

# **PACIFIC SEA CUCUMBER HARVESTERS ASSN.**

## **MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD JUNE 25, 2018 BEBAN PARK, NANAIMO, BC**

### ***License Holders and Representatives Present:***

Thom Liptrot, President; Paulo Demee, George Dennis, Glen Dennis, Gary Grant, Charles Greaves, Allan Hertel, Raf Kalus, King Chong, John Lindsay, John Parkin, Eric Ponsford, Ken Ridgway, Al Shanks, William Strong, Mark Ulanowski, Alfa Wong, Sheila Wood. 51 Licenses were represented.

### ***Guests Present:***

Darin Macy-D&D Pacific; Pauline Ridings-DFO, Erin Wylie-DFO, Christine Hansen-DFO, Lynne Yamanaka-DFO; Geoff Krause.

## **REGISTRATION OF PROXIES**

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Moved by Alfa, seconded by Mark that agenda be approved. Carried.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE 2017 AGM –**

Moved by Paulo, seconded by John Parkin that the minutes be approved. Carried.

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Thom Liptrot**

Kitasoo survey is complete. We agree to further discussion re survey 80,000 lbs. over a 3-year rotation.

The Kitasoo Marine spatial plan takes away shoreline and removes our quota – closing Higgins Pass would mean a 16,000 lb. loss for PSCHA. We agreed to close minimum shoreline but we do NOT want this to be permanent.

### **LICENCE LOTTERY**

The lottery remains in-house. If drawn last year, licence will not be drawn again until all have moved.

### **FINANCIAL REPORT – Sheila Wood**

Sheila presented and discussed the Comparative Income Statement and the Comparative Balance Sheet. There was an increase in Revenue and Expenses were down, resulting in a Net Income.

BC Seafood Alliance required assistance to cover a funding shortfall – to assist with lobbying, etc. in Ottawa, reconciliation and FOPO issues. The Association donated \$6,000 to the BCSA to assist with their shortfall.

It was moved by Paulo and seconded by Mark to accept the Financial Report. Carried.

## **ZD LICENCE FEES**

In 2017 there was a motion to increase the licence fees for 2018 by \$1,000 (moved by Charlie and seconded by Glen). A discussion was held regarding the amount of increase as we have a very healthy financial standing at this time.

It was moved by Ken, seconded by Charlie that the increase amount be amended to \$500 for the 2018 fishery and that it be reviewed in the coming year. Carried with 1 abstaining (Paulo) and 1 against (Mark).

## **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

The current slate of Directors agreed to stand for another year. It was moved by Al Shanks and seconded by Charlie that the slate be re-elected. Carried.

### **Directors of PSCHA**

President	Thomas Liptrot
Secretary	Sheila Wood
Vice-Presidents	John Lindsay Mark Ulanowski

### **Board**

Paulo Demee	John Parkin
George Dennis	Al Shanks
Gary Grant	Alfa Wong
Rafal Kalus	

## **VALIDATION CONTRACT**

It was moved by John Lindsay, seconded by John Parkin that D&D Pacific be retained as our Validation Company for the 2018 fishery. Carried.

## **NORTHERN SHELF ISSUES – Geoff Krause**

Several years ago the Province and First Nations were working on a plan – the Marine Planning Partnership (MaPP) which proposed setting a series of Marine Protected Areas on ground North of Campbell River, the area known as the North Shelf Bioregion (NSB). After a forum, held in 2015, the Provincial Government adopted the MaPP plans within a few weeks.

The Federal Government has now come on board and now we have the Northern Shelf Bioregion Marine Protected Areas Network Development Initiative (NSB MPA). The PNCIMA began in 2008, the MaPP in 2012 and this in 2017.

The BC Seafood Alliance took the lead on responding to the Gwaii Haanas MPA proposal. There were many meetings with commercial fishing sectors for each could lay out their preferred boundaries while maintaining conservation values within the original plans. The final announcement on the Gwaii Haanas plan was just released and much of the commercial fisheries proposal was accepted. This confirms that the industry is willing and able to contribute constructively.

Geoff is a representative of BC dive fisheries. He has attended many meetings, including MPATT (MPA Technical Team) meetings regarding technical issues and processes. He has also attended local advisory board meetings for the North Island, Central Coast and North Coast which have been very productive.

## **MARKETING AND EXPO REPORTS – Geoff Krause**

The Agri-Marketing Project (AMP) has stayed consistent. We exhibited with PUHA at the Seafood Asia Expo in Hong Kong in September 2017 and the China Fisheries and Seafood Expo in Qingdao in November 2017. We were accompanied by Pat Fantillo from RBS, Paddy Wong from Paladin/Premium, King Chong from Evergreen and a representative from Wen Lian.

Geoff has put together another proposal for the next three years to continue similarly. We may attend the Boston Show (SENA) next year and Geoff has made provisions to attend the BC Seafood Show in Courtney each year.

As of November 1, 2019, there will be a new regulation in Hong Kong on permissible levels of Arsenic in seafood. We must look carefully at our sea cucumber meat in light of the 0.5 mg/kg limit for inorganic arsenic.

## **REVIEW OF THE 2017-2018 FISHERY – Darin Macey, D&D Pacific *Management Summary***

- 2017-18 Fishing Season was from October 2, 2017 to December 2, 2017 with scheduled QMA openings and closures.
- An Adaptive Rotational Fishing Strategy (ARFS) initiated in 2011 continues.
- A New Quota Management Area (QMA) was created in (12L) and changes made to QMA's 12J, 12K and 13D
- Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for 2017-18 was 1,360,000 pounds split weight
- ZD Quota remained at 16,000 pounds split weight per license
- A Harvest Questionnaire was sent out to the fleets in order to get on-grounds observations from harvesters on each of the QMAs harvested during the season.

**Area Licencing** was adjusted in 2017-18:

- NC 31 licenses (only 30 active)
- CC 30 licenses
- ECVI 22 licenses
- WCVI 2 licenses

License stacking limit were discontinued in 2015.

## **2017-2018 HARVEST SUMMARY & FISHERY DYNAMICS**

- 2017-18 Season opened October 2<sup>nd</sup> in the North Coast QMA 6F.
- First dive date October 2<sup>nd</sup> – last dive date December 1<sup>st</sup>.
- The Association utilized a sequential QMA opening format for the 2017-18 season
- Landings were strong in October then weakened in November near the end of QMA schedule.
- 85 licenses were registered but prior to the fishery, DFO revoked one licence which explains why TAC wasn't met.
- 31 vessels – 10 fished two licences each- Landings totaled 1,348,526 pounds
- Number of active vessel-days was 53.

### **Landings by Region, Historical Landings, Landings by Week/Month**

Darin reviewed several charts and lists pertaining to landings.

## **LANDINGS BY QUOTA MANAGEMENT AREA – REVIEW**

Darin reviewed QMA comparison charts and sequence of landings tables

### **North Coast**

- North Coast QMA opened October 2 2017 and last fishing day was November 23<sup>rd</sup> 2017
- 13 Vessels active on first day.
- Harvest rates & vessels increased and remained steady through all QMAs until the last three in QMA3
- Packers were used to transship product to Prince Rupert & Port Hardy for processing and/or trucking to processing plants.
- Communications with some Packers and ground (Packer) weight issues, math issues, all added to the difficulties in managing the North Coast.
- The North Coast finished with a vessel returning to the grounds weekly in QM3 until the last day fished.
- One FZD tab designated north (prd) was not fished.
- Opened in sequential order. North fished by 15 vessels in 29 fishing days.

### **Central Coast**

- Opened and first day fished October 9<sup>th</sup> and last fished on November 5th
- 3 vessels active on the first day.
- One vessel showed up on the grounds without hail, and a logbook/chart set
- A First Nations closure not identified on a D&D harvest chart was reported. (Princess Royal)

- Packers transshipped product to Port Hardy for processing and/or trucking to processing plants
- Opened in sequential order.
- Fished by 15 vessels in 25 fishing days for an achievement rate of 100.33%.

### **East Coast Vancouver Island**

- Opened and first fished on October 9<sup>th</sup> 2017 and finished on December 1<sup>st</sup>.
- 4 vessels were active on opening day
- Opened in sequential order.
- Packers transshipped product to Port Hardy and Port McNeill for processing and/or trucking to processing plants prior to the last vessel being active.
- The East Coast was fished by 9 vessels in 45 fishing days with an achievement rate of 100.23%

### **West Coast Vancouver Island**

- Opened October 19<sup>th</sup>
- First fishing day November 1<sup>st</sup> and last fishing day November 9<sup>th</sup>.
- Only region where a packer was not used.
- Fished by 2 vessels in 8 fishing days with an achievement rate of 99.16%.

### **LICENCE ACTIVITY**

- 84 licenses were active and fished by 31 vessels. 10 vessels fished two regions.
- 17 licenses were re-designated with one tab re-designated three times
- Two re-designations occurred before the opening date of the season. One revoked by DFO (FZD01)

### **BUYER/PROCESSOR ACTIVITY**

- There were 9 buyers active, with landings mainly shared between two buyers (59%)
- 21 vessels fished for one buyer, 8 vessels for two buyers, and 2 vessels for three buyers.
- Buyers organized and controlled the number of products received from the fleet, reducing shutdowns at the processing level due to over-supply.
- Comments from buyers are few. They were related to random issues with their vessels, packers and logistics within their own business plan
- Comments relating to product were minimal.

### **COMPLIANCE**

PSCHA provides fleet coordinators who assist in daily fishery logistics from the fishing grounds with fishery managers at D&D's Head office. They communicate to the fleet updates from D&D on fishery related issues.

- 73 Incident Reports were issued through the course of the Fishery.

High Priority – 2, Medium Priority - 71

- Medium Priority varied in definitions and their infractions to the Conditions of Licence -
- Majority of incidents related to:
  - Missing Harvest information
  - NTO's
  - Incorrect or missing harvest data
  - Wrong statistical sub area or wrong QMA recorded on log page
- The majority of Non-Compliance issues were dealt with each vessel during the course of the fishery.
- Industry is proactive in reporting non-compliance to D&D. Issues included:
  - Fraudulent fishing practices,
  - Disregard for QMA clean-up vessel limit(s).

All reports were received, forwarded to DFO C&P and/or dealt with D&D in a timely manner.

## **PROBLEMS AND ISSUES**

- Problems were minor this season and were dealt with as they occurred.
- An issue involving a ZD tab area designation discrepancy between the licence holder and DFO caused a delay in the tab being fished, but shows how difficult industry and DFO's efforts are to move ZD tab(s) on a yearly basis to balance the TAC.
- Certain packing vessels had difficulty in providing accurate ground weight information, but the seasonal issue is improving
- In-Season – D&D reviews packer weights to identify issues relating to packer weight estimates on which D&D relies in reducing the QMA quotas to zero.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The yearly movement of ZD tab(s) to balance the TAC evenly between all ZD tabs should be reviewed and possibly an alternative solution looked into. A large effort is made by PSCHA representatives and DFO managers to convince a licence holder to move their gab to another region. A fixed number of tabs per region over time would resolve many issues.

## **CONCLUSION**

- Minor issues occurred and were dealt with in real time.
- The sequential opening format supported the fishing effort and processing capacities.
- All Harvest Data and Charts have been received by Industry – digitized and delivered to DFO's Shellfish Data Unit with the exception of one tab.
- Electronic Charts, IFMP and other relevant fishery information provided by D&D online was well received and will continue.
- D&D's point of view is that problems and issues that arise in commercial fisheries are best resolved in a timely fashion, and the Management of the 2017-18 season would not have been so effective if it was not for the dedicated time and effort of:

- The on-ground coordinators, who were in contact with D&D daily, ensuring communication. was relayed both to the fleet and to D&D. We thank all of them.
- The buyers/processors who assisted D&D in issues that arose.
- DFO Resource Management for expediting D&D requests in the short timeframe of the Sea Cucumber fishery.

It was moved by Mark and seconded by Paulo that the D&D report be accepted. Carried.

## **2017 FISHING SEASON DISCUSSION**

### **North – Al Shanks**

Season went fairly smoothly until Laredo  
Weather broke which helped  
Higgins Pass was not good – nothing there.

### **Central – Thom Liptrot**

Need more boats for Spider/Kildit  
Opened first which was a problem – should have changed sequence  
Seaforth Channel is complete  
Queen Sound had shocking otter impact. Slow start but achieved in three days. Quota should be lowered.

### **South Coast**

Went smoothly  
Knight Inlet had a small quota but good fishing  
Annual fishing on area with small cukes initiated

## **2018 MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Discussion regarding all areas and recommendations are:

### **North Coast**

31 tabs  
Laredo is a problem and needs a rest, also Kildit and Queen – Pauline trying to balance problem  
Split Grenville Channel into North & South zones  
Principe is a huge opening – lots of cukes  
Move North to South likely best plan

### **Central Coast**

28 tabs  
Sequentially fish Denny Island, Florence Peninsula, Calvert Island, Smith Inlet  
Florence should be checked by whole fleet and it is finished.  
Rivers should be set aside, Fitzhugh done last year

## **South Coast**

24 tabs

Split Allison Harbour quota. Cukes are small but plentiful.

## **LICENCE MOVEMENT**

Two licences will move from Central to South Coast (Lottery) and one from WCVI because of a PICFI licence that is from NC but moving to WCVI. Owner must decide which area – to NC or Inside.

**Licences which were moved South in 2017 are not in lottery. 16 Licences are designated South Coast but 24 are needed. 8 will be drawn.**

**Areas:**

<b>North</b>	<b>– 31</b>
<b>Central</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>ECVI</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>WC</b>	<b>2</b>

## **DFO SCIENCE – Christine Hansen, Biologist**

Christine spoke about the assessment model used for sea cucumber. A basic problem is that there is no known way to age them.

She distributed a 2017 survey summary of Area 7-4 and 7-6 Finlayson.

Discussed were Science Program Objectives

- Completion of the EFA Projects

- Development of Multispecies Benthic Invertebrate Surveys

- Development of Stock Assessment using data limited methods

## **DFO MANAGEMENT – Pauline Ridings, Lynne Yamanaka**

Pauline was questioned about DFO's commitment regarding extended stock assessment. It was noted that DFO had dropped initiatives because of changing priorities. Lynne Yamanaka reassures that there will be no replacement of current survey-based protocols with a new unvalidated multi-species system.

The plan to survey Zeballos has fallen through – sea otters impact?

Noted that year one is the weakest in three-year rotation.

## **EFA Tolmie**

Kitasoo are looking for wide implementation of a Marine Use Plan including extensive closures, etc. causing uncertainty. Questions are how this will work with the NSB MPA initiative.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Packer Situation - Central Coast should get together and share packers, North Coast packer situation is okay. Suggested is to move from a 7-day to a 10-day interval between opening North and Central fisheries to assist with packer management, which is poor in this fishery.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved by AI and seconded by John that the meeting be adjourned. Carried.



