

NEVADA BOARD OF WILDLIFE COMMISSIONERS
TAG ALLOCATION and APPLICATION HUNT COMMITTEE (TAAHC)
APPROVED MINUTES

MONDAY, JANUARY 25, 2021 4:00PM

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<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83007837582?pwd=Sm9HKzZncE93R0FlUUhjejR6T25Td09>

Passcode: 231062

Committee Members: Chairman Tommy Caviglia, Commissioner Tiffany East, Commissioner Ron Pierini, CABMW Representative Joe Crim, CABMW Representative Arnie Pitts, Public Representative Meghan

Staff to the Committee: Data and Technology Services Division Administrator Kim Munoz

Nevada Department of Wildlife personnel in attendance: Management Analyst Megan Manfredi, Management Analyst Kailey Taylor, Deputy Director Jack Robb, Game Division Administrator Mike Scott, Wildlife Staff Specialist Mike Cox, Habitat Division Administrator Alan Jenne

County advisory Boards to Manage Wildlife (CABMW) Members and public in attendance: Cory Lytle, Judi Caron, Rex Flowers, Steve Robinson

1. Call To Order and Roll Call of Committee Members – Commissioner and Committee Chairman Caviglia

Chairman Caviglia called the meeting to order at 4:01 PM. CABMW Representative Pitts led the pledge. Chairman Tommy Caviglia, Commissioner Tiffany East, Commissioner Ron Pierini, CABMW Representative Joe Crim, CABMW Representative Arnie Pitts, Public Representative Meghan Brown were present.

2. Approval of Agenda – Commissioner and Committee Chairman Caviglia– For Possible Action

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

CABMW REPRESENTATIVE PITTS MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER EAST. MOTION PASSED 6-0.

3. Approval of Minutes – Commissioner and Committee Chairman Caviglia – For Possible Action

The Committee may take action to approve Committee minutes from the October 26, 2020 meeting.

Chairman Caviglia proposed changes to the October 26, 2020 minutes beginning with the motion of agenda item #3 stating approval of the agenda when agenda item #3 was approving the minutes. As well as changing the word must to most on page 3.

Public comment period 4:05 PM – 4:08 PM.

No public comment.

CABMW REPRESENTATIVE CRIM MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES WITH THE MENTIONED CHANGES, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER PIERINI. MOTION PASSED 6-0.

4. Mule Deer Junior Hunt Eligibility Requirement Review– Commissioner and Committee Chairman Caviglia– For Possible Action

The Committee will discuss the possibility of limiting the number of tags a junior can be awarded and/or the junior age requirements to give more opportunities to more juniors.

Data and Technology Services (DATS) Division Administrator Kim Munoz stated that data was requested in November's meeting regarding the junior hunt eligibility and requirements. She shared a PowerPoint presentation displaying the requested data.

Commissioner East asked if juniors were only allowed to apply as a junior for five years. That was confirmed by DATS Administrator Munoz.

Chairman Caviglia stated he would like to review the data presented before making a decision.

CABMW Representative Pitts added that the conversation during November's meeting included dropping the limit of allowance for junior applications from five to three to give additional juniors a chance to draw a tag.

Chairman Caviglia stated he would like to see if juniors have been drawing junior tags for consecutive years in a row or if there is an issue of juniors drawing multiple junior tags within their five years of junior eligibility.

DATS Administrator Munoz stated there was an issue with the differing licensing systems and could not guarantee data for a 10-year review.

CABMW Representative Pitts asked if the Department knew how many junior applicants were receiving tags each year.

Game Division Administrator Mike Scott answered that the 2019 statistics show on average 58 percent of overall juniors draw tags around Washoe County, but that percentage varies for areas.

Deputy Director Jack Robb added better than 50 percent of junior applicants only applied for two or fewer years. Every year there are leftover tags in some units. The public has an assumption that every junior who applies will draw a tag which results in selective areas in the applications. The 58 percent Game Division Administrator Scott mentioned is one of the hardest areas to draw in and those applicants may be those only applying for two units. The Department has not figured out a formula to break the public's mindset. The Commission changed the age of eligible juniors from 16 to 18 around 2008 and that change allows more people to be included in the pool of junior hunters. There is a need to figure out how to get the younger 12- and 13-year-old juniors in the field. If changes are made now, they will not be implemented in this season's draw, so there is time to discuss and decide on a solution that will work.

Commissioner East asked if Deputy Director Robb remembered the Commission discussion around changing the junior age from 16 to 18.

Deputy Director Robb answered that the decision was made while he was not a member of the Commission and he does not know the background of the decision.

Commissioner East stated that when her sons were young enough to apply for the junior hunts, they applied for the easy to get to areas due to high school activities of the family. As a parent, you want to get the kids in the field but need to be realistic on how and where that can happen

Commissioner Pierini agreed that the junior eligibility age is a time where families are busy with extracurricular activities that also revolve around school.

Deputy Director Robb said that this last year the Department saw an increase in hunter education due to it being offered online. License sales are growing in every class except the 18–23-year-old class but show great growth in the following age class as life slows down for people.

Chairman Caviglia added that at the last meeting it was suggested to break up the weapon type to possibly give juniors additional opportunity to get into the field. He asked if there was an interest in that potential option.

Game Division Administrator Scott agreed that it might present an opportunity for getting additional juniors in the field. It might be something to consider especially keeping Commissioner East's explanation in mind when sharing her family's reasoning for where they applied in the junior hunts.

Commissioner Pierini stated that there are kids getting more involved and familiar with other weapon types through the volunteer education programs that the Department holds.

Deputy Director Robb added that the Department has seen over 600 kids participate in the statewide archery tournament prior to the COVID-19 shutdowns. Creativity is needed to determine how to share the wealth of tags to more juniors. Additional tags could be generated if they were offered through a different weapon choice.

Commissioner East reminded the Committee that school breaks could make a difference on where people will apply. She suggested education outreach to entice people to apply to the lower traffic areas. People apply where they are familiar, but education might encourage applications in other units. This would also ask parents to juggle their own time off from their jobs that would add to the difficulty of getting out into the field.

CABMW Representative Pitts stated that if applicants are trying to draw in a more popular area, it is the decision of the parent and not the fault of the system. Juniors carry their bonus points forward so there are no hard feelings on those juniors who choose harder areas but would like to see better opportunity for those just wanting to get out and hunt.

Commissioner Pierini added that some kids may not be able to go out due to single parents and the time away from home or lack of education of where and how of the parents who need to accompany the junior into the field.

Chairman Caviglia agreed that it is a tough subject that needs a deeper discussion.

Public comment period 4:40 PM – 4:45 pm.

Mike Cox stated: I would suggest that we take the opportunity to develop a survey to send to all the junior tag applicants this year to ask them if they would apply for a separate archery or muzzleloader junior deer season if they were offered. I think we also need to ask juniors on our current hunt survey which dates and weapons they used during their junior deer hunt. I agree that juniors and seniors in high school get busy and we should think about giving more opportunity to 12 - 16-year-olds to "catch the hunting bug". Ron has a good point that there are more single parent families and encouraging neighbors and friends to take out kids that don't

have parents who hunt. We tried to have a formal "big brother" program in the early 2000's but too much liability issues.

Chairman Caviglia said no change will happen easily so when we do change something, it needs to be as accurate as we can make it.

Commissioner East stated she liked the idea of a survey that was suggested in the public comments.

DATS Administrator Munoz said a survey was not very difficult to put together.

Chairman Caviglia requested data on how many juniors had received multiple junior tags in the years applying for a junior, even if it was just data from the current licensing vendor.

Deputy Director Robb added that he understood what Chairman Caviglia was asking but noted that demographics on where the tags were drawn might show a different picture.

Chairman Caviglia stated that he understood and requested this agenda item be brought back at the next Committee meeting.

CHAIRMAN CAVIGLIA CLOSED THE AGENDA ITEM WITH NO MOTION.

5. Specialty Tags Closed Units Procedure Review– DATS Division Administrator Kimberly Munoz

The Committee will discuss the possibility changing the procedure for how units are closed to Bighorn Sheep hunts for specialty tags.

DATS Division Administrator Munoz opened the agenda item by stating as the Department was preparing the Commission Regulations for January's Commission meeting, they found a draft document from a former Department employee originating from a 2016 Tag Allocation and Application Hunt Committee meeting directing how bighorn sheep harvest units should close for specialty tags. The direction in the procedure has the Department trying to close a unit in January dependent on the current year's quotas, which are set in May. This agenda item was brought to the Committee for review and discussion.

Game Staff Specialist Mike Cox added that he believed the policy was a misinterpretation of the original direction given to the Department. He added that the direction to close units if there are less than seven tags for California bighorn sheep and ten tags for Desert bighorn sheep in a unit does not work either. He gave an example of a biological issue in reducing the tag quotas for the general public if all of the specialty tag holders all harvested in the same unit. The current system makes the Department guess what units they believe specialty tags will be harvested out of. He recommended additional communication with the Commission regarding unit closures from a biological standpoint instead of the current system.

Chairman Caviglia stated that a change could affect the whole system due to the Heritage tag seasons and being set a couple years in advance.

CABMW Representative Pitts added that the suggestion would work for most specialty tags but not for the Heritage tags.

Game Staff Specialist Cox said that Heritage tag holders are only offered tags for two Desert and one California bighorn sheep. Unless all harvests happen in the same unit for years in a row, there should not be an issue in accommodating two extra tags in any unit.

Commissioner East asked if the answer was setting Heritage unit closures a couple years in advance along with the seasons.

CABMW Representative Pitts answered that if the Committee agrees with Game Staff Specialist Cox, the Commission could control the areas open for harvest for the other specialty tags to keep the pressure of particular units. If we see the same units affected over years of harvest reports, we could back the option to harvest Heritage tags out of those units.

Deputy Director Robb said it was a balancing act with maintaining the value of the Heritage tags and protecting the smaller animal populations at the same time. He offered having a maximum harvest limit in each unit or specific units of concern to avoid heavily impacting that unit's population with harvesting. The Department could set up a 24-hour notice call line similar to that of the bear hunts.

Chairman Caviglia stated that the suggested solution could cause some heated competition to get to the one ram in the one unit that everyone is after.

Game Staff Specialist Cox added that the bighorn sheep Heritage tag holders would likely be in the field before the Dream tag or Partnership in Wildlife tag holders and the competition would only be affecting some units that would have a sub-quota limit.

Deputy Director Robb said the Department could announce those units prior to the auctions of the specialty tags.

Chairman Caviglia asked if this suggestion was something that needed the Commission's approval every year.

Deputy Director Robb answered that if the Commission gave specific direction on how the Department can close units, the Department could implement the process. The closures would be known and noted long before the time of the tag auctions.

Commissioner Pierini stated that the biologists know what should be done and what is best for the animal populations. The Department should be handling the management of the units as they see best for the animals.

Deputy Director Robb added that if some unit quotas are set at a minimum of two unless the Department closes it, then season settings could identify what other specialty tags can harvest in each unit.

Game Staff Specialist Cox offered that the decisions on unit closers would need to be made by the Department and presented at the November's Commission meeting to get the information to the public early.

Chairman Caviglia asked for the Department to discuss a process internally and present a suggested process at the next Committee meeting.

Game Staff Specialist Cox agreed that it needed to be a discussion with Game Division Administrator Scott and the other Game biologists.

CABMW Representative Pitts stated that the past process was set to spread out the units of harvest. Most specialty tag harvests are reported before October and the following year could not harvest in those units. The discussed suggestion might allow for the Heritage tags to be harvested in the same units as the prior year's harvests.

Public comment period 5:15 PM – 5:20 PM.

Rex Flowers stated: I hope that you would allow the Department to come back with recommendations before any further discussion. I do hope that the Heritage tags can be made not to hunt the same years for any more than two consecutive years.

Deputy Director Robb stated that the Department can bring proposals to the next Committee meeting and was hopeful that the Committee members might bring a solution to the issue that the Department had not thought of.

CHAIRMAN CAVIGLIA CLOSED THE AGENDA ITEM WITH NO MOTION.

6. Future Committee Meeting – Commissioner and Committee Chairman Caviglia– For Possible Action

The committee will discuss possible future agenda topics set a date and time for the next committee meeting.

Chairman Caviglia stated that based on today’s meeting, both agenda items should roll forward to the next meeting and suggested holding the next Committee meeting around the same date of the Monday prior to the next Commission meeting.

Commissioner East confirmed that the next Commission meeting will be held on March 19 and 20, 2021. The Committee meeting should fall on March 15, 2021.

7. Public Comment Period

This period is for general comment on anything not on the agenda. No committee action will be taken but may be scheduled on a future committee agenda. The 3- and 6-minute time limits still apply.

Public comment period 5:22 PM – 5:25 PM.

Rex Flowers stated: I am hoping you will review Policy 24 soon as it is outdated and needs clean up. Also, there are items within the Policy that could be reviewed to better distribute tags and how they are allocated.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:25 PM.