

CHAIRMAN TOMMY CAVIGLIA
COMMISSIONER EDDIE BOOTH
COMMISSIONER PAUL YOUNG
COMMISSIONER SHANE ROGERS
CABMW REP. JOE CRIM
CABMW REP. MATT MELARKEY
PUBLIC REP. MEGHAN BROWN

STAFF TO THE COMMITTEE:
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MINUTES
NEVADA BOARD OF WILDLIFE COMMISSIONERS
TAG ALLOCATION AND APPLICATION HUNT COMMITTEE

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2023 @ 7:00 AM

Clark County Government Center

500 S. Grand Central Parkway

Las Vegas NV 89155

Or

Please click this URL to join.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86039794949?pwd=WDliZ3hPelZGYVZxWmhYRGxQVmVLZz09>

Passcode: 397594

Committee Members in attendance: Chairman Tommy Caviglia, Commissioner Eddie Booth, Commissioner Paul Young, Commissioner Shane Rogers, CABMW Representative Joe Crim, Public Representative Meghan Brown

Nevada Department of Wildlife personnel in attendance: Data and Technology Services (DATS) Division Administrator Kim Munoz, Management Analyst Megan Manfredi, Game Division Administrator Shawn Espinosa, Deputy Director Mike Scott, Director Alan Jenne, Wildlife Staff Specialist Cody McKee, Wildlife Staff Specialist Joe Bennet, Habitat Division Administrator Mark Freese, Conservation Educator Doug Nielson, Administrative Assistant Cameron Tull, Executive Assistant Lynda Barr, Program Officer Chrissie Rose, Program Officer Alejandra Medina, Management Analyst Kailey Musso

County advisory Boards to Manage Wildlife (CABMW) Members and public in attendance: Mitch McVicars, Don Klebenow, Ryan Brown

1. Call to Order, Pledge and Roll Call – Committee Chairman Tommy Caviglia

Chairman Caviglia called the meeting to order at 7:03 AM. Members and public present said the pledge. Chairman Tommy Caviglia, Commissioner Eddie Booth, Commissioner Paul Young, Commissioner Shane Rogers, CABMW Representative Joe Crim, Public Representative Meghan Brown were present. CABMW Representative Matt Melarkey was absent.

2. Public Comment Period

No public comment.

3. Approval of Agenda – Committee Chairman Tommy Caviglia – For Possible Action

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

No public comment.

COMMISSIONER ROGERS MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED, SECONDED BY CABMW REPRESENTATIVE CRIM. MOTION PASSED 6-0 WITH CABMW REPRESENTATIVE MELARKEY ABSENT.

4.* Approval of Minutes – Committee Chairman Tommy Caviglia – For Possible Action

The Committee may take action to approve Committee minutes from the June 24, 2023, meeting.

No public comment.

COMMISSIONER ROGERS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS PRESENTED, SECONDED BY CABMW REPRESENTATIVE CRIM. MOTION PASSED 6-0 WITH CABMW REPRESENTATIVE MELARKEY ABSENT.

5.* Commission Policy 24 – Game Administrator Shawn Espinosa – For Possible Action

The Committee will discuss possible changes to the demand-tag success formula defined in Commission Policy 24.

Game Division Administrator Shawn Espinosa opened the agenda item by explaining during the previous meeting the Department proposed seven options to update the demand formula outlined in Commission Policy 24. He shared the seven options again for the new Committee members. He shared that the Department reran the application rates for each species and weapon groups across all five choices over the past three years and did not come to the solution that the Department initially hoped for. The demand for mule deer any legal weapon (ALW) is 60 percent, archery ten (10) percent, and muzzleloader six (6) percent. He added that if the youth deer tags were included, the percentage demand for ALW would increase to 85 percent. The demand for pronghorn horns longer than ears ALW is 93 percent, archer five (5) percent, and muzzleloader one (1) percent. In the antlered elk category, the demand for ALW is 79 percent, archery 15 percent, and muzzleloader seven (7) percent. Based on that five choice, three-year average primitive weapon classes are a small piece of the pie relating to demand. The Department's proposed solution is to modify policy 24 and develop fixed allocations for the various weapon groups. The support materials show a fixed demand for mule deer ALW of 57 percent, archery ten (10) percent, and muzzleloader eight (8) percent. Antelope horns longer than ears ALW shows as 85 percent, archery 15 percent and muzzleloader five (5) percent. Antlered elk ALW shows 70 percent, archery 20 percent and muzzleloader ten (10) percent. He went on to explain the other changes proposed by the Department in Commission Policy 24 and how they would affect the future quota allocations.

Chairman Caviglia asked if the fixed demand recommendations for mule deer would be the same for the standard units as it is for the alternative and nonstandard units.

Game Division Administrator Espinosa confirmed that the fixed demand recommendations would be the same for all units.

Chairman Caviglia requested that the fixed demand definition could be adjusted to include the standard units. He added his concern that while he understands the change would increase tag numbers, this change would be to the detriment of the ALW hunters who are the majority of the applicants to the advantage of the primitive weapon users. He asked if that is the direction the Committee and Commission would like to take.

Deputy Director Mike Scott stated that one of the biggest changes that are made during the quota meeting is based on comments made around overcrowding in the field. The proposed changes were

made specifically to address that issue. Multiple CABMWs earlier this May during the quota setting recommended an increase in primitive weapon hunts and reductions in ALW tags. The Department is trying to find that balance.

Chairman Caviglia agreed but stated that he wanted it said that ALW is by far the biggest user group and would be the group negatively affected by this change.

Director Alan Jenne added that seasons of archery and muzzleloader add opportunities for people to get into the field and create opportunity, but it is not being taken advantage of and because of the way the current formula is working, it continues to compress the odds with a diminishing return on what an applicant can do in the field. This solution is a possible way to help distribute the tags and create a better experience for hunters in the field.

Wildlife Staff Specialist Cody McKee added that while tags would be taken from the ALW category and put into the primitive weapon categories, the tags will still be issued, and the Department would not see an issue of under allocation. The Game Division has also asked itself how we can do more with less and an option for this is to offer additional primitive weapon tags because success is lower, which would allow more hunters in the field.

Conversation continued about the fixed demand formula and proposed changes to Commission Policy 24.

Public Representative Meghan Brown asked if the Department knew if first time hunters who have not participated in the junior hunt program primarily apply in the ALW category.

Game Division Administrator Espinosa answered that at least for mule deer, all hunters in the junior mule deer program are classified as ALW hunters. They might transition into different weapon classes as their seasons progress, but most are successful in harvesting during the ALW seasons.

Wildlife Staff Specialist McKee added that the Department does not have the data to show if new adult hunters are applying for the first time for the ALW category, but it is speculation that a new hunter would most likely target the ALW category.

The logic behind the proposed percentages for fixed cost in Commission Policy 24 was discussed.

No public comment.

Chairman Caviglia stated he did not have a problem forwarding the Commission Policy 24 on to the Commission but did foresee that there could be substantially more discussion and public comment.

Commissioner Eddie Booth stated he liked the idea of keeping the quota calculation simple and the opportunities to hunt with his hunting groups that the complaint most heard is around the quality of the hunt and too many people are in the field. He liked the idea of the fixed demand formula.

COMMISSIONER ROGERS MOVED TO FORWARD COMMISSION POLICY 24 TO THE COMMISSION AS PRESENTED WITH AN UPDATE TO THE STANDARD AND ALTERNATE IN THE FIXED COST DEFINITION, SECONDED BY CABMW REPRESENTATIVE CRIM. MOTION PASSED 6-0 WITH CABMW REPRESENTATIVE MELARKEY ABSENT.

6.* Junior Tag Transfer – Management Analyst Megan Manfredi – For Possible Action

The Committee will discuss possible options for establishing a junior tag transfer program as authority to establish such a program was given from SB 311 out of the 2023 Legislative Session.

Management Analyst Megan Manfredi opened by reviewing the language in Senate Bill 311 that allows the Commission to establish a program that would allow for the transfer of a big game tag to anyone under the age of 18. She stated that the idea of a black market that this bill created is of deep concern to the Department, so the Department came up with three alternative suggestions other than one individual giving their big game tag to a specific youth. The three proposed alternatives were a junior only application period, a junior alternate option, or to expand the currently established mentor hunt program allowing the original tag holder to be in the field teaching the youth the tag was transferred to.

Chairman Caviglia confirmed that SB 311 states the Commission may establish a program and not the Commission shall establish a program. He shared that the intent of the individuals who introduced the bill was to have the ability to transfer their game tags to whomever the tag holder intended to transfer to. He added his understanding for the Department's concern of a black market but would like to see an option where a tag could be transferred to the tag holder's child.

Clarity around establishing a new program, what limitations, if any, SB 311 established and the process of which the regulation changes would need to be sent through the Commission was provided.

Commissioner Paul Young stated he would like to see the family member aspect included in the program as that was something that would be important to him, and he felt was part of the initial bill establishment.

Management Analyst Manfredi informed the Committee that it is difficult for the Department to prove lineage of tag holders and research family heritage of the individual claiming to be the parent of the junior who the tag is requesting to be issued to.

Chairman Caviglia stated he liked the familial ties and referenced Arizona's transfer program where a grandparent is able to transfer their tag to a grandchild and the burden of proof falls on the tag holder, weather that includes a birth certificate or other proof required before the transfer is accepted. He referenced a good friend who has utilized Arizona's program in the past.

Clarity was provided on transferred mule deer tags where they would be the exact tag transferring to a youth and would not revert into a junior tag and offer the three weapon classes with extended seasons.

Commissioner Rogers voiced his support of allowing a transfer through a family line.

Chairman Caviglia stated that there would be some nonhunting individuals in a family that would begin to apply and earn bonus points to utilize in this program, but that junior would have a small window to receive a tag from that nonhunting family member and would probably only participate in this program one time. The intent is to get juniors additional opportunities.

Commissioner Rogers agreed and added that constraints and limitations of direct family lineage would be ideal opposed to an open transfer program to any individual.

DATS Division Administrator Kim Munoz stated that with the demand success formula heard in the previous agenda item and the subject that was just touched upon, if the family route is decided by the Commission, you will see additional applications and applicants in the system, altering the demand success we know today. That would mean more licenses sold by the Department and more Pittman Roberson funds received through license certification, but you've made the draw odds harder for the individuals already in the system wanting to draw a tag.

Chairman Caviglia added that there are two sides to that where there is constant discussion on gaining more applicants which would generate more revenue for the Department.

Commissioner Young agreed that it would result in additional applications but also more bonus points being earned or purchased with the mindset of earning them until the time the youth is of age to participate in big game hunting.

Public comment:

Ryan Brown supported the idea of transferring a tag to a family member. He anticipated the majority of applicants applying to participate in this program would be bonus revenue in applications and licenses to the Department.

Mitch McVicars from White Pine CABMW stated their CABMW has been working through two legislative sessions to get this bill passed to this point. Many people he has spoken to are in favor of this bill with the idea of getting more youth into the field due to the lack of tags currently available for them. He stated his understanding of the negative aspects that this bill created but the positives of families in the field hunting outweighed the option of kids sitting at home without a tag.

COMMISSIONER ROGERS MOVED TO DIRECT THE DEPARTMENT TO DRAFT LANGUAGE FOR A JUNIOR TAG TRANSFER PROGRAM THAT WOULD ALLOW FAMILIES TO TRANSFER TAGS THROUGH FAMILY LINEAGE.

Public Representative Brown stated that she would second the motion as she supports the idea of transferring a tag within a family but asked if the motion could include language around the mentor program which would allow for different people an opportunity to get into the field and not have the program solely aimed at already hunting families.

COMMISSIONER ROGERS AMENDED THE MOTION TO INCLUDE AN OPTION FOR PARTICIPATION THROUGH THE MENTOR PROGRAM AS WELL AS A TRANSFER OPTION THROUGH FAMILY LINEAGE, SECONDED BY PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVE BROWN. MOTION PASSED 6-0 WITH CABMW REPRESENTATIVE MELARKEY ABSENT.

7. TAAHC Workshop – Management Analyst Megan Manfredi – For Possible Action

The Committee will review a list of potential future agenda topics and determine which will be brought forth to a future Committee meeting for deeper discussion.

Management Analyst Megan Manfredi opened the agenda item by stating that many topics are being brought forward for possible discussion by the Committee. The topics are suggested by members of the public as well as Department staff members and this workshop is a way for the Department to limit the items based on the interest of the Committee members for additional discussions around each topic. This agenda item is looking for a yes or no direction from the Committee on whether the Committee would like the topic brought back for a deeper discussion at a future meeting.

The workshop encompassed five topic items including:

Diversifying season structures where appropriate, which would expand opportunities for primitive weapon late season hunts or have multiple seasons with reduced season lengths.

Additional late mule deer hunts with very limited quotas. This suggestion would not be recommended for landowner tags to be eligible to utilize these specific hunt seasons in mind.

Limit the number of successfully awarded tags for an individual within a draw year. Currently a person could draw one tag per species they were eligible. This topic would limit the number of big game tags one person could hold within a hunt year.

Limit the number of hunt choices from five (5) to (2). Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) 502.4175 allows a person to choose up to five (5) options per species application. This option would limit that number but would also directly affect Commission Policy 24's quota calculation formula that was discussed in earlier in agenda item five (5).

Junior tags broke out into season weapon classes. Junior tags allow the junior to hunt all three weapon classes on a single tag until a successful harvest is made. This option would break out the weapons into different hunt choices, resulting in juniors being awarded one of the three weapon choice options per tag.

Commissioner Rogers stated that he would like to discuss the junior weapon class break out and the hunt choices from five (5) to two (2) with no desire to hear about late season mule deer hunts or limiting a person's ability to draw more than one tag.

CABMW Representative Joe Crim shared his interest in hearing more about breaking the junior tags into their own weapon classes.

Commission Young expressed his interest in limiting the application choices from five (5) to (2) as the discussion has been made about allocating tags from one weapon class to another and how this limit would affect tag allocation.

Chairman Caviglia stated that limiting the hunt choices has the potential to massively shake up the application and draw game for good or bad. He stated his interest in that future conversation as well as hearing more on the junior tags into their own weapon classes.

No public comment.

COMMISSIONER ROGERS MOVED TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS BROUGHT BACK TO THE COMMITTEE FOR A FUTURE DISCUSSION; LIMITING THE NUMBER OF HUNT CHOICES PER APPLICANT FROM FIVE (5) TO TWO (2) AND BREAKING UP THE JUNIOR TAGS INTO THEIR INDIVIDUAL WEAPON CLASSES, SECONDED BY CABMW REPRESENTATIVE CRIM. MOTION PASSED 6-0 WITH CABMW REPRESENTATIVE MELARKEY ABSENT.

8. Future Committee Meeting – Committee Chairman Tommy Caviglia – For Possible Action
The committee will discuss possible future agenda topics and set a date and time for the next committee meeting.

Chairman Caviglia stated that his list of items to come back at a future meeting includes the junior tag transfer program, limiting the number of hunt choices per applicant from five to two and junior tags broken out into individual weapon classes.

Deputy Director Scott added that the Department is having issues around the tag deferral program and requested that program be brought to the Committee for discussion in hopes to tighten up the holes or questions that have arisen now that the program has been opened for more people to utilize.

9. Public Comment Period

No public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 am.