

Eureka County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife

Minutes

March 6, 2023

The Eureka County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife (CAB) held a public meeting on March 6, 2023 at 4:30 p.m. at the Eureka County Administrative Facility (Annex). A virtual option to attend was made available.

Members Present: James Evans (Chairman), Trent Gordan (Vice-Chairman), and Jayme Halpin.

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Tom Donham, NDOW Eastern Region Supervisor (virtually); Cody Byrne, NDOW Eastern Region Fisheries Supervisor (virtually); Josh Kirk, NDOW Game Biologist (virtually); Chris Jasmine, Nevada Gold Mines (NGM) Manager of Biodiversity and Rangelands (virtually); Ashley King, Battle Mountain District BLM Recreation Specialist (virtually); Caitlin Shattuck, BLM Realty Specialist (virtually); Cassie Ault, Battle Mountain BLM Realty Specialist (virtually); Robert Burdick, Battle Mountain District BLM Natural Resource Specialist (virtually); Raymond Hodson, Eureka County Assistant Public Works Director; Jake Tibbitts, Eureka County Natural Resource Manager; and Hallee Dechambeau, CAB Secretary.

Call to order

Chairman James Evans called the meeting to order at 4:32 pm. A quorum was determined to be present.

Public Comment

None

Board Business

Approval of the agenda notice with addition of any emergency item and/or deletion of any item.

By consensus the Board agreed in moving the Tonkin Reservoir Access Improvement Planning Initiative to earlier in the agenda to facilitate virtual attendees present for that item.

Wildlife Enhancement Projects

Discuss pinyon-juniper thinning projects, wildlife guzzlers installation, and other potential projects including fisheries and the Tonkin Reservoir Access Improvement Planning Initiative and consider further efforts to move forward for successful implementation of projects including potential funding requests for the County or other entities.

Tonkin Reservoir Access Improvement- Access

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Chairman Evans questioned Mr. Burdick regarding permitting on the existing access for the Tonkin reservoir. Mr. Burdick introduced Ms. Ault and Ms. King. Mr. Burdick stated that they have been reviewing records and have not been able to find any documentation on existing right of ways. Mr. Burdick shared that they would likely have to authorize it as a new project if they are not able to find how it was originally authorized, and that would require an Environmental Assessment to be done. Mr. Burdick stated that he, Ms. Ault, and Ms. King would continue to search for the original authorization.

Chairman Evans suggested older USGS maps could possibly clarify where the South and East access roads were located before the reservoir improvements were made, and could qualify as pre-existing.

Ms. Ault shared that the maps they have been reviewing do show the pre-existing roads, and may have been authorized. Ms. Ault stated that if the BLM is able to find the existing authorization for the access roads, a SF29 would need to be completed.

Mr. Tibbitts questioned attending BLM representatives what authorization process took place with NGM's recent rehab of the dam, and cited when that work was done was when the historical landing was covered.

Ms. Ault stated that she has not been able to find anything on the reservoir in her research, and suggested that they may have been logged incorrectly on their end. Ms. Ault stated that she would continue searching, and that they would look into different avenues to permit the Tonkin Reservoir Access Improvement Initiative.

Mr. Tibbitts highlighted that the NGM's rehab project on the dam was done within the last four years, and offered Ms. Ault copies of documents that reference a right of way if she would find them useful in her research on this project.

On screen and virtually, Mr. Tibbitts shared a figure that shows the historical landing, now under riprap as of NGM's rehabilitation project on the dam. Mr. Tibbitts clarified that the Board was only interested in re-establishing the historical landing.

Mr. Burdick expressed his support of the project, and optimism in a simple process if previous permitting documents can be used.

Chairman Evans spoke towards planning a meeting and trip to the location of Tonkin Reservoir.

Correspondence and Member Reports

No additional reports

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Agency Reports

Reports and updates from various wildlife and land management agencies.

NDOW Eastern Region Supervisor, Tom Donham introduced the new Eureka NDOW Game Biologist, Josh Kirk.

Mr. Kirk informed the Board on a proposed deer collaring project in area 13 next winter. Mr. Kirk shared that 914 deer were counted during a recent survey of Area 14 in the Cortez, Sulphur Springs, and Lone Mountain locations. Another survey would be conducted in the Diamond Mountain area.

Current and Emerging Wildlife, Natural Resources and Public Land Issues

Report on and discuss current and emerging wildlife, natural resources and public land issues affecting Eureka County.

Mr. Tibbitts highlighted several wildlife legislative items that are being proposed currently in the 82nd Session of the Nevada Legislature. It was determined that there was nothing to discuss at this time, but future discussion would possibly take place.

Wildlife Enhancement Projects

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Mr. Tibbitts updated the Board on pinyon-juniper (PJ) thinning projects he was managing, and that the categorical exclusion (CX) authority for PJ has been revoked by the current U.S Administration. The 5,000 acre swath located along the foothills of the Diamonds was under a CX. With the CX authority being revoked, the State BLM is currently looking to the National BLM office for clarification on if the CX still applies to this wildlife enhancement project on the Diamonds. Mr. Tibbitts also summarized the grant application Eureka Conservation District has submitted for PJ work to benefit sage grouse.

Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners Meeting Agenda and Support Material—

Board may discuss and act upon any or all items on the Wildlife Commissioners Agenda for the March 10, 2023 meeting.

The Board reviewed and discussed the entire Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners (NBWC) agenda and support material.

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Item 6E: Draft Fiscal Year 2024 Predation Management Plan

Chairman Evans clarified that the Board already provided commentary on this item at a previous meeting, and no new recommendation was required.

Item 6F: Wildlife Heritage Grants Manual

It was determined that the Board had no recommendation.

Item 7A: Commission Policy - Predation Management – Third Reading

Chairman Evans made a motion to support Commission Policy 23. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gordon, and passed unanimously.

Item 8A: Commission General Regulation 506, Possession of Golden Eagles Under Certain Circumstances

It was determined the Board had no recommendation on this item.

Item 16A: Commission Regulation 23-13, Migratory Game Bird Seasons, Bag Limits, and Special Regulations for Waterfowl and Webless Migratory Game Birds Public Hunting Limited on Wildlife Management Areas and Designated State Lands – 2023–2024 Season

A motion was made by Chairman Evans to support Commission Regulation 23-13. The motion was seconded by Mr. Halpin and passed unanimously.

Item 16B: Commission Regulations 23-04 Amendment 1, 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 Big Game Seasons

Chairman Evans made a motion to support the Commission Regulation 23-24 Amendment 1. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gordon and passed unanimously.

The Board moved back to consideration of the previous meeting minutes

Review and approve the minutes from the January 19, 2023 meeting

Chairman Evans noted a couple paragraphs from the previous meeting related to Lance Knudsen's comments on the Tonkin Reservoir Access Project. After further discussion, it

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was determined that no changes needed to be made and that better clarification on what Mr. Knudsen stated would be made as the Project.

Mr. Halpin made a motion to approve the minutes without any changes. Mr. Gordon seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Next Meeting

By consensus, the Board set the next meeting date for Thursday, April 27, 2023 at 4:30 p.m.

Public Comment

None

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Chairman Evans, was seconded by Mr. Halpin with all in favor. There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

Approved this _____ day of _____ 2023.

Respectfully submitted: _____, Secretary
Hallee Dechambeau

Approved: _____, Chairman
Jim Evans