

Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners' Meeting August DRAFT Minutes

REVISED

Due to the ongoing challenges surrounding COVID-19 along with the increased desires for public participation, this meeting will be held virtually via Zoom in an effort to more safely and more effectively conduct the meeting.

The meeting will be broadcast live at the NDOW Commission YouTube page:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrFHgHLM0Mza2Hx7og8pFcQ

If you wish to make public comment, please use this link for Friday, August 6, 2021.

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81595050456?pwd=U2szN2c2bjVY21ZbkVKYW56T3NOZz09

Meeting materials are available at: http://www.ndow.org/Public\_Meetings/Com/Agenda/

Public comment will be taken on each action item following Commission discussion and before any action is taken. Persons wishing to comment are invited to raise their virtual hands in the virtual meeting forum during the appropriate time; each person offering public comment during this period will be limited to not more than three minutes. The Chair 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 prior to the meeting at wildlifecommission@ndow.org or make comment during the meeting and are asked to complete a speaker card and present it to the Recording Secretary. Public comment will not be restricted based on viewpoint. To ensure the public has notice of all matters the Commission will consider, Commissioners may choose not to respond to public comments to avoid the appearance of deliberation on topics not listed for action on the agenda. Minutes of the meeting will be produced in summary format.

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 which antagonize or incite others are examples of public comment that may be reasonably limited.

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

Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners present for the meeting via Zoom:

- Chairwoman Tiffany East Vice Chair Tommy Caviglia
Commissioner Jon Almborg Commissioner Tom Barnes
Commissioner David McNinch Commissioner Shane Rogers
Commissioner Casey Kiel

Absent: Commissioner Ron Pierini, Commissioner Alana Wise

Senior Deputy Attorney General Craig Burkett Secretary Tony Wasley

Nevada Department of Wildlife personnel in attendance:

- Deputy Director Jack Robb Management Analyst Kailey Musso
Executive Assistant Missy Stanford Management Analyst Megan Manfredi
Chief Game Warden Mike Maynard Staff Game Warden Jake Kreamer

Habitat Division Administrator Alan Jenne  
Wildlife Health Staff Specialist Nate LaHue  
Wildlife Staff Specialist Shawn Espinosa  
Wildlife Staff Specialist Mike Cox  
Administrative Assistant Ali Medina  
Data and Technology Services Division Administrator Kim Munoz  
Conservation Education Division Administrator Chris Vasey

Game Division Administrator Mike Scott  
Professional Engineer Supervisor Rodd Lighthouse  
Diversity Division Administrator Jen Newmark  
Wildlife Staff Specialist Pat Jackson  
Administrative Assistant Cindy Alexander

Seth Dettenmeir, USGS Representative, Commission Guest Speaker  
Caroline Sexton, Abbi Agency, Commission Guest Speaker  
Ty Whitaker, Abbi Agency, Commission Guest Speaker  
Zack Lambert, Kalkomey Representative, Commission Guest Speaker

Public in Attendance:

Paul Dixon, Clark CABMW  
Joe Crim, Pershing CABMW  
Steve Marquez, White Pine CABMW  
Steve Robinson, Washoe CABMW  
Cory Lytle, Lincoln CABMW  
Arnie Pitts, Washoe CABMW  
Patrick Donnelly, self  
Elaine Carrick, self  
Carol Schaye, self  
Fred Voltz, self  
Rex Flowers, self  
Cathy Smith, self  
David Rickers, self  
Jana Hoefeditz, self  
Pam Runquist, self  
Judi Caron, self  
Louis Hawkins, self

Glenn Bunch, Mineral CABMW  
Craig Burnside, Douglas CABMW  
Jim Rhea, Washoe CABMW  
Rob Boehmer, Carson CABMW  
Jim Cooney, Elko CABMW  
Joe Crawford, Lyon CABMW  
Daleen DuPlessis, self  
Cheyanne Neuffer, self  
Rene Johnson, self  
Tobi Tyler, self  
Mel Belding, self  
Carol Garlington, self  
Fauna Tomlinson, self  
Meghan Brown, self  
Dr. Staci Baker, self  
Jeff Dixon, self  
Dana Gentry, self

**Friday, August 6, 2021 – 8:00 a.m.**

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

Chairwoman East called the meeting to order at 8:02am. Vice Chair Barnes led the pledge of allegiance. Executive Assistant Missy Stanford called the roll call of Commission members, Commissioner Pierini and Commission Wise absent. Chairwoman East noted the CABMW members in attendance.

**2. Election of Officers – For Possible Action**

In accordance with Commission Policy #1, the Commission will elect a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.

**COMMISSIONER ALMBERG NOMINATED TIFFANY EAST TO CONTINUE AS CHAIRPERSON FOR THE COMMISSION. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BARNES. COMMISSIONER BARNES NOMINATED TOMMY CAVIGLIA AS VICE CHAIR. SECONDED BY CHAIRWOMAN EAST.**

Paul Dixon, Clark CABMW, stated that he supported the nominations of Tiffany East for Chair and Tommy Caviglia for Vice Chair.

Glenn Bunch, Mineral County CABMW, echoed Paul Dixon's support in the nominations.

**MOTION CARRIES 7-0. COMMISSIONER PIERINI AND COMMISSIONER WISE ABSENT.**

**3. Approval of Agenda – Chairman – 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.

*No public comment.*

**CHAIRWOMAN EAST MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER ALMBERG. MOTION CARRIES 7-0. COMMISSIONER PIERINI AND COMMISSIONER WISE ABSENT.**

**4.\* Approval of Minutes – Chairman – For Possible Action**

Commission minutes may be approved from the June 25 and 26, 2021 meetings.

Chairwoman East stated she thinks that some of her comments were left out from the wildlife contest discussion, and she wanted to make sure all of her comments were noted.

*No public comment.*

**COMMISSIONER KIEL MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES WITH NOTED CHANGED. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BARNES. MOTION CARRIES 7-0. COMMISSIONER PIERINI AND COMMISSIONER WISE ABSENT.**

**5. Member Items/Announcements and Correspondence – Chairman – 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.

Chairwoman East said that she received a letter from the Coalition for Healthy Nevada lands regarding a letter of support for wild burros and horses. She introduced Commissioner Wise as the new general public representative seat on the Commission and Commissioner Kiel and Vice Chair Caviglia were appointed to a second term on the Commission.

**6. 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, thanked Deputy Director Robb and Chief Game Warden Maynard for assistance with a request from the public to require the use of having a canine unit in NDOW. Lieutenant Chris Walther attended the Clark CABMW meeting and helped the public understand why canines are not part of NDOW. He stated he added urban fishing at Wetlands Park on his agenda and did not realize the amount of people who did not fish there. He stated he would like to explore a catch and release option for certain parts of the park. He anticipated coming back in 2022 to the fishing regulations in September with a catch and release recommendation. He warned about using the Clark County Government

Chambers for a hybrid meeting, he had his CABMW meeting at the Chambers and there were issues with the virtual capabilities.

**7. Reports – Informational**

- A. Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) 2021 Annual Conference – Secretary Wasley and Commissioner McNinch**  
Reports from the 2021 conference will be provided.

Commissioner McNinch and Secretary Wasley gave their reports from the 2021 WAFWA conference. There were five awards related to Nevada, Outstanding Citizen Wildlife Contributor, Bryan Perchetti; Federal Conservation Partner of the Year Award, Dr. Peter Coates - USGS; Special Recognition Award, Warden Sean Flynn; Honorary Lifetime Membership, Jon Sjöberg; the Sage and Columbia Sharp Tail Grouse Workshop's Patterson Award, an award issued once every two years, Shawn Espinoza.

- B. Department Website Update – Abbi Agency Representative and Conservation Education Division Administrator Chris Vasey**  
Conservation Education Division Administrator Chris Vasey and the Department's website developer, Abbi Agency, will give the Commission and the public its first look at the agency's new website to be launched this fall. The Abbi Agency explains the research and work behind the new website. The goal of the new website is to both reach new audiences and better serve or current users. This website is a resource for all Nevadans and will help promote wildlife conservation.

Conservation Education Administrator Chris Vasey introduced Caroline Sexton of the Abbi Agency; she provided an overview of the new NDOW website. The new website is set to go live mid-September.

*Break: 9:30 – 9:45am*

- C. Department Activity Report – Secretary Wasley and Division Administrators**  
A report will be provided on Nevada Department of Wildlife activities.

**DIRECTOR'S OFFICE**

The Director's Office is pleased to announce that a companion bill to the Recovering America's Wildlife Act (RAWA) was recently introduced into the Senate. This Act was co-sponsored by Senators Heinrich and Blunt and was introduced as S.2372. The House Bill – H.R. 2773 now has 3 out of 4 Nevada congressional delegates who have signed on to co-sponsor. This bill was also introduced into the House Natural Resources Committee's Water Ocean and Wildlife subcommittee on Thursday, July 29, 2021. We are hopeful for more forward movement in the days to come.

Many Department staff recently attended the Summer Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) Virtual Conference. Staff were able to engage with other western states on issues relevant to Nevada including sage grouse, wild horses, and diversity and inclusion efforts.

At the May Commission Meeting, some of the County Advisory Boards (CABs) asked about the status of the Shed Antler Regulation (CGR 489) and the Landowner Compensation Tag Regulation (CGR 488). Both regulations were initially submitted to the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) in September 2019. The Department has received Shed Antlers back and is on this meetings' agenda for an adoption. LCB hopes to have the Landowner Compensation Tag regulation back to the Department before the September Commission Meeting.

**GAME DIVISION**

**Moose Survey:** A recent survey by NDOW biologists found all six collared cow moose with six confirmed calves. One cow did not have a calf, but another one made up for it with twins. The cow with twins also had twins when she was captured and collared. The moose biologist, Kari Huebner, has started a spreadsheet to keep track of production on the collared moose.

**ESRI/NDOW Survey App:** The Game Division has recently undertaken a new approach to data collection for wildlife surveys with the rollout and testing of a new tablet-based survey application. Biologists are testing the new program which will be utilized by recording data on tablets instead of using pencils and paper. The application will be a giant leap forward in data collection, recording, and uploading which, in theory, will improve accuracy, save time, and allow for improved data analysis. Cody McKee has been instrumental in working with ESRI, as has Joe Bennett, Kody Menghini, Tom Donham, Scott Roberts, and Cody Schroeder.

**NDOW Summer Training:** The Department recently held a weeklong training session that consisted of Weapons Qualification, Wildlife Handling, Wildlife Restraint, Comprehensive Helicopter Safety Training, and an introduction to the new survey app. These trainings included personnel from the Law Enforcement, Conservation Education, Wildlife Diversity, Fisheries, and Game divisions. Instructors were all Department personnel with experience and expertise in various aspects of wildlife management.

**Big Game Seminars:** Game Division staff have been participating in or preparing for seminars for Pronghorn antelope, bighorn sheep, and black bears. Each year the information for these seminars is updated and the presentations are improved. As of this writing, over 300 people have signed up for the antelope seminar and over 150 have signed up for the bighorn seminar. Personnel from the Law Enforcement and Conservation Education divisions are integral to providing these seminars. The information for these classes is truly valuable for the participants as well as the Department or many reasons.

**Game Division Summer Activities:** Game Division personnel are spending time during the summer months with activities including rabbit surveys, upland game brood surveys, quail trapping, duck banding, bighorn lamb and mountain goat kid surveillance, water development inspections, bear conflict response, mule deer enhancement program field trips, attending summer WAFWA, Pacific Flyway Council preparation, participating in training as instructors or students, and numerous other activities.

## **HABITAT DIVISION**

**Carson Lake and Pasture** - Water allocations for Carson Lake Wetlands remained at 70 percent from Truckee Carson Irrigation District (TCID), but deliveries are expected to be shut-off in late-August. Despite various proposals such as a delayed delivery season for wildlife water or leaving a portion of our allocation on top of the minimum pool in Lahontan Reservoir to help sustain the fishery the TCID Board granted no flexibility in the use NDOW's water. As a result, the Department has begun taking water orders into the York and Grimes Units earlier than expected with drain flows maintaining conditions in the Big Water unit. The goal is to call on and receive as much of our allocation as possible before Lahontan Reservoir hits the 4,000-acre-foot minimum pool level.

**Water Development** - The northern water development crew finished their annual volunteer build season and completed four big game projects, including a new build in the Kamma Mountains, two rebuilds in the Wassuk Mountains, and a big game build near Soldier Meadows. The northern crew also finished up annual inspection flights in mid-July and completed inspections on 350 units. Most units were in good condition and water supply was better than expected with only two dry units in the Medicine Range being identified. An emergency water haul was conducted less than a week after observation, delivering approximately 4,500 gallons of water to Medicine units' number 1 and 2. and were soon after filled efforts to provide emergency water to these units are underway.

The southern region has received some much-needed monsoonal precipitation over the past few weeks, and when combined with aggressive emergency water hauling efforts, most water developments currently have adequate water storage for the near future. From early-June to present, the southern region has hauled 72,000 gallons of water. An emergency temporary tank was installed near the South Hiko slickrock guzzler to help offset the low-water conditions at the guzzler. This temporary tank has since seen some use by sheep and these animals are also using a natural spring source in the area. The emergency temporary tank in the Muddy Mountains saw sheep use earlier this summer but use has since declined as the sheep moved back up in elevation as the permanent guzzlers were filled.

The southern crew will be completing an aerial recon flight for guzzlers within the Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR) on August 1st and 2nd to determine if water hauling is necessary for those units. The southern crew will also continue to monitor several units in Lincoln County to determine water hauling needs. Precipitation in this area alleviated the need to haul water in mid-June as originally planned.

**Technical Review** - The Energy Planning and Conservation Program (AB 307) has seen one (1) amendment and 28 new project applications submitted since January 1, 2021. Of these new applications, we have received 23 applications for solar and ancillary facilities (including transmission lines), four (4) applications were for powerlines/transmission, and one (1) application was for a wind power project. The amendment was for a previously submitted solar project.

Applications to the AB307 program have far exceeded the number of applications received by this date in 2020, and currently accounts for approximately 17 percent of applications received since the inception of this program. Applications received in 2020 far exceeded all previous years, accounting for 51 new project applications. It is anticipated in 2021 the program will surpass that number in new energy project applications.

### **CONSERVATION EDUCATION**

**Events:** Maison T. Ortiz Camp Youth Outdoors Skills Camp July 16-17 – NDOW staff assisted with two single day camps for youth ages 11-14. Activities included shotgun shooting, survival, archery, fishing, pellet gun shooting as well as others.

The Nevada Outdoor Experience was held in Carson City on June 12<sup>th</sup>. Angler and Wildlife Educators attended and educated the local community on wildlife in the area and ran a casting station.

A volunteer open house was held in the Southern and Western Regions on June 23<sup>rd</sup>. The purpose was to reconnect with instructors and share upcoming events and changes to our programming. The instructors were very enthusiastic and excited to resume in-person programming.

Throughout the month of July, NDOW Wildlife Educators hosted a free virtual summer camp, the Nevada Wild Discovery Box. The camp consisted of four different weeks of activities, each week with a different theme. Participants received a kit full of materials for a fun, interactive activity each day. This program had 109 total students registered.

The Summer Nevada Nature Blitz is still ongoing and currently there are 6,115 observations, 1,329 species, 537 identifiers, and 185 members in the project. The project is a joint event with the University of Nevada Reno Natural History Museum and Nevada Bugs and Butterflies.

**Outreach and Education efforts:** NDOW staff in partnership with Conservation Visions have distributed a short survey to a portion of our hunting license holders to help us better understand wild meat harvest, meat sharing, and hunter motivations here in Nevada. The survey window will close this summer, results analyzed this fall and will be shared late this fall or early winter.

Wildlife Education programming will be piloting several new classroom programs in the Spring. These programs include an Urban Wildlife project-based program for high school students, a community science bird trunk for 6<sup>th</sup> grade students, and a wildlife badges program for k-12 students. Preparations and outreach are ongoing throughout the summer and trainings for teachers will be scheduled over winter break.

NDOW staff from around the state participated in Game Division's biologist training July 20-22, including training on Wildlife Handling, Chemical Immobilization, and Aviation Safety Training.

Conservation Education staff continued our webinar effort with programs featuring a variety of Hunter Education, Wildlife Education and Angler Education programs.

NDOW staff and special presenters held a pronghorn hunting seminar on July 27<sup>th</sup>. Topics include the history of pronghorn from NDOW biologist, hunting techniques, hunting laws, field care and Taxidermy. This presentation was broadcasted via zoom.

Conservation Education staff attended the Association for Conservation Information's conference virtually the week of July 30. Despite it being a record year for the number of entries into ACI's annual awards, conservation education division staff received four third place awards:

- Internal Newsletter for the November 2020 edition of NDOW Tracks, the Department's quarterly newsletter to all staff.
- Conservation Post of the Year for a social media post showing video of the bighorn sheep release at Pyramid Lake in January 2020
- Social Media Campaign for the Department's announcement of its new Fish NV tool for anglers
- The Nevada Wild podcast- for an episode on State Record Breaking Carp caught in 2020

**Media Highlight:** The drought has resulted in an increase in media inquiries. Public Information Officers have conducted various interviews with the media on topics including the impact of the drought on wildlife, habitat, local waters, and fishing. Other topics of interest include urban wildlife, boating safety and incidents and more. Conservation Education's media monitoring service, Critical Mention, reported a TV audience of more than 534,000 and an audience of more than 9 million for print and online news stories.

Public Information Officers are currently working on a story with the Washington Post detailing the impact of the drought on Nevada's wildlife across the state. The story will be published on a national scale.

## **WILDLIFE DIVERSITY**

**Columbia Spotted Frog Surveys:** Wildlife Diversity and Fisheries biologists conducted our annual survey for Columbia Spotted Frogs this past July. Commonly called Frog Camp, we had 26 total participants this year from 6 federal and state partners. All 14 sentinel sites, the sites we prioritize to count every year, were surveyed 1 to 4 times each, depending on water availability. We conduct up to 4 passes per site to maximize the numbers of frogs we catch – it is surprising how well-hidden frogs can be and even on a 4<sup>th</sup> pass of a site, we will catch new frogs not previously captured. This year, we captured approximately 1900 frogs, 125 of them that were new, meaning they were not recaptures from prior years.

Not surprisingly, drought is reducing the amount of available habitat and concentrating frogs into the few remaining wet sites. Four sites were completely dry with no open water available to frogs. However, subsurface water is persisting on site and sustaining the established riparian vegetation. This suggests that sites could be re-occupied by frogs when the current drought ends or thru habitat restoration activities. Several sites, including various restoration ponds, are currently occupied but in need of maintenance to prevent excessive plant growth which reduces pond depth and amount of open water. Discussions were initiated with Forest Service staff and other partners on how best to address this issue.

An important highlight from this year's survey effort is this is the first year that all the mark/recapture data were captured entirely electronically. Working with our partners at the USGS, a Survey 123 App was developed specifically for this effort. Tagged frogs have a 15-digit number that is recorded, in addition to GPS coordinates being recorded for every individual, when it is either tagged or recaptured. Manually recording these data, and then subsequently transcribing the data from paper data sheets into the database, is both time-consuming and the source of data errors. With the new app, these data are automatically added into the App, with no transcription necessary. It was a bit of a learning curve to make the transition, but all participants agreed that electronic data capture is far preferred to the old paper data methods.

**Other Projects:** Wildlife Diversity staff are continuing various projects throughout the state, including nest monitoring for Southwestern Willow Flycatcher and conducting presence/absence surveys for Yellow-billed Cuckoos. On-going surveys and field work are focused on mountain beaver surveys, Gila monster radio tracking, Mojave fringe-toed lizard genetics, breeding bird surveys, and acoustic bat monitoring.

## **FISHERIES**

Fisheries staff and the division said goodbye to Pat Sollberger on Friday, July 9<sup>th</sup> after Pat spent 28 years with NDOW in the fisheries division and decided to retire and spend some much-needed quality time with his family. We wish Pat a very happy retirement and again thank him for his many years of dedicated service to NDOW.

**Aquatic Invasive Species Program:** Kevin Netcher was recently hired as a staff fisheries biologist at NDOW Headquarters office in Reno, serving as our statewide AIS coordinator. Keven is a very familiar face as he has served as a fisheries biologist (LCT and then Redband and Bull Trout) in our Elko Office for much of the past eight years. Kevin comes from a position at Pyramid Lake Fisheries where he worked for two months. We are all extremely happy to have Kevin back in the NDOW family. His hard work, calm demeanor, and enthusiasm will serve him well. As previously reported, NDOW's AIS Program Watercraft Inspection Stations are fully operational for the 2021 boating season and remain busy during peak boating season. South Fork Reservoir in Elko County has 1,926 inspections and 19 decontaminations so far this year, Rye Patch with 475 inspections, Lahontan Reservoir with 2,808 inspections and 8 decontaminations and Topaz Lake with 834 inspections. Cottonwood Cove, Big Bend, Alamo, and Laughlin in southern Nevada have completed 3,709 inspections and 58 total decontaminations this year. Lake Mead has completed 6,918 inspections and 455 decontaminations so far this year. Stations at Lake Mead and Alamo operate year-around.

**Water Conditions:** Unfortunately, water conditions remain unfavorable as we enter the warmest portion of the year and much of Nevada suffers through ongoing drought conditions. Most reservoirs and rivers statewide are experiencing warm temperatures and low water conditions making them susceptible to fish kills. Biologists around the state reported streams and rivers to already be at normal seasonal low levels by the end of spring. Algae blooms and fish die-offs are expected in the absence of the region receiving any appreciable precipitation. In mid-July, many fisheries were reportedly at all-time lows. Some localized water conditions are as follows:

Little Washoe Lake has dried up due to drought conditions compounded by a diversion that was blown out in 2017 and no longer delivering water from Galena Creek. In past drought conditions, (Big) Washoe Lake has gone completely dry long before Little Washoe shows signs of stress.

Localized, limited fish kills have been documented in Boulder and Bilk Creek reservoirs (Western Region).



Lahontan Reservoir is expected to drop to 4K acre feet by mid-August which could result in a loss of the fishery.

The Truckee River is expected to drop dramatically in mid-August when Lake Tahoe drops below its natural rim. The Sand Harbor boat launch was closed in mid-July.

Lake Mead elevations have hit an all-time low of 1,067 feet on July 19<sup>th</sup> creating problematic situations impacting both boaters and anglers alike. Most launches on the lake are still usable due to the relentless work of the NPS adding pipe flooring to extend the boat ramps. Boulder Harbor has been temporarily closed for launching boats. Lake elevations are forecasted to continue to drop through December 2021 before it is forecasted to rise again.

**Eastern Region Fisheries:** AIS samples were collected in June at Wildhorse Reservoir, Wilson Reservoir, South Fork Reservoir, and Ruby Lake, all of which came back negative. Samples are scheduled for mid-July and the final samples will be taken in September/October to allow for algae levels to drop.

Eastern Region Fisheries staff coordinated with Nevada Gold Mines to salvage Largemouth Bass from a privately-owned pond that was suffering negative impacts due to the drought. Approximately 1,200 bass were moved to South Fork Reservoir with an additional 700 fish being moved to a cooling pond associated with mine dewatering.

Two salvage efforts were made at Jiggs Reservoir to remove approximately 6,000 Bluegill Sunfish and Largemouth Bass from the drying reservoir. These fish were transplanted to Battle Mountain High School Pond, Wilson Reservoir, Comins Lake, and Mason Valley WMA.

Stream survey crews and other NDOW personnel participated in a post-treatment survey of the North Fork Humboldt River which had previously been eradicated. Although no Brook Trout were found, survey crews documented several LCT that have drifted down from above the barrier.

Native aquatic surveys also continue, primarily associated with Columbia spotted frogs and native mussel species. With listing petitions looming for native species, these surveys are critical in establishing a baseline for current occupied ranges.

**Southern Region Fisheries:** The Southern Region urban ponds were not stocked in July, similar to stocking patterns in recent years when air and water temperatures are at an extreme. As a reference, Las Vegas tied an all-time record high of 117 on July 10.

Southern Region Diversity and Fisheries staff organized and implemented the week-long annual Columbia Spotted Frog survey in the Toiyabe Mountains of Nye County. NDOW staff from multiple regions participated, along with numerous individuals from partnering state and federal agencies.

Annual trawl surveys for monitoring shad production at Lake Mead were completed on June 24. Boulder Basin larval shad counts were more than triple last year's counts and followed the boom-boost cyclical pattern typical of Boulder Basin. Shad counts in the Overton Arm were the lowest since 2016; however, only half of the Overton Arm survey was completed this year due to the Echo Bay launch ramp being temporarily closed because of low lake elevations. Overall, the lake average was above the 32-year mean and shad production should provide adequate forage for the Striped Bass fishery through the year.

**Western Region Fisheries:** Quagga sampling has been conducted on Lahontan Reservoir, Rye Patch Reservoir, Topaz Lake and Washoe Lake, all coming back with negative test results.

The Marlette Lake Broodstock Facilities/ Passage project has been granted to Granite Construction. Construction is expected to commence this fall to replace the old degraded corrugated culvert pipe at the confluence of Trelease Creek with a bottomless archway which will allow for better fish passage upstream to the Marlette Lake spawning facility.

Fisheries and Conservation Education staff put together a social media post to discuss drought impacts on local fisheries and increase public awareness on the negative impacts of catch and release fishing for trout in warm temperatures, as well as providing advice to increase fishing success during warm weather by fishing higher elevation fisheries or warmwater fisheries.

Boat launch facilities are no longer usable at Lahontan Reservoir, Lake Tahoe (Sand Harbor) and Topaz Lake. The launch at Rye Patch Reservoir is still accessible at the time of this writing, but reservoir levels are dropping fast so it will become unusable soon.

### **DATA AND TECHNOLOGY SERVICES**

**First Come First Serve:** Testing and validation of the First Come First Served program has completed its 6<sup>th</sup> week of review. Testers, Department staff, and Kalkomey development staff are comfortable that the program meets expectations of business requirements as well as integrity and fairness to all clients. Tag returns, as usual, ramped up the last few weeks in July and all tags available in the program are those returned to the Department with no eligible alternate. The program went live early this with a foundation off over 73 tags that would have gone unused in previous years. Updates will be provided to the Commission at a future date regarding the status of tags that enter the program.

**Overton Dove:** At the last Commission meeting, the Commission approved the Overton Wildlife Management Area dove application process and draw to be conducted online throughout licensing vendor, Kalkomey. At the end of the application period, a total of 289 applications were received. A total of 137 individual hunters applied, a decrease from the 178 hunters who applied in 2020 but still resulting in all available spaces being awarded to hunters. Validation of the draw went smoothly, and applicants have been notified of their draw status.

**Governor's Vaccination Prizes:** In collaboration with Immunize Nevada, the Department has prepared to assign free fishing licenses to the winners of the Governor's Vax Nevada Days giveaway. More information on the Vax Nevada Days incentive program can be found at [www.VaxNevadaDays.org](http://www.VaxNevadaDays.org).

**Geographic Information System:** The Geographic Information System staff has completed the first beta version of the HuntNV application map which will be similar to our FishNV application. Staff also finished an Oil and Gas Tool for the Habitat division that summarizes data from 23 statewide biological datasets, 66 Bureau of Land Management (BLM) planning stipulations, and public land data. Habitat staff can utilize this tool when commenting on BLM parcel leases. Between spending time on project development, staff was able to attend the ESRI User Conference as well as some events during the WAFWA Summer Meeting.

**Information Technology:** Finally, the Information Technology staff have been continuing with network upgrades at the Valley Road, Ely, Overton and Lake Mead offices and Wildlife Management Areas. These upgrades include new budgetary approved laptops, firewalls to access the State's network and Departmental internal resources in rural areas, wireless installations and Mbps upgrades, as well as video conferencing setups in our Las Vegas office. New servers have been ordered for all three regional offices and the headquarters location with replacement installation beginning this fall.

### **LAW ENFORCEMENT**

**Wildlife Investigations:** Numerous wildlife events have been ongoing throughout the state. Game wardens cited an individual for taking possession of a mule deer fawn, responded to calls relating to deer

caught in a fence, removed a Mojave green rattlesnake from a building, and investigated an OGT call of the unlawful kill of an antelope in the Western Region.

Game wardens also investigated possible water diversion incidents at Little Washoe Lake and on the Walker River.

Members of the LE Division Investigations Unit assisted US Fish and Wildlife Service with a search warrant in a case involving the illegal sale of songbird, gathering information for Idaho regarding a fraud case, and helped organize and coordinate a wildlife fraud conference in Stateline where AZ, ID, WA, and CA all attended.

**Boating Safety Patrol:** There have been numerous boat accidents statewide over the last month including several very serious and tragic events:

On Lake Tahoe, near Incline Village, several juveniles rented a 24-foot vessel from a livery. During a return transit to the livery from mid-lake, one male juvenile occupant was thrown from the boat, likely due to speed, sea-state, and inexperience. This male juvenile drowned and succumbed to that injury despite being recovered back onboard the MV by the other passengers and being rendered CPR. The victim was not wearing a life jacket.

On Lake Lahontan a tragic death involving two male adults, during reboarding of a vessel while the engine was in engaged resulting in a fatality due to massive trauma to one adult male.

On 7/25/21 at Las Vegas Harbor, Lake Mead, a vessel exploded just after engaging forward propulsion in the vicinity of their boat slip. Out of seven persons on board, four persons: three adults and one juvenile, transported to hospital with serious burns, one adult female via life flight, condition unknown, cause unknown. The investigation is pending.

At the Las Vegas Harbor Fuel Dock, on Lake Mead, a 30-foot vessel exploded just after completing fueling while near the fueling dock. Cause of explosion deemed to be ignition of flammable vapor in the engine compartment. The vessel was a total loss and sank. Two adult males onboard hospitalized for traumatic injuries and smoke inhalation. Responding game wardens and game warden trainees were first on scene, rendered emergent life-saving aid, and were also transported to the hospital for smoke inhalation injury. Game Warden Zachary Blackwood, assisted by game warden trainee Emily Cain, used the patrol boat to push the fully engulfed boat away from the injured persons in the water.

Water levels continue to fall to critical levels around the State of Nevada. The launching of boats is now very difficult or closed to launching in Lake Lahontan, Lake Topaz, Rye Patch Reservoir, and Sand Harbor at Lake Tahoe.

**Public Safety:** Eastern Region game wardens assisted Eureka County Sheriff's Department and Nevada Highway Patrol with an attempted homicide/officer involved shooting event on State Route 278.

A game warden who assisted in apprehension of a murder suspect attended a pre-trial hearing for a murder case. Trial for the suspect is set for this week.

A Southern Region game warden responded to a brush fire at Overton Management Area. Clark County Fire Department, Nevada Division of Forestry and Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD) were also on scene. Fire was extinguished on a one acre; one suspect was arrested by LVMPD.

A game warden in Laughlin saved the life of a female boat operator who was ejected from her vessel and caught on the upstream side of a dock by the river current. The game warden was able to pull the female to safety prior to her submersion and subsequent possible drowning under the dock.

A Western Region game warden did a welfare check on a plane crash in the Winnemucca lakebed. All persons on board had already crawled out and left. The lakebed in that area like quicksand as there is so much water under the surface.

NDOW game wardens freed a subject vessel that jumped the Davis Dam buoy line and was stuck. Game wardens also provided security during a marine permit fireworks event on the river.

A Western Region game warden assisted the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) with a fire in Sun Valley after they requested assistance. The BLM ranger had a suspect which then fled. The NDOW game warden assisted to catch the suspect and took witness statements.

Chairwoman East asked if there is anything that the sportsmen or the Commission can do to encourage the passage of bills pertaining to RAWA.

Secretary Wasley answered that the broader support, the better. He continued that any partnerships, conversations with congressional delegation, particularly with republicans on the senate side could be helpful

Diversity Division Administrator Jen Newmark explained that the awareness of the Act is important as it is a once in a generation opportunity and it really will change our abilities to really manage and conserve Nevada's wildlife as well as wildlife across the country.

Chairwoman East said she would like to Secretary Wasley and Administrator Newmark offline as she has some ideas.

**D.\* Litigation Report – Deputy Attorney General Craig Burkett**

A report will be provided on Nevada Department of Wildlife litigation.

Senior Deputy Attorney General (DAG) Craig Burkett reviewed the NDOW litigation report. He explained that due to court congestion issues, item number four on the litigation report has been rescheduled for February 2022 for trial. *A copy of the litigation report can be found on the NDOW website.*

**E.\* Public Works Contracts – Deputy Director Jack Robb**

A report will be provided on public works contracts awarded by the Department in the previous year.

Deputy Director Jack Robb reviewed the list of contracts awarded by the Department in the previous year. *A copy of the list of contracts can be found on the NDOW website.*

**F. Tag Allocation and Application Hunt Committee (TAAHC) Report – Committee Chairman Tommy Caviglia**

A report will be provided on the recent TAAHC meeting. *Committee Webpage:* [http://www.ndow.org/Public\\_Meetings/Committees/Tag\\_Allocation\\_and\\_Application\\_Hunt/](http://www.ndow.org/Public_Meetings/Committees/Tag_Allocation_and_Application_Hunt/)

Commissioner Caviglia gave a presentation from the August 5, 2021 TAAHC Committee meeting.

**G. Administrative Procedures, Regulations and Policy (APRP) Committee Report – Commissioner and Committee Chairman McNinch**

A report will be provided on the recent APRP Committee Meeting. *Committee Webpage:* [http://www.ndow.org/Public\\_Meetings/Committees/Administrative\\_Procedures\\_Regulations\\_and\\_Policy/](http://www.ndow.org/Public_Meetings/Committees/Administrative_Procedures_Regulations_and_Policy/)

Commissioner McNinch gave a report from the August 5, 2021 APRP Committee meeting.

**H. Mule Deer Enhancement Program Update – Committee Chairman Casey Kiel and Game division Administrator Mike Scott**

A report will be provided on the Mule Deer Enhancement Program Oversight Committee and Subcommittees.

Commissioner Kiel and Game Division Administrator Scott explained that the Mule Deer Enhancement Oversight Committee has not met since the last meeting. They explained that the subcommittee field trips have been productive and have been educational.

Division Administrator Scott stated that there have only been two subcommittee field trips, the third is scheduled for today. There is a number of subcommittees now have field trips scheduled. He had hoped to push things faster than how they are going but it is more important for people to get out into the field, discuss things thoroughly before they go forward with any project proposals and I think we are going to back off of the timeline to allow more time for these groups to meet and discuss and provide well thought out, vetted project proposals that they can agree on and move forward with. He said he will meet with Commissioner Kiel to set a Mule Deer Enhancement Program meeting.

**I. Wildlife Disease Update – Wildlife Health Staff Specialist Nate LaHue**

A report will be provided on the various wildlife disease issues being investigated by the NDOW veterinarian.

Wildlife Health Staff Specialist Nate LaHue gave a presentation on wildlife diseases. The *Wildlife Health Update presentation can be found on the NDOW website.*

**J. Raven Research Update – Predator Staff Specialist Pat Jackson**

A report will be provided on raven research being conducted by NDOW and USGS.

United States Geological Survey (USGS) representative Seth Dettenmaier presented *Decision Support Tools for Management of Raven Management to Benefit Greater Sage-Grouse*. A copy of the presentation can be found on the NDOW website.

*Lunch Break 12:30pm – 1:15pm.*

**K. Initiating Bighorn Sheep Management Plan Revision – Big Game Staff Biologist Mike Cox**

An overview of the proposed plan revision process will be provided including team members representing key groups and expertise; and principal issues, challenges, opportunities, and decisions that will be focused on in the plan.

Big Game Wildlife Staff Specialist Mike Cox gave an overview of the proposed bighorn sheep management plan revision process; the first plan was completed in 2001. He invited Vice Chair Caviglia to sit on the committee that will also consist of Game Division Field Biologists, a regional Game supervisor and a Habitat staff biologist. He explained that he would like to include mountain goats in the bighorn sheep plan to mirror what other states have done with their plans. He stated that key topics that he would

like to expand and provide more details on include habitat management, population management, various management hunts, pathogen and disease management, and subspecies management. He would also like to collaborate and engage with more Nevada wool growers. He stated that he would like to try to have the first meeting later in August but also realizes it's the beginning of hunt season and there may not be availability. He explained that we will likely see a request this fall from the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources for a bighorn sheep nursery group.

Vice Chair Caviglia agreed and expressed his excitement to sit on the management plan review team.

Chairwoman East asked about the Utah request for bighorn sheep.

Staff Specialist Cox answered that the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources have a site located in north central Utah where they would like to establish a nursery group using Nevada's sheep. He explained that there has been detection of mycoplasma in many of the herds; 75 percent of Nevada's herds have been exposed and though it's not a death sentence, it creates challenges. They want our sheep to establish this nursery group so the when the time is right, they will have the source that they can use for their translocations.

Vice Chair Caviglia stated that he sees potential concerns with sheep roundup near the start of California hunting season.

Staff Specialist Cox explained that rams will not be removed at this time, they will just be sampled, and sampling will be completed a week before the season opens.

Chairwoman East asked if Nevada will be receiving anything from Utah in exchange for the sheep that they will obtain from Nevada for their nursery group.

Secretary Wasley explained that there is a long-standing reciprocity between states in terms of animals. He explained that it provides us an off-ramp for sheep in areas where we know we have population challenges and issues of carrying capacity and we have heard sportsman and others that prefer us to explore alternatives that do not result in dead sheep. This is another off-ramp where Sheep could be used to establish a clean source population that could pay dividends in the future back to Nevada but would pay them in the short-term to Utah. Typically, there aren't immediate or tangible benefits to the reciprocity that is exhibited in sharing animals but there are a lot of long-term benefits to the states involved in those programs.

Chairwoman East clarified that she meant long term, not necessarily referring to monies and could this be something where we get some of the clean source sheep back in Nevada.

Commissioner Almborg stated that the nursery group was great news to hear, he states that there is time sensitivity while looking at populations of animals and those areas that have had exposures.

Wildlife Staff Specialist Cox stated that it is an anomaly and the sooner we move some sheep, the better.

**L. The Draw Process – Kalkomey Representative Zack Lambert and Data and Technology Services Administrator Kim Munoz**

A representative of the Department's contracted licensing vendor will provide an overview of this year's application and hunt statistics, the process of conducting the draw and provide a demonstration of the new First Come First Serve program's functionality.

Kalkomey Representative Zack Lambert provided an overview of this year's application and hunt statics and of the new First Come First Serve program and its functionality. The *2021 Big Game Draw Report* is available on the NDOW website.

## **8. Commission General Regulations – Adoption/Public Comment Allowed**

### **A.\* Commission General Regulation 489, NAC 503.172, Shed Antler Season, NAC 501.200 – Management Analyst Kailey Musso and Chief Game Warden Mike Maynard – For Possible Action**

The Board of Wildlife Commissioners will hold a workshop to consider amending Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) 501.200 and 503.172 to change the demerits for violation of the shed antler closure, increase the demerits for a violation of that regulation and require an online class in order to collect or possess shed antlers in the field.

Chief Game Warden Mike Maynard gave a PowerPoint presentation on shed antlers similar to the presentation given in September 2019 workshop. He explained the language in the regulation. *A copy of the presentation can be found on the NDOW website.*

Chairwoman East asked Chief Maynard how long the course in Utah took him to complete.

Chief Game Warden Maynard answered that it was less than 15 minutes.

Chairwoman East followed up and asked how long the term of the certification was.

Chief Game Warden Maynard answered that it was anticipated a yearly refresher is required.

Chairwoman East asked when the course would roll out if we were to approve the regulation this year.

Management Analyst Musso answered that if the Commission were to adopt today, it could get placed on the next Legislative Commission agenda, usually in October or November, which would make it enacted for January, but it would be a matter of building the course after legislative approval.

Chairwoman East asked if we chose nine demerits to be in line with Utah.

Chief Game Warden Maynard stated that he did not recall but he believed part of it was that there should be a greater penalty for anyone who is out there when it is prohibited for any reason and a lesser penalty for those who did not get their certificate.

Vice Chair Caviglia asked what is the number of demerits to lose your hunting license?

Chief Game Warden Maynard answered that it is 12. So, this is a big hit demerit-wise, a fishing ticket would kick you over to the revocation area.

Vice Chair Caviglia recalled the discussion was to make it sting a little more. He stated that he wanted to bring up that it was the Elko CABMW started this discussion with a petition, that information was not in the presentation.

Commissioner AlMBERG explained that White Pine County was involved in these discussions initially, but since they were unaware that the Commission moved the meeting, they were unable to conduct their CABMW meeting to address this topic. He then asked for clarification on the adoption process.

DAG Burkett explained that the agenda item indicates that this is a workshop this item cannot be adopted today.

Management Analyst Musso reminded the Commission that the regulation will have to be adopted by September or it will expire.

Chairwoman East clarified with Management Analyst Musso that this item can be adopted at the September commission meeting and will still meet the deadline.

Commissioner Barnes asked for a refresher of the shed antler season dates, restrictions, and certificate requirements. He asked if the course was worth staff's time.

There was discussion on the timeline of implementing the regulation and enacting a course.

Commissioner McNinch wanted it on the record that he would support recovering any costs and implementing a fee. He also wanted clarification on why we could not adopt the regulation and asked if it was because of the use of the word "workshop" in the descriptive paragraph on the agenda.

DAG Burkett answered yes, and a regulation cannot be workshopped and adopted on the same day.

Commissioner McNinch asked what happens if shed antler collectors find sheds outside of the season.

Chief Game Warden Maynard answered that they would be violating the law.

Commissioner McNinch asked about the demerit point system and how it pertains to folks who don't have a hunting license and what the incentive would be for them to quit doing what they are doing.

Chief Game Warden Maynard answered is that's where the bail amount and fines would be the discouraging factors, it would be cumulative each time they got caught.

Commissioner McNinch asked if violations can be assessed per antler rather than per event to act as a disincentive.

Chief Game Warden Maynard stated that they are per event, but we have a way to max it out, bail-wise, internally within our own fee structure but there is not a way of increasing penalties due to statutory authority.

Chairwoman East asked about the interstate violators compact law.

Chief Game Warden Maynard answered that there are restrictions in which you can apply the compact to. The event has to be similar and relevant; the laws are not exact but shed antler laws are unique. He said that his unsure how close the laws would have to be in order for that compact to work.

Public Comment:

Jim Cooney, Elko CABMW, explained that he brought the petition to the Commission in Ely. He thinks that until we have a cooperative agreement with Utah and Idaho, we will just keep chasing the problem around. Another big topic of discussion were the season dates; the initial petition requested that the season dates go from January 1 to March 31 and then that was changed to May 1. Adding demerits does add some teeth but as Chief Maynard explained. He wonders if the demerits will do more harm than good to Nevada residents. It has been more than two years since we started this discussion but there has been no progress with Utah.



Paul Dixon, Clark CABMW, stated that his CABMW supported the changes but spoke to the maximum fine for a misdemeanor and said the fine would not mean much to someone collecting these for business purposes. He thinks there is more work that needs to be done.

David Ricker, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, thanked the Department for the regulation and explained that they fully support the Commission and Department adding demerits for unlawful gather of shed antlers but wonders about the efficacy of the course. They would like to see future consideration of some sort of licensing and fee collection for commercial gathering especially by non-residents to help fund education and/or enforcement.

Vice Chair Caviglia stated he thinks this is an important topic and hopes to hear from White Pine and Lincoln Counties next time. He recalls wondering how effective a course would be but remembered that a major part of that was to determine the number of people out in the field.

Commissioner AlMBERG noted that the dates were pushed back because of the impacts to other species but that all of the neighboring states are done with their collection when ours opens so it is not quite helping the situation. He said that it would be preferable that states would get together and come up with something common.

Commissioner Barnes noted that the discussion always comes back to the out-of-state hunters and that is where the issue really lays. Is there any way we can address the out-of-state hunters specifically? At some point we need to discourage out-of-state shed hunters and not penalize Nevada residents.

Commissioner McNinch offered to coordinate with the Department on what to bring next.

Deputy Director Robb said the Department cannot charge a fee for the course without a statutory change. The Department only gets to put three bills forward each session and last session we only had one approved this past session. There is no room to change this regulation in front of you at this time, if it is not adopted, we will have to start the process all over again. He said some of the things being discussed are outside of the Commissions purview; it will be a huge task to get all of the surrounding states on the same page.

Chairwoman East responded that a reciprocal agreement would be wonderful, but we will not get an agreement before September.

Commissioner AlMBERG suggested a staggered season date for non-residents which is unfortunate but the only fair thing to Nevada residents who have sacrificed. He thinks two weeks would be sufficient.

Vice Chair Caviglia asked the Department to research if there any way we could put a deeper look on the demerits, that'd be a big deal, if they could research that a bit and let us know at the next meeting.

Secretary Wasley and Deputy Director Robb emphasized, more than once, the importance of the CABMWs indicating whether they would like to move forward with the regulation as there is no time to offer amendments.

*Break 3:30 – 3:45.*

**9. Commission Regulations – For Possible Action/Adoption – Public Comment Allowed**

**A.\* Commission Regulation 21-04, Amendment #2, Black Bear Seasons – Wildlife Staff Specialist Pat Jackson – For Possible Action**

The Commission will consider adopting the 2021 dates and times for indoctrination courses for black bear.

Wildlife Staff Specialist Pat Jackson reviewed CR 21-04, Amendment 2. He explained that the indoctrination course will need to be recorded to address first come first serve tagholders.

Vice Chair Caviglia asked if Kalkomey is conducting the course and if they are able to track each individual taking the course.

Wildlife Staff Specialist Jackson answered that the Department offers the course and maintain who attended in-house.

Public Comment: None

**COMMISSIONER ROGERS MOVED TO APPROVE CR 21-04, AMENDMENT #2. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER KIEL.**

Commissioner McNinch wanted to note on the record that while he opposes the bear hunt, he does believe there should be an indoctrination course if there is going to be one.

**MOTION PASSES 7-0. COMMISSIONERS PIERINI AND WISE WERE ABSENT.**

**B.\* Commission Regulation 20-12, Amendment #2, 2021-2022 Upland Game and Furbearer Season and Bag Limits – Wildlife Staff Specialist Shawn Espinosa – For Possible Action**

The Commission will review and may take action to modify Commission Regulation 20-12 for upland game seasons and bag limits for certain upland game species.

Staff Specialist Shawn Espinosa explained that there was an error on the third season date for Unit 203. From the first Saturday in May through the second Sunday in May. The year should be 2022 rather than 2021-2022.

Public Comment: None

**CHAIRWOMAN EAST MOVED TO APPROVE CR 20-12, AMENDMENT #2. COMMISSIONER ROGERS SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION PASSES 7-0. COMMISSIONER PIERINI AND COMMISSIONER WISE WERE ABSENT.**

**10. Wildlife Contests – Commissioner McNinch – For Possible Action**

The Commission may discuss Wildlife Contests. The Commission may provide direction to the Department regarding Wildlife Contests for consideration by the Commission at a future meeting.

Chairwoman East stated she understood that there are a lot of people anxious about this agenda item. She explained that to outline some framework going forward, it calls for everyone to have patience as there is a lot of important information and data to go through and consider before deciding. She asked for everyone's continued patience and engagement on this issue.

Commissioner McNinch stated that he hoped that the exercise we go through can help us determine what is upsetting people by having or not having these contests. He stated he is holding out hope that there is a path forward.

Chairwoman East asked Secretary Wasley to explain what a wildlife contest is or is not.

Secretary Wasley answered that he is not sure he could explain what a contest is or is not. He explained adherence to the open meeting law is not the most inviting in terms of dialogue or engagement when individuals are relegated to a 3 or 6-minute window to speak. People are using their public comment time to preach personal views and values or prosecute the views or values of others rather than having the opportunity for real conversation. He explained that the Department is not concerned about the viability of the populations, we do not view the benefits from those contests to be an integral part of public safety, we do not believe that the benefits are meaningful or measurable in ways that we can lay claim to public safety benefits to communities as a result of contests that occur within and around those communities. He further explained that science says that an excess of 70 percent of the coyote population would need to be removed to realize benefits to mule deer. He explained that the discussion and exercise are to get a better understanding of what aspects of these events people feels most strongly about and we thought it might be a better way to have some earnest engagement.

Management Analyst Musso explained the poll exercise and that it is open to the public attendees of the meeting; NDOW employees and guest speakers did not do the poll.

A poll distributed to those on the Zoom meeting that asked participants to cite their first, second and third priorities from a list of concerns. *Attendees were given 15 minutes to participate in the poll:*

- Societal perceptions of hunting/hunter ethics
- Recreational opportunities
- Benefit to predator species
- Wanton waste
- Ability to award prizes
- Event promotion
- Tradition/heritage
- Economic impacts
- Community safety
- Coyote populations

Secretary Wasley disclaimed that the poll is not intended to be wildlife management by popular vote, the poll is to get a better understanding of which aspects this issue people feel most strongly about.

Management Analyst Musso reviewed the results of the poll. Results are as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> priority - wanton waste;
- 2<sup>nd</sup> priority - societal perceptions of hunting/hunter ethics;
- 3<sup>rd</sup> priority - coyote population;
- **How do you feel about allowing contests to continue unchanged?**
  - 7 of 27 voted very strongly
  - 5 of 27 voted strongly
  - 2 of 27 voted open to discussion
  - 2 of 27 vote opposed
  - 11 of 27 voted very opposed.
- **Do you feel a license should be required to hunt coyotes?**
  - 10 of 27 voted strongly agree
  - 2 of 27 voted agree
  - 5 of 27 voted open to discussion
  - 3 of 27 disagree
  - 7 of 27 voted strongly disagree
- **How do you feel about addressing wanton waste?**
  - 11 of 27 voted very strongly
  - 1 of 27 voted strongly

- 9 of 27 voted open to discussion
- 2 of 27 voted opposed
- 4 of 27 voted very opposed.
- **How do you feel about requiring notice on public land where these events are held?**
  - 9 of 27 voted very strongly
  - 2 of 27 voted strongly
  - 2 of 27 voted open to discussion
  - 7 of 27 voted opposed
  - 6 of 27 voted very opposed
  - 1 of 27 voted undecided
- **How do you feel about allowing prizes for contests?**
  - 4 of 27 voted very strongly
  - 4 of 27 voted strongly
  - 5 of 27 voted open to discussion
  - 1 of 27 opposed
  - 12 of 27 voted very opposed
  - 1 of 27 voted undecided
- **How do you feel about setting seasons or bag limits for coyotes?**
  - 6 of 27 voted very strongly
  - 3 of 27 voted open to discussion
  - 3 of 27 voted opposed
  - 14 of 27 voted very opposed
  - 1 of 27 voted undecided
- **How do you feel about outlawing coyote contests?**
  - 12 of 27 voted very strongly
  - 1 of 27 voted strongly
  - 1 of 27 voted open to discussion
  - 4 of 27 voted opposed
  - 9 of 27 voted very opposed

Commissioner McNinch stated that he appreciated Secretary Wasley's disclaimer. He said the poll shows that there are people on both side of this issue but also that some people are willing to have an open dialogue and he appreciates the open-mindedness.

Jim Rhea, Washoe CABMW, thanked Commissioner McNinch for his opening statement, as it was very thoughtful and well thought out. He thanked Management Analyst Musso for putting the poll together. He said in his opinion, 27 people is not a very accurate sample section but it definitely does give people an idea of what is going on. He explained that when this was addressed in his CABMW meeting, they strongly opposed the Commission considering any ban on wildlife contests. They felt this was a purely emotional agenda item that could result in a loss of hunting rights for predator hunters.

Paul Dixon, Clark CABMW, said his CABMW had a short discussion on this and until we hear specifics coming back from the commission of what they would like to see happen in this area, our CABMW still remains opposed to putting any regulations on coyote hunting. He explained their decision was based on that fact that a coyote is an unprotected animal and if we start putting regulations on unprotected animals, we are going to open up with a series of rules and regulations or end up making it protected. He said we should be careful how we proceed.

Joe Crawford, Lyon CABMW, unanimous vote to impose any type of restrictions for the calling contests. We feel that it's a gateway to limit hunting opportunities and agreed with CABMW members that we are using hunters' money to control the coyote populations when there are individuals out there that will do it for free.

Jim Cooney, Elko CABMW, said that Elko strongly opposes outlawing of the contests and ditto with regards to all the other items the other CABMW members have presented.

Arnie Pitts, Washoe CABMW, reiterated what Jim Rhea said. People were strongly opposed to this ban in his meetings. Stated that he grew up doing wildlife contests through NDOW, such as fishing contests and he's won a gold buckle for a large sheep. He feels that contests bring people and sportsmen together. He further explained that contests are not just heritage, but it is part of coming together as a community; not to go out and slaughter animals but to go out and have fair chase and fun.

Rob Boehmer, Carson CABMW, stated that his CABMW members share the same sentiment with all of the commissioners. They did discuss this in their CABMW meeting and at the end of the day they are still maintaining a position of being opposed to banning wildlife contests. He explained that a ranch owner in Douglas County tried to work with NDOW due to losing 30-40 percent of his sheep population to primarily coyotes. He was able to have local hunters come depredate on his land and it has saved him a ton of his flock, bringing the percentage of loss to single digits. He stated that the rancher has trappers that utilize the pelts and meat, though everyone does not do the same.

Dr. Staci Baker, Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association, stated that they strongly support implementing a rule prohibiting wildlife killing contests for furbearing and unprotected mammals in the Silver State. She continued that wildlife contests are a senseless blood sport, like dog or cockfighting which both have been outlawed nationwide. Under traditional hunting ethics, wildlife may only be killed for legitimate non-frivolous purposes, however, killing contests promote mass slaughter of animals for cash or prizes or even just the sake of killing. The most frequent victims of these events; coyotes, mountain lions and foxes are not killed for their meat and often their pelts are not salvable. Wildlife contests use cruel and unethical methods of trapping and killing the animals which run counter to traditional hunting ethics; participants use high tech equipment, traps. Wildlife contests target ecological vital species and disrupt ecosystems. Finally, wildlife contests are inconsistent with the values of Nevada residents. We have criminalized dog fighting and cock fighting in the state, and they carry felony penalties, we should promote similar protections for wildlife which are equally valued by the residents of our state....**3-minute mark.**

Patrick Donnelly, Center for Biological Diversity, we are categorically opposed to coyote killing contests and all other forms. We advocate for an immediate ban on these barbaric blood sports. There is abundant scientific literature showing that they do not accomplish any of these supposedly virtuous outcomes that proponents proclaim; only to appease the blood lust of a few. This is not legitimate hunting; this is an ethical issue. I would also add that we strenuously oppose any sort of regulation of these contests; right now, the state has the plausible deniability of saying there are no specific rule against them. Regulating these contests would give them the sanction of the state, a seal of approval from the people of the State of Nevada. If your intent is to put this issue to bed, regulating these contests will have the opposite effect, as we will re-double our efforts should the commission choose to efficiently sanction these slaughters. There is no middle ground on this issue. There is no way to make a coyote killing contest less bad and we will fight any attempt to regulate these gruesome spectacles. Please ban these contests.

Jeff Dixon, Nevada State Director of Humane Society of the United States, thanked the commission for continuing this conversation where everyone is able to think about what we don't like or don't mind about these contests. To reiterate what Donnelly said, we would not support a regulation. The department would have more work, in terms of enforcement, it would be a greater strain on the game wardens. You'd have to set up a regime to permit them, oversee and monitor them, so it would create a lot of work for the department, more than would a ban. Hunters to the extent that there is a reputational effect, there would still be the knowledge that these are happening in our state, you would still have that kind of albatross around you, because hunting has pretty high public support and to keep it that way, I think you cut weight

where you can; find ethical dilemmas and set some ground rules so that you stay within that area of the public accepting or at least tolerating the practice of hunting. You see your poll numbers flip upside down when you ask people how they feel about wildlife killing contests. I don't think that knowing that they are regulated in any way if they are still happening. You still have the spectacle and the frivolous killing of these animals. I would ask you to consider that. I would ask the people who do not want to see a ban but don't support or participate in these contests to as yourselves, give the commission some space on ethical issues if they're inclined to do it for the betterment for protecting the reputation and the standing within the general public of the sportsman community. This is a very... **3-minute mark**

Fred Voltz, private citizen, stated that he would like to see a public workshop where there a back-and-forth ability to ask questions and converse about this issue. It would be useful to know what other states have done, he was disappointed that staff did not go through that today in their preamble to the Commission's conversation. Regarding public safety, a stray bullet, the tear up of the desert by people racing around as fast as they can to kill as much as they can, is a public safety problem. We did not hear about tradition or the social aspects very much, but slavery was a tradition as well, which we have done away with. As far as the social aspects go, people can get together at a bar, help the senior citizens; there are all sorts of other ways to gather, rather than going out to try as many animals as possible in the shortest time span. Regarding biological disruption, it is very serious because there is a survival mechanism that all wildlife species; they reproduce, they do not have the family structure from the indiscriminate killing and effectively they are juvenile delinquents that will cause even more problems than the coyotes that have been demonized so far. Wildlife commission has a responsibility as does the department to responsibly protect and manage all wildlife species; protected or not. He would look for the Commission and Department to step up on that. Fishing contests are not the same thing, there is not the mass killing, there is not the stacking of the dead animals. Ranchers should be protecting their property by using non-lethal methods rather than a mass killing of any species. This Commission needs to have more discussion about this and while I appreciate the ten questions, the sample sizes are very small and not necessarily indicative of the public at large the Commission is to be representing.

Cathy Smith, private citizen, thanked the Commission for continuing this discussion. She asked that when an issue has no population effect on a species and there is no safety issue, why is it not done by public opinion? Targeted killing of problem coyotes can be very effective and it is much different than the contests that are being spoken of today. These social issues are very important, even when we have multiple pressing issues regarding populations and habitats. It is really about trust. How can she trust an agency and the commission that doesn't care how wildlife is killed? How can she trust a commission that doesn't care how Nevada's wildlife is treated? Of course, broad decisions should be population and habitat based but these social issues are as important, if not more important to maintain agency and commission relevance. Why does someone get so upset when sheep die of thirst, but not care how other wildlife is treated. How can we trust with such flexible morality? When wildlife across the country was being decimated, hunters stood up and defined limits to ensure wildlife existed for future generations. Now wildlife and habitat are under assault from all different directions, and we need everyone's help and passion. Hunting is only inspiring to a small percentage of the population. We need outreach that will motivate a broader audience. This is a challenge, not to wildlife population growth or decline, not to agency funding, and not to our security but how we want out wildlife treated and how we want out wildlife to be respected. If we conquer all other issues of habitat and finding but continue to fail at these issues, then we will have failed the stewards of Nevada's wildlife. She thinks we can all come together and say that Nevada's wildlife needs to be respected and we can do better.

Jana Hofeditz, private citizen, quoted Aldo Leopold "Conservation is getting nowhere because it is incompatible with our Abrahamic concept of land. We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may be to use it with love and respect." She continued with "A land ethic expands the definition of "community" to include not only humans, but all of the other parts of the Earth, as well: soils, waters, plants, and animals, or what Leopold

called “the land.” A land ethic is a moral code of conduct that grows out of these interconnected caring relationships”. She thinks we can agree that these contests go against Leopold’s description of loving and respecting the land. We do not live long; we need to make these right decisions for our future generations, so we are left with a legacy that cares for our planet and not destroying it. Do we choose to have dominion over the natural world, or do we choose to see that we are a part of it and make good prevail? Please think about these very powerful decisions that you will be making at some point.

Rene Johnson, private citizen, she stated that while she is a multi-generational Nevadan who has hunters in her family, she does not hunt, her family views these contests as the same category as dog fighting and cock fighting, which shows that there is no respect for the animals. Her home backs up to BLM land, she explained a situation when she has encountered a coyote hunter after watching several of these contests and the hunter disrespected all of the coyotes. The hunters in her family that hunt do not disrespect animals. She heard others from the CABMWs say that it is fun, the unprotected vs. protected this, it opens it up for more restrictions. She asked about the gentleman with the ranch and why he was not at the meeting. She has friends with ranches who very effectively keep coyotes away from their horses, goats, and other animals. I am just going to echo what others have said previously. She has looked at science and research and she like to ask commission to enact a policy to ban wildlife killing contests since this has been going on for so long, be... **3-minute mark.**

Tobi Tyler, Sierra Club Toiyabe Chapter, we would like to recommend that you ban wildlife contests in Nevada. Our members oppose this abhorrent cruel practice and assures the Commission that this is not a trivial matter to our members. Killing contests are a stain on this state. The majority of people in this state find them disgusting. These contests are unethical and are not fair chase hunting practices and they serve no purpose as a wildlife management tool. The fact that those defending this practice claim that it’s a fun, family-oriented activity should make you all shudder at what this morally vacant practice says about their values. There’s nothing wrong with gathering, all we ask is that you stop the wanton killing. Slaughtering animals for the sake of it, should not be a family value and it certainly should not be condoned by NDOW or the Commission. Discussing this in terms of property rights is something more digestible for you, these animals are not private property. The continuation of these events shows a profound lack of respect for the lives of animals and wildlife that this agency is supposed to be protecting. Furthermore, members of the general public, are not going away on this issue, this is a prime opportunity for commissioners to step up to the plate and decide to start garnering support instead of distaining from the general public. She stated that the Commission’s continued support of these events will challenge its credibility as trustees of the public trust doctrine. Urged the Commission to start listening to the broader general public and ban these horrendous events.

Fauna Tomlinson, private citizen, said that after listening to the four CABMW members explain why they are opposed to banning killing contests, she realized none of them were actually talking about the contests. She explained that the CABMW member that talked about the rancher who lost 30-40 percent of his sheep explained that he used coyote hunters and did not use the contests. We are not requesting a ban on coyote hunters. Mike Reese used the term “coyote hunting”, that is not true, its “wildlife calling contests”. She stated that it is easy to ban wildlife culling contests; eight states have done it without any increase in law enforcement. Even though coyotes are not protected, the Commission can ban wildlife culling contests without any issues. She explained that Dr Pitts said that he did fishing derbies and sheep derbies and big buck contests, those are all still very legal so those have nothing to do with wildlife culling contests. All in all, it seems like the four CABMW members that had reasons that the Commission should not end these contests actually were not on point and if the contests were ended, they could still do all of the things that they talk about. Ranchers can still protect their heard, coyote hunters can still hunt coyotes, we can still have hunting derbies and eight states have done it successfully and it is time for Nevada.

Daleen Duplessis, private citizen, stated she would like to just support and endorse the comments stated by other and strongly oppose these contests. She stated that there is ample evidence in the US and

around the world that shows what happens if you indiscriminately destroy and remove predators and in the case of coyotes and bob cats that are slaughtered, there is a concern with an explosion of prey that will then explode. She quoted Ghandi, "the greatness of a nation and its progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated". She strongly opposes any discriminate killing of animals.

Steve Robinson, Washoe CABMW, stated that at their meeting in June, they unanimously rejected the proposal of a ban and asked for it to be removed from all future agendas. We would also like clarification on the title, is this a ban on "wildlife killing contests" or just "coyote killing contests" as they are two different discussions. He stated that he has not heard any common ground from people that are rejecting this, so he does not believe we will very far. Every year the Commission votes on and passes the predator plan which allocates hundreds of thousands of dollars to manage coyote populations; this acknowledges that it is important to control coyote numbers in order to protect struggling deer herds and other species. These coyote calling contests, often called "save the fawn contest" have the same goal in mind but doing it at no cost to the state. Its only due to the fact that they are having fun doing so that we want to ban these. In light of the desperate state of our mule deer population, he cannot think of a more ill-conceived proposal, please reject this, and remove from future agendas.

Rex Flowers, private citizen, stated that he did not participate in the coyote contests and is opposed to regulating them. He hoped that the Commission would end the discussion on this and move on to other matters. He heard today that if the Commission regulates this they will get sued. He said that this is a lose-lose situation. The only thing that will come out of this if you restrict these contests is you will open the door and the slippery slope situation will begin. Next, we will be back on the bears, mountain lions, etc. Fuel is being added to people's advocacy. I can understand their emotion against these, but there is no biological reason to end it. Asked to eliminate any further discussion on this topic.

Mel Belding, private citizen, stated that he does not think that this is an end all but just a start. He stated that he supports those that participate in these coyote calling contests. In the end, this isn't going to be the end and I'll keep standing up for those who actually are concerned about wildlife and have put their lives into projects and money, sweat and blood in keeping wildlife in Nevada wild. I support the coyote calling.

Commissioner McNinch asked the best way to proceed. He explained that the Commission will be forced to deal with the issue. He believes that if we do not try, we will fail, and he said he is not willing to do that. He asked everyone listening what they are willing to do to maintain some tolerance. There has been tolerance built into the landowner compensation tag program, as well as sage-grouse conservation activities, we can do that here too.

Commissioner Kiel stated that he would like some context about how this process could play out. He asked the other commissioners what steps can be taken going forward.

Chairwoman East was hopeful that we could do this in person amongst many different communities from around the state and be able to get different constituencies to have conversations with us and help us dissect them and determine common denominators, but we are no further than she had hoped.

Commissioner Barnes said he was not sure that there is a middle ground on this issue, we have talked about these contests for three meetings. He agreed that we are no further along now than when we started, but a decision needs to be made. He stated he is willing to make a motion to move on from this issue.

Commissioner Almborg said that it seems the trench keeps getting deeper and the topics keep getting broader. It is difficult to see how we can get to a middle ground. He echoed the statements that if this is not addressed at the Commission level it will be taken to the Legislature.



Commissioner Rogers stated that he thinks some type of a compromise is justified but it has been so polarizing, dividing, and difficult. A compromise would be good, but he is unsure how to get there.

Vice Chair Caviglia echoes that this is a difficult topic, and he does not know what the middle ground would be. He explained that we are being asked to take up a social issue and it is very difficult.

Secretary Wasley noted that it is a social issue but that the commission does manage social issues in some contexts. He notes there are a lot of people around this issue who aspire to accomplish the same goal at the end of the day; whether its conservation, relevancy, the continuation of recreational pursuits and often times the debate is the best way to ensure that future. He thinks that this needs to be taken seriously because the consequences of what can happen to the commission's decision-making ability. He said he believes that the makeup of the commission and the authority of the commission, as it pertains to wildlife management decisions, could forever be affected by this process or the outcome regardless of where it ends or how it proceeds.

Chairwoman East said she understands everyone is frustrated with this process but requested the Commissioners to take some more time to determine how to move forward and not make a decision at this time.

Commissioner McNinch stated that there needs to be conversations where the same points are not stated over and over again. He said we need to figure out how to engage in good conversation.

Vice Chair Caviglia asked Commissioner McNinch for some ideas on how to get to the middle ground at the next meeting because we have not heard anything for the last three meetings. At some point the road has to end and he hopes we have some options to look at in order to get there.

Commissioner Barnes retracted his statement saying that he was ready to make a motion. He said that no one realizes the decisions they have to make when they sign up to be a commissioner on this board. This is a tough sensitive and emotional issue; deciding is going to be hard. He echoed that he would like to see what the middle ground would look like as he has not seen any.

Commissioner Kiel stated that he thinks the issue is broader than coyote calling contests, there is a lot of wordsmithing and people trying to twist the issue. He stated his preference would be to drop the entire discussion on calling contests because if we are to have these discussions a lot of it is on a bigger level than just calling contests for coyotes.

Chairwoman East will work with Commissioner McNinch and Department to determine how to move forward with this agenda item.

**NO VOTE OR ACTION TAKEN. WILL BE DISCUSSED AT A FUTURE MEETING.**

**11. Future Commission Meetings and Commission Committee Assignments – Secretary Wasley and Chairman – For Possible Action**

The next Commission meeting is scheduled for September 24 and 25, 2021. The Commission will review and discuss potential agenda items for that meeting. The Commission may change the date, time, and meeting location 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.

Chairwoman East read into the record from Chief Game Warden Maynard “FYI – under our current bail schedule, due to NRS 501.385, the maximum bail is \$500 + \$140 administrative and court fee to equal \$640 per citation.”

Secretary Wasley and Chairwoman East listed the meeting will be held in a via zoom, the 2022-2023 Commission meeting schedule will be reviewed at some point but there is time to make adjustments, the Utah Bighorn sheep nursery group request, the shed antler regulation, the landowner compensation regulation, wildlife contests, fishing regulations, the Wildlife Trust Fund report, an AFWA conference report, a *Living with Wildlife* presentation, and the bighorn sheep plan.

**12. Public Comment Period**

Public comment will be limited to three minutes. No action can be taken by the Commission at this time; any item requiring Commission action may be scheduled on a future Commission agenda.

Cathy Smith, private citizen, suggested that an ethics committee be formed as a Commission committee, as the issues being addressed are ethical. She asked why hunting dogs don't have the same protections as domestic dogs. I think if we had a broader and more in-depth discussion on ethics and morality as they pertain to wildlife, we can see where everyone stands, and we can see how much motion we could get moving forward.

Meeting adjourned at 5:55pm.

\*Support material provided and posted to the NDOW website, and updates to support material will be posted at [http://www.ndow.org/Public\\_Meetings/Com/Agenda/](http://www.ndow.org/Public_Meetings/Com/Agenda/). Support material for this meeting may be requested from the Recording Secretary at (775) 688-1599 or [wildlifecommission@ndow.org](mailto:wildlifecommission@ndow.org). In accordance with NRS 241.020 this agenda closes three days prior to the meeting date and has been posted on the NDOW website at [http://www.ndow.org/Public\\_Meetings/Com/Agenda/](http://www.ndow.org/Public_Meetings/Com/Agenda/).

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