



COUNTY OF PLACER

FISH AND GAME COMMISSION

COMMISSION MEMBERS

DON GOULD
District 1
ROBERT HASWELL
District 3
KARI FREIDIG
District 5/Colfax
MICKEY DANIELS
District 5/Tahoe

MARK FOWLER
District 2
GARY FLANAGAN
District 4
RON SALTER
District 5/Forest Hill

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Joshua Huntsinger, Agricultural Commissioner
County Contact

PLACER COUNTY FISH & GAME COMMISSION MINUTES

April 27th, 2011 7:00 P.M.

Placer County Government Center Hearing Room
DeWitt Center
2900 Richardson Drive
Auburn, CA 95603

Members Present: Gary Flanagan, Mark Fowler, Robert Haswell, Kari Freidig Don Gould, Mickey Daniels, Ron Salter

Members Absent: None

I. CALL TO ORDER – (Roll Call) – Gary Flanagan, Chairman at 7:00 pm

II. Roll Call- Paul Meyers, Secretary
a. Opening Statement

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES March 23rd, 2011

Fowler motioned to approve the minutes as written
Freidig seconded
Daniels and Gould abstained
Minutes approved unanimously

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT – Individuals may address the Commission on items under the jurisdiction of the Fish and Game Commission not included on this agenda for no longer than five (5) minutes. *No action can be taken on items addressed under Public Comment.*

None

V. FINANCIAL REPORT

a. **Budget update** - Josh Huntsinger

Expenditures to date total \$7,679.80, including \$1,170.00 in commissioner's fees, \$600.00 in secretary services, \$4,874.62 in grant funding, and \$1,027.18 in mileage reimbursement. Budgeted expenditures for the remainder of the fiscal year total \$4,182.20.

Revenues to date total \$1,222.71, including \$878.56 in Fish and Game fine revenues, and \$344.15 in Fish and Game Fund interest.

VI. AGENCY REPORTS

a. **California Department of Fish and Game (DFG)** - Lt. Richard Vincent

Turkey season is coming to close this weekend. Archery and youth hunters can continue for another two weeks. Loaded guns in vehicles and trespassing have been the most common violations. Trout season is opening this weekend.

Lt. Vincent continues to work with the Placer County District Attorney about sending out bail notices for infractions. They may be able to make the violations an infraction that allows the bail notices to be mailed instead of people having to show up in court.

Bears are starting to get active.

Lt. Vincent will be retiring effective Nov. 1st.

b. **Commissioner Updates**

Fowler reported on the Mercury TMDL task force meeting of April 14th. The team is still working on plans to reduce the mercury levels in the Middle Fork of the American River. The group is looking at different watersheds and the focus is on controlling point sources, but they don't know where the sources are located. The group wants to have a plan done by the summer of 2012.

c. **Nevada Irrigation District** - Sue Sindt

Snow surveys indicate they are at 200% of average. It will be awhile to get to most places in the high country.

The failure of the PG&E Bear River canal is hampering water supplies in Placer County and it could be 2 to 3 months before the canal is repaired.

VII. Old Business

a. **Continued Discussion of Request for Letter of Support for AB 606**

The bill did pass the assembly 16 to 0. Is being referred to the Senate and who is taking comments. The intent is to clarify the law regarding Wildlife Habitat Conservation Easements administered by the California Department of Fish and Game. The bill would clarify that hunting and fishing are allowable uses of such lands unless otherwise prohibited by contract, or other laws or regulations.

The commissioners discussed the bill and the merits of sending a letter of support for AB 606.

Gould motioned to recommend that the Placer County Board of Supervisors write a letter in support of AB 606.

Haswell seconded

Freidig and Fowler opposed.

Motion passes 5-2

VIII. New Business

a. Consideration by the Commission of Opportunity to Affiliate with Other Central Sierra Counties Fish and Game Commissions to Address Common Issues

Haswell reported that Flanagan and he had met informally with other commissioners from other county fish and game commissions in the region.

The goal of this informal group is to foster communication among the various counties, and address common issues. For example, one issue is the bears at Lake Tahoe.

There was some concern regarding the ability of the group to approve actions that would be binding on the members.

Much discussion was had regarding what authority the group would have. Haswell expressed that the purpose of the group would be to share information between the counties. Placer County would not be obligated to anything based on the actions or decisions of the proposed group.

Commissioners discussed how this group might work or be bound to a lobbying group. It was generally discussed that the commissioners were not interested in being bound to any lobbying organization.

Salter motioned that this commission (up to a maximum of 3 members) participate in the Central Sierra Counties Fish and Game Commission for information sharing.

Daniels seconded.

Motion passed unanimously

b. Recommendation to the Placer County Board of Supervisors Regarding California Department of Fish and Game's Proposed Suction Dredging Regulations-Requested and presented by Bill Carnazzo

Carnazzo reported that he lives in Foresthill and is a full time fishing guide. He has been around the area for fifty years.

He gave a PowerPoint presentation about his group, Foothills Angler Coalition, a California Non-Profit Corporation. He is the VP and Member of the Board of Directors.

Foothill Angler Coalition represents the following groups:

North fork of the American River Associates

Upper American River Federation

Carnazzo's presentation covered the following:

- Proposed regulations
- Draft supplemental EIR
- Issues regarding these documents

The proposed allowable dredging seasons are mainly scheduled to protect the spawning of fish, frogs, and other wildlife.

Carnazzo highlighted what he viewed as a few problems including:

- DFG used a "statewide" analysis instead of a stream-by-stream analysis to evaluate potential environmental impacts
- Transfer of permits/claims to groups or entities
- Use of Best Management Policies voluntary guidelines to reduce the severity of environmental impacts
- DFG's definitions of "deleterious to fish"
- Use of 8" suction nozzles – allowed on the American River (one of 9 in the state)
- Allowing motorized winching

Fees:

- Proposed fees \$40
- 4000 permits can be issued. Each permit can cover 6 locations
- Would generate only \$160,000 dollars, indicating not much enforcement.

Above Folsom Lake, they are going to re-introduce Central Valley Steelhead which is currently listed as a threatened species.

Carnazzo then covered the issues for both forks (North and Middle) of the American and Rubicon Rivers within Placer County.

He discussed the characteristics of the North Fork of the Middle Fork of the American River. Carnazzo mentioned that tributaries function as the main trout nursery for the Middle Fork American River. The Middle Fork American River has virtually no natural spawning habitat.

He presented some pictures of the impacts of dredging and the impacts of miners on the river.

The commission discussed the issues related to suction dredge mining and water quality as well as the release of mercury into the environment. Now that Placer County is a partner in the Middle Fork Project, they might be accountable for the water quality.

A recent US Geological Survey study indicates that dredging is a point source of mercury in California's waterways. Mercury is a problem in both forks of the American River(they are listed as impaired.)

Fowler motioned that the Placer County Fish and Game Commission recommend to the Placer County Board of Supervisors to:

- Oppose the proposed DFG regulations on suction dredge mining
- Ban the use of dredges on "Wild and Scenic" waters, such as the North Fork of American River, and also on "Wild Trout" status rivers, under the State Heritage Trout Program
- Ban the use of 8 inch suction nozzles
- Ask DFG to consider the impact dredging would have on the release of methyl mercury in the American River watershed

Salter seconded

Motion approved unanimously

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Flanagan adjourned the meeting at 9:53 PM

Paul Meyers – Recording Secretary

Next Meeting – Wednesday May 25th, 2011