



STATE OF NEVADA

DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE

Law Enforcement Division

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MEMORANDUM

March 25, 2016

To: Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners, County Advisory Boards to Manage Wildlife, and Interested Publics

From: Tyler Turnipseed, Chief Game Warden

Title: **Regulation Changes: Commission General Regulations 458, 459, and 440**

Description: The Commission will consider NAC changes to prohibit the use of laser tracking “smart rifles”; limit the use of excessively large military type cartridges; allow the use of some black powder substitutes that may be considered smokeless; limit the use of drones and other aircraft for hunting; and limit the use of trail cameras for hunting.

Presenter: Tyler Turnipseed, Chief Game Warden

Agenda No: 20C, 20D, 20E

CGR 458 (Agenda Item 20C): Electronic Rifle Triggers, Caliber and Cartridge Length, and Smokeless Powder Restrictions. This proposed change to NAC 503.142 has three separate and unrelated parts.

- The first proposed change deals with muzzleloader hunts. Regulation currently states that smokeless powder is prohibited. In 2011, we sent a letter to every holder of a muzzleloader big game tag because it was determined that Blackhorn 209, which had become very popular with muzzleloader hunters, would actually be considered a smokeless powder because of its chemical makeup. The Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners (NBWC) then received a petition to legalize Blackhorn 209 in 2013. The board agreed to look at the situation, but chose not to remove the sentence stating that smokeless powder is prohibited. This current proposed change would remove the sentence, “The use of smokeless powder is prohibited” from regulation, thereby making smokeless powders, such as Blackhorn 209, legal to use during a muzzleloader-only hunt.
- The second proposed change would make it illegal to hunt a big game mammal with any firearm equipped with an electronic or computer-controlled trigger. This change is in

response to the development of laser-tracking “smart rifles”. These rifles acquire “laser lock” on a target and then automatically fire the round when the riflescope’s crosshairs meet up with the laser lock point. The scopes are Wi-Fi enabled to show real time images to anyone wirelessly hooked up to it, and allow for shooting the rifle without even looking through the scope. The company producing these rifles guarantees accuracy within half an inch at over a mile distance on targets moving up to 30 miles per hour once “laser lock” is acquired. See product videos at tracking-point.com.

- The third proposed change would limit the use of huge military type cartridges, such as the .50 BMG. These large rifles have crossed over from the military and become more available to civilians in recent years. The proposed regulation change would limit the overall loaded length of a hunting cartridge to 3.8 inches and bullet caliber to .46 inches. .50 BMG rounds are approximately 5.45 inches in overall loaded length. A similar military type round developed in 2005 is the .416 Barrett with a loaded length of about 4.5 inches. Most commonly used hunting cartridges have an overall loaded length less than 3.7 inches, but this proposed language has been said by some to limit handloaders using long bullets in their .30-378’s that may exceed 3.8 inches in overall loaded length. Some possible alternatives to the 3.8 inch overall loaded length restriction are as follows.
 - Change the 3.8 inch overall loaded length limit to 4 inches to allow handloaders to load long bullets in their .30-378’s and seat them a shallow depth. This would still prohibit the .50 BMG and .416 Barrett which most consider too large for game animals.
 - Instead of limiting overall loaded length, the limit could be placed on case length. This would allow handloaders variation in bullet seating depth. Prohibiting the use of a cartridge with a case length of 3 inches or more would allow all of the commonly used hunting cartridges of today while prohibiting the .50 BMG and the .416 Barrett.

CGR 459 (Agenda Item 20D): Use of drones and other aircraft for the purpose of hunting, scouting, or locating big game. This proposed change to NAC 503.148 would do two things relative to hunting and scouting with aircraft.

- The first change would strengthen existing language stating that the use of drones, or unmanned aerial vehicles, for the purpose of hunting, is already illegal according to the current aerial hunting regulation. Most agree that they are already covered under subsection (a) that describes “an aircraft, including, without limitation, any device that is used for navigation of, or flight in, the air.” However specifically adding “unmanned aerial vehicle” language further clarifies their prohibition as many people have asked for clarification.
- The second proposed change requested by the NBWC is to simplify and expand the season closure for aerial scouting. The regulation currently prohibits the use of aircraft for hunting, scouting, or locating big game from a period beginning 48 hours prior to the opening of **any** big game season in that unit until the close of all big game seasons in that unit. This has proven confusing to some who thought they could fly up until 48 hours before the season for which they had a tag, rather than **any** big game season in the unit. The proposed change would prohibit the use of aircraft for hunting, scouting, or locating big game year round.

CGR 440 (Agenda Item 20E): Use of “trail cameras” for the purpose of hunting, scouting, or locating big game. This proposed addition to Chapter 503 of NAC would prohibit the use of “trail cameras” for the purpose of hunting, scouting, or locating big game from August 1st through December 31st. Various versions of a trail camera regulation have been discussed numerous times since 2010. The most recent draft was discussed by the NBWC in 2013 and this current proposed version incorporates motions made at that meeting regarding the regulation.