

TAG ALLOCATION AND APPLICATION HUNT COMMITTEE
Minutes of the December 17, 2007 Meeting

The Tag Allocation and Application Hunt Committee (TAAHC) was scheduled for **5:00 p.m. on Monday December 17, 2007 at the Nevada Department of Wildlife Office, 1100 Valley Rd, Reno, Nevada**

PRESENT: Chairman Jim Jeffress
Bevan Lister (via teleconference)
Ron Lurie (via teleconference)
Jack Robb (via teleconference)
Don Cavin
Giovanni Giordano
Jeremy Drew

STAFF: Bob Haughian
Maureen Hullinger
Julie Meadows

OTHERS PRESENT: Don Sefton – SCI
Judi Caron - Public / Washoe Co. Advisory Board
Glenn Copeland – Public/ Washoe Co. Advisory Board
Gerry Lent – Public/ Nevada Hunters Association
Tom Ryan – Public
Rex Flowers – Public
Shannon Giordano – Public

NOTE: A tape recording of these proceedings is retained by the Department of Wildlife and is available for review upon request.

1. **Call to Order, Determination of Quorum** – Chairman Jeffress called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.
2. **Introduction of Committee Members** –Chairman Jeffress
3. **Public Comment Period** - The public is encouraged to comment on items not presented in this agenda. Any item requiring Committee action will be scheduled on a future Committee agenda.

Chairman Jeffress opens up for public comment.

Tom Ryan wanted to comment on drawing multiple tags and said he has always been opposed to a hunter being able to draw more than one tag. He stated that he drew multiple tags this year, an elk and a sheep tag. He commented because of the opening dates of the hunts and prior engagements, he found it very difficult to find the time to hunt. He went on to say that it would not be a bad thing, if there was a need to return one tag and have it placed in next year's allotment.

Chairman Jeffress clarified that tonight's meeting is not so much about the methodology of how to reallocate tags but the opportunity of returning a tag.

Tom Ryan said he has heard of a lot of comments from people about turning their tags in and keeping their bonus points. He went on to say that he has about 15 bonus points for each species and has been putting in the draw for 20 years. This has been a 20 year commitment and 20 years from now, this would not work for him because he has the maximum bonus points but for some one who does not, this would benefit them. He said he would recommend that if a hunter had multiple tags they would have the option of returning a tag and it would go back to that hunter for the next hunting year. Tom went on to comment that the sheep indoctrination course in his opinion was a waste of time. He felt that a certified letter mailed and explaining everything would have worked just fine. He also commented that using credit cards when applying online bothers him. He said he did not feel this was fair. A family of 5 could apply online without paying all of the fees up front but would have to if they applied on paper.

Chairman Jeffress explained to Tom Ryan that the issues he has brought up are being looked at by the TAAHC and encourages him to go to the website to review all of the information.

4. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – Chairman Jeffress – Action

The Committee will review and approve the meeting minutes from the November 2, 2007 TAAHC meeting.

Don Cavin said he was not sure if he reviewed the minutes thoroughly and was not sure where the committee stood on the motions in the minutes. He stated that when reading the minutes, the committee approved motions and withdrew motions and were not clear as far as the waiting periods were concerned.

Chairman Jeffress said he recalled that the committee had about 4 or 5 motions drawn up but died due to the lack of seconds, but believes that the committee did vote on these motions that are posted in the minutes. He asked the other committee members if they felt comfortable with the motions that are posted in the November 2nd TAAHC minutes.

Jack Robb stated he felt comfortable with the minutes as they read.

Bevan Lister said he too felt comfortable with the minutes from the November 2nd TAAHC meeting.

Jeremy Drew and Giovanni Giordano also agreed with the reading of the minutes.

Chairman Jeffress asked the committee for a motion on the approval for the November 2nd TAAHC minutes.

Don Cavin motioned to approve the minutes from the November 2, 2007 TAAHC meeting.

Jeremy Drew seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously.

5. Review and Discuss – Chairman Jeffress – Action

The Committee will make its final motion on the proposals addressed in the document titled, "Informational Report – Tag Return – For Any Reason." This document, prepared for review by both the TAAHC and the commission during their November 2007 meetings, has now been updated to address issues presented during the November meetings. The public can access this document through the home page of the NDOW Website (www.ndow.org; click on the link titled "[TAAHC Committee/ NBWC Committees](#)", then scroll down to the TAAHC committee).

Chairman Jeffress said he had contacted all of the CWABs and would like to read their comments on the tag return topic before opening up the meeting to the committee members and the public for discussion.

Bob Haughian read and explained the information report on tag return for any reason to the committee members and the public.

Chairman Jeffress informed the committee and public that at the November 2 TAAHC meeting, this topic was on the agenda as informational only and that White Pine, Carson City, Washoe, Elko and Eureka County Advisory Board members were present. They all heard the proposal and most preferred proposal 2. Out of the 17 counties, only four counties had their meeting. Chairman Jeffress commented that the committee did receive comments back from some of the CWABs regarding the tag return topic. Washoe County Advisory Board commented they were in favor of proposal 2 but wanted to include antlered elk only. Elko County Advisory Board commented they were in favor of proposal 2 but wanted to include elk. Eureka County Advisory Board commented they did not have a meeting, and this was not an official vote, but people contacted their chairperson and stated they preferred proposal 2. Clark County Advisory Board did not have a meeting, but did comment to leave it to the TAAHC for the initial recommendation and would bring their comments before the commission. Churchill County Advisory Board Chairman Jim Curran commented they would get back to the TAAHC with their comments but never responded. Lincoln County Advisory Board commented they did not have a meeting but the general public consensus was for proposal 2. White Pine County Advisory Board commented they did not have a meeting but the general public consensus was for proposal 2. Nye County Advisory Board commented they did not have a meeting and had no response. Lander County Advisory Board had no response. Mineral County Advisory Board Chairman Glenn Bunch commented they would get back to the TAAHC with their comments but never responded. Carson City County Advisory Board Vice Chairman Gil Yanuk commented that they were in favor of proposal 2. Esmeralda County Advisory Board and Storey County Advisory Board did not respond. Chairman Jeffress opened up for discussion from the committee members and the public.

Jack Robb asked Maureen Hullinger if she would explain to the committee members and the public the spread sheet that she compiled on tag return.

Maureen Hullinger explained the spread sheet she compiled on how many hunters drew tags but did not hunt. These numbers reflect all big game species. In 2006 for antlered elk, any legal weapon, there were 3.10% who reported they did not hunt; for muzzleloader, there were 4.35% who reported they did not hunt; for longbow, there were 3.61% who reported they did not hunt. In 2005, for any legal weapon, there were 3.5% who reported they did not hunt; for muzzleloader, there were little over 5% who reported they did not hunt and for longbow, all reported they did hunt. These figures are for the resident hunters only. In 2006, nonresidents who drew an elk tag for any legal weapon, there were 2.41% who reported they did not hunt; for the nonresident muzzleloader and longbow, all reported they did hunt in 2006. In 2005, nonresidents who drew a tag for any legal weapon, there were 5.31% who reported they did not hunt and for the nonresident muzzleloader, there were 6.25% who reported they did not hunt.

Chairman Jeffress went on to clarify that in 2004 for Antlered Elk, resident and nonresident, all weapon types, 23 who drew a tag reported that they did not hunt. In 2005, 39 reported that they did not hunt and in 2006, 32 reported that they did not hunt. Chairman Jeffress asked Maureen if she had any information on how many tags get returned and go to alternates now.

Maureen Hullinger said she had put together 4 years worth of total numbers of tags returned for all species and were reallocated to alternates for military, death, medical reasons and also included the credit card declines. In 2007 there were 67 tags reallocated; in 2006 there were 53 tags reallocated; 2005 there were 60 tags reallocated and in 2004 there were 45 tags reallocated. To break it down even further, in 2007, 27 of those tags were reallocated due to credit card declines; 29 tags reallocated for medical reasons; 5 tags were reallocated for death and 6 tags were reallocated for military. In 2006, 13 tags were reallocated for credit card declines; 30 tags were reallocated for medical reasons; 7 tags were reallocated for death and 3 tags were reallocated for military reasons. In 2005, 13 tags were reallocated for credit card declines; 34 tags were reallocated for medical reasons; 9 tags were reallocated for death and 4 tags were reallocated for military reasons. In 2004, 11 tags were reallocated for credit card declines; 25 tags were reallocated for medical reasons; 9 tags were reallocated for death and there were no tags reallocated for military reasons.

Chairman Jeffress reported that NDOW staff has informed him they are not in favor of the return a tag for any reason, but would instead, like to expand this to the sportsmen who drew multiple tags only. Their reasoning behind this is if the TAAHC liberalizes the tag return for any reason this would impact the workload for NDOW and SCI.

Bevan Lister said he understood the Department's concern on liberalizing the tag return for any reason. He said he was not convinced that the work load would be impacted too much as long as the committee stayed with the "non-reallocation" of the tags.

Jack Robb said he felt this was an important first step and we need to use the tags the best way we can to get as many people in the field as we can. The committee needs to look at reallocating the tags, but needs to first gather data on how many tags are returned for any reason before going forward.

Jeremy Drew said he also understood the Department's hesitancy on the return a tag for any reason, but when looking at the numbers Maureen provided, the number of tags that are being reallocated now are growing from year to year. As a representative of the sportsmen, Jeremy commented that sportsmen have always wanted to return a tag for any reason as long as he can remember. The committee needs to find a better way to do this and by not finding a better way would be a disservice to the sportsmen the committee is representing.

Giovanni Giordano agrees with Jeremy and said he was in full agreement if a sportsman wanted to return a tag for any reason. He stated he would also like to see the tag be reallocated to another hunter.

Don Cavin said he was in agreement with returning a tag for any reason, but would want to gather information first and get it right, then make a regulation change that everyone could live with. He said he was under the impression that what was agreed upon was to reallocate the tags for certain species, the bighorn sheep and the mountain goat this year because of the small numbers, but with the other species, don't reallocate the tags until we have at least one or two years of data on how many tags will be returned.

Chairman Jeffress said he concurs with Don Cavin and by moving off and trying to find a way to reallocate the tags, the committee has really high centered themselves by trying to figure out how to do this and it is not that simple. Going back to proposal 2 would give the committee enough safe guard initially, to look at this, gather the data needed to see what species tags are being returned and for what reasons. Then the committee can sit down and structure or build a system that would accommodate the reallocation of tags.

Jack Robb commented that if the committee goes forward with proposal 2, then part of the motion would have to include that the committee is actively pursuing rule changes that would allow for future reallocation of the tags that are returned.

Glenn Copeland with Washoe County Advisory Board said the whole problem with not reallocating tags is with the process on how the tags are reallocated. If you don't change the process on how the tags are reallocated, then we will be sitting here a year from now with the data but will still have to wait another year to get the reallocation process changed. These two processes need to tie together some how. He stated that the Washoe County Advisory Board members wanted to include the reallocation of antlered elk tags that are being returned. He asked if the Heritage tags could also be returned for any reason.

Maureen Hullinger stated that only the tag fee would be refunded, but also stated that this issue has never come up before in the past and would have to look into it.

Tom Ryan said he felt the words "for any reason" were really broad and could be abuse when returning a tag.

Judi Caron with Washoe County Advisory Board asked Don Cavin to clarify what he had meant when he said to try to get it right the first time. Was he asking that proposal 2 be set aside and we do all of the species at once or go forward with how it is?

Don Cavin reiterated that he is in complete agreement with how proposal 2 reads now but to also have an assessment on how to reallocate the tags. He said before going forward with reallocating a tag; make sure there is a system in place.

Judi Caron said one of the biggest concerns at Washoe County Advisory Board meetings was with the antlered elk tags. The antlered elk is the second most sought after tag in the state and there are a lot of people who never drawn this tag. The Washoe County Advisory Board members and the general public felt that these tags should not be put in the garbage or burned. Something should be in place to satisfy the customers that those tags are reallocated. Judi stated that she has received more questions and comments on the return a tag for any reason then for the quota settings. She asked on how a party hunt would be considered into the return tag for any reason.

Maureen Hullinger explained that if a person applied with a party and could not hunt, returned their tag, their bonus points would be reinstated to what it was prior to the draw and they would be awarded a bonus point for that year application. Their record would then be updated from "successful" to "unsuccessful" and this would not affect the other members in the party hunt.

Judi Caron said the Washoe County Advisory Board members had concerns if a person returned their tag, should that person be entitled to have their bonus points reinstated. And if a person drew a tag but returned it but had the opportunity to hunt on the tag but chose not to hunt, should this person be entitled to accumulate a bonus point for that year. These were sportsmen concerns on these issues.

Gerald Lent commented to the committee that they should be consumer oriented. He went on to say that proposal 2 he thought was the best but had some short comings in it and wanted to point them out to the committee. The first one is if a person returns a tag, someone should pay the price with the exception of the three reason that are already in place, military, medical or death. If someone wants to return a tag for any reason, then they should pay a price for doing that. He said the sportsmen he has talked to are not opposed to at least paying for half of the price of the tag fee. As for the contractor, Systems Consultants, it will cost them money to reallocate the tags, so let SCI hire a new position and call it a "Reallocation Specialist" then have this one person do all of the reallocating of the tags. The process we have now, we need an honest reallocation method like we have now. The reallocating system we had before with the alternate list did not work. Someone would jump to number 14 on the list, which he states that he has proof of, and this guy, number 14 got the tag, not the 1st guy listed on the list. The system that is in place now is working but is time consuming because of the 4 calls that have to be made to an alternate over a two day period. There is a money issue here, let the hunter pay for half of the tag fee and have the contractor hire a person to do the reallocating of tags.

Don Cavin informed that at the September TAAHC meeting in Las Vegas, that Gerald Lent attended, and the TAAHC talked about getting the tag return proposal into regulation so it could be implemented for the 2008 hunt year. At that meeting, the committee decided not to have a "restocking fee" for the first year but in 2009, getting 50% of the money back. The committees goal here is to get this up and going before the 2008 hunt year.

Chairman Jeffress commented that what the committee seems to be doing is getting high centered on the reallocation of the tags, how are we going to reallocate the tags? Before the committee can think about that, we need to get past proposal 1 or proposal 2 and build on that. What the committee needs to do right now is to

work off of these two proposal and see if there is a stronger suggestion and we can affix it to either one of the proposals. Then the committee needs to move forward with this and take it to the commission, get it in place, get the data needed so we can build a system. The second phase would then be how to reallocate the tags and what is a fair restocking fee.

Gerald Lent said he would hate to see this proposal fail, due to the reallocation problem with the contractor saying they can't do it. He said he felt the bull elk should be included in the reallocation of tags because this is one of the most sought after tags there is and not to reallocate these tags would be a shame. The problem he said he has with the return tag is with the death, military or medical, we should make an effort to try and reallocate these tags up until the day of the hunt. If a person wants to return a tag, they should make up their minds within the first 2 weeks or 30 days after receiving it. This would give the alternate enough time for preparation in finding a guide or to scout. A hunter could always apply for a bonus point if they don't want to go hunting. He said he was against Jack Robb's suggestion on only being able to draw one tag. He stated that if he drew multiple tags in a year, that he was going to go hunting on those tags and should not be allowed not to go hunting on those tags. He recalled years ago that a commissioner named Merv Matorian drew a sheep tag and could not hunt on that tag so he put it on the commission agenda to have the tag returned but would also be guaranteed to have the tag issued to him the following year. He stated that he objected viciously to this. He said if a hunter returns a tag, he should not be guaranteed a tag for the following year.

Brett Flowers commented that in the first part of the proposal, if a tag is returned for sheep or goat, the tag fee would be refunded and the tag would be reallocated, however, in the second part of the proposal it states that if a tag is returned less than 2 weeks prior to the opening date of the season, the tag would not be reallocated. He said he felt the tag fee should not be refunded if the tag was not reallocated. Let the bonus points be reinstated but keep the tag fee. He had concerns on not adding the antlered elk into this and does not feel that by reallocating the antlered elk tags this would not cause too much of a workload.

Maureen Hullinger explained to the committee members and the public on the procedure for calling alternates off of the alternate list. She explained that an alternate that is first on the list is called 4 times over a 2 day period and is a method that does work and eliminates any concerns from the general public that the callers are jumping down the alternate list. She said she does not recommend changing this procedure.

Bob Haughian commented that when proposal 1 and proposal 2 were developed, the departments view was that the only other legitimate reason for returning a tag was if someone drew multiple tags. Once we have a year or two worth of data, and when you boil it all down, multiple tag return may be the only real good reason. When the department passed this along to the committee, it was not necessarily the view that the department wanted the committee take. This is just what we anticipate the outcome may be.

Maureen Hullinger said that her only other comment on proposal 2 was that a 2 week cutoff prior to the start of the hunt for returning a tag should be longer. If you applied for a hunt and decided not to go hunting then maybe look at having such a shorter window to return the tag. By having the return cutoff date at 6 or 8 weeks prior to the start of the hunt is a reasonable amount of time and this would give the alternate enough time to prepare to go hunting. Keep the standard reasons that are in place now for military, medical or death, two days prior to the opening date of the season.

Don Sefton from SCI said he wanted to make several comments on the reallocation of tags; first SCI does know what the workload will be, but is not clear on what the demand will be. We do not know if 150 people will turn in elk tags or 3. SCI reallocates 50 to 60 tags a year right now and struggles with those numbers as it is. If we double those numbers SCI will have a real problem with this. If there are 100 tags being returned and need to be reallocated, we have to call 4 times over a 2 day period, if the first person called refuses the tag, we have to call the next person on the list and this is a linear process. This is a big problem in trying to finish the process before the season starts. Shortening the time frame that a tag can be returned could be a good solution. He said he feels that most are in agreement that there should be some sort of a restocking fee for the returned tags. He stated that most people he has heard from are not concerned about getting their tag fees refunded but are more concerned about getting their bonus points reinstated. Another thing to consider, if you open the flood gates for return a tag for any reason, and if there was a fire in a unit, what is going to happen? This may have a big impact on the tags being returned.

Chairman Jeffress asked the committee and staff for comments on what would be an appropriate time frame for returning a tag for any reason.

Jeremy Drew said that when he first made his motion at the Ely TAAHC meeting, he felt that giving a 2 week time frame for returning a tag would work, but after listening to the discussions on this, the committee may need to look at a 30 day time frame. He suggested on keeping the pilot as consistent to what the committee will recommend to the commission as the final recommendation.

Giovanni Giordano commented that it would be nice to give everybody what they want, but we need to take responsibility for our own actions. Hunters don't only apply in Nevada, they are also applying in other states and if making the return tag process too liberal, there will be hunters who will apply in other states knowing that in Nevada, they can return their tags if they don't have time to hunt. He said he felt a 2 week period after receiving a tag to return it would make the hunter chose whether or not they will hunt or return it so an alternate could use it.

Chairman Jeffress asked the committee to recommend a motion on the return a tag for any reason proposals.

Don Cavin motioned a recommendation to the committee to propose proposal 2 as it is to the commission with the stipulation that the committee has special provision to continue to gather data on the time frame for the reallocation of tags, for one or two years.

Ron Lurie asked for clarification on proposal 2 if the tag fee will be forfeited if a tag is returned and will the bonus points will be reinstated.

Chairman Jeffress clarified that the tag fee will not be refunded and the bonus points will be reinstated. For the deer, elk and antelope, the tags will not be reallocated. For the mountain goat and bighorn sheep tags, they will be reallocated to alternates.

Ron Lurie seconded the motion.

Jack Robb said he would support this motion if a July 20th cut off date for returning a tag was part of the motion.

Jeremy Drew moved to amend the motion to include the cut off date to return a tag for any reason as July 15th.

Jack Robb seconded the amended motion.

Don Cavin said he was not amiable to the amendment to his original motion. The committee is trying to gather data on the time frame that will be needed to reallocate tags.

Chairman Jeffress suggested to the committee that the easiest way to handle this would to go with Don Cavin's original motion and Ron Lurie second on proposal 2 as is, with the caveat that in one or two years, there will be a tag reallocation system in place based on the data collected.

Bevan Lister informed the committee that proper procedure would be to vote and discuss the amendment to the motion prior to making a motion. He asked the committee for clarification on the amended motion as to what would be the cut off date to return a tag for any reason and if this is for all tags return or just for the mountain goat and bighorn sheep tags.

Jeremy Drew clarified that it would be for Don Cavin's original motion on proposal 2 as is, with the amendment to the cut off date from a two week tag return prior to opening date of the season to July 15th for the bighorn sheep and mountain goat tags only. For all other species, deer, elk and antelope, the tag return cut off date would be one day prior to the opening date of the season. There will be no refund on the tag fee and no reallocation for deer, antelope or elk tags except for the current regulation that is in place now for death, military or medical reasons.

Chairman Jeffress asked the committee to vote on the amended motion made by Jeremy Drew and seconded by Jack Robb.

In Favor: Ron Lurie, Jack Robb, Bevan Lister, Jeremy Drew and Giovanni Giordano

Opposed: Don Cavin

Motion carried 5-1.

Bevan Lister informed the committee that procedurally, they need to go back and address Don Cavin's original motion.

Don Cavin recommended a motion to the committee to accept proposal 2 as is, with the exception of the July 15th cut off date to return a tag for any reason for bighorn sheep and mountain goat and all other species, a one day cut off prior to the start of the season.

Ron Lurie seconded that motion.

Motioned carried unanimously.

Chairman Jeffress informed the committee and the general public that this recommended motion from the committee will be carried forward to the February commission meeting. It will be sent out to the CWABs as to what action the committee took.

6. Future Committee Meetings – Action

The TAAHC meeting schedule is posted on the NDOW website and can be accessed using the instructions above.

The next TAAHC meeting will be February 8, 2008 at 9:00 am in Las Vegas.

Meeting adjourned at 6:57 p.m.