

P.U.H.A ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
JULY 25, 2002
NANAIMO, B. C.

ATTENDEES:

ROSS MORRIS	MIKE FEATHERSTONE	DON CHRISTIAN
RUSS JONES	WILLY SAM SR.	GARY GRANT
KEN RIDGWAY	DAVID McRAE	MIA PARKER
KEN RIDGWAY JR.	BRIAN CRAWFORD	PETER CODLING
MARION CAMPBELL	DAVID LANSDOWNE	GREG LOISELLE
WILLIAM CHOI	MARK ULANOWSKI	GEORGE DENNIS
TIMOTHY JOYS	DIMITRI TZOTZOS	TIM KULCHYSKI
STEVE GAGNON		

41 voting licence holders plus 17 proxies = 58 votes

Meeting commenced at 10:30 a.m.

2001 Annual Meeting Minutes—mike featherstone

The 2001 Annual General Meeting Minutes are on the P.U.H.A website (puha.org)
Motion for approval by Tim Joys, seconded by Gary Grant—approved by the membership.

Financial Report—ross morris

As of June 30, 2002 (year end) The Pacific Urchin Harvesters Association has a bank balance of \$8698.71 along with a term deposit of \$50,000.00 and accounts payables totaling \$4,643.14. As of this date \$9000.00 has been expensed for survey work with another \$10,000.00 survey presently being done, as well as \$6331.00 in operating expenses paid out. During the months of July and August revenue is next to non-existent, as licences are not being purchased. At this time last year our surplus funds were extinguished due to a number of surveys, and I personally put in \$5,000.00 to cover over costs until revenue's were received. This year 109 out of 110 licences were purchased. For the second year in a row all Canadian Processors contributed \$2,500.00 towards our survey and plant sampling programs. Motion for approval by Ken Ridgway, seconded by David McRae—approved by the membership.

President's Report---mike featherstone

Each fishing season has its ups and downs with problems to deal with, conflicts to resolve and initiatives to complete. The Association has continued to move forward trying to deal with issues by following the guiding principals of sustainability and maximizing economic returns. In the upcoming year, P.U.H.A. has identified long term stability and planning as becoming an increasingly important part of reaching our goals and improving our Industry. Although many issues were discussed at the Spring Bi-Annual Meeting in May, I would like to summarize some of the work done this past season.

- A. B.C. Seafood Alliance The B.C. Seafood Alliance is an umbrella group representing the majority of B.C.'s seafood industries. The Alliance promotes the conservation and the environmental sustainable use and production of seafood resources in B. C., while also fostering a safe, economically viable and internationally competitive seafood industry. P.U.H.A. has one representative

on the Board of Directors who attends the monthly and other special events on behalf of our Association. Some of the issues the Alliance has covered in 2002 were:

- i. **Fee Structure:** Fees were restructured to reflect the relative value of the fisheries represented, as a result the cost membership cost to P.U.H.A. was reduced by \$3,000.00 to an annual fee of only \$2,000.00. This is an incredible value for our Industry.
- ii. **Meeting with the Ministers:** The Alliance, as representative of the majority of fishing industries in B.C. has the unique position of presenting Government with one central Organization with which to consult on important issues. This year P.U.H.A. was represented at meetings with the new Minister of Fisheries, Robert Thibault as well as meetings with Jon Van Donegen, who is the Provincial Minister responsible for Fisheries and Aquaculture. At these meetings P.U.H.A. presented a summary of our Industry, including goals, values of importance.
- iii. **Position on Increased Access for First Nations:** In March the Alliance presented both levels of Government with a Position Paper on this important topic. Highlights of this paper include managing all fisheries to the same conservation standards, fair market based compensation for transferred fishing allocations, a single, non-discriminatory management and legislative framework of fisheries management and certainty of access.
- iv. **Aquaculture Development:** The Alliance has requested a position on the Salmon Aquaculture Industry Advisory Committee to provide a seafood industry perspective to the committee. Issues such as escapes, pathogen transfer, sea lice and interactions due to night lighting need to be assessed and minimized. Further more, the operations need to be environmentally sustainable.
- v. **W.C.B. Health and Safety Initiative:** The purpose of this proposal for a Seafood Alliance Fishing Industry Safety Co-ordinator is to reduce fishing industry injuries and injury claims and to promote a safe return to work for workers in the fish harvesting industry. The Seafood Industry is now a stand alone group in W.C.B. and as such will be required to fund any shortfalls in assessments if claim costs increase. Keeping assessment costs low is an important objective of the co-ordinator.
- vi. **Trade Development Funding for Seafood:** After much work by Chritina Burrige, (President of the Seafood Alliance and former President of the B.C. Salmon Marketing Council) including a meeting with the directors of the Alliance Seafood is finally eligible for agrifood funding from the federal government. Ironically seafood was never considered for funding before, as it did not fall within the government's definition of food. More details of the Agrifood Industry Marketing Strategy will be announced and the

- directors will discuss an application to promote Sea Urchins with processors.
- vii. **Dive Buoys:** The dive community proposed closures around certain buoys for viewing purposes. The Alliance wrote opposing these closures, shrinking the proposed areas around the buoys if closed and identifying the purpose of the closures so the closures could be matched to specific objectives.
 - viii. **Seafood Summit:** This years Summit, sponsored by the Alliance, will focus on sustainability through co-management and with highlights of the Australian experience. Co-management is a cornerstone of D.F.O. policy but is not necessarily well understood by the D.F.O. internally. This Summit hopes to focus on areas for improvement and how to get there.

B. Science and Research

- i. **Survey and Research Work Plan:** Recent meetings with representatives of D.F.O. Science Branch highlighted the need for long term planning and increased focus on the experimental areas to better reach the objective of maximizing economic returns in the red sea urchin fishery. This work plan is discussed in detail in the report from Dimitri Tzotzos.
- ii. **PSARC Paper:** At this year's quota planning sessions the importance of proper bed maps was discussed. The bed maps formed an important part of the quota estimates in the recent PSARC paper and highlighted the need for skippers to report all dive harvest areas.
- iii. **Sea Otters:** P.U.H.A. had identified sea otter predation as the greatest threat to sustainability in the red sea urchin fishery. The Ahousat Band is developing a study and response program to deal with sea otters entering their territory.
- iv. **Abalone Rebuilding Strategy:** P.U.H.A. has offered to co-operate with the strategy by engaging in joint research where possible, reporting any poaching activities, co-ordinating research area closures and sharing scientific and harvest information. P.U.H.A. has advocated a co-ordinated approach involving all dive fisheries. A meeting will be held this fall to review these possibilities.
- v. **Experimental Study Areas:** Highlighted as a goal at the spring Bi-Annual General Meeting, P.U.H.A. has allocated \$8,000.00 to fund a Co-op student to enter and analyze the data collected since 1995 from the experimental sites. This work forms a key to understanding variables, which can improve economic returns in the red sea urchin fisher.

C. Management Issues

- i. **The North Coast Fishery:** The North Coast fishery will implement a diver based split on clean-up quotas approved at the spring bi-annual general meeting.
- ii. P.U.H.A. will work to **prevent waste and maximize economic values** with respect to utilization of the harvested product. Based on Processor's advice, this includes closing the fishery if the harvest grossly exceeds market and processing limitations.
- iii. **South Coast Lottery:** P.U.H.A. is working towards a long-term plan with increased stability. As part of this plan a better solution than a yearly lottery is being sought. The recent vote conducted by D. F.O. with respect to uneven quotas between south and north did not pass. D.F.O. required 65% of all licence holders; the vote was 64.5% of the licences that voted. This is an important issue for P.U.H.A. to resolve before the 2003/2004 season.

D. Budget

The budget for 2001/2002 has wrapped up with a surplus. The extra funds will be used to cover the costs of surveys, biologist and administration costs until the first income from licence fees starts coming in, which will begin in September. The budget for 2002/2003 will be the same as the 2002, with some funds redesignated to reflect the new research priorities. Licence and validation fees remain the same for 2002/2003.

Election of Officers:---mike featherstone

Mike Featherstone has agreed to continue in the President's position. The following persons have agreed to act as Directors for the Association---David McRae, Herb Watson, Tim Joys, David Lansdowne, Ken Ridgway, Paul Robinson and Mark Ulanowski. Motion for approval by David Lansdowne, seconded by David McRae---approved by the membership.

South Coast Report---ken ridgway

The year started with a draw, which did not go that smoothly. One licence was issued for the North that had to be reissued and transferred to the South. There were concerns by fishermen over Campbell River North and Blind Channel, as they need quota reductions. There were also concerns about the Cape Scott quota as to "where the product is coming from." The quality of the product is poorer than before in the South. It is desired that a South Coast meeting be held before September.

North Coast Report---mike featherstone

The 2001/2002 north coast season went well, as less than 80,000 pounds remained unfished at the completion of the season. This remainder was due to one A.F.S. licence not being issued due to a dispute between the Tsimshian Band and D.F.O. P.U.H.A. is trying to find why these pounds were not allowed to be redistributed and what the situation is for the 2002/2003 season. The Q.C.C. Island fishery started earlier than ever amid concerns of weather and safety. In typical unpredictable fashion, the islands were fished without any major hitches and fully completed within a month. One closure was implemented during

the Area 1 fishery due to over production and over supplied markets. At the spring bi-annual general meeting, it was resolved to split the clean-up quotas by diver and not vessel, thus addressing concerns of inequality during the 2001/2002 season.

D. & D. Pacific Report---don christian

In both the north and south, the season was slow to get started due primarily to a poor market and the airfreight difficulties affected by the September 11th tragedy. This wasn't really a factor in the south coast, as typically fishing doesn't commence until September.

North Coast The north fleet after landing just 25k was shut down until September 25th. The fleet resumed in Calamity Bay, the area in which the fleet was anticipated to be for that period, skipping the first 10 scheduled openings. Once fishing was given the green light, the fleet size rarely dropped below 10 to 12 vessels as it consistently stayed between 15 – 25 or higher. Industry worked hard to maintain a steady supply while trying to catch-up on lost time. By January 9th the fleet had moved through the regular schedule and had achieved approximately 75% of the North Coast quota. The fleet rarely took days off and what may have been weather days last season; some were workdays this season. A clean-up schedule was initiated and another 825,000 pounds was harvested before going to the Q.C.I on February 12th. Efforts were not in vain as 87% of the North Coast quota on the mainland was achieved before heading to the Q.C.I. about 10% ahead of last seasons pace. Even though some disagreed with the opening time, the Q.C.I. went relatively smooth and quickly, compared to previous seasons. It opened on February 12th and closed on March 11th, leaving a cumulative total of 1,600 pounds remaining, one of the better efforts recorded. However, the time frame was reported by some to be too early, as quality was a concern in many of the areas. Upon resuming the clean-up schedule on March 15th at Harvey Island and Lower W. Aristazabal progressively working south cleaning up all unfinished quotas. Fleet size and effort didn't subside until the end of March. By then, only a few vessels had quota remaining and were working in the Rivers and Smiths area. The season in the North Coast with all things considered, was seen as a successful one with 99% of the TAC achieved only a cumulative total of 80,000 pounds remained. Of the North Coast licences, 87 of the 91 were achieved within 1000 pounds.

Issues:

- Breakage—handling of product was of a concern due to the low market, as every little bit of wastage hurts and will eventually cost someone. It is in the best interest of all parties to be aware of product quality and handling.
- Lost Product---unfortunately this season some vessels had product lost overboard and with the current regulations from D.F.O. it was deducted from each IQ.
- Fishing Notification---during the course of the clean-up schedule there were at times several areas open at a time, spreading the fleet over a large area. There were occurrences where vessels were reported to be fishing in areas closed or out of sequence. It is not an excuse for those vessels not keeping in daily contact with the OGM or D. & D. during an opening. This will only limit the amount of flexibility the industry has already with respect to opening areas ahead of time.

- Plant Sampling---this went very well as almost all of the areas are now sampled and the program will continue for next season. However, undersize urchins are still being encountered. Please be aware of the limit set at 90mm, as it can only benefit yourself and the industry to avoid any undersize.
- Completion of Areas---on the last day in an area, problems occur when dividing the remaining quota. P.U.H.A. recommends dividing it per diver on that day. This will require guidelines to be developed by P.U.H.A. prior to its implementation.

South Coast The South Coast fleet initiated fishing on the West Coast in the Tofino area. It opened September 1st and finished on the 27th. The boundary in area 23 for the marine research area was confirmed, as there was confusion with the definition. Upon completing the bulk of the West Coast the inside opened starting with Johnstone Strait and Port Hardy areas. By early December the south coast was running out of quota due to a high level of vessels participating. Inquiries were received to try to open some areas reserved for December 15th earlier, as there was an opportunity for supply. No schedule modifications were made and all areas reserved for December 15th remained unchanged. The bulk of the south coast was achieved by January, approximately 80% east and west. By the end of the season 95% of the east and 85% of the west quota was achieved. Areas unachieved include Quatsino Outside and Inside, and Wells Pass. Of the south coast licences 14 of the 19 were achieved within 1000 pounds mid way through the season, and it was noticed that D.F.O. licensing had designated a tab north when it should have been south. By this time approximately 1/3 of the IQ had been fished on the north. It was reassigned south where the remainder of it's quota was fished.

Issues:

- Fixed Openings---concern over reserving quota for certain times of the year. If there is a need for supply there should be provisions to open some areas
- Sea Otters---Evidence of otters were reported in the Quatsino Inlet area, which is currently being addressed by P.U.H.A.
- Fishing Notification---vessels hailing to an area to fish and landing from another was reported. This not confirmed, but if it is true it will impact the areas possibly being over fished and ultimately may result in D.F.O. activity.
- East and West IQ's---upon completing the east or west (which ever may come first) the overage from one is deducted from the other within the licence involved. When the total IQ is achieved, that is when an overage is transferred to a different licence. However, it is a condition of licence that a certain amount be fished from each region. This is done, as each licence is only to have one overage and transfer as laid out by D.F.O.

Association Health & Dental Plan---dan mcdermid & joe rogers

These two gentlemen came to the meeting and gave a presentation during the lunch, on behalf of Equinox Financial Group. The presentation consisted of handouts and explained that the Plan that has been set up for anyone in the dive industry (urchin, geoduck etc.). The Plan consists of various options to match each and every individuals needs. For those not in attendance, the Plan brochures will be mailed out to everyone.

PUHA Biologist Report---dimitri tzotzos

DATA COLLECTION:

Dive Surveys:

2002

March - Kendrick Island Study Site
May - Beaver Pass & Freeman Pass Broadbrush
June - Queen Charlotte Islands Study Site
July - Campbell River Broadbrush, Yaculta out-plant site
September - Price Island and Tofino Study Sites

2003

March - Kendrick Island Study Site
May - September - Surveys TBA

Processing Plant Sampling:

September 2002 - April 2003 - D&D conducting sampling

Urchin Jaw/Rotule Ageing:

Estimate 3000 jaws to be processed and aged

DATA ANALYSIS:

- Data preparation & entry into database (October, 2002)
- Complete and publish 8 manuscripts in various stages of completion (August 2002 - March 2003):
 - a) Juan Perez, 1999
 - b) Deserter Group, 2000
 - c) Laredo Channel, 2000
 - d) Tofino, 2000
 - e) Johnstone Strait, 2001
 - f) Fitz Hugh Sound, 2001
 - g) South Price Island, 2001
 - h) Becher Bay, 2001
- Analyze and prepare reports for broadbrush surveys conducted during 2002/2003 (October, 2003):
 - a) Beaver Pass & Freeman Pass
 - b) Campbell River
 - c) Surveys TBA
- PSARC Assessment (November 2003):
 - requested to update bed analyses, surveys, processing plant sampling size frequencies, and quotas
 - analysis must start summer,2003

- Analyze and report on 3 study areas (QCI, Price Island, Tofino)
 - a) Density, size frequencies, recruitment time series (March, 2003)
 - b) Age, growth, mortality, from tag studies and size/age frequencies
 - c) Gonad quality from biosamples and processing plant sampling
 - d) Habitat/urchin variable relationships
- Items a) and c) have been identified as priorities.
- Out-planting juvenile seed experiment at Yaculta
- Kendrick Island long-term study (one year of seasonal gonad index, age, growth, recruitment, and 12 years of size and density data).

Abalone Rebuilding Strategy---russ jones

Russ is the Technical Director of the Haida Programs and they are presently rebuilding the Haida Gwaii abalone program for their area to support food fisheries, especially since the D.F.O. want to stop the decline of abalone. Despite a 12-year fisheries closure for all abalone harvesting on the B. C. coast, the abalone population around Haida Gwaii/Queen Charlotte Islands have not increased.

Russ gave a presentation via a computer video display of their objectives, partnership groups, action plan history, goals and rebuilding strategies and conservation education. There is some feeling amongst the Haida that the red sea urchin harvesters have been harvesting abalone, however, it was made very clearly that the P.U.H.A. members are more than willing to assist in preserving the abalone.

Workers Compensation Board ---george dennis

The 1 or 2 diver scenario has been of concern to the red sea urchin fleet. It is still uncertain as to 1 or 2 divers are functional. The second diver has never proven to be safer. The ultimate answer is wireless communications between diver and tenderman, which would make it much safer, thus eliminating the second diver. OTS seems to be the best wireless system, however, the costs are not cheap. Dave Lansdown motioned that P.U.H.A. support James Ridgway by dealing and presenting our point of view with W.C.B.—seconded by Mark Ulanowski---approved by the membership.

No further business was presented, thus the meeting finished at 3:45 p.m.