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Eureka County Wildlife Advisory Board
Minutes
September 16, 2010

The Eureka County Wildlife Advisory Board met in the Eureka County Administrative Facility on September 16, 2010 at 5:00p.m.

Members Present: Chairman Chris Torres, Chad Bliss, Jim Evans, Mike Taylor and Dale Hornickle

Members Absent:

Others Present: Mike Podborny-NDOW, George Corner of Nevada Outfitters and Guides Association, Bill Hull, Raymond Hodgson-Nevada Houndsmen Association and Kathy Porter-Natural Resources Assistant/Secretary

Call to order

Vice- Chairman Jim Evans called the meeting to order at 5:15p.m. A quorum was determined to be present.

Review and Approve Minutes-

The minutes of the August 5, 2010 meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved, on a motion made by Chad Bliss and seconded by Mike Taylor.

Correspondence and reports

No Correspondence.

Wildlife and Mule Deer Enhancement Projects in Eureka County- Discuss and consider further efforts to proceed with wildlife and mule deer enhancement projects, including guzzlers, in Eureka County:

Chad Bliss updated the board on the juniper thinning projects around springs. Mr. Bliss further reported that he spoke with Ben Zunio and Fitzwaters and they are both interested in having some thinning done around their springs. Mr. Bliss still needs to contact the Buchanan's. Mrs. Porter reported that she spoke with Ryan Sandefur of the Battle Mountain BLM. Ms. Sandefur recommended dates to meet in Battle Mountain to discuss the projects and the process. Mr. Bliss would like to have a joint meeting with the BLM and the water right owners at some point. Mr. Bliss would like to monitor flow before the thinning begins and follow up with monitoring after the thinning takes place. Mr. Bliss spoke with District Ranger, Steve Williams of the Toiyabe National Forest Service (FS), and said he is very supportive of the project and thinks the projects could be done under a Categorical Exclusion. Mr. Bliss predicts a meeting with the FS, possibly in October. Mr. Bliss asked Mr. Podborny if the FS and BLM follow the same guidelines. Mr. Podborny was unsure. A special meeting was set Wednesday, September 22, at 6:00pm to discuss possible springs with water right owners.

Chairman Torres arrived at 6:30 p.m. and conducted the meeting from this point on.

Mr. Podborny reported that the guzzler fixing project has been postponed. Mr. Podborny will follow up with the board of other possible dates to work on the guzzlers. Chairman

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Torres updated the board that Barrick Ruby Hill has purchased the materials for the guzzler and plans to assemble the mine guzzler October 2nd.

Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners Agenda and Support Material Packet –

The Board may discuss and act upon any or all items.

Dale Hornickle informed the board that not all DMV offices are capable of renewing boat registrations and he would like the Commission to consider equipping all DMV offices with the capability to renew boat registrations. Mr. Bliss told Mr. Hornickle that if he attended the Wildlife Commissioners’ meeting he would bring the subject up.

Action Item 16: The Commission May Discuss, Create, or Give Instruction to Staff to Draft Regulatory Changes to Include Status and Method of Take of Wolves – Chairman Raine - Action

Discussion was had as to who has more authority over the wolves, the State or the Federal Government. Mr. Hornickle argued that the right to manage wildlife belongs to the states and feels the wolves should be unprotected and given as predator status. Mr. Podborny reported that dealing with a endangered species, the Federal Government has the authority. Mr. Bliss is concerned with the relocation of wolves to Nevada. George Corner, Nevada Outfitters and Guides Association, reported that the Wildlife Services reported at the Elko CAB meeting that they will not introduce wolves but they have already been sighted in Elko County. Bill Hull commented that wolves populate quickly. Discussion was had that other states have lost their authority to manage the wolves because they were not managing the wolves by placing the wolves under the predator status. Mr. Evans agreed that we need to manage the wolves. Mr. Taylor stated that it is easier to change the method of take if the animal is listed as big game animal. Raymond Hodgson would like to see the wolves listed as a big game animal

Mr. Taylor moved to leave the regulations as is, there is no need to stir up the issue at this time. Mr. Bliss seconded, motion carried 4-1, Mr. Hornickle- opposed, reason: wolves should be unprotected and have predator status.

Action Item 11: Letter in Support of Elko County Multiple Use Efforts - Elko County Commissioner Demar Dahl and Randy Brown, Elko County Director Planning/Zoning/Natural Resource Management – Action

The Commission may adopt, modify, or take other action to develop and adopt language supporting a resolution to support Elko County in its efforts to ensure multiple uses on the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest and on all public lands in Elko County and the State of Nevada.

Mr. Hornickle moved to support as written. Mr. Taylor seconded. Chairman Torres called for questions or comments. Mr. Hodgson reported that some areas have regulations prohibiting the off road retrieval of big game with motorized vehicle. Mr. Podborny clarified that in some States off road retrieval of big game is included in the gaming rules. Mr. Corner reported that the Humboldt-Toiyabe Forest Service is not allowing retrieval of big game with a motorized vehicle in their travel management plan. The motion carried unanimously.

Action Item 14: to Rescind 2011 and 2012 Heritage Tags and or Partnership in Wildlife (PIW) Tags – Chairman Raine -Action

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Possible refund of 2010, 2011, and 2012 donations and fees to successful Heritage and PIW donors pending outcome of potential court Injunction and lawsuit against Heritage tags and approved Heritage projects that has been filed by Paul Dixon, Chairman, Clark County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife. It was noted that the only support material provided was the definitions of the Heritage Tags and PIW Tags. Mr. Bliss commented that the returning of funds after big game is bagged is wrong. This item is premature and should be left for the courts to handle. Mr. Taylor moved to oppose item 14, Mr. Evans seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Action Item 16: The Commission May Discuss, Create, or Give Instruction to Staff to Draft Regulatory Changes to Include Status and Method of Take of Mountain Lions – Chairman Raine - Action

Mr. Bliss added incidental implies the approval to trap mountain lions. Mr. Bliss is concerned with a lawsuit from environmental groups or individuals who may stumble upon large traps and become injured. Mr. Bliss further stated that California's loss of hunting rights on mountain lions began with a \$25 bounty on lions. Loss of hunting rights will increase cost to state to take lions themselves and increase cost to livestock industry from increased numbers of lions preying on livestock. Mr. Evans asked if there has been any discussion of legal trapping restricted to a regulated number. Mr. Hull added that it will turn into the similar situation as the wolves, having control of management taken over by the Federal Government. Mr. Bliss added trapping lions would have a negative impact on outfitters and guides by the loss of a game species. Mr. Corner, speaking for Nevada Outfitters and Guides Association, said they are opposed to a change in the status and method of take and do not want to lose the game animals they have. If the classification of the mountain lion is changed from big game to predator, the lion loses the big game status and prestige of mountain lion hunt. This also would be a loss of revenue source to NDOW. Mr. Hodgson added this would be a loss of revenue to the state through hounds hunting. It was acknowledged that the two items are being proposed to reduce the number of predators on mule deer and elk. Mr. Bliss moved to leave the status of the mountain lion as a big game species as is and method of take as is currently written. Mr. Taylor seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Action Item 23 A: Commission General Regulation Number 389, Interference with a Guzzler LCB File No. R083-10 – Chief Game Warden Buonamici - Action

The Commission may adopt a regulation relating to wildlife; prohibiting a person from interfering with the use of a guzzler or other water development; providing an exception. Note: Support material sent under agenda item #17 A.

Mr. Hornickle moved to approve how currently written. Mr. Taylor second, motion carried unanimously.

Action item 24: White Pine County Elk Incentive Arbitration Panel Selection - Chief of Game Larry Gilbertson - Action

There was no recommendation on this item.

Action Item 25A: Nevada Department of Wildlife Big Game Release Plan – Chief of Game Larry Gilbertson – Action

The Department is asking the Commission for approval to amend the current biennial Big Game Release Plan to accommodate additional bighorn sheep releases.

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Mr. Podborny reported this is the first time ever to propose a big game release on private property, in Storey County. Mr. Podborny further reported there are some 100,000 acres of private property. NDOW is working on putting together a cooperative agreement to release big horn sheep, build an information site for school students to tour, and eventually open to hunting. Mr. Bliss stressed the importance of assuring sportsmen's access to the property considering sportsmen's dollars are being used on private property. Mr. Evans agreed that addressing the perpetuity of the agreement is important. Mr. Podborny said another reason NDOW is interested in this offer is this is another place to put desert sheep and build their numbers. Mr. Bliss is hesitant, wants to ensure sportsman can utilize land. Mr. Podborny is unsure of to what degree sportsman will be able to use the land. Mr. Bliss moved to support the releases as long as sportsmen are guaranteed rights of access to the private property and hunt the sheep. Mr. Taylor seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Action Item 27: The Commission May Discuss, Create, or Provide Instruction and Guidance to Staff to Create Black Bear Season Regulation –Chairman Raine - Action

Other comments, including a dissenting viewpoint (different than the majority) or issue brought up during discussion:

Mr. Taylor moved to support action item 27. Mr. Hornickle seconded. Mr. Bliss pointed out that NDOW will have support data to back up in court if needed. Also, the season should coincide with California's season. Mr. Corner, Nevada Outfitters and Guides Association, reminded everyone that a hunter cannot call dogs off a bear scent at a certain time in the evening, being that the dogs commonly are far ahead of the hunter in pursuit of the game. Mr. Bliss added that regulations on day light to dark should be regulated similar to hunting lions with hounds. Motion carried unanimously.

Action Item 29: Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) – Chairman Raine – Action

The Commission may review and take appropriate action in responding to attached letter sent to Chairman Raine from NDOW concerning Commission travel expenses to WAFWA conference and allocation of travel expense reimbursement.

There was no recommendation on this item.

Action Item 32: The Commission May Discuss, Create, or Provide Instruction and Guidance to Staff to Create a Non-Trophy Bull Elk Season and Regulations – Chairman Raine – Action

Other comments, including a dissenting viewpoint (different than the majority) or issue brought up during discussion:

Mr. Hornickle stated under old regulations, required hunters to count rings on big horn sheep. Mr. Taylor suggested no more than 5 points on either side. Mr. Bliss also added it is an additional revenue source by increased number of applications. Mr. Bliss moves to support and look into further and get more discussion. Mr. Hornickle seconded, motion carried.

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Action Item 34: The Commission May Discuss Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep and May Consider Drafting a Policy Concerning Diseased Bighorn Sheep Populations and Future Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep Management – Chairman Raine - Action

There was no recommendation due to a lack of support material.

Mr. Corner, Nevada Outfitters and Guides Association, reported that this is a concern for the sheep hunters, sheep hunters fear commission does not want to replace herds that died off due to disease. No support material.

Guided hunt regulation update- Mr. Corner, Nevada Outfitters and Guides Association reported they have already released statistics on loss of revenue to State. Non-resident applications are steadily decreasing and they believe the decline is due to the lack of ability that non residents have to apply in the main draw after the guided draw. In Dec of 1989 the legislative intent was that non-residents who were unsuccessful may apply in the main draw. This was designed to give Nevada guides equal footing with guides in other states. 35% of tags in other states are set aside for guided hunts. Mr. Corner reported the Commission received many other language proposals. They asked to set aside the other proposals and keep the language simple but feels they should have included the bonus point issue. They have had discussion that non-residents cannot use bonus point until the following year. They are now looking at the December 6th meeting, asking for support to return to original language including current proposed language of the bonus point. Mr. Evans asked how many tags are allocated for guided draw. Mr. Podborny answered at max of 400, each guide can acquire only 30 successful applicants. Mr. Evans asked if the applicants go through allocation or directly through application process. Mr. Corner explained that the hunter contracts the master guide, and the master guide sends in the application. Mr. Bliss feels draw odds are better in general draw and Mr. Bliss will get Mr. Corner the spreadsheets he put together showing this. Another issue Mr. Bliss has with the guide draw, is the quota of tags is based on last year's quota. Mr. Corner explained that 1989 regulations put into place are working. Mr. Corner went to say that it is hard to lay the cause steep reduction in non-resident guide draw applicants to the change in regulation only. "It was designed to make a non-resident guided draw more enticing, not designed to be fair" said Mr. Corner. Mr. Bliss asked if the Guides Association would be interested in volunteer habitat projects and others. Mr. Corner, speaking for himself, replied he would be interested in helping.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is scheduled for November 29th at 6:00 p.m.

A special meeting is scheduled for September 22nd at 6:00 p.m.

Public Comment

Mr. Podborny reported that Mr. Woolstenhulme, Waterfowl Staff Biologist, is proposing a new water fowl hunting zone for the north eastern zone of Nevada to include Lander, Eureka, Elko, that will be on the December 6th agenda for vote.

Mr. Podborny proposed a new agenda item, local NDOW issues, for NDOW staff to report on issues.

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Mr. Hodgson announced the creation of the Nevada Houndsmen association. They can be found on line at Nevadahoundsmen.com.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Hornickle and seconded by Mr. Taylor. There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 8:01p.m.

Approved this _____ day of _____ 2010.

Respectfully submitted: _____, Secretary
Kathy Porter

Approved: _____, Chairman
Chris Torres