

**STATE OF NEVADA
NEVADA BOARD OF WILDLIFE COMMISSIONERS**

Commission Policy Number P-21

Title: Game and Fur-bearer
Management (formerly titled Big
Game Hunting Seasons.)
Reference: NRS 501.181,
Effective Date: 2007
Amended Date: June 26, 2009

PURPOSE

The Board of Wildlife Commissioners is charged in Nevada Revised Statute to provide broad level policy guidance to programs within the Department of Wildlife. This Policy is designed to provide that broad policy for the development of big game, upland game, waterfowl, and fur-bearer management plans.

JUSTIFICATION

Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 501.181 states that: "The Commission shall establish broad policies for the protection, propagation, restoration, transplanting, introduction, and management of wildlife in this State". In addition, NRS 501.181 indicates that the Commission shall: "Establish policies for areas of interest including the management of big and small game mammals, upland and migratory game birds, fur-bearing mammals...the control of wildlife deprecations...and the introduction, transplanting, or exporting of wildlife". Further, the statute requires the Commission to: "Establish regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of this title and of chapter 488 of NRS, including: (a) seasons for hunting big game mammals and game birds, for hunting or trapping fur-bearing mammal the manner and means of taking wildlife, including, but not limited to, the sex, size, or other physical differentiation for each species, and when necessary for management purposes, the emergency closing or extending of a season, reducing or increasing of the bag or possession limits of a species, or the closing of any area to hunting, fishing, or trapping. The regulations must be established after first considering the recommendations of the Department, the county advisory boards to manage wildlife and others who wish to present their views at an open meeting. Any regulations relating to the closure of a season must be based on scientific data concerning the management of wildlife. The data on which the regulations are based must be collected or developed by the Department".

BACKGROUND

Game and fur-bearer species are important to the State of Nevada. Hunting and viewing activities related to these species are economically vital to rural areas, and the sale of licenses, tags, permits, and other hunting and trapping related fees are principle sources of income to the Department. More broadly, game animals and fur-bearers are capstone species and the population health of these species is a key indicator of the integrity of Nevada's diverse ecosystems under changing climatic regimes.

The Game Division of the Department is charged with the management of big game, small game, waterfowl, and fur-bearers and for the development and implementation of management plans for these species. This policy is intended to provide Division and other departmental personnel with guidance to be followed in the development of such plans.

POLICY

The Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners develops broad policies related to the conservation, restoration, maintenance, and utilization of Nevada's game populations. This guidance serves as the basis for species-specific management plans developed by the Game Division in cooperation with other departmental personnel. Management plans shall contain elements that:

- (a) document available information on each species and their critical seasonal habitats and implement efficient, accurate, and objective programs to obtain herd and habitat inventory information;
- (b) outline strategies to assess the current status of big game habitat and the use of that habitat, identify challenges to habitat and habitat use, and prescribe management actions and research that benefit game and fur-bearer populations;
- (c) recognize that game and fur-bearers may come into conflict with other land uses such as agriculture and develop strategies to eliminate or minimize conflicts. If impacts are unavoidable, develop appropriate mitigations;
- (d) provide a range of biologically feasible alternatives for the management of habitat, herd size, and harvest strategies for game and fur-bearer species, as well as the preferred alternatives on the basis of the best available science;
- (e) maintain, and whenever possible, increase the quality of critical seasonal habitats in cooperation with private landowners, federal land management agencies, and other entities;
- (f) implement predator control to reduce mortalities and increase recruitment whenever predation may have negative impacts on meeting game and fur-bearer population objectives;
- (g) Document wildlife disease impacts and outline mitigation strategies to reduce those impacts whenever and wherever feasible.

Management plans will be regularly reviewed by the Commission and departmental personnel will apprise the Commission of successes, shortcoming, and changes in direction. The Division will apprise the Commission of the best biological information available, any social, economic, or political impacts that management strategies are likely to have, and shall advise the Commission of alternatives that might address these impacts. Whenever Division recommendations are based on considerations other than biological data, those considerations will be fully explained to the Commission. If management plans conflict with federal, other state, or local planning efforts or policies, and if these conflicts are likely to have adverse impacts on game resources, the Division will notify the Commission at the earliest possible date as to the herds affected. The

Department also will outline any alternative remedial measures available to the Commission and the Department which might be taken to minimize or eliminate these impacts.

This policy shall remain in effect until amended, repealed, or superseded by the Board of Wildlife Commissioners.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF WILDLIFE COMMISSIONERS IN REGULAR SESSION, June 26, 2009.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Gerald A. Lent".

**Chairman Dr. Gerald A. Lent, O.D.
Board of Wildlife Commissioners**