



Elko County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife

Nannini Administration Building, Suite 102
540 Court Street, Elko, Nevada 89801

www.elkocountynv.net

MEMBERS
Mitch Buzzetti
Jim Cooney
Bert Gurr
Wyatt Mesna
Furn Winder

MINUTES CLERK
Michele Petty

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

The Elko County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife, County of Elko, State of Nevada, met on Thursday, August 02, 2018, in Nannini Administration Building, Suite 102, 540 Court Street, Elko, Nevada 89801 at 5:30 PM. Pacific Time Zone

1. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS

Called to order on 5:36 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Board will review the agenda and may take action to approve the agenda. The Board may remove items from the agenda, continue items for consideration or take items out of order.

Motion to Approve by Jim Cooney. Seconded by Mitch Buzzetti. Motion approved.

3. MEMBER ITEMS/ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

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

No items and announcements.

4. COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Pursuant to NRS 241 this time is devoted to comments by the general public, if any, and discussion of those comments. No action may be taken upon a matter raised under this item on the agenda until the matter itself has been specifically included on a successive agenda and identified to be an action item.

No comments.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

5.a. Discussion and consideration of approval of minutes from June 26, 2018.

Motion to approve minutes as presented by Jim Cooney. Seconded by Mitch Buzzetti. Motion approved.

6. SALVAGE TAGS

6.a. Discussion and consideration of concerns relating to Salvage Tags.

Jason James spoke on the tags noted pros and cons to having the program. Downfall to tags in residential areas as people watched a huge buck for a while, but it looked like it was hit purposely just to salvage antlers. It great that meat is not wasted, but have to worry how long meat was sitting there and has gone bad. There would have to be stipulation that the Department would not be responsible if people eat bad meat. Mitch Buzzetti asked if the salvaged animals now are just disposed of. Bert Gurr noted that he last saw a Highway Patrol picking up the dead animal. Bert Gurr noted no flavor from board to look at this, but will hold off any action until Furn Winder can express his purpose of putting this on the agenda.

7. CITES TAGS

7.a. Discussion and consideration of a request to review with possible recommendation to change Cites Tags and game they cover.

Bert Gurr noted receipt of a letter from a trapper Randall Stoeberl and Jason James noted that he spoke to Randall and would like to have this tabled for the time. He noted he talked to Tom Donovan and try to get some groundwork done for the otter count and why we need cites tags. Bert Gurr read letter into record. Lance Stitzel representing Nevada Trappers Association recommends no action on tags. Motion to approve to table this item by Jim Cooney. Seconded by Mitch Buzzetti. Motion Passed.

8. ELK MANAGEMENT PLANS

8.a. Discussion and consideration of a recommendation to open the Elk Management Plans for review and update.

Pete Mori, representing himself, stated he is against opening the plans. He believes the originating committees were thorough on the evaluations and conservative in the approach for management. He noted that monitoring habitat and checking for existing habitat to set numbers is a big misconception in setting the elk management levels. The herds move too rapidly and easily. They will find habitat. Have elk seven months out of the year. If ranchers want feed for cattle, they have to beat the elk. They have a rotation process to try to accomplish this. We do not mind feeding some elk, just not three times the number. Only reason to open the plans would be to raise numbers.

Craig Spratling, representing himself, noted he lives in elk habitat. The plan was thoroughly vetted and they are over the cap right now. Do not mind and accept that elk graze on private ground, but over population is not good. He notes as ranchers want to be reasonable, but just don't want to increase the population. Early seasons are hard on ranchers. Shed hunters tearing up their property.

Neil McQueary from Ruby Valley noted he co-Chaired the Committee of the elk plan of Elko County and a lot of anger in the process, but they believe they came up with a plan that landowners and sportsmen both could live with. Units are still over the caps and elk are tough on fences and hay and hunters need to appreciate that elk not easy to host. Encourage board to leave plans as they are.

Mike Stevens noted that when he watched the presentation from the last meeting it was noted that the plans needed to be reviewed in a certain amount of time. He noted that things have changed and a review is warranted to address those changes. Discussion of when and why are null and void when it states a review in the plan.

Jason James asked that the mixed grass, mostly cheat grass, is not worth any kind of feed and whether it creates a good habitat. What is the true quality of the habitats? He noted other states doing studies

looking at habitats, feed and forages and cheat grass and their effect on mule deer. Only fire wants to eat mature cheat grass, which will not feed a bigger population. Everyone is losing right now because of the fires. Need to concentrate on habitat.

Tom Barnes, representing himself, noted that elk do not know property boundaries. Heard discussion of more elk bringing more opportunity for higher quality animals. Do not know that will increase quality. With the strained relationship in the past between private landowners and NDOW, things have gotten better and cooperation is happening, however opening plans could bring back many issues.

Mike Stevens then noted that in the presentation made last meeting, private property protection was in place and ranchers are grazing on public lands, but questions how ranching is the main focus, when it should be on sportsmen and elk. Not about ranching. Need to open review of plan for habitat studies to find out how many elk can we have that doesn't harm ranchers?

Jay Bilbao noted that those hunters still have to go through private lands to get to the public lands to get the elk. Ranchers know more about elk and what they have seen the last 30 years where elk populations have exploded. We don't need any more elk. Deer could be regulated a little more as well. Numbers way too high.

Christian Hunsaker noted that the presentations on the plans from last meeting speak for themselves. A lot of data has been gathered in the last 20 -30 years and yet the plans have not been reviewed as expected. Not discussing the habitat handling more cattle. The plan is about the habitat and wildlife. He noted this is not a board for ranching, but for hunting.

Jim Cooney noted that he doesn't believe the plans should be opened. They are reaching levels they are shooting for and biologists are the ones responsible for managing herds. Have had to hammer the herds in recent years, which has caused so much congestion. Concerned about the amount of habitat we are losing right now.

Mitch Buzzetti stated he appreciated the comments made. He thought about the plan noting the plan managed mule deer first and their habitat was the priority. Mule deer has gone to nothing in numbers. Understands where the sportsmen are coming from and that more tags may mean more income. He can see the heartburn between the two sides even in just this meeting and the need is to proceed cautiously for the county. There is also a misconception that an increase in tags would increase the quality of animals. He noted NDOW is doing their job, lots of herds into the caps that should point to seeing quality hunting and maintain hunting in the next couple of years. Don't want to jump back to more tags and more congestion. Thinks we will see quality increase.

Furn Winder stated he believes that the numbers don't need to be increased, but plan said we need to review, just not review just to increase numbers.

Wyatt Mesna also noted that we need that 20 to 30 years of data to see how wildlife is affected, so at some point it needs to be revisited, but not at the same time as the data is being collected. Don's want the cooperative relationship to go away. Excited to see what NDOW plans can do and giving more opportunities for hunting. They haven't tested if they can manage elk. Looking forward to what NDOW can do.

Bert Gurr stated that any plan needs to be review for effectiveness as it was done in 1989. It doesn't mean more elk tags, but maybe cut. Maybe it means more cattle. But there are no studies on what fires have done and how it has affected ranchers. Should it not be a cooperative effort between NDOW, sportsmen and ranchers. Open plans to see if they work. No one knows what the effects have been. Objective to open plans with sane people, use all sorts of people and government entities to sit down and then add some hunters into the equation. Do they make sense it today's economy. Technology has changed and

we are running on an old plan. If we are going to live on a ranch, we need to think about them, seasons too long. Need to look at the benefit to wildlife, hunter and habitat. Fires bring up other issues.

Motion to not open elk management plans by Jim Cooney. Seconded by Mitch Buzzetti. Motion Passed by a three to two vote to not open plans at this time.

9. COMMISSION GENERAL REGULATIONS

- 9.a. Discussion and consideration of any additional comments and/or considerations for a recommendation on State Agenda #7A regarding Commission General Regulation 477, Landowner Deer and Antelope Compensation Tag Program, LCB File No. 096-18

The Commission will hold a second workshop to consider a regulation relating to amending Chapter 502 of the Nevada Administrative Code (NAC). This regulation would provide direction for allocating landowner deer and antelope compensation tags should the statutory limit be reached. The Commission considered this regulation during a workshop at their meeting on June 29, 2018. The Commission directed the Department to provide specific language to improve the clarity of the proposed regulation. Bert Gurr need escape plan without having to go to legislature to change.

Motion to approve to support by Jim Cooney. Seconded by Wyatt Mesna. Motion Passed, Mitch Buzzetti abstained.

- 9.b. Discussion and consideration of any additional comments and/or considerations for a recommendation on State Agenda #7B regarding Commission General Regulation 478, Bighorn Sheep Ewe and Mountain Goat Online Course, LCB File No. R151-18. .

The Commission will hold a workshop to consider a regulation relating to amending Chapter 502 of the Nevada Administrative Code (NAC). This regulation would require all bighorn ewe and mountain goat tag holders to complete an online course. It would also require the tag holder for ram bighorn sheep, mountain goat, mountain lion or bear to provide questionnaire information during the already required post-harvest physical inspection and eliminate the subsequent need for successful tag holders to also submit a questionnaire.

Mitch Buzzetti asked if the course had been developed yet.

Motion to approve to support by Wyatt Mesna. Seconded by Furn Winder. Motion Passed.

- 9.c. Discussion and consideration of any additional comments and/or considerations for a recommendation on State Agenda #7C regarding Commission General Regulation 479, Rosy Boa Reptile, LCB File No. 152-18.

The Commission will hold a workshop to consider amending Chapter 503 of the Nevada Administrative Code (NAC). This amendment would revise the scientific name of the rosy boa, which is classified as a protected reptile, from *Lichanura trivirgata* to *Lichanura orcutti*. This name change is needed due to new scientific studies that have split the species into two distinct entities, one that occurs in Nevada and one that occurs outside the state. Current NAC protects the species outside Nevada rather than the species that occurs within Nevada.

Motion to approve to support by Jim Cooney. Seconded by Mitch Buzzetti. Motion Passed.

10. COMMISSION REGULATION 18 - 12 AMENDMENT #1

10.a. Discussion and consideration of any additional comments and/or considerations for a recommendation on State Agenda #8 regarding Commission Regulation 18 – 12 Amendment #1, 2018 - 2019 Upland Game and Furbearer Seasons and Bag Limits.

The Commission will consider taking action to amend the season for upland game birds for the 2018 and 2019 seasons. The amendment recommends an adjustment to the open units for sage-grouse hunting due to the effects of wildfire on habitat.

Kari Huebner from NDOW reported most of the changes are due to wildfire when set bag limits – area 066 unit closed. Made a month ago. Don't know if there will be any other closures.

Furn Winder asked about 081 unit.

Kari noted the new Goose Creek Fire has effected 4 active leks, but there are still many left.

Bert Gurr noted that what this effects needs to be clear to the public.

Kari Huebner noted that anywhere you can hunt will be listed. The Commission is responsible to advertise.

Motion to approve to support the closure of 066 unit by Jim Cooney. Seconded by Furn Winder.
Motion Passed.

11. NEVADA DIVISION OF WILDLIFE, ELKO OFFICE

Update on any further activities or projects of the Elko Office of the Nevada Division of Wildlife.
NON-ACTION

Kari Huebner reported about working on the Goose Creek Fire noted a considerable amount of land is burned, but 30% of it was already previously burned. Still a lot of areas to hunt for elk, not a lot of difference. Raining up there now, greening up coming soon and elk will live there. Focusing on mule deer and concerned about them during the winter, especially in 081 unit. Deer living on mahogany and just lost most of that habitat. Mule deer are more susceptible. Elk will move, deer just try to live and possibly die. Also, just a an update from the Winecup Gamble ranch, they usually send out a letter to potential hunters on their private land, but because there is not sellable list, they have asked for NDOW's assistance to get the word out that 075 will be walk in only. They have a website and a great interactive map on access to their property. They have tried to manage travel, but people have not responded correctly. People don't realize it is private land. Will not be blocking access to public lands. Info going out next week.

Jim Cooney noted last year that they also sent out a letter as people were parking in front of their gates, polluting, etc. Public is not always courteous. They are not against sportsmen.

Kari Huebner noted that they have been out building fence in Ruby Valley, cattleguards and gates are not included.

Jim Cooney asked about any potential emergency hunts in unit 067.

Kari Huebner answered that there has not been a lot of discussion on emergency hunt not one of the primary areas, just discussion on the Martin Fire and sage grouse.

Fred Sparza reported a new game warden in Ely is going through training and will be on ground in mid-October. Another new game warden will be needed in Battle Mountain. As far prosecutions, one has occurred in the last couple of months regarding individuals hunting in Battle Mountain and taking an elk illegally. Privileges have been lost and a fine. It has been a busy boating season and a couple operating under the influence were sited. Hunting season started yesterday and will need to monitor cameras. Some cameras have been taken and trying to get a handle on camera theft. Working on information for trapping registration and waiting for LCB on trapping tags. There has been a shed antler case individuals caught 40 different antlers, but the case was dismissed, noting that there was not enough evidence to prosecute. Bert Gurr asked that the board be updated on why the case was not prosecuted at the next meeting.

Furn Winder asked about Elko County fines are lower than other counties.

Fred Sparza is working with the District Attorney on this matter. Bail amounts are low as well as judges questioning why fines low. Looking on how to increase and then go to judicial to complete the process.

Jason James was curious about shed antler buyers have licenses.

Fred Sparza responded no they don't have to have a commercial license.

12. FUTURE COMMISSION MEETINGS

The next Commission meeting is scheduled for Sept. 21 and 22, 2018, in Las Vegas. 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.

Available dates for the next CAB meeting in the Elko County Commission Meeting Room are September 14, 17 and 18, 2018.

Would like to book the Monday nights in advance if possible. September 17th consensus for next meeting, and then October 25th.

13. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Pursuant to advice from the Nevada Attorney General's Office, this time is devoted to comments by Board Members for general information or update purposes. No action may be taken upon a matter raised under this item of the agenda until the matter itself has been specifically included on a successive agenda and identified to be an action item. Any correspondence received by a Board member may be read and attached for the record. No Comments.

14. COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Pursuant to NRS 241 this time is devoted to comments by the general public, if any, and discussion of those comments. No action may be taken upon a matter raised under this item on the agenda until the matter itself has been specifically included on a successive agenda and identified to be an action item. No Comments.

15. ADJOURNMENT at 6:53 p.m.