

Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife

Minutes

Monday ~ June 25, 2018 ~ 6:00 p.m.
Nevada Department of Wildlife
Conference Room B
1100 Valley Road, Reno, Nevada

MEMBERS

Steven Robinson, Chair
Arnold Pitts, Vice-chair
Sean Shea, Secretary
Meghan Di Rocco
Michelle Spencer

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE [Non-action item]

Member Shea led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL [Non-action item]

Chair Robinson called the meeting or order at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Arnie Pitts, Steve Robinson, Sean Shea and Michelle Spencer. Meghan Di Rocco joined the meeting at 6:02 p.m.

ABSENT: None.

Jen Gustafson – Deputy District Attorney, was also present.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS [Non-action item]

Jonathan Lesperance questioned how legal expenses were paid when the Department is sued based on his review of support materials on litigation.

4. APPROVAL OF APRIL 25, 2018, MINUTES (For possible action)

Hearing no Board or public comments asked for motion.

It was moved by Member Pitts, seconded by Member Shea, to approve the April 25, 2018, minutes as submitted. The motion carried with member Di Rocco absent.

5. BOARD MEMBER MEETING ASSIGNMENT [Non-action item] – A discussion and selection of member(s) to attend the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners meetings on:

Member Di Rocco joined the meeting at 6:02 p.m.

5-1) June 29 and 30, 2018, meetings in Dyer, Nevada – Chair Robinson stated he was unable to attend the meeting as originally planned due to a family emergency.

The Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife will not be present at the June 29 and 30th meetings in Dyer, Nevada.

Member Shea noted that the Heritage Committee is meeting on Friday June 29, 2018, at 8:00 a.m.

5-2) August 10 and 11, 2018, Lincoln County, Nevada – Chair Robinson will attend the August 10 and 11, 2018, meetings.

6. COMMITTEE, MEMBER AND LIAISON UPDATES [Non-action items]

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6-1) Correspondence (including sportsmen's concerns) – Chair Robinson noted that correspondence had been received from Tracy Truman about the Bobcat season and quota and will be presented under that agenda item.

Member Shea noted that he had received an inquiry about a Silver State Desert tag and had tried to contact NDOW. Thus far NDOW has not returned his call.

Mel Belding suggested that Member Shea contact Nevada Big Horn.

2) Overview of the May 4 and 5, 2018, meetings of the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners – Member Shea noted that he had heard at the National Wildlife Federation conference at Sportsmen's Warehouse that NDOW had purchased a new helicopter.

Mike Scott – NDOW, confirmed that NDOW had purchased a new helicopter to replace an older helicopter noting that it has become increasingly difficult to find parts of the aging aircraft. Additionally, there are some safety issues with the older aircraft.

Member Shea suggested that NDOW consider implementing an unmanned system and newer technologies noting that the State of Washington has started such programs.

Mr. Scott noted that a presentation had been made about ten years ago on unmanned technologies. However, it is difficult to determine whether animals are mature or not from video. A decision was made that the technology was not yet good enough for NDOW. Mr. Scott will pass the information along.

Member Pitts noted that the pooling of resources with National Federal Wildlife had amazing results and encouraged NDOW to pool resources with others to have a more effective outcome.

Chair Robinson noted that none of the recommendations for quotas from Washoe County had been accepted at the May 4 and 5, 2018, meetings. It was noted during the meeting that the primary focus is to maintain a 30 bucks to 100 doe ratio.

7. DUCK STAMP REQUEST [For Possible Action] – *A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify recommendations to fund \$128,510.00 in Duck Stamps projects: 1) Technician Support for Nevada Waterfowl Projects - Project # 384 (\$13,910); 2) Ducks Unlimited Wetlands Conservation Support - Project # 352 (\$10,000); 3) Mason Valley WMA Moist Soil Food Plots - Project # 382 (\$10,000); 4) Key Pittman WMA Food Plots - Project # 330 (\$2,600); 5) Overton WMA Pipe Replacement Project - Phase 2 - Project # 360 (\$7,000); 6) Eastern WMA Complex Weed Control - Project # 349 (\$10,000); 7) Overton WMA Pintail and Wilson Pond Leveling - Project # 351 (\$60,000); and 8) Mason Valley WMA Saltcedar Treatment - Project # 381 (\$15,000).*

Chair Robinson provided an overview of the item. Chair Robinson asked for a motion hearing no comments from NDOW, the public or Board.

It was moved by Member Shea, seconded by Member Di Rocco, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Duck Stamp funding requests as written. The motion carried unanimously.

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- 8. UPLAND GAME BIRD STAMP REQUEST** [For Possible Action] - *A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify recommendations to approve up to \$252,234 for projects submitted for FY 2019 funding from the Upland Game Bird Stamp account. The specific Upland Game Bird Stamp projects that may be approved are; 1) Greater Sage-grouse Statewide Monitoring – Project # 373 (\$55,000); 2) Upland Game Translocation and Monitoring – Project # 368 (\$14,264); 3) Dusky Grouse Ecology and Management in Nevada – Project # 365 (\$3,100); 4) Monitoring the Effects of Landscape-Level Treatments on Greater Sage-grouse within the Desatoya Mountains – Project # 369 (\$15,000); 6) Measuring Corticosterone Metabolites in Greater Sage-grouse - Project # 393 (\$25,000); 7) Estimating Sage-grouse Vital Rates within Nevada’s Most Novel Habitats - Project # 367 (\$53,470) 8) Effects of Conventional Raven Control and Wildfire on Greater Sage-grouse within the Virginia Mountains – Project # 370 (\$25,000); 9) Mason Valley WMA Upland Food Plots – Project # 383 (\$10,000); 10) Key Pittman WMA Food Plots - Project # 330 (\$3,900); 11) Edwards Creek Lek Pinyon Juniper Hand Removal Project – Project # 282 (\$25,000); 12) Eastern WMA Complex Weed Control – Project # 349 (\$10,000); and 13) Eastern Nevada Properties Restoration – Project # 390 (\$12,500)*

Chair Robinson opened the agenda item hearing no public comment asked for Board discussion or a motion.

Responding to Member Shea’s inquiry about a farmer helping out as indicated on page 31, Chris Hampson – NDOW, explained that the program has been in place for many years and that a rancher in the Winnemucca (Nevada) area had expressed an interest in helping with the upland game species. The intent is to not harvest a portion of the field so that turkeys can nest. Mr. Hampson noted that BLM and other organizations assist in various ways including Sage Grouse surveys.

During the discussion it was noted that water development also helps other species beside Muledeer and other large animals.

Chair Robinson noted that it would be nice to see other cooperative efforts in the future using funds from other groups as well as sportsmen.

Rex Flowers noted that there has not been a lot of matching funds for projects in the past and that these are NDOW sponsored projects that are putting the Upland Game Bird Stamps funds to good use.

Mel Belding suggested that more Upland Game Stamp money be used for fire rehabilitation to benefit Sage Grouse and pointed out that Pershing County Chukar has funded at least six new guzzlers in the past few years. Mr. Belding noted that upland game also benefits when guzzlers are developed.

Ray Kabisch asked about the effect of Raven control on Greater Sage Grouse.

Chair Robinson confirmed that he would seek an explanation on the program and closed public comment.

Chris Hampson – NDOW, explained that this is the 10th year of study of Sage Grouse and noted the fire history dating back to 1999 when the whole mountain burned. USGS (United States Geological Survey) took over after that and installed cameras to monitor Sage Grouse nests to determine the

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predator. Mr. Hampson then noted that Raven Control was introduced after that and included the use of poisoned eggs during the nesting season, which has been successful.

It was moved by Member Pitts, seconded by Chair Robinson, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Upland Game Stamp Requests, as written. The motion carried unanimously.

- 9. FISCAL YEAR 2019 HERITAGE PROJECT PROPOSALS** [For Possible Action] – *A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify recommendations to approve up to \$887,474.01 for projects submitted for FY 2019 funding from the Wildlife Heritage account. The preliminary funding recommendations from the Committee are listed below and may be approved by the Commission. These recommendations may change at the 8:00 a.m., June 29, 2018, Heritage Committee meeting; 1) Bighorn Sheep Capture, Transplant and Monitoring – Project # 19-01 (\$75,000); 2) NDOW Helicopter Acquisition – Project # 19-02 (\$200,000); 3) Wildfire-Related Restoration and Seed Purchase – Project # 19-03 (\$100,000); 4) Overton WMA Pintail and Wilson Ponds Leveling – Project # 19-04 (\$60,000); 5) Willow Creek Reservoir Habitat Structures and Other Improvements – Project # 19-05 (\$21,500) 6) South Steptoe Watershed Restoration – Project # 19-06 (\$35,000); 7) Kern Mountain Habitat Improvement Project – Project # 19-07 (\$30,000); 8) Izzenhood Basin Habitat Improvement Project – Project # 19-08 (\$30,000); 9) Bighorn Sheep Gene Transcription Analysis – Project # 19-09 (\$84,500); 10) Comins Lake Boat Ramp – Project # 19-10 (\$55,000); 11) Rebuild of Last Chance #6 Hanging Basin Water Development – Project # 19-11 (\$25,100); 12) Survey and Maintenance of Existing Big Game Water Developments – Project # 19-12 (\$36,700); 13) Simkins/Doc Pass PJ Chaining Maintenance Project – Project # 19-13 (\$75,000); 14) Cave Valley Ranch PJ Removal Project – Project # 19-14 (\$59,674.01) and 15) Delineation and Nutritional Value of Desert Bighorn Lambing Habitat – Project # 19-15 (not recommended for funding).*

Chair Robinson opened the agenda item and noted that the recommendations may be changed at the Heritage Committee meeting and opened public comment.

Rex Flowers suggested that Project 19-13 be fully funded at \$100,000.00 with Cave Valley Ranch be dropped as it is private property.

Mel Belding concurred with Mr. Flowers comments and asked how much was being requested for the helicopter.

Member Pitts believes that the cost of the helicopter is \$200,000.00.

Mr. Belding believes that the purchase of the new helicopter is contingent on the sale of the old one. Mr. Belding noted his opposition to hanging collars on baby lambs which will make them more vulnerable to predators. Mr. Belding suggested that if there is money remaining that the Cave Valley project could then be considered.

Chair Robinson closed public comment.

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It was moved by Member Shea, seconded by Chair Robinson, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Fiscal Year 2019 Heritage Project Proposal with the following modification: 19-13 increase funding from \$75,000.00 to \$100,000.00 and not fund 19-15. The motion carried: Members Pitts, Shea, Spencer and Chair Robinson assenting; and Member Di Rocco opposed.

10. COMMISSION GENERAL REGULATION 477, LANDOWNER DEER AND ANTELOPE COMPENSATION TAG PROGRAM, LCB File No. 096-18 [For Possible Action] – *A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify recommendations to approve a regulation relating to amending Chapter 502 of the Nevada Administrative Code (NAC). This regulation would provide direction for equitably allocating landowner deer and antelope compensation tags if the statutory limit is reached.*

Chair opened the agenda item and asked for board discussion.

Member Shea recommended that under item 4 remove the word “the” from the phrase “the department shall determine” to clarify the intent.

Chair Robinson opened public comment.

Mel Belding expressed his concern about how quickly NDOW is pushing the matter and suggested the Board recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners delay action and conduct additional workshops about the program before making a final decision.

Chair Robinson closed public comment.

It was moved by Member Shea, seconded by Member Pitts, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners not approve the Landowner Compensation Program as written and hold additional workshops and discussion to refine the final outcome. The motion carried unanimously.

11. COMMISSION GENERAL REGULATION 474, TRAP REGISTRATION, LCB File No. R038-18 [For Possible Action] – *A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify recommendations to adopt a regulation to amend Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) 503.150. This regulation revises provisions relating to the registration of traps as mandated by Senate Bill (SB) 364 of the 79th Legislative Session. SB 364 states that with certain exceptions, each trap, snare, or similar device used by a person in the taking of wild mammals must be registered with the Department before it is used. It also states that for each trap, snare, or similar device registered with the Department, the person registering the device shall pay a registration fee of \$5. This proposed regulation provides a mechanism for the Department to register traps and charge \$5 per trap registered. The Commission held a workshop on May 4, 2018 and directed the Department to clarify the first sentence of the regulation as it relates to SB 364.*

Chair Robinson opened the agenda item and asked for staff input. Hearing none Chair Robinson opened public comments.

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Joel Blakeslee - Nevada Trappers Association, commented that he does not believe that the proposed regulation has been well thought out. Mr. Blakeslee recommended that NDOW provide the tag with stamped on numbers that are issued sequentially. Mr. Blakeslee also recommended some type of seal to prevent counterfeiting.

Mel Belding concurred with Joel Blakeslee and wanted to see a ready to attach tag. This has to be ready within 3 months and can't go any longer or we will see it again in June 2019.

Chair Robinson closed public comment.

It was moved by Member Shea, seconded by Member Spencer, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Commission General Regulation 474, Trap Registration, LCB R038-18, with the following modifications: NDOW to provide ready to attach tags that are numbered in sequential number order. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting recessed at 6:51 p.m. and reconvened at 7:00 p.m.

- 12. COMMISSION REGULATION 18-01, AMENDMENT #1 – FISHING SEASONS AND REGULATIONS FOR THE TWO YEAR PERIOD MARCH 1, 2018 THROUGH FEBRUARY 29, 2020** [For Possible Action] – *A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify recommendations to Amendment #1 of CR 18-01, the Fishing Seasons and Bag Limits for March 1, 2018 through February 29, 2020. The Department is proposing an amendment to the harvest limit for fish in that portion of the Upper Reese River and tributaries from the Arc Dome wilderness boundary south of the Yomba Shoshone Tribe Reservation to its headwaters, and Stewart Creek from its confluence with the Reese River to its headwaters, in Nye County, to remove harvest limits on trout species.*

Chair Robinson opened the agenda item.

Member Shea drew attention to the last page under Nye County and recommended that the “no limit” be changed to read “Unlimited”.

There were no public comments.

It was moved by Member Shea, seconded by Member Spencer, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Commission Regulation 19-01, Amendment No. 1 Fishing Seasons and Regulations for the two year period March 1, 2018 through February 29, 202, with the following modification: change the words “No Limit” under Nye County to read “Unlimited”. The motion carried unanimously.

- 13. COMMISSION REGULATION 18-12, 2018-2019 UPLAND GAME AND FURBEARER SEASONS AND BAG LIMITS** [For Possible Action] – *A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify recommendations to establish regulations for upland game birds and mammals as well as furbearers for the 2018 and 2019 seasons. This regulation will also include fall wild turkey*

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seasons for 2018 and 2019 and spring wild turkey seasons for 2019 and 2020.

Chair Robinson opened the agenda item asked for department input.

Chris Hampson – Biologist, provided an overview of the proposal noting the minor modifications that closed Unit 034 to Sage Grouse due to low populations and Unit 164 in the Antelope Range as no strutting grounds were identified. Additionally, the season has been reduced to 7 days in Units 014 and 015. Mr. Hampson noted that there were no changes in season or Units in Washoe County. Mr. Hampson noted that surrounding states are also experiencing low populations which may be due, in part, to heavy rainfall and other nesting issues. Mr. Hampson noted a slight modification to the Bobcat sealing date which he does not have exact details of. Mr. Hampson noted that it is not uncommon to transplant beavers to different areas to improve habitat.

Member Shea suggested that line 3 under special regulations on page 4, both boxes, be changed from “his privilege” to “his or her privilege”.

Chair Robinson noted that correspondence from Tracy Truman (copy on file) supported the Bobcat season for 120 days through 2-18-2019.

Chair Robinson opened public comment.

Joel Blakeslee recommended that the Board recommend approval of the NDOW recommendations.

Jack Spencer pointed out that Bobcats cannot be trapped on Military, City, County lands and other locations and that other locations such as the State of Texas do not have a quota. Mr. Spencer believes that the recommendation from Mr. Truman should be considered.

Mel Belding concurred with the NDOW recommendation.

Chair Robinson closed public comment.

It was moved by Member Shea, seconded by Member Spencer, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Commission Regulation 18-12, 2018-2019 Upland Game and Furbearer Seasons and Bag Limits with the following modification changing “his privilege” to read his or her privilege” on page 4 under hours.

- 14. COMMISSION REGULATION 18-04 AMENDMENT #1, 2018 HERITAGE TAG ORGANIZATION/VENDOR SELECTION AND SPECIAL REGULATIONS** [For Possible Action] – *A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify the 2018 Heritage Tag vendors/organization recommendations.*

Chair Robinson opened the agenda item. Hearing no Board member comments Chair Robinson asked for public comment.

Rex Flowers suggested that one muledeer tag be moved from the Mule Deer Foundation and given to the Northern Nevada Safari Club and that one elk tag be provided to The Rocky Mountain Elk

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Foundation. Mr. Flowers pointed out that NDOW staff had come in after public comment at the May meeting and expressed concern that staff continues to provide comment to the Commission and others after public comment is closed.

Mel Belding commented that he did not see an issue with the Elk tag to NSCI pointing out that a previous tag was sold for \$155,000.00

Chair Robinson closed public comment.

It was moved by Member Shea, seconded by Member Spencer, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Commission Regulation 18-04 Amendment #1, 2018 Heritage Tag Organization/Vendor Selection And Special Regulations with the following modification: Move one Muledeer tag from the Muledeer Foundation to Norther Nevada Safari Club; one Elk tag from the Safari Club to the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. The motion carried unanimously.

- 15. AMENDMENT TO THE BIENNIAL UPLAND GAME RELEASE PLAN FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019 [For Possible Action] – A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify recommendations to amend the Department’s biennial upland game release plan for fiscal year 2019 to include beavers.**

Chair Robinson opened the agenda item.

Chris Hampson – NDOW noted that there had been a request to place beaver on private land thus resulting in the question about who would be responsible for damage caused by beavers.

Member Shea believes it is a good idea to transplant beavers to private property as is done in the State of Montana, which has improved the water table.

Chair Robinson opened public comment.

Rex Flowers commented that the only issue is that the agreement indicates that the property owner will take responsibility. Mr. Flowers recalled the transplant of sheep on Clark Mountain pointing out that the agreement had never been signed. Additionally, the agreement should be written in a manner that conveys the responsibility when the property is transferred. Therefore, it is crucial that the agreement be enforceable.

Joel Blakeslee commented that he knows a lot about beavers and that some serious thought needs to occur before transplanting beavers upstream, which can destroy the invertebrate populations if the beavers get into irrigation and other ditches.

Mel Belding expressed his support for the transplant noting that South America is now asking and paying for the trapping and removal of beavers. However, Mr. Belding believes there needs to be more discussion and thought on the matter before moving forward.

Chair Robinson closed public comment.

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Member Spencer believes that an expert in land transfer and ownership need to review so as to avoid causing problems and more work.

It was moved by Member Spencer, seconded by Chair Robinson, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners delay Consideration of Amendment to the Biennial Upland Game Release Plan for Fiscal Year 2019 until additional research and study can be completed. The motion carried unanimously.

16. COMMISSION POLICY 50, DUCK STAMP PROCEDURE, SECOND READING – COMMISSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES, REGULATIONS, AND POLICY [For Possible Action] – *A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify the proposed second reading of Commission Policy 50 and may take action to officially suspend the policy.*

Chair Robinson recalled previous discussion and approval by the Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife.

It was pointed out during a brief discussion that the Duck Stamp program is still available.

There were no public comments.

It was moved by Member Robinson, seconded by Member Spencer, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Commission Policy 50, Duck Stamp Procedure as written. The motion carried unanimously.

17. WASHOE COUNTY ADVISORY BOARD TO MANAGE WILDLIFE MEMBERS AND/OR STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS, REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION AND SELECTION OF TOPICS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS [Non-action item] – *Selection of additional agenda item(s) for the next meeting to be held August 2, 2018.*

Jen Gustafson – Deputy District Attorney, noted that she had not realized that this would be the last meeting for Members Shea and Spencer. Therefore, it may be necessary to reschedule the August 2, 2018, meeting until Washoe County can appoint replacements, unless Members Shea and Spencer agree to an extension of their membership.

The next meeting agenda may include, but is not limited to: Introduction of New Members and a presentation on predator control.

Chair Robinson expressed his appreciation to outgoing Members Shea and Spencer for their service.

Member Pitts commented that he had learned a lot from both Member Shea and Spencer.

18. PUBLIC COMMENTS [Non-action item]

Rex Flowers recalled his work with both Members Spencer and Shea. Drawing attention to his review of the Heritage fund, it appears that the fund is a banking spot for NDOW due to the

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\$811,000.00 balance. Mr. Flowers pointed out that Heritage Projects need to have a reasonable expectation of completion within a specified time frame. Mr. Flowers suggested that Deputy District Attorney Jen Gustafson contact the Washoe County Manager's Office about an extension of time for outgoing Members Spencer and Shea, which has been done in the past.

Joel Blakeslee expressed his thanks to Members Spencer and Shea for their service.

19. ADJOURNMENT [Non-action item]

Chair Robinson adjourned the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

AS APPROVED BY THE WASHOE COUNTY ADVISORY BOARD TO MANAGE WILDLIFE IN SESSION ON AUGUST 2, 2018.