



# Elko County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife

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

[www.elkocountynv.net](http://www.elkocountynv.net)

MEMBERS  
Mitch Buzzetti  
Jim Cooney  
Bert Gurr  
Joel McConnell  
Wyatt Mesna

MINUTES CLERK  
Michele Petty

**The Elko County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife, County of Elko, State of Nevada, met on Tuesday, April 30, 2019, in the Nannini Administration Building, Suite 102, 540 Court Street, Elko, Nevada 89801 at 6:00 PM. Pacific Time Zone**

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

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Bert Gurr, Wyatt, Mesna, Joel McConnell and Jim Cooney present.

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion by Wyatt Messna to approve the agenda. Seconded by Bert Gurr. Motion passed.

**3. MEMBER ITEMS/ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

Bert Gurr reported he took the shed antler recommendation to the White Pine CAB, but due to an agenda issue they could not take action. Discussion leaned towards not having a season.

Jim Cooney reported that tomorrow at the County Commission meeting he is presenting the recommendation on changing the season, ethics course and NDOW penalty changes for a letter of support and then will forward to committee.

Mitch Buzzetti arrived at 6:05 p.m.

**4. COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC**

No Comments.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by Joel McConnell to approve the minutes of April 8, 2019. Seconded by Wyatt Mesna. Motion passed.

## 6. NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE PROJECT UPDATES

- 6.a. Presentation from the Department of Wildlife, Eastern Region, with an update on the department's activities.

Tom Donham gave a slight synopsis of the surveys to help with quotas. The combined data, which includes Elko, Eureka, Lander and White Pine Counties, reported 15,000 mule deer with a spring survey with a tough winter 23,500 deer classified with a 34% fawn loss. Pronghorn antelope surveyed about 14,500 in the region. Fawn ratio was bad at 27% due to the drought conditions last summer. Elk population stable is down to 10,750.

Jim Cooney asked about the sheep. Tom Donham reported the population is larger than thought based on latest survey even with decreasing trend. Want a little bit lower and will see that in the quotas.

Mitch Buzzetti asked about the Big Game Status Book and it doesn't help to make decision on quotas when we just got the book. Tom Donham will bring that up.

## 7. COMMISSION GENERAL REGULATION

- 7.a. Discussion and consideration of comments on State Agenda item #15 A regarding Commission General Regulation 19-14, Big Game Quotas for the 2019-2020 Seasons.

### **Black Bear – Either Sex – Any Legal Weapon Hunt**

Bert Gurr doesn't know what are the problems in the western part of the state, so backing the department on their recommendations. Motion by Mitch Buzzetti to agree with the recommended quota. Seconded by Wyatt Mesna. Bert Gurr Nay. Motion approved.

### **Antelope – Horns longer than ears – All Weapon Classes Hunts**

### **Antelope – Horns shorter than ears – All Weapon Classes Hunts**

Joel asked about the rationale behind the archery increase.

Kari Huebner answered that was a high demand with a zero success.

Mitch Buzzetti asked about the substantial mature herd in Unit 065.

Tyler Nahl noted they are managing for the young bucks, just maintaining it. Definitely animals out there for harvest.

Motion by Mitch Buzzetti to agree with the recommended quota. Seconded by Bert Gurr. Motion approved.

### **Nelson (Desert) Big Horn Sheep – Any Ram – Any Legal Weapon Hunts**

### **Nelson (Desert) Big Horn Sheep – Any Ewe – Any Legal Weapon Hunts**

Motion by Mitch Buzzetti to make no recommendation on the quota. Seconded by Joel McConnell. Motion approved.

### **California Bighorn Sheep – Any Ram – Any Legal Weapon Hunt**

### **California Bighorn Sheep – Any Ewe – Any Legal Weapon Hunt**

Mitch Buzzetti asked what are the number of sheep in the ewe hunt in Unit 068.

Tom Donham noted that 170 adult sheep is the estimate. Like to get down to 140. Planning to do a capture in the unit this fall, but can't guarantee to be able to remove this manner.

Bert Gurr asked the success rate. Tom Donham stated usually about 100%.  
Motion by Mitch Buzzetti to agree with the recommended quota. Seconded by Wyatt Mesna.  
Motion approved.

### **Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep – Any Ram – Any Legal Weapon Hunt**

Joel McConnell asked Kari Huebner to get update on Unit 091 herd.

Kari Huebner stated Unit 074 no tags the last few years due to disease and Unit 091 went through a disease event and have not recovered. May have to take a year or two off.

Motion by Bert Gurr to agree with the recommended quota. Seconded by Mitch Buzzetti. Motion approved.

### **Mountain Goat – Any Goat – Any Legal Weapon Hunt**

Mitch Buzzetti about goats lost in the fire.

Scott Roberts answered that they can't say definitely but prior to the fire he saw 4 different herds in the burn scar, but guess some may have been lost.

Motion by Wyatt Mesna to agree with the recommended quota. Seconded by Mitch Buzzetti.  
Motion approved.

### **Elk – Antlered and Antlerless – Any Legal Weapon Depredation Hunts**

Jim Cooney noted fewer conflicts with landowners which is a positive thing.

Joel McConnell said the application system won't let you apply for both antler and depredation Elk tags.

Tom Donham noted that can apply for spike depredation and antlered bull but whatever you drew first you still get your points.

Motion by Bert Gurr to agree with the recommended quota for Units 081 and 101-103 and no recommendations on Units 121-251. Seconded by Mitch Buzzetti. Motion approved.

### **Elk – Antlered – All Weapons Classes Hunts**

Wyatt Mesna asked about the changes to Units 072 to 074 and whether we finally redistributed the elk in our area and successful harvest.

Kari Huebner noted the changes are due to the strategies for harvest and also collaring elk and the way the elk are the habitat. Some elk in winter are not coming back to Nevada. Are under the population objective and are anticipating a higher calf population in the future. Harvesting the antlerless elk is difficult and this year they were able to back off.

Wyatt Mesna asked why we left the spike tags where they are?

Kari Huebner it is the way if fell out. Don't want to see a high ratio taken out. Spike rate is about 15%.

Wyatt Mesna asked whether there would be a point when the hunt would be a waste of a hunt.

Motion by Wyatt Mesna to agree with the recommended quota. Seconded by Bert Gurr. Motion approved.

### **Elk – Spike – Any Legal Weapons Hunt**

Motion by Mitch Buzzetti to agree with the recommended quota. Seconded by Wyatt Mesna.  
Motion approved.

### **Elk – Antlerless – All Weapon Classes Hunts**

Tony Buzzetti read the status book on Unit 065, which states there are 20 elk and we are issuing 10 tags, which is bizarre, if we have a stagnant herd.

Tyler Nahl noted herd very hard to survey. Survey indicates 33 elk. Found one group of 20 assume more out there. Having mortalities that could not be determined yet. Quota harvest is so light a lot of tags for population. Kept the quotas the same because harvest is light. There are full major bulls in the herd.

Mitch Buzzetti asked why we are giving tags for animals that are not there.

Tyler Nahl noted last year 4 tags only as harvest is low. He said there is elk out there for harvest. He noted that Scott increased the quota just to get success.

Motion by Bert Gurr to agree with the recommended quota for units in our area. Seconded by Wyatt Mesna. Motion approved.

### **Elk – Antlerless – Management – All Weapon Classes Hunt**

Joel McConnell commented on issuing tags tool to reduce hunter congestion but must justify hunt.

Scott Roberts noted this year reduced to 10 percent of deer tags and gave people an option and hoping to go away with the management totally. Resident muzzleloader should say 9, not 30 as listed for Unit 101-103. It was a typo.

Wyatt Mesna asked Kari Huebner why Units 072-079 drop with the good success.

Kari Huebner noted the drop was for congestion and now just a drop because they have hit the population objective. Will watch how it goes.

Mitch Buzzetti asked about the objective of depredation elk hunt is limit hunt. It is an elk free zone and is an opportunity hunt.

Scott Roberts noted that why we added 50 to the depredation cow hunt and give them 6 months for the opportunity.

Mitch Buzzetti noted that the hunt in check.

Burt Gurr stated that ranchers need to give access to the hunters to get the elk.

Wyatt Mesna agreed to depredation, but the problem with it is the perception is that the department is trying to collect yet another fee.

Mitch Buzzetti stated that there would always be complaints.

Motion by Bert Gurr to agree with the recommended quota with the exception of Units 101-103 to take down the 9 to be consistent with the department. Seconded by Joel McConnell. Mitch Buzzetti was Nay.  
Motion approved.

### **Junior Mule Deer – Antlered or Antlerless – All Weapon Classes Hunts**

Bert Gurr asked why not so many decreases, lots of increases.

Kari Huebner noted that area 7 this is reflective no just for juniors, all tags recommended to be increased in 7. May have been underestimating the herd. The drought summer into the heavy winter has affected the fawn count. Out of caring capacity. The herd has reset itself somewhat. The overpasses have been completed and changed the population. Usually lost about 300 deer hit on the interstate and highway 93 a year and last year, just two reports. She noted that the estimated deer population is 11,200.

Scott Roberts reported that area 10 was a mess up in the worksheet, should have kicked out 600, so to fix the array they are splitting the difference.

Chris Konakis asked about Unit 081 and why tag increase when status book states no survey done.

Kari Huebner noted that they don't survey that as it is a challenge because of elk hunters out there – timing is problem. They try to watch the metrics through the success of hunters. Very strong at 87% success of 4 point deer. Lots of good large bucks. Not a big increase, just a little more opportunity. Concern about the Goose Creek fire took out winter range and will be watching the herd carefully.

Motion by Bert Gurr to agree with the recommended quota. Seconded by Wyatt Mesna. Motion approved.

#### **Mule Deer – Antlerless – Any Legal Weapon Hunt**

Henry Krenka suggested that area 7 stay the same as last year for does, area 6 drop 100 in each hunt due to fires and area 10 drop down to 100 due to poor fawn recruit.

Tony Buzzetti agrees with Henry Krenka especially with the bad winter and fires.

Bert Gurr stated that they didn't cut hunt numbers all together. The biologists are out there with the deer and who know and watch them so he believes what they are telling us. If you suggest dropping them, drop a little.

Mitch Buzzetti noted this is a public process and when the public comes and asks for something, we need to listen.

Bert Gurr noted that he appreciates public comment. Shed hunt is not a biology process. We listened to the public. These hunts are biological.

Henry Krenka commented that these doe hunts you see 6 to 10 fawns dying because they die because no one to lead them.

Wyatt Mesna would like to avoid an emergency hunt.

Motion by Bert Gurr to agree with the recommended quota but amend Units 071-091 to 200 and reduce Units 101-102, 109-125 to 125. Seconded by Wyatt Mesna. Motion approved.

#### **Mule Deer – Antlered – All Weapon Classes Hunts**

Henry Krenka speaking for the guides recommend bringing from 550 to 500.

Tony Buzzetti questioned the Unit 081 raising of the tags that was hit with fire and based on a formula.

Chris Konakis supports Mitch Buzzetti's comments with the fire losses and winter, tags could be more detrimental to the herd. In addition, support Henry Krenka change.

Don Klebenow stated he supports the NDOW recommendations.

Wyatt Mesna noted concern about area 7 and the lack of forage out there and questions if there is enough summer feeds. They highway is not killing them and the fires are destroying the forage. Why keep so many animals?

Joel McConnell stated this is not a perfect science, could be over estimating. Would like a survey in Unit -81.

Mitch Buzzetti asked how many choice applicants are there?

Scott Roberts not slashing archery tags, this year demand is screwy. The second choice 980 people applied. There is around 500 people in the first draw and the rest in the second.

Wyatt Mesna asked has the success changed in area 10. Scott Roberts stated no, the success is low, and there are two hunts, which drives the demand up.

Mitch Buzzetti asked about lower rifle tags and upping the archery tags.

Bert Gurr noted that rifle hunts have a bigger success rate.

Tom Donham list of landowner compensation.

Bert Gurr have to allow certain number of people to valid tag holders during that open season. He asked that a request of list be on the next agenda to look at compensation tags.

Motion by Mitch Buzzetti to agree with the recommended quota with an amendment to change area 8 Units for all weapons back to the 2018 quota numbers. Seconded by Joel McConnell.

Bert Gurr moved to amend the motion to move Units 071-091 early hunt back to 550. Wyatt Mesna seconded. Motion approved.

Motion by Mitch Buzzetti to agree with the recommended quota with an amendment to change area 8 Units for all weapons back to the 2018 quota numbers with amendment as approved. Seconded by Joel McConnell. Motion approved.

Bert Gurr asked to talk about the Landowner Compensation tags list.

Tom Donham reported that yes, there is a list of those given tags and you can get it at the license office. Landowner compensation tag holders must follow the following requirement: If private land blocks access to adjacent public land that are required to give access to valid tag holders during the open season.

Bert Gurr requested that the compensation tag holder list on the next agenda.

## **8. FUTURE COMMISSION MEETING**

- 8.a. The next Commission meeting is scheduled for June 21 and 22, 2019 in Hawthorne. 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.

The Elko County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife meeting is set for Monday, June 17, 2019.

## **9. 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.

Jim Cooney would like board members to look at future state meetings and commit to attend at least one if not two meetings coming up.

Bert Gurr requests the herd counts and recommendations for the past ten years to be able to compare data so we can use as a tool for decision-making. Asking for it down the road from the department.

Jim Cooney reported that he received an e-mail regarding a guzzler rebuild on June 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> if anybody is interested in volunteering. Need volunteers.

## **10. 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 public comment.

## **11. ADJOURNMENT**

### **E-COMMENT**

Comments for this meeting from the public.  
e-Comment

[e-Comment for Wildlife 043019.JPG](#)

### **POSTING CERTIFICATE**

Posting Certificate

[Posting Certificate for 043019 Wildlife.pdf](#)

### **NOTICE TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

Members of the public who are disabled and require special accommodations or assistance at the meeting are requested to notify the Board of County Commissioners, County of Elko, in writing at 540 Court Street, Suite 101, Elko, Nevada 89801, by e-mail at [mpetty@elkocountynev.net](mailto:mpetty@elkocountynev.net) or by calling (775) 738-5398.

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