

<p align="center">Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners' Meeting</p>
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Draft Minutes

Washoe County Commission Chambers
1001 E 9th Street, Building A
Reno, Nevada 89512

Video Streaming and Teleconferencing available at:

Nevada Department of Wildlife
Southern Region Office
4747 Vegas Dr.
Las Vegas, Nevada 89108

Public comment will be taken on every action item after discussion but before action on each item, and is limited to three minutes per person. The chairman may allow persons representing groups to speak for six minutes. Persons may not allocate unused time to other speakers. Persons are invited to submit written comments on items or attend and make comment during the meeting and are asked to complete a speaker card and present it to the Recording Secretary. To ensure the public has notice of all matters the Commission will consider, Commissioners may choose not to respond to public comments in order to avoid the appearance of deliberation on topics not listed for action on the agenda.

Forum restrictions and orderly business: The viewpoint of a speaker will not be restricted, but reasonable restrictions may be imposed upon the time, place and manner of speech.

Irrelevant and unduly repetitious statements and personal attacks that antagonize or incite others are examples of public comment that may be reasonably limited.

Please provide the Board of Wildlife Commissioners ("Commission") with the complete electronic or written copies of testimony and visual presentations to include as exhibits with the minutes. Minutes of the meeting will be produced in summary format.

NOTE: Public comment allowed on each action item and regulation workshop items and at the end of the meeting.

Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners present for meeting and field tour:

Chairman Grant Wallace	Vice Chairman Brad Johnston	Commissioner John Almberg
Commissioner Tom Barnes	Commissioner East	Commissioner Kerstan Hubbs
Commissioner David McNinch	Commissioner Paul E. Valentine	

Secretary Tony Wasley	Deputy Attorney General Joshua Woodbury
Deputy Attorney General Bryan Stockton	

Nevada Department of Wildlife personnel in attendance:

Deputy Director Jack Robb	Deputy Director Liz O'Brien
Wildlife Diversity Administrator Jennifer Newmark	Game Division Administrator Brian Wakeling
Chief Game Warden Tyler Turnipseed	Staff Game Warden Mike Maynard
Fisheries Division Administrator Jon Sjöberg	Habitat Division Administrator Alan Jenne
Conservation Education Administrator Chris Vasey	Wildlife Staff Biologist Pat Jackson

Public in Attendance for the two day meeting at Reno location:

Scott Torgerson, Lander CABMW	Gene Green, Carson CABMW
Larry Allen Humboldt CABMW	Joe Crim, Pershing
Mitch McVicar, White Pine CABMW	Glenn Bunch Mineral
Ramona Maestes, White Pine CABMW	Joel Blakeslee, Nevada Trappers Association
Jonathan Lesperance, Nevada Sporting Dog Alliance	Paul Dixon, Clark CABMW
Steve Robinson, Washoe CABMW	Don Molde, Nevada Wildlife Alliance
Rex Flowers, self	Cory Lytle, Lincoln CABMW
P. Hughes, self	Trish Swain, Trail Safe
Cathy Brandhorst	Bill Miller
Tina Nappe, former Wildlife Commissioner	Phil Gray, Lander CABMW
Worth Nelson, Lander CABMW	Walter Mandeville, Lyon CABMW
Gerald Lent, Nevada Hunters Association	Chris Cefalu, Nevada Bighorns Unlimited
Jim Cooney, Elko CABMW	Glenn Bunch, Mineral CABMW
Cathy Smith, No Bear Hunt Nevada	Elaine Carrick, self
Kathryn Thomas, self	Lloyd Peake
Craig Burnside, Douglas CABMW	Jim Puryear, Nevada Bighorns Unlimited
Mel Belding, self	Terry Owens
Elaine Profitt, self	Matt Dixon, self
Sean Shea, Washoe CABMW	Joe Crawford, NSDA

Public in attendance at the Las Vegas location:
Jana Wright, self
Karen Layne, former Wildlife Commissioner
Stephanie Myers, self

Friday, May 4, 2018 – 10:30 a.m.

- 1 Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, Introduction and Roll Call of Commission and County Advisory Board Members to Manage Wildlife (CABMW) – Chairman Wallace

Friday's meeting was called to order by Chairman Wallace. Commissioners present for roll call on Friday, May 4, 2018, were Chairman Wallace, Vice Chairman Johnston, Commissioners Almberg, Barnes, East, Hubbs, McNinch and Valentine. Chairman Wallace said Commissioner Young has resigned from the Commission.

CABMW members present at roll call: Paul Dixon, Clark; Gene Green, Carson; Mitch McVicars, White Pine, Ramona Maestes, White Pine; Craig Burnside, Douglas; Joe Crim, Pershing; Glenn Bunch Mineral; and Worth Nelson, Lander; Jim Cooney, Elko; Walt Mandeville, Lyon; Larry Allen, Humboldt; and Cory Lytle, Lincoln.

- 2 Approval of Agenda – Chairman Wallace – For Possible Action
The Commission will review the agenda and may take action to approve the agenda. The Commission may remove items from the agenda, continue items for consideration or take items out of order.

COMMISSIONER VALENTINE MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. COMMISSIONER MCNINCH SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

- 3 Member Items/Announcements and Correspondence – Chairman Wallace – Informational
Commissioners may present emergent items. No action may be taken by the Commission. Any item requiring Commission action may be scheduled on a future Commission agenda. The Commission will review and may discuss correspondence sent or received by the Commission since the last regular meeting and may provide copies for the exhibit file (Commissioners may provide hard copies of their correspondence for the written record). Correspondence sent or received by Secretary Wasley may also be discussed.

Commissioner Johnston said he received several emails regarding the safe shooting distance regulation. He said it has been frustrating to him to receive emails on a regulation that the Commission decided not to move ahead on.

Commissioner Hubbs said she received letters regarding the shed antler regulation. She is sure other Commissioners received them along with correspondence on quotas.

Chairman Wallace said he received those letters through the Department which will be part of the record.

Secretary Wasley said NDOW did not receive additional emails on safe shooting distances. He listed correspondence received by him: An email from a sportsman who had an issue with a taxidermist; correspondence from constituents on providing social security numbers who were advised that the social security numbers are required because of a federal regulation; and

requests from legislators through Legislative Counsel Bureau asking for information on shed antler hunting activities and sage-grouse populations.

Commissioner Johnston received taxidermist correspondence too. He said he sees no action for the Commission to take as complaint was due to length of time it was taking for the work to be done.

- 4 County Advisory Boards to Manage Wildlife (CABMW) Member Items – Informational CABMW members may present emergent items. No action may be taken by the Commission. Any item requiring Commission action will be scheduled on a future Commission agenda.

Paul Dixon, Clark CABMW, said he would like to re-visit the issue of muzzleloader handguns for hunting.

Worth Nelson, Lander CABMW, read letter into the record from the Lander CABMW:

The Lander County Wildlife Board has been concerned about our declining deer population for many years now. We do appreciate NDOW not issuing any doe tags for the 2018 hunt, but we would like to see more done to enhance the deer population in our county.

We recently had a workshop with NDOW Jeremy Lutz, Tom Donham and Cody Schroeder to explain the herd health model (buck ratio, fawn ratio) and how NDOW game division tries to manage to have a buck ratio for the state of 30 bucks to every 100 does. We would like to see that changed for Area 15 to a ratio of 40 to 100.

As CAB members one of our main jobs is to listen to the hunters from Area 15 and to address their concerns. We are constantly hearing that there are not any deer in Area 15. Our job is to bring their concerns to you, the commissioners. We believe that by increasing the buck ratio. It will hopefully increase quality of the hunt.

Also, our board would like to recommend that with our antelope herds thriving like they are, that you consider issuing youth antelope tags to replace youth deer tags in Northern Unit 15.

Thank you for your time concerning these matters in Lander County.

Craig Burnside, Douglas CABMW, requested that shotguns be allowed as legal weapon for bear hunts.

- 5 Approval of Minutes – Chairman Wallace – For Possible Action
Commission minutes from the March 16 and 17, 2018, meeting may be approved.

COMMISSIONER EAST MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS PRESENTED. COMMISSIONER HUBBS SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION PASSED 7 – 0. COMMISSIONER MCNINCH ABSTAINED FROM THE MOTION BECAUSE HE WAS ABSENT FROM THE MEETING.

- 6 Petition – Mr. Ryan Bronson, Federal Premium Ammunition – For Possible Action
Mr. Bronson has submitted a petition to change regulation “to allow use of a .410 shotgun or a 28 gauge and use of non-toxic shot size no larger than number 6 pellets with a density of 15 grams per cubic centimeter or denser.” The Commission may take action to deny or accept the petition and initiate rule-making.

Mr. Bronson, director of conservation and policy for Federal Premium Ammunition presented a PowerPoint presentation.

http://www.ndow.org/uploadedFiles/ndoworg/Content/Public_Meetings/Com/6-Petition-Mr.-Ryan-Bronson-Federal-Ammunition.pdf

Mr. Bronson explained pellet and shot size. He said currently Nevada allows .9 shot but not .410. With advent of new tungsten shot and other technological advances .410 shot should be allowable. Mr. Bronson said his petition is requesting Nevada to allow .410 using new configuration of shot. There is no patent protection which means other manufacturers will eventually enter the market. They are advocating for the .410 because that will attract new young shooters because of less recoil and the .410 gun is easier to handle. This will assist in promoting the Three R's (recruitment, retention and reactivation of hunters) by bringing a new product to market. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) endorsed the use of tungsten shot. Mr. Bronson answered various questions from the Commission relative to the ammunition:

Commissioner Valentine asked the price of the ammunition.

Mr. Bronson said that the shot is expensive but with turkey hunting you only need one shot.

Commissioner Johnston asked if price difference will be similar to that between 28 gauges and 10 and 12 gauge.

Mr. Bronson said in this configuration with the smaller .410 it will be cheaper but not cheaper than conventional turkey ammunition.

Commissioner Hubbs asked if shot is more accurate in hitting the target or if any less lethal.

Mr. Bronson answered that the .410 is more lethal than lead for penetration and is certified non-toxic; performance will exceed traditional lead shot when comparing apples to apples at 40 feet.

Public Comment Petition –

Paul Dixon, Clark CABMW, said at a meeting they had a request for the Commission to consider hand-loaded 20 gauges. He said as we go through this proposal should also look at including other species that could be hunted with a shotgun less than 20 gauge.

Gene Green, Carson CABMW, said his CABMW heard from person .410 and they were concerned that if .410s are allowed; that the regulation not specify a specific manufacturer. He said his CABMW supported tungsten shot because it is less harmful to weapon and the environment.

Walt Mandeville, Lyon CABMW, said they discussed the petition at length with several avid turkey hunters who were supportive of the .410. Lyon CABMW unanimously approved the petition for a regulation.

Commissioner Valentine said his concern with a .410 being allowed is that the consumer will buy lead shot because it is cheaper.

Commissioner Almberg said he is supportive of the petition to allow the Commission to have further discussion to work out the regulatory issues and language.

DAG Stockton said if the Commission accepts the petition the motion could be specific to direct the Department or the Department can pick-up on what is needed from the discussion.

Commissioner East said she supports the petition as she learned to shoot on .410, but is not sure about the ammunition and how to regulate the shot or monitor what is used.

Commissioner Barnes said he would like to go forward with the petition and work out the details later.

Chairman Wallace agreed with Commissioner Barnes.

Mr. Bronson said the USFWS has a "hot shot" device to detect and test the shot to insure ammunition is made out of tungsten.

Commissioner Valentine said if the petition is accepted by the Commission he asked that the regulation drafted have specific language for the ammunition description such as "steel" or "tungsten."

Commissioner McNinch asked if the Department had any issues to address if regulation were drafted.

Chief Game Warden Turnipseed said his concerns are that the density requirement would be difficult in the field because currently NDOW does not have "hot shot" device which could be obtained; wounding loss if correct ammunition not used; would prefer simpler language as this is a narrow niche of utilization; and is not sure if enough hunters would use the .410 to warrant regulation.

Commissioner Hubbs said she supports use of non-toxic shot. Her concern is wounding loss and would any of these proposals make it easier to kill turkey to comply with Fair Chase as opposed to different gauge shotguns.

Chief Turnipseed said non-toxic shot is defined in NAC which references shot. Years ago only option for non-toxic was "steel shot" and pellets less dense so there was wounding loss. During last few years bismuth and tungsten have evolved solving wounding loss issues. The load would be solid to kill turkeys; however, other .410s that use lead or steel would not be as effective.

Further discussion on impact of .410s between Commissioner Hubbs and Chief Turnipseed.

COMMISSIONER EAST MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM #6, THE PETITION SUBMITTED BY MR. RYAN BRONSON OF FEDERAL PREMIUM AMMUNITION TO ASK THE DEPARTMENT TO CREATE/INITIATE RULEMAKING OF A REGULATION TO ALLOW THE USE OF A .410 SHOTGUN OR .28 GAUGE AND USE OF NON-TOXIC SHOT SIZE. COMMISSIONER HUBBS SECONDED THE MOTION.

Commissioner Johnston said he will vote on the motion to accept the petition; however, his vote is not a sign that he will go forward with changing the regulations. He thinks recruiting new hunters by allowing use of a .410 or 28 gauge shotguns will be minimal because of the small number of turkey tags issued in Nevada. He is concerned with the regulation becoming exceedingly complex in terms of what shot is allowed or not allowed in the smaller shotguns, which could actually steer new participants away. As a parent of young children, he has found that a 20 gauge shotgun is not hard for youth to handle. Will support the petition as he is not opposed to initiating rule-making. Also, he would be more likely to support this, if the petition had come from turkey hunters rather than a company wanting to sell ammunition.

Commissioner Valentine said he too will support the petition and agreed with Commissioner Johnston that a 20 gauge could be used and is concerned as well with the possible intricacy of the regulation.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 8 – 0.

- 7 Presentation of Fiscal Year 2019 Predation Management Plan – Wildlife Staff Specialist Pat Jackson – For Possible Action. The Commission will review the final draft of the Fiscal Year 2019 Draft Predation Management Plan with the Department. The Commission may take action to modify or endorse the plan.

Wildlife Staff Specialist Jackson said the plan is the same as presented at the March meeting. He requested adoption of the plan. There was no Commission comment on the plan, only one comment from Jana Wright for the record. See below.

The predation plan, in my opinion, is a sad commentary by the department as it appears to be a copy and paste duplicate from the FY 2018 plan. I know the work of staff is much better than what is reflected in this document.

I compared projects: 21, 21-02, 22-01, 22-074 and project 37 before I stopped.

The only changes I found were in the comment boxes referencing the previous year's predation report.

At the very least, under the budget line item, there could be a running total of monies allocated from the previous years the project has been on the plan

I would hope some serious improvements could be made to the plan format for FY 2020.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE FISCAL YEAR 2019 PREDATION MANAGEMENT PLAN AS PRESENTED. COMMISSIONER BARNES SECONDED THE MOTION.

Commissioner Hubbs said no dissenting comments were provided at the last Wildlife Damage Management Committee meeting.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Wallace recessed the meeting at 11:42 a.m.

- 8 Regulation for Possible Action and Regulation for Workshop – Public Comment Allowed: Persons Wishing to Provide Comment on Regulations are Requested to Complete a Speaker's Card and Present it to the Recording Secretary
- A Commission General Regulation 470, Miscellaneous Petitions, LCB File No. R095 16 – Commissioner and APRP Committee Chairman David McNinch – For Possible Action
The Commission will consider adopting amendments to Chapter 501 of the Nevada Administrative Code (NAC). The regulation was developed by the Administrative Procedures, Regulations, and Policy Committee after several public meetings incorporating relevant suggestions from the public, legal counsel, the Department and the Committee. The amendments will simplify petition form requirements and the petition process overall. Three workshops have been held on this regulation, Nov. 18, 2016, Aug. 11, 2017, and Mar. 16, 2018.

Commissioner McNinch said that the regulation is scheduled for possible adoption after changes to some language. The primary issue was that statute requires petitions to be considered within 30 days of being submitted. However, the Commission does not meet often enough. The Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) has suggested that this regulation is kept as proposed.

Deputy Attorney General Stockton explained that statute requires that when a petition to change a regulation is made, the Commission either has to approve or deny that within 30 days. It is not possible for this Commission to look at all petitions within 30 days. In that case, it would be denied unless the petitioner accepted to hear it at the next following meeting. The Legislative Counsel Bureau recognized that this Commission is in a difficult place because of the meeting schedule, the Open Meeting Law (OML) requirements and the petition requirements. The informal process will continue where the Department works with the petitioner to set a hearing date. If they do not agree, the petition will be denied.

Commissioner McNinch explained that LCB is aware of this challenge because other Boards and Commissions also have the same challenge.

Deputy Director Robb explained that the Department will continue to work with the petitioner because there are often cases where a petitioner wants to attend the meeting nearest them.

Public Comment Reno – None

Public Comment Las Vegas – None

COMMISSIONER MCNINCH MOVED TO APPROVE LCB FILE NO R095-16 AS PRESENTED. COMMISSIONER VALENTINE SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 8-0.

- B Commission General Regulation 474, Trap Registration, LCB File No. R038-18 – Chief Game Warden Tyler Turnipseed – Workshop/Public Comment Allowed
The Commission will hold a workshop to consider amending Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) 503.150. This regulation revises provisions relating to the registration of traps as mandated by Senate Bill (SB) 364 of the 79th Legislative Session. SB 364 states that with certain exceptions, each trap, snare, or similar device used by a person in the taking of wild mammals must be registered with the Department before it is used. SB 364 also states that for each trap, snare, or similar device registered with the Department, the person registering the device shall pay a registration fee of \$5. This proposed regulation provides a mechanism for the Department to register traps and charge \$5 per trap registered.

Chief Game Warden Turnipseed explained that this regulation is a result of a Senate Bill (SB) from the 2017 legislative session. A part of that bill stated that the trapper could either stamp their trap with their name and address or they could register their traps with the Department. This means that the Department needed to create a Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) in order to outline how to comply with the bill. The trapping subcommittee met several times to discuss this issue. Sections 1, 2, and 3 of the proposed regulation came from the 2013 subcommittee meeting. The bill also mandated a \$5 fee for every trap. The thought with the proposed regulation is to split it into two different processes. Sections 1, 2, and 3 are from the old system. A trapper can come in and get a trap registration number and put that on the trap however they would like. Section 4 addresses the \$5 portion of SB 364. For each trap registered, the Department will provide: a tag, seal or widget. Game wardens will be able to know whether or not the trap has been paid for if they see the tag. If they see that the trap does not have a name and address nor does it have the tag, they will know it has not been paid for. Many people have asked if that seal will have a number on it. The answer is no, because that is just a receipt of the \$5 payment. The Department could come up with a way of combining

some of those sections or by mandating that the trapper stamp their seal themselves. It is up to the Commission on how to manipulate that.

Commissioner Almberg asked if trappers can still use their old registration number.

Chief Game Warden Turnipseed said he believes they can use their old number. He said it is challenging to implement that in Section 2(a) when it comes to transferring traps between family members. The Legislative Counsel Bureau added a phrase regarding an expiration period; however the Department does not have a registration period.

Commissioner Barnes wanted to clarify that if a trapper already has a registration number they could put that number on the widget.

Chief Game Warden Turnipseed explained that the Department has not decided on a widget to use as of yet because there are multiple options. It could be a one-time use or multiple-use widget.

Commissioner Valentine asked if there was an option to put your name on your trap to avoid registering.

Chief Turnipseed pointed out the first sentence says that a person who is required to register shall submit an application. SB 364 of the 79th Session reads that if a trap or snare of similar device has a name and address on it, the person is not required to register.

Commissioner East asked what the \$5 is earmarked for.

Director Wasley noted that it would most likely go in the general wildlife fund but the money coming in would not be significant; it would just help to administer this program.

Commissioner East asked if it was a one-time fee or if it was annual.

Chief Turnipseed said the bill did not specify. The Department is considering it a one-time fee. He said the Department could also work out the details of the widget.

Commissioner Hubbs asked can they just pay the \$5 if the traps are already registered.

Chief Turnipseed said that numbers can be adopted but the \$5 per trap would still need to be paid.

Public Comment in Reno –

Paul Dixon, Clark CABMW, said that Clark CABMW supported the regulation; however, he did not. His opinion is that if there is an NAC without mentioning the fact that you could avoid the \$5, it will be misleading. Most people do not read that first sentence the way that Chief Game Warden Turnipseed read it. It should say that there are two options, because it is currently unclear.

Walt Mandeville, Lyon CABMW, said they supported the idea of the regulation, but not the \$5 fee per trap because it could get expensive.

Cory Lytle, Lincoln CABMW, said that Lincoln CABMW has a big issue with subsection 4 and the durability of the widget. He said the CABMW would like to see something durable and small.

Rex Flowers said he agreed with Mr. Dixon. He believes that first sentence is very confusing and that the normal person will look to NAC. He realizes that stamping numbers on widgets would be costly to the Department as it would be to the trapper if they are required to do it themselves.

Joel Blakeslee, Nevada Trappers Association, noted that SB 364 of the 79th Session is well written and that there is not much to do beyond that. Some concerns are that it should be made known that there is an alternative to the \$5 and that there should be durable tags. He said trappers do not want to have to stamp their numbers on the tags either. Nevada Trappers Association would like the money go to furbearer management or trapping and possibly law enforcement. He said when trapping coyotes it is important to keep human scent off of the traps; therefore, they would ask that the game wardens avoid going through traps while they are still in the trucks. They know that in the field traps are fair game.

Public Comment Las Vegas –

Stephanie Myers said she strongly supports the regulation as required trap registration has been needed for decades.

Karen Layne said the biggest issue is that the trappers did not want to put their names or address on the traps. She does support the amendments to NAC 503.150 and that it is time to move ahead with this.

Jana Wright said that the mandates of SB 364 went into effect July 1, 2017, and now there is a regulation to move forward in the process. SB 364 gives trappers a choice of how they want to identify their traps if they choose to trap on public lands. Trappers may request a unique trapper identification number from the Department or trappers may choose to put their name and address on each trap, snare or similar device. Trappers may stamp this information on the trap or put the information on a metal tag that is attached to the trap, snare or similar device and avoid paying any fees to the Department. This regulation is for those that decide to register their traps, snares and similar devices versus putting their name and address on the traps, snares and similar devices. Most trappers are taking animals that belong to all of us and making money by selling the pelts, requiring a fee of \$5 per trap seems modest. NRS 503.452 currently lists the exemptions for those not required to register their traps, snares and similar devices and in my opinion do not need to be added to this regulation. The metallic seal provided by the Department will be attached to each trap thus alerting law enforcement that the trap is in compliance with the mandates of this regulation. According to the small business impact statement the reason and impact of the regulation, the money generated will go into the Wildlife Fund Account, with the potential of qualifying for a three to one match of federal money depending on what kind of project might be funded by the Wildlife Fund Account. She feels the Department has done a very good job on this regulation; she encourages the Commission to vote in favor of adopting R038-18.

Commissioner Valentine would like to clarify the issue of paying by adding some language.

Commissioner Johnston said to add “a person who does not affix his/her address to a trap snare or similar device and uses a trap snare or similar device on public land is required to register.” That way, there are not new sections or subsections.

Commissioner East asked what would happen if the Department decided not to stamp the widget with the registration number and they were to come across one that did not have a number on it.

Chief Turnipseed said that has been a topic of discussion. It would be costly to the Department and more time-consuming for the trapper if the Department needed to have a vendor stamp the widget. There could be an option of the trapper stamping it themselves or the Commission could mandate it.

Commissioner East noted that it could be a liability at some point if someone had many traps.

Commissioner Johnston said that the Department will need to add an “and” so that the language reads: Trappers are required to register with the Department and will be required to submit an application.

Chief Turnipseed said he will get clarification on the transferability of the trap registration numbers.

9 Reports – Informational

A Heritage Committee – Chairman Wallace

A report will be provided on the recent Heritage Committee.

Chairman Wallace said the committee met yesterday to discuss and recommend Heritage tag vendor selection, and review state fiscal year 2019 Heritage project proposals submitted. Fiscal Year 2019 funds available are \$887,474.01 and the funding needed for the 15 proposed projects totals \$998,300. Chairman Wallace read the Heritage Committee's recommendation for proposed Heritage tag vendors: Mule Deer Foundation, one mule deer tag; Wildlife Habitat Improvement of Nevada, one mule deer tag; Nevada Waterfowl Association, one pronghorn antelope tag; Pershing County Chukars Unlimited, one pronghorn antelope tag; Northern Nevada Chapter of Safari Club International, one Rocky Mountain elk tag; Meadow Valley Sportsmen Unlimited, one Rocky Mountain elk tag; Nevada Bighorns Unlimited-Reno, tag #1 Nelson bighorn sheep tag; Wild Sheep Foundation/Fraternity of Desert Bighorn, tag #2 Nelson bighorn sheep tag; Nevada Bighorns Unlimited-Reno, one California bighorn sheep tag; Carson Valley Chukar, two wild turkey sheep tags; Meadow Valley Sportsmen Unlimited, one wild turkey tag; Nevada Sportsmen Las Vegas, one wild turkey tag; and Wildlife Habitat Improvement of Nevada, one wild turkey tag. All but three projects were recommended to be fully funded. The three projects not recommended for full funding were: The Simpkins P-J Chaining Project 19-13 which was reduced from \$100,000 to \$75,000; the Cave Valley Ranch P-J Removal Project from \$100,000 to \$ 59,674.01; and no funding for Project 19-15 Delineation and Nutritional Value of Desert Bighorn Sheep Lambing Habitat. The committee recommendation will be submitted to the Heritage Committee in June, and then to the full Board of Wildlife Commissioners at the June 29 Commission meeting for possible action. One possible change may be Project 19-02 NDOW Helicopter Acquisition as the used NDOW helicopter is to be sold at auction in a few weeks.

Deputy Director Robb said at month's end the Department will know the total value and NDOW will solicit contributions to the purchase from the NGO's.

B Department Activity Report – Secretary Wasley
Director Wasley will provide a report on recent Department activities.

NDOW hosted the Western States Wild Turkey Workshop in Minden in April. Participants attended representing the states of Arizona, California, Kansas, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, Utah, and Wyoming. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) was represented at the meeting, and several biologists from the National Wild Turkey Federation attended as well. The 21 participants toured the Mason Valley Wildlife Management Area (WMA) to see upland game management activities in Nevada. The National Wild Turkey Federation financially sponsored the meeting, and draft documents on the economic value of turkey hunting in the west and guidelines for monitoring turkey population and hunting harvests were further developed. New Mexico will host the 2019 meeting.

The Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) Western Quail Working Group also met in Minden in April. The working group is chaired by New Mexico, but chose to meet in Minden to take advantage of the Western States Wild Turkey Workshop that had already gathered many of the upland bird biologists involved in the working group as well.

The Department received a report of a large herd of deer being trapped in a canal in Verdi on March 27, 2018. Department staff responded, but local fire department personnel had already removed about 10 deer from the hydroelectric plant canal where they had been trapped on a diversion grate. The deer were suffering from exhaustion and extended exposure to cold waters. Two deer died on site, but seven were able to walk away from the scene into nearby natural habitat. A third deer had to be euthanized. Media coverage of the event was largely positive, although this was an unfortunate accident which could not be explained easily and has not occurred previously.

Newmont Mining submitted a final report to NDOW on the Long Canyon mule deer monitoring plan. An analysis of migration paths, Brownian bridge movement models, and movement rates for radio marked mule deer between 2015 - 2017 detected no significant changes in mule deer stopover use, although movement rates were higher within the project boundaries compared to outside, suggesting that mule deer may be exerting greater energy reserves within these areas. These findings are similar to those from the University of Nevada, Reno during 2012 -2014.

Mule deer monitoring associated with the Bald Mountain Mine indicates that only three previously radio marked animals had migrated through the North Operations Area as of April 2, 2018, during the 2017 - 2018 monitoring year. One of the deer migrated in late fall while the two others waited until mid-March to migrate south. Three additional deer were captured south of the mine in the Maverick Springs range this winter. During this mild winter, most mule deer stayed north of the mine area between Harrison Pass and Sherman Creek.

The testing of mule deer from eastern Nevada indicates some herds have high titers to bovine viral diarrhea virus (BVDV). Further PCR testing indicates that one doe from the Izzenhood's had the virus and probably exposed others in the herd as well. The effect of BVDV on reproductive performance in mule deer is unknown, yet in white-tailed deer reproductive losses are similar to those described in BVDV-infected cattle.

The Wildlife Health Specialist attended the Northwest Section of The Wildlife Society and Alaska Chapter of the Wildlife Society meeting in March 19, 2018, in Anchorage. She gave a presentation entitled; A review of wild sheep pneumonia: Lessons learned from the lower 48.

Department staff visited three bighorn sheep guzzlers in central Nevada. Due to dry conditions during the summer and fall months in the southern portion of the state last year, the guzzlers were not at full capacity. Robb had 15 inches of water in each tank and Beko had 8 inches in each tank. Monte Cristo

Number 4 is completely full. Staff is working with the Southern Region guzzler crew to explore possible options to fill guzzlers to capacity before the upcoming dry season.

A Big Game Tag Application Seminar on March 28, 2018, was attended by 100 sportsmen and was recorded for online dissemination and focused on the standard aspects of tag application strategies. Considerable time was spent answering questions about the new application procedures. While most public comment trended toward favorable comments about the new system, some confusion remains due to the change from the former familiar system.

Staff recently attended a wildlife-vehicle conflict meeting with the NDOT on March 29, 2018, for a presentation on preliminary results from Dr. Patricia Cramer's analysis and prioritization of animal-collision hotspots. Despite the frequency of wildlife collisions, the effect of cattle and wild horse collisions on public safety can be substantial due to their greater body mass.

Staff is working with USDA Wildlife Services to explore the potential for using oral bait (alphachloralose) to accelerate capture rates for radio marking ravens. These ongoing studies of raven occupancy and habitat use can help the Department identify nonlethal methods for reducing raven predation on sage grouse and tortoises and remains instrumental in maintaining our existing permits to take ravens as necessary. Ravens have proven extremely difficult to capture with traditional nets used to capture many other species.

Spring mule deer and sage grouse flights in central Nevada were done. While on flight, 97 sage grouse leks were surveyed and 679 birds were observed. In Area 17, staff conducted new randomized sub-watershed polygon survey methodology for the second consecutive year, 14 polygons were surveyed where 510 deer were classified as 398 adults and 112 fawns.

An informational update on bighorn sheep management at the semi-annual Native American Tribal-Nellis Air Force Base coordination meeting was provided by NDOW staff. The subject of the presentation was "NDOW's bighorn sheep program to include 'a presentation on hunt strategies, disease monitoring, and collaring activities over the last couple of years.'"

The Fifth International Human-Bear Conflict Workshop in Gatlinburg, Tenn., was attended by six Department staff during March 2018. This workshop focused on conflicts from an international perspective, and cross-divisional representation was sent to obtain the most recent information that could be applied within Nevada to prevent and reduce conflicts. The workshop was very valuable. Nevada will host the Sixth International Human-Bear Conflict Workshop that is being scheduled for 2021.

A new vendor is supplying catchable sized catfish for summer urban pond stocking in the Las Vegas area. The first deliveries occurred in mid-April and will continue for this year through September or October.

Colorado River surveys below Davis Dam have produced several striped bass in the 20- to 30-pound range all of which were released alive. Those surveys also found abundant, very large redear sunfish, mostly in the Big Bend area.

Efforts at Eagle Valley Reservoir to control invasive water milfoil are continuing with the assistance of the Nevada Division of State Parks. We anticipate this will significantly improve fishing access over time, particularly for shore anglers.

A major effort to survey Comins Lake in White Pine County was completed in early April as soon as ice was off the lake to look for additional northern pike. Three male pike were found, all small fish (around 12") in the same age class as the pike found last year. Monitoring will continue to assess the situation. Numerous bass and trout were also encountered and all were healthy and showed good growth rates.

Information from USFWS and the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe indicates that over 150 Pilot Peak Lahontan cutthroat trout (LCT) have passed Marble Bluff Dam and fish are moving further up the lower Truckee

River. To date there have not been any reported catches of LCT below Derby Dam in the area where the special catch-and-release regulation was implemented but this is still a possibility for this year.

The Marlette Lake spawning station will open on schedule the last week of May due to the mild winter. Spawning activities will still be impacted somewhat by sediment buildup and damage that occurred along the spawning stream from winter 2016 - 2017 conditions but shouldn't be a significant issue.

Willow Creek Reservoir dam repairs should be completed by the end of May. However, the construction delays have made restocking of sport fish unlikely this year and staff efforts will focus on creating fish habitat in the dry reservoir bed, with restocking planned for spring 2019.

Laura Megill started as NDOW's new Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) program coordinator. All of the seasonal AIS inspection and decontamination stations will be operational by May including South Fork, Rye Patch, and Lahontan reservoirs and Topaz Lake. Lake Mead and Alamo (US 93) AIS stations operate year round.

The Nevada Aquatic Nuisance Species Management Plan which was approved by the Commission and the Governor last fall should be approved by the National ANS Task Force in June, which will make NDOW eligible for additional funding to support the AIS program. Final approval has been delayed because the National Task Force hasn't met since early last year.

Spring population counts for Devils Hole pupfish were completed in early April. The official count was 87 adult fish which is lower than some previous spring counts but within the normal range of variation. Conditions in Devil's Hole are good with no recent disturbance events impacting the habitat.

A contract for development of new production wells at Mason Valley Hatchery has been awarded with construction work to start in mid-May. We anticipate that the work will be completed by late this summer. Several other hatchery system improvement projects are underway including repairs and upgrades to several residences. Replacing the fire suppression system at Lake Mead Hatchery continues to be delayed as we still don't have approval from the State Fire Marshall for the system changes.

A large number of new duck stamp and upland game bird stamp project proposals have been submitted by NDOW staff for FY 19. They are being reviewed and compiled and will be sent to the Commission and CABMW chairman for review by mid-June, in time for them to be addressed and acted upon at the late June Commission meeting.

Habitat Division staff are working with the Nevada Department of Agriculture and other members of the Truckee Meadows Weed Coordination Group to create a new Washoe-Storey Cooperative Weed Management Area. The new weed-fighting agency can be the recipient of grants and donations, and can also hire staff to fight weeds and conduct related restoration activities. NDOW and the other participants expect that this will create opportunities for more effective and comprehensive weed control and habitat restoration work in these two counties.

NDOW and the SETT continue to work with USGS and AboveGeo to explore drone technology to aid in measuring habitat characteristics important to sage-grouse seasonal habitats and have several pilot projects planned for the 2018 spring/summer field season.

Nevada Partners for Conservation and Development's (NPCD) vegetation and soil survey crews begin project survey work in May 2018. This season's sampling includes plots in Great Basin Nat Park, Bi-State sage grouse PMUs, private land and NDOW properties.

NPCD is participating in the Nevada Native Seed Increase project and will be in Ely in April. The purpose of the project is to bring native seed production to Nevada's farmers/producers so that restoration work across Nevada can make use of the most appropriate genetic materials.

The water development construction season is well underway with the six rebuilds being completed since January. The northern crew has been busy working on two new guzzlers near Winnemucca with the help of several sportsmen-conservation groups.

NDOW is a cooperating agency in the environmental analysis being conducted for the Fallon Naval Air Station withdrawal, renewal and expansion. As part of that effort, NDOW staff continues to work with Navy personnel on drafting a Managed Access Program for hunting on lands proposed for withdrawal by the Navy. Although in the early stages, NDOW is working towards language that enough flexibility to maintain popular hunting opportunities that are sustainable over time and with changes in wildlife populations. The withdrawal spans three major management units that include high priority big game populations including desert bighorn sheep, mule deer, and pronghorn.

Habitat Staff continue to be involved in discussions with Washoe County regarding their developing land bill that is proposing possible transfer parcels and land use designations such as Wilderness Areas and National Conservation Areas. NDOW has provided comment regarding associated wildlife values and land management designation effects on habitat and wildlife management activities.

Chief Game Warden Turnipseed and Operation Game Thief Coordinator Brian Eller were recently interviewed for a story highlighting NDOW's Operation Game Thief program. Operation Game thief is like Secret Witness for wildlife crime. <http://www.ktvn.com/story/37817819/dept-of-wildlife-hopes-to-stop-poaching-with-anonymous-reporting-program>

The weekend immediately preceding the shed antler regulation going into effect, the Lincoln County Game Warden checked 24 camps in Lincoln County representing five different states. Shed antler pressure has remained high in Eastern Nevada even since the regulation went into effect as game wardens attempt to educate the public about the new rules. A large portion of the pressure is coming from Utah shed hunters who came to Nevada last spring in response to Utah's shed antler closure. The shed antler season opened on May 1.

The field season is beginning in earnest for Wildlife Diversity biologists. The following is a small sample of the various efforts we are engaged in statewide:

Surveying for short-eared owls as part of a WAFWA range wide project is being done by staff that is coordinating approximately 40 survey routes in Nevada – some run by NDOW biologists and many by citizen scientists. At the half-way mark through these surveys four owls have been detected.

Four baited camera stations were recently deployed to survey for Pacific marten within Van Sickle Bi-State Park, Tahoe Meadows, and the area north of Spooner Lake. Marten were photographed at Tahoe Meadows and Van Sickle Bi-State Park. It was the first marten detection by NDOW at Van Sickle since 2007. Other carnivore species detected include: spotted skunk, black bear, coyote, and bobcat.

Several different raptor species are being surveyed statewide. Golden eagle tracking continues with confirmed breeding at six of eight territories in Lincoln County. Staff continues to monitor two golden eagles in northwestern Nevada, one who appears to be incubating eggs, and the other collared eagle has gone offline. At this point staff is not sure if the bird is out of range of the transmitter or if the bird has died. In the Western Region, a golden eagle nest is being monitored near the Ludwig Mine in Smith Valley. The nest is located on the high wall of the mine and has two eggs being incubated. Recommendations for non-disturbance measures were provided to both the mine and USFWS.

Statewide nest surveys are being conducted for ferruginous hawks. Known nesting sites are visited at least two times during the breeding season to document use. In addition to statewide surveys, a more concentrated survey is being conducted in White Pine County. One day of aerial surveys verified incubation at five nests, with a follow-up to confirm activity at a sixth site. This project is to assess occupancy, nesting density, breeding success and habitat use of ferruginous hawks surrounding BLM pinyon-juniper treatment plots. Staff plans to deploy up to nine satellite transmitters on adults and young this year.

Abandoned mines (83) were surveyed for use by bats in Clark County as were another 38 mines in the Western Region. Those sites supporting bat colonies are recommended to have bat gates installed. Diversity biologists recently compiled a list of all the abandoned mines throughout the state that have bat gates installed over the past decade or two. There are over 1,050 gates protecting wildlife in Nevada. Other bat work has focused on monitoring sentinel sites over the winter for presence of White Nose Syndrome, a deadly fungal disease impacting bats throughout the country. At each site, several bats are swabbed for presence of the fungus. Lab results have been negative for all samples.

The Southern Region initiated a collaborative effort with the BLM to begin tracking desert tortoises in Red Rock National Conservation Area. To date, four tortoises have been captured and had transmitters attached. Staff is working with BLM to study common ravens nesting on transmission lines in southern Nevada and their effects on tortoise populations. Work also continues with BLM and their National Conservation Crew to remove pitfall traps. So far 170 traps have been removed.

Conservation Education personnel staffed the department exhibit at the Clark County Fair and Rodeo. Nearly 2,500 youth visitors completed the "Wildlife Passport" educational activity. The exhibit included an archery range, Hedwig the owl, a live reptile display, the Operation Game Thief and Boating Education trailers, and booths highlighting various management activities and education programs.

A live stream of a great horned owl nest on the NDOW YouTube channel was started. The feed went viral and led people from around the world to subscribe to the NDOW's YouTube. The live stream resulted in multiple stories and follow up stories from stations from all over the country. Most recently, Conservation Education staff was interviewed by the National Audubon Society for a story published on a national level this week. Staff announced that the live stream was available to watch on the NDOW Facebook page. That post alone has reached almost 43,000 people and has been shared 510 times.

Trout in the Classroom has finished up statewide with more than 2,000 students participating. Students across the state were able to release their trout at events engaging the community in the release of thousands of fish. Angler Education Staff has continued to hold introductory fishing and fly-tying workshops. Preparations have started for Free Fishing Day and additional community events. These events would not be as successful without the help of dedicated volunteer angler education instructors.

Baby birds and coyotes have dominated the subject matter of calls to the urban wildlife coordinators. Educators have worked with the media across the state to address rising conflicts between humans and coyotes and how people can live with coyotes. Wildlife educators have engaged over 2,300 participants with presentations on desert wildlife, the importance of interacting with nature, nocturnal animals, skins and skulls, raptors, watersheds and habitats.

Sage-grouse lek surveys have concluded for the year. This year several new volunteers were recruited and a new phone app was developed to enter lek data by NDOW GIS staff who successfully deployed and tested a new greater sage-grouse lek count mobile data collection app. Biologists across the state had the opportunity to test the app and we are looking to implement it as a standard data collection method next year. The GIS staff is continuing to use mobile data collection tools to improve other aspects of Department data collection, and hope to test a new harvest check-in app this coming hunting season. Staff hopes to demonstrate their use of innovative GIS technology at the upcoming ESRI User Conference in July.

Staff helped organize and lead the Elko County Sage Grouse Experience taking 40 participants to a lek in Ruby Valley. The two trainings provided time for viewing and photography opportunities and a program on the natural history of the sage grouse, the different agencies' roles, and a video of sage grouse, how the wings are used for population modeling and how they can further volunteer.

NDOW successfully conducted the first big game draw application period on the new Agency Management System provided by contractor Kalkomey. Both Kalkomey and NDOW staff worked to ensure all customer support needs were met, including full phone and email support through the close of

the application period. The system handled an increase of over 3,000 new applicants and over 40,000 new applications from last year with no loss or slowing of service. The big game draw is planned to occur May 23, 2018, at Kalkomey Headquarters in Dallas, Texas.

License office staff is working to develop and implement a more structured license agent support plan that would seek to improve agent relations, improve Department messaging at agent locations, and increase agent technical support. This plan also hopes to address improved functionality and enhancements in the agent component of the new Agency Management System (AMS).

Public Service Recognition Week was May 6 -12. Each region, along with headquarters, scheduled events to recognize state employees for their public service.

PowerDMS software was purchased to help NDOW supervisors and staff track, record and notify employees of required training and new or revised policies. Power DMS organizes, manages, and distributes important documents, such as policies, training requirements, and frequently used forms. The system will generate reports for ease of tracking when an employee completed a training requirement or when an employee signed a policy.

The Director's Office has been busy responding to legislator requests and public records requests; the Department submitted all USFWS annual grants to Region 8; the Director met with Senator Cortez-Masto's staff for discussion of the Nevada Test and Training Range, the lands bills, and wild horses and burros; the Director's Office continues to provide input regarding the notice of intent for the sage grouse land use plan; and the Director met with the Hunting and Fishing Chief of the USFWS regarding Secretarial Order 3356 on hunting and fishing access.

C Wayne E. Kirch – Secretary Wasley

A report will be provided on Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioner Wayne E. Kirch's legacy.

Secretary Wasley said Commissioner Hubbs requested information at the March meeting about the Kirch award and Mr. Kirch's background. He said it is worth taking time today to revisit Mr. Kirch's legacy and why the Kirch Award is such a prestigious award to the Wildlife Commission and NDOW. Secretary Wasley read the support material provided on Mr. Wayne E. Kirch.

http://www.ndow.org/uploadedFiles/ndoworg/Content/Public_Meetings/Com/9-C-Kirch-Background.pdf

D Litigation Report – Deputy Attorney General (DAG) Bryan Stockton

DAG Stockton highlighted updates since the report was submitted: (#2) U.S. vs. TCID, the Tribe filed motion in opposition to TCID concerning new case law characterizing the recoupment of over appropriation of water to the Tribe as a penalty. If it is a penalty there is a five year statute of limitations, and that would prevent the recoupment from being recovered; and Mark Smith vs. NBWC, both sides filed motions for summary judgement, and have been fully briefed and are pending before the court and a joint request for submission has been filed so the court will look at those; and Mark Smith vs. Brian Wakeling, the plaintiffs have filed motion for reconsideration which was denied.

10 Public Comment Period –

Gerald Lent of Nevada Hunters read a section from the Commission's March meeting where Commissioner Johnston requested an attorney/client meeting between the DAG and the Commission at the May meeting. He said that came to their attention and they are very

interested in the OML. He would like to go on record stating that the Commission's closed session was a violation of the OML and we oppose interrupting the meeting to have a closed session without putting that on the agenda. The OML states that all meetings must be open and public except otherwise provided by specific statute. He said there isn't specific statute in this case; NRS 241.015 which says "to receive information from the attorney...to deliberate toward a decision is a reason why there is an exception. According to OML manual 4.05, reads "attorney/client conference is possibly exempt. The OML states it does not have to be open to the public, which it wasn't, and it also says "however, the office of the Attorney General said that if the public body interrupts its meeting to conduct a non-meeting with its legal counsel, the public body should place this interruption of the open meeting on its agenda to avoid any confusion. That was not on the agenda. Mr. Lent read 5.11 from the OML manual that states that any decision must be made in public at the re-opened meeting; the agenda should note that the public body would interrupt the open meeting and exclude the public from the meeting for the limited purpose of receiving the information and for deliberating. This was not on the agenda; NRS states to deliberate on a decision is a reason for the "closed session." He asked if any decision was made.

Commissioner Johnston answered "no."

Mr. Lent continued that the usual notice an agenda will be required to later convene an open meeting to take action on information received from the attorney. Also, says in 5.11 if the public attorney calls for a closed non-meeting and an interested party objects, the benefits of the closed session will need to be great enough, to justify the possibility of having to defend a lawsuit challenging the closed session. There is no justification here to have a closed session.

DAG Stockton asked Mr. Lent the date on the cover of the OML manual version that he is reading from.

Mr. Lent said there is no date, and it is a copy and says Cortez-Masto version.

DAG Stockton said he understands Mr. Lent's complaint but does not think the complaint is valid. The OML manual on page 29 of the current 2016 version reads: That a meeting held for the purpose of an attorney client discussion of potential and existing litigation pursuant to NRS 241.015 Sub. 3, Sub. b, Sub. 2, is "not a meeting for purposes of OML and does not have to be open to the public." In fact no agenda is required to be posted and no notice is required to be provided to any member of the public. The Attorney General advises if the public body interrupts the meeting to confer, then it should be put on the agenda. However, in DAG Stockton's opinion the meeting was not interrupted. The meeting was interrupted for lunch, and had the non-meeting as it specifically excluded from the definition of a meeting. The non-meeting was during the lunch break which is why he did not think it needed to be on the agenda, and while he respects Dr. Lent's opinion that is his reasoning.

Don Molde said that there was a Supreme Court decision one year ago stating that if a body meets to discuss monies then that matter needs to be on agenda.

Cathy Brandhorst spoke on different topics for three minutes.

Rex Flowers asked the Commission to give a review of split seasons to reduce congestion, there are six units with 90 percent early and 10 percent late tags.

Meeting recessed at 2:47 p.m.

Saturday, May 5, 2018 – 8:30 a. m.

- 11 Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call of Commission and County Advisory Board Members to Manage Wildlife (CABMW) – Chairman Wallace

Meeting called to order by Chairman Wallace. Commissioners present for roll call on Saturday, May 5, 2018, were Chairman Wallace, Vice Chairman Johnston, Commissioners Almberg, Barnes, East, Hubbs, McNinch and Valentine.

CABMW Roll Call: Paul Dixon, Clark; Gene Green, Carson; Mitch McVicars, White Pine; Joe Crim, Pershing; Glenn Bunch, Mineral; Cory Lytle, Lincoln; Worth Nelson, Lander; Phil Gray, Lander; Ramona Maestes, White Pine; Steve Robinson, Washoe; Jim Cooney, Elko; and Larry Allen, Winnemucca.

- 12 Approval of Agenda – Chairman Wallace – For Possible Action
The Commission will review the agenda and may take action to approve the agenda.
The Commission may remove items from the agenda, continue items for consideration or take items out of order.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA. COMMISSIONER MCNINCH SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

- 13 Member Items/Announcements and Correspondence – Chairman Wallace – Informational
Commissioners may present emergent items. No action may be taken by the Commission. Any item requiring Commission action may be scheduled on a future Commission agenda. The Commission will review and may discuss correspondence sent or received by the Commission since the last regular meeting and may provide copies for the exhibit file (Commissioners may provide hard copies of their correspondence for the written record). Correspondence sent or received by Secretary Wasley may also be discussed.

Secretary Wasley said as noted yesterday all correspondence received by NDOW was forwarded to the Commission.

- 14 County Advisory Boards to Manage Wildlife (CABMW) Member Items – Informational
CABMW members may present emergent items. No action may be taken by the Commission. Any item requiring Commission action will be scheduled on a future Commission agenda.

Mitch McVicars, White Pine CABMW, reported on several White Pine CABMW issues. He said the public is using Comins Lake again and thanked the Department and Commission; in regard to correspondence received by NDOW and Commissioner on shed antlers that the persons who wrote the letters did not attend their local meeting; Sunnyside has an issue with water deliveries, and need information on that situation. North end of refuge, Old Place, used to store water for Adams-McGill Reservoirs and they have been told by road department that they cannot store water. All the amenities provided are being unused because there is no water. Discussed at CABMW meeting having fences fixed. He said they would like to know about the water rights and the impact to the local reservoirs.

- 15 Nevada Department of Wildlife Project Updates – Secretary Wasley – Informational
The Commission has requested that the Department provide regular project updates for ongoing projects and programs as appropriate based on geography and timing of meetings. These updates are intended to provide detail in addition to the summaries provided as part of the regular Department Report and are intended to inform the Commission and public as to the Department's ongoing duties and responsibilities.

Secretary Wasley said today a brief update on the application hunt process from Data and Technology and Administrative Services Administrator Chet Van Dellen will be presented. However, he would like the Commission to be aware that there are other items that could be included under this agenda item at future meetings. Secretary Wasley has spoken to his peers at North Carolina who have a similar standing agenda item on their Commission meeting agendas, but rather than a geographically relevant project update North Carolina has a "species spotlight." He asked for the Commission to give thought to that idea as a type of update. Also, this agenda item could be a place to highlight conservation partners who conduct projects and work across the state. Currently, there is no formal mechanism to recognize their efforts and discuss what they are doing and that relationship between those organizations and the agency. This agenda item could be also an opportunity for that.

Administrator Van Dellen showed the Commission and audience online the live Kalkomey Agency Management System (AMS). Presentation is viewable at the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KztQa6kbCAI&t=0s&list=PLozNE4RG4InMxF19Fb48N6PYzXzsBit-H&index=3>

Administrator Van Dellen said the system took 69,000 big game applicants through the process, an increase of over 3,000 from last year with over 293,000 applications were processed. That number includes PIW and bonus points only applications. Last year about 250,000 applications were processed. As the new system is deployed and NDOW works through the education process, the Department feels this was a wildly successful launch. There was a complete updating of the NDOW licensing program, allowing you to purchase license and apply for tags simultaneously. A full report by the Kalkomey will be provided at the June Commission meeting in Dyer.

- 16 Commission Regulation 18-11, 2018 Big Game Quotas for the 2018 - 2019 Season – Wildlife Staff Specialists Mike Cox, Cody Schroeder, Cody McKee, and Pat Jackson – For Possible Action
The Commission will establish regulations for the numbers of tags to be issued for mule deer, pronghorn antelope, elk, bighorn sheep, black bear, and mountain goats for the 2018 - 2019 seasons.

Game Division Administrator Brian Wakeling discussed hunter support and interest nationwide. He explained that in order to recruit new people, it is important to get them into nature. In order to retain hunters, it is important to provide a good opportunity and quality experience. Too many people in the field may cause the experience to decline. The Game Division established management objectives using the best available science and historical performance to develop the targets used as management objectives. The Division uses the best scientists and biologists. Administrator Wakeling provided two examples of using science to achieve targets and the conservative nature of the recommendations. People may question the estimates of population size for species like bear. Administrator Wakeling said the Department is developing a third tool to look at bear populations. He said oftentimes people believe Nevada has an

isolated bear population. He wanted it recognized that our bear population is a continuous population that extends to California and Oregon, and California alone estimates they have about 35,000 animals. Management objectives target light harvest for this species. He also discussed the mule deer population because of the recommended increase in tags. He said almost without fail, the population estimate is conservative and the actual size is underestimated. When biologists see buck to doe ratios increase between years, it makes it relatively clear that the population was underestimated or the quotas were too low during the previous year. Administrator Wakeling noted the Game Division has had the most CABMW correspondence on mule deer.

Predator Management Staff Specialist Pat Jackson presented a PowerPoint presentation (exhibit file) on the black bear quota recommendations. The Department is recommending 45 resident tags and five nonresident tags. There would be a female harvest limit of eight and an overall harvest limit of 20. That is the same as what was approved during the 2017 quota setting meeting. It is the same unit harvest recommendations. Unit 203 was added to Unit 291. A paper was recently published in Biodiversity Research on the rewilding of black bears in the Great Basin. Black bears were extirpated from Nevada and they are recolonizing. That recolonization is an extension from part of California and Oregon referred to as a metapopulation. The paper also demonstrates that there is enough sufficient gene flow between the bears in Nevada and California that they do not believe there is a chance for a genetic bottleneck. California publishes a report annually on their black bear take. They are behind a couple of years because they believe they are behind a couple of years because they wait on teeth pulled from hunter-harvested bears. The 2015 report is the most recent report available. According to this paper, California is removing over 3.5 percent of their harvest and is still seeing population growth. Nevada only removes 2.3 percent of the population. Last year the overall harvest limit in Area 19 was reached so the Department shut it down. The recommendations are the same as last year.

Commissioner McNinch thanked Staff Specialist Jackson for taking the time to sit down with him and discuss the bear hunt. Commissioner McNinch mentioned that he has some internal battle with the bear hunt, maybe because of the social aspect. He asked if immigration and emigration matters if the bear population here is part of a metapopulation.

Staff Specialist Jackson responded often jokes about California falling into the ocean are made and if that were to happen completely along the state line and Nevada had somewhere between 500 - 800 bears, the population would still have enough genetic diversity to maintain itself. Nevada marks bears that are continually found in California and vice versa. That is not vital, but it is important from a genetic standpoint.

Commissioner McNinch asked if genetics are the most important factor.

Staff Specialist Jackson said that genetics are important but if there was a catastrophic event and many bears perished in Nevada from possibly a disease outbreak, California bears would again immigrate into Nevada.

Commissioner McNinch asked when the last time Program Mark was ran.

Staff Specialist Jackson said he believes it was ran in 2015. There was a 2017 estimate not used because it is a model and it is a higher number. The Department would rather come to the Commission with an overly defensible number. If the Department used what they believe is the population number, less than 2.3 percent of the population would be harvested.

Commissioner McNinch asked if the Department believed the take in Nevada was compensatory or additive.

Staff Specialist Jackson responded that it is compensatory.

Commissioner Hubbs said she always gets correspondence when it comes to setting bear seasons and quotas. She said the social aspects do matter and that the long term effects of not listening to the public could cause a greater disinterest in conservation in terms of supporting hunters and their conservation efforts. She wants to emphasize the importance of the social aspects. If there is a hunt that antagonizes the community, it may have more consequences long term which may manifest later. In terms of this hunt, the last season setting was a difficult meeting. She noted that in her position, she would be interested in lowering the quotas if the Department wants to be conservative.

Commissioner Johnston wanted to clarify that even though there was a unit added the quota was not raised and that if the quotas were reached, the bear population would not see a detrimental impact.

Staff Specialist Jackson said that he was correct.

Commissioner Johnston noted that Unit 203 was the only one added but it just extends Lyon County's border.

Commissioner Hubbs asked why that was never opened before.

Commissioner Johnston stated this is the first year that unit is open and said that it had to do with input he received and that it would be better to have a broader area for the hunt but to keep the quota the same.

Commissioner Hubbs mentioned that she likes the idea of passive sampling and to identify the genetic linkage. She said she read the paper and that she was glad to know that there is sufficient gene flow between metapopulations. She wanted to make it clear that because of her position on this Commission, she needs to be very sensitive to this species.

Commissioner McNinch said there is a concept of recolonization and that bears are growing numerically and geographically, but that the rate of growth is slowing down. He is concerned because it could be that carrying capacity is being reached but then it could also be because of the "sink" theory.

Public Comment – Reno

Cathy Smith, NoBearHuntNV, thanked the Commission for the opportunity to speak (submitted as written comments). She said she really appreciates Commissioner Hubbs' comments and have the same fears of backlash when a tipping point is reached. According to the new application numbers, only 2 percent of Nevadans hunt. Recognizing the likelihood a 2018 hunt will be conducted, we request the quota be decreased to one until the Department of Wildlife can determine the cause of decreasing growth rates and survivability of Nevada's black bears and ensure long term success of the species. What is the bear population in Nevada? Well, we have two conflicting data points. Initially, the bear population was growing at 16 percent per year on average. One of the highest growth rates in the country. More recently, it has decreased to

approximately 5-10 percent per year. Yet, the population estimates do not reflect this growth rate. The population estimate in 2011 was 456. In 2014, it was estimated by program mark at 445. So where was the increase? The overall broad population estimates have not changed either. It seems that the average annual growth rate, although possibly helpful for longer term historical averages, doesn't do anything to predict the future course of Nevada's bear population. Why has survivability decreased, especially for Nevada's male bears? With such small numbers, statistically speaking, it would be virtually impossibility to determine the impact of the hunt. But, something has changed. The average annual increase per year has also flattened according to Dr. Sedinger's own graphs. Why is that? Could it be the population has reached carrying capacity? Maybe. Are more bears going back to California than coming from California into Nevada? Mountains lions were shown to be heading to California from Nevada, an unexpected finding. Could poaching have increased as it has in other hunted populations of predators? We know a case of bear poaching was recently solved in Nevada. Are corridors connecting California and Nevada bear habitat being destroyed by increased development? Possibly. We haven't really protected or even defined those corridors well. Could indirect causes of bear hunting be limiting Nevada's population? Bear hunting has been shown to increase infanticide, result in poor foraging conditions for females, and decrease reproduction secondary to the selective advantage of having cubs. Bear hunting tends to take the older females—the best reproducers in a population. There are so many indirect consequences of hunting and increasing development we are still learning about— results of hunting predators is much more complex than ungulates. And, despite the propensity of wildlife departments to treat all individual animals as equal, we know they are not. We know by observation they have their own distinct personalities, skill sets, and intelligence. Depending on the bear, the loss of social knowledge can be substantial. We are losing about 10% of our bear population a year from all causes. It really does not matter what percentage loss is from hunting, vehicle collisions, or departmental policy, because bear hunting has been found in other populations to be additive, not compensatory. I have never seen a study in Nevada to determine that Nevada's bear hunt is not additive as well. Ten percent is a big number for a small edge population made up of approximately 2/3 males. It is a percentage found to be unsustainable in other predator studies. As we keep saying, it is inherently risky to hunt small populations. She said she understands the Department is using the best science available to them. These comments are in no way an indictment of them and she appreciates their belief that there is no concern. Funding limitations are real and predator populations are notoriously difficult to count. There is no real way to determine if Nevada's small bear population is crashing. The matrix used by the Department doesn't have enough statistical power to even determine there is a problem until it is too late. So, all we are left with are a bunch of hypotheses and questions. NoBearHuntNV requests the quota be reduced to one, at least until these questions can be answered. Does this Commission really want to close their eyes, cross their fingers, and hope that if the bear population crashes there will still be open corridors and bears will eventually wander over this way again?

Public Comment in Las Vegas -

Jana Wright, Private Citizen, voiced her opposition to the black bear hunt (submitted as written comments) but requested that the quota be dropped to one in Hunt 6151 and four in Hunt 6251. This would prevent the black bear from being included in the dream tag raffle. She said she is also concerned about female bears in the hunt. In the season setting meeting red flags were raised by the trend towards a moderate to heavy harvest of the females killed in the hunt. The Commission is tasked with taking public comment and to base your decision not only on sound science practices but also on how people's knowledge, values, and social acceptability influence their own opinions on the management of all wildlife held in the public's trust. She said she participates in these Commission meetings and never says a word about any other species

but the bears. For many years, bears were not included in the hunt. She believes the use of hounds is a disturbing practice, especially if they are wearing GPS collars as that does not qualify as “fair chase.” At a previous Commission Meeting, Unit 203 was added to the bear hunt season for no apparent reason other than one of the CABMWs requested it. Looking at the draft minutes from the Douglas CABMW, it was stated that Unit 203 is largely shotguns only. Shotguns are not a legal weapon to use on bears. Does this mean that this is the beginning of a request to use shotguns to kill bears? She asked that the Commission take her recommendations into consideration while deliberating the quota setting guidelines for black bears.

Stephanie Meyers, Private Citizen, said that “because we can” is not a legitimate to hunt and kill black bears. She said that the Clark CABMW labeled her comments as emotional and the reasons behind the bear hunt as scientific. She said there is no science-based justification for hunting black bears in Nevada.

Public Comment in Reno –

Don Molde said he endorses Cathy Smith’s comments. He said if you look at the numbers on what NDOW kills in Tahoe for bear management and other causes, Nevada loses about 50 bears a year. He believes the idea that Nevada’s bears are contiguous with California’s is not fully true. Mr. Lackey has made the argument that relocating bears does not work because they have a home range. When a relocation of bears is used, they come back. He said it is true that some bears wander to California or Oregon, but for the most part, they stay in their home range. That suggests they are not fungible across the border. Mr. Molde believes that Ann Bryant knows more about bears than anyone in this state. She has told him that no bear she has ever known has moved across the border and stayed. That speaks against the idea that Nevada’s bear population is contiguous.

Jonathon Lesperance, Nevada Sporting Dog Alliance, said that overall the population metrics for health are within the light harvest and sustainable harvests. It is fluctuating based on sample size. Nevada Sporting Dog Alliance has submitted a letter in support of the bear hunt (exhibit file). He appreciates Commissioners Hubbs and McNinch’s comments. Bears have captured the interest of many people and captivate emotions and fascinations. He said he loves bears but also pursues them and does not believe those things are inconsistent.

Joel Blakeslee, Nevada Trappers Association, said he supports Mr. Lesperance’s comments and supports the bear hunt.

Steve Robinson, Washoe CABMW, said the CABMW supports the bear quotas due to the overwhelming public support at their meeting.

Jennifer Simeo said with only 500 to 600 bears in Nevada she does not see the scientific need for harvest. She submitted a letter in opposition to the bear hunt (exhibit file).

Paul Dixon, Clark CABMW, said the Clark CABMW supported the bear hunt. He also noted that the CABMW does not respond to public comment.

Janelle Richards thanked Commissioners McNinch and Hubbs for their comments. She said that everyone she speaks with is greatly opposed to this bear hunt. She said that there are many animals killed in the hunt. She asked that the animal win for just one time.

Sean Shea said that he wanted to clarify that there are bears all over the state; they are not just in the units open to the hunt.

Commissioner Hubbs asked if there is any evidence that there is an over population of bears and that the environment cannot sustain them.

Staff Specialist Jackson said that when he first started, Carl Lackey had a trail camera on a den with a mother and two cubs, but that a boar came and ate all three. That could be an example of reaching carrying capacity, but from a management standpoint, he does not believe there are too many bears.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE CR 18-11 QUOTA RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BLACK BEAR AS PRESENTED. COMMISSIONER EAST SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 6-2. COMMISSIONERS HUBBS AND MCNINCH VOTED NO.

Staff Specialist Cody Schroeder said that antelope have been doing well in Nevada. Harvest trends have been incredibly stable and that success rates are fairly consistent. One of the metrics used for age class is horn length. In the last year, there was a slight uptake in 14-inch horns. Other than that, there has been a normal distribution over the last three years. He noted that there are no muzzleloader tags available for nonresidents. Other than that, it is close to the 90:10 split.

Commissioner Hubbs asked why the populations have been increasing.

Staff Specialist Schroeder said that there are a variety of reasons. The Department has been doing translocations throughout the years though antelope do move well on their own. There have also been habitat changes that are particularly favorable to antelope. Fires are detrimental to mule deer but they are beneficial to antelope.

Chairman Wallace asked why Churchill County wanted the quota dropped.

Staff Specialist Schroeder said that it may be because of the buck ratio. The Department changed the way they manage the buck to doe ratio by including only two-year-old bucks or older. It could also be an artifact of the demand-success ratio as well. The success ratio has been fairly high.

Commissioner East noted that in one unit in 2017 the quota was 45 and it was lowered to 40 this year. She asked what the reasoning was.

Staff Specialist Schroeder said it is similar to the previous answer and also that some of the quotas for the different weapon classes have gone up. He addressed the CABMW recommendations, and said that the Department has no biological issue with their recommendations. The Department is recommending four tags instead of six because of an error in the "nonresident horns longer than ears" hunt in Units 132 -134, 245.

Public Comment Reno –

Steve Robinson, Washoe CABMW, recommended keeping Units 011 - 022 at 45 since it looks like the big game status book supports that.

Glenn Bunch, Mineral CABMW, said that in Unit 202 - 204 there were eight last year and the success was about 50 percent. Now, it is a new state park so they are unsure of the impact. They asked for an increase of one until they can be sure of how that will change. Antelope are doing well in Unit 205 so they are asking for last year's quota.

Rex Flowers said he asked the Washoe CABMW to increase the tags for any legal weapons and, now, the Department is asking to increase the nonresident quota. At 45, ten percent would be five tags. Policy 24 is written as such that it is an approximate of ten percent. He said nothing is etched in stone.

Craig Burnside, Douglas CABMW, said the CABMW did not have specific demands for antelope but wanted to point out that through the demand success formula, all numbers could be a divisible by five. The demand-success formula could have just been a difference of one tag.

Public Comment Las Vegas – None

COMMISSIONER MCNINCH MOVED TO APPROVE ANTELOPE HORNS LONGER THAN EARS ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 2151 WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGES: UNIT 021, 022 CHANGE FROM 40 TO 45, UNIT 181-184 CHANGE FROM 35 TO 45, UNIT GROUP 202, 2014 BE CHANGED FROM 3 TO 4, AND UNIT GROUP 205-208 BE CHANGED FROM 20 TO 25; ANTELOPE HORNS LONGER THAN EARS MUZZLOADER HUNT 2171 AS PRESENTED; ANTELOPE HORNS LONGER THAN EARS ARCHERY HUNT 2161 AS PRESENTED EXCEPT THAT UNIT GROUP 205-208 BE CHANGED FROM 10 TO 12; ANTELOPE HORNS SHORTER THAN EARS ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 2181 AS PRESENTED; ANTELOPE HORNS LONGER THAN EARS ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 2251 AS PRESENTED WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGES: UNIT 021, 022 BECHANGED FROM 5 TO 6, UNIT GROUP 132-134, 245 BE CHANGED FROM 6 TO 4, UNIT GROUP 205-208 BE CHANGED TWO TO THREE; AND ANTELOPE HORNS LONGER THAN EARS ARCHERY UNIT 2261 AS PRESENTED. COMMISSIONER BARNES SECONDED THE MOTION.

Staff Specialist Schroeder said that if there was an increase in the residents there would be an increase for nonresidents in order to have the 90:10 split. That would change Unit 181-184 from six to eight.

COMMISSIONER MCNINCH AMENDED MOTION TO INCLUDE A CHANGE IN ANTELOPE HORNS LONGER THAN EARS ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 2251 UNIT 181-184 FROM SIX TO EIGHT. COMMISSIONER BARNES SECONDED MOTION. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 8-0.

Game Division Staff Specialist Mike Cox said he is serving as the Wild Sheep Working Group Chair through WAFWA. Nevada has taken the opportunity to lead that working group for the western states. Staff Specialist Cox provided a PowerPoint (exhibit file). Desert bighorn sheep make up the majority of our wild sheep in Nevada. There are a lower number of lambs, but that has been consistent for the last five years. It could be because we are reaching carrying capacity in bigger herds. If it were to get to below 32 lambs per 100 ewes, the population growth would slow down and the population would reduce. Many lambs are also affected by pneumonia and predation, as well as long-term droughts. About 53 percent of newly produced herds are now providing desert bighorn ram tags. The management objective is to harvest rams who are about six years of age. In terms of California bighorn and Rocky Mountain bighorn there has been a decrease in average age. The heyday for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep was prior to

the disease event in the Rubies and East Humboldt in 2009 and 2010. There was a big drop in average age and score, but we are now seeing an increase in average age and score in the few tags. We are projecting the same population estimates for sheep as last year. Mountain goats are an "any mountain goat" season. The Area 10 biologist, Caleb McAdoo, reached out to Alaska and British Columbia to ask for their presentations on determining gender in mountain goats. Mountain goats have a delayed productivity; some nannies do not give birth until they are four or five years old. Staff Specialist Cox said he would be interested in having a mandatory presentation on mountain goats. He briefly discussed mycoplasma ovipneumoniae in mountain goats and then went over the quota recommendations for sheep and mountain goats. The slight drop in quota recommendations for Desert Sheep tags was because of the recommended age in management objectives. California Bighorn Sheep had a slight increase in tags. There was no change to Rocky Mountain sheep or mountain goat recommendations. Staff Specialist Cox discussed the alternative recommendation from Humboldt County which was to increase a resident tag in Unit 034 and decrease a nonresident tag.

Commissioner Valentine asked if the increase in the resident and the decrease in non-resident had a different unit they could reduce in order to keep the 90:10 split.

Staff Specialist Cox said there are four units to work with. In order to be closer to the 10 percent they chose the Black Rock area.

Chairman Wallace asked if the Department was all right with that change.

Director Wasley noted that Nevada has been the beneficiary of wild sheep from other states. If you look at California, they have very limited units to choose from. At 8.6 percent, it would be disingenuous given how other states have restored our opportunity to hunt bighorn sheep.

Commissioner Johnston asked if increasing the resident tag and leaving the nonresident tags would still keep it at 10 percent.

Staff Specialist Cox said that the field biologists may differ when it comes to adding an extra hunter in that unit but that it would not have too much of a difference in population.

Director Wasley noted that the ten percent is of the total opportunity. When calculating the ten percent, the Department looks at the total opportunity nonresidents have compared to residents.

Commissioner Hubbs asked if there is a biological reason for the management objective of the six-year average for the mean age. She also asked why the south has a higher average of age.

Staff Specialist Cox explained that Nevada is the most liberal state when it comes to bighorn hunting. He said many states have an average age of eight to nine years. He said that the Department wants to make sure there are enough mature rams. Horn size matters in terms of breeding for sheep. The difference between the average ages in the north and south could be a result of many different reasons such as surveys, hunters, and past hunts.

Commissioner Hubbs asked when mycoplasma was first detected.

Staff Specialist Cox said there were scientific methods not available to the Department prior to 2007, but that it was probably circulating long before that. The Department could detect other bacteria and viruses, but it was not until 2007 that mycoplasma was detected. He said that mycoplasma has been detected in every herd that has had problems with pneumonia.

Commissioner Hubbs noted that it is interesting that the southern herds carry mycoplasma yet they have a higher average age of harvest. She asked why there is not a larger detriment to the population in the south.

Staff Specialist Cox responded that mycoplasma was first detected in the Spring Mountains in 2011, but the strain was not highly virulent. In 2014 - 2015 a new strain was detected in the Mohave Preserve Herds in California. The lambs that would have been born in 2014 and 2015 would be three and four years old now. Hunters would not target those lambs yet. Tag reductions will be seen down the road.

We will start to see those Commissioner Hubbs asked if it is important to keep larger rams in the population to keep breeding.

Staff Specialist Cox responded that when the Department sees that reduction in the lamb recruitment, the quota is lowered. Now, the biologists are classifying many mature rams during surveys. Harvesting those rams allows for the remaining rams to continue breeding.

Director Wasley also noted that the guidance the Department was provided by the Commission in making the quota recommendation allows for 8 percent of the total number of rams to be harvested, not to exceed 50 percent of those rams 6 years and older.

Commissioner Almberg noted that in the big game status report there was a graph of Boone and Crocket scores size versus age. He asked if those scores are consistent year to year.

Staff Specialist Cox said it depends on what you view as consistent, but that he would consider it to be fairly consistent.

Commissioner Hubbs said it looks as though 52 percent of rams taken are from being translocated. She asked what would happen if Nevada did not receive those.

Staff Specialist Cox said that is a good question, but bighorn sheep are nomadic and they will pioneer so, we could still see growth.

Public Comment – Reno

Sean Shea, Washoe CABMW, said that their CABMW was the one that recommended the tag increase for residents because they feel that residents need to see more “love” than nonresidents at this point. He suggested adding a nonresident hunt to Unit 035 because that unit's tags have doubled and it is a more difficult hunt.

Larry Allen, Humboldt CABMW, said that they agreed with the Washoe CABMW. He said they would like to see the nonresident quota stay where it was.

Jim Puryear, Private Citizen, said that two of his sub guides drew tags in Unit 034 so he spent time hunting and scouting with them. He mentioned that it is not a good idea to give nonresidents extra tags because the nonresident last year did not fill. He also mentioned that half of Unit 034 is not accessible right now. He suggested moving that from Unit 034 to Unit 032.

Public Comment in Las Vegas – None.

Commissioner Johnston asked if increasing the resident quota and keeping the nonresident at one tag in Unit 034 but adding a tag to nonresident tag to Unit 035 would have any biological effect.

Staff Specialist Cox believes that is more of a social issue than a management issue.

Commissioner Johnston and Staff Specialist Cox discussed how to best approach the issue of the nonresident tags in Unit 034.

Director Wasley noted that there are a small number of units and a small amount of tags. The scenarios presented by the Department takes us to 10.3 percent and the suggestion from Washoe takes it down to 8.7 percent. The suggestion from Commissioner Johnston would put us at 10.1 percent. Whether those are in Units 035, 034 or 032, the Department is not concerned.

Staff Specialist Cox said that Mike Scott, the Western Region Supervisor, would support adding the nonresident tag in Unit 035.

Commissioner Johnston said it makes sense to have 8 resident tags in Unit 034 and reduce the nonresident tags in that unit to 1, then increase the nonresident tags in Unit 035 from one to two.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON MOVED TO ADOPT THE BIGHORN SHEEP AND MOUNTAIN GOAT PORTION OF CR 18 - 11 WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGES: RESIDENT NELSON BIGHORN SHEEP ANY RAM ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 3151 AS PRESENTED; NONRESIDENT NELSON BIGHORN SHEEP ANY RAM ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 3251 AS PRESENTED; RESIDENT NELSON BIGHORN SHEEP ANY EWE ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 3181 AS PRESENTED; NONRESIDENT NELSON BIGHORN SHEEP ANY EWE ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 3281 AS PRESENTED; RESIDENT CALIFORNIA BIGHORN SHEEP ANY RAM ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 8151 AS PRESENTED EXCEPT FOR INCREASING UNIT 034 FROM SEVEN TO EIGHT; NONRESIDENT CALIFORNIA BIGHORN SHEEP ANY RAM ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 8251 AS PRESENTED EXCEPT DECREASING UNIT 034 FROM TWO TO ONE AND INCREASING UNIT 035 FROM ONE TO TWO; RESIDENT CALIFORNIA BIGHORN SHEEP ANY EWE ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 8181 AS PRESENTED; RESIDENT ROCKY MOUNTAIN BIGHORN SHEEP ANY RAM ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 9151 AS PRESENTED; AND RESIDENT MOUNTAIN GOAT ANY GOAT ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 7151 AS PRESENTED. COMMISSIONER VALENTINE SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 8-0.

Game Division Staff Specialist Cody McKee presented a PowerPoint (exhibit file) with recommended quotas for elk. Last year, 82 percent of elk herds in Nevada were either within or below the identified population management objectives. Now, 88 percent of the unit groups are within or below population management objectives. There are two areas that are above management objective. With predicted harvest, the Department expects that those numbers will either be brought within or below the population objective. The recommendations are to maintain elk herds. The Department recommended aggressive elk hunts in 2013 and 2014 because of the large populations. Through successive years of aggressive quotas and tag harvest nearing 15,000 tags, we have been able to lower that number. In 2018 the population is about 13,500 elk, which is the same as in 2012 at an appropriate level. The antler growth of a bull reaches maturity at about seven years old. After seven years, antler size varies on nutritional status and reproductive behavior. The best way to determine age in ungulates is to

analyze incisors, but due to the years of data collection and analysis, the Department can infer age through antler growth data. In the quota memo, the Department mentioned that we are trying to target 25 to 35 percent of our overall harvest of antlered bulls having 50 inch main beams or greater. In the past three years, the Department has observed the highest bull to cow ratio since 2003. The aggressive antlerless elk harvest has skewed the ratio high. Having a bull ratio that high can have implications for overall herd health and productivity. The Department would like to bring that down to a more acceptable level. It could be brought down by increasing bull elk tags, but the Department's recommendation is to try to do this by harvesting spikes. Staff Specialist McKee noted the few CABMW recommendations.

Public Comment Reno -

Mitch McVicars, White Pine CABMW, said that every year archery hunts are moved to muzzleloader. White Pine agreed with Eureka on the Unit 131 hunts.

Public Comment Las Vegas - None

Commissioner Johnston asked if these proposed changes were okay with the Department.

Staff Specialist McKee said that from a biological standpoint the changes come to 10 less tags than the Department recommended so it would not make much of a difference on the harvest.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE ELK PORTION OF CR 18-11 WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGES: RESIDENT ELK ANTLERED ANY LEGAL WEAPON DEPREDATION HUNT 4102 AS PRESENTED; RESIDENT ELK ANTLERLESS ANY LEGAL WEAPON DEPREDATION HUNT 4107 AS PRESENTED; RESIDENT ELK ANTLERED ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 4151 AS PRESENTED EXCEPT UNIT GROUP 108^c, 131, 132 IS REDUCED FROM 60 TO 55; RESIDENT ELK ANTLERED MUZZLELOADER HUNT 4156 AS PRESENTED EXCEPT UNIT GROUP 108^c, 131, 132 IS REDUCED FROM 8 TO 6 AND UNIT GROUP 111-115 IS INCREASED FROM 15 TO 25; RESIDENT ELK ANTLERED ARCHERY HUNT 4161 AS PRESENTED EXCEPT UNIT GROUP 108^c, 131, 132 IS REDUCED FROM 15 TO 10 AND UNIT GROUP 111-115 IS REDUCED FROM 45-35; RESIDENT ELK SPIKE ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 4651 AS PRESENTED; RESIDENT ELK ANTLERLESS ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 4181 AS PRESENTED; RESIDENT ELK ANTLERLESS ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 4181 WILDERNESS ONLY AS PRESENTED; RESIDENT ELK ANTLERLESS ELK MANAGEMENT ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 4481 OPTION FOR MULE DEER HUNT 1331 AS PRESENTED; RESIDENT ELK ANTLERLESS MUZZLELOADER HUNT 4176 AS PRESENTED; RESIDENT ELK ANTLERLESS ELK MANAGEMENT MUZZLELOADER HUNT 4476 WITH OPTION FOR MULE DEER HUNT 1371 AS PRESENTED; RESIDENT ELK ANTLERLESS ARCHERY HUNT 4111 AS PRESENTED; RESIDENT ELK ANTLERLESS ELK MANAGEMENT ARCHERY HUNT 4411 WITH OPTION FOR MULE DEER HUNT 1341 AS PRESENTED; RESIDENT JUNIOR ELK ANTLERLESS ELK MANAGEMENT HUNT 4407 WITH OPTION FOR RESIDENT JUNIOR MULE DEER HUNT 1107 AS PRESENTED; NONRESIDENT ELK ANTLERED ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 4251 AS PRESENTED EXCEPT UNIT GROUP 108^c, 131, 132 IS REDUCED FROM 7 TO 6; NONRESIDENT ELK ANTLERED MUZZLELOADER HUNT 4256 AS PRESENTED EXCEPT UNIT GROUP 111-115 IS INCREASED FROM 3 TO 4; NONRESIDENT ELK ANTLERED ARCHERY HUNT 4261 AS PRESENTED EXCEPT UNIT GROUP 108^c, 131, 132 IS REDUCED FROM 2 TO 1 AND UNIT GROUP 111-115 IS REDUCED FROM 5 TO 4; NONRESIDENT ELK ANTLERLESS ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 4281 AS PRESENTED; NONRESIDENT ELK ANTLERLESS ELK MANAGEMENT ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT

4481 WITH OPTION FOR MULE DEER HUNT 1331 AS PRESENTED; NONRESIDENT ELK ANTLERLESS MUZZLELOADER HUNT 4276 AS PRESENTED; AND NONRESIDENT ELK ANTLERLESS ARCHERY HUNT 4211 AS PRESENTED. COMMISSIONER EAST SECONDED THE MOTION.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 8 - 0.

Staff Specialist McKee said to note that there was an error in the unit groups in the quota table for the elk management hunts. All tags in the 071 - 077 groups should read 072 – 077.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON MOVED TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THE PRIOR MOTION IS TO APPROVE THE QUOTAS FOR THE UNITS APPROVED IN THE SEASON SETTING. COMMISSIONER HUBBS SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 8-0.

Staff Specialist Cody Schroeder presented a mule deer PowerPoint presentation (exhibit file). The statewide population estimate is about 92,000. Statewide the Department aims for a 30:100 buck to doe ratio, and a 35:100 buck to doe ratio for alternative hunts. Hunt success has been stable and is steadily increasing. The Department generally appropriates 25 percent of the tags to junior hunters. There was a typo in the table for Unit 131-134 which should read “140.” Also Unit 141-145 shows a quota recommendation of 170 which should be 190. One other typo is in Resident Mule Deer Antlerless Any Legal Weapon Hunt 1181-Area 6 there are two seasons, the table shows the unit group as 061, 062, 064, 066-068 and it should be Unit 062, 067, 068 for the late hunt.

Commissioner Johnston asked if the dramatic increase in Area 6 was because of the fires in that area.

Staff Specialist Schroeder said yes, they are trying to manage that population.

Commissioner Barnes said many people have asked him why there are such a large number of tags in Area 6.

Staff Specialist Schroeder said that is intentionally designed to drive the population down because that is what the Department feels the habitat can support at this time. He said millions of dollars have been invested to reseed. He said Nevada Mule Deer Foundation has also helped with those efforts.

Commissioner Barnes asked how the rehabilitation efforts are going.

Staff Specialist Schroeder said that some of those areas with big fires are not looking great but it does take time and moisture.

Commissioner Barnes asked why some of the quotas in Unit 101-109 any legal weapon jump dramatically from previous years.

Staff Specialist Schroeder said the big jumps are to try to get back to the management objectives. He said that some areas are way outside of the objective.

Commissioner East asked what happens when deer cannot migrate back to their summer range as a result of a burn.

Staff Specialist Schroeder explained that mule deer are highly philopatric which means they are very specific as to where their summer and winter ranges are. In Nevada, there are herds that do not migrate at all and there are also deer that are long-distance migrators. Some deer even migrate some years and not in others.

Commissioner East asked if that is the reason that some of these quotas fluctuate so much. She said she got a call from someone who felt that 700 tags in one area was a lot.

Staff Specialist Schroeder said that is a huge area and that spatially, deer distribute themselves very well.

Commissioner Hubbs asked if they take their migratory patterns into consideration when they do surveys.

Staff Specialist Schroeder said they do consider migrations and they fly in both fall and spring. Those can be distributed differently in fall and spring so flight paths are altered. He discussed the junior mule deer quotas.

Public comment on junior hunts –

Sean Shea, Washoe CABMW, said they would like to change Unit 033 from 15 to eight and Unit 014 from 20 to 15.

Larry Allen, Humboldt CABMW, recommended the same as Washoe for 033. For Unit 035 they recommended the 2016 quota of 35. The concern is mostly with the any legal weapon, archery and muzzleloader numbers but they are less concerned with the junior hunt.

Glenn Bunch, Mineral CABMW, would like to increase Unit 202, 205 – 208 from 15 to 20 tags.

Philip Gray, Lander CABMW, would like to keep Units 151-156 at 90 tags, the same as last year.

Public Comment Las Vegas – None

Commissioner Barnes asked if the junior tags are based on percentage of any legal weapon.

Staff Specialist Schroeder said it is 25 percent of the tags across the board.

Commissioner Barnes wanted to make sure any changes to the junior hunt would not influence the rest of the hunts.

Staff Specialist Schroeder said the Department has not accounted for changes in the junior hunt.

Director Wasley said the 25 percent is a general guideline so the rest of the hunts are independent of the junior hunt.

Commissioner McNinch asked if the recommended changes are okay with the Department.

Staff Specialist Schroeder said that he does want to note that these recommendations are tied to the rest of the quotas so some reductions could contribute to population size if the rest of the hunts are reduced as well.

There was discussion regarding Carson CABMWs recommendations to lower quotas in certain units.

Commissioner Hubbs noted that the Commission generally tries to get more youths involved.

Commissioner Johnston agreed saying that if the Commission cuts tags he would like to cut them from adult hunts rather than junior hunts.

Commissioner McNinch agreed that he would rather make changes somewhere else.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE RESIDENT MULE DEER JUNIOR HUNT PORTION OF CR 18-11 WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGES: FIX THE TYPOS IN UNIT GROUP 131-134 FROM 190 TO 140 AND IN UNIT GROUP 141-145 FROM 170 TO 190. COMMISSIONER MCNINCH SECONDED THE MOTION.

Deputy Director Robb said that Glenn Bunch wanted to increase tags in Unit 202, 205-208 if the Commission is looking for that opportunity.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON AMENDED MOTION TO INCREASE THE TAGS IN UNIT GROUP 202, 205-208 FROM 15 TO 20. COMMISSIONER MCNINCH SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 8-0.

Staff Specialist Schroder discussed the rest of the hunts for mule deer. He noted the typo in Hunt 1181.

Public Comment Las Vegas – None

Public Comment in Reno –

Glenn Bunch, Mineral CABMW, said that for Hunt 1331 in Unit 202, 205-208 they would like to have 55 tags. In Hunt 1371, Unit 202, 205-208 they would like to see 10 tags, in Hunt 1341 in Unit 202, 205-208 Late they would like to see 6 tags.

Gene Green, Carson CABMW, has one resident change. In Hunt 1371 they would like to see Unit 192 have 15 tags.

Worth Nelson, Lander CABMW, said they would like the tags in the Unit 151-156 Early (Hunt 1331) to be the same as last year's recommendations at 150.

Larry Allen, Humboldt CABMW, would like to make changes to Hunt 1331 in Unit 033 Early to 20 tags and 033 Late to 10 tags. In Unit 035 they would like it changed to 50 tags. In Hunt 1371, Unit 033 they would like it changed to 5 tags and Unit 035 to 10 tags. In Hunt 1341 they would like to change Unit 035 to 35 tags. This is because of the success rate and there was also a decline in the four-point success rate.

Joe Crim, Pershing CABMW, wants to lower quotas in Hunt 1331 Unit 043-046. The population in that side of the county is declining. He said they have younger bucks and not very many older bucks. Pershing CABMW would like to lower tags to 100 tags in Early and 35 tags in Late.

Sean Shea, Washoe CABMW, would like to keep Unit 011-013 at 40 tags in Hunt 1331 because there is a lack of four-point mature bucks. In Unit 014 Early they would like to reduce it to 35 tags and 10 tags for Late. In Unit 021 and 022 they would like to reduce to 40 tags and in Unit 033 Early they would like to reduce to 20 tags and 10 tags for Late. The population estimate in Unit 011 is 45 percent less than it was in 2014. They would like to be more conservative in these units.

Mitch McVicars, White Pine CABMW, said all of White Pine's recommendations are to slow down in jumps in Units 101-109. In Hunt 1181 they recommended dropping from 250 to 125 tags in that unit. In Hunt 1331, early reduce tags to 650; in mid hunt, reduce from 700 to 600 tags and the late, from 160 to 120 tags. In Hunt 1371 they recommend going from 120 to 110 tags in that unit. In Hunt 1341 early they would like to reduce to 375 tags in that unit.

Sean Shea, Washoe CABMW, added that in Hunt 1371 in Units 014 and 033, Washoe CABMW would like to have five tags and in Hunt 1341 they would like to have 15 tags in Unit 011 - 013 and 30 tags in Unit 021.

Jim Cooney, Elko CABMW, recommended a change for Hunt 1181 in Unit 071 - 079, 091 to 125 tags and in Units 101, 102, and 109, they would like 125 tags.

Craig Burnside, Douglas CABMW, voted to go with quotas as presented. Two absent members asked for the quotas to remain the same as last year in Hunt 1331, Unit 194-196 and in a decrease to 4 tags in those units for Hunt 1371. He also noted that there is the same amount of tags for residents and nonresidents in Unit 291 for the muzzleloader hunt.

Mel Belding, Private Citizen, supports Washoe CABMW's recommendations. He wanted to point out that biologists observed 187 deer in the spring survey in units 011, 012, and 013. A decade ago, that could be seen in two fields. He is concerned that in Unit 014 there has been a loss of 47 percent since 2014. In Unit 033, we have lost 55 percent in the last five years. Mr. Belding noted that this state wants quality, not quantity. Washoe needs to make all of our areas an alternative area. He believes there is a serious problem in Unit 011-014 and Unit 033.

Rex Flowers, Private Citizen, said the Department speaks to having a 30:100 buck to doe ratio. The alternate areas are managed for 35 bucks per 100 does. There was a time that this was a minimum for all units. Now, Unit 033 is not even considered an alternate area. Last year, there was a loss of 300 deer in the population. He asked if the Commission really wants to increase tags when the increase in bucks is not something seen repetitiously.

Chris Cefalu, Nevada Bighorns Unlimited (NBU) - Reno, agrees with Washoe County's recommendations. He said it seems that there is a population decline in Washoe County especially, but also statewide. He said NBU is willing to work with the Department to make a change.

Paul Dixon, Clark CABMW, noted that Clark County citizens utilize every other county for deer hunting. They agreed 6-1 with the doe recommendations from the Department. The one dissenting opinion is that it is not understood why there is an increase in tags with a decline in the population. Clark CABMW sees the need for a mule deer study. In Hunt 1331 and the rest of

the hunts there was a 4-3 split vote to keep Department recommendations but the dissenting opinions were to keep the 2017 quotas.

Gerald Lent requested all of his comments to be included in minutes. (See attachment)

Comments For The Record : Wildlife Commission Meeting May 5, 2018

By Gerald Lent

Item #16- Big Game Quotas

We all know there are 3 components of Wildlife Management, that is :

SCIENTIFIC- what biologists are doing in the field

ECONOMIC- the money

POLITICAL

NDOW may not want to talk about it but there is an economic part to their wildlife program.

By all this killing of doe mule deer, NDOW is letting the economic component of management override the scientific component.

NDOW does not know how many deer are in this State!

NDOW needs to kill more deer to make up for all the loss of revenue by their reducing other Big Game species tags.

They are selling more mule deer tags for the economic boost ie. For the money they bring in and get it matched 3 to 1 with Federal Dollars!

Deer tags are a huge source, if not NDOW's major source of revenue, when matched 3 to 1 with Federal Dollars.

NDOW has a benefit – there is no shortage of hunters that want to hunt each year. There is an excess of deer hunters that didn't draw a tag.

If NDOW puts hunters out in the field and they do not have a good hunting experience because there are no deer and consequently drop out of the system, NDOW doesn't care as others are waiting in line for those tags.

NDOW does not care if a hunter has a bad experience and drops out of the system as there are many more to replace him, SO FAR. But it will eventually catch up to NDOW in Nevada!

The Mule Deer Population Study that was authorized while I was on this Commission by Maxell Global Technologies showed that mule deer under NDOW's current management objectives, would be a non-huntable species by the year 2025 approximately.

NDOW is giving up on restoring deer herds in Nevada !!

DON'T PANIC I HAVE A SOLUTION TO THIS DILEMMA:

I recommend that this Commission greatly and I mean greatly increase NDOW's doe mule deer quotas so NDOW can kill off the mule deer herds in Nevada and thus force NDOW to find another major and different source of funding for their agency. This will also bring in lots of money to the agency for matching!

Obviously NDOW is selling deer tags for the money and this has nothing to do with saving the resource.

(OVER)

ITEM 18 Public Comments:

As an addendum to my written testimony:

All this testimony you heard from the Big Game Chief about hunters just don't care about the quality of their hunt and just want to be out in the field. This is B.S.!

Why don't this Commission require the agency to give this Commission a copy of their hunters survey they did a few years ago, when they asked and found out what Nevada hunters really wanted.

This Commission should know what your customers really want. Quality NOT Quantity!

OR ELSE put me on the agenda as an informational item and I will show you the survey and what your customers really want and it is not and I repeat NOT what you heard here today.

This knowledge will allow the Commission to ask the agency how they can manage to please the customers so they don't drop out of the system.

Commissioner East said that Eureka CABMW wanted to drop to 30 tags in Unit 131-134 late; 350 in 141-145 early for Hunt 1331. In Hunt 1371 they wanted 190 in Unit 141-145.

Commissioner McNinch said it seems like there has been many more changes than in past years and he feels that it need to get back to the biology. It is his understanding that deer grow bigger antlers as a result of nutrition, not age. He asked Staff Specialist Schroeder if the buck to doe ratios is inflated. He asked if those populations are normal or if they are higher than they should be. He also asked if the quality of deer would be jeopardized if the tag quotas were reduced.

Cody Schroeder said that is a complex issue. The statewide population has declined from past years. In recent times, declines are fairly small. The buck ratio is what drives ratios. It is speculated that there are massive habitat changes in Washoe. There have been severe draughts and fires in Washoe County. Predation also plays into populations. Coyotes and mountain lions eat mule deer. The Department has been studying disease, predation, and body conditions of deer in many mountain ranges. In general, it can be perceived that tags are jumping drastically. If they were to go back to last year's quotas, the Department will be recommending even higher increases in the next few years. Bucks are competing with fawns for food on winter ranges.

Game Division Administrator Brian Wakeling said that there has been a project update in the past which addressed this. At the Laughlin Commission meeting, Commissioner Barnes noted that his constituents wanted surveys done in Area 10. That area is where the Department got the best surveys in the entire state. He said adjusting tag levels is not meant to be wildly reactive. The Department is looking at a 2,000 tag increase which would give the Department 60,000 dollars. After the match the Department could maybe purchase three trucks. This does not drive a significant amount of money. The intent is to come up with the best biological recommendation.

Commissioner Valentine said that one of the most confusing parts is what has occurred in 101-109 early, mid, and late. The Elko CABMW recommended accepting the Department's recommendations and then White Pine CABMW drastically reduced those numbers.

Commissioner Barnes said he is struggling with the same questions. He said he understands where the Department is coming from, but he would rather err on the side of caution. He does not have any issues with what White Pine recommended if it can be adjusted next year.

Commissioner McNinch said it is his understanding that those recommendations were the conservative numbers and that the Department could have recommended more.

Staff Specialist Schroeder said the Commissioner McNinch was correct. He said we counted just as many mule deer in that survey as they have historically. They could have easily recommended more. These quotas are to get the buck to doe ratio to 35:100. If they do not get there, the Department will have an even higher quota recommendation next year.

Commissioner McNinch said with that in mind, he is more inclined to default to the Department's recommendations, especially in Unit Group 101-109.

Commissioner Hubbs would like to spend more time discussing mule deer and their population estimates. She said she is worried about the Washoe County area and that the reason for a population decline is unknown.

Chairman Wallace noted that two neighboring counties have significantly different recommendations. He suggested splitting the difference so it is not quite so drastic.

Director Wasley said that clearly there is a significant increase in tags but that part of the challenge is that we are looking at a two year window. If you look back further in time, you can see that the anomaly isn't the 800 and 700, it is the 450 and 400. The population estimate was adjusted downwards. Simultaneous to the population decrease, there was a very low observed buck ratio. To Commissioner Barnes' point about which data point is inaccurate, he said that often you observe lower buck to doe ratios due to survey timing than what is truly present in the field. He noted that a few years ago he shared an Area 10 tag with 2,200 other hunters and went a week without noticing any other hunter. If the Department observes 38 bucks to 100 does this year and those tags are reduced, there will be a much higher quota next year. He said we need to look at a longer term.

Chairman Wallace said there are many questions over the Area 10 numbers. He asked if any other recommendations strike the Department as causing issues down the road.

Staff Specialist Schroeder said most of the alternative recommendations are lower numbers. Lander CABMW wanted to decrease to 100 which is a big drop. Adding the Pershing CABMW recommendation to go from 170 down to 100 is a significant drop which would put the Department well above their management objective. The Department has been directed to use the buck ratio as the tool, if the Commission would like to go a different route, it can be done.

Commissioner Almberg said that in regards to Unit 101-109, he has faith in the local experts and they agree with the biologist. He agrees in taking smaller steps. In the Washoe area, it sounds like there is not too much of a concern when it comes to the herd and habitat, it seemed like there was more of an issue with using the buck to doe ratio. He is leaning towards the CABMW's recommendations for Washoe.

Commissioner Hubbs stated that she felt comfortable with the Department's recommendations because they are already being conservative. She is more inclined to take the Department's suggestion on Area 10. She believes that Washoe County's areas seem more concerning.

Commissioner Johnston said he understands some of the Department's and the citizens of Washoe County concerns. He wished that some of the people who were here this morning stuck around to hear the CABMW members talk about how they want some of the tag numbers reduced because they are passionate about what they think are best for the wildlife populations. He said he is okay with cutting some tag numbers as long as those people who suggested those cuts are open to reevaluating next year, but he has real concerns about cutting hundreds of tags in Area 10.

Commissioner East agreed with Commissioner Johnston; some of the cuts are baby steps.

Commissioner McNinch asked if the changes in Hunt 1181 in Unit Group 071-079 concern the Department.

Staff Specialist Schroeder said that the changes are more conservative than needed; biologically not much of a difference.

Commissioner McNinch asked if the changes in Hunt 1331 in Unit 011-013 early are concerning.

Staff Specialist Schroeder said that it is getting into the “danger zone” biologically. He said he would be more inclined to go for more of a midway point on that recommendation.

Director Wasley added that last year in Hunt 1331 Unit 011-013 early the quota was set at 40. This year’s recommended quota is 80; which is a perfect example why to avoid the “let’s wait and see” argument. The Department’s recommendation last year was 60 tags which would have put it at a 30:100 buck to doe ratio. Then, this year’s recommendation would have also been 60 so you would have not seen a change. However, instead of seeing no change, in front of you now is a recommendation of a 100 percent increase which sounds alarming from a percentage standpoint. That buck to doe ratio may continue to grow and then the Department comes in at a stance that seems more and more unreasonable in terms of the percentage because we are adhering to the objectives that are set.

Commissioner McNinch said he appreciates Director Wasley’s comment because it offers another dynamic. He also noted that in Unit 035 the recommended cut was very significant.

Staff Specialist Schroeder said that is a significant cut as well. The Department has recommended higher quotas in that unit for the past several years. Each year, the CABMW has recommended a lower quota and the Commission has generally gone with the CABMW recommendation. As you can see, that has put everyone in a bind.

Commissioner McNinch also asked about Unit Group 202, 205-208.

Staff Specialist Schroeder said that is a nonstandard hunt and the Department looks at success ratios and manages for a goal of greater than 45 percent. It has been at 54 percent and higher the last three years during rifle season. Technically, that one is above management objectives.

[Commissioner McNinch made a motion that was later amended.]

The Commission discussed which other changes they would like to see.

Chairman Wallace asked if the changes in Hunt 1331 Units 131-134 Late the change from 35 to 30, Unit 141-145 Early from 400 to 350, and Unit 151-156 from 225 to 150 would be an issue.

Staff Specialist Schroeder explained that the suggestions for Area 13 and 14 seem like reasonable suggestions. He said that the suggestions for Area 15 would put the Department at the top-end of the management objectives. He said that unless they were directed to make that area an alternative management area, they prefer to stay with their recommendation.

[Commissioner McNinch amended the motion.]

Commissioner Johnston noted that Pershing CABMW wanted to see reductions in Unit 043 - 046. Staff Specialist Schroeder said those are reasonable.

COMMISSIONER MCNINCH MOVED TO APPROVE THE RESIDENT MULE DEER PORTIONS OF CR 18-11 WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGES: RESIDENT MULE DEER ANTLERLESS ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 1181 AS PRESENTED EXCEPT UNIT GROUP 071-079, 091 REDUCED TO 125, UNIT GROUP 101, 102, 109 REDUCED TO 125 WITH THE RECOGNITION THAT 061, 062, 064, 066-068 LATE IS ACTUALLY IN REFERENCE TO 062, 067, 068; RESIDENT MULE DEER ANTLERED ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNT 1331 AS

PRESENTED WITH THE EXCEPTIONS OF UNIT 011-013 EARLY REDUCED TO 60, UNIT 014 EARLY REDUCED TO 35, UNIT 014 LATE REDUCED TO 10, UNIT 021 AND 022 REDUCED TO 40, UNIT 033 EARLY REDUCED TO 20 AND LATE REDUCED TO 10, UNIT 035 REDUCED TO 90, UNIT 043-046 EARLY REDUCED TO 140 AND LATE REDUCED TO 55, UNIT 131-134 LATE REDUCED TO 30, UNIT 141-145 EARLY REDUCED TO 350, UNIT 151-156 EARLY REDUCED TO 200, UNIT 202, 205-208 TO 55; RESIDENT MULE DEER ANTLERED MUZZLELOADER HUNT 1371 AS PRESENTED EXCEPT UNIT 014 CHANGED TO 5, UNIT 033 CHANGED TO 5, UNIT 035 CHANGED TO 10, UNIT GROUP 101-109 CHANGED TO 110, UNIT 192 INCREASED TO 15, UNIT GROUP 202, 205-208 INCREASED TO 10; AND RESIDENT MULE DEER ANTLERED ARCHERY HUNT 1341 AS PRESENTED EXCEPT UNIT GROUP 011-013 DECREASED TO 15, UNIT 20 CHANGED TO 30, UNIT 035 CHANGED TO 35, UNIT GROUP 141-145 CHANGED TO 190, AND UNIT GROUP 202, 205-208 LATE INCREASED TO 6. COMMISSIONER BARNES SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 8 - 0.

Staff Specialist Schroeder discussed the changes in nonresident quotas as a result of the reduction of resident tags.

Public Comment Las Vegas – None

Public Comment in Reno –

Glenn Bunch, Mineral CABMW, said his CABMW recommended that Nonresident Hunt 1341 in Unit 202, 205-208 Late, be raised by one tag, to three.

COMMISSIONER MCNINCH MOVED TO ACCEPT THE NONRESIDENT MULE DEER HUNTS AS PRESENTED WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGES: NONRESIDENT MULE DEER ANTLERED ANY LEGAL WEAPON HUNTS 1331 AS PRESENTED EXCEPT UNIT GROUP 011-013 EARLY DECREASED TO 6, UNIT GROUP 022 DECREASED TO 4, UNIT 035 TO DECREASED TO 8, UNIT GROUP 043-046 EARLY DECREASED TO 8, UNIT GROUP 043-046 LATE DECREASED TO 4, UNIT GROUP 141-145 EARLY DECREASED TO 26, UNIT GROUP 151-156 EARLY DECREASED TO 18, UNIT GROUP 202, 205-208 INCREASED TO 6; NONRESIDENT MULE DEER ANTLERED MUZZLELOADER HUNT 1371 AS PRESENTED EXCEPT UNIT GROUP 101-109 DECREASED TO 14 AND UNIT 192 INCREASED TO 3; NONRESIDENT MULE DEER ANTLERED ARCHERY HUNT 1341 AS PRESENTED EXCEPT UNIT GROUP 011-013 REDUCED TO 2, UNIT 021 REDUCED TO 3, UNIT 035 REDUCED TO 4, UNIT GROUP 141-145 REDUCED TO 24, UNIT GROUP 202, 205-208 LATE INCREASED TO 3. COMMISSIONER HUBBS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 8-0.

Staff Specialist Schroeder said that resident and nonresident deer and antelope landowner compensation tags will be 2.5 percent of the deer and antelope quotas.

Public Comment in Reno –

Mel Belding said he would like to know how many of the 558 tags are used.

Game Division Administrator Wakeling said the number of tags authorized for the upcoming year will be between 540 to 550 tags. Requests received were 361 last year; this year is somewhat less than that.

COMMISSIONER MCNINCH MOVED TO APPROVE RESIDENT AND NONRESIDENT DEER AND ANTELOPE LANDOWNER COMPENSATION TAGS EITHER SEX HUNTS 1115, 1215, 2115, AND 2215 AT 2.5 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL MULE DEER AND PRONGHORN ANTELOPE QUOTAS. COMMISSIONER BARNES SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION PASSED 8 - 0.

Commissioner McNinch asked if the Department could bring a presentation on these areas of interest next year to see how the decisions impacted populations.

Director Wasley said that he noted several items that might help in the future. He said that Commissioner Hubbs mentioned maybe wanting to hear more about the specific biological challenges. The Department has begun to discuss a mule deer initiative which may involve habitat work, protection of winter ranges, and corridor work. There would be some value in looking at units and recommendations from multiple years back. Agenda Item 16 concluded at 4:06 p.m.

- 17 Future Commission Meeting and Commission Committee Assignments – Secretary Tony Wasley and Chairman Wallace – For Possible Action
The next Commission meeting is June 29 and 30, 2018, in Dyer, Esmeralda County. The Commission will review and discuss potential agenda items for that meeting. The Commission may change meeting dates and locations at this time. The chairman may designate and adjust committee assignments and add or dissolve committees, as necessary at this time. Any anticipated committee meetings that may occur prior to the next Commission meeting may be discussed.

Secretary Wasley listed potential agenda items for the June Commission meeting: Commissioner appreciation; set and revise upland game and furbearer seasons, bag limits and special regulations; trap registration regulation for possible action; regulation workshop on a reptile species (Rosy boa) that is currently listed as an “occupant” of Nevada that is a “suspect resident”; Finance Committee report; fiscal year 2018 CABMW budget requests for possible action; duck stamp funding request for possible action; upland game bird stamp request for possible action; Wildlife Heritage Committee meeting; fiscal year 2018 Heritage Project Proposals for possible action; and Heritage tag organization/vendor selection and special regulations for possible action.

Commissioner Almborg said he supports Secretary Wasley’s idea of species specific topics to be discussed at each meeting in a continuing fashion. Commissioner Almborg said he supports the idea of incorporating the indoctrination course for goats to specifically try to minimize the harvest of nannies as it has higher impact on goat population. He said he doesn’t know the process is but thinks that would be something to address.

Commissioner McNinch said based on conversations he had prior to this meeting and prior to Secretary Wasley mentioning it, he said to Secretary Wasley that as a biologist he had put together a Mule Deer bulletin. Commissioner McNinch said it has been a while since the presentation has been made to the Commission. He asked if in conjunction with the species highlight if the timing would be right to have that presentation again considering the discussion today on mule deer

Chairman Wallace said if there is time on the agenda perhaps a field trip could be taken to a water development.

Secretary Wasley said that is a possibility and there may be other sites of interest.

Commissioner Hubbs said she is not sure how to address this but there has been a recurring request for muzzleloader handgun to kill big game species and request for shotguns for bears in new Unit 201. She is not sure if that is true and is concerned if those are proper weapons for big game hunting.

Secretary Wasley answered Commissioners Hubbs that the Department has had discussions about both topics with respect to shotgun restrictions in the county where the unit is open and available for bears. He said he would have Chief Game Warden Turnipseed answer those questions with an informational item on a future agenda.

Commissioner Johnston said a portion of Unit 203 is limited to shotguns only, is not the whole unit. He understands comment made.

Reno and Las Vegas Public comment - None

18 Public Comment Period

Paul Dixon, Clark CABMW, said for mule deer, NDOW could do something similar to Utah where deer are moved around in state to augment declining mule deer populations. He has heard that effort has been successful. The presentation suggested by Commissioner McNinch on mule deer would be helpful to the CABMW chairs who could relay the information to their constituents.

Gerald Lent said he would like his testimony on the record: As an addendum to my written testimony, you heard from the big game administrator about hunters just don't care about the quality of their hunt and just want to be out in the field. That is B.S.! Why doesn't this Commission require the agency to give this Commission a copy of their hunters' survey they did a few years ago, when they asked and found out what Nevada hunters really wanted. This Commission should know what your customers really want. Quality not quantity. Or else put me on the agenda as an informational item and I will show you the survey and what your customers really want and it is not, and I repeat it is not what you heard today. The knowledge will allow the Commission to ask the agency how they manage to please the customer so they don't drop out of the system.

Joel Blakeslee said we heard earlier in the meeting why antelope are doing so well, then we heard later the why as to deer doing so poorly. In 1974 he worked on a project that studied antelope fawns, within two weeks 36 fawns were dead from bobcats, if you look at graph and did overlay of bobcat prices that parallels the antelope population. Predators affect populations, not the only factor, but coyote management and populations interact closely.

Rex Flowers said his request is for the Commission to consider establishing a mule deer restoration committee. The Commission had one in 2008, and if you look at all possible reasons for decline of deer herd populations. Have a group of people to look at solutions from outside of the box such as Mr. Dixon's suggestion to transplant deer. He said this Department has been extremely successful with sheep, elk and antelope, with deer being the only species hurting on. Mr. Flowers said it may be time to have a committee to handle that portion of deer populations and bring back recommendations to the Commission.

Craig Burnside said we heard today that antelope herds are increasing and at least one CABMW suggested an antelope youth hunt. He suggested that the Commission and Department consider an antelope youth hunt between now and next year.

Meeting adjourned at 4:27 p.m.

Note: The meeting has been videotaped and is available for viewing at www.ndow.org. The minutes are only a summary of the meeting. A complete record of the meeting can be obtained at the Nevada Department of Wildlife Headquarters Office in Reno.