involvement.

Government has a duty to represent Non Aboriginal People. Government’s outcome has been predetermined prior to and involvement by other stakeholders.

Jason H. asked who are on the Salmon Allocation Policy committee. North Coast is Gerry C. and Martin, South Coast is Mike K.

Jason states that not all 1st Nations want us off the rivers due to the dollars we generate into their annual incomes.

 Rod C. Hoping we will be able to hold our Fundraiser this fall. We will need lots of help.

Leader length proposal had to go through Province to get condition of license changed. DFO was to go to Province to push this through. Pat A. states that it must be done tomorrow as time is critical.

Rod C. will do tomorrow. Next Meeting at 7PM March 22

**Adjourned at 9:05 PM**

TP