

Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council
Teleconference Meeting
January 8, 2016
Meeting Minutes

Council Attendees: Scott Kovarovics, James Adams, John Adey, Janine Belleque, Doug Boyd, Chris Edmonston, Fred Harris, Betty Huskins, Mac McKeever, John Sprague, Alvin Taylor, Jim Zorn

Other participants: Brian Bohnsack (Designated Federal Officer), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service- Tom Busiahn, Paul VanRyzin, Brad Gunn

General Public: Dave Matsuda

The teleconference was called to order after experiencing some technical difficulties with the proper call in number. Specifically, an incomplete call in number was provided to the Council and other participants. When this was determined, the Designated Federal Officer contacted all Council members, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration staff members and members of the public that had expressed interest in participating in the teleconference and provided a corrected number. This contact effort was successful as members, including a public participant, were then able to call in and participate.

Boating Issues Committee chairman John Sprague discussed the fiscal year 2016 Boating Infrastructure Grant program Tier II ranking committee logistics and process that occurred in December 2015 with members of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program in California. Specifically, Mr. Sprague discussed how member of the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council's subcommittee for the Boating Infrastructure Grant Program Tier II program jointly reviewed and scored proposals that were submitted for these competitive grant awards. Members of the Council's Boating Infrastructure Grant Program Tier II subcommittee included John Sprague, James Adams, Wendy Larimer, and Ed Poolos. The fiscal year 2016 funding cycle was the first for the Boating Infrastructure Grant Program since the release of new rules and refinement of ranking criteria.

Mr. Sprague commented that there was close coordination between the Council's subcommittee and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service staff during the meeting. The subcommittee's rankings were forwarded to the full Council for their consideration, as well as a brief summary of each proposal that was ranked by the subcommittee and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service staff at the meeting. Mr. Sprague commented that in general the Council's ranking scores were similar to those of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service staff. Mr. Sprague indicated that both the Council subcommittee recused themselves from discussing or voting on any proposal where they could be perceived as having a conflict of interest or vested interest in the project. Both Mr. Sprague and James Adams complimented the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service staff about the overall meeting and the Service's implementation of the new rule. Although the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council had some concerns about the new rule

before the ranking meeting, the Council's subcommittee indicated they did not experience problems with interpreting or ranking proposals based on the new program rules.

Mr. Sprague raised some concerns about the amount of Tier II funding that was available. The amount was reduced somewhat from previous years because the new program rules allow for more funds to be set aside for the non-competitive Tier I projects. Mr. Sprague stated this may be an item of concern for the Council in the future and that it is an issue to remain vigilant on in future years.

Alvin Taylor motioned that the Council's Boating Infrastructure Grant Program Tier II subcommittee's scores and rankings be approved by the Council. Doug Boyd seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

(As a result of this, the Council prepared a letter to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director forwarding on their scores and ranking for later combination and consideration for funding. This letter was completed on January 13, 2016 and sent to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director).

Janine Belleque and John Sprague then gave the Council an update on their respective efforts to advance the Council's efforts with federal agencies to improve the efficiency of the permitting process for boating access projects. Ms. Belleque indicated that she was working with federal agencies on the West Coast to improve their internal permit review processes. Ms. Belleque had undertaken this effort through her role with the States Organization for Boating Access. Mr. Sprague was continuing to work with federal agency staff in Florida to similarly seek ways to improve the speed and efficiency of the boating access permitting process. The Council's Designated Federal Officer indicated he would get Ms. Belleque and Mr. Sprague together on a conference call and have a draft letter to the Secretary of the Interior updating her on the Council's progress in this regard.

The Council next discussed the spring meeting date and location. The general location of Florida was discussed and the time of May 2-4 was established. The Designated Federal Officer (Mr. Bohnsack) indicated that several facilities had been contacted and were being considered for the meeting.

The Council chairman, Scott Kovarovics, next sought public comment. Tom Busiahn spoke briefly about the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's letter to the Council seeking the establishment of a technical committee for boating. The Council was supportive of this concept and planned to discuss this further in the coming months with Mr. Busiahn and other members of the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program staff.

The Designated Federal Officer, Brian Bohnsack, provided the Council with an update on the 2016 Council member nomination and charter process. He stated that all Council members' terms expire in 2016 and that they will need to be reappointed. Mr. Bohnsack was seeking guidance as to whether a Federal Register notice was required. (Note: After the meeting it was determined that although a Federal Register notice was not required for the Council, it was recommended that this be done. Draft documents were forwarded on for review in January. These documents were successfully processed later than expected and a Federal Register notice was posted in March 2016 seeking member nominations.)

Mr. Kovarovics then asked if there were other public comments to be made. There were none.

John Sprague motioned for the meeting to adjourn. Scott Kovarovics seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned.