

**Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners' Meeting
Commission Meeting**

*Approved Minutes – COMPLETE VIDEO OF THE MEETING IS AVAILABLE AT
WWW.NDOW.ORG AGENDA*

The public is invited to attend and provide public comment from the following locations:

Truckee Meadows Community College
7000 Dandini Blvd
Sierra Building - Room 108
Reno, NV

Videoconferencing Locations:

University of Nevada Las Vegas
4505 Maryland Parkway
System Computing Services Building Room 102
Las Vegas, NV

Great Basin College
1500 College Parkway
High Tech Center Building Room 137
Elko, NV

Public comment will be taken on every action item after discussion but before action on each item, and is limited to three minutes per person. The chairman, in his discretion, may allow persons representing groups to speak for six minutes. Persons may not allocate unused time to other speakers. Persons are invited to submit written comments on items or attend and make comment during the meeting and are asked to complete a speaker card and present it to the Recording Secretary. To ensure the public has notice of all matters the Commission will consider, Commissioners may choose not to respond to public comments in order to avoid the appearance of deliberation on topics not listed for action on the agenda. Forum restrictions and orderly business: The viewpoint of a speaker will not be restricted, but reasonable restrictions may be imposed upon the time, place and manner of speech. Irrelevant and unduly repetitious statements and personal attacks that antagonize or incite others are examples of public comment that may be reasonably limited. Please provide the Board of Wildlife Commissioners ("Commission") with the complete electronic or written copies of testimony and visual presentations to include as exhibits with the minutes. Minutes of the meeting will be produced in summary format.

NOTE: County Advisory Boards to Manage Wildlife (CABMW) members and public comment allowed on each action item and regulation workshop items and at the end of the meeting.

Friday, May 15, 2015 – 9 a.m.

- 1 Call to Order, Introduction and Roll Call of County Advisory Board Members to Manage Wildlife (CABMW) – Chairman Drew
Employee Appreciation – Secretary Wasley
Several Department of Wildlife employees will receive awards for various years of service.
- 2 Approval of Agenda – Chairman Drew – For Possible Action
The Commission will review the agenda and may take action to approve the agenda. The Commission may remove items from the agenda, continue items for consideration or take items out of order.
- 3 Member Items/Announcements and Correspondence – Chairman Drew – Informational
Commissioners may present emergent items. No action may be taken by the Commission. Any item requiring Commission action may be scheduled on a future Commission agenda. The Commission will review and may discuss correspondence sent or received by the Commission since the last regular meeting and may provide copies for the exhibit file (Commissioners may provide hard copies of their correspondence for the written record).
- 4 County Advisory Boards to Manage Wildlife (CABMW) Member Items – Informational
CABMW members may present emergent items. No action may be taken by the Commission. Any item requiring Commission action will be scheduled on a future Commission agenda.
- 5 Approval of Minutes – Chairman Drew – For Possible Action
The Commission may take action to approve meeting minutes from the March 20 and 21, 2015, Commission meeting.
- 6 Commission General Regulation 456 LCB File No. T004-15 (Temporary LCB File) – Elk Arbitration Panel: Proposed Changes to NAC 502.42283 – Game Division Administrator Brian F. Wakeling – For Possible Action
The Commission will hear a temporary regulation concerning amending NAC 502.42283 by which the Commission may facilitate decisions by appointing or serving as the arbitration panel should arbitration of elk incentive tag awards become necessary. The Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners conducted a workshop on March 20, 2015 and the Commission approved the regulation as presented to move forward to take action at the May 2015 Commission meeting.

- 7 Draft Process for Use by the Commission in Arbitration as Described in NAC 502.42283 – Game Division Administrator Brian F. Wakeling – For Possible Action
The Commission will review a proposed process for arbitration as described in proposed amendment to NAC 502.42283 arbitration panel that will outline the responsibilities of the Department and landowner applicant when contesting issues associated with awards of special incentive elk tags, the establishment of a subcommittee to hear the contest, timelines associated with contest and decision, and recommendations to the Commission as decision-making arbitration panel. The Commission may provide the Department with direction on further revisions or approve the draft process pending adoption of temporary regulation CGR 456 re: NAC 502.42283.
- 8 Request from the Colville Confederated Tribes in Washington for up to Fifty Pronghorn Antelope during Winter 2015 – 2016 – Wildlife Staff Specialist Mike Cox – For Possible Action
The Commission may consider and act on a request by the Colville Confederated Tribes in Washington regarding a request to capture and translocate up to 50 pronghorn antelope from Nevada to tribal lands in Washington.
- 9 2015 Legislative Session Update and Commission Bill Positions – Chairman Drew and Kim Jolly Management Analyst 3 – For Possible Action
Staff will present a status update of tracked legislation since the last Commission meeting, and the Commission may consider any additional legislative positions or actions.
- 10 Commission General Regulation 457 LCB File No. T003-15 (Temporary LCB File) – Awards, Issuance, and Use of Tags – Proposed Changes to NAC 502.42279 – Game Division Administrator Brian F. Wakeling – For Possible Action
The Commission will hear a temporary regulation amending license issuance and use clarification for elk incentive tags. Elk incentive tags were designed to be issued in association with "bull" hunts and seasons. Subsequent to initial NRS and NAC adoption, "spike" hunts have been developed, and "antlered" tags do not clearly denote the appropriate quota or season for which the incentive tags are intended. The amended formula will account for the harvest of "spike" elk, but identify seasons for incentive tag use.

The Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners conducted a workshop on March 20, 2015. The Commission discussed the language with changes to Section 1, rewriting the formula to read as follows: $(NP \div NE) \times (DP \div 365) \times (NT + TSH)$ and adding $TSH =$ *The total number of spike elk harvested in the previous year in the unit or units within the management area or areas in which the private land is located.* The regulation has been updated to reflect the changes requested by the Commission. The Commission approved to move forward to take action at the May 2015 Commission meeting.
- 11 Humboldt County Elk Species Management Planning Process – Game Division Administrator Brian F. Wakeling – For Possible Action
The Commission will continue the elk sub-planning process in accordance with the Nevada Elk Species Management plan for Humboldt County, and the Commission may select members of the Steering Committee from volunteers for this elk management sub-plan.
- 12 Wildlife Damage Committee Update and Fiscal Year 2016 Draft Predation Management Plan (Final Draft) – Commissioner Bliss, Game Division Administrator Brian F. Wakeling, and Wildlife Staff Biologist Pat Jackson – For Possible Action
The Commission will hear a report from the Wildlife Damage Management Committee chairman and consider an updated third and final draft of the proposed Fiscal Year 2016 Predator Management Plan. The Commission may take action to modify or approve the plan.
- 13 Reports – Informational
- A Sage-grouse and Sagebrush Ecosystem Council Update – Secretary Tony Wasley
An update on the status of the sage-grouse will be provided *as well as an update on the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council.*
- B Heritage Committee Report – Commissioner Wallace
Heritage Committee Chairman Wallace will provide a report.
- C Big Game Hunt Status Report – Wildlife Staff Specialist Mike Cox
A summary report will be provided on the status of big game with updates on the new cow elk and ewe hunts implemented in 2014.
- D Black Bear Hunt and Status Report – Game Division Administrator Brian Wakeling
A report will be provided on the status of the black bear hunt and ongoing population and harvest monitoring.
- E Wildlife Trust Fund Report – Deputy Director Cates
Status of the Wildlife Heritage Trust Fund Account will be reported.
- F Department Activity Report – Secretary Wasley
- G Litigation Report – Deputy Attorney General Harry Ward
- 14 Public Comment Period

Saturday, May 16, 2015 – 8:30 a.m.

- 15 Call to Order, Roll Call of Commission and County Advisory Board Members to Manage Wildlife (CABMW) – Chairman Drew
- 16 Approval of Agenda – Chairman Drew – For Possible Action
The Commission will review the agenda and may take action to approve the agenda. The Commission may remove items from the agenda, continue items for consideration or take items out of order.
- 17 Member Items/Announcements and Correspondence – Chairman Drew – Informational
Commissioners may present emergent items. No action may be taken by the Commission. Any item requiring Commission action may be scheduled on a future Commission agenda. The Commission will review and may discuss correspondence sent or received by the Commission since the last regular meeting and may provide copies for the exhibit file (Commissioners may provide hard copies of their correspondence for the written record).
- 18 County Advisory Boards to Manage Wildlife (CABMW) Member Items – Informational
CABMW members may present emergent items. No action may be taken by the Commission. Any item requiring Commission action will be scheduled on a future Commission agenda.
- 19 Commission Regulation 15 – 12, 2015 Big Game Quotas for the 2015 – 2016 Season – Wildlife Staff Specialists Mike Cox and Cody Schroeder – For Possible Action
The Commission will establish regulations for the numbers of tags to be issued for mule deer, pronghorn antelope, elk, bighorn sheep, mountain goats, and black bears for the 2015 – 2016 seasons. Note: Support material will be sent separately.
- 20 Future Commission Meetings and Commission Committee Assignments – Secretary Tony Wasley – For Possible Action
The next Commission meeting is scheduled for June 19 and 20, 2015, in Eureka, and the Commission will review and discuss potential agenda items for that meeting. The Commission may change the time and meeting location at this time. The chairman may designate and adjust committee assignments as necessary at this meeting.
- 21 Public Comment Period

Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners present for two day meeting:

Chairman Jeremy Drew	Vice Chairman Grant Wallace	Commissioner Chad Bliss
Commissioner Brad Johnston	Commissioner Karen Layne	Commissioner David McNinch
Commissioner Pete Mori	Commissioner Paul E. Valentine	Commissioner Bill Young

Secretary Tony Wasley	Deputy Attorney General Harry Ward
Recording Secretary Suzanne Scourby	

Nevada Department of Wildlife personnel in attendance during the two days:

Deputy Director Jack Robb	Chief of Operations Bob Haughian
Biologist 4 Ken Gray	Conservation Education Division Administrator Teresa Moiola
Division Administrator Habitat Alan Jenne	Management Analyst 3 Maureen Hullinger
Wildlife Diversity Administrator Jennifer Newmark	Wildlife Staff Specialist Mike Cox
Administrative Assistant 4 Kathleen Teligades	Game Division Administrator Brian Wakeling
Chief Game Warden Tyler Turnipseed	Wildlife Staff Specialist Pat Jackson
Fisheries Division Administrator Jon Sjoborg	Management Analyst 3 Kim Jolly
Wildlife Staff Specialist Cody Schroeder	Administrative Assistant 4 Helen Gilliam
Biologist 4 Steve Kimble	Biologist 3 Tom Donham

Others in attendance/two days:

Joe Bennett, USDA, Wildlife Services	Gil Yanuck, Carson County Advisory Board Member (CABMW)
Mark Jensen, USDA, Wildlife Services	Fred Voltz, public
Tom Cassinelli, chairman Humboldt CABMW	Tyler Nall
Sean Shea, chairman Washoe CABMW	Brent Johnson, retired
Mitch Burns, chairman Lyon CABMW	Rex Flowers, self
Mike Cassidy, self	Monty C. Martin, Systems Consultants
Furn Winder, Elko CABMW	Joe Crim, chairman Pershing CABMW
Cory Lytle, chairman Lincoln CABMW	Don Molde, self
Jana Wright, Clark County resident	Stephanie Myers, Mt. Charleston resident
Leah Sturgis, self	Gerald Lent, Nevada Hunters' Association
Jana Hofeditz, self	Jim Evans, chairman Elko CABMW
Ray Sawyer, chairman White Pine CABMW	Justin Rozich, White Pine CABMW
Don Sefton, Systems Consultants	Jeff Turnipseed, Nevada Bighorns Unlimited
Paul Dixon, chairman Clark CABMW	Miller Cassidy, self
Cole Crim, self	Genelle Richards, No Bear Hunt Nevada
Trish Swain, Trail Safe Nevada	Joel Blakeslee, self
Robert Pogoda	Shannon Scott
Bert K. Gurr, Elko CABMW	Mitch Buzzetti, Elko CABMW
Fauna Tomlinson	Caron Tayloe

Friday, May 19, 2015 – 9 a.m.

1 Call to Order, Introduction, and Roll Call of Commission and CABMW Members – Chairman Drew

Chairman Drew called the meeting to order at 9 a.m., all nine Commissioners were present.

CABMW Roll Call – Gil Yanuck, Carson; Tom Cassinelli, Humboldt; Sean Shea, Washoe; Mitch Burns, Lyon; Furn Winder, Elko; Mike Turnipseed, Douglas; Joe Crim, Pershing; Cory Lytle, Lincoln; and Jim Evans, Eureka.

- NDOW Employee Appreciation – Director Wasley recognized NDOW employees for their tenure at the Department: Kathleen Teligades for 20 years, Alan Jenne for 20 years, Joanne Trendler for 30 years, and Jon Sjoberg for 35 years.

2 Approval of Agenda –

Chairman Drew asked that Legislative Agenda Item #9 be placed on the agenda at the call of the chair due to real time changes that may occur today at the legislature.

COMMISSIONER WALLACE MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED WITH EXCEPTION OF AGENDA ITEM #9 TO BE AVAILABLE AT THE CALL OF THE CHAIR. MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MCNINCH. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Commissioner Johnston said on April 14 he received a copy of a letter (exhibit file) from Elko Attorney Julie Cavanaugh stating that she represents petitioners Fred Voltz and Don Molde who submitted a petition to ban coyote killing contests. Commissioner Johnston said the letter had serious allegations against him and he wanted to respond in a public setting. He said the essence of the letter was that the Commission denied the petition on a technical or procedural ground and that was improper. Ms. Cavanaugh said that was improper and denial on technical grounds is fatally flawed and illogical and noted that terminology was borrowed from him as he was quoted in the Reno Gazette-Journal (RGJ). He said it is disheartening to receive a letter based on four words that appeared in a RGJ article rather than actual video of the meeting and what transpired at the meeting. He said it is apparent the attorney did not take the time to review the meeting or comments that were made by everyone on the Commission. Nor does it appear that the attorney read the motion that was made and passed by the Commission in response to the petition. Allegation was made that he overstepped his bounds and acted as a legal advisor to the Commission, which he denies. He said he reviewed the petition on its merits and the proper context and role of the Commission that the petition presented an allegation that his conduct could have caused attendees un-necessary concerns and doubts as to the value of their effort in attending Commission meetings. That allegation is belied by the specific comments he made and due consideration he gave to all the public comments made during the hearing and made that clear on the record. There was notion that this was a simple process and inconsistencies in the petition could have been worked out through a rule-making process. He does not believe Ms. Cavanaugh understood what the petition meant. If the Commission accepted the petition his understanding was the Commission would have had a regulation to ban coyote killing contests, and his position was not to go down that road as such a regulation was not needed. He said what the letter ended up saying was simply that the petitioners wanted the petition heard with an up or down vote on the merits, and that is precisely what the petitioners received at the hearing. The petition was denied on its merits in a seven to one vote, because the petition was not needed for management of wildlife in this state. He said due consideration was given and for the record Ms. Fauna Tomlinson from Project Coyote approached him and said he was right given the context of where things are in Nevada.

Chairman Drew said he was in receipt of same letter and sees no need for further comment.

4 CABMW Member Items –

Gil Yanuck, Carson CABMW, thanked the Department for their assistance at the kid's fishing event at Baily Park in Carson City. He offered his assistance to any CABMW member who needs help with their CABMW budget.

Paul Dixon, Clark CABMW, said at their CABMW meeting a person provided testimony on the urban pond situation addressing issues of fishing line impacting ducks at urban ponds in Las Vegas. He said Nevada Sportsmen's Unlimited has stepped up with deciding to assist with education and the problem at the urban ponds.

5 Approval of March 20 and 21, 2015, Meeting Minutes

Commissioner McNinch said he was absent from the March meeting and will abstain from the vote.

Commissioner Johnston said he provided revisions to the draft minutes which were included in the draft minutes.

Commissioner Layne said she only attended the meeting on Friday, March 20, 2015, and will abstain from the vote.

Commissioners Bliss said he will abstain since he missed one day, Saturday, March 21, 2015.

Public Comment –

Jana Wright, member of the public, said in her comments there should be a correction to page 22: SJR 1 and should read "SJR 11" in reference to Senate Bill 163.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGE: ON PAGE 22 MS. WRIGHT'S COMMENTS REFLECT CHANGING SJR 1 TO SJR 11. MOTION SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 6 – 0. THREE COMMISSIONERS ABSTAINED: BLISS, LAYNE AND MCNINCH.

6 Commission General Regulation 456, Elk Arbitration Panel: Proposed Changes to NAC 502.42283, Game Division Administrator Wakeling – For Possible Action

Game Division Administrator Brian F. Wakeling said the purpose for this regulation is to amend existing administrative code to provide the ability for the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners (Commission) to appoint a panel or serve as the panel by which arbitration may be handled for disputes of the Nevada Department of Wildlife's (NDOW) determination of appropriate allocation of special incentive elk tags. Currently, the arbitration process has been handled using a panel that serves from the local area from which the individual that files the arbitration resides. This panel currently comprises of a member representing the local business community, one representing the agricultural community, and one representing the sportsmen or County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife. In practice, this has proven problematic as local community members have demonstrated discomfort and unwillingness to serve on a panel that sits in judgment on a fellow community member. This difficulty was pointed out and an amendment to the existing process was requested by the White Pine County Commission chairman on August 11, 2014. Subsequent to this letter, the Commission has heard and discussed the existing process and NAC three separate times: at the Churchill County Chambers, 155 Taylor Street, Fallon, NV on Friday, August 15, 2014; at the Clark County Government Chambers, 500 South Grand Central Parkway, Las Vegas, NV on Saturday, September 13, 2014; and at Truckee Meadows Community College, 7000 Dandini Blvd., Sierra Building, Room 108, Reno, NV, Friday, Nov. 14, 2014

. At this latter meeting, video and audio was also teleconferenced into Elko and Las Vegas, NV from which the public could comment. At the Commission meeting in Reno on March 20, 2015, this temporary NAC was discussed in a workshop and it was approved as presented to move forward to take action at this meeting. Arbitration is an infrequent occurrence, with relatively few challenges to NDOW

determinations. However, during the instances in which arbitration is requested, the likelihood that the arbitration will occur in a location proximal to the individual that submits the request is less likely. While an arbitration request does not require the physical presence of the individual that submits the request and arguments may be at times submitted in writing or via teleconference, such an individual may believe that presentations and discussion made in person may be more persuasive. Consequently, an individual that submits an arbitration request may want to travel to a location where the arbitration request is being heard. The suggested amendment provides for an efficient method to address any arbitration request, but does not place fellow community members in a position by which they must sit in judgment of another.

CABMW and Public Comment –

Paul Dixon, Clark CABMW, said the CABMW wanted the composition of the arbitration board pulled up to Commission level due to local conflicts and being ostracized in local communities. Comment made at their meeting showed that the arbitration board should be the Commissioners.

COMMISSIONER MCNINCH MOVED TO ADOPT CGR 456 AS PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT. MOTION SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

7 Draft Process for Use by the Commission in Arbitration as Described in NAC 502.42283 – Game Division Administrator Brian Wakeling – For Possible Action

Game Division Administrator Wakeling said this provides guidance to the regulation that was just approved, and that on March 21, 2015, following the workshop on Commission Regulation 456 addressing the NAC about arbitrating elk incentive awards on March 20, the Commission reviewed a draft process that described the methods by which the Commission could appoint or serve as the arbitration panel. Amendments were suggested by the Commission and as directed by the Commission, Commissioner Johnston and Chairman Drew provided revisions. Revisions were designed to clarify the intended process, which has been presented today.

Briefly, this process identifies the timeline and responsibilities for any request for arbitration. The Commission or a designated Committee of Commissioners or a member from a County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife may serve as the arbitration panel. The timeline ensures that the decision will be rendered by the end of June during any year. It also identifies that the arbitration process will be identified on all Elk Cooperative Agreements beginning in the next fiscal year (FY). In practice, due to the time frame in which we develop the cooperative agreements, this will begin following this calendar year (2016).

Commissioner McNinch said under Section 5, (a) that he would like clarification on whether the conservation and public member of the CABMW are both from the CABMW or is it any CABMW member.

Game Division Administrator Wakeling said the CABMW member could serve in any of those roles. At the Commission's discretion we could be more precise in the wording, and he may have misinterpreted the intent.

Chairman Drew said he recalled the intent as for any CABMW member. That wording could be replaced with "or a CABMW member" or "or any CABMW member" and it would clarify that.

CABMW and Public Comment –

Jana Wright said in regard to the wording in Section 5, that she is requesting that the language be "the chairman of the Commission may choose to have a committee of Commissioners," deleting "County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife members serve as the arbitration panel or choose to have Commission serve as arbitration panel." She said the reason for her request is that this was brought forth because it was difficult for the Department to find people to serve on panel, as it was neighbor against neighbor, and "no-win" situations. This provides for change to the process with problems in local areas.

Chairman Drew said he understands the concern and her point is taken but the wording is “or” and “or” and provides the Commission with flexibility.

Commissioner Johnston said this gives flexibility that CABMW members could be from another county addressing concern with being ostracized.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE ARBITRATION PROCESS AS PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT WITH SMALL CHANGES NOTED IN PARAGRAPH 5 THAT CABMW MEMBER BE “ANY.” COMMISSIONER WALLACE SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

8 Request from Colville Confederated Tribes in Washington for up to 50 Pronghorn Antelope during Winter 2015 – 2016 – Wildlife Staff Biologist Mike Cox – For Possible Action

Wildlife Staff Biologist Mike Cox said NDOW provided pronghorn for the Yakama Tribe several years ago, and there was interest from Colville Confederated Tribes at the same time. They have been in discussions with them for over two years regarding requesting pronghorn.

Chairman Drew said some of the CABMWs asked why this item is on this agenda and not part of the Biennial Big Game Release Plan.

Biologist Cox answered that plan only deals with in state releases. All out of state requests must come before the NBWC. He said the request would be accommodated in the winter of 2015 – 2016.

Eric Krause and Rich Whitney provided a PowerPoint presentation on lands for transplant for their request of up to 50 pronghorn antelope from Nevada.

Commissioner Layne asked about the results of prior bighorn sheep releases and what natural predators there are.

Biologist Krause answered that in 2008 they began reintroduction of 150 California bighorn sheep augmenting an existing population, and had no mortalities during the process. He said the population is currently over 200, and they just had their first ram harvest in the history of the Colville Reservation. He said they are trying to bring back historic populations. He said in regard to natural predators there were cougars, black bears, coyotes, and wolf packs that occur on the reservation. He said the home range of the wolves do not include the areas they are looking at for the pronghorn.

Commissioner McNinch asked if there is a target population to allow a subsistence hunt.

Biologist Krause answered that the target will be population growth and recruitment, and will likely be when areas are established.

Commissioner Valentine asked if tags will be sold to non-tribal members.

Biologist Krause said that only tribal members are allowed to hunt big game. The Tribe has a subsistence culture.

Chairman Drew said he appreciates the biologists’ attendance. The presentation and pictures of grass forage were impressive. Chairman Drew confirmed the request is for 50 antelope this year, and he asked if satellite collars will be placed on every animal.

Biologist Krause answered that the collars have already been purchased and will last up to four years.

Commissioner Johnston asked what the State of Washington’s position is on the reintroduction of pronghorn in other areas outside of tribal land.

Biologist Krause answered that in meetings with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife that they are supportive of what the tribe is going through as they have had the same difficulties with moving forward with this type of project.

Commissioner Johnston asked if the Commission approves the request for 50 pronghorn, would the Tribe be in a position to enter into an understanding as to what the purpose of re-introduction is, so we are all on same page with the goal of no hunt being established until sufficient numbers and no sale of tags for commercial purposes. He would like to know the basis for their request is documented and all have the same understanding.

Biologist Krause said an agreement could be drafted outlining intentions.

Commissioner Valentine asked which unit or units will be the source of antelope.

Biologist Cox said there are many issues on the landscape right now and they will try to keep options open. He said for several years they have discussed reducing densities in Humboldt County due to ground conditions, and will decide this winter on what the best place is. He said all herds have plenty of animals, but they will need to evaluate ground conditions as to what is safe for the animals.

Commissioner Young asked if accommodating the request would result in a reduction in tag allocations for residents.

Biologist Cox said maybe for a year but it would not be significant, and they have doe hunts in the herds that would be considered. He said he had discussions with his counterparts in Washington State who are very impressed with Colville Tribe program and are supportive of the introduction.

Commissioner Wallace said to address Commissioner Johnston's concern the resolution includes a statement that future management goals would include an added opportunity for subsistence by the tribal membership.

Commissioner Bliss said he appreciated the presentation and preparations, and he said that much data will be gathered with satellite collars and asked if they will share that information with NDOW as to how the population is doing for future years.

Biologist Krause answered that they wanted to collar the animals due to experience the Yakama Tribe had and ensure the transplant is done better and more successful.

Chairman Drew said one of the issues the Yakama Tribe experienced was the horse populations with serious range usage and he asked if there is similar issue.

Biologist Krause said the Yakama Tribe did have significant horse populations and they have horses but smaller populations. He said he does not foresee problems as they have done horse removals, recently removing 450 horses.

CABMW and Public Comment -

Furn Winder, Elko CABMW, said they voted to oppose the request because of CABMW members concern with habitat management and management of wolves. The member had lived there at one time.

Sean Shea, Washoe CABMW, said they approved the request. Nevada's pronghorn numbers would give more than requested to start them off.

Chairman Drew said he personally feels that this is a great opportunity at a great time, and he supports the request and appreciates the information that will be provided from the 50 satellite collars.

Commissioner Young said there was discussion about returning and obtaining another 50 next year or a few years later, and that with our current drought conditions he asked if the amount should be 100 now which would maybe save on capture costs down the road.

Biologist Cox said that was discussed and after the Yakama experience there is some hesitation to start smaller, they could come back but staff would like to see how things are going for the first year and then assist with additional augmentations.

Commissioner Johnston asked if the Commission approves the request, does the Commission provide input on where the antelope are taken from in Nevada or is that something that just occurs in the future without further input from public or Commission.

Biologist Cox said the NAC does not address source population rather it states the Commission's need to approve animals being translocated outside the state. He said that the Department looks at all factors and would hate to tie hands today because conditions can change.

Commissioner Johnston asked staff to identify the benefit to the State of Nevada.

Biologist Cox said to look at the number of bighorn sheep, elk and pronghorn that we received ourselves from other states/provinces, and we have not asked for anything in return. He said he knows the agency is proud to see other entities in other jurisdictions throughout North America, to be able to restore animals as Nevada has and we would not have had those opportunities if others had not opened their doors to us.

Commissioner Johnston said he appreciates the statement.

Chairman Drew asked for a motion and the motion could include contingency for information requested.

COMMISSIONER LAYNE MOVED TO RECOMMEND TO ACCEPT THE TRIBE'S REQUEST AND HER SUGGESTION WOULD BE INSTEAD OF UP TO 50 TO CHANGE IT TO 100 DURING THE WINTER OF 2015 AND 2016, AND THAT IT IS LEFT UP TO THE DEPARTMENT TO DETERMINE WHERE THEY COME FROM. COMMISSIONER BLISS SECONDED THE MOTION.

Chairman Drew asked for discussion and asked if the tribe could accommodate up to 100 pronghorn.

Biologist Krause said when they discussed 50 or 100, one item they considered was taking a smaller chunk to see if they like Oregon. They would like to see if they stay in habitat and would be better to re-introduce in the area they are brought to. He thinks they could accommodate 100 but it would require more logistic support such as trailers and equipment. He said he thinks it can be done, it is just a matter of changing planning, and whatever works out best for everyone.

Commissioner Layne said she made the motion simply to provide latitude, assuming it is up to 50, and latitude with the drought situation.

Commissioner Bliss said he agreed with Commissioner Layne, and the motion does not state that they have to take 100. It provides latitude if they want to take 60 and they have room, that would be fine.

Commissioner Johnston is concerned with doubling the number to 100 as prior experience and problems with Yakama Tribe introduction and having no CABMW input; however, he understands the planning process and would like a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between tribe and NDOW stating no hunting until population is established and no sale of tags. He said he appreciates all the work done but would like agreement formalized for the future.

Commissioner Young asked when Nevada received animals did other states require a memorandum or agreement. Biologist Cox answered no, we have not.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Game Division Administrator Brian F. Wakeling said this proposal is an amendment to an existing regulation to keep the issuance of elk incentive tags consistent with the original intent. The Nevada Department of Wildlife determined that, although NRS 502.142 establishes the program for issuance of special incentive license tags, it does not provide a specific definition for "bull" elk. At the time of initial adoption (1997), the only permits issued for male elk by the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners were for "bull" elk. "Bull" was defined in NAC, and a definition for "spike" was added in 2002, but a subsequent amendment to NAC Chapter 502 added and amended definitions for several game species in 2010, of which an amendment of "bull" to "antlered" was included. Consequently, there is no current definition of "bull" in NRS or NAC. When NRS 502.142 was adopted, the intent was to provide a venue by which the efforts of private landowners could be rewarded with permits for mature male elk, which they could subsequently offer for sale and benefit from their husbandry of the habitat on private lands. The 2010 promulgation of rule has inadvertently reduced clarity of designation for animals that may be lawfully taken and eligible seasons. Although this unintended oversight has yet to cause any application of the statute or administrative code inconsistent with original intent, addressing the inconsistency seems prudent. The enactment of this NAC will not alter any current practice or result in an additional cost to landowners that participate in this program or any additional cost to the agency other than the processing of this administrative code amendment. The Commission conducted a workshop on March 20, 2015. The Commission discussed the language with changes to Section 1, rewriting the formula as: $(NP \div NE) \times (DP \div 365) \times (NT + TSH)$ where TSH = the total number of spike elk harvested in the previous year in the unit or units within the management area or areas in which the private land is located. Game Division Administrator Brian F. Wakeling said CGR 457 is a temporary regulation and will return for action in the fall if passed.

Commissioner Valentine said the effect can be quantified on the available tags for the draw based on adding the total spike harvest into the equation. Commissioner Valentine said his understanding with the elk incentive tags is that we look at the total number of elk in the area, and he asked if spikes are double counted.

Administrator Wakeling said no, the equation is crafted by looking at the area and number of elk that use the area and this is incentive area on private habitat, land that is not cultivated. It provides incentive for private landowners to provide the benefit to wildlife.

Public and CABMW Comment – None

COMMISSIONER WALLACE MOVED TO APPROVE CGR 457. COMMISSIONER BLISS SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

11 Humboldt County Elk Species Management Planning Process – Game Division Administrator Brian F. Wakeling

Game Division Administrator Brian F. Wakeling said today the Commission will be continuing the elk planning process for the Humboldt County Elk Sub-plan. He briefly explained the process, and identified where we are in that process:

The process for developing a sub-plan, under the statewide elk species management plan, was adopted by the Commission on February 11, 2006. That process was included in the support materials for the March Commission meeting, but briefly the process includes eight steps:

- A. Director notifies Commission of need for plan. This was done February 7, 2015 during the Director's update on Department activities.
- B. Commission appoints sub-planning committee chairman within three months. (This was completed on March 21, 2015 when the Commission appointed Eddie Booth to serve as the Chair of this committee.) Invites participation from list of groups identified. (A letter, signed by

NDOW Director, Commission Chair, and sub-planning committee chair, was sent to livestock permittees and wildlife conservation organizations identified in elk plan on April 10, 2015 inviting them to volunteer if interested in participating on the sub-plan committee.)

- C. Commission appoints steering committee from list of volunteers and assigned agency personnel submitted. (This is the step for the Commission today. Names have been submitted from which the Commission may select.)
- D. Planning meetings initiated in community closest to new elk sub-plan area.
- E. Steering Committee appoints a Technical Review Team (TRT). The TRT is comprised of natural resources professionals.
- F. Within six months of first meeting, committee will distribute first draft for review:
 - a. The Commission.
 - b. The Director posting on the NDOW website.
 - c. At scheduled public meetings in Reno and Las Vegas for public comments for TRT consideration.
- G. Monitor progress of planning groups and planning team to ensure facilitation of process.
- H. Submit for approval in accordance with the Elk Species Management Plan.

Division Administrator Brian Wakeling said with this brief overview of the process, he would also mention that Ed Partee, the Game Division biologist that works in this area, is available should there be any questions.

Chairman Drew read the names of persons who confirmed interest: Lyell Avey, local representative from Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation; Kevin Gallio, Nevada Chukar Foundation; Mark Evatz, Nevada Muley's; Tom Cassinelli, Humboldt CABMW; Lloyd Hatch, U.S. Forest Service; Ron Cherry, Humboldt County Commissioner and local landowner/permittee; Mike Speary, Winnemucca Farms; Brad Schultz, UNR Cooperative Extension; William Mack, Winnemucca BLM; Hank Dufferena, local permittee; Terry Boyle, local businessman; Fred Anderson, local guide; and Brian Day, USFWS. Chairman Drew said Eddie Booth and NDOW support the nominations, and he would recommend to the Commission to approve the list to begin the process. He said if additional folks are interested or someone is missing, they could be added in the future; he and Commissioner Mori will be Commission liaisons to the committee.

Commissioner Layne asked if members of the public or citizens outside of those stakeholder interest groups were considered as all seem to be directly involved.

Chairman Drew said volunteers were solicited from a list of 20 or more organizations and everyone is a member of the community. Mr. Boyle is a local general member of the community, and all are long-standing community members with skin in the game, so to speak, from interest background/personal background.

CABMW and Public Comment –

Joe Crim, Pershing CABMW, said we need to look ahead and develop a plan for the Western Region.

Chairman Drew said he wanted to start with Humboldt County and does have the entire Western Region in mind for the future.

CHAIRMAN DREW MOVED TO APPOINT THE FOLLOWING PERSONS TO THE STEERING COMMITTEE: EDDIE BOOTH, LYELL AVEY, KEVIN GALLIO, MARK EVATZ, TOM CASSINELLI, BOYD HATCH, RON CERRI, MIKE SPEARY, BRAD SCHULTZ, WILLIAM MACK, HANK

DUFFERENA, TERRY BOYLE, FRED ANDERSON, AND BRIAN DAY. MOTION SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

- 12 Wildlife Damage Management Committee Update and FY 2016 Draft Predation Management Plan (Final Draft) – Commissioner Bliss, Game Division Administrator Brian F. Wakeling, and Wildlife Staff Biologist Pat Jackson – For Possible Action

Commissioner Bliss introduced the topic and briefed the Commission on the Wildlife Damage Management's Committee meeting yesterday.

Game Division Administrator Wakeling reviewed the changes to the budget page recommended by the Wildlife Damage Management Committee. The final budget was:

Overall FY 2016 Budget

Project	\$3 Predator Fee	PR Funds	Total
Department of Agriculture Administrative Support Transfer ^a	\$14,000	N/A	\$14,000
Project 21: Greater Sage-Grouse Protection (Raven Removal)	\$78,000	N/A	\$78,000
Subproject 21-02: Raven Removal and Greater Sage-Grouse Nest Success	\$50,000	N/A	\$50,000
Subproject 22-01: Mountain Lion Removal to Protect California Bighorn Sheep	\$45,000	N/A	\$45,000
Subproject 22-14 Coyote Den Density Effects on Mule Deer Fawns and Other Wildlife Species	\$40,000	\$120,000	\$160,000
Subproject 22-074: Mountain Lion Removal and Diet Analysis for the Protection of Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep	\$45,000	N/A	\$45,000
Project 32: Mountain Lion, Black Bear, and Mule Deer Interactions	\$40,000	\$120,000	\$160,000
Project 35: Using Genetic Testing to Identify Origin of Red Fox	\$2,500	\$7,500	\$10,000
Project 37: Big Game Protection-Mountain Lions	\$90,000	N/A	\$90,000
Project 38: Big Game Protection-Coyotes	\$90,000	N/A	\$90,000
Project 39: Predator Education	\$1,500	\$4,500	\$6,000
Project 40: Coyote Removal to Complement Multi-faceted Management in Eureka County	\$60,000	N/A	\$60,000
Total^b	\$556,000	\$252,000	\$808,000

^a This transfer of \$3 predator fees for administrative support to the Department of Agriculture partially funds state personnel that conduct work for the benefit of wildlife at the direction of USDA Wildlife Services (e.g., mountain lion removal to benefit wildlife).

^b The projects that contain limited lethal removal as a primary aspect, making them ineligible for Federal Aid funding, is 85% of predator fee budget.

Expected Revenues and Beginning Balance

	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Estimated	FY 2016 Projected
Beginning balance	\$377,674	\$437,529	\$420,808
Revenues	\$570,368	\$502,879	\$570,368
Authorized budget	\$526,360	\$519,599	\$556,000
Expenditures	\$509,156	--	--
Ending balance	\$437,529	\$420,808	\$435,176

The expected revenues and beginning balance information was provided to the Committee by a member of the public in response to the Committee's request for more information on the budget at the end of yesterday's Committee meeting, as it had been shared with the legislature previously.

Game Division Administrator Wakeling introduced Wildlife Staff Specialist Pat Jackson who provided a PowerPoint presentation with an overview of recent results from Project 25, and a recap of the current Predator Management Plan.

CABMW and Public Comment –

Mitch Burns, Lyon CABMW, said that Project 33, Bi-State Sage-grouse Nesting Habitat Restoration Project, has been recommended for discontinuation and he would ask that the Commission reconsider continuing that program.

Paul Dixon, Clark CABMW, said board members were very vocal on Project 22-16, coyote study, because when the matching funds are added it has been a fair amount of money over the years and no one on CABMW is sure what we are gaining.

Sean Shea, Washoe CABMW, said they approved this and had a question on the \$14,000, and they received clarification on where the money went.

Gil Yanuck, Carson CABMW, thought the budget presented was good and supported it.

Caren Tayloe, self, said her concern is with Projects 37 and 38, as she noticed there is a project goal under Project 37 to remove specific problematic mountain lions to benefit game species, and sees objectives are under “Anticipated Results” and “Methods” and she would like to find out more about specifying the ratios. She said the recommendation is to “evaluate the efficacy of Project 37 annually” and yet the project will span more than one fiscal year. She wanted to know why it is indefinite and why would the span not indicate that it is evaluation of the efficacy and also has concern for area biologists having other biological evidence demonstrating removal of mountain lions as necessary. She wants to know exactly what that other biological evidence is, especially if spending \$40,000.

Don Molde, representing Nevadans for Responsible Wildlife Management, said he appreciates NDOW doing more research and data collection, yet as we all know, in the legislature there is pending legislation asking for 80 percent to be spent on lethal control. He gave a quick review, the \$3 fee was a political bill passed with support of Dr. Lent, Cecil Fredi, Jerry Claborn, and others, with premise that this would rebuild Nevada’s diminishing mule deer herds. Basically what goes on now is random killing of predators over about 12 years, spending \$5 million. He provided mule deer statistics over 12 year period; 2003, mule deer population estimated by NDOW at 109,000 and last year in 2014 the estimate was 108,000, difference of 1,000. During the 12 year period the low point was 105,000 in 2004 and the high point number is 114,000 in 2007. Despite \$5 million spent and thousands of animals killed, mostly coyotes, the mule deer herds are remarkably stable. He said if anyone is concerned with efficacy or outcome, the evidence is in, and predator control does not work, as you have the numbers.

Jana Hofeditz, representing herself, said she is blown away by the amount of money spent, easy killing and no results. She said she moved out on Pyramid in 1991 and used to see the random mountain lion, and now she never sees them. She lives near a local trapper and does not understand the money. She said she is a taxpayer and those animals are hers and is here to let you know that as a taxpayer this all needs to come out of the closet by Wildlife Services.

Leah Sturgis, rancher, (provided her comments for the exhibit file) said she is appalled by the predator management program. The plan started to kill mountain lions in an effort to help bighorn sheep numbers recover is incredibly short-sighted. Killing lions in an immediate vicinity of transplant means new lions move into that area. Following the logic, does that mean more killings of mountain lions? She said predators are not responsible for the dramatic loss of wildlife, humans are responsible and loss of habitat due to poor planning without considering wildlife corridors or maintaining wildlife habitat is the real reason. Instead of taking responsibility at what we have done, we point at predators as the cause, and then NDOW has to kill instead of protecting. She asked why there is no value of mountain lion over mule deer, and she said she sees more wildlife in California. She attended a California Commission meeting where non-consumptive users are heard and protect predators.

Gerald Lent, representing Nevada Hunters, said his organization reviewed the plan, and they disagree with the coyote study project as just means for someone to get their Ph.D. and is a waste of sportsman funds. He said there are many mistakes in the plan, for example on page 10, it states the Diamonds are in Unit 02 and on page 46, and there is no Project 20-14. He said the plan is not well thought out. He said support material did not show the revenue, and how can you do that and plan. The coyote plan is wasteful spending of sportsman's dollars.

Fauna Tomlinson, Lake Tahoe, California, said we are killing to kill, and agreed with Mr. Molde. It is true that \$5 million was spent of Nevada taxpayers' dollars over the last 12 years to kill predators and yet facts are that there has been no increase in mule deer population. That is 12 years of scientific data that can be used to prove that the \$5 million has been wasted. She does not know why you would want to continue to waste taxpayer dollars. Math tells us this does not work and we need to go back to the drawing board. Also, it is a bad study since so many radio collars have failed.

Stephanie Myers, Mt. Charleston, said many people are distressed that the word "predator management" and Predator Management Plan is synonymous with killing and lethal removal. Management does not necessarily just mean killing. At the Clark CABMW meeting there were loud protestations that sportsman fund the Predator Management Plan and since they fund the plan with tag fees and Pittman-Robertson, they need deliverables, which is more predators killed, and they believe they should have 100 percent authority into dispersal of the funds into the Predator Management Plan. Ms. Myers said predators are not simply varmints or pests as they have an essential role in the wildlife ecosystem. She suggested that many who expressed their feelings and who are not here would like more funds going to research and education. Such as Project 39 and 25. Let us do more research into non-lethal methods and have co-existence with predators.

Jana Wright said looking at Predation Plan that the goals are vague for most of the projects. She supported Don Molde's comments about the \$3 fee being eliminated, as finding killing predators is a short-term solution. She said she can support Projects 39, Predator Education, and Project 25 which will be phased out, and agreed with comments on more education and research. Killing predators without conclusions or goals that are more specific is disturbing.

Mitch Buzzetti, Nevada Guides and Outfitters, said they support the predator plan as a step in the right direction.

Commissioner Johnston thanked Department staff for time and effort. This is the third time the plan has been heard by the Commission, two times in committee meetings, which have been open to public comment. He said the notion that this has been done in secret or not open to the public is belied by the fact that this is the fifth public meeting. Commissioner Johnston said in regard to comment on habitat restoration for bi-state population that he believes the program is continuing but separate funding has been found which is why it was moved; the project is continuing but with a different funding source. He said as many know he wants on record that this is not funded by tax dollars generally, rather by the \$3 fee that is charged in conjunction with big game tag applications. Commissioner Johnston reiterated that there is a statutory mandate on how the money is spent and a plan developed accordingly, and he will support the plan.

Commissioner McNinch said the Department has been the fall guy for a lot of parts that they don't control, and they are trying to balance all with the plan. The legislature has mandated 80 percent of this go to lethal removal, and if persons want to effect change it needs to be at the legislature as that is what has driven this. He said Department staff has done a good job of maintaining science, and building in balance.

Commissioner Layne would reiterate what Commissioner McNinch said, but will still vote against it.

Commissioner Young said he agreed with Commissioner McNinch's comment, and the plan is based on science and no taxpayer money is used. He also recognized the Department's tough spot.

Commissioner Bliss said this plan is much improved compared to previous plans and he does not want indiscriminate killing of any wildlife as all want to do proper predator management at the right time. He said we rely on professionals in the field, and he said he is not made up that way.

Commissioner Johnston said changes to fees are occurring at the legislature and not the Commission. The Commission position has been to leave it flexible to be mindful of the statute. He said he wants on the record that this Commission has been active in the legislative process expressing views of sportsmen and the public in Carson City, and working with members of the legislature on various items.

Chairman Drew said when he came on the Commission there was a process that was de-railed and it took at least three 18 month periods where things had to be re-worked, such as Policy 23. He said the plan is probably not perfect but is good, and he has complete faith and belief in the committee. He said he knows how hard staff works and that view has been reflected to the legislature and given where we started we are 1,000 percent better off. Chairman Drew said it is important to point out restrictions placed on the Commission, he will support the plan.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON MOVED TO ADOPT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMITTEE WITH RESPECT TO THE PREDATOR MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016. COMMISSIONER YOUNG SECONDED THE MOTION. COMMISSIONERS IN FAVOR: DREW, WALLACE, BLISS, JOHNSTON, MORI, MCNINCH, VALENTINE, AND YOUNG. COMMISSIONER LAYNE OPPOSED. MOTION CARRIED 8 – 1.

- 9 2015 Legislative Session Update and Commission Bill Positions – Chairman Drew and Management Analyst 3 Kim Jolly – For Possible Action
Chairman Drew reviewed the bill list as provided (Exhibit file)

Chairman Drew reviewed the support material document for this agenda item entitled “NDOW Legislative Tracking Update as of May 14, 2015” (exhibit file), with the Commission’s positions which were taken at the April Commission meeting. He said the bills that did not meet legislative deadlines have been removed from the tracking list and his recommendation is to leave the Commission’s positions in place.

CABMW and Public Comment –

Gerald Lent said Chairman Drew said he contacted both sides on AB 78 on the conference committee and he asked Chairman Drew if he represented the Commission as he believes that is not legal without a public hearing.

Chairman Drew said regarding Mr. Lent’s comment, that when he provides testimony and in discussions with folks, he makes it clear he is representing himself. When representing the Commission he is bound by the platforms as denoted on the spreadsheet provided for this agenda item. Chairman Drew said he would like to discuss Assembly Bill 142 and noted that the last time the bill was discussed was after it passed out of the Assembly where the demerit system was taken and placed into NRS, and another section discussed Hunter Education and the removal of four demerits if you presented a Hunter Safety card to the Department. He said the Commission position was in opposition, and a 24 page amendment just came out. Chairman Drew said during the work session he offered an amendment on his own behalf on the Hunter Safety class which would allow someone to take Hunter Safety after accumulating six demerits in order to remove four once per lifetime versus just showing up with Hunter Safety card. Chairman Drew said he has asked Chief Game Warden Turnipseed to provide the changes.

Chief Game Warden Turnipseed said the bill has changed significantly and he reviewed the proposed changes to Assembly Bill 142 (exhibit file).

Summary of Status on Assembly Bill 142:

Senate Natural Resource Committee work session May 14, 2015, and no vote, but agreed conceptually to two new amendments (voluminous and significant) but will do another mockup to address more changes by the Committee which will be voted on behind the bar on May 15, 2015.

Changes include:

- 1) A new section that will be amended but basically says wildlife laws are only broken if intentional and knowingly broken,
- 2) Changes the section on erasing demerits to someone with six or more demerits but less than 12 can erase six demerits, once in a lifetime, if a Hunter Education Course is taken after most recent conviction.
- 3) Removes authority from NDOW to revoke or suspend licenses for anything beyond what is listed in the bill section 1.9, and can only revoke or suspend licenses beyond three years.
- 4) Reduces from a felony to a misdemeanor mountain lion provisions, and moves to the courts the decision of penalties or revocations,
- 5) Removes authority from NDOW to suspend or revoke licenses if a person has not paid their civil penalty, or not shown up in court, or defaults- and gives that authority to a court. Department must also reinstate license, tag, permit. (Limited to three year revoked);
- 6) Inserts the take of any furbearer on private property by owner or occupant of property with permission of owner or occupant, deletes need for a permit from the Department (similar to SB4);
- 7) Changes the regulation of shed antler collection by the Commission from shall to may, and limits it to commercial only (exactly like SB4);
- 8) Puts in NRS a slightly revised demerits system from 1999 (with higher penalties on some than before), which expires after July 1, 2015, at which time the Wildlife Commission is allowed to establish them in regulation; and
- 9) Repeals trap registration NRS 503.452.
- 10) Section 15 of the bill would cause the demerit schedule in statute to expire once the Wildlife Commission re-adopts a new demerit schedule into NAC and approved by the Legislative Commission, essentially rolling back the demerit numbers and put them in statute, and once the Commission has reheard testimony on demerit schedule and accepted a new demerit schedule which would then be approved by the Legislative Commission the new demerits would eventually go back from NRS into NAC.

Chief Game Warden Turnipseed said that is quite a lot of information to digest because the bill bounces all over different NRS chapters, and is a whole scale weakening of our ability to prosecute wildlife crime.

Chairman Drew said the breakdown provided by Chief Turnipseed was very good as the work session document is confusing. The document is posted on the legislative website through the Nevada Electronic Legislative Information System (NELIS) with a work session scheduled today and all could change in real time today. If Assembly Bill 142 passes from committee today, the next step would be the Senate floor, then onto the Assembly for concurrence and potentially is a long way from being done; however the Commission has the opportunity to adopt a platform if desired.

Commissioner Layne said the Commission already opposed the bill but what Chairman Drew is recommending is that the Commission be more specific in terms of the conceptual issues that have been brought to the Commission's attention.

Chairman Drew said the Commission opposed the version of Assembly Bill 142 that came out of the Assembly, and all we have today is a conceptual amendment to which he would suggest adopting a platform in opposition of that conceptual amendment as described to the Commission today.

Commissioner Layne said with the changes suggested, that would break the current demerit system and she understands that is the intent of the bill sponsor, but can the Commission not go through the concepts point by point to lend credibility to something that does not have any credibility? She said the bill is not something that can be amended.

Chairman Drew said without the actual language it would be difficult to address the amendments point by point.

Chief Turnipseed said if he would add that much of this has changed during the last 24 hours which is why the language was not provided in writing. He said comments were made in legislative hearings that NDOW's demerit system was too heavy-handed and staff compiled revocation numbers. On average over the last 20 years we sell approximately 190,000 licenses and out of that number, on average 14 persons have their license privileges revoked per year. The math is 99.999925 percent of licenses sold do not result in a license revocation, and would be hard for anyone to contend that the system is unfairly punishing anyone.

Commissioner Layne said the issue that she sees is it appears that we do not have the votes to stop this at the committee level, and seems to her that the Commission should take aggressive action, such as possibly drafting a letter conceptually indicating our concerns to every senator and point out the actual number of licenses issued and still that feeling give the Commission the chance to deal with this but not on a minute by minute basis.

Chairman Drew said a general platform in opposition to the conceptual amendment that is before the Commission which the Commission would be opposed to and generally opposed to any subsequent changes that weaken the current demerit schedule. He asked DAG Ward if the agenda item allows the latitude to do that.

DAG Ward said that would be allowed as the agenda item is written.

Public Comment Specific to Assembly Bill 142 –

Jana Wright said she would encourage the Commission to be adamantly opposed to Assembly Bill 142 in its entirety. She said she would hope as Chairman, Chairman Drew would contact the Senate majority and minority leaders and explain how terrible this bill is.

Stephanie Myers, Mt. Charleston, said the bill really undermines the Department and the Commission authority, and seems right for more aggressive action on the Commission's part.

Don Molde said you have to be careful who you vote for such as in Assemblyman Hansen's district. He said he agreed with Commission's posture on this bill and as their side is working on this issue. He thinks it is important to take all the administrative steps you can to register your concerns about the bill. He said ultimately the Commission's boss, the Governor, will have an opportunity to sign the bill or not, and if it goes that far he hopes the Commission is able to convince the Governor not to sign the bill.

Fred Voltz said for the record, the Commission needs to take a much starker approach to frame this issue and to tell whomever you are speaking to that if you believe in the State Police, the National Guard, or the County Sheriff, because if you do, then you are completely eviscerating the wildlife law enforcement

aspect of the Department and the Commission which makes no sense and you will have rouge people out there doing all sorts of things not in the public interest.

Commissioner Johnston said the notion of creating ignorance of the law as a defense, basically rewrites the basic tenet of criminal law, the statute that states "you only violate the law if you knowingly or intentionally break it." He said this is going too far and what we currently have for revocations is not draconian to him, not even close.

Commissioner Young said he would go further to say the bill may even be unconstitutional as it denigrates those who have laws violated on them. He said you can't discriminate on that point based on whether it is intentional or not, if elements of the crime are met, you have broken the law. That is how he was taught in his law enforcement career and no way would this ever pass constitutional muster in his opinion. He is also interested in what LCB said about this bill.

Chairman Drew said the question was raised in yesterday's work session, as several committee members had questions as to what the language specifically met, and legal had concerns. Legal had directions that they received for new language which may have come out today. He said his concern was rolling back demerits with minor changes to what they were in 1999, and personally he is not comfortable with undoing all the hard work of the Commissions, CABMWs, and public process that has been unveiled over the last 16 years. Out of respect for them and the system he is opposed. He said, personally, he is adamantly opposed to the bill and he made that clear yesterday in his testimony, and as pointed out earlier by Mr. Lent, he cannot convey that on behalf of the Commission unless he has a position or platform. His intent for today was to give opportunity to Commissioners to develop a platform or a position and would be glad to relay that. Chairman Drew said yesterday all he could say on behalf of Commission was that the Commission is neutral because they had not seen these changes and have not discussed all of the provisions.

Commissioner Johnston said for record, that this discussion of rolling back demerit points has come up in prior meetings while addressing legislative bills, and to date he has not heard from one CABMW, one sportsman at any Legislative Committee meeting or at a Commission meeting, that this is a draconian system that needs to be fixed. He said he could be wrong but they have not heard from the community that lives with the existing system that it needs to be fixed.

Commissioner Young asked Chairman Drew if it has been told to legislators that the bill sponsor has a personal agenda and a sordid long history of wildlife violations that he has been convicted of.

Chairman Drew said that he cannot recall that arising in committee meetings and he has not brought that up.

Commissioner Young said he will make sure people are aware, and not from the Commission but from his own point of view. He said if given legal scrutiny he does not believe it will pass, and can't believe it has even gotten to this point with that body as they are supposed to know better, and please point that out if you can.

Commissioner McNinch said the people advocating for the bill are in positions where they got it where it is at, and have shut down the Commission process which involves CABMWs and the public, and certainly there have been blockades put up so things could get filtered into this fashion. The bill has essentially become a dumping ground for the nonsense that could not survive on its own or as part of another bill and is a cumulative effect to have gained traction, instead of a bill with one dumb idea it is a bill with 10 dumb ideas that gained speed. He said this is a result of someone knowing how to work the system and is masterful, leveraging things, with personal issues involved. How does the Commission deal with it outside of being adamantly opposed? There is not much left in the bill to work with as they are just out of line. He said at this point it is so late in the game and the Commission should state anything having to do with the demerit system, or a bunch of these things in here, that they are opposed as it is too late in the game and there are games going on and we don't want or need to be part of that.

Commissioner Bliss said this is more to add to the discussion and he agreed with all the comments made, and he is speaking as just an everyday sportsman. When he reads the language in the bill it disappoints and disheartens him because wildlife deserves respect and protections. He said he is adamantly opposed to these changes due to his respect for wildlife in the state.

CHAIRMAN JOHNSTON MOVED THAT THE COMMISSION OPPOSE THE LEGISLATIVE EFFORTS, INCLUDING LEGISLATIVE EFFORTS BY ASSEMBLYMAN IRA HANSEN THROUGH ASSEMBLY BILL 142 OR OTHERWISE, TO EVISCERATE THE DEMERIT SYSTEM TO TAKE THE DEMERIT SYSTEM AWAY FROM THE COMMISSION AND DEPARTMENT BY REMOVING IT AND INSERTING IT INTO STATUTE FROM NEVADA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE AND PUTTING IT INTO NEVADA REVISED STATUTES, TO SOFTEN PENALTIES FOR WILDLIFE CRIMES, AND/OR TO MAKE ENFORCEMENT OF WILDLIFE CRIMES MORE DIFFICULT. COMMISSIONER YOUNG SECONDED THE MOTION.

Chairman Drew said shed antlers are a big issue with CABMWs and he offered a friendly amendment.

CHAIRMAN DREW MOVED FOR A FRIENDLY AMENDMENT ON THE LIST ENUMERATED, TO ADD THAT WE DO NOT SUPPORT LIMITING OUR ABILITY TO REGULATE SHED ANTLERS TO COMMERCIAL PURPOSES ONLY. COMMISSIONERS JOHNSTON AND YOUNG ACCEPTED THE AMENDMENT.

Commissioner Layne asked if the amendment will open the door to go into other specifics, or if they need the broader statement that was proposed by Commissioner Johnston. She said she is concerned if they talk about specifics in the bill it will open the door to address each one of these issues, and she does not think they really want to do that.

Commissioner Johnston restated the motion changing “gut” to “eviscerate” in the original motion.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Commissioner Johnston suggested that given the time sensitivity that a short break be taken to convey the Commission’s vote to the chairman of Assembly Committee on Natural Resources.

Chairman Drew recessed the meeting until 3:30 p.m. and upon return reported that he left a voice mail with Mr. Gustavson as he was unable to reach to him or his office.

13 Reports – Informational

A Sage-grouse and Sagebrush Ecosystem Council Update – Secretary Tony Wasley

Secretary Wasley said hopefully many of you saw the news related to the Secretary of the Interior’s visit to NDOW’s Valley Road office, and announced that the Bi-state distinct population segment of sage-grouse was determined to be not warranted under the Endangered Species Act. The secretary announced the collaborative effort and process that had been underway for 15 years on the bi-state. Secretary Jewell complimented the leadership of NDOW, and the agency’s role and Director Wasley said Shawn Espinosa’s role and efforts have been a long-term part of that endeavor. Director Wasley said a key piece that the Department of the Interior referenced in arriving at the not warranted finding, was the bi-state action plan, of which initially USFWS said uncertain of action plan implementation due to the possible \$38 million cost. He said pressure applied to federal agency partners, and significant financial commitments made in writing. NDOW Staff Biologist John Tull compiled all of the financial commitments into one document and generated over \$45 million in financial commitments over the next 10 years from USDA, NRCS, USFWS, USFS, BLM, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, NDOW, and Mono County. The action plan was deemed the appropriate action; scientifically the Service believed that it had certainty of effectiveness and certainty of implementation, which led them to the not warranted decision. Director Wasley said that was a significant day with Governor Sandoval and Secretary Jewell acknowledging NDOW’s role and the significant partners, with no one partner being able to have done it

without the full collective group effort. At this point the action plan will continue to be implemented, and the Service has the right to re-evaluate that population every five years toward implementation of the action plan and evaluating population responses. He said we are pretty positive where we are at and the partnerships we have built.

Secretary Wasley said yesterday the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council met on the Greater Sage-grouse. Right now the process is the final administrative draft of Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was out for 14 days, all the cooperating agencies submitted comments which were due on Wednesday. NDOW had 30 pages of comments specific to the administrative draft; comments are expected to be reviewed by the BLM. The final EIS will be issued the first week of June, and there will be a public comment period, then a protest period and ultimately there will be subject to a governor's consistency review and the governor will look at the state plan and look for discrepancies between the state plan and BLM's final EIS at which there is an opportunity to submit input. He said it is still expected that the Service will have to make a final decision by September 2015, although there has been legislation aiming to postpone the listing for 10 years. He said there are bills from Colorado and California with language to postpone listing decision for 10 years, and an Omnibus spending package to limit USFWS' ability to publicize a listing finding. He said if the listing is found to be warranted the Service would not be able to spend money on publishing the listing. The Service would need to seek legal guidance. He said for Nevada with its vast percentage of federally administered land, the main plan for Nevada is the BLM's Land Use Plan Amendment, and how that addresses the various multiple uses that occur on the landscape. The state has developed their plan and asked that the BLM adopt the state's plan as part of that Land Use Plan Amendment, and as a cooperating agency having signed a MOU of confidentiality, he cannot necessarily discuss a lot about the differences other than to say that there are significant portions of the state plan incorporated into the Land Use Plan Amendment and some things go above and beyond the state plan. Most of that will be brought to our attention through the Governor's Consistency Review.

B Heritage Committee Report – Commissioner Wallace

Commissioner Wallace reported that the committee met last night and reviewed project proposals. They prepared a proposed Heritage tag vendor worksheet which will be brought forth to the June Commission meeting for approval. Proposed Heritage tag vendors are as follows: One mule deer tag, Nevada Bighorn Unlimited (NBU) Reno; one mule deer tag to Mule Deer Foundation (MDF); one antelope tag to Nevada Waterfowl Association; one antelope tag, Pershing County Chukars; one elk tag, Northern Nevada Safari Club International; one elk tag, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF); one Nelson bighorn tag to NBU-Reno; one Nelson bighorn sheep tag to Wild Sheep Foundation; one California bighorn sheep tag to NBU Fallon; and five wild turkey tags with one to new group, Nevada Sportsman Unlimited, one to Pershing County Chukars; two to the National Wild Turkey Federation; and one to new vendor, Bristlecone County Family Services. Also, during the wild turkey discussion, a suggestion was made to make tags available for following spring which would allow more vendors to be involved and possibly bring in more money on the auction of tags.

Commissioner Wallace said the committee reviewed Heritage proposals and had \$700,830 available. He said the total amount for projects was \$825,229 and obviously they could not award the money to everyone and all took a significant cut. Commissioner Wallace reviewed the projects:

16 – 01 2016 Big Game Capture Transplant and Monitoring Program/requested \$110,000/allocated \$90,000; 16-02 Pequop Summit and Highway 80 Wildlife Safety Crossing/requested \$100,000/allocated in full; 16-03 Sierra Front Winter Mule Deer Habitat Improvement Project/requested \$75,000/allocated in full; 16-04 Atlanta Road Sage-Grouse Habitat Improvement requested \$50,000/allocated in full; 16-05 Spruce Mountain Restoration Project/requested \$150,000/allocated \$136,470; 16-06 Mule Deer Corridor and Survival Analysis/requested \$75,000/allocated in full; 16-07 State Route 160 Big Game Monitoring Project/requested \$40,000/allocated in full; 16-08 Respiratory Pathogens of Mountain Goats/ requested \$98,060/allocated in full; 16-09 North Schell Pinion-Juniper Removal Project/requested \$80,000/awarded \$75,000; 16-10 Survey and Maintenance of Existing Big Game Guzzlers/requested \$33,700/allocated in full; 16-11 the Hidden Valley Guzzler Replacement/requested \$29,212/allocated \$13,000; 16-12 the Sage-grouse Late Brood Rearing Habitat as Effected by Wild Horse and Cattle Management/requested \$35,982 and left that unfunded at zero; 16-13 Genetic Connectivity Among Desert Bighorn Sheep

Populations in Nevada/requested \$36,475/awarded \$10,000. He said these are tentative amounts as another meeting will be held June 18 to finish up with further input.

Commissioner Bliss said one more comment on the NDOW guzzler being funded at \$15,000, there is additional match money so the project will be fully funded. They will be able to utilize the 16-13 project at \$10,000 PR dollars to reach the total request.

C Big Game Hunt Status Report – Wildlife Staff Specialist Mike Cox

Big Game Biologist Mike Cox presented a PowerPoint of the summary of the status of big game with updates on the new cow elk and ewe hunts implemented in 2014. He said the demand for the tags totaled 17,800 different applicants that applied for some type of cow elk rifle hunt which was the focus of his presentation.

Chairman Drew said he attended the Lyon CABMW meeting this month and the members were highly complementary of the status book and acknowledged the time and effort that goes into producing the book.

D Black Bear Hunt and Status Report – Game Division Administrator Brian Wakeling

Game Division Administrator Wakeling provided a briefing to the Commission based on information compiled from Game Biologist Carl Lackey and UNR Professor Jim Sedinger. The bear population continues to grow both numerically and in distribution. Dr. Jim Sedinger’s analysis in Program MARK, based on NDOW collected data over the last 17 years (through the end of calendar year 2014) includes data from over 1,000 capture events and 601 individual bears, which indicates that the population of bears continues to grow in number. The distribution increase is based on capture and sighting data from 1988 to present. Results from the Heritage DNA study support the theory that these captures and sightings in historical bear range are largely the result of western Nevada bears moving eastward, although a recent documented sighting of a bear near Caliente is likely from elsewhere. The current population estimate is 445±14. We published an estimate in 2011 of 456±39, but in the models we just ran for 2014 shows the population in 2011 should have been 426. It is important to note that this is an iterative model that is rerun based on new data, but the new 2011 estimate is still well within the confidence intervals of the old 2011 estimate (±39), and the change is simply a result of three more years of data a new estimates with tighter CIs. This change may be hard for some individuals to understand. The current drought does not seem to be affecting bear population growth. Production of forage is average, and we are still detecting the normal number of two and three cub litters; modeled recruitment is stable; most harvested bears have been in very good shape with many having fat layers 4–6 inches thick; and older age class bears are still prevalent within the harvest and captured conflict bears. Additionally, the bear population has continued to increase through at least three significant drought periods in just the last 20 years. Some of this is because bears are opportunistic and will find several things to eat when climatic conditions cause soft mast failure. All published estimates represent only that portion of the state within our study area (Carson Range, Pine Nut Mountains, Virginia Range) from Reno south to Topaz. Hence, when we write the estimated population in Nevada is 500–700 bears we are including the Pinegroves, Sweetwaters, Wassuk Range, and Excelsior Mountains. Estimates of our population within our study population have been increasing over time.

Year	Population estimate	Males	Females	Method
2002	180±117	na	na	MARK
2008	262±31	171	91	MARK
2011	426 (456±39)	296	160	MARK
2014	445±14	289	156	MARK

Although the population is still growing, the rate of increase has slowed. Current λ (per capita rate of population change) is between 1.06 (males) and 1.1 (females) – around 8 percent. Recruitment (in situ and immigration) appears to be stable so the decline in lambda is likely due to decreasing survival rates in adult bears. Within the adult data set, survival increases with age, and since there is no way to discern

the difference between a bear that dies from a bear that disperses (they have both left the population permanently), the lower survival rates in younger bears is likely due to dispersal. Additionally, higher survival rates with increasing age are evidence that the sport hunt is not adversely affecting the population. These data suggest the bear population is responding to density-dependent factors and may be reaching carry capacity. NDOW continues to cooperate with the Wildlife Conservation Society on bear research and are in our 19th year studying Nevada's population. We are cooperating on four different studies involving bears, three of which have been going on for several years: (1) A PhD student from Columbia University is running habitat selection models and mortality data to look at habitat suitability and how this affects causes of mortality; (2) UNR is finishing up the Heritage DNA study which analyzed genetics in Nevada's population. Dispersal within the population and relatedness to California's Sierra Nevada bears were the main questions. The post-doctorate student is currently writing up the results for publication; (3) we are still waiting on the isotope analysis publication which has been in the works for about four years. We have had trouble getting the person who did the analysis to actually write it up. This was originally going to be for her Masters at the University of Tennessee but that is not the case now. At this point we're just trying to get it published; and (4) we are investigating the interactions of bears and cougars at cougar kill sites, and questioning (a) if and how these interactions effect cougar kill rates; (b) if these interactions could potentially be facilitating black bear population expansion into eastern ranges. Based on the harvest data associated with age and proportion of male and female bears, there is every indication that the harvest of bears is light and in no way affecting population growth. That is consistent with the conclusion determined from Dr. Sedinger's analysis. To date, Nevada's bear harvest has not met the limit established through Commission Regulation.

E Wildlife Trust Fund – Deputy Director Cates

Deputy Director Cates said the total amount of donations for fiscal year 2014 is \$293,519.11. He said for the first six months for fiscal year 2015 is \$49,000. He said for year to date another \$120,000 has been collected, and donations are actually trending downward over the last four years.

F Department Activity Report – Secretary Wasley

Secretary Wasley provided an extensive report on the Department's recent activities:

He introduced Jennifer Newmark who has been hired as NDOW's Wildlife Diversity Division administrator, and Administrator Newmark had nearly 16 years with Nevada Natural Heritage Program, seven years as Division Administrator. This past Tuesday the Department's Executive Budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 and 2017 closed in joint Senate Finance and Assembly Ways and Means Committee, the committee supported all of the Department's budget recommendations with the exception of some Spanish translation for signage in high fishing/boating areas. Budget presentations presented to the legislature are available on the NDOW website under the banner "Our Agency." USFWS auditors arrived at NDOW last week, the auditors are conducting the five year audit review of Wildlife Sportfish Restoration grant funds and will be looking at 41 different federal grants involving Wildlife Sportfish Restoration including financial management systems, including payroll, IT, documentation of costs, federal draws, program income, in-kind contributions, sub-grants and contracts, asset management, sportsman license certifications which is the process by which they determine our eligibility, and state sportsmen revenue. The auditors indicate that Nevada is a low-risk state and the audit will last several months with conclusions presented sometime in 2016.

Management Analyst 3 Kim Jolly in the Director's Office worked with HQ Hunter Education staff to update the Hunter Education Instructors' Manual/Policy. We particularly focused on updating the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) section. This will be discussed as part of their training retreat in Pioche this weekend including an update to instructors on Assembly Bill 136.

Additionally, we are working on adding a checkbox in NWDS where students sign-up so that students will be prompted to flag in advance whether they would need ADA accommodations or auxiliary aids for the course or test, and then adding a section of the confirmation letter to include the contact information of

the Regional Coordinators (to contact them in advance of the class) what type of accommodations they might need. This will help staff help the volunteer instructors to prepare for any special accommodations.

MA 3 Jolly has been coordinating with Western Region and Washoe County on the following issues of joint concern:

1. Feral Cat Colony Ordinance – This was unanimously approved with a section in it to protect wildlife by prohibiting feral cat release or colonies where NDOW designates wildlife-sensitive areas.
2. Bear Documentary online and DVD distribution/promotion – will work with video producer and Health District Supervisor on Waste education and video promotion.
3. Bear Logic/Awareness Month – Board of County Commissioners/County Manager's Office
4. Baby birds message to public to leave them alone.

All regions held tenure award events and recognized public service the first week in May, a big thanks to each of the staff who assisted in coordinating these employee events. Employees appreciated the Division Administrators, Deputies, and Director for providing their own contributions to make it happen.

Game Division

Several Game Division biologists attended the 53rd Meeting of the Desert Bighorn Council (DBC) in Borrego Springs, Calif., April 15 – 17, 2015. Mike Cox and Peri Wolff presented Nevada data regarding herd health and adaptive management strategies for bighorn sheep. Pat Cummings and Brian Wakeling serve on the DBC Technical Staff. Brian recently stepped down as the editor of the *Desert Bighorn Council Transactions*, and he was recognized for serving as the editor for volumes 47 through 52.

Game and Habitat Divisions prepared and presented on the effects of drought on game animals at the BLM's drought training workshop held during April 7–9, 2015.

Several Game Division staff and field biologists attended the WAFWA Deer and Elk Workshop in Alberta, Canada. At least three presentations will be given on mule deer and elk research and a status report on deer and elk populations in Nevada. Cody Schroeder will also represent NDOW at a meeting of the Mule Deer Working Group while at this meeting.

The Eastern Region Game and Conservation Education Divisions are working in conjunction with the Division Administrators for Game and Conservation Education to embark on a program to promote the value of elk to the state. One of the first steps will be to rent rotating billboards in Elko with a simple message that Elko County now has a significant elk resource.

Significant gains were made in bringing elk populations to objective levels despite one of the highest recruitment levels on record. All elk herds south of Interstate 80 are within the established population objectives. Harvest management strategies have resulted in a downward trend within the 062–068 and 076–081 Unit Groups. Only the 072–074 units are trending upwards and most of this is due to adjusted population estimates. Added harvest strategies are expected to reverse the trend in these units. In Unit Group 061 and 071, objectives are based on vegetation monitoring and not population size. However, recent radio marked elk movement data suggests a large number of elk in this unit group are spending substantial time in Idaho and on the Duck Valley Indian Reservation.

Game Division Staff updated the annual Big Game Tag Application Workshop presentation and gave the presentation Thursday night, March 26 to about 60 sportsmen at the NDOW Reno office. Staff from hunter education and the license office also attended to answer tag applicant eligibility and alternate tag program questions.

The 2014 Harvest Information was made available to the public on NDOW's website in time for the big game application period.

All elk incentive packages have been received from landowners. Ninety-nine tags will be issued pending Commission approval, which represents a 17 tag drop from last year with all of the decreases occurring in Unit 075 and Unit Group 076–081. The 2015 incentive tags are still higher than those issued in 2013. The anomaly was in 2014 when very high bull quotas caused a substantial increase in the incentive tags. One individual has indicated he wants to go to arbitration for the fifth time. He was informed that arbitration will occur at the Commission level, pending final process approval.

Sixteen NDOW employees and three volunteers completed a sharp-tailed grouse trapping and translocation from Idaho to Nevada. Participation involved Game, Fisheries, Habitat, Conservation Education, and Law Enforcement Divisions.

Forty-nine sharp-tailed grouse, consisting of 34 hens and 15 males were successfully released in Nevada. Thirty-nine of the released grouse were fitted with radio collars and will be monitored throughout the year by USGS. Only six days were needed to capture the targeted quota.

Recently USGS reported that 16 males were observed on a lek in Nevada near the release site. A large number of hens were also reported to be near the lek.

Idaho Fish and Game will conduct an evaluation to determine if they will continue providing sharp-tailed grouse to Nevada for two more years. Criteria will include population levels of sharp-tailed grouse in Idaho, initial success of the grouse reestablishment in Nevada and if adequate monitoring and communication of the results are occurring on the released grouse.

The Pacific Flyway study committee and the dove task force have asked NDOW to participate in a three-year study that will compare the old dove survey standard (dove call count surveys) to the current method of band returns and wing bee data. Nevada has been asked to conduct nine routes during the study term. This test will ensure that data exists to reopen dove seasons.

Waterfowl Breeding Bird Population Surveys are scheduled this week. Surveys take place statewide and will take several days. Many of the traditional survey transects will be eliminated this year due to current drought conditions and the lack of water.

Fisheries Division

Staff has finished an unprecedented level of NEPA analysis for the treatment projects this summer to remove northern pike from Comins and Bassett lakes and a small private reservoir in Eureka County. Public scoping and multiple public meetings were held and formal Environmental Assessment (EA) documents completed which have been forwarded to the FWS Federal Aid office. At this time the Bassett and Comins lakes treatments are still on schedule for completion by late summer 2015. The primary concern and possible roadblock is obtaining the 1,800 gallons of rotenone fish toxicant in time, because of challenges with the state purchasing system.

Fisheries Division is also moving forward with plans to introduce sterile hybrid tiger musky in Chimney Reservoir in Humboldt County. The purpose is to provide control for a nuisance carp population and eventually develop a warm-water fishery. This also required preparation of an EA, full NEPA analysis and public hearings and scoping. The first release of tiger musky would occur in 2016.

Staff is working on an access agreement with the Hawthorne Ammunition Depot (HAD) for public access to Rose Creek Reservoir as an Urban Fishery for the Hawthorne area. The HAD is interested in opening the reservoir to the public but it would be on a limited scale for base security reasons (total number of anglers at any one time, with no restrictions on who can fish).

Several important projects to enhance and protect sport and native fisheries have been completed:

- The Sage Creek Fish Barrier has been completed by the contractor. The purpose of the barrier is to protect pure Lahontan Cutthroat trout (LCT) in Sage Creek (tributary to McDermitt Creek) from non-native trout encroachment.

- The Fly Canyon Enclosure Fence in Soldier Meadows was completed at the end of March to protect an isolated population of desert dace from extirpation due to overutilization of the spring habitat by feral horses, with help from FWS staff. This project is in BLM Wilderness and has taken almost five years to get to completion.

Staff is continuing to work with Winnemucca BLM to complete an enclosure fence around the headwater springs of Crowley Creek to protect LCT populations impacted by drought conditions. We've been in discussion with BLM over Crowley Creek issues for 10 years but progress is being made. BLM has issued a Full Force and Effect Decision closing the Jordan Meadows allotment to grazing until the enclosure fence problems at Crowley Creek are resolved, because of severe resource damage.

NDOW is in coordination with the City of Sparks and UNR (Dr. Sudeep Chandra) on a water quality study at the Sparks Marina. The purpose of the study is to identify what is occurring physically in the lake that is causing the winter fish kills that have been occurring the past two years. The data collected will help inform managers on how best to address the problem, and if it is even possible.

Fisheries and Mason Valley Hatchery staff are working with the Walker Basin Conservancy to identify suitable stocking locations on the East Fork Walker River where the Conservancy is planning to allow public access to the river on the Rafter 7 Ranch which was acquired in 2013. We hope to work with the Conservancy to provide additional fishing opportunity on other properties throughout the Walker Basin as they become available.

Work has started to set up the Marlette Lake spawning station for this year. Tributary flows are extremely low because of the drought which could significantly affect spawning success for Tahoe rainbow and cutthroat trout.

Extremely low storage levels at Lake Mead will continue to cause problems for anglers and watercraft users through 2015. The current lake elevation is 1,078 feet, the lowest since May 1937. National Park Service will be extending boat ramps starting this month which will cause further problems for boaters.

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) inspection and watercraft decontamination stations are being set up for the 2015 boating season. Lakes Mead/Mohave and South Fork Reservoir stations are fully staffed and operational. The station at South Fork has already intercepted and inspected at least one boat coming from Lake Mead. Wildhorse, Rye Patch and Lahontan sites are being set up with State Parks and will be fully staffed in the next week.

Operations

The big game application period closed on Monday, April 20, which was followed by the week-long, bonus-point-only application period. Total tag and bonus point applications received this year by Systems Consultants set a new record--218,219 applications compared to 202,173 in 2014. A single-day record for numbers of applications was also set on April 20 -- 33,577 applications. Despite a record year, some applicants encountered technical difficulties on the last day of the tag application period. Difficulties appeared to begin around 8:20 p.m. and continued off and on until shortly before the 11:00 p.m. deadline. One hundred thirty-six people reported problems in completing applications. Systems Consultants is reviewing the performance which contradicts their experience this year with Utah that had nearly twice the volume and no similar problems. There is an issue that Microsoft has acknowledged with other similar websites and Systems Consultants is pursuing that as a possible solution. The draw will take place on Wednesday, May 27, with results posted on the huntnevada.com website by late afternoon Friday, May 29.

With the approval of Senate Bill 41, the Department was postured to begin offering the new electronic federal duck stamp this year. We are working through the remaining minor technical and administrative steps and plan to offer the new electronic stamp privilege beginning August 1, 2015.

Habitat Division

Western Complex Wildlife Management Area (WMA) crew has been out at the Humboldt WMA spraying noxious weeds, repairing the observation tower, addressing signage issues and general clean-up of the area.

Overton WMA is still repairing impacts from last year's floods. Corrective actions are being implemented in conjunction with surrounding landowners based on the assessment of impacts received.

This weekend the Northern Water Development Crew will be working with approximately 100 volunteers to build two new guzzlers near Cherry Mountain in northern Washoe County.

The Bald Mountain Mine administrative draft of the Draft EIS will be released for a two week review on May 21.

NDOW has submitted our Carson City Resource Management Plan comments despite the comment period be extended until May 28.

Upland Game and Duck Stamp project proposals have been received and are under review in preparation for the June commission meeting.

Contracts have been awarded for PJ thinning on Spruce Mountain, Mill Canyon and Atlanta Road projects.

We recently finalized our review and provided comment on the Final Greater Sage-Grouse LUPA/EIS.

Law Enforcement

An egregious closed season and needless waste elk poaching case in the Jarbidge Area got some media attention and that has led to some possible suspects. Wardens are following those up. Many leads came in after the Humane Society increased the reward amount to \$5,000. <http://www.ktvn.com/story/28724911/nevada-game-wardens-seek-clues-in-elk-poaching-case>

An antelope case was pled out in Elko County in which a tag holder shot the wrong sex antelope during the season of 2013. The hunter pled to a suspended prosecution of "Hindering a Game Warden," and paid a civil penalty of \$1,700 to NDOW's Operation Game Thief along with criminal penalty fines.

A case in Lander County has been filed in which two individuals have been charged with the intentional killing of an antelope out of season and without a tag.

A rare (by Nevada standards) commercial fishing investigation at Lake Tahoe has resulted in the seizure of 173 lobster traps being used for crawdads. Charges are pending in Douglas County for commercial wildlife collection without a permit.

With the warming weather, Southern Region wardens have experienced an increase in boating activity, fishing violations, and urban wildlife complaints.

Personnel update: Two more game wardens have submitted letters of resignation and Game Warden Captain Paul Dankowski has announced his retirement effective July 6, concluding a great 31 year career with NDOW. This brings the total to five game warden jobs we will attempt to fill in the upcoming months. We recently hired a seasonal game warden for Lake Tahoe, but were unable to fill a similar position at Lake Mead due to a lack of applicants. Three of last fall's new hires have graduated from the POST Academy in Carson and will now begin field training. Five more are scheduled to graduate from the Southern Nevada Academy in July. We also just sent four game wardens to a Field Training Officer school to help deal with the flood of new hire wardens.

To put our coverage problems in perspective, we've been receiving complaints about gross over limit fishing violations occurring at some rural Humboldt County reservoirs but addressing the problem has proven difficult since the nearest working game warden is stationed over 190 miles away.

The 2015 legislative session continues to consume at least 75 percent of the Chief Game Warden's time. The bulk of this has been spent trying to defend against bad legislation that would be damaging to Nevada's wildlife.

Conservation Education

In April, the Eastern Region Conservation Education staff along with the Game Division, BLM, and Northeast Nevada Stewardship Group took nearly 30 participants on the Second Annual Elko County Sage-grouse Experience Tour. Participants were taken to a lek in north Ruby Valley, then proceeded to the Lamoille Ranchers Center for a breakfast followed by presentations on topics such as how radio collars work, classifying birds using wings and the natural history of the bird.

In a joint effort between the Conservation Education and Law Enforcement Divisions, NDOW participated in the Reno River Festival last weekend. Although the kayaking events were cancelled due to low water, NDOW staff took the opportunity to educate the many festival attendees about fishing opportunities on the Truckee River and general boating safety.

This weekend, Conservation Education staff is hosting the 2015 Outdoor Education Academy at Echo Canyon State Park in Pioche. Each year, volunteer Hunter and Angler Education instructors from across that state gather to engage in this training academy. This year's academy will address a host of issues including compliance with the ADA, new archery regulations, streamlined hunter education courses, field care for game, outdoor survival, and many others.

Free Fishing Day event preparations are underway around the state. On June 13, 2015 Free Fishing Day events will be available in Reno, Sparks, Las Vegas and Elko.

The 2015 Nevada Hunting Guide is currently undergoing a redesign. Like the 2015 Big Game Seasons and Application Regulation publication and the 2015 Nevada Fishing Guide, NDOW has made several changes in an effort to make it more user-friendly. A digital edition will also be available with expanded content.

A new and fully revised Eastern Region Fishable Waters Map will soon be available. With completely updated information and mapping from the Fisheries Division and GIS section, this new map will provide the latest information on fishing for the Eastern Region.

Wildlife Diversity Report

Several efforts are underway statewide to survey for Northern Goshawks (NOGO). Staff developed an aerial and ground survey protocol for northern goshawks throughout Nevada for the 2015 season. The NOGO is a Species of Conservation Priority in the Wildlife Action Plan. In late March and early April the Elko area biologist was able to conduct eight hours of helicopter surveys in search of NOGO nests in the Snowstorms, North Tuscaroras, Merritt Mountain, and Buck Creek Mountains. One flight was accomplished in White Pine County, with more focal areas being targeted in this region in spring of 2016.

Several efforts underway to better understand Golden Eagle (GOEA) movements and habitat use, including aerial and ground surveys for GOEA, radio transmitter work, and creating a western eagle nesting habitat model that will aid NDOW in better managing this important species.

Diversity staff continues to deploy and maintain data loggers that record both temperature and humidity in mines and caves across Nevada. To date, Diversity has roughly 128 data loggers deployed across 25 sites in the state. This effort is in response to national initiatives to better understand cavernicolous roosting climates that bats roost in regarding White Nose Syndrome (WNS), which is caused by a fungus, *Pseudogymnoascus destructans*. This disease has killed off the majority of populations of certain species of bats in some states in the eastern half of the U.S. While currently not detected in Nevada, WNS is moving west and early detection will be important in mitigating its effects. To help with this early detection, eastern region staff is preparing a grant proposal to the USFW Competitive State Wildlife Grant to continue our WNS surveillance activities. Finally, Diversity biologists are continuing to survey abandoned mines in association with the BLM, USFS, Nevada Division of Minerals, and private mine claimants.

Staff continues to work with FWS, Tortoise Group (TG) and other partners to relay messages to the public regarding how to deal with displaced and unwanted captive tortoises when they emerge this spring. A sterilization workshop will be convened by FWS/TG/NDOW and local veterinarians in Las Vegas July 15-16 to show sterilization techniques for captive tortoises. Some captive tortoises will be delivered to Reno residents from TG for adoptions in April and some will be provided to Utah DWR for adoptions. USFWS is organizing a tag and microchip workshop for the public to bring in their captive tortoises in Las Vegas May 30. Note that only one captive desert tortoise is allowed for possession as of May 1, 2013, to further limit over breeding of captives.

Studies are being initiated on yellow-pine chipmunk genetics, small mammals and climate change, and pygmy rabbits and habitat use. There are multi-year studies and will provide important information for best management of these Wildlife Action Plan priority species. On-going work continues on Yellow-billed Cuckoos, Southwestern willow-flycatchers, Ridgeway's Rail, Gila monsters, and breeding birds. Staff biologists are providing the Pacific Flyway Council with priority resource conservation concerns for migratory birds as part of an effort to integrate top priorities and link common themes for all western states. Finally, we presented at the Third Annual Conference of the North American Pika Consortium as well as at the Joint North American Bat Working Group.

G Litigation Report – Deputy Attorney General Harry Ward

DAG Ward said the litigation report was submitted (exhibit file).

14 Public Comment Period –

Gerald Lent, Nevada Hunters Association, requested in accordance with the Open Meeting Law that his comments be part of the distributed minutes for this meeting (Attachment A).

Paul Dixon, Clark CABMW, speaking on behalf of himself, said his question is directed to Director Wasley and Chief Game Warden Turnipseed: Over the last six years concerns have been raised about people fishing the urban ponds in Las Vegas with no fishing licenses. He asked whether there is no enforcement due to a lack of resources or the ponds are just not patrolled the way reservoirs are. He said he wants an answer back on what the situation is so he can present to the public that attends the Clark CABMW meetings.

Sean Shea, Washoe CABMW, speaking for himself regarding the black bear hunt status report, the state did a great job on that, but it is misleading to say 445 plus or minus 14 because that is only using three mountain ranges for estimate, and when you look at whole thing that is 500 – 700 animals and he thinks that is left out of the report. On female harvest he thinks that is misleading too, as one female harvested was a depredation problem and a hunter decided to harvest that bear in Washoe Valley.

Chairman Drew said the main agenda item tomorrow is quota setting and will be using the hand-out provided as support material.

Meeting Adjourned 5:02 p.m.

Saturday, May 16, 2015 – 8:30 am.

15 Call to Order, Roll Call of Commission and CABMW Member – Chairman Drew

Chairman Drew called the meeting order with all nine Commissioners present. CABMW roll call: Paul Dixon, Clark; Tom Cassinelli, Humboldt; Cory Lytle, Lincoln; Grant Sawyer and Justin Rozich, White Pine; Gil Yanuck, Carson; Joe Crim, Pershing; Sean Shea, Washoe; Troy Smith, Churchill; Bert Gurr, Furn Winder, and Mitch Buzzetti, Elko.

16 Approval of Agenda – Chairman Drew – For Possible Action

COMMISSIONER MCNINCH MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA. COMMISSIONER WALLACE SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

17 Member Items/Announcements and Correspondence – Chairman Drew - Informational

Commissioner Wallace said during the Application Hunt process, local applicants asked him about the resource enhancement stamp (RES) as some applicants told him they purchased the stamp as they thought it was required.

Chairman Drew requested Don Sefton to provide a response.

Don Sefton, Systems Consultants, said Dream Tag tickets were not allowed to be sold on the website but the site continued to offer the stamp and about 7,000 people bought the stamp with 2,123 having bought tickets. He said he believes a marketing effort will target those stamp purchasers to solicit interest in purchasing tickets.

Commissioner Wallace said it would be interesting to know how many of those persons who bought those stamps had no idea it was just a requirement for the Dream Tag not necessarily a requirement for the draw.

Chairman Drew said the Commission may need to request an update on this matter during the State of the Draw report, and will discuss this further during Agenda Item #20 Future Commission Meetings and Commission Committee Assignments.

Commissioner Bliss added that he too had the same type of phone calls in regard to this issue.

18 CABMW Member Items

Paul Dixon, Clark CABMW, said he was asked why the WHIN organization did not apply for Heritage tags, and turns out the person who was to submit the WHIN proposal had an incident where his car was broken into and his briefcase was stolen so he ended up faxing the request to NDOW which apparently never got to the Heritage Committee. Mr. Dixon said WHIN requested the same as they had in the past.

19 CR 15 – 12, 2015 Big Game Quotas for the 2015-2016 Season – Wildlife Staff Specialists Mike Cox and Cody Schroeder – For Possible Action

Biologist Mike Cox compiled the CABMW recommendations which will be used during today's discussion.

Chairman Drew mentioned that he attended the Mineral CABMW meeting as their members are not able to attend due to Armed Forces Day and since he attended their CABMW meeting he will be able to discuss their comments.

Antelope Resident Hunt 2151 – Horns Longer than ears – Any Legal Weapon Hunt

HU: Reduce tags in unit groups 031, 032, 034 and 035 by 15 percent.

MN: Reduce to 25 from 30 on Units 205-208.

PE: We would like to see the tags lowered to 65 in Units 041-042 for the early and late season.

Chairman Drew said Mineral CABMW requested reducing the tags to 25 due to reasoning that patchy populations concentrate hunting pressure.

CABMW and Public Comment -

Pershing CABMW Chairman Crim said the Department recommendation for Units 041 – 042 Early and Late was for 75 tags and they want them reduced to 65 tags similar to last year because the average horn length is lower than the state average and they think they are younger buck antelope.

Tom Cassinelli, Humboldt CABMW, said they want 031, 032, 034 and 035, reduced by 15 percent due to the drought and the size of antelope are going down.

Biologist Cox said statewide there has been a horn length decline since 2010 in the 15 percent horns or longer in all unit groups, and believes the drought is having an impact. He has no problem with Pershing CABMWs change however in Humboldt County a small sample had post-season buck ration of 54 bucks per 100 does. Large unit group that was split, 032, 034, and 035, only had 20 bucks per 100, and could support a lower tag quota. In 031 the bucks are there with age structure.

COMMISSIONER YOUNG MOVED TO ACCEPT THE RECOMMENDATIONS ON CR 15 – 12 RESIDENT ANTELOPE HORNS LONGER THAN EARS ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 2151, WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGES: IN UNIT GROUPS 032, 034 AND 035 REDUCE RECOMMENDATION BY 15 PERCENT, LEAVING 031 AS RECOMMENDED BY MR. COX, ALSO IN 041, 042 (EARLY AND LATE) REDUCE TAG QUOTA FROM 75 TO 65; IN MINERAL UNITS 205-208 REDUCE TO 25 FROM 30. COMMISSIONER VALENTINE SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Antelope Resident Hunt 2171, Muzzleloader and Hunt 2161, Archery, Horns Longer than Ears

HU: Reduce tags in unit groups 031, 032, 034 and 035 by 15 percent.

PE: We would like to raise the tags back to 12 in Units 041-042.

Tom Cassinelli, Humboldt CABMW, said they had the same recommendation for Archery Hunt 2161 to decrease tags in Unit groups 031, 032, 0324 and 035 by 15 percent.

Joe Crim, Pershing CABMW, said they are opposite on this with last year quota. Archery was 12 and they want to take it from 10 to 12.

COMMISSIONER MCNINCH MOVED TO APPROVE RESIDENT ANTELOPE HORNS LONGER THAN EARS MUZZLELOADER HUNT 2171 AS PROPOSED AND RESIDENT ANTELOPE HORNS LONGER THAN EARS ARCHERY HUNT 2161 WITH FOLLOWING CHANGES: 032, 034, TO 51; 035 TO 25; AND 041 AND 042 TO 12. COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Resident Antelope Hunt 2181 - Horns Shorter than Ears – Any Legal Weapon

PE: We would like to lower the tags to 25 in Units 041-042, which is 2% of the doe population.

Joe Crim, Pershing CABMW, said last year in that unit they gave out 101 tags and they had no clue what the success rate was, and this year the Department proposed 40 tags and they would like to lower that to 25 which is 2 percent of the doe population in that unit.

Chairman Drew asked for an explanation from the 100 tags to 40 tags.

Biologist Cox said the Department was contemplating reducing to 40 tags because there is an estimated 1,800 pronghorn there and they need to manage in terms of numbers. An increase would be great but willing to accept 40.

COMMISSIONER MCNINCH MOVED TO APPROVE RESIDENT ANTELOPE HUNT 2181 HORNS SHORTER THAN EARS ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT AS PROPOSED BY THE DEPARTMENT. COMMISSIONER YOUNG SECONDED THE MOTION.

Commissioner Johnston asked Mr. Cox that given the fact that we lowered the other buck tags for horns longer than ears, it is still the same and does not affect the analysis of the doe tags.

Biologist Cox said at this point it is not worth getting into the weeds on every last tag and on this day we do our best to accept those modifications that are social in nature and accept what it is.

Commissioner Johnston said that did not answer his question. He said he hears comments about buck ratios, and we have tags allocated and we lowered the number of tags for the residents horns longer than ears, and his question in lowering that number of tags is has there been any influence on the number of tags for this hunt per Pershing CABMW's request to lower it for horns shorter than ears hunt.

Biologist Cox said for some of the hunts where there is a lot of female harvest such as for elk, when you take huge bites of 5 to 15 percent of the females it has a huge impact on male ratio, and that is taken into account. For pronghorn biologists not necessarily worried with these changes of 15 percent affecting one way or another something such as reducing/increasing female harvest. He is not too concerned if the buck ratio is up to 38 from 35.

Chairman Drew said he understands where Pershing CABMW is coming from and 40 is fair. There is demand there and success relatively good with the Department taking it back.

COMMISSIONERS IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION: CHAIRMAN DREW, COMMISSIONERS WALLACE, BLISS, LAYNE, MORI, MCNINCH, VALENTINE, AND YOUNG. COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON OPPOSED. MOTION CARRIED 8 – 1.

Nonresident Antelope Hunt 2251 – Horns Longer than Ears – Any Legal Weapon Hunt and Nonresident Antelope Hunt 2261 Archery – Horns Longer than Ears

HU: Reduce tags in unit groups 031, 032, 0324 and 035 by 15% for 2251 and 2261.

Biologist Cox said the desire is to do the best to meet the 90/10 split by unit group and statewide for nonresidents.

Chairman Drew said his calculations have 032 to 15 and 035 to eight and Mr. Cox can check the 90/10 split.

CABMW and Public Comment – None

Biologist Cox said for archery every resident hunt does not have companion nonresident hunt, you may end up staying the course and not making modifications to archery as we are at 9.8 percent.

COMMISSIONER YOUNG MOVED TO APPROVE NONRESIDENT ANTELOPE HUNT HORNS LONGER THAN EARS ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 2251 AS RECOMMENDED BY THE DEPARTMENT WITH FOLLOWING EXCEPTIONS 032 REDUCING FROM 20 TO 16; 035 REDUCING FROM 10 TO EIGHT; 041 AND 042 EARLY REDUCING FROM EIGHT TO SEVEN; 041 AND 042 LATE REDUCING FROM EIGHT TO SEVEN. NONRESIDENT ANTELOPE HUNT HORNS LONGER THAN EARS ARCHERY HUNT 2261 RECOMMENDED AS PROPOSED BY THE DEPARTMENT. COMMISSIONER VALENTINE SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Resident Nelson (Desert) Bighorn Sheep – Any Ram – Any Legal Weapon Hunt 3151

MN: Units 202-204 Recommend 5 down from 7.

Chairman Drew said Mineral CABMW requested 202 – 204 to be five tags on a split vote due to concern with hunter congestion around Walker Lake.

Biologist Cox said the unit does have the E. Walker River area associated with it and had two rams harvested. He had reviewed the survey data and is comfortable with the reduction.

COMMISSIONER BLISS MOVED TO SUPPORT THE RESIDENT NELSON (DESERT) BIGHORN SHEEP ANY RAM ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 3151 AS PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT WITH ONE CHANGE UNIT 202 - 204 FROM SEVEN TO SIX TAGS. MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER YOUNG. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Resident Nelson (Desert) Bighorn Sheep – Any Ewe – Any Legal Weapon Hunt 3181

PE: We would like to see no ewe hunts in Units 253, 268.

Biologist Cox said the population estimate for Desert bighorn statewide is 9,600 which does not include any of the bighorn on Department of Defense lands. He said we know there are 10,000 bighorn sheep in Nevada and are bursting at the seams for water availability/sustainability. He said these four herds need to continue to be reduced closer to their level until the drought situation changes.

Sean Shea, Washoe CABMW, said for the record they approved this hunt as recommended.

Jeff Turnipseed, NBU president, said NBU had issued a statement opposing the quotas set for 253 ewe hunt, and subsequent to that position statement, some good information was put forth that has caused NBU to retract their opposition. He said they encourage NDOW to use ewe hunts as a last resort, and opposing these quotas is not the mechanism to do that. Their position is the same for 068 ewe hunts and is the same situation where an opposition position statement was issued and then issued another position retracting that opposition.

Chairman Drew said he read the position statement and is a long-term supporter of NBU and he did take exception to the implication that somehow the biologist has recommended a quota without scientific justification and would like to know if there is opportunity to clear that up.

Mr. Turnipseed said that was more of a lack of communication by both parties over the last few years for various reasons. He met and both parties are endeavoring to fix that.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON MOVED TO APPROVE RESIDENT NELSON (DESERT) BIGHORN SHEEP ANY EWE ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 3181 AS PRESENTED. COMMISSIONER VALENTINE SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Nonresident Nelson (Desert) Bighorn Sheep Hunt – Any Ram – Any Legal Weapon Hunt 3251

COMMISSIONER WALLACE MOVED TO APPROVE NONRESIDENT NELSON (DESERT) BIGHORN SHEEP ANY RAM ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 3251 AS PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT. MOTION SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Resident California Bighorn Sheep Any Ram Any Legal Weapon Hunt 8151

CH: Recommends that the Unit 068 tag quota stay at five, instead of the suggested four.

Troy Smith, Churchill CABMW, said their recommendation was proposed by a member and could simply be a lack of understanding but he was upset over the proposed ewe hunt in 068, and he did not understand why we are killing ewes when it could be ram to ewe ratio. Why are we killing ewes and reducing ram tags?

Biologist Cox said the population is estimated at 110 and they want the population at about 100 based on forage conditions. At the same time we have not seen stellar lamb recruitment, as five to six years ago it would be mature rams in that population. He knows it is connected, but regardless of the ewe harvest last year and this year we are starting to see a slight reduction in mature ram segment from the recruitment five to eight years ago, and that is the reason to reduce it by one tag this year.

COMMISSIONER YOUNG MOVED TO APPROVE RESIDENT CALIFORNIA BIGHORN SHEEP ANY RAM ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 8151. COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Resident California Bighorn Sheep Any Ewe - Any Legal Weapon Hunt 8181 and Nonresident California Bighorn Sheep Any Ram Any Legal Weapon Hunt 8251

COMMISSIONER VALENTINE MOVED TO APPROVE RESIDENT CALIFORNIA BIGHORN SHEEP ANY EWE ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 8181 AND NONRESIDENT CALIFORNIA BIGHORN SHEEP ANY RAM ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 8251 AS RECOMMENDED BY THE DEPARTMENT HUNTS. MOTION SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Resident Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep – Any Ram - Legal Weapon Hunt 9151 and Resident Mountain Goat Any Goat Any Legal Weapon Hunt 7151

EL: Unit 101 – Increase from four to six – support recommendations for 102 and 103.

Eastern Region Biologist Ken Gray said he wanted to address the Elko CABMW recommendation. The East Humboldt Range experienced a die-off in 2010 and kid production is still low. However all hunters report seeing a strong segment of mature billies. There is an ongoing study with a minimum of three to four persons on the mountain in the summer, and conditions are such that the recommendation to change from four to six is not opposed by the Department.

Furn Winder, Elko CABMW, said for Hunt 7151 they had been told that there are ample billies and wants to give hunters opportunity by taking it up from four to six. He said last year all billies were harvested.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON MOVED TO APPROVE RESIDENT ROCKY MOUNTAIN BIGHORN SHEEP ANY RAM LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 9151 AS PROPOSED BY THE DEPARTMENT, AND APPROVE RESIDENT MOUNTAIN GOAT ANY GOAT ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 7151 AS PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT WITH FOLLOWING CHANGE IN UNIT GROUP 101 THAT THE QUOTA BE INCREASED FROM FOUR TO SIX. COMMISSIONER WALLACE SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Resident Elk Antlered Any Legal Weapon Depredation Hunt 4102 and Resident Elk Antlerless Any Legal Weapon Depredation Hunt 4107

Resident Elk – Antlered – Any Legal Weapon Depredation Hunt 4102

EL: Support recommendations except change from 40 to 50 tags for early and late.

Resident Elk Antlerless – Any Legal Weapon Depredation Hunt 4107

CH: Recommends that all antlerless tags be reverted to 2013 quotas (pre DELK and BELK levels).

EL: Support recommendations except change from 50 to 75 tags.

Biologist Cox said in Area 10 there was a sizable reduction in the 4102 Hunt and they are putting a lot of pressure on the transient elk herd in the Rubies and East Humboldts. He said with 75 tags there were a lot of unsuccessful folks and probably no sword to fall on if increasing it back up. Great success in Hunt 4107 and Area 8 hunts, there was sizable decrease in Area 10 4107 Hunt from 150 to 50. He said the cow management hunt is providing great opportunity to put pressure on scattered cow elk, and although it is a depredation hunt almost disingenuous issuing a lot of tags as there is such low density. This past year there were more cow elk harvested by cow management tag holders than the 4107 tag holders providing the reasoning for shifting tags from 4107 Hunt to cow management hunt.

Jim Evans, Eureka CABMW, said he wanted to talk about Units 144 and 145. When the hunt was first started they had them lumped into one hunt which created problems relative to hunter density. Now they are split into three seasons for the bull and four for the cow which has helped considerably with hunter density.

Furn Winder, Elko CABMW, said for 101 Early and 101 Late in Hunt 4102, they wanted to change to 40 tags and the same for Hunt 4107 to 75 tags.

Paul Dixon, Clark CABMW, speaking for himself, said yesterday he heard Mr. Cox say elk herds below I-80 are at or below management objectives, and he said we had a lot of discussion during season setting about going into January because we needed to have more harvest ability to take animals. He asked if we should be pushing for that later January hunt to harvest when we are at or below objectives in areas south of I-80.

Commissioner McNinch said on Hunt 4107 for Area 10, you are stating that is addressed as part of another hunt.

Biologist Cox said yes, as part of cow management hunt. There will have sizable tag quota in there.

Commissioner Layne asked if the third hunt in Unit 121 that goes from October 1 to January 31 is going that long because of hunter congestion.

Biologist Gray said the hunt was effective last year with most of the elk out of there, and the thought was to have a long season to give hunters a long opportunity and allow NDOW to address the problem.

COMMISSIONER MORI MOVED TO APPROVE RESIDENT ELK ANTLERED ANY LEGAL WEAPON DEPREDATION HUNT 4102 AS PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGES: UNITS 101 – 103 EARLY FROM 40 TO 50; 101 – 103 LATE 40 TO 50; ELK ANTLERLESS ANY LEGAL WEAPON DEPREDATION HUNT 4107 AS PRESENTED BY DEPARTMENT WITH FOLLOWING CHANGES: UNITS 101 – 103 FROM 50 TO 75. COMMISSIONER WALLACE SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Resident Elk Antlered Any Legal Weapon Hunt 4151

CH: Quota for Units 161-164 and 171-173 Early hunt is changed from 8 to 12.

CL: Due to low success rates in Units 161-164, recommend the quota for 161-164 Early and Late hunts to match 2014 recommendations.

EL: Change Units 062, 064, 066, 068 Early 45 to 50 and 062, 064, 066, 068 Late 40 to 50.

WA: Unit group 161-164, 171-173 Early quota from 8 to 10.

WP: Units 111-115 Early at 100 and 111-115 Late at 85.

Furn Winder, Elko CABMW, said they agreed with the Department except for in Units 062, 064, 066, 068. Early 45 tags to 50 tags and 062, 064, 066, 068 Late 40 to 50, would like to split difference and wants increase from 45 tags to 50 tags and 40 tags to 50 tags.

Sean Shea, Washoe CABMW, said they had an exception with Unit group 161-164 Early, they wanted it to be 10 tags to be closer to the 90/10 split for nonresidents. For the late tags they see no problem going to 10 tags.

Ray Sawyer, White Pine CABMW, said they are requesting a reduction from 120 in Area 111 Early to 100 and in 111 – 115 Late to 85 as they want to move those tags into muzzleloader hunts when that hunt is addressed.

Biologist Cox said the Department's recommendation is following a demand/success formula and not inconsistent to have White Pine recommendation shift as that is what this process is about, letting social interests carve up the pie.

COMMISSIONER BLISS MOVED TO APPROVE RESIDENT ELK ANTLERED ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 4151 AS PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT WITH FOLLOWING CHANGES: UNITS 062, 064, 066, AND 068 EARLY MOVE FROM 45 TO 50 TAGS, SAME UNIT BUT LATE HUNT MOVE FROM 40 TO 50 TAGS; UNITS 111-115 EARLY FROM 120 TAGS TO 100 AND 111-115 LATE FROM 95 TO 85; UNIT GROUP 161-164, 171-173 EARLY FROM EIGHT TO 10. COMMISSIONER YOUNG SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Resident Elk – Antlerless Elk Management Any Legal Weapon Hunt 4481 OPTION for Antlered Elk Hunt 4151

CH: BELK and DELK tags remain at the 2014 quotas due to lack of hunter success.

Biologist Gray said a lot of elk are killed in Area 13 and are at the population objective. He felt the need to put a lot of cows in management hunts. He said they are now starting to back off of management hunts.

Troy Smith, Churchill CABMW, said their recommendation is not correct as written. They are in favor of the reduction in tags.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON MOVED TO APPROVE RESIDENT ELK ANTLERLESS ELK MANAGEMENT ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 4481 WITH OPTION FOR ANTLERED ELK HUNT 4151 AS PRESENTED COMMISSIONER VALENTINE SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Resident Elk Antlered Muzzleloader Hunt 4156 and Resident Elk Antlered Archery Hunt 4161

Resident Elk – Antlered – Muzzleloader Hunt 4156

CL: Units 221-223 total should be 18 and the quota for Units 241-242 should be 2. Should the quotas in the Monitors be less due to drought conditions?

LI: Units 221-223: Recommend increase to 18; Units 241-242: Recommend increase to 2.

WP: Increase tags in Units 111-115 by 15 to 25 and increase tags in Units 221-223 by 15 to 23.

Resident Elk – Antlered – Archery Hunt 4161

CL: Recommends that the quota for Units 221-223 be 25, the quota for Units 241-242 be 2 and the quota for Unit 231 be 25.

LI: Units 221-223: Recommend increase to 25; Units 241-242: Recommend increase to 2.

WP: Recommendation to increase by 5 to total 25 in Unit 221-223.

Discussion on demand/success.

Ray Sawyer, White Pine CABMW, requested an increase in tags in Units 111-115 by 15 to 25 and increase in tags in Units 221-223 by 15 to 23.

Paul Dixon, Clark CABMW, said Clark CABMW followed Lincoln CABMW's recommendation and the CABMW wanted to know about the monitors and drought conditions.

Southern Region Biologist Tom Donham said the increase is because muzzleloader hunt is taking place of normal rifle hunt in the late slot. He said they have not seen much of a reduction in production and recruitment in the elk herds and elk in central Nevada are not as affected by conditions.

Ray Sawyer, White Pine CABMW, said for clarification they are not adding archery hunt to 111 – 115, they were adding to 221 and 223.

Cory Lytle, Lincoln CABMW, said for Hunt 4156 they want to go back to 18 tags to provide opportunity and don't feel the extra harvest will turn anything upside down. He said they are requesting 50 percent increase in Units 241 – 242 from one to two tags.

Biologist Cox said with a 20 tag reduction in the rifle hunt and with the same hunter success rates with rifle and muzzleloader if there was commensurate tag change and a pickup of 20 tags in a different weapon class.

Ray Sawyer, White Pine CABMW, said they had concern with the archery hunt and congestion. They have a small area to hunt when they rut.

Cory Lytle, Lincoln CABMW, said they did not support that as they already have a three tag increase recommended.

COMMISSIONER MCNINCH MOVED TO APPROVE RESIDENT ELK ANTLERED MUZZLELOADER HUNT 4156 AS PROPOSED BY THE DEPARTMENT WITH FOLLOWING CHANGES: 111 -115 FROM 10 TO 25; 221 TO 225 FROM EIGHT TO 20; 241, 242 FROM ONE TO TWO; APPROVE RESIDENT ELK ANTLERED ARCHERY HUNT 4161 AS PROPOSED WITH FOLLOWING CHANGES: 111-115 25 TO 30; 221 TO 223 20 TO 25; 241, 242, FROM ONE TO TWO. COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Resident Elk Spike Any Legal Weapon Hunt 4651

CH: Recommends keeping the spike hunt quotas at 2014 levels.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON MOVED TO APPROVE RESIDENT ELK SPIKE ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 4651 AS PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT. COMMISSIONER WALLACE SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED 8 - 0. (COMMISSIONER YOUNG ABSENT FROM ROOM.)

Resident Elk Antlerless Any Legal Weapon Hunt 4181

Resident Elk – Antlerless – Any Legal Weapon Hunt 4181

CH: Recommends that all antlerless tags be reverted to 2013 quotas (pre DELK and BELK levels).

CL: Recommends quotas for Units 241-242 Early and Late should be 8.

EL: Increase Units 061, 071 mid from 170 to 210 and Units 062, 064, 066,068 Mid from 70 to 100.

LI: Units 241-242 early: Recommend increase to 6; Units 241-242 late: Increase to 8.

Biologist Cox said NDOW does not want major reductions in this hunt, and put those into the cow management tag quotas as not seeing major reductions. In Area 13 populations objectives are met, and will see cow elk hunt tag quotas lowered. Trying not to remove or reduce cow tags in primary cow hunts in favor of cow management hunts as they are “in addition to.”

Troy Smith, Churchill CABMW, said they had a member who is an archer that had concern with reducing cow elk archery tags to make room for management tags and Biologist Cox addressed that.

Cory Lytle, Lincoln CABMW, said for 241 – 242 Early they want to increase from five to six and for Late they support eight.

Paul Dixon, Clark CABMW, said they recommended an increase as success rates may be low.

Mitch Buzzetti, representing himself, said Elko County had substantial increases for antlerless elk hunts and sportsmen had made agreements with local ranchers and still have a ways to go. He supports an increase to antlerless tags in 061 and 071.

COMMISSIONER MORI MOVED TO APPROVE ELK ANTLERLESS ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 4181 AS PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT WITH FOLLOWING CHANGES: 061, 071 EARLY FROM 400 TO 440; 062, 064, 066 – 068, EARLY FROM 275 TO 305; 241, 242, EARLY FROM FIVE TO EIGHT; AND 241, 242, LATE FROM FIVE TO EIGHT. COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED 8 – 0. (COMMISSIONER YOUNG ABSENT FROM ROOM.)

Elk Antlerless Any Legal Weapon Hunt 4181 Wilderness Only

CH: Recommend all antlerless tags to be reverted to 2013 quotas (pre DELK and BELK levels).

EL: Change Unit 072 from 150 to 200.

Furn Winder, Elko CABMW, said they recommended an increase to get more people into the Wilderness Area and push the elk out.

COMMISSIONER WALLACE MOVED TO APPROVE ELK ANTLERLESS ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 4181 WILDERNESS ONLY AS PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGES: TO UNIT GROUP 072 CHANGING QUOTA FROM 150 TO 200. COMMISSIONER MORI SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED 8-0 (COMMISSIONER YOUNG ABSENT FROM ROOM.)

Resident Elk Antlerless Elk Management Any Legal Weapon Hunt 4481 with Option for Mule Deer Hunt 1331

CH: Recommends that the BELK and DELK tags remain at the same quotas as the 2014 season due to lack of hunter success.

Chairman Drew said something to keep in mind for next year for the management hunts is the original intent was to match the date with the main deer season date and he received comments about whether the cow hunters should start earlier or later than regular cow hunters. A suggestion was made that if one of the seasons starts earlier than another to let people know, so buyer beware on the application.

Troy Smith, Churchill CABMW, said their recommendation is to stay at the same quota as 2014 as increases concern them and not because of over-harvest rather concern with sportsmen not knowing what they are getting such as the low success rate. He said that is fine if sportsmen have been educated enough to know what they are buying.

Biologist Cox said in Area 10, they had 270 applicants in Early, 217 in Mid, and 240 Late. He said the other issue is we have that demand. A lot of hunters who selected Area 10 on the deer application put it as their fourth or fifth choice. He said there will be a lot of tag holders not drawing that Area 10 deer tag; therefore they will not draw a cow management tag. He said the 400 tag quota for Early and Mid is the tags will go unsold.

COMMISSIONER MORI MOVED TO APPROVE RESIDENT ELK ANTLERLESS ELK MANAGEMENT ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 4481 WITH OPTION FOR MULE DEER HUNT 1331 AS RECOMMENDED BY DEPARTMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGES: 061, 062, 064, 066 – 068 EARLY FROM 550 TO 575. COMMISSIONER WALLACE SECONDED THE MOTION.

Commissioner Mori said he discussed this with Biologist Gray and as we go down further there were issues with antlerless elk archery and Elko CABMW recommendations on that. Commissioner Mori said he will recommend as we get to that point is we are picking up 25 tags from other hunts and fewer hunters in the field during the few antlerless archery hunters.

Biologist Gray said there was an increase in elk archery tags with 1 percent hunter success rate from 77 tag holders, and Elko County has made it known they are pulling out all the stops to kill elk. They took out the 061 muzzleloader cow season, pushed the 062 muzzleloader season to early September. Instead of archery hunters chasing the cows around before the more successful hunters, we would be better off with tags in a hunt that have higher success.

Biologist Cox said the Commission will have to decide to attempt to accommodate using more successful “weapon” or accommodate those who use “primitive” weapon as Churchill CABMW requested.

Chairman Drew said he has no problem with that as 25 tags is minimal.

Commissioner Bliss agreed 25 tags is minimal but 550 tags is not, and personally he would rather give opportunity to more sportsmen during archery hunt, and if success is low enough we could raise archery tags to match the success and divide opportunity to get more people in the field during that particular hunt. He feels for deer hunters who deal with the pressure.

Furn Winder, Elko CABMW, said this came up after their meeting, and they polled everyone and they were in agreement with what is going on here.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Resident Elk Antlerless Muzzleloader Hunt 4176

Resident Elk – Antlerless Elk **Management** Muzzleloader Hunt 4476 – Option for Mule Deer Hunt 1371

Resident Elk – Antlerless Elk Management Muzzleloader Hunt 4476 – Option for Mule Deer Hunt 1371

CH: Recommends that all antlerless tags be reverted to 2013 quotas (pre DELK and BELK levels).

LI: Units 241-242: Recommend increase to three.

Resident Elk – Antlerless Elk Management Muzzleloader Hunt 4476 – Option for Mule Deer Hunt 1371

CH: Recommends that the BELK and DELK tags remain at the same quotas as the 2014 season due to lack of hunter success.

EL: Change Units 061, 062, 064, 066, 068 from 20 to 40.

Cory Lytle, Lincoln CABMW, recommendation to increase tags from two to three.

Furn Winder, Elko CABMW, recommendation to increase from 20 to 40 in Units 061, 062, 064, 066, 068.

COMMISSIONER VALENTINE MOVED TO APPROVE RESIDENT ELK ANTLERLESS MUZZLELOADER HUNT 4176 FOLLOWING CHANGES: TO 241, 242, FROM TWO TO THREE; RESIDENT ELK ANTLERLESS MANAGEMENT MUZZLELOADER HUNT 4476 OPTION FOR MULE DEER 1371 APPROVE WITH FOLLOWING CHANGES: 061, 062, 064, 066 – 068 FROM 20 TO 40 TAGS. COMMISSIONER MORI SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Resident Elk Antlerless Archery Hunt 4111

Resident Elk Antlerless Management Archery 4411 Option for Mule Deer Hunt 1341

Resident Elk – Antlerless – Archery Hunt 4111

CH: Recommends that all antlerless tags be reverted to 2013 quotas (pre DELK and BELK levels).

EL: Change Units 061, 071 from 50 to 70 and 062, 064, 066, 068 from 45 to 70

LI: Units 241: Recommend increase to 3.

Resident Elk – Antlerless Elk Management Archery 4411 – Option for Mule Deer Hunt 1341

CH: Recommends that the BELK and DELK tags remain at the same quotas as the 2014 season due to lack of hunter success.

EL: Change Units 061, 062, 064, 066, 068 from 25 to 80.

Biologist Gray said with drastic steps taken in muzzleloader season by eliminating cow muzzleloader season in 061 with the idea in mind of increasing success rates in cow harvest, they felt with archery success low, these elk are in open country and the more harassment of elk pushes them into Idaho or big groups. He said this is taking tags from less successful hunt into more successful hunt to facilitate success rate to get to the population objective faster.

Cory Lytle, Lincoln CABMW, recommended increasing from two to three.

Furn Winder, Elko CABMW, recommended from 25 to 80 as they were moved into another hunt. He personally would like the number to be 50. He said for Hunt 4411 the option for Mule Deer they want to go from 25 to 80 which was a less successful hunt and put those into rifle.

Shannon Scott, Spring Creek, concurred with the Departments comment on elk moving to Idaho, and would like to see archery tags back in regular rifle or muzzleloader season.

COMMISSIONER MORI MOVED TO APPROVE RESIDENT ELK ANTLERLESS ARCHERY HUNT 4111 AS PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGE: UNITS 241, 242, FROM TWO TO THREE; RESIDENT ELK ANTLERLESS ELK MANAGEMENT ARCHERY HUNT 4411 OPTION FOR MULE DEER 1341 AS PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT. COMMISSIONER WALLACE SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

EL: Increase to match resident.

WP: Recommendation to adjust nonresident quotas to 10% of resident quota for Units 111-115 Early and 111-115 Late.

Nonresident Elk – Antlered – Muzzleloader Hunt 4256

EL: Increase to match resident.

WP: Adjust nonresident quota to 10% of resident quota in Unit 111-115 and 221-223.

Nonresident Elk – Antlered – Archery Hunt 4261

EL: Increase to match resident.

WP: Adjust nonresident quota to 10% of resident quota if necessary in Unit 221-223.

Biologist Cox said he computed the changes to get to the 10 percent split on nonresident individual unit groups and to ensure a statewide 10 percent: 062 through 068 Early six and Late six; 111-115 Early reduce to 12. For Hunt 4256 changes are 111-115, three; and 221- 223 two. Hunt 4261 Archery 111-115, four; and 221-223 four. The split does not apply to Hunt 4281 as it is an antlerless hunt.

Chairman Drew requested one motion for the three nonresident antlerless hunts.

COMMISSIONER WALLACE MOVED TO APPROVE NONRESIDENT ELK ANTLERED ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 4251 AS PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGES: 062, 064, 066-068 EARLY FROM FIVE TO SIX; LATE FROM FIVE TO SIX; 111-115 EARLY FROM 15 TO 12. APPROVE NONRESIDENT ELK ANTLERED MUZZLELOADER HUNT 4256 AS PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT WITH FOLLOWING CHANGES: TO UNIT 111-115 FROM TWO TO THREE; UNIT 221–223 FROM ONE TO TWO. APPROVE NONRESIDENT ELK ANTLERED ARCHERY HUNT 4261 AS PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGES: UNIT GROUP 111 – 115 FROM THREE TO FOUR; 221-223 FROM THREE TO FOUR. COMMISSIONER VALENTINE SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Nonresident Elk – Antlerless – Any Legal Weapon 4281

CH: Recommends that all antlerless tags be reverted to 2013 quotas (pre DELK and BELK levels).

EL: Increase to match resident.

Furn Winder, Elko CABMW, increase to match resident.

COMMISSIONER WALLACE MOVED TO APPROVE NONRESIDENT ELK – ANTLERLESS – ANY LEGAL WEAPON 4281 AS PRESENTED COMMISSIONER YOUNG THE DEPARTMENT. MOTION SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Resident Junior Mule Deer Antlered or Antlerless Archery, Muzzleloader, or Any Legal Weapon Hunt 1107

CL: Recommend following quota recommendations of the ELKO CABMW for Units 071-079, 091.

EU: Unit Groups 141-145 and 151-156 quotas remain the same as 2014 year's quotas. The reasons being in Area 14 and Area 15 we are very skeptical relative to the estimated base population levels determined through modeling. Over the last many years we personally have experienced and heard from a measurable number of hunters and interested public who have expressed their concern regarding significantly reduced deer numbers and the high number of hunters.

LA: Would like the quota of youth tags in Area 15 changed to 100.

WA: Unit group 011-013 quota from 75 to 56. Unit 033 quota from 20 to 10.

Biologist Schroeder presented a PowerPoint presentation on the status of mule deer in Nevada and the effect of the current three-year drought on mule deer, and answered questions from the Commission.

Sean Shea, Washoe CABMW, said in 011-013 they cut the quota by 25 percent as he is in that unit a lot and he spoke to the biologist and the deer are not there. He said in 033 they cut 50 percent because if you go to the fall survey information they count 64 deer and for the spring survey they cut it short as they

had not seen any deer. Mr. Shea said the juniors went from 20 to 10 tags, and the Sheldon should see improvement in the future due to the removal of horses.

Jim Evans, Eureka CABMW, provided a summation on mule deer in Area 14 applying their recommendations. Mr. Evans said they agree Area 14 has a young and growing herd; one issue that they deal with is the number of deer that occupy Area 14 and has continued to be controversial. As far as population dynamics the herd is not growing as fast as the adjacent units and that has been identified by the local biologist. He read from a summary document identifying factors such as high concentration of hunters, drought with record low precipitation, and changes in the dynamic. He said they would like all mule deer hunt quotas held at 2014 levels.

Paul Dixon, Clark CABMW, said they had one person concerned about the youth hunt tags, and they did not have a biologist attend their meeting. He said it would be better to follow the local biologist and CABMW recommendation and not implement something from Clark CABMW that does not have biological background.

Rex Flowers said he supports Washoe CABMW recommendation except on the youth hunt; he wants to stay with the Departments recommendation.

Chairman Drew said he understands where Washoe CABMW is going as this is opportunity hunt, and cuts in both units have more first choice applicants, but he has trouble with it on the youth hunt. As far as Eureka and Lander's recommendation in Area 14 and 15 if you look at tags sold to first choice applicants he is comfortable with Eureka's recommendation of 155 in Area 14, he would prefer to go with Lander's recommendation in 15 because 68 first choice applicants, that suggests more demand and would be comfortable with 100.

CHAIRMAN DREW MOVED TO APPROVE RESIDENT JUNIOR MULE DEER ANTLERED OR ANTLERLESS ARCHERY, MUZZLELOADER, OR ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 1107 AS PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGES: UNIT 141 - 145 TO GO FROM 170 TO 155; 151-156 FROM 140 TO 100. COMMISSIONER WALLACE SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Resident Mule Deer - Antlerless – Any legal Weapon Depredation Hunt 1101

Resident Mule Deer – Antlerless – Any Legal Weapon Hunt 1181

EL: Change 071-079, 091 from 800 to 650.

Biologist Schroeder said Elko CABMW submitted a recommendation on the Area 7 doe hunt which is new. The Department recommendation was for 7 percent of doe harvest and their recommendation to 650 results in 5 ½ percent impact on deer harvest and the Department is fine with that.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON MOVED TO APPROVE RESIDENT MULE DEER ANTLERLESS ANY LEGAL WEAPON DEPREDATION HUNT 1101 AS PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT AND APPROVE RESIDENT MULE DEER ANTLERLESS ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 1181 AS PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGE: 071 - 079 AND 091, QUOTA BE REDUCED FROM 800 TO 650. COMMISSIONER VALENTINE SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED.

Resident Mule Deer Antlered Any Legal Weapon Hunts 1331

CL: Recommend following quota recommendations of the Elko CABMW for Units 071-079, 091. Recommend Units 221-223 Mid be 140 and Units 221-223 Late be 30.

EU: Unit Groups 131-134, 141-145, 151-156 quotas remain the same as 2014 year's quotas.

See reasons under Hunt 1107 for quota recommendation.

HU: Reduce Unit 035 to 75 tags and Unit 051 to 250 tags due to longer season. Reduce Unit Group 043-046 Early to last year's quota (191 tags) and 043-046 Late to last year's quota (81 tags) due to overpressure in the Sonomas caused by limited access in the Tobin Range.

LA: Recommend Area 15 changed to the following: resident – early – 200; and late – 40.

LI: Units 221-223 Mid: Recommend decrease to 140.

PE: Because no aerial surveys were conducted and populations are down we recommend tag quotas go down to 170 in Units 043-046 Early and down to 70 in Units 043-046 Late. We base this on hunter's response in the field.

WA: Unit group 011-013 Early quota from 140 to 105, Unit group 011-013 Late quota from 40 to 30. Unit group 033 Early quotas from 45 to 23, Unit group 033 Late quotas from 35 to 13.

WP: Recommendation to decrease tags in Unit 221-223 mid from 160 to 130.

Biologist Schroeder said in response to Eureka CABMWS comment about skepticism on population modeling and hunter perceptions in the field that the Department works very hard and he has full confidence in the Department recommendations based on surveys. He said in Areas 13, 14, and 15, combined had a 51 percent success rate which is 11 points above the statewide average. He agreed there had been a dip in Area 14 populations and in 4 points or better.

Commissioner Bliss said he supports Eureka CABMW comment, and there was further discussion on deer herd status in Eureka County.

Chairman Drew said he appreciates the discussion and is leaning toward the Department recommendation on Area 13, Area 14, and the CABMW in Area 15. He knows there are doe hunts and it seems like some of the Department recommendations are pretty big but could be swayed.

Biologist Schroeder said Area 15 is problematic in terms of having a poor survey and the Department went ultra conservative and are playing catch-up. He recognized the compromise on Area 15.

Commissioner Johnston said on Area 15 the Commission received input, with Lander recommending a quota of 200 which is a slight increase from last year at 140, and listening to the Department there is room for compromise on 15 or common ground.

Ray Sawyer, White Pine CABMW, said for Unit 221-223 mid they asked to reduce from 160 to 130.

Jim Evans, Eureka CABMW, said on Area 15 those from his area hunt Simpson Park and Bates Mountain which has multiple access points allowing good access which drives the complaints over the past several years. During his work he has flown Bates Mountain doing resource work and there is a huge difference in numbers there compared to Cortez Range. Mr. Evans said problems on Bates Mountain are density and is a hard hunt.

Tom Cassinelli, Humboldt CABMW, said they are requesting reductions in 035 to 75 and 051 to 250 tags because the length of the season will make for better hunter success and the drought will concentrate deer and hunters.

Joe Crim, Pershing CABMW, said the recommendation for reduction in 043-046 to 170 in Early and Late is because there is no survey done in the unit, the success rate and horn growth.

Cory Lytle, Lincoln CABMW, said they wanted to drop to 20 tags in Units 221-223 Mid, a slight increase and the area is congested.

Sean Shea, Washoe CABMW, said they cut 013 Early by 25 percent and a survey includes 014 which have a lot of deer and one-half the deer from Unit 01 are in 014. He said the Department's game warden is not seeing deer either. Mr. Shea said for himself he does not go off antler growth as thinks it is more of a genetic issue. He said even with no wild horses when they flew the area to survey no deer were seen and they cut the flight short.

Rex Flowers said he would like the Commission to consider reducing unit 015 to 20 because of wild fire and severe drought.

Biologist Schroeder addressed comments: Access in Area 14 Units 014, 043 – Continual frustration as biologists can't control access, and have access issues in many areas of the state such as Humboldt County has differences between Tobin's and Sonoma's. As Tobin's have a road that you can take to the top. For 222-223 Mid the intent by putting tags from Early to Mid was to alleviate hunter congestion due to the three season structure. In regard to antler growth four points or better for biologists is more an index of age structure then quality or size of antlers although that can be impacted by density and drought. He said in terms of Northern Washoe Units have no deer during surveys, unit 015 is an interstate herd and have had no significant winter the last couple of years and typically hunters rely on snowfall as that pushes deer and moves them. He said it is very tough to predict snowfall, and biologists have acknowledged that and quotas have been reduced because of the drought. The removal of horses on the Sheldon is promising and he hopes the Sheldon turns around over the next couple of years.

COMMISSIONER VALENTINE MOVED FOR RESIDENT MULE DEER ANTLERED ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 1331 RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE QUOTA AS PRESENTED WITH CHANGES: 011 – 013 EARLY FROM 140 TAGS TO 105; 011, 013 LATE FROM 40 TAGS TO 30; 015 FROM 35 TO 25; 033 EARLY FROM 45 TO 23; 033 LATE FROM 25 TO 13; 035 FROM 95 TO 75; 043-046 EARLY FROM 225 TO 170; 043-046 LATE FROM 80 TO 70; 051 FROM 275 TO 250; 131-134 EARLY FROM 325 TO 300; 141-145 EARLY 425 TO 355; 151-156 EARLY 350 TO 200. MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MORI.

Chairman Drew said the following units in the motion concern him 015 to 25 instead of 35; 033 Early and Late. He would be more comfortable with that being higher; same for 043-046; 151-156 Early not comfortable going that low; and maybe 015.

Commissioner Johnston said he wanted to accept the input received relative to 221-223 on Mid-season as he believes a compromise of around 140 to support Lincoln and White Pine CABMW's recommendation.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON MOVED TO AMEND THE MOTION TO DECREASE THE QUOTA FROM 160 IN 221-223 MID AND MAKE IT 140. MOTION SECONDED. COMMISSIONERS IN FAVOR OF THE AMENDMENT: CHAIRMAN DREW, COMMISSIONERS WALLACE, BLISS, JOHNSTON, MCNINCH, MORI, AND YOUNG. COMMISSIONERS VALENTINE AND LAYNE OPPOSED. MOTION CARRIED 7-2.

Commissioner McNinch said he won't be able to support the motion as he does not want to recreate a situation such as that in 15 and sees what the Department is trying to do with getting back on track. He said for 033 there have already been reductions.

Commissioner Layne said she won't support the motion either; she will support some decreases in 141 Early and Late.

COMMISSIONER BLISS MOVED TO AMEND TO CHANGE 015 FROM 25 TO 30; CHANGE 033 EARLY FROM 23 TO 35; 043-046 EARLY FROM 170 TO 191; AREA 13 FROM 300 TO 325; 151-156 EARLY TO 225. COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON SECONDED THE MOTION TO AMEND.

Commissioner McNinch asked if the change to 225 tags gets the Department where it needs to be.

Biologist Schroeder said that is a reasonable compromise.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT WAS UNANIMOUS. MOTION CARRIED.

CHAIRMAN DREW SAID THE VOTE ON THE MAIN MOTION WAS AMENDED TWICE FOR HUNT 1331 AND IS AS FOLLOWS: DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION WITH FOLLOWING CHANGES: 011-013 EARLY IS 105, LATE IS 30; 015 30; 033 EARLY 35; 033 LATE 13; 035 75; 043-046 EARLY 191, LATE 70; 051 250; 131-134 EARLY 325; 141-145 EARLY 355; 151-156 EARLY 225; 221-223 MID 140. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Resident Mule Deer Antlered Hunt 1371 Muzzleloader

CL: Recommend following quota recommendations of the Elko CABMW for Units 071-079, 091. Recommend Units 221-223 be 25 and Units 114-115 be 65, the same as the 2014 quota.

LA: Would like the Area 15 quota changed to 25.

LI: Units 221-223: Recommend increase to 25.

MN: Change to 6.

WA: Unit group 011-013 quota from 8 to 6. Unit group 033 quota from 4 to 2.

WP: Recommendation for Unit 111-113 to be at 35 and Unit 221-223 to be at 30.

Sean Shea, Washoe CABMW, said they are requesting Unit group 011-013 quota from eight to six, and cut 033 from four to two.

Cory Lytle, Lincoln CABMW, requested an increase to 25 for 221-223, and speaking for himself he would be okay with a move up to 30.

Ray Sawyer, White Pine CABMW, they recommended 30 for 221-223 to provide more opportunity and for 111-113 also requested A 20 tag increase to 35.

Chairman Drew said Mineral CABMW unanimously approved 202, 205-208, for an increase from three to six. He said he is comfortable with all but the Washoe CABMW recommendation caused him concern as the Department already cut that in half, and is a big drop.

Biologist Schroeder said the small changes do not cause the Department concern as to biological impact and with lower tag numbers the demand/success formula is more volatile when dealing with absolute numbers.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE RESIDENT MULE DEER ANTLERED HUNT MUZZLELOADER 1371 AS PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT WITH FOLLOWING CHANGES: UNIT GROUP 011 TO 013 REDUCTION FROM EIGHT TO SIX; 111-113 INCREASE FROM 15 TO 35; 202, 205-208 INCREASE FROM THREE TO SIX; AND 221 – 223 INCREASE FROM 20 TO 30. MOTION SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Resident Mule Deer – Antlered – Archery Hunt 1341

CL: Recommend following quota recommendations of the Elko CABMW for Units 071-079, 091. Recommend Units 221-223 be 65 and Unit 231 be 45.

EU: Unit Groups 131-134, 141-145, 151-156 quotas remain the same as 2014 year's quotas, due to the high number of hunters in the area.

LA: Would like the Area 15 quota changed to 100.

LI: Units 221-223: Recommend increase to 65; Unit 231: Recommend decrease to 45.

WA: Unit group 011-013 quota from 30 to 23. Unit group 033 quota from 10 to 5.

Sean Shea, Washoe CABMW, said their desire was to be consistent with everyone getting a deduction.

Cory Lytle, Lincoln CABMW, for 221-223 recommended change to 65; and Unit 231 to 45.

Jim Evans, Eureka CABMW, said for consistency they want to maintain 14 at 120 versus the 160 recommendation.

Rex Flowers said he would like the Commission to look at Unit 015 as probably demand/success, that created this to go from four to 10, and given the fact that junior hunters are receiving 52 percent less tags, then weapon classes receiving 20 percent less, he requested it move back to four as in 2014.

Sean Shea, Washoe CABMW, said personally they would be okay with that.

Biologist Schroeder said demand/success volatility has an effect here and from the Departments standpoint it is not a big deal with the difference between five and 10.

Jim Evans, Eureka CABMW and Commissioner Bliss, both clarified on the Eureka CABMW recommendation, that there was no action/recommendation for Area 15 for the archery hunt, but there was recommendation for Area 14.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON MOVED TO APPROVE RESIDENT MULE DEER ARCHERY HUNT 1341 AS PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT WITH FOLLOWING CHANGES: UNIT GROUP 011-013 REDUCTION FROM 30 TO 23; UNIT GROUP 015 REDUCTION FROM 10 TO FOUR; UNIT GROUP 033 REDUCTION FROM 10 TO FIVE; UNIT GROUP 141-145 REDUCTION FROM 160 TO 120; 221 – 223 65; 231 45. COMMISSIONER WALLACE SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Nonresident Mule Deer – Antlered – Any Legal Weapon Hunt 1331

CL: Recommend following quota recommendations of the Elko CABMW for Units 071-079, 091.

EU: Unit Groups 131-134, 141-145, 151-156 quotas remain the same as 2014 year's quotas, due to the high number of hunters in the area.

LA: Would like Area 15 changed to the following: Early hunt – 30; and Late hunt – 3.

LI: Units 221-223 mid: Recommend decrease to 4; Unit 231: Recommend decrease to 10; Units 241-245: Recommend decrease to 2, (mirror 2014 quotas).

PE: Recommend tags lowered to 15 in Units 043-046 Early and lowered to 5 in Units 043-046 Late.

WA: Unit group 011-013 Early quota from 10 to 7, Unit group 011-013 Late quota from 4 to 3. Unit group 033 Early quotas from 4 to 2, 033 Late stays at 2 because of minimum quota.

WP: Recommendation to adjust nonresident quota to 10% of resident quota.

Biologist Schroeder provided the following for the Nonresident Hunt 1331: 011-013 Early seven, 011-013 Late three; 015 two; 033 Early three; 035 five; 043, 046 Early 22; 043, 046 Late five; 051 22; 141-145 Early 28; 151-156 Early 18; and 221-223 Mid 12.

Cory Lytle, Lincoln CABMW, for 221-223 Mid they wanted four, and for 231 10, and for 241-245 two not 10.

Jim Evans, Eureka CABMW, said 25 Early and three Late is their recommendation.

COMMISSIONER WALLACE MOVED TO APPROVE NONRESIDENT MULE DEER ANTLERED ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 1331 AS PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGES: UNIT 011–013 EARLY FROM 10 TO SEVEN; 011-013 FROM FOUR TO THREE; 015 FROM THREE TO TWO; 033 FROM FOUR TO THREE; 035 FROM SEVEN TO FIVE; 043-046 EARLY FROM 25 TO 22; 043-046 LATE FROM SIX TO FIVE; 051 FROM 25 TO 22; 141-145 FROM 35 TO 28; 151-156 EARLY FROM 30 TO 18; 221-223 MID FROM 15 TO 12. COMMISSIONER VALENTINE SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Nonresident Mule Deer Antlered Muzzleloader Hunt 1371

Nonresident Mule Deer – Antlered – Archery Hunt 1341

Nonresident Mule Deer – Antlered – Muzzleloader Hunt 1371

CL: Recommend following quota recommendations of the Elko CABMW for Units 071-079, 091.

LA: Would like the Area 15 quota changed to 2.

WP: Recommendation to adjust nonresident quota to 10% of resident quota.

Nonresident Mule Deer – Antlered – Archery Hunt 1341

CL: Recommend following quota recommendations of the Elko CABMW for Units 071-079, 091.

LA: Would like the Area 15 quota changed to 10.

LI: Unit 231: Recommend decrease to 4.

WA: Unit group 011-013 quota from 4 to 3. Unit group 033 quota stays at 2 because of minimum quota.

WP: Recommendation to adjust nonresident quota to 10% of resident quota.

Biologist Schroeder said due to the requirement of having a minimum of one tag some units do not change. He provided the nonresident changes.

Chairman Drew asked that the antlered archery hunt be included.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON MOVED TO APPROVE NONRESIDENT MULE DEER ANTLERED MUZZLELOADER HUNT 1371 AS PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGES: UNIT GROUP 111-113, FROM TWO TO FOUR; 221-223 FROM TWO TO THREE. NONRESIDENT ANTLERED MULE DEER ARCHERY HUNT 1341 AS PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT WITH FOLLOWING CHANGES: UNIT GROUP 011-013 DECREASE FROM FOUR TO THREE; 114-115 DECREASE FROM 20 TO 14; 221-223 INCREASE FROM SIX TO SEVEN; AND 231 DECREASE FROM SIX TO FIVE. COMMISSIONER WALLACE SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Resident and Nonresident Deer and Antelope Landowner Compensation Tags

COMMISSIONER WALLACE MOVED TO APPROVE RESIDENT AND NONRESIDENT DEER AND ANTELOPE LANDOWNER COMPENSATION TAGS EITHER SEX HUNTS 1115, 1215, 2115, AND 2215, AS PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT AT 1.5 PERCENT. COMMISSIONER MORI SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Black Bear Resident Any Legal Weapon Hunt 6151

Black Bear Nonresident Any Legal Weapon Hunt 6251

Game Division Administrator Wakeling said yesterday a briefing was provided on black bears and the Department is recommending a quota of 41 resident bear tags and the nonresident bear quota at four.

Commissioner Johnston said he received a number of emails requesting a zero quota and the senders cited the state's drought conditions, and he asked with the existing drought, if the Department is comfortable with the quota proposal.

Administrator Wakeling said the population has continued to grow and has survived several droughts.

Chairman Drew said that the Commission received the emails and that there were about two dozen emails requesting a zero quota for black bears.

Janelle Richards, No Bear Hunt Nevada, representative read their statement:

Given the certainty that there will be a 2015 bear hunt, which we oppose in entirety, we request the Commission to significantly decrease the recommended quota. The year 2014 has been the hottest one in Nevada for more than one hundred years, and the Department predicts a bad year for human wildlife conflict. The number of urban bear conflicts increased from 282 for the years 2008-2012 to 601 for 2013-2014. The drought, while resulting in more conflict, is also affecting the available food sources for the bears. It is difficult to find information on pinyon pine health in Nevada, and there is no way for the average individual to get anything more than anecdotal information by personal analysis. However, fire danger is increasing with hotter, drier summers and fire damage has significantly affected habitat in Nevada; and drought increases vulnerability of pinyon pine to insects and disease. In 2013 a wholesale pine nut seller in Nevada said, "Due to severe climate changes in the mountains of the western and southwestern states, plagues are coming into our forests very early in the spring. This is something we never saw 20 or more years ago. These plagues are destroying our wonderful products of Nevada pine nuts" Additionally he said, "With these occurrences happening so consecutively in the past years we can see that this industry of harvesting commercial pinyon pine seed from our forest and making them available to consumers all over the southwest and western states, as we have for decades in our family business, we can sadly say that at this rate it is a dying business and a dead one in the near future." In an email asking about the crop last year this gentleman said, "Plagues are taking most of harvest before it matures." It is nice that we hear anecdotally that some bear's stomachs are filled with pinenuts, but this

means little with the bigger picture of the drought and its effect on the pinyon pines and the bear population as a whole.

Forty-nine bears were killed for a variety of reasons last year. (Of note, there is a typo in the big game status report, 49 bears were killed, not 48.) For a population of 600, that is 8.2 percent of the population killed last year. According to the Department the rate of growth is slowing to an average of approximately 8 percent per year. An amazing feat in the fourth year of a drought. Is there another Western state that has a population growing so robust in a time of drought? California's population has grown an average of 5.5 percent since 2010 and they are fortunate to have much better bear habitat in the Northwest of the state. The bear density in the Sierra Range has been estimated at only 0.5-1 bear per square mile. The other mountain ranges in Nevada are much more arid and likely to have even lower bear densities, although we do not know the population in these mountain ranges despite an ongoing hunt. To make matters worse, regulations still permit the use of hounds. Hounds chasing bears for hours will decrease the animals' fitness and could potentially result in more human wildlife conflict in attempt to increase caloric intake. Several scientific studies, including at least two in Nevada, have determined that the public does not approve of hounding. In fact, hunters in most studies do not approve of hounding. Sex kill ratios do not change with or without hounds. This was reconfirmed by California's bear kill data from last year. Therefore, we ask that you please give the bears a small break after four years of drought. Please decrease the quota this year. Thank you.

Rex Flowers requested an increase of bear tags as the hunt has been over the last four years. He noted Douglas CABMW requested an increase of eight tags.

Sean Shea, Washoe CABMW, said their CABMW had a 2 – 2 vote of with one member absent so it did not pass. He said speaking personally, he went on four bear hunts this year and saw abundant pine nuts away from the roads. He said running bears with dogs have not affected them at all as the bears had five to six inches of fat all the way down their backs.

Stephanie Myers, Mt. Charleston, said as a trophy hunt only, the bear hunt should be discontinued/banned with zero quota.

COMMISSIONER BLISS MOVED TO APPROVE THE RESIDENT QUOTA BLACK BEAR ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 6151 AT 41, NONRESIDENT HUNT ANY LEGAL WEAPON QUOTA 6251 AT 4. BLACK BEAR HARVEST OBJECTIVE COMBINED RESIDENT HUNT 6151 AND NONRESIDENT HUNT 6251 2015 HARVEST OBJECTIVE AT 20. COMMISSIONER MORI SECONDED THE MOTION.

Commissioners Layne and McNinch stated they are opposed to the bear hunt.

Commissioner Johnston supports the motion and would have supported an increase in number of tags but keeping harvest objective where it is at based on Department's presentation yesterday and with confirmation today on the information provided.

VOTE ON MOTION: COMMISSIONERS IN FAVOR: CHAIRMAN DREW, COMMISSIONERS WALLACE, BLISS, JOHNSTON, MORI, VALENTINE AND YOUNG. COMMISSIONERS OPPOSED: LAYNE AND MCNINCH. MOTION CARRIED 7 – 2.

20 Future Commission meetings

Deputy Director Robb listed the agenda items for the June Commission meeting: Upland game/furbearer seasons, Heritage tag vendors and projects, CABMW budgets, and elk arbitration hearing.

Commissioner Johnston advised that the Heritage Committee will meet on Thursday in Eureka prior to the meeting, and also would like to schedule a Tag Allocation Application Hunt Committee meeting on Friday morning.

21 Public Comment –

Trish Swain thanked Commissioner Layne for her service on the Commission and presented her with an award listing her devotion to animals, integrity, and willingness to hold values, honesty, tact, and statesmanship.

Chairman Drew said he will reserve the Commissioners' thanks to Commissioner Layne for the Eureka Commission meeting.

Caren Tayloe, Washoe County, thanked Commissioner Layne for her service, effort and courage under fire, and as she will not be at the Eureka meeting, she thanked the other Commissioners who may also be leaving for their service to the state. Ms. Tayloe congratulated NDOW on the May 6, 2015, article on the state's drought in the Washington Post.

Joel Blakeslee said he has attended these meetings for 35 years and provided the following information: Two years ago he trapped on the Sheldon and saw one deer; we talked of the bear population increasing and lions are increasing too; in the 1980s 400 tags allocated on Sheldon now it is 40; it is possible one mountain lion will kill more deer on the Sheldon than humans next year and that is really sad. He said there used to be lion quotas and trappers never saw lions and now that country is overwhelmed. Over the last 35 years he watched this thing change a whole bunch is why he offered this for perspective.

Tom Cassinelli, Humboldt CABMW said he has represented Humboldt CABMW for 28 years and has participated in the quota process for all those years and he commended the Commission and the Department for how the system has improved. He said now it is very easy for the CABMWs to provide input to the Department and he thanked everyone.

Stephanie Myers congratulated Commissioner Layne and said on a good day it has been 7 – 2, and a bad day 8 – 1. She said she is proud of her for her service under fire and thanked Commissioner Layne.

Commissioner Young thanked Commissioner Layne for her outstanding service and it has been a great opportunity to work with her.

Commissioner Layne said Commissioner Young's term may end as well and she hoped he stays on. She said if she is not at the Eureka Commission meeting she will thank everyone now.

Meeting Adjourned 2:21 p.m.

Note: The meeting has been videotaped and is available for viewing at ndow.org and the minutes are a summary of the meeting. At the Department of Wildlife Headquarters in Reno is a complete record of the meeting.