



Meeting Minutes January 25 & 26, 2012 Ft. Lauderdale, FL

SFBPC members participating: James Adams, Jim Anderson, John Arway, Doug Boyd, Noreen Clough, Jeff Crane, Ned Dikmen, Thom Dammrich, Roger Fuhrman, Betty Huskins (by phone), Scott Kovarovics, Ryck Lydecker, Mike Nussman, Geoff Ratté, John Sprague

Other participants: Rowan Gould (FWS), Bryan Arroyo (FWS), Nick Wiley (Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission), Christine Dobday (RBFF), Lori McCullough (Tread Lightly!), Ken Taylor (The Pebble Partnership), Herb Leedy (BSEE), Todd Turner (FWS), Stuart Leon (FWS), Brian Bohnsack (FWS), Paul Malo (National Association of Charterboat Operators), Carlos Vidueira (Marine Industries Association of South Florida & Rybovich), Mike Antheil (Marine Industries Association of Palm Beach County), Doug Hobbs (FWS), Bruce Decker (FWS), Christina Zarella (FWS), Jerry Miller (CEQ), Eric Schwaab (NOAA), Terry Holman (DOI)

January 25, 2012:

Location: Renaissance Fort Lauderdale Cruise Port Hotel
1617 Southeast 17th Street; Fort Lauderdale, Florida

CONVENE

Welcome & Introductions

- Thom Dammrich, SFBPC Chair

Welcome comments of Fish & Wildlife Service leadership

- Rowan Gould, Deputy Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Bryan Arroyo, Assistant Director, Fisheries and Habitat Conservation

Florida presentations

- Overview of State of Florida FWCC
 - Nick Wiley, Executive Director, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
 - Mr. Wiley highlighted the importance of recreational angling and boating in the State of Florida.

- The economic impact and importance of these activities was highlighted.
 - Mr. Wiley gave a quick brief on the management activities that the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission undertakes to conserve fish and wildlife resources.
 - He highlighted some of the current challenges for the State – Federal fisheries management councils and Federal management issues at Biscayne National Park.
 - Mr. Wiley highlighted the importance of working relationships with stakeholders and partners.
 - Council member Nussman asked about the situation at Biscayne National Park. He raised concern with NPS actions.
 - A question about the incidence of derelict vessels was asked.
 - Mr. Wiley mentioned youth outreach efforts by Florida.

- Overview of the Boating and the Boating Industry in the State of Florida
 - *John Sprague & Carlos Vidueira, Vice President, Rybovich Mega Yacht Facility*

- Mr. Vidueira discussed the economic importance of boating in Florida, and particularly in South Florida.

Fish and Wildlife Service Update

- *Rowan Gould, Deputy Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*

- Mr. Gould discussed the collaborative effort between the FWS and States, through the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies, on Endangered Species Act (ESA) issues.
- The Obama Administration proposal to move the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration into the Department of the Interior is related to ESA issues.
- FWS budget – Flat. Given cuts at other agencies, flat is a good outcome.
- Mr. Gould mentioned the Science initiative at the FWS. Land Conservation Cooperatives are supposed to gather science for use in FWS decision-making. They are also supposed to build shared science capacity with States. LCCs do not usurp existing management authorities.
- America’s Great Outdoors initiative: Mr. Gould mentioned that the Interior Secretary is interested in regional focus areas.
- The DOI is working on a Rivers Initiative to restore rivers and connect people to them through recreational access.
- National Wildlife Refuge System “Vision” implementation: Implementation is on-going. SFBPC participation and input is helpful to process.

- Council members Sprague asked about Endangered Species Act implementation. He mentioned that boating access can be negatively impacted by uncoordinated implementation by Federal agencies.
- Council member Crane mentioned the anniversary of 75 years of Wildlife & Sport Fish Restoration programs. He stated that community was looking to change the tag line for the programs to: "User pay, Public benefit." Mr. Crane stated that this tagline more accurately portrayed the impact of the programs.
- Council member Arway raised a concern about LCC funding on other FWS programs. He indicated that States are concerned about using limited funds for ambiguous research efforts and that States have a lack of resource to participate in the effort. LCC effort does not mesh with PA strategic plan. Pulling out of LCCs because there are other higher priorities.
- Gould stated that States can use State Wildlife Grants for regional participation in LCCs.
- Council member Dikmen asked if the FWS was thinking about future funding models since SFR relies heavily on gas taxes, which are declining.
- Gould said that others need to be brought into the conversation.

BREAK

Update on the activities of the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation

- Christine Dobday, Vice President for Stakeholder Engagement and Business Development, Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation

- Ms. Dobday updated Council members on the activities of the RBFF.

Overview of Bureau of Ocean Energy Management Rigs to Reefs Program

- Herb Leedy, Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, Department of the Interior

- Mr. Leedy mentioned the "Idle Iron" policy. Applies to rigs out of use for 5 years. A lot of rigs are in shallow water.
- Rigs to Reefs Program is really focused on State programs.

Break for Lunch

Reconvene

"The Pebble Prospect" - An Overview of the Project and its Extensive Environmental Studies

- Ken Taylor, Vice President for Environment, The Pebble Partnership
- Duane Gibson, Consultant to The Pebble Partnership, Livingston Group LLC

- Ken Taylor provided an extensive overview of the The Pebble Mine project in Bristol Bay, Alaska.
- The Council decided to take no action on a letter to Secretary Salazar, at this time, because the project has not been submitted officially.

Fish and Wildlife Service Fisheries Program update

- *Bryan Arroyo , Assistant Director, Fisheries and Habitat Conservation*
- *Stuart Leon, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service*

- Mr. Arroyo discussed the status of efforts by the Fisheries Program to implement recommendations made by the SFBPC.
- Mr. Arroyo and Mr. Leon covered the coming fiscal year 2013 budget outlook for the Fisheries Program.
- Arroyo updated Council members on the status efforts to thwart the Asian carp from spreading to the Great Lakes.

Wind Energy siting guidelines

- *Bryan Arroyo, FWS*
- *Ned Dikmen, SFBPC member*

- Mr. Arroyo briefed Council members on soon to be released FWS guidelines for siting wind energy facilities.
- He indicated that the guidelines would be for siting land-based facilities.
- He recognized that the Council is concerned about the impacts of facilities sited in oceans or on the Great Lakes.
- Mr. Arroyo suggested that the land-based guidelines could serve as a model for helping determine where water-based facilities may be sited in the future.
- He indicated that the U.S. Coast Guard would help lead siting efforts for water-based facilities.
- Mr. Dikmen discussed feedback he solicited from members of the boating community related to concerns over possible impacts of water-based wind energy facilities.

BREAK

Boating Issues Committee - *John Sprague, Chair, SFBPC Boating Issues Committee*

- Committee update
 - *John Sprague & Doug Hobbs*
 - See discussion below under Boating Issues Committee working session

Fisheries Issues Committee – Mike Nussman, Chairman

- Discussion and update on Fisheries Issues Committee
- *Mike Nussman & Doug Hobbs*

- Hobbs and Nussman briefed Council members on a proposed process for assisting the FWS Fisheries Program revise and update both its strategic program vision and operating plan.
- Action to endorse the process and to undertake the effort (which was requested by the FWS) was postponed for the Fisheries Issues Committee working session. See notes below from January 26.

Update on NOAA Fisheries activities & issues

- *Russell Dunn, National Policy Advisor for Recreational Fisheries, NOAA Fisheries*

- Mr. Dunn updated Council members on implementation of the Recreational Fisheries Action Agenda.
- Mr. Dunn also updated Council members on Catch Shares implementation and management actions of the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Councils.

Boating Issues Committee work session

- *John Sprague, Boating Issues Committee Chair*

- John Sprague led a discussion of issues that the committee would likely be addressing in the new Council term.
- Issues include the Boating Infrastructure Grant Program rulemaking and rulemaking for the Clean Vessel Act Grant Program.
- Sprague also suggested that the Council work with partners to try and understand why BIG applications for funding were significantly down than in past years.
- Sprague also led a discussion of the impacts of a draft proposed management plan being considered for the Biscayne National Park.
- The proposed plan would close large areas of the park to boating and fishing.
- Council decided to invite National Parks Service staff to its next meeting to discuss.

ADJOURN

January 26, 2012

CONVENE – *Thom Dammrich, SFBPC Chair*

Wildlife & Sport Fish Restoration Program Update

- *Christy Vigfusson & Christina Zarella, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service*
 - Ms. Vigfusson updated the Council on the status of the rulemaking for the Boating Infrastructure Grant Program.
 - Ms. Zarella briefed Council members on the FWS celebration of 75 years of Wildlife and Sport Fish Restorations Programs.

National Ocean Policy: Discussion of Draft Implementation Plan

- *Jerry Miller, Assistant Director for Ocean Sciences at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and Acting Deputy Director of the National Ocean Council*
- *Terry Holman, Department of the Interior*
- *Eric Schwaab, NOAA*
- *John Oliver, U.S. Coast Guard*
 - Mr. Miller took the lead in updating SFBPC members on the status of implementation of the National Ocean Policy (NOP).
 - Specifically, Mr. Miller reviewed the just released draft implementation plan for the NOP.
 - Lydecker asked how implementation of the NOP would be funded.
 - Ratté stated that science should drive decision-making.
 - Arway indicated that it is hard for States to participate in new planning efforts in times of declining budgets.
 - Crane raised a concern about the impacts of restrictions on recreational angling and boating may have on conservation funding through the Sport Fish Restoration Program.

Briefing on the activities of the Federal Interagency Council on Outdoor Recreation (FICOR)

- *Bob Ratcliffe, Deputy Assistant Director for Renewable Resources & Planning, Bureau of Land Management (via conference line)*
 - Mr. Ratcliffe updated the Council on the status of FICOR activities.
 - He discussed with Council members future venues for their input into the work of the FICOR.
 - Council members inquired with Mr. Ratcliffe about focus areas that the FICOR might have identified for its work.
 - Ratcliffe indicated that the FICOR would be reaching out to engage the SFBPC in the near future.

Update, discussion and action on SFBPC Strategic Work Plan for 2010 to 2012

- *Doug Hobbs, SFBPC Coordinator*

- Hobbs reviewed the status of the strategic issues list for the 2010-2012 SFBPC term.
- Hobbs also briefed Council members of the process for identifying new issues at the first meeting of the upcoming new Council term.

BREAK

Outreach and Communications Committee work session

- *Betty Huskins & Geoff Ratté, Co-Chairs*

- Huskins and Ratté were asked to collect nominees for appointment to fill RBFF Board vacancies. The Council is an appointing authority to the RBFF Board.
- Huskins also mentioned that the committee would work to assemble materials that the council can use to highlight its accomplishments over the last term.

Fisheries Issues Committee work session

- Discuss or take actions to close out session or to prepare committee for the new Council term

ACTION – Council established a Strategic Planning Team to begin and assist the Council complete the task of leading the development of a revised Fisheries Program Strategic Plan.

MOTION: John Sprague – To establish a steering committee, under supervision of the Council’s Fisheries Issues Committee, to assist the Council in helping update and revise the FWS Fisheries Program vision and strategic plan.

SECOND: John Arway

Motion unanimously approved.

ACTION – Draft letter for to Secretary Salazar and Lubchenko asking them to make sure recreational activities on the Nation’s oceans are not unduly restricted by implementation of the National Ocean Policy. If possible, letter to include Discuss or take actions to support the sport fishing community’s comments to NOAA Fisheries’ Eric Schwaab.

ACTION – Draft letter for Council expressing support for principles included in H.R. 2834 and Senate legislation.

Refuge Vision Implementation Plan

- Council to respond to letter from FWS asking for SFBPC input. Letter to highlight specific areas of interest in Refuge Vision.

- Areas of interest include, primary interest is in hunting, fishing, outdoor recreation and interpretation and education, with a lesser or tertiary interest in the community partnerships and planning.

ACTION - Council established an ad hoc team to play an active role in collaborating with the FWS Refuge System to implement the Refuge Vision Implementation Strategy

- Members include Boyd, Crane, Adams, Kovarovics, Ratté, and Lydecker.

Public Comment period

- No members of the public requested time.

Open Council discussion / Consideration of Action Items / New business

- Discuss or take actions to close out the current Council term and offer items for consideration for the strategic work plan for the coming Council term.

- New business

- Council appointments

- Hobbs stated that Council appointments were pending and that appointments were anticipated by April

- Meeting dates for teleconference meeting & possible 2012 meeting

- Council members set February 28, 2012, for Council teleconference to approve appointments to the RBFF Board of Directors. This is a non-advisory meeting.

- After considering calendars, Council members decided to meet on June 4 & 5, 2012, in Washington, D.C.

Meeting adjourned