

Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners  
Bear Regulation Committee

Approved Minutes - December 5, 2013

Tahoe Center for environmental Sciences  
291 Country Club Drive, Rooms 139 &141  
Incline Village, NV 89450  
Monday September 10, 2012

Committee Members Present

Chairman Commissioner David McNinch  
Commissioner Jeremy Drew  
Commissioner Jack Robb  
Judi Caron  
Kathryn Bricker

Department Personnel Present

Mike Dobel, Western Region Game Supervisor  
Carl Lackey, Western Region Game Biologist  
Jody Wilkinson, Recording Secretary

Others in Attendance

Tony Robinson  
James English  
Mike Smith - Self  
Elaine Carrick - Self  
Catherine Smith - Self  
Carolyn Stark - Self  
Ann Bryant - Bear League  
Pamela Gartin - Self  
Joshua Boles  
Robert Pohlman - Douglas CABMW  
Nicole Lutkemuller  
Jim Hammerel  
Elizabeth Rogers - Community  
Sherine Kuckhoff - Self  
Margaret Martini - Self

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- 1. Call to Order – Chairman McNinch**  
Meeting called to order at 5:32 p.m.  
Introduction of members.

## 2. Opening Statement – Chairman McNinch

We want to educate ourselves. We are going to be going through a learning curve as a committee. There are a lot of different things going on and we are probably not all aware of everything that is going on. We are here to educate. There are no promises as to where we will head or what we are going to do. The only promise that I did make is that we would have a meeting and listen.

## 3. Member Items – Announcements

Committee may present emergent items. No action may be taken by the Committee. Any item requiring Committee action will be scheduled on a future Committee agenda.

Kathryn Bricker – Members of the community and NoBearHunt Nevada were encouraged that they had a forum for dialogue when the Bear Committee formed. Formed a public committee and reviewed the Bear Management Plans for each state that manage bears (approximately 30). There were three states that stood out. There seems to be a desire by the public that this committee consider reviewing the top 3 bear management plans and recommend our own version of those to the Commission to adopt in Nevada.

Poll – Survey results of lethal vs. non-lethal solutions. Ask the Committee consider studying the non-lethal models that are available. See what steps we need to take to move in that direction.

Request that the discussion of whether or not to use dogs in the hunt be considered by the Commission as an action item in order to change current regulation.

Jeremy Drew – I am interested in solutions moving forward. We as wildlife commissioners, our role is that we help set policy for the Department of Wildlife, but we cannot dictate what the county, State Legislatures, or local governments do. Keep in mind in this forum we have constraints we deal with and I think that needs to be clear to everyone as we have our discussion.

## 4. Approval of Minutes – For Possible Action

Committee meeting minutes from May 10, 2012.

**Motion: Move to approve minutes from May 10, 2012 – Jack Robb**

**Second: Judi Caron**

**Public Comment: None**

**Vote: All in favor – motion carries.**

## 5. Trash Laws – Informational (Public Comment Allowed)

The Committee will hear a report on trash laws specific to Washoe, Carson and Douglas Counties in Nevada. The Committee will take input from the public and discuss potential solutions to any perceived deficiencies in those laws.

Madonna Dunbar presentation – Incline Village General Improvement District (IVGID)

Local government contacts for trash/wildlife conflicts

NDOW has bear hotline that is staffed most of the day – staff limited - want to deal with the bears after you have taken care of your garbage.

IVGID has regulatory control over solid waste compliance

(775)832-1221 - Trash complaint hotline

[http://www.ivgid.org/utilities\\_services/ivgid\\_ordinances](http://www.ivgid.org/utilities_services/ivgid_ordinances)

Trash Ordinance #1 – Compliant if trash is left securely stored in a building, house or in garage allowed until placement on the morning of service day at 5:00 a.m. or later – up to 7 cans or bags on the curb weekly.

250 Bear resistant poly carts in use – finger latch to open

350 Bear boxes in the community  
IVGID Waste Not  
Hotline – (775)832-1284

If poly carts are not working/damaged – will swap out the lid as needed – pilot project – order 50 at a time to see how things are going. Offer services to residence and commercial business entities – will come out and help – sell bear carts at cost (Since 2008). Offer free service analysis. Extensive educational program – available to anyone in town who wants it. Provide referral for some other bear services, such as who are the bear box manufacturers, promote the Rex alarm – the barking dog alarm, rental of unwelcome mats in Nevada (electrified mats for in front of the door). Active in public outreach by going to schools and give bear awareness information and presentation to children.

Questions:

Judi Caron – Is it mandated that you have Incline Village containers or can you use bags or purchase your own garbage cans?

Madonna Dunbar – The rule is that the trash needs to be containerized. Bags are allowed, normal cans from the hardware store are allowed and the yellow and green topped Waste Management rolling carts, which are not bear resistant, are allowed if kept inside a secure building until 5:00 a.m. on the day of service. Storage in a garage or a home is considered containment.

Judi Caron – What is the difference between a bear tote and a bear box?

Madonna Dunbar – A bear tote is a 96 gallon rolling cart that has a metal framework around the top and trigger that you need a finger to use. Once it is closed and closed properly animals tend to toss them around. All tested at the Grizzly Bear Institute.

Judi Caron– This is the one that is \$250.00 and then you can trade that back in for a metal bear box?

Madonna Dunbar – Yes, the metal bear box is permanently installed. They hold from 1-3 cans and it stays on the property. If you bought a bear cart you can take it with you.

Jeremy Drew – In talking with Douglas and Carson counties some of the other communities even though they have a rudimentary ordinance they have problems enforcing it, so is the hotline the way to go on that in your opinion? What has been your experience and how can some of these communities that are tight on budget and staffing help address the enforcement side?

Madonna Dunbar – We are unique in Incline with a small service area and a compliance department that is already set up internally in Public Works. One of the ideas might be sheriff volunteers that are trained in bear things and even on an educational level or dealing with code enforcement that creates somewhat of a public safety.

Kathryn Bricker – Each county has a citizen's patrol. In Douglas County, Sgt. Halsey. I have spoke with members of the citizen's patrol and they said they are authorized to do different things to include code enforcement on trash. In their training manual have a whole section on trash. I wanted to ask him if they could pick a neighborhood to walk or drive by to check for bear compliant trash cans/garbage placement.

Jeremy Drew – We have some trash ordinances throughout western Nevada but we don't have anything as far as a statewide wildlife feeding ordinance. I know this has been something that has been

brought up by Carson City on multiple occasions. Is that something that you are seeing as problematic? And where I can specifically see it being a big problem is with tourists or people who unwilling are feeding wild animals without understanding the ramifications of that.

Madonna Dunbar – I know Carl has tried for years to get an anti-feeding ordinance through. That would cover a lot of accidental problems. It is definitely something a lot of our jurisdictions would support. In Incline's case we can go talk to somebody, not officially on the clock, on a feeding thing but we try to work cooperatively with our residents. Food conditioning becomes a public safety issue.

Public Comment:

Margaret Martini – Chair of the Citizen's Action Board on trash issues for Incline Village – would like to see more enforcement and stricter enforcement for businesses or businesses dealing with food.

Sherine Kuckoff – Board member of No Bear Hunt Nevada – had a meeting inviting all vacation rental companies regarding trash and trash pickup.

Elizabeth Rogers – Recommend that there be a working group formed.

Jack Robb – As a committee we have restrictions as far as a working group – there are no restrictions for the public. We cannot participate as a group. I would like it to get to a point where this type of activity is occurring and then we as a Committee and as a Commission can work together.

Jim Hammerel – Would like to look at what the Bear League has done in California in terms of helping the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) by offloading bear management and bear/human conflict mitigation process to the Bear League. If budget is an issue be more proactive in private/public collaborations – offset liability to public organizations.

Nicole Lutkemuller – Recommend utilizing student volunteers – form a student committee for information distribution.

Bob Pohlman – Minden/Gardnerville have automated trash trucks and only take one type of container.

Elizabeth Rogers – Aversion – bears come where they feel safe need to make more effort to make them feel unwelcome.

Margaret Martini – Aversion tactics such as Rex the barking dog work.

Jim Hammerel – Through education Whistler, BC is able to help keep bears in the mountains and then monetize that by running bear tours.

Madonna – Whistler and Mammoth model they do not offer curbside collection they have community dumpsters for their trash.

Elizabeth Rogers – Bear tours are moneymakers.

Nicole Lutkemuller – Humans are the cause of the problems. Believes requirement of bear boxes may be a necessity. Sometimes you have to make drastic changes that people don't want to accept. Community dumpsters are an option to consider.

Margaret Martini – Thinks that if bear boxes are not closed properly that should be a fineable offense.

Kathryn Bricker – Need integration of the current efforts. We have an amazing amount of labor being put out and things that are done but without a forum to integrate it we are not aware of all the resources we have.

Elizabeth Rogers – Is there a receptivity from all parties involved if my partner and I look into what it would take – possible avenues for funding, preliminary conversation to get to a working group.

Jack Robb/Dave McNinch – We have a willingness to reach that common goal. It is how we do it, and what will be the best way to get us to that common goal. We are just getting things on the table.

Jack Robb – How do we broaden past the 15 people that are carrying the weight and get where we need to get to?

Kathryn Bricker – I think we need to have a fundraising committee and have “Bucks for Bear Boxes” and raise the money. Need to look at revenue generating ideas to buy bear boxes.

Madonna Dunbar – Over the past 5 years IVGID got more bear boxes in the community spaces through a Federal Grant program. Trash haulers make money off trash. IVGID uses a fair bit of the franchise agreement to fund the Waste Not Program, bear outreach and a variety of programs.

Judi Caron – Waste Management as well as Wal-Mart have grants for conservation projects for communities.

#### **6. “Bear Smart Community” Program – Informational (Public Comment Allowed)**

The Committee will hear a presentation of the “Bear Smart Community” program that has been used to address bear-related conflicts in other communities. The Committee will take input from the public and discuss the potential for establishing a similar program in Nevada.

The “Bear Smart” Program is a model concept and intended to create discussion. It is not intended to begin a process to replace NDOW’s programs.

Madonna Dunbar – Bear Smart is only available in Canada, however they have developed a set of guiding principles and a framework/structure, which has been adopted in part sometimes in whole by communities in Canada and some states. The most important thing with Bear Smart communities is the fact that it is not just completely agency driven but it is community buy-in to the framework that is established. Bear smart communities do still have to take problem bears out of the community, however there are a full set of steps and attractive management options used to minimize problems.

Bear Smart Background Report can be found at  
[http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/documents/bearsmart\\_bkgdr.pdf](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/documents/bearsmart_bkgdr.pdf)

The first step that needs to be done is form a bear stewardship committee. There is interagency and some citizen input from non-profit groups or from individuals.

We have conflicting levels of data collection and how do consolidate? This becomes a key tool to give back to the public as information.

The Bear Smart Principle Report was developed in 2002. They have had 10 years to work on this. The Bear Management Plan for NDOW doesn’t really address bear proof waste management and a few of these other components.

This model covers a lot of different points. Seems extensive but deals with all the aspects.

This would be a starting point and has been successful in a lot of communities.

Dave McNinch – Standardization program with continuous improvement. We have a Bear Aware program but how do we take the next step and build a community that has more buy in. So it is not just NDOW carrying the program. The people actually start living the concept where Bear Aware would be a component of that. The strength in it is that NDOW would be a part of the process not leading the process.

Carl Lackey – A couple things to keep in mind when they were developing Bear Smart they canvassed agencies across US and Canada and picked parts of those programs that they liked to develop Bear Smart. IVGID's ordinance is the best seen but is still missing the community involvement.

Jack Robb - If we were 100% bear proof containers here and a no feeding ordinance, what would you be doing up here.

Carl Lackey – I think our bear problems would almost be non-existent. Incline is ideal bear habitat, you are always going to have bears moving through. If you could bear proof overnight it is going to be like Glacier and Banff where you are going to end up killing a lot of bears the next two years or so. It happened when they closed their viewing dumps. That will not happen up here, we are not going to bear proof overnight. It is not Bear Aware anymore, it is Bear Logic. It is Think! Like a bear.

Jack Robb – Out of the successful bear smart communities how many of them were led by the Department of Wildlife in the area or how many were community led to a city, general improvement district, county or something like that?

Carl Lackey – The two that I am most familiar with – Bear Smart Durango, which is run by Brian Peterson, Bear Smart Whistler is run by Sylvia Dolson. I am not sure how they started it but I do not believe they were agency led, they were community based grassroots type stuff that came together. They looked to the wildlife managers, the agency professionals, for guidance for involvement. A bear working group is a great idea and would love to be a part of a working group. If one is started let's look to the Tahoe Council for Wild Bears for some of the things that were accomplished and why others were not and why it is no longer a group. Key is funding.

Jeremy Drew – To do this sort of program you need a coordinator and the funds to house that person wherever it makes sense.

Dave McNinch – There are university systems here along with Cooperative Extension, they do provide services for facilitating meetings and starting groups and moving things along. There are some opportunities how the Committee and the Commission in general play a role we have to be careful and we will continue to check into it. It is a need. We have to be diligent. A community based process is critical. There are some opportunities.

Kathryn Bricker – Need to have a strong liaison with the Forest Service in Nevada.

Pamela Gartin – Education/first responders are critical in getting information out.

Madonna Dunbar – IVGID gives a new homeowner packet with new water/trash service within 2-3 weeks that contains bear aware information. First responder link is missing in the community.

Margaret Martini – Clarification on letter and to who.

Jack Robb – I think, as a suggestion, we can take the proposal of bear proof containers in bear areas of Nevada to the Commission and write a letter from the Commission to Washoe County, Douglas, and IVGID asking for increased ordinances on the issue. It would be a start.

Carolyn Stark – In support of a letter from the Commission.

**7. Public Comment Period –**

Persons wishing to speak are requested to complete a speaker's card and present it to the recording secretary. No action can be taken by the Committee at this time; any item requiring Committee action may be scheduled on a future Committee agenda.

Carolyn Stark – Agrees with community volunteers as first responders. Lethal vs. non-lethal bear aversion – NDOW does use some non-lethal bear aversion techniques, 23 out of 24 bears outside of Incline Village in 2012 have been released by NDOW and 1 was killed. In Incline Village, however, a different story, 4 out of 5 bears have been killed through June 28<sup>th</sup>. Incline Village has some very loud and vocal opponents regarding the bear hunt and NDOW and I don't know if that is starting to relate to bear activity in Incline Village. It is such a big disparity between outside Incline Village where the majority are being released and in Incline Village they are being captured and killed.

Elaine Carrick – To touch on something Kathryn Bricker had mentioned in regards to hunting with hounds/dogs, if this is within the time period to bring that up to the commission I would like that to have some public comment. Right now there are 14 states that have prohibited hunting of bears with hounds and the 15<sup>th</sup> state (California) has passed committee and is currently on the desk of the Governor.

Elizabeth Rogers – Recommend that look at the planning method of Future Search.

Mike Smith – Need to get a bear box ordinance in place. In the big picture \$1000.00 is not a lot of money. If left for people to make the decision they are not going to do it, we need to force hands.

Catherine Smith – Would like see the hounding issue brought up by the Commission in time for a potential regulation change.

Jim English – Incline Village will have a new county commission in November – they are the ones that set policy for Washoe County.

Margaret Martini – Bear boxes vs. bear proof container. Limiting people if you were to force to have a bear box. Better language would be a bear proof container.

Carl Lackey – If bear proofed all at once, case and point, Lake Village HOA in Stateline, when we (John & Carl) started the study the first 6-7 bears captured were out of Lake Village condo timeshare units, roughly 600 units. They were not doing anything to curb the trash problem. A letter was written by me telling them I wasn't going to trap anymore bears and that they needed to do something ASAP. The following winter the HOA voted to buy bear resistant containers (BRCs). They put in 300 units over winter in 2001. Since they have been installed I have had 2 bear calls in that area.

Jack Robb – I don't want to encourage people to spend \$500 on something that is only going to work for a short time to turn around and have to spend \$1000 later. There is a solution that

we know works. In my opinion, it will cost the homeowner more in the long run to go half way the first time.

**Move to adjourn by Jeremy Drew.**

**Second by Judi Caron.**

**Adjourned at 8:43 p.m.**