

Heritage Committee Meeting
Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners
Nevada Department of Wildlife
1100 Valley Road, Reno, Nevada 89512

Meeting Location: Nevada Department of Wildlife
1100 Valley Road
Reno, Nevada 89512

Committee Members: Commissioners Gerald Lent (chair), Scott Raine and Bruce Kobrin

Department of Wildlife: Gabe Pincolini, Maureen Hullinger, Kelly Clark and Mike Cox

Commissioners: Daryl Capurro

CABMW: Chad Bliss and Rex Flowers

Public: John Zenz, Jim Puryear, Tim Humes and Tina Nappe

Thursday, January 07, 2010 – 8:00 a.m.

1. **Call to Order – Chairman Gerald Lent**
8:04 a.m.
2. **Approval of Minutes – Action**
Minutes are from the August 6, 2009 Heritage Committee meeting.
First motion by Raine and second motion by Kobrin. All in favor.
Approved
3. **Member Items**
Committee members may present emerging items. Any item requiring committee action will be scheduled on a future Committee agenda.
None
4. **Public Comment Period**
Persons wishing to speak on items not on the agenda should complete a speaker card and present it to the recording secretary. Public comment will be limited to three minutes for individuals and six minutes for persons representing groups or organizations. Persons are invited to submit comments in writing on the agenda items and or attend and make

comment on the item at the committee meeting. Any item requiring committee action could be scheduled on a future committee agenda.
None

5. **Discussion of Harvest Control for Heritage and PIW Tags in Big Game Units- Chairman Lent – Possible Action**

The Heritage committee will discuss the need for harvest control for Heritage and PIW tags in big game units and make recommendations to the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners

Lent – Explained the problem for the committee and the public. The biologists do an available ram harvest and come up with a number in the management units that can be harvested that will not affect the biology of the area. This is not a biological issue, this is a sociological issue. We need a solution for the public and that there are tough decisions to make. Biology comes first. Success rate also determines the quotas, 50% success rate with 5 sheep you can put 10 hunters in the field and come up with available ram harvest. Searching for a solution from the public and ask the public to speak on their ideas and they would be discussed individually. Disappointed by the lack of CABMW input on this issue and asked Maureen Hullinger to go over the packet that was sent out to CABMW in September.

Hullinger – Addressed the handout and the question that was enclosed. She identified the different documents mailed, the deadline and that the only response to the questionnaire was from the CABMW was from Lincoln County.

Lent - Had a sportsman provide some data. The problem is basically with sheep. In Desert sheep 25 tags total for PIW and Heritage in the last 5 years, 64% rams in one unit and 88% in the top 2 units. These two units are being hit hard by PIW and Heritage tags. And there is a general quota of 13 in 253 the one area and we have had more PIW and Heritage hunters than the public. In Calif Bighorn 6 tags were taken and 60% in one unit.

Lent – Gave examples of mountain ranges that have been shot out by PIW and Heritage tags and left nothing for the common hunter to shoot. Also read Boone and Crockett results for Nevada by units.

Lent – In unit 253, five special tags in that unit were used. The quota should have gone up for the regular hunter, but instead went down due to these special tags.

Raine – The problem is with the influx in two areas and the priority should be regular draw and the regular hunter.

Zenz – Cut PIW tags from three to one. He did not think this would affect the funding. Split up areas for remaining special tags. The over-kill by

special tags takes all the quality sheep. Biologists then have to cut resident quotas to compensate.

Raine – Asked Zenz if this was unique to only the Baer range. Zenz stated it was also the McCullough range as well.

Zenz – He was in the Baers in 2005, best hunt he had been on regarding quality and quantity of sheep. A lot of Boone and Crockett rams. Two years later could not find a Boone and Crockett ram. The year previous they killed 7 Boone and Crockett rams. PIW and Heritage was there. 7 rams killed instead of 4.

Lent – Asked if Zenz agreed that the biologist has to cut the regular tags because of these special tags.

Zenz- The biologist does not have a choice, forced to do it on the public not the special tags.

Raine - This is not unique to this area.

Zenz – Started with PIW.

Raine – Asked Zenz if the Desert or the California sheep was more important. Zenz felt there was no real difference, but for nonresident the Desert is more desirable because of the grand slam.

Lent – Commented that the Heritage and PIW for California were taken in the same unit.

Kobrin – Concerned that the public perceives these special tags are elitist.

Lent – Trying to solve the inequities today.

Cox – This issue has frustrated NDOW biologist for the last five years. It is difficult to determine ahead of time where the concentrated harvest is going to occur. It is not fair to the tag holders in the draw. The success of the sheep population is in large part attributed to the proceeds from Heritage tags. As part of the discussion it makes sense to reduce PIW tags. Concerned about the future and how many total special tags will be issued and be managed. He would like to deal with the Silver State and Dream tag this year. Looking at options and it has been brought up such ideas are to break the state into two regions or could attach certain units to Heritage tags. But those could change over time and they could be adjusted annually. Occasionally there is a decent distribution of harvest but more and more they are concentrated.

Hullinger – Seasons and quota setting for Heritage and PIW occurs at the season and bags Commission meeting. It occurs at the CR level. She also provided a reminder that the 2011 Heritage will be on the Feb

commission meeting because the packets to the vendors have to go out March 1, 2010.

Puryear – Would like PIW tags to go from three to one. He provided a suggestion that the Heritage tags include two trophy areas associated with each tag, including good archery units. The Heritage transplant program really works and would like the Heritage program to stay unchanged. The best thing for the average hunter is to take advantage of the hunters that have the money and use the money for transplant. Easy way is to drop the PIW number.

Flowers – He brought up this issue last year when Heritage was being discussed. Welcomes a restriction but PIW should be left alone, since it is the best thing for the common hunter. Restricting units is the best solution for these special tags and would eliminate the problem. Could divide the state by North and South for the Desert sheep, but this solution doesn't work for California sheep. Restricting entry to certain units may work.

Zenz- Taking away the PIW would not take away from the public because the regular quota would increase.

Bliss – Was sorry that Eureka County's minutes didn't make it to NDOW. Board discussed splitting units, could split units into North, East, South and West. Cut PIW tags from three to one and if not, attach a unit to each tag or if you had 3 then the state would need to be split 3 ways. Agreed the money would not have a big difference if there were 1 or 3 tags.

Raine – Asked Bliss if the Silver State tag was created to eliminate a Heritage tag?

Bliss - Stated the Silver State tag was to help the common hunter have a tag like the Heritage tag. As an example one tag for Heritage auction and one for Silver State and the opportunity for a "Heritage type" tag are then spread across all hunters.

Lent – Deer and elk do not seem to be a problem with over harvest. Data from Humes supports that elk and deer do not have an over harvest problem like sheep.

Raine – Brought the Silver State tag up as a topic because of the concept of it replacing Heritage if it comes online.

Hullinger – Spoke to the Heritage tag allocation. Heritage has fifteen tags available, but currently only nine tags issued for auction leaves a balance of 6 available to Silver State. But in the end the Wildlife Commission will always have the ability to annually set the quota and seasons each year for Heritage and Silver State. The Wildlife Commission will have the

ability to choose the species, quotas and seasons for Heritage, PIW and Silver State.

Lent – The Silver State tag is at LCB right now.

Hullinger – Provided additional season background. Silver State tag season is proposed to be the same as Heritage tag season, but is obtained through the draw process with an additional fee. PIW is a stratified hunt and will have the ability to hunt each season and weapon type that is established by the commission. The Silver State tag will mimic the Heritage tag.

Lent - The season and fee for the Silver State tag will be set by the Commission. It could generate as much as a Heritage tag and will be open to the general hunter. A poor man's governor's tag.

Zenz – The Silver State and Dream tags can be any species of tag.

Hullinger – As to the Dream tag if there is a species with 50 tags then we are required to have a tag. That is the basic concept and pointed out the paper the Department put together on each of the programs and that it is available on the web.

Lent – Today's meeting is just to focus on the PIW and Heritage tags. The potential issues with Silver State and Dream tags can be handled when they come on-line. The problem right now is the distribution of hunters.

Humes – Right now it is a band aid fix but there needs to be a real fix when the other programs come online. Maybe we outgrew the PIW tags. Possibly look at 2 Heritage (auction) tags and 2 Silver State (draw). Then you have the funding from Heritage auction and 2 issued through the process of the draw, the poor man's tag. We should be careful with the Heritage tags. Those 4 tags and possibly use a hunt kill rotation on units and closure, kill in one unit, the following year that unit is closed. Then there would be 2 to the public and 2 to the Heritage. It is obvious that we cannot have 7 special tags. PIW from 3 to 1 is great for right now and when we bring 2 more tags back online we are back to where we are right now.

Cox – With large herds like elk and deer, special tags do not affect the quota setting, only small herds like sheep.

Puryear – Agreed with Humes. Don't take away the Heritage tags they draw people in for other things. Would prefer to get rid of PIW tags.

Capurro – Thanked Humes for compiling statistics. Asked that the same statistics be developed for antelope to see if there is a problem with over harvest.

Hullinger – Cox has already developed these statistics and they are available.

Cox – We should develop a good template for the Desert and California sheep and then apply it to other species. Pronghorn is behind Desert and California bighorn in importance due to the limit of total number of tags per unit.

Lent – Provided ideas from the public which would open up more tags for the common hunter:

- Split PIW tags into three regions.
- Even and Odd hunts for PIW.
- On Heritage tags, kill one sheep in a unit, close it for one year. If two sheep killed in the same unit, close it for two years. Same for PIW.
- Keep 2 Heritage but the season after the regular hunter.
- Decrease Heritage tags to one.
- Decrease PIW tags to one.
- Increase PIW fee.
- Auction all Nonresident sheep tags.
- Must have a minimum of 5 resident tags before a Heritage tag or PIW in the area.
- Start the Heritage tag season later to avoid conflict.

Lent – Possible solutions to this issue are:

- Cut PIW tags to one as there appears to be a consensus on that.
- Cut the Heritage Sheep tag to one. We received \$95,000 for one and \$60,000 for the other. If there was one tag it may generate more interest and more money.
- If we are worried about the dollars increase deer tags by one or two. The deer tags are going \$50,000 or more. There are good deer in many locations.
- If harvest occurs with a PIW or Heritage tag in a unit, close that unit the next year.

Cox – Closing a unit cannot be done in the Heritage process as the problem is you will always be behind by two years.

Lent – We could readdress the quotas every year.

Raine – Possible solutions to this issue are:

- Cut PIW tag to one.
- Cut Heritage tags down from two to one, is reasonable.
- Let the harvest tell the unit which will be closed the following year. Close only units and not hunt areas.

Lent – Concerning Cox's idea of splitting regions into only two regions, it would change overtime because the populations are dynamic. They will need to be changed each year and will need to be updated too often.

Zenz – Go to one PIW and one Heritage tag. This reduces the five to two and increase deer tags.

Puryear – Do not reduce Heritage tags down to one. Increasing deer tags will not cover the funding shortfall created by the sheep tag issue. Would rather eliminate PIW and leave 2 Heritage tags.

Kobrin – Add one or more deer tags. How many could we add realistically?

Lent – More deer tags would offset the funding shortfall. Two deer tags could make up the difference if you were looking at lost revenue.

Humes – Try this plan for a year, because we can always go back to the way it was in the past. The Desert sheep is the most wanted tag and could generate more dollars as one tag. Increasing deer tags is a good idea. Back to his original idea if there was 2 Heritage and 2 Silver State then split all the units up and apply these units to each special tag.

Cox – Changes to the Heritage tag seasons takes two years to go into effect if closing a season. PIW tag seasons can be changed every year.

Lent – Create a policy that if a kill happens in a unit, it is closed the next year for PIW tags and every two years for the Heritage tags.

Hullinger – This change can happen. Would rather have the unit described in the CR so that it was available to the public.

Cox – The problem really comes down to two units, 253 and 263. In the season settings, no more than one special tag can be killed in one of these two units. Must deal with the problem we have now, which pertain to these two units. Possibly each unit gets only one special tag.

Flowers – You are reducing a lot of the problem by reducing from 5 tags to 2. The value of the Heritage is going to go up some. You might lose some value if you restrict where they can go. Did not see a problem with PIW getting restricted on the harvest but leave the Heritage alone.

Lent – Restrict the PIW tags on an annual basis and don't restrict the Heritage tags.

Raine – We have narrowed it down and there are good options and we need to come up with what we need to bring to the Commission.

Puryear – Wants two Heritage tags and likes the idea of going back to the original tag quotas if this current plan doesn't work after a year.

Cox – If we don't reduce the Heritage tags, one Heritage tag can be hunted in all units but 253 and the second Heritage tag can be hunted in

all units but 263. In 2010, we can only restrict the PIW tags. We cannot put restrictions on the Heritage tags until 2011. There would be two Heritage in 2010 and we could control PIW in 2010.

Lent – What about the antelope tags?

Cox – The PIW antelope can be amended at the season and bags commission meeting in February as with the other species.

Lent – Public comment period is now closed and we got some excellent ideas.

Raine – Made the 1st motion to recommend to the Commission:

- Reduce the PIW quota from three tags to one tag for Desert Bighorn sheep.
- Reduce the Heritage quota from two tags to one tag for Desert Bighorn.
- And on the Desert and California sheep, close PIW in the unit where the PIW harvest occurred in the previous year.

First motion by Raine and second motion by Kobrin. All in favor.

Approved

Lent – Asked if Heritage needed to have units closed. With this motion, it should increase the Baer range tag quota for the resident draw by two tags.

Raine – Hesitant to close a unit in Heritage. Feels the problem has been covered by this motion. Self solving for no matter the unit.

Lent – Feels this motion solves the current issue and will reduce congestion.

Raine – The License Office will draft the correct language.

Zenz – If you are reducing the Heritage tags, the vendors need to advertise this year about the change that will happen the next year.

Hullinger – Asked for clarification that it was just Desert and California on language for the PIW tags.

Raine – Yes. Doesn't feel antelope needs to be corrected at this time.

Bliss – If restricting PIW units, the public should be notified as early as possible each year.

Hullinger- To solve the problem the unit would be listed in the language in the publication and on the web. It would also be printed on the tag.

6. **Future Committee Meeting - Chairman Cavin - Action**

The committee will set a date, location, and time for the next committee meeting.

Future meeting will be at the discretion of the Chairman.

Meeting ended at 10:05 a.m.