

BC Wildlife Federation 55th Annual General Meeting – Surrey, B.C. April 13-16, 2011

After checking in to the hotel Wednesday afternoon and registering as a club delegate, I chaired a short (two hours) meeting of the BC Conservation Foundation board of directors. The major agenda items required decisions concerning the purchase of several parcels of land for wildlife. Immediately following that meeting I attended the Meet 'n Greet event which involved renewing old acquaintances and meeting a number of new participants – always a pleasure. This was an early night, about 10 pm.

Thursday at 7 am it was time to choose a table in the meeting room for the Nelson reps – Bob Vliet, Wally Kampen, and myself - and by chance it was a table with two reps from Revelstoke. At 8 am the convention opened with presentation of the colours, a prayer, one minute of silence for recently fallen members, and greetings from various local dignitaries. The AGM theme “Our Rivers: From Peaks to Oceans” was introduced in a keynote address by Dr. Marvin Rosenau, a distinguished fish biologist who has been front and centre in the issue of removing gravel from the lower reaches of the Fraser River (and in the process killing millions of salmon eggs).

The rest of the morning was devoted to the debate of resolutions. One resolution of particular interest for the West Kootenay: Resolved, that the BCWF support the position that Limited Entry Hunting is the last step in implementing restrictive harvest regulations and that alternative General Open Season regulations must be exhausted first was passed by an overwhelming majority (there were a few hands raised in opposition at two tables only). After lunch in closed session (BCWF members only) the special resolution concerning purchase of a building to be the BCWF home was brought forward and passed unanimously. Two panels regarding Tidal Fisheries occupied most of the afternoon; another closed session attempted to deal with the treasurer's report. With additional information requested, the report was tabled until later in the convention.

At 5 pm the work ended and we were bussed to the Semiahmoo Fish & Game Club hall and hatchery on the banks of the Little Campbell River. There we dined, toured the hatchery, and supported the host club's fundraising efforts, with the day ending after 10 pm.

Friday morning the first panel discussed various land use projects. The next panel – Chief Willie Charlie of the Chehalis Band, lawyer Keith Clark, and RCMP Inspector Sean Maloney - dealt with some aspects of native affairs. The afternoon began with a discussion of native impacts on resident hunting opportunities and a review of the LEH operation in Victoria. The late afternoon saw another closed session with the treasurer's report finalized and an emergency resolution concerning wildlife allocations passed unanimously. Another 5 pm end to the working day! But then we simply moved to another large ballroom where the BCWF fundraiser evening was conducted. With slices of roast in hand we spent hours trying our luck with deck of card draws, silent and live auctions, and bucket draws. A late night, with a 1:30 am bedtime.

The final day, Saturday, morning was taken up with Inland Fisheries panels and the afternoon included a grab bag of committee, regional, and program reports, numerous awards, and a presentation on the new BCWF Outdoor Passport. I recommend that you go to bcwf.net and learn about the Outdoor Passport which may be of great value to you especially should you wish to fish or hunt on private land. My morning began with a brief statement from four of the past presidents to me: “If you do not let your name stand for director, we will break your arm” which I found quite persuasive. At one of the three

opportunities during the AGM for nominations I was nominated and at the end of the Saturday sessions the elections were held. Harvey Andrusak from our North Shore and I were both chosen to be directors at large, he for two years and I for one.

Rod Wiebe remains as President; Vice-Presidents are Bill Bosch and Rick Mayor; Treasurer was Richard Daloise by acclamation (he has since resigned); and three other directors elected are George Wilson, Allison Stacey, and Jesse Zeman.

Saturday evening saw the grand banquet MC'd by Heather Lemieux who was pulled out of retirement for the occasion. Her sparkling performance enhanced a splendid wild meat buffet, following which she gave out the remaining awards. Sadly, several awards were not bestowed as no applications for them were received. Apply!

As in past years the BCWF convention proved to be interesting, inspiring, rewarding, and exhausting. Bob, Wally and I wish to say thank you for choosing us to represent you at the BCWF AGM this year.

- by Richard Green