

Mono County Fisheries Commission

Regular Meeting

Monday, December 4, 2013 ~ 10:00 a.m.

June Lake Community Center

June Lake ~ California

Minutes of Meeting

I CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m.

II Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

III ROLL CALL

Present were Commissioners Steve Marti, John Webb, Dan Anthony, Gaye Mueller, Bob Dunn, Jim King and Gary Jones. Staff present was Jeff Simpson and Nancy Alaniz. Also present were Supervisor Fesko.

IV COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

V APPROVAL OF MINUTES

November 6, 2013

Motion by Jones to accept the November 6, 2013 minutes. Second by Webb. Passed unanimously (King abstained since he was not at the last meeting.)

VI STAFF/COMMISSIONERS REPORTS

Simpson nor anyone else, had an update on the reappointment of commissioners.

Webb commented on a legal decision made in support of fish stocking. Erdman clarified that the lawsuit claimed that wilderness fish stocking is a pollutant, but it was deemed that "dead" fish are a pollutant.

Mueller attended the Inyo Fish & Wildlife Commission meeting and she learned that CDFW director Chuck Bonham is planning on attending the opener dinner in Inyo again this year.

VII F&W UPDATE – Jim Erdman

Marti asked Erdman about the planned reduction in stocking. Erdman responded that the overall average of the planned reduction in stocking will be 10% this year. This is a statewide reduction, not just our region. Erdman did not know which specific budget reductions caused the decrease in stocking. The Trophy Trout program will still exist. John Frederickson (IAG) said he sees this as a continuing trend and it needs to be addressed. A discussion followed regarding the potential future of fish stocking and how to increase funding for stocking.

The West Walker River regulation change was approved to take effect on March 1, 2014.

VIII FUND BALANCES

The F&G Fine Fund balance was reported by the Finance Department as \$17,471.13. (\$7500 encumbered-\$4000 BFEF/\$3500 ESWC) The MCFC regular budget is \$10,586.29. The Conway Ranch Fund was reported as \$11,930.45.

IX BUSINESS MATTERS

1. Discussion Regarding the SCE Supply to Conway Ranch – Tim Rafferty

Rafferty reported that in the last five years there have only been two emergency outages on that circuit and two planned outages. There was one additional outage that was related to the Bridgeport Substation. He said that circuit is not on the list for replacement and there is no designated funding for its replacement. There are numerous circuits, throughout the County, that are similarly aged as this circuit. SCE is reviewing the circuit, but there is enough power there for the planned Conway Ranch upgrades and it does not have reliability issues. Rafferty addressed specific questions regarding the planned upgrades, but some questions were not able to be answered due to the lack of project details.

2. Discussion of Conservation Easement Overview – Karen Ferrell-Ingram

Karen Farrell-Ingram reported the following: the main purpose of the document is to solidify the County's and the land trust's ideas on the concept, then to share the ideas in writing with the public and the grantors. The goal is to reiterate and potentially clarify existing grant restrictions. The primary conservation values that are to be preserved are based on the Cal Trans grants - historic resources, habitats, wetlands, perennial fresh water springs, open space/scenic resources, public access, connectivity to other public and protected open space for habitat and recreation. The reserved rights for Mono County are the commercial fish rearing within the designated 75 acre parcel, grazing and aquaculture in accordance with future management plans, and all rights specified by the conservation easement or existing grants. The County and the land trust are working on the conveyance agreement and once finalized, the conservation easement will be drafted and presented/reviewed by the public and BOS, then approved.

King asked for clarification regarding the parcel for fish rearing. Ferrell-Ingram explained the agreed upon parcel size is 75 acres. In order to change this size, the process would have to be redone. King also asked about the ability for new roads and trails to be added. Ferrell-Ingram said she assumed they could be added if the conservation values are not affected. Additionally, in response to King, Ferrell-Ingram said some type of management plan was necessary to move forward and it could be refined in the future.

In response to Webb, Ferrell-Ingram reported that she has been working closely with Cal Trans and the County to develop the draft easement and that all representatives have been actively involved. Cal Trans agreed to a MOU extension until 4-1-14 so progress needs to be made. Dunn asked Ferrell Ingram if the other grantors have been involved, and she responded that they have the necessary documents and are under review. Marti added that there was no need to review the Vaught management plan until the other grantors approve it. Dunn concurred.

3. Discussion & Possible Action: Tony Vaught Draft Plan for Conway Ranch Fish Rearing Facility - Marti

The consensus of the FC was the draft management plan lacked detail and a breakdown of short, medium and long range goals. It is a vision of potential projects for the ranch, with which they agree with as a rough draft, but it is not a plan; it is just an overview that needs additional work. Marti asked Karen Ferrell-Ingram how she saw the management plan fitting in with the other grants. She said there are areas to be cautious about and that the other grantors may have concerns about, specifically the use of groundwater. Additionally, the management plan is a larger plan than what was originally discussed, i.e. the barn.

4. Discussion of 11-12-13 BOS meeting ref: Reappointment of FC Commissioners - Marti

Simpson was not at the BOS meeting but it was his understanding that all of the commissioners who were due for reappointment were reinstated.

5. Mono County's Future in Fish Planting & Count's direction with Time-Lines, Sooner than Later - Webb

Webb said this was mostly discussed under the CDFW update. There is a concern about the future of stocking and obtaining funding to supplement stocking. He thought maybe funds could be raised and allocated to the Conway Ranch to ensure there is stocking for the County. Launch fees, TOT taxes, fish stamps, TBID and other options were discussed. Webb asked that this item be placed on the next agenda for further discussion.

6. Progression of the OVCC (Conway Irrigation Ditch) – Webb

Webb reported that FIM Corporation has done major digging in the settling pond, but it could be made bigger. There are also ditches that need to be dug out. The OVCC did not start their project as planned since they were diverted to a wildfire. Simpson will follow up with them regarding the project.

7. Modification of the Fisheries Commission Name – Webb

Webb reported that during the recent BOS meetings there was discussion regarding the Fisheries Commission changing its name to reflect their involvement with wildlife. The consensus of the commissioners was that they would accept a name change if the BOS so desired.

8. Discussion & Possible Approval of Reprint of the “proper handling of fish after catching” brochure – Simpson

Supervisor Fesko was requesting brochures in anticipation of the early West Walker River opener. During a discussion it was determined that there are numerous additional brochures in storage and it is not necessary to reprint the brochure at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 12:26 pm.

The next regular meeting of the MCFC will be held in the Bridgeport Health Dept/Animal Control building, Bridgeport January 8, 2014 at 10 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy Alaniz, Secretary