

Whittier Advisory Committee
Thursday, April 16th, 2026
Zoom Only

I. Call to Order: [Time] by [name of chair/acting chair]

II. Roll Call

Members Present:

Name	Present	Excused/Unexcused
David Pinguoch	X	
Brett Wilbanks	X	
James Norris		X (Logged in at 7:13pm)
Brett Roth	X	
Jody Mason		X
Gordon Scott	X	
Brad von Wichman		X
Bruce Bowman	X	
Matt Kopec	X	

Number Needed for Quorum on AC: 5

List of User Groups Present:

III. Fish and Game Staff Present: Leila Williams

IV. Guests Present: None

V. Approval of Agenda

VI. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

VII. Reports

a. Chair's report

b. ADF&G

c. Others

VIII. Public Comment

IX. New Business:

- a. Presentation of Draft Letter for HB93
 - i. Dave: Clarified the bill maintains 12-month consecutive residency requirement initially, then requires 180 days in-state annually (similar to PFD requirements)
 - ii. Bruce: Changed stance from initial meeting, could not draft support letter due to complications with PFD qualification parallels
 - iii. Gordon: Expressed neutral position, didn't understand it well enough to take strong stance
 - iv. No letter drafted as Bruce withdrew from writing it with the committee agreeing to stay neutral on proposal with the belief that it will likely pass regardless of committee action.
- b. Presentation of Draft Letter for HB203
 - i. Letter is a separate document that will be attached
 - ii. Brett Wilbanks: Presented draft letter with exemption for beam trawl shrimp fishing; noted beam trawling different from otter trawl but still makes bottom contact.
 - iii. Dave: Expressed concern that allowing one exemption opens door for others; noted historical damage from trawling including coral removal and bycatch of sand lance and crab
 - iv. Bruce: Supported well-crafted letter
 - v. Brett Roth: Joined late, supported amendment but opposed overall letter due to personal concerns about blanket trawl ban
 - vi. Gordon Scott: Recalled maximum of 3 active shrimp trawl operators historically in Prince William Sound
 - vii. Brett Roth: Confirmed one active beam trawl operator (Ezekiel Brown) currently fishing out of Cordova on CDFU
 - viii. Amendment created to remove shrimp trawl exemption and 3-year phase-out language. Amendment passed.
 - ix. Letter suggests certification requirement be placed on operators to prove pelagic trawls don't contact bottom
 - x. Legislation takes effect January 1, 2028 with department report due January 1, 2027 if legislation is adopted.
 - xi. Final letter approved 5-1 with Brett Roth in opposition
 - xii. Dave Pinquoch will sign the letter and have it sent to Leila Williams for submission
- c. Presentation of Draft Comment to Federal Subsistence Board Regarding Regulation WP26-15
 - i. Comment is a separate letter that will be attached
 - ii. Bruce: Drafted letter emphasizing lack of biological justification; noted non-residents harvest average of 0.5 deer (1% of total) and non-rural Alaskans harvest 1 deer (26% combined)
 - iii. Dave: Read letter aloud highlighting that area biologists stated no biological need for restrictions and warned closure would be effective irreversible

- iv. Brett Roth: Thanked Bruce for well-written letter
- v. Gordon: Agreed with letter content
- vi. Letter unanimously approved that emphasized the proposal addressed social conflict rather than biological need and that Cordova’s federally-qualified users provided no data showing unmet subsistence needs
- vii. Dave Pinquoch will sign the letter and be the point of contact
- viii. Bruce will attend Federal Subsistence Board meeting in Anchorage on April 23-24 if timing allows for in-person testimony
- d. Board of Fisheries Generated Proposals 189-192 for May 1st Special Session
- e. Other Fish & Game Business as Needed

Alaska Board of Fisheries Board-Generated Proposals for Special Session
 May 1st, 2026 | Online Only (Zoom) at 1:00pm | Comment Deadline April 28th, 2026

Proposal Number	Proposal Description		
Support, Support as Amended, Oppose, No Action	Number Support	Number Oppose	Comments, Discussion (list Pros and Cons), Amendments to Proposal, Voting Notes
<i>Note: Effective September 2019, when abstentions occur, the action or decision of a majority of the remaining members at a meeting at which a quorum is present is an act of the committee. For example, a vote tally of 7-6-2 means the motion carries. Members abstaining from voting must provide an explanation that is included in the committee record.</i>			
189	Adopt a policy on Traditional Knowledge into regulation		
	0	6	Brett Wilbanks explained that the proposal stems from 2023 North Pacific Fisheries Management Council adoption; noted policy already exists and has been used since 2023 with concern expressed on enshrining definition into regulation before more testing cycles. Leila provided context that Proposal 191 (Yukon River fall chum action plan) reference traditional knowledge, necessitating codified definition; clarified definition already exists in policy form and has been used through full 3-year Board of Fisheries cycle. Gordon questioned whether regulation would make traditional knowledge trump science or work alongside it and raised concern about past experience with spot shrimp management where local knowledge was ignored. Bruce distinguished Gordon’s example would be “local knowledge” and not “traditional knowledge” under proposal’s definitions and also noted that traditional knowledge requires institutional sponsorship (community or corporation), not individual testimony. Committee members are concerned about premature codification and potential judicial leverage. Noted ACs already provide avenue for similar input without regulatory codification
190	Adopt the Stock of Concern Action Plan for Yukon River king salmon into regulation		

TNA			
191	Adopt the Stock of Concern Action Plan for Yukon River fall chum salmon into regulation		
TNA			
192	Replace commercial set gillnet opportunity in the Kenai River Late-run King Salmon Stock of Concern Plan with a newly established set beach seine gear type		
TNA			<p>Dave recalled the 2025 experimental fishery where setnetters developed method to retain sockeye and release king salmon; noted potential conflict with Governor Dunleavy's sport fish management plan to push setnetters offshore. Gordon explained proposal specific to east side Cook Inlet setnetters; noted 2-year-old experimental fishery was fairly successful but failed at board level last year; fishery now restricted to dip nets when certain key numbers are not met. Leila provided detailed backstory about how the experimental fishery under commissioner's permit became Proposal 313 at the Statewide Shellfish meeting last year, which failed due to insufficient data; proposal written opposite of setnetters' intent; original proposers don't support proposal as written; they wanted beach seine as additional gear when forecast under 14,250 kings. Brett Roth confirmed understanding that people who conducted experimental fishery don't support current proposal. Committee decided to take no action due to proposal falling outside committee's geographic area.</p>

X. Set next meeting date for next season? Wait until October to make determination

XI. Other

XII. Adjourn at 7:08pm

XIII. Adjournment:

Minutes Recorded By: Dave Pinquouch

Minutes Approved By: BW.O

Date: 05/01/26