

Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife

MINUTES

Thursday ~ September 17, 2009 ~ 6:30 p.m.
Nevada Department of Wildlife
Conference Room B
1100 Valley Road, Reno, Nevada

MEMBERS

Rick Smith, Chair
Glen Copeland, Vice-chair
Rex Flowers, Secretary
Daryl Harwell
Thomas Wilson

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE *

Chair Smith led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL *

Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. A quorum was established.

PRESENT: Glen Copeland, Rex Flowers, Daryl Harwell, Rick Smith and Tom Wilson.

ABSENT: None.

3. APPROVAL OF AUGUST 10, 2009, MINUTES

Member Wilson asked that page 5, second paragraph from end of page to reflect that his comment was meant to convey that it was the general consensus of those present that there was “no confidence” in the current leadership.

It was moved by Member Wilson, seconded by Member Copeland, to approve the August 10, 2009, minutes, as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS *

Tony Wasley – NDOW (Nevada Department of Wildlife) introduced himself and explained that he was transition into the statewide Mule Deer Staff Specialist coming from ten (10) years as a biologist. Mr. Wasley asked whether the agenda could be reordered to allow him an opportunity to attend a parent teacher meeting.

Chair Smith reordered the agenda.

12. METHODS OF RESTORING NEVADA’S MULE DEER POPULATION – *A review, discussions and possible recommendation to the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners of written recommendations and specific suggestions and actions that may be taken within the respective County to enhance Mule Deer populations as requested by Commission Chair Gerald Lent. [Taken out of agenda order]*

Responding to Chair Smith’s inquiry about the recommendations for Washoe County, Tony Wasley – NDOW (Nevada Department of Wildlife), explained that Washoe County’s issues

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are not much different from those in other areas of the state. Studies have shown that the wildfires that consumed more than 1-million acres of habitat used by Muledeer, including portions of Humboldt County and northern Washoe County has resulted in some increased age of vegetation such as Mountain Mahogany and Bitterbrush along with a decline in recruitment. Mr. Wasley then focused on the grazing in the different climate zones in the western states as ecosystems get drier and less productive in the more desert environment. Mr. Wasley noted that the BLM (Bureau of Land Management) is somewhat adverse to the use of non-native vegetation to reclaim areas lost to wildfire. Mr. Wasley noted that there has been some invasion of Junipers and Pinion Junipers in some areas although not nearly as much in northern Washoe County. Mr. Wasley then noted that the other threat to Muledeer populations and habitat is the urbanization of the region although efforts are made to retain open space and migration corridors.

During the discussion it was noted that there is insufficient data to determine accurately what role wild horses play in the degradation of wildlife habitat. It was noted that in general wild horses have moderate impact except in areas where the herd protects a limited water resources to the detriment of other species. Other discussion focused on a presentation on Bitterbrush by Cliff Garner. During the presentation there were several generalizations made such as allowing grazing to increase productivity or reduce fuel for wildfire. It was suggested that the grazing down of vegetation comes at a time when it is not beneficial to Muledeer when needed. Therefore, a shift in grazing patterns might prove more beneficial. Other discussion noted that studies have indicated the most grazed areas had been affected by wildfire more often. Discussion then noted that an individuals/organization is pledging \$50,000.00 to reseed parts of the Petersen Range that were devastated by the Trailer and Red Rock wildfires. As the discussion continued, it was noted that there are some volunteer projects underway such as the production of Bitterbrush seedlings in the Lowery High School green house. Other discussion noted that there was little that could be done to effectively slow or reduce urbanization and that there are areas in which water is located on private lands. It was suggested that there may be methods by which water located on private land could be shared in a manner that is beneficial to wildlife without having adverse effect on the land owner. It was pointed out that there may be some federal funding available for various types of restoration projects such as habitat improvement that would also foster a better working relationship with private land owners. Additionally, certain types of restoration project can be funded by the Heritage Fund.

Discussion then focused on the lack of data concerning body condition and the relocation of troublesome predator cats by the State of California in the vicinity of Unit 014. It was noted that while the Unit 014 predator control program is appropriate, such programs are not the answer in all instances. Other discussion focused on “carrying capacity” that changes as the climatic conditions change. For example, a long period of drought and other natural occurrences may reduce the “carrying capacity” of any specific location with moderate to severe changes that directly impact the ability of a resident herd to recruit. It was noted that body condition data is needed to develop a more in-depth analysis of what the issues are. Discussion then turned to the “hot season” grazing of what is otherwise Muledeer habitat

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during winter months. As the discussion continued, it was noted that the recruitment of native vegetation can sometimes be enhanced using a disk harrow that breaks down the older growth and loosens soil to allow new growth to flourish. Discussion then suggested working with the penal system in harvesting seeds for revegetation to areas lost to wildfire. It was noted that the contracting for inmates had been changed and become more cumbersome.

Chair Smith then summarized the issues facing Washoe County such as urbanization, wild horses and grazing that all have significant political implications. Mr. Smith suggested that Member Flowers meet with a number of interested parties to develop project and funding recommendations for the Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife to consider.

During the ensuing discussion it was suggested that in addition to the BLM that other participants include the Muledeer Foundation. It was emphasized that the group would meet exclusively to discuss Muledeer enhancement and potential funding sources. It was suggested that a Heritage Fund project to recede certain areas would be an appropriate use of the fund. As the discussion continued, it was noted that the focus group should remain somewhat small with Mr. Wasley serving as a consulting liaison.

Discussion then turned to the potential translocation of Muledeer. It was explained that Muledeer do not flourish when transplanted and that the animals tend to try to migrate back to the former home location.

Mr. Wasley can be reached at 775-688-1659 or via email: twasley@ndow.org.

5. COMMITTEE MEMBER AND LIAISON UPDATES *

5-1. Correspondence (including sportsmen's concerns) and Announcements – Chair Smith read correspondence pertaining to Agenda Item 9 received from Dave Stanley (copy on file) into the record.

5-2. Update on the Sheldon Wildlife Management Plan – There was no update.

5-3) Overview of the August 14 and 15, 2009, Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners meeting – Chair Smith noted that Gerald Lent had been retained as Chair in a 5-4 vote with Commissioners Capurro, Howell, Korbin, Raine and Chair Lent voting in the affirmative; and Commissioners Cavin, McBeath, Mori and Wallace dissenting. Of particular concern is that there may be many more votes reflecting similar outcomes on a variety of issues. Chair Smith noted that one objector had been ejected from the meeting after being called out of order several times. Ms. Smith noted that recommendations on the regulations before the Commission had been passed with minor modification including the muzzle loader with scope to avoid having a federal mandate issued on the matter. Chair Smith then noted that there had been significant discussion about the Winecup Ranch proposal with a letter from Chair Lent written in opposition to HR-1018. The Commission also chose to adopt Hunt

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Application Deadline Option 6 as well as approval of the Bobcat sealing date. Chair Smith commented that he would invite Cliff Garner to make his presentation on Bitterbrush to the Washoe County board at a future meeting.

5-4). *Update and status report on the Washoe County Predator Control Project and the Wildlife Damage Management Subcommittee* – Chair Smith commented that two (2) more cats had been removed from Units 014/015.

- 6. BOARD MEMBER MEETING ASSIGNMENT** – *A discussion and selection of member(s) to attend the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners meetings on: 1) September 25 and 26, 2009, meetings in Las Vegas, Nevada; and 2) December 4 and 5, 2009, meetings in Reno, Nevada.*

Member Flowers will attend the September 25 and 26, 2009, meetings in Las Vegas, (Nevada).

Member Wilson will attend the December 4, 2009, meeting in Reno (Nevada).

Member Copeland will attend the December 5, 2009, meeting in Reno (Nevada).

- 7. COMMISSION GENERAL REGULATION NUMBER 368, LCB (Legislative Counsel Bureau) FILE NO. R040-09** – *A review, discussion and possible recommendation to the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners to approve, deny or otherwise modify provisions pertaining to the electronic access to the 48-hour release of draw results.*

Hearing no one wishing to speak in favor of, or in opposition to the proposal, Chair Smith asked for board discussion or a motion.

Members Copeland and Wilson stated they could support the proposed modifications.

It was moved by Member Flowers, seconded by Member Harwell, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve the modifications to Commission General Regulation 368, Legislative Counsel Bureau File R040-09, as written. The motion carried unanimously.

- 8. COMMISSION GENERAL REGULATION NUMBER 369, LCB (Legislative Counsel Bureau) FILE NO. R041-09** – *A review, discussion and possible recommendation to the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners to approve, deny or otherwise modify provisions pertaining to defining edible portions in the case of big game mammal, other game mammals, game birds and game fish.*

Chair Smith provided an overview of the modifications.

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There was some discussion about whether neck meat should be included under edible. It was noted that since that particular area was not listed in either allowed or prohibited that it was up to the discretion of the hunter whether or not the neck should be taken. Other discussion noted that the specific language of the Commission General Regulation was written so that it would not need to be modified extensively and that a chart of the body part will be published in the hunt book.

It was moved by Member Flowers, seconded by Member Harwell, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve the modifications to Commission General Regulation Number 369, Legislative Counsel Bureau File R041-09, as written. The motion carried unanimously.

9. **COMMISSION GENERAL REGULATION NUMBER 371, LCB (Legislative Counsel Bureau) FILE NO. R083-09 –** *A review, discussion and possible recommendation to the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners to approve, deny or otherwise modify a proposal to remove an artificial lure only regulation for Crittenden Reservoir, limit method of take at Smith Creek Reservoir to only artificial lures with single barbless hooks and limit method of take at Dacey Reservoir to artificial lures only.*

Matt Maples – NDOW (Nevada Department of Wildlife), provided an overview of the requested modifications noting that this will “clean-up” regulations since Crittenden Reservoir is no longer open to the public. The Smith Creek Reservoir will continue to allow public access to the public portions while closing the privately held portion of the property. The land owner in this instance has been stocking the reservoir and the implement a special regulation that reduces the overall impact to the fish population and move towards repair of the dam that is currently a safety hazard.

It was moved by Member Copeland, seconded by Member Wilson, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve the modifications to Commission General Regulation Number 371, Legislation Counsel Bureau File R-083-09, as written. The motion carried unanimously.

10. **COMMISSION REGULATION FISHING SEASONS AND BAG LIMITS 09–09 –** *A review, discussion and possible recommendation to the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners to approve, deny or otherwise modify recommended fishing seasons, bag and possession limits, for the period of March 1, 2010, to February 29, 2012. Note: Please see NDOW (Nevada Department of Wildlife) publication entitled, “Recommendations for Fishing Seasons and Regulations”.*

Matt Maples – NDOW (Nevada Department of Wildlife), provide an overview of the modifications that will limit the number of fish taken from urban ponds to three, thus allow NDOW to restock the urban ponds less frequently. Mr. Maples stated that the term “game

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fish” was all inclusive and that the modification will provide a more standardized approach to limits.

During the discussion it was noted that there was noting in the way the regulation was modified to prevent an angler from claiming to have taken additional fish from the Truckee River when fishing in one of the urban ponds. It was suggested that the limit be applied statewide to all bodies of water. As the discussion continued, it was explained that urban ponds such as the Sparks Marina are stocked in spring and fall with additional fish as needed and available. It was noted that population surveys are conducted in a variety of ways and that a roving creel survey of fishermen can track fishing trends so that stocking can be scheduled. Other discussion noted that there will be some time needed for fishermen to transition to the reduced limit per day.

It was moved by Member Wilson, seconded by member Copeland, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve the modifications to Commission Regulation Fishing Seasons and Bag Limits 09-09, as written. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting recessed at 8:00 p.m. and reconvened at 8:06 p.m.

- 11. TRANSLOCATION OF DESERT BIGHORN TO UTAH DIVISION OF WILDLIFE RESOURCES** – *A review, discussion and possible recommendation to the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners to approve, deny or otherwise modify on a request by the State of Utah Division of Natural Resources for the translocation of twenty (20) Desert Bighorn Sheep from the State of Nevada to the State of Utah during fall/winter field operations in Fiscal Year 2010.*

Chair Smith provided an overview of the agenda item.

Member Copeland noted that could only support the request if NDOW (Nevada Department of Wildlife biologist could state there were no other locations within the State of Nevada that were not at or over their carrying capacity. Mr. Copeland does not believe that the State of Nevada should give up such a valuable resource.

Chair Smith reminded the board and those present that without the translocation of Desert Bighorn Sheep and other big game animals over the years to establish herds in the State of Nevada there would be no sheep. Therefore, it is Chair Smith’s belief that there is an obligation to work with surrounding states to help build their herds.

Member Flowers concurred noting that the State of Nevada has a good working relationship with the State of Utah who has developed and implement sound management practices and are working to create more diversity in their wildlife populations.

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Member Wilson commented that it was unclear whether there was sufficient information to support the request and suggested that the total number be left to biologists that have the pertinent herd information.

It was moved by Member Harwell to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve the translocation of twenty (20) Desert Bighorn Sheep to the State of Utah.

Member Wilson suggested that the motion be amended to condition the translocation upon the review and approval of the biologists and that the translocation is not detriment to the State of Nevada herd(s).

Member Harwell accepted the amendment as stated by Member Wilson. Member Flowers seconded the motion. The motion carried: Members Flowers, Harwell, Wilson and Chair Smith assenting; and Member Copeland dissenting.

- 13. NEVADA DUCK STAMPS** – *A review, discussion and possible recommendation to the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners on: 1) Duck Stamps not being available for sale at area vendors; 2) not being allowed to pick-up a physical Duck Stamp at NDOW (Nevada Department of Wildlife) offices without paying for the stamp again (even if agreeing to sign for it at their office); and 3) license sticks to itself when it gets wet making it unreadable.*

Member Wilson commented that this was more of an informational item and that he had taken several telephone calls expressing some concern about the Nevada Duck Stamp and hunting license issues. Mr. Wilson pointed out that in order to receive a printed Duck Stamp after purchasing an electronic stamp the payment of additional fees is required. Additionally, the stamp tends to stick to its self if wet. Member Wilson noted that the issuance of printed Duck Stamps is a revenue generator as most are not purchased for hunting but rather as a collectable. Of some concern is that the printed Duck Stamp may be phased out as has occurred in several other states. Member Wilson noted that he had discussed the concerns with Director Kenneth Mayer who had indicated that staff is working on the issues and will make recommendations on the Duck Stamp program in the future.

During the discussion it was noted that the number of Duck Stamps printed had been reduced and that Duck Stamps can be obtained at the end of the season by those individuals holding an electronic stamp. As the discussion continued, it was pointed out that there are no local vendors that sell Duck Stamps and that the 2010 Duck Stamp will be announced in November 2009 and available March 2010. Other discussion suggested that perhaps Member Wilson should draft a letter to the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners that includes specific information about the number of individuals that purchase the Duck Stamp and anticipated revenue loss if printed Duck Stamps are discontinued.

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Member Wilson reiterated that Director Mayer and staff are working on a plan for the Duck Stamp and that he asked that the matter be placed on the meeting agenda to determine the direction this board might want to take. Mr. Wilson responded that he was “happy” with Director Mayer’s answer and that he is not yet ready to make a specific recommendation without having the staff recommendation on the issues. Member Wilson concurred with Chair Smith that the matter should be treated as informational allowing an opportunity to revisit the issue in the future.

No specific action was taken on this agenda item.

14. **MEMBER COMMENTS *** – *Limited to emergent items not addressed elsewhere on the agenda. While the Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife may not engage in discussion or take action on any item identified under this topic the matter may be placed on a future agenda for discussion and possible action or recommendation of action to the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners; and*
15. **FUTURE MEETING AGENDA ITEMS *** – *Selection of additional agenda item(s) for the Tuesday, November 24, 2009, meeting.*

Chair Smith asked that the next meeting agenda include the Silver State Tag and Heritage Tag allocation.

Member Flowers requested an agenda item to discussion and take action on a potential Heritage Fund project for Washoe County.

Member Wilson suggested a recurring agenda item that would review the previous Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners’ (Commission) meeting, whereby the Washoe County board can provide comment, guidance and advice to the Commission encouraging a more civil, professional demeanor. Currently there is no method by which this board can provide input and express opinions.

Chair Smith concurred that there should be an action item that would provide information on how Commission members vote on various issues as it is important to understand the positions the Commission members are taking, specifically those representing Washoe County.

Member Wilson commented that the purpose of the agenda item would be to advise the Commission on conduct, procedure and other matter relevant to the actual meeting, including behavior. For example, a way for the Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife to express disapproval for not allowing public comments on agenda items.

Chair Smith noted that the Attorney General representing the Commission had opined that the Commission did not have to take public comment on the Election of Officers but did have to take comment on other agenda items.

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Ed Tilzey recalled that during his tenure on the Washoe County board that former Commission Member and Chair Bill Bradley had attended and provided monthly updates.

Member Harwell asked whether there was some manner in which this board and the Commission could be kept apprised what NDOT (Nevada Department of Transportation) has in mind for water rights at the south end of Washoe Lake.

Chair Smith noted that a pipeline is being proposed from Elko through northern Washoe County to either the State of California or Oregon along Route 140. It is Mr. Smith's belief that the pipeline is in the planning stages.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Smith adjourned the meeting at 8:36 p.m.

AS APPROVED BY THE WASHOE COUNTY ADVISORY BOARD TO MANAGE WILDLIFE IN SESSION ON NOVEMBER 24, 2009.