

Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife

Minutes

Thursday ~ May 5, 2016 ~ 6:00 p.m.
Nevada Department of Wildlife
Conference Room B
1100 Valley Road, Reno, Nevada

MEMBERS

Sean Shea, Chair
Miles Humphreys, Jr., Vice-chair
Michelle Spencer, Secretary
Cathy Smith
William Tamblyn

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE (Non-action item)

Chair Shea led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL (Non-action item)

Chair Shea called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. A quorum was established.

PRESENT: Miles Humphreys, Jr., Michelle Spencer, Sean Shea, Cathy Smith and Butch Tamblyn.

ABSENT: None.

Jen Gustafson – Deputy District Attorney, was also present.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS (Non-action item)

Daryl Harwell - Nevada Water Fowl, asked that the board approve Nevada Water Fowl as the sponsor for the 2016 and 2017 Duck Stamp Contest.

Gerald Lent commented that he had attended the Yerington (Nevada) Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners meeting and had not heard or seen any member in attendance from this body to make comment or respond with concerns and recommendations made on behalf of Washoe County residents. Mr. Lent believes that the lack of input by the Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife is, in his opinion, a disservice to the residents of Washoe County.

Chair Shea introduced Mark Enders who will provide a brief informational presentation on biodiversity.

Mark Enders – Wildlife Diversity Division, narrated a PowerPoint® presentation on biodiversity (copy on file) in the State of Nevada, which includes bats, owls, raptors reptiles and rodents such as squirrels. Mr. Enders drew attention to the Pika noting that this particular animal has difficulty with its thermal regulation and prefers the higher cooler elevations and rocky habitat. Mr. Enders noted that the Pika has been researched for about 70 years and noted a 1946 Mammals of Nevada publication. Mr. Enders commented that the Pika is listed as a sensitive species and is protected by state law as well as BLM (Bureau of Land Management). Mr. Enders drew attention to the photograph of the forage stored by the Pika that will serve as winter feed. As climate change continues to warm, the Pika's habitat becomes increasingly delicate with the warming trend causing the animals to migrate to cooler areas. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NDOW continue to gather data on the Pika with scat and other evidence collected being sampled to determine migration patterns. Mr. Enders noted that surveys have been conducted at the higher elevations as part of his research to help in detecting where suitable habitat may be found using aerial photographs as well as on the ground inspections. In some areas where the habitat appears to be desirable to the Pika no traces have been found, which may be due to communications equipment and blasting that may have

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caused the animals to abandon the area. Mr. Enders outlined the various mountain ranges and elevations around the State of Nevada that range in elevation from 9,000 to more than 10,000 feet. Mr. Enders noted that the budget is derived from federal grants designated for sensitive species with some general fund monies used to cover salaries for non-consumptive species.

4. APPROVAL OF MARCH 21, 2016, MINUTES (For possible action)

Hearing no public comment Chair Shea asked for Board discussion or a motion.

Chair Shea asked that page 2 be corrected to read that the TAAHC (Tag Allocation and Application Hunt Committee) had approved the change in the PIW (Partners in Wildlife) rather than the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners as stated in the meeting minutes.

It was moved by Member Smith, seconded by Chair Shea, to approve the March 21, 2016, minutes, as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

5. BOARD MEMBER MEETING ASSIGNMENT (Non-action item) – *A discussion and selection of member(s) to attend the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners meetings on:*

5-1) *May 13 and 14, 2016, in Reno, Nevada* – Chair Shea and Member Smith will attend.

5-2). *June 24 and 25, 2016, in Elko, Nevada* – Chair Shea and Member Tamblyn will attend.

6. COMMITTEE, MEMBER AND LIAISON UPDATES (Non-action items)

6-1). *Correspondence (including sportsmen's concerns) and Announcements* – Chair Shea commented that correspondence had been received from Rex Flowers stating his recommendations on various agenda items (copy on file) and will be read into the record when appropriate.

6-2). *Overview of the March 25 and 26, 2016, meetings of the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners* – Chair Shea emphasized that the Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife had been present and did address various Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners topics noting that Item 17 was not approved. However, most other items were passed except for the Elk Arbitration which was missing required LCB (Legislative Counsel Bureau) language. The Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners also indicated that they were waiting for additional information from surrounding states (Utah) before moving forward the definition of "spike elk". Smokeless powder and electronic triggers will be brought back for further consideration with most members supportive of a ban on unmanned drone surveillance as it pertains to dealing with big game. Chair Shea noted that the TAAHC (Tag Allocation and Application Hunt Committee) and other subcommittee will meet at the new location in Sierra Center Parkway and that agendas are forwarded to interested parties and are also available at www.ndow.org.

7. HUMBOLDT COUNTY ELK SUB-PLAN (Second Reading) (For Possible Action) – *A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify the draft Humboldt County Elk Sub-plan.*

Hearing no public comment Chair Shea asked for Board discussion or a motion. Chair Shea noted his appreciation for NDOW's adding summary information on agenda items.

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Member Humphreys, Jr., concurred.

It was moved by Member Tamblin, seconded by Member Spencer, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve the Humboldt County Elk Sub-plan, as written. The motion carried unanimously.

- 8. FISCAL YEAR 2017 DRAFT PREDATION MANAGEMENT PLAN (FINAL DRAFT)** (For Possible Action) – *A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify the third and final draft of the Fiscal Year 2017 Draft Predation Management Plan.*

Hearing no public comment Chair Shea asked for Board discussion or a motion.

Responding to Member Smith's inquiry about assessment the long term benefits of implemented projects, Pat Jackson – NDOW, explained that there are different levels of project monitoring and assessment after implementation. Mr. Jackson drew attention to page 7 of the Predator Report that covers the different levels of monitoring and implementation. Mr. Jackson also noted that while NDOW does not necessarily calculate big game carrying capacity for big game as population numbers continue to decrease and would create a new set pot for the carrying capacity. Typically predator control is used to thwart spikes below average. Mr. Jackson noted that Project 37 is also covered in the Predator Report and that the average female survival rate is not known. Mr. Jackson noted that the average is based on data obtained from collared animals and that the average 10-percent is a combination of mortality and harvest success.

Chris Hampson – NDOW, noted that the current population estimates are based on aerial and ground surveys and that the extended drought had adverse effects on the herd and changed distribution as water sources and habitat dwindled. Mr. Hampson noted that as the drought abates it is thought that the movements will be lessened and lamb recruitment should improve. Mr. Hampson explained that additional sheep will be collared to aid in monitoring this population of bighorn.

Chair Shea opened public comment.

Jim Puryear outlined his time spent in the north end of the Granites during which he observed up to 70 Muledeer per day at different times. Mr. Puryear noted that he had also heard a lion and found evidence of a lion kill. Mr. Puryear believes that something needs to be done to reduce lion populations proactively.

Mr. Hampson noted the decrease in populations levels during the drought and mentioned that all wildlife had to move off of summer ranges due to water resources drying in the higher elevations. Additionally, hunters have reported seeing fewer deer this past hunting season and surveys over the past year also located less deer in the Granites. The extreme drought condition over the past several years with few wet winters has also resulted in a similar decrease in quotas. Mr. Hampson noted that predator control projects are currently ongoing in units 011 and 013 and that the predator control projects in the Granites had ended in 2014, but had last almost 10 years.

Chair Shea closed public comment.

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It was moved by Member Humphreys, Jr., seconded by Member Spencer, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Fiscal Year 2017 Predation Management Plan as written.

Member Smith explained that she appreciated some the additions to the predator plan, but could still not support the plan. Member Smith stated that she preferred the format used in the Fiscal Year 2015 Predation Management Plan and stressed the need to include data on the long-term effectiveness of individual projects.

The motion carried: Members Humphreys, Jr., Spencer, Tamblin and Chair Shea assenting; and Member Smith dissenting.

- 9. REVISIONS TO EXISTING COMMISSION POLICY 23 ON PREDATION MANAGEMENT (SECOND READING)** (For Possible Action) – *A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify a recommendation to revise existing Policy 23 consistent with provisions included in Assembly Bill 78 (AB 78) from the 2015 legislative session and current practice.*

Brian Wakeling – NDOW, outlined the modifications suggested by Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners had been addressed and are being brought forward to bring Policy 23 into compliance with the intent of AB78.

Hearing no public comment, Chair Shea asked for Board discussion or a motion.

Responding to Member Smith's inquiry about project monitoring, Mr. Wakeling explained that a sponsor of AB78 had been in contact with Chair Bliss noting that the use of monitoring is appropriate and not to be taken out of context.

It was moved by Member Humphreys, Jr., seconded by Chair Shea, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Revisions to Existing Policy 23 on Predation Management as written. The motion carried unanimously.

- 10. COMMISSION GENERAL REGULATION 462, ISSUING AND VERIFYING HULL NUMBERS OF VESSELS, LCB FILE NO. R015-16** (For Possible Action) – *A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify a recommendation to consider regulation changes to address federal regulatory changes the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) has requested states to implement pertaining to hull numbers for vessels and the verification and issuance of these numbers; the processing of certificate of number applications for vessels to include language definitions, standardization of terminology regarding vessels and personal identification information of owners.*

Kristie Knight – Game Warden, noted that this is the result of changes made by the U. S. Coast Guard, which is the federal governing agency for boating nationwide. The modification will ensure that federal funding is maintained and provides a uniform basis from state to state on hull number and registration.

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Hearing no public comment Chair Shea asked for Board discussion or a motion.

It was moved by Chair Shea, seconded by Member Smith, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Commission General Regulation 462, Issuing and Verifying Hull Numbers of Vessels, LCB FILE NO. R015-16, as written. The motion carried unanimously.

11. COMMISSION GENERAL REGULATION 460, DEFINITION OF "SPIKE ELK," LCB FILE NO. R013-16 (For Possible Action) – *A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify a recommendation amending NAC 502.104 and 502.1045 to define "Spike Elk" in a manner that limits inadvertent errors in the field. The intent is to consider and possibly broaden the definition of spike in a manner that is consistent with the management objective of defining a spike while reducing the likelihood of errors in harvest identification.*

Brian Wakeling – NDOW, commented that input had been received from some other states and that the State of Utah indicated that they still had some challenges with their regulation. Mr. Wakeling noted that a small branch at the tip of the ear is difficult to identify and that the State of Colorado had responded indicating they do not have a similar regulation.

Darin Elmore outlined his continuing concern about the cumbersome regulation and the difficulties in making sure that a fast moving spike elk is legal to harvest. The intent of the hunt is to reduce herd sizes and it is Mr. Elmore's suggestion that the regulation be defined as not more than two points above the ear on either antler.

Member Spencer read the following recommendation from Rex Flowers who could not be present at tonight's (May 5, 2016) meeting (copy on file) "Agenda Item #11- Definition of Spike Elk- I fully support this amended definition as it not only helps " to reduce the likelihood of errors in harvest identification" but still maintains the integrity of what a spike is. While the objective of a spike hunt is to cull a number of younger age class bulls, many of which may be branched on either or both antlers, there is still a responsibility on the hunter's part to know and properly identify his quarry. Harvest is a very small part of any hunting experience and not a necessity to the success of that experience. To reduce a spike to any animal with a minimal branching of both horns may help to eliminate a criminal act and increase legal harvest but also negates the very definition of "spike". As ethical and responsible hunters and mentors to others I would hope you will vote to support the Department's definition."

Chair Shea closed public comment.

Chair Shea concurred with Member Tamblyn's recollection that the Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife had already made a similar recommendation at the March 21, 2016, meeting.

During the discussion it was noted that the intent of the hunt is to reduce the number of young bulls and that previous action had recommended language limiting the number of points to not more than two on any antler. Chair Shea read the motion from the March 21, 2016, meeting and suggested that the words "above the ears" be added.

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It was moved by Chair Shea, seconded by Member Spencer, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Commission General Regulation 460, Definition of "Spike Elk," LCB File No. R013-16 with the following modification that any elk with two or fewer points above the ear on either antler. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting recess at 7:09 p.m. reconvened at 7:20 p.m.

12. COMMISSION REGULATION 16-12, 2016 BIG GAME QUOTAS FOR THE 2016 - 2017 SEASON (For Possible Action) – *A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify regulations for the numbers of tags to be issued for mule deer, pronghorn antelope, elk, bighorn sheep, black bear, and mountain goats for the 2016 - 2017 seasons.*

Chair Shea stated that each species would be addressed individually.

PRONGHORN

Mike Scott – NDOW, provided an overview of the statewide recommendations and noted the moderate fawn recruitments in certain areas provides some optimism over the next few seasons.

Chris Hampson – NDOW, explained that in Washoe County fawn ratios increased overall and while not having an effect of this year's quotas there may be some increased quotas in the near future. The survival rates indicated an overall slight increase but other hunt units have also shown a slight decrease.

Chair Shea opened public comment.

Judi Caron questioned why a recent population estimate provided by the BLM on April 16, 2016, in Winnemucca (Nevada) is different than what is being presented by NDOW.

Mr. Hampson stated that the BLM does not conduct Pronghorn surveys and that the information may have come from other sources. Mr. Hampson explained that NDOW conducts surveys for Antelope during the month of September when observed fawn ratios and survival are more accurate. The population models account for any winter loss.

It was moved by Chair Shea, seconded by Member Smith, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Pronghorn Antelope Hunts 2151, 2171, 2161, 2181, 2251 and 2261, as written. The motion carried unanimously.

NELSON BIG HORN SHEEP

Mr. Scott provided an overview of the quotas, which are the same as 2015 with some Units having minor increases or decreases based on Lamb Recruitment and mortality Mr. Scott noted that specialty tag holders are not allowed to hunt in certain units in 2016. Mr. Scott noted that the translocation of 50 Big Horn Sheep from unit 268 to Utah will help bring the population to a more sustainable level as resources and habitat continue to improve.

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Hearing no public comment Chair Shea asked for Board discussion or a motion.

Member Humphreys, Jr., noted that he had neglected to mention his concerns about non-resident tags under the Pronghorn Antelope and questioned how the number of non-resident tags is determined. It is Member Humphreys, Jr., belief that the non-resident quota limit of 10-percent should be strictly enforced with any additional tags going to Nevada residents. Member Humphreys, Jr., noted that even a 1-percent overage could mean 10 to 15 more tags for residents.

Mr. Scott noted that Member Humphreys, Jr., could bring that concern forward to the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners.

Chair Shea pointed out that the regulation stated not less than 10-percent of the overall tag quota has to be allocated to non-residents.

Member Humphreys, Jr., commented that he understands it should not be less than 10-percent but the allocation for the Pronghorn Antelope appears to be 11-percent, which would have given an additional 25 tags to residents.

Chair Shea closed public comment.

It was moved by Member Smith, seconded by Chair Shea, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Nelson Big Horn Hunts 3181, 3251, and 3281 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

California Big Horn

Mr. Scott outlined the recommendation to reduce the number of tags due to ram populations remaining below maintenance levels. It is hoped that the population will increase. Mr. Scott also noted that livestock overgrazing continues to deplete habitat for wildlife herds.

Mr. Hampson noted the reduction in quotas for units 012 and 014 with hunt unit 033 remaining at 2 tags. The most recent surveys indicated a slight decrease in the overall population in hunt unit 012. Mr. Hampson also noted that there were more unsuccessful hunters in recent years for hunt unit 012. Mr. Hampson noted that most other hunt units had quotas similar to the previous year.

Brian Wakeling – NDOW, read Commission Policy 24 that requires a minimum non-resident quota of 10-percent. Therefore a quota of 100 tags requires that 10 tags be offered to non-residents.

Chair opened public comment.

Gerry Lent noted his concerns with the ten-percent non-resident rule stating that with the depleted populations he believes it wrong to allot tags to non-residents in all units.

Chair Shea closed public comment.

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Mr. Scott concurred with Chair Shea's comment that if a season is set there must be at least one tag allocated as non-resident.

Chair Shea pointed out that the board could recommend a change to the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners on how non-resident tags are allocated.

Mr. Wakeling clarified that some non-resident tags are rotated among the various units annually.

A motion by Member Humphreys, Jr., to move one nonresident tag from Unit 31 to Unit 34 and make the resident quota 7.

Mr. Scott pointed out that nonresidents have already applied for tags and that the option is to modify the season next year and remove the nonresident from Unit 031 then.

Mr. Hampson noted that a zero quota would close a unit that was already set.

The motion died due to lack of a second.

It was moved by Member Spencer, seconded by Member Smith, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve California Big Horn Hunts 8151, 8181, and 8251 as written. The motion carried unanimously.

Rocky Mountain Big Horn

Mr. Scott provided an overview of the hunt noting a slight tag increase for Unit 114. Mr. Scott noted that only one ram had been harvested in the past two years.

Hearing no public comment Chair Shea asked for Board discussion or a motion.

Chair Shea suggested a later season for Unit 114 due to the issues.

Mr. Scott commented that while he is unsure whether that was considered, it is a good suggestion given the challenges.

It was moved by Member Spencer, seconded by Chair, Shea, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve the Rocky Mountain Big Horn Hunt 9151, as written. The motion carried unanimously.

Mountain Goat 7151

Mr. Scott indicated that he did not have any information on this particular hunt.

Hearing no public comment Chair Shea asked for Board discussion or a motion.

It was moved by Member Smith, seconded by Member Spencer, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve the Mountain Goat Hunt 7151, as written. The motion carried unanimously.

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ELK

Mr. Scott provided an overview of the statewide populations and hunter success. Mr. Scott noted that the number of tags had been increased in certain areas due to the excessive bull to cow ratios and continued impact to agricultural areas. Mr. Scott drew attention to a correction on Resident Elk Archery hunt 4161 units 076, 077, 079 and 081 that should read 40.

Chair Shea opened public comment.

Darin Elmore asked for clarification on the Antlerless Elk Hunt 4181 Units 062 and 068.

Mr. Wakeling – NDOW, explained that his recollection was that there was some rationale to reduce the quotas in certain units to alleviate overcrowding.

Chair Shea closed public comment and asked for Board discussion or a motion.

Mr. Hampson noted that there was a misprint under elk hunt 4161 where the total quota for the 2016 quota column should read 303 not 263.

It was moved by Chair Shea, seconded by Member Humphreys, Jr., to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Elk Hunts 4102, 4107, 4151, 4481, 4156, 4161, 4651, 4181, 4181 wilderness only, 4481 option Muledeer Hunts 1331, 4176, 4476, 4111, 4411, 4251, 4256, 4261, 4281, as written with a modification to Hunt 4161 Units 076, 077, 079 081 2016 quota to read 40 and 2016 quota Hunt 4161 should be 303. The motion carried unanimously.

Muledeer

Mr. Scott outlined the 17-percent reduction due to fawn depredation and lower doe ratios. Additionally a 60-percent reduction is recommended for antlerless also reflecting poor fawn recruitment and higher hunter success ratios.

Mr. Hampson noted that while buck ratios remain strong, the recommendations are on the conservative side due to the long-term drought. Mr. Hampson noted quick loss of snow pack in the upper elevations due to a warm month of February and that while some of the upper elevation lakes are currently full, it is expected that others will be dry by June and may create some continued distribution issues as herds migrate to find forage and water sources.

Mel Belding disagreed with the assessment of the Granites and that over his lifetime in the state there has been a continued decline in populations since 1988 and that some areas that very dry. Mr. Belding suggested that the quotas in Washoe County be reduced by 30 to 50-percent and that a letter be sent to Junior Hunt tag holders to refrain from harvesting a doe.

Gerry Lent concurred with Mr. Belding comments and explained that in his opinion the modeling program is in error and that there may be only 50,000 animals rather than the 94,000 projected by

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NDOW. Mr. Lent believes that the modeling system is fraught with many faults and that the population is being over-harvested.

Joel Blakeslee noted that until 1990's he had not seen many lions in Washoe County. However, there are now 20-times more lions and 1/10th the Muledeer.

Judi Caron suggested that rather than a letter to Junior Hunt tag holders that a statewide educational tool be developed about doe hunts.

Member Spencer read comments and recommendations submitted by Rex Flowers (copy on file) "Washoe Deer Quotas- I tried to evaluate success rates of Junior hunts (Bucks Only) compared with all other hunt groups (Resident/Non-Resident; all classes - archery, muzzleloaders, any legal weapon) and found the following per unit (Jr./All Others): 011-013 29%/25%; 014 53%/46%; 015 30%/24%; 021 60%/48%; 022 64%/46%; 033 45%/41%; 194,196 87%/68%. Quota recommendations for these same units based against last year's quotas are increased/decreased as follows with Jr, hunts identified first- 011-013 (-47%)/(-13%); 014 (-27%)/(-16%); 015 (No Change/ (+21%)); 021 (-33%/-9%); 022 (No Change/-12%); 033 (-25%/-9%); 194,196 (-17%/-6%). My concerns are with Units 011-013, 015, and 033 and I would like to recommend the following changes: 011-013: Res. ALW-88, Muz-2, Arch-15; Non ALW-7, Muz-2, Arch-2 015: Same as last year- 30, 2, 4, 2, 2, 2 033: Res ALW-41, Muz-3, Arch-4; Non ALW-4, Muz-2, Arch-2. These numbers better align themselves with the changes to Junior hunts and while it must be recognized that high success rates relate to lower quotas each of these areas have been severely impacted over the past four years and we need to give the remaining deer an opportunity to evolve again into a viable resource. I only wish beyond this is that we eliminate antlerless take specific to the Junior hunt program and eliminate that take from any unit not meeting population caps except areas where there has been a major event requiring their removal. Just my thoughts."

Member Spencer suggested that Unit 034 stay at 15 and not be reduced to 10 for the Junior Hunt and suggested that Hunt 1331 be reduced.

Member Humphrey's Jr., questioned whether the Unit 021 observations were done by flying the area.

Mr. Hampson noted that this particular hunt unit has animals migrating from three different areas in California and that the 5 tag decrease was most likely based on the first choice applications. Additionally, the heavier winter also increased the number of Mule deer observed as they are very concentrated due to past wildfires and loss of habitat. Mr. Hampson noted that the quotas are typically based on demand and success ratios.

Cody Schroeder – NDOW, explained that quotas are based on the demand/success formula set by commission policy and that the Junior Hunt is treated as if it is a separate weapons class. The percentages for each hunt unit group aren't always a 90/10 split, due to rounding conventions for example a desired quota of 12 rounds to 10 whereas 13 rounds to 15 under current guidelines. .

Member Humphrey's Jr., reiterated his earlier concerns about non-residents getting too many tags as he estimates that the percentage is closer to 14-percent.

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Mr. Schroeder noted that there has to be a minimum of two tags per unit regardless of the 90-10 split. Mr. Schroeder also pointed out that non-resident guided hunts (1235) are considered non-resident.

Chair Shea explained that guided hunts have a maximum of 400 tags statewide all of which are considered non-resident. Chair Shea suggested in the Big Game Status Book that Units 011, 012, 013, 014, 015 be separated into hunt groups like unit 192 is separated from unit group 194,196.

Mr. Hampson noted that this is the format that has been used and may be more of a space saving practice noting that there are limitations on language to save printing space for the large book. However he can bring the issue up to senior management.

It was moved by Chair Shea, seconded by Member Spencer to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Muledeer resident hunts 1107, 1101, 1181, 1331, 1371, 1341, non-resident 1331, 1371, 1341, as written: with the following modifications for Junior Hunt 1107 unit 034 increase from 10 to 15, change resident Hunt 1331 Units 011 thru 013 early to 69, Units 011 to 013 late to 19; in the same hunt Unit 015 keep at 30, Unit 033 early remain 30; late reduces to 11, Resident 1371 muzzleloader Unit 011 through 013 reduce from 7 to 2; Unit 015 keep at 2; Unit 033 reduce from 4 to 3; Resident 3141 Archery Unit 011 through Unit 013 stay at 15; Unit 015 reduce from 7 to 4; Unit 033 reduce from 5 to 4; Hunt non-resident 1331 Units 011-013 early reduce from 7 to 5 tags; Unit 015 change reduce from 3 to 2 tags; Unit 033 early no change; Non-resident 1371 stay the same; Non-resident Hunt 1341 no change and further recommend that the NDOW Big Game Status Book under Muledeer break up units 011 thru 015 to hunt group 011 thru 013 information and 014 and 015 have their own information. The motion carried unanimously.

It was moved by Chair Shea, seconded by Member Spencer, that the entire book including Antelope should be broken out into unit groups for all species. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting recessed at 8:50 p.m. and reconvene 9:00 p.m.

Black Bear

Mr. Scott noted that there was no prepared presentation.

Chair Shea opened public comment.

Judi Caron explained that she had hoped to hear the biologist's report on Black Bear before making comments.

Mr. Wakeling explained that NDOW continues to monitor Black Bear using two different data sets: 1) the capture, mark and release studies that have been conducted since 1997; and 2) a modeled population, which uses data from the marked and released bears and indicates a very robust population. Additionally it is estimated that there are 10-to-15,000 bears that inhabit the Sierras in Nevada, California, and Oregon. The current estimated population in northern Nevada is 445 bears. Additionally, bears have been observed as far south as Caliente as well as near Elko, Nevada.

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Additionally, a tooth is extracted when harvested bears are inspected with a harvest target of 20 that has never been reached.

Chair opened public comments

Bob Brunner questioned the impact of California not reducing the population and how that may result in an artificial increase in the number of bears without reaching harvest goals.

Chair Shea noted that the season had been shortened by a month by the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners.

Ms. Caron then suggested that perhaps the number of tags should be increased to 46 for residents and 5 for non-residents in an effort to reach the harvest goal of 20.

Joel Blakeslee concurred with Ms. Caron's recommendation.

Member Spencer read Rex Flowers' comments and recommendations (copy on file) "Black Bears - We have now had 5 seasons and have never met the harvest objective of 20, only once coming close in 2014 at 18 animals harvested. Over the 5 years the average harvest has been 14 per year and in this most recent 3-year period the harvest averaged 15 per year. A harvest average of 15 allows for an increase in tags to 64 while a harvest of 14 would allow for an increase in tags to 60. Keeping in mind that this past January the season was shortened by a month to December 1. December accounts for an average of one animal per year harvested. Given this fact that would reduce the past 3-year harvest to 14 animals. While 60 is an admirable increase and correct given the manner in which tags are allocated I would ask that the CAB recommend an increase to 55 tags - 50 resident and 5 non-residents."

Chair Shea closed public comment.

Responding to Member Smith's inquiry about the most recent population estimate that she finds more stable than growing, Mr. Wakeling explained that when the 2011 population estimates used a plus or minus 39 in an attempt to fit a curve to the statistic. Mr. Wakeling noted that the confidence level is based on information that indicates the population has grown as a small rate between 2011 and 2014. Mr. Wakeling commented that the prolonged drought continues to influence food and habitat as it does with other species that reach the capacity of the available habitat. The ongoing search for food sources and habitat may account for some movements. Mr. Wakeling noted that there is an opportunity for viable populations to reoccupy former habitat and is something that other states experiences as well. Mr. Wakeling stated that a 10-percent decline in populations, in his opinion, would be detected given the capture, mark and release program and other survey criteria that are in place.

During the discussion it was pointed out that the population growth is slower, but continues at a lesser rate as carrying capacity has been reached. Other discussion noted that harvest objectives have not been met and that perhaps it is time to set the bar higher in order to get closer to the harvest goal. Other discussion suggested an increase in the number of tags.

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Member Smith explained that she believes the drought has been especially difficult for Black Bears and that in the past there has been a larger turnout of non-consumptive public participation. Member Smith believes that the comments made by this body and the consumptive audience may have caused many to not attend these meetings.

Chair Shea commented that he could support an increase in the number of tags but not an increase in the harvest quota.

It was moved by Member Humphreys, Jr., seconded by Member Tamblyn, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve the Black Bear Hunt 6151 with the following modifications: 1) an increase in the number of tags to 55 for residents and 10 for non-residents with a harvest objective of 20. The motion failed; Members Humphreys, Jr., and Tamblyn assenting; and Members Smith, Spencer and Chair Shea dissenting.

A motion by Chair Shea to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Black Bear Hunt 6151 with a tag quota of 46 for residents and 5 for non-residents with a harvest goal of 20, failed due to lack of a second.

A motion by Member Spencer to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Black Bear Hunt 6151 with a tag quota of 50 resident and 5 non-resident with a harvest objective of 20 died due to lack of second.

It was moved by Member Spencer, seconded by Chair Shea, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Black Bear Hunt 6151 with 47 resident tags and 5 non-resident tags with a harvest objective of 20. The motion carried: Members Spencer, Tamblyn and Chair Shea assenting; and Members Humphreys, Jr. and Smith dissenting.

13. DUCK STAMP CONTEST SPONSOR (For Possible Action) – *A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify a recommendation of a sponsor for the 2017 and 2018 duck stamp contests.*

Judi Caron suggested that Nevada Waterfowl be chosen as the Duck Stamp sponsor as suggested earlier by Daryl Harwell.

It was moved by Chair Shea, seconded by Member Humphreys Jr., to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Nevada Waterfowl as the 2017 and 2018 Duck Stamp sponsor. The motion carried unanimously.

14. WASHOE COUNTY ADVISORY BOARD TO MANAGE WILDLIFE MEMBERS AND/OR STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS, REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION AND SELECTION OF TOPICS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS [Non-action item] – *Selection of additional agenda item(s) for the next meeting is June 16, 2016.*

The June 16, 2016, meeting agenda may include, but is not limited to a biodiversity presentation and information on appropriate management levels as defined in the Wild Horse and Burro Act.

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- 15. PUBLIC COMMENTS** [Non-action item] – *Comments heard under this item will be limited to three (3) minutes per person and may pertain to matters both on and off the Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife (Board) agenda. The Board will also hear public comment during individual action items, with comment limited to three (3) minutes per person. Comments are to be made to the Board as a whole. Please sign the sign-in sheet.*

Ray Kabisch noted the damage done by wild horses and burros on open range and suggested that the BLM or agency in charge be contacted about the increased populations during the drought conditions that impacts wildlife. Mr. Kabisch suggested a reduction in populations as is done in the Sheldon, which seems to be working.

Joel Blakeslee recalled when the number of big game tags in the Sheldon numbered 400. The increase in the number of lions has already wiped out porcupines in this county. Mr. Blakeslee noted that trapping and lion hunting are big political issues that if abolished could result in there being no need for this or a similar body to manage wildlife.

Judi Caron suggested the CAB hold a Wildlife Population public workshop prior to the May quota setting meeting, similar to the Hunt application workshop showing the odds of the draw. Ms. Caron believes the information would be beneficial to both consumptive and non-consumptive to better understand the health of the herds. Additionally a review of Predator Project 18 by a small group to review and work with biologists to see if the project should be reopened as well as a similar project review on wild horses and information on Sage Grouse.

Jim Puryear noted that there used to be a large number of song birds, quail and other birds along the river corridor as well as a haven for deer. However, feral cats have taken their toll on bird, deer and habitat. Mr. Puryear concurred with comments made by Mr. Blakeslee.

Mel Belding recalled that there were no Mountain Lions in the Granites for many years. However, he has observed a 10-fold increase in the number of Mountain Lions since 1997 with as many as three adults seen in a single day. Additionally, Mr. Belding has observed a Mountain Lion track in the City of Sparks along the Truckee River. Mr. Belding noted his concern about misinformation being distributed by anti-hunting groups and while Mountain Lions may be in decline in some other areas they are not declining in the Nevada, Mr. Belding suggested that NDOW take another look at the predator program, specifically Mountain Lions.

- 16. ADJOURNMENT** [Non-action item]

Chair Shea adjourned the meeting at 9:41 p.m.

AS APPROVED BY THE WASHOE COUNTY ADVISORY BOARD TO MANAGE WILDLIFE IN SESSION ON JUNE 16, 2016