

**TAG ALLOCATION AND APPLICATION HUNT COMMITTEE**  
**Minutes of the August 2, 2013 Meeting**

The Tag Allocation and Application Hunt Committee (TAAHC) met at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, August 2, 2013 at the Churchill County Chambers, 155 N. Taylor St., Fallon, Nevada.

**PRESENT:** Chairman Jack Robb  
Rex Flowers  
Joe Crim  
Michael McBeath  
Brad Johnston

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**STAFF:** Bob Haughian  
Maureen Hullinger

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Tony Wasley – NDOW Director  
Don Sefton – Systems Consultants (SCI)  
Monty Martin - SCI  
Larry Gilbertson – NDOW  
Mike Cox - NDOW  
Eric Clifford – Churchill CAB  
John Reed  
Chad Bliss

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

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call of Committee Members, Determination of Quorum** – Chairman Robb called the meeting to order at 6:45 pm.

2. **Approval of Agenda** – Chairman Robb

Rex Flowers motioned to approve the agenda.

Mike McBeath seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously.

3. **Approval of Minutes – Chairman Robb – For Possible Action**

The Committee will review the minutes from the June 21, 2013 meeting of the TAAHC and may take action to approve the minutes.

Joe Crim motioned to approve the minutes.

Brad Johnston seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. **Member Items/Announcements and Correspondence - Chairman Robb - Informational**

Committee members may present emergent items. No action may be taken by the Committee. Any item requiring Committee action may be scheduled on a future Committee agenda. The Committee will review and may discuss correspondence sent or received by the Committee since the last regular meeting and may provide copies for the exhibit file (Committee members may provide hard copies of their correspondence for the written record). Correspondence sent or received by the department will also be discussed.

Bob Haughian stated he received an email from Elaine Carrick regarding the pending big game survey and will include it with the materials for this TAAHC meeting. He also stated he had received a phone call from John Zenz who suggested on limiting the number of hunter choices to 1 or 2. Mr. Zenz felt that this would change the draw results favorably. Bob Haughian informed the committee that he encouraged John Zenz to submit his suggestion in writing to the TAAHC.

Rex Flowers stated he received correspondence from an out-of-state hunter (name unknown) who suggested that if a hunter purchased a First Come, First Serve tag that the bonus points should not be lost.

Chairman Robb stated that Mike Reese of the Clark County Advisory Board submitted correspondence recommending the creation of a "Media Tag" to promote hunting in Nevada. Chairman Robb said he felt there were enough specialty tags already and did not feel there was a need for any more. Committee members agreed.

#### **5. New Items for Consideration for Inclusion on the TAAHC Topic List – Chairman Robb – For Possible Action**

The Committee will review any new suggested Tag Allocation and Application Hunt topics received from County Advisory Boards or the public and may take action to add topics to the TAAHC Topic List for consideration for implementation.

Chairman Robb asked the members if any of the correspondence received would be appropriate to be added to the TAAHC list.

Mike Cox reported to the committee that NDOW had a statewide coordination meeting, specifically to address elk management, 2 weeks ago in Ely, and NDOW is looking at new, more effective ways to manage elk. A few ideas came from the meeting. One was a recommendation for spike bull hunts for 2014, another for a cow elk hunt in designated wilderness areas. Also, it was suggested that if the bull elk waiting period (if harvested) were to be reduced to 5 years more hunters might be encouraged to take a bull elk that they might otherwise pass up.

Don Sefton with SCI reported he could run report of how many hunters would be eligible if the waiting period was reduced to 5 years compared to the 10 year wait.

Mike Cox also informed the committee that another elk management idea was to eliminate the bonus points for the Depredations hunts, to include elk. This might result in the harvest of more elk. Another suggestion was to allow an deer tag applicant to check a box on the application and if successful in drawing a mule deer tag the applicant would also be issued a cow elk tag in certain units. This would not put more hunters in the field so the hunter congestion would not be a negative factor.

Chairman Robb said he is in favor of this idea and that if the Game Division could proceed with this idea by bringing it to the Commission and would like to see this implemented in 2014.

Mike Cox said another idea addressed during the statewide coordination meeting was to allow for a check box on the application to apply for a cow elk tag when applying for a bull elk tag. Have the option to take a cow elk after harvesting their bull elk. He also stated that there was support to allow applying for both a bull elk and cow elk on the same application.

Chairman Robb said he supports these ideas and would like these ideas to be implemented. He asked Mike Cox to look into the NAC and NRS to see what would need to be changed to get them implemented by 2014.

Chairman Robb asked the committee to rank order the suggestions submitted by Elaine Carrick, Mike Reese and the unnamed out-of-state hunter, and the telephonic suggestion received from John Zenz.

The committee was in full agreement and rank ordered all four items as a "3" on the TAAHC Topic list.

Mike Cox asked the committee if they had come to a decision regarding the suggestion if a hunter applies for a tag in the First Come, First Serve (FCFS) draw could we eliminate the current process of the hunter's bonus points reverting to zero for that species.

The committee discussed this and was in full agreement to have changes made to allow applicants who draw a tag drawn during the FCFS draw to not lose their bonus points. Chairman Robb asked NDOW staff to precede in making changes to NAC so this could be implemented but that it is was not a priority for 2014. However, Jack Robb said he would like the

bull elk tag application with the option of obtaining a cow elk tag check box, the deer tag application with the option of obtaining a cow elk tag check box and applying for a bull and cow elk tag on the same application to be a priority so this could be implemented in 2014.

Chairman Robb asked the public for any comments. There were none, so the committee continued to agenda item 6.

**6. Topic List Items ranked as #1 by the Committee - Chairman Robb – For Possible Action**

The Committee will evaluate oral and written feedback from County Advisory Boards and the public regarding their views of the five topic items ranked as #1 by the committee.

Bob Haughian read to the committee the feedback received from the County Advisory Boards regarding top five items previously ranked as #1 by the committee:

Topic Item A.1.7 (Party hunt bonus point retention) – Elko CAB had no comment; Pershing and Washoe CAB were supportive; Eureka and Lyon CAB were not supportive.

Topic Item A.1.10 (First-time youth applicant, who has completed hunter safety course, starts with one bonus point) – Eureka CAB supportive; Elko, Washoe, Lyon and Pershing CAB were not supportive.

Topic Item A.1.14 (No loss of bonus points for active duty military who leave the State of Nevada) – All of the County Advisory Boards that responded were supportive.

Topic Item A.2.2 (Fee evaluation) – Elko CAB had no comment; Eureka CAB were supportive; Lyon CAB partially supportive; Washoe and Pershing CAB not supportive.

Topic Item A.10.2 (Apply for bull & cow elk tag in the same draw) – Washoe CAB had some concerns; Lyon, Pershing, Elko and Eureka CAB were supportive.

Eric Clifford with Churchill CAB informed the TAAHC that they were in supportive of A.1.7. There were questions regarding the eligibility on A.1.14. They were supportive of A.2.2 and A.10.2.

Tony Wasley Director of NDOW spoke on the behalf of Carson CAB. The Carson CAB had concerns with A.1.7, but if NDOW staff was not aware there was a problem with A.1.7 then Director Wasley felt it did not need to be addressed. Carson and Lincoln CABs were in favor of the mixed application on A.10.2 but did not feel it would be fair to hold both a bull and cow elk tag in the same draw; instead, if a hunter drew a bull tag, the cow tag would then become unsuccessful in the draw.

Bob Haughian confirmed that neither he nor his staff have heard any public comments or complaints regarding A.1.7 Party hunt bonus point retention in regards to unspecified accusations of hunters with a lot of bonus points applying in a group hunt then returning the tag with the intent of enhancing a group hunt in being successful in drawing tags. He stated that if this is a concern, he would like to get specifics for further research.

Maureen Hullinger also reiterated that NDOW has not heard of anyone doing this. Hunters who return their tags are doing so for valid reasons. She informed the committee that she had researched the names from the “return a tag for any reason” list and checked their records and researched to see how many returned a tag for each year. She stated that there was no evidence that would lead the department to believe that this is being done.

Chairman Robb suggested to the committee not to make any changes on this and asked if Don Sefton of SCI could run an analysis on tags that have been returned to see how many bonus points a hunter had when they applied in a party hunt and then returned their tag. Once the analysis is completed, the TAAHC will review this and discuss this further at the next TAAHC meeting.

Chairman Robb opened up any comments from the public regarding A.1.10, First-time youth bonus point.

Chad Bliss said that after reading the comments that were submitted from the CABs, and hearing about all of the left over tags for the youth hunt, he felt the main concern for the first couple of years is getting youths and young adults interested in hunting. He explained to the committee a young boy he is very familiar with who was unsuccessful in youth drawing was extremely disappointed in not drawing a tag. Mr. Bliss stated he understood there are left over tags in other units the boy could have applied for, but the boy did not have the means to travel to that unit.

Chairman Robb opened up to the committee to discuss whether this topic ranking should stay as a “1” or be changed.

The committee members were all in favor of changing the ranking of Topic Item A.1.10 as a “3”.

Chairman Robb opened up to the public and committee to discuss Topic Item A.1.14 No loss of bonus points for active duty military who leaves the State of Nevada.

John Reed, a retired US Air Force Colonel, having served on active duty, expressed to the committee that he felt military personnel have a lot to deal in preparing for and during a Permanent Change of Station (PCS) or being deployed, and remembering to apply or purchase a bonus point is not always high on their list. He would like the committee to support Topic Item A.1.14 for all active military personnel.

Bob Haughian, a retired US Air Force Lieutenant Colonel, having served on active duty, offered a different perspective. He agreed that preparing for and during a PCS can be stressful and challenging, with many distractions to normal life activities. He stated a PCS move can occur anytime during the year, with many such moves occurring during the summer months. And while a PCS move could occur as often as one per year, most PCS moves take place once every two to four years. With the Main big game draw application period taking place in March through April, and with NDOW's process of allowing for no loss of bonus points unless two years occur without an application, there was ample opportunity for an active duty military person to secure their bonus points during a two year period under the current NDOW process.

Maureen Hullinger informed the committee that from an administrative standpoint, if this recommendation were implemented, NDOW would likely require some sort of paperwork annually from each eligible military person to confirm their current military status for this to work.

Rex Flowers asked if SCI could notify a hunter through an email if they were close to losing their bonus points if they did not apply.

Don Sefton stated currently there is no way to pin point how many military personnel are applying each year because some will not always purchase a reduced military license which requires proof of eligibility, but a mass email to all hunters could be sent out. Mr. Sefton asked if once someone retires from the military, what would happen to their residency?

John Reed informed the committee once an individual retires from or leaves the military, the individual can become a resident of the state they are currently in, or they can retain their Nevada residency. He felt that just sending out an email reminder to those who are on the verge of losing their bonus points would suffice.

Rex Flowers suggested an extension of the bonus point retention allowance. Instead of losing bonus points after two years without applying, change it to three years for all applicants.

Brad Johnston felt it should be for military personnel only.

Mike McBeath was also in agreement with Brad Johnston that this should only be for military personnel only.

Chairman Robb asked the committee if they would like to leave Topic Item A.1.14 as "1" until the Department can look into finding a way to implement this for military personnel only then report back to the committee.

The committee members were all in favor of this. John Reed offered to assist the Department in working through this issue.

Chairman Robb opened up to the public and committee to discuss Topic Item A.2.2 Fee reevaluation - Tag and license fees should be reevaluated during a future legislative session.

Rex Flowers reported Washoe CAB members were not in favor of this because an increase in these fees would be a financial burden to hunters. One suggestion was a fee on Wildlife Management Areas for those who hunt birds, also looking into grants that would benefit the Diversity Division.

Joe Crim reported Pershing CAB members voted to oppose this also, and felt there may be other alternative ways to find revenue without increasing tag and license fees.

Brad Johnston reported Lyon CAB members suggested that the commission should examine this further, although they don't necessarily support it. On a personal note, he felt reevaluating the \$3 predator fee, upland game stamp fee and all of the little side fees and how the funds are used.

Chairman Robb noted that the timing of paying for tags and licenses does put a burden on the hunters especially when applying for members of the family. If there was a way to spread it out, that would be ideal.

Maureen Hullinger informed the committee the last time NDOW increase tag and license fee's was in 2003. NDOW was then required to pull the fees out of NAC and have them put into NRS. Prior to the fee increase in 2003, there were three attempts from the Department to have a fee increase but was not supported. She stated she felt the fee increase should at least be on the radar since it has been 10 years since NDOW has increased any fees and having to go through the legislature to do this would be a lengthy process. It would be beneficial to at least conduct the research.

Brad Johnston agrees with at least having the information at hand for reevaluation of increasing fees.

Chairman Robb agreed with the reevaluation and stated that during a commission meeting about 8 months ago, Ken Mayer, former NDOW Director, informed the commission that the Department was in good financial standing. Chairman Robb asked Director Wasley if those accounts were bolstered due to the mandated furloughs, employee pay freeze and positions not being filled, if once these were to go away how would that affect NDOW's budget.

Director Wasley said he felt this would be a good time to examine this and currently NDOW is in a good state with its budget this year, but anticipates it will slowly dissipate over the next few years. He said he didn't know the cost savings the furloughs had or the prolong position vacancies, but doesn't believe this is what put NDOW in a good financial state.

Chairman Robb said he believes that the Finance Committee would be better suited to answer this question and recommended that this item be passed from the TAAHC to the Finance Committee.

The committee members were all in agreement.

**7. Proposal to Conduct a Survey of Nevada's Big Game Tag Applicants' Attitudes and Preferences - Chairman Robb and Operations Chief Bob Haughian – For Possible Action**

The chairman will inform the committee of the recent discussion with NDOW leadership and researchers at the University of Idaho regarding a proposal to use the services of the University of Idaho to conduct a survey of Nevada's big game hunters. The committee may further define the scope and content of the desired survey.

Bob Haughian was tasked with contacting the University of Idaho in regards to the proposed survey. He informed the committee that he had got in touch with Dr. Nick Sanyal at the University of Idaho. A conference call of July 11<sup>th</sup> included Dr. Sanyal and Dr. Ed Krumpy with the University of Idaho, and Director Wasley, Deputy Directors Patrick Cates and Rich Haskins, and Chief of Game Larry Gilbertson, and Chairman Jack Robb. One of the suggestions that was made was for NDOW to do a combined survey which would entail an online and paper survey, which would suit NDOW's need to include those tag applicants who apply on paper vs online. He also reported the cost of the survey could be anywhere from \$20,000 to \$45,000 depending on what NDOW wants in the survey. The survey sample size would likely not exceed 6,000 hunters.

Chairman Robb said prior to going forward with the survey, he asked that the Department gather more information on the survey, nail down the cost and example of survey questions so the TAAHC could take it to the commission meeting for justification on cost and explain the rationale of the survey.

Bob Haughian suggested reaching out to NDOW biologists for their input. He also suggested on getting the broad subject topics from the Commission and TAAHC members.

Mike McBeath asked the committee if they were going to leave the survey questions up to the university researchers or does the committee have a say in the questions.

Chairman Robb informed the committee that Bob Haughian has some sample survey questions and to run them by NDOW staff biologist to see if these questions would suffice and or if they had any additional questions they would like to add.

Rex Flowers asked Chairman Robb for clarification on the survey questions.

Chairman Robb clarified that with the TAAHC's broad view regarding the survey topics (opportunity, quality, season structure, etc), combined with the department's view and recommendations of more detailed survey questions, such

information would be provided to the researchers at the University of Idaho, and the researchers will then come up the specific questions, which would be shared with NDOW and the committee prior to conducting the survey.

The committee members were all in agreement with this plan to precede with the survey and the survey questions.

8. **Public Comment Period** - Persons wishing to speak may do so at this time. Public comment will be limited to three minutes. No action can be taken by the Committee at this time; any item requiring Committee action may be scheduled on a future Committee agenda.

Chairman Robb opened up for any public comments. There were none.

9. **Future Committee Meetings – Chairman Robb – Informational**  
The Committee will reconfirm the date and location of the next TAAHC meeting.

Next TAAHC will be scheduled for September 20, 2013 in Las Vegas, at 6:30 pm. Location is to be determined.

Meeting adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Approved by the TAAHC