

Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife

Minutes

Wednesday ~ January 15, 2020 ~ 6:00 p.m.
Nevada Department of Wildlife
Conference Room B
1100 Valley Road, Reno, Nevada

MEMBERS

Steven Robinson, Chair
Arnold Pitts, Vice-chair
Anthony DoMoe
Ray Kabisch
Jim Rhea

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE [Non-action item]

Chair Robinson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL [Non-action item]

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

PRESENT: Ray Kabisch, Arnie Pitts, Jim Rhea and Steve Robinson,

ABSENT: Anthony DoMoe.

Jen Gustafson – Deputy District Attorney, was also present.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS [Non-action item]

John Zenz outlined his recently submitted request for changes in the Big Game Draw. No more than 50% of the tags in any area can be issued to applicants that have max points so as to leave 50% available to point holders with less than max. There were 814,744 draw numbers issued to 6,838 applicants in the California Bighorn drawing.

Sean Shea suggested that the Washoe County Advisory Board work with Washoe County, NDOW and NDOT to provide fencing along I-80 Truckee river corridor into Verdi to reduce the number of deer killed along the I-80 corridor. Additionally, Mr. Shea would like the Washoe CAB to look into making nonresidents that want to hunt with hounds have to apply and draw a nonresident hound permit as Idaho Fish and Game has set up.

4. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 24, 2019, MINUTES [For possible action]

Hearing no public or board comments Chair Robinson asked for a motion.

It was moved by Member Pitts, seconded by Chair Robinson, to approve the October 24, 2019, minutes as written. The motion carried: Member DoMoe absent.

5. BOARD MEMBER MEETING ASSIGNMENT [Non-action item] – Discussion and determination of member(s) to attend the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners meetings on: 1) January 24 and 25, 2020, in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Chair Robinson will attend the video conference.

Member Pitts will attend the Saturday video conference.

6. COMMITTEE, MEMBER AND LIAISON UPDATES [Non-action items]

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6-1) Correspondence (including sportsmen's concerns) and Announcements – Member Rhea noted that John Zenz had contacted him about making public comments and that he had some discussions with sportsmen and friends.

Chair Robinson noted that Director Wasley had commented about Washoe County requesting a month long season. Chair Robinson drew attention to improving return card data on what NDOW (Nevada Department of Wildlife) is asking.

6-2) Overview of the November 1 and 2, 2019, meetings of the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners – Member Rhea commented that he had nothing to report although he had attended the first day of the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners meeting.

Chair Robinson noted that he had attended the second day and also had nothing to report.

7. Request for up to 30 Pygmy Rabbits by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife [For possible action] – A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify a recommendation from The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife request for up to 30 pygmy rabbits from Nevada during late winter-early spring 2020 to augment their restoration efforts. Pygmy rabbits from Nevada are similar genetically to the Columbia Basin pygmy rabbits, and these rabbits would be used to augment their semi-wild breeding population. The Commission may vote to endorse this request.

Chair Robinson outlined the agenda item noting that the transplanted animals would be used to augment the current breeding population. Additionally this looks like a nice project and that the Washington State biologist had volunteered to assist in the roundup of the rabbits.

Chair Robinson opened public comment.

Sean Shea believes that this is a great project and that he hopes this can be done with other states. Mr. Shea expressed his hope that the animals would not be taken from a single area so as not to impact populations.

Chair Robinson closed public comment.

Member Kabisch agreed with Mr. Shea and asked whether the animals would be pulled from a single or multiple valleys.

Jack Robb – NDOW, commented that diversity and others are collaborating on this project. It is not believed that the project will have any negative impacts to the current populations and NDOW periodically receives resources from other jurisdictions.

Chair Robinson commented that it was nice that NDOW could be of assistance and that will help wildlife without any significant impacts to the current populations.

It was moved by Member Pitts, seconded by Member Kabisch, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

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request for up to 30 pygmy rabbits from Nevada during late winter-early spring 2020 to augment their restoration efforts. The motion carried: Member DoMoe absent.

8. **Draft Fiscal Year 2021 Predation Management Plan** [For possible action] – A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify draft Fiscal Year 2021 Predation Management Plan will be presented to the Commission for initial review. Following this review, the draft plan will be updated and shared with the State Predatory Animal and Rodent Committee (PARC). All comments from the PARC, County Advisory Boards to Manage Wildlife, and any other interested entity will be compiled and shared with the Wildlife Damage Management Committee (WDMC) for their consideration at their March 2020 meeting. The Commission will receive an update at the March 2020 meeting from the Wildlife Damage Management Committee and may provide additional direction at that time.

Chair Robinson opened the agenda item.

Member Pitts stated he did not have any questions.

Chair Robinson expressed his appreciation to the Department for have Project 46 and the limiting factors in Northern Nevada. Of primary concern are the project goals and an accurate count of densities in specified areas. Chair Robinson inquired as to whether NDOW already does this for feral horses.

Mike Scott – NDOW, noted that Mule deer are done surveyed twice a year. The trail cameras will be placed at four kilometer intervals that will be reviewed and provide information on what is being seen.

Chair Robinson commented that Pat Jackson had previously mentioned a report at the last NDOW meeting but Chair Robinson has been unable to find the report on raven control or Mountain Lion removal.

Mr. Scott commented that this is an ongoing project and that he has not seen the report. Therefore, Mr. Jackson would have to answer any questions.

Jack Robb – NDOW, stated he would send a link to the report.

Chair Robinson opened public comment.

Rex Flowers outlined his concern on Unit 22 which has seen a decline in deer herd populations. There has been discussion annually about the eliminations of tags due to declining herd populations. Mr. Flowers feels for this reason Unit 022 should be part of Project 46.

Mel Belding commented that he shares Mr. Flowers' concerns and does not concur with the belief that Unit 022 is not worth the effort due to the location at the northern portion of PLPT lands. Mr. Belding noted the high number of horses and mountain lions in the small area and that the high number of mountain lions may be related to the high number of horses. Mr. Belding believes that the funding for the project should come from the Heritage Fund rather than the Predator Fund.

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Chair Robinson closed public comment.

Member Rhea suggested that 022 be included in the study.

Chair Robinson concurred.

It was moved by Chair Robinson, seconded by Member Pitts, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve draft Fiscal Year 2021 Predation Management Plan will be presented to the Commission for initial review with the addition of Unit 022 to project 46. The motion carried: Member DoMoe absent.

9. **Commission General Regulation 486, Veteran and Active Military Waterfowl Season, LCB File No. R027-19** – [For possible action] – A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify a suggested regulation to amend Chapter 503 of the Nevada Administrative Code (NAC). A federal statute was adopted in 2019 which allows a state to provide for veterans and active military to exclusively hunt waterfowl for a period of two days within the maximum allowable days of the existing season. If adopted, this regulation would provide authority to the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners to establish such a season at some future point if they choose.

Chair Robinson opened the agenda item.

Responding to Member Pitts inquiry as to whether that had come from NDOW or legislation Jack Robb – NDOW, explained that this was created on a national basis and that Fish and Wildlife supports the concept. However, any shortening of the season will be a Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners decision should it be suggested.

Chair Robinson commented that while this seems like a nice idea he cannot support as it would preclude his hunting with a friend who is a veteran.

Responding to Member Kabisch's inquiry about whether it would be prior to opening, Jack Robb – NDOW indicated that it could be similar to the youth hunt that moves around depending on the region. Mr. Robb noted that NDOW would go through the process to determine if this is a viable option.

Member Pitts commented that he does not believe it should be a special day as they can hunt the whole season. Member Pitts pointed out that youth and first time hunters do not get the same options.

Member Kabisch noted that perhaps disabled veterans that have served should be considered in the future.

Chair Robinson opened public comment.

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Rex Flowers commented that as a veteran he does not see the need to have a specific season as the seasons are set by federal mandates. However, since the wording has changed from “will” to “may” he would hope the CAB would support the regulation.

Chair Robinson closed public comment.

Chair Robinson suggested that another option would be to combine with another group so that it does not take away from any other group.

It was moved by Member Pitts, seconded by Member Rhea, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Commission Regulation 486, Veteran and Active Military Waterfowl Season, LCB File No. R027-19 as written. The motion carried: Member DoMoe absent.

10. Commission Regulation 19-05, Amendment #1, 2019–2020 and 2020–2021 Big Game Seasons [For possible action] – A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify proposed amendments to the 2020–2021 hunting seasons and dates for mule deer, pronghorn antelope, elk, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat, including limits, hunting hours, special hunt eligibility, animal sex, physical characteristics and legal weapon requirements, hunt boundary restrictions, and legal weapon requirements, and emergency depredation hunt structure and statewide quotas. The Department is limiting amendments to those that correct errors from last year, address emerging management needs, address substantial changes in wildlife abundance, or address conflicts.

Chair Robinson opened the agenda item and asked for comment as it appears it is closing the Delk tag seasons.

Member Pitts commented that he believes that this makes sense to allow as written.

There were no public comments.

Chair Robinson agreed that NDOW has achieved the management objective and that the plan is working.

It was moved by Chair Robinson, seconded by Member Pitts, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Commission Regulation 19-05, Amendment #1, 2019–2020 and 2020–2021 Big Game Seasons as written. The motion carried: Member DoMoe absent.

11. Commission Regulation 19-12, Amendment #1, 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 Restricted Nonresident Guided Mule Deer Seasons and Quotas [For possible action] – A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify a proposed amendment to the 2020–2021 hunting seasons and quotas for restricted nonresident guided mule deer including hunt boundary restrictions.

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Chair Robinson opened the agenda item.

There was no report from NDOW staff.

Responding to Chair Robinson's comment that he had not been able to review the return tag data to determine the success rates for this last year, Jack Robb – NDOW, commend that notices were sent out.

Chair Robinson drew attention to Unit 032 which is down from 5 to 3. Chair Robinson suggested that perhaps the overall hunter success rate is down.

Chair Robinson noted that most were set the previous year and that there are not a lot of changes in the proposed modification.

It was moved by Member Pitts, seconded by Chair Robinson, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Commission Regulation 19-12, Amendment #1, 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 Restricted Nonresident Guided Mule Deer Seasons and Quotas as written. The motion carried: Member DoMoe absent.

12. Commission Regulation 20-02, 2020 Black Bear Seasons [For possible action] – A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify proposed 2020 hunting season dates, open management units, hunting hours, special regulations, animal sex, legal weapon requirements, hunt boundary restrictions, and dates and times for indoctrination courses for black bear.

Chair Robinson opened the agenda item.

There was no NDOW report.

Chair Robinson noted that this mirrors previous seasons that seem to be working well and that the management plan also seems to be working well. Therefore, Chair Robinson is in favor of the request.

Chair Robinson opened public comment.

Jonathan Lesperance commented that he supports the department's season dates and noted that the harvest composition (male:female ratio) in 2019 was excellent. Mr. Lesperance noted that hunters are making selective choices and being conservative. Mr. Lesperance noted a small typographical error for 203 and 291 which should read 203 and 209 as there is not a Unit 291.

Sean Shea commented that it would be nice to have information on unsuccessful hunts.

Chair Robinson closed public comment.

Chair Robinson drew attention to a previous inquiry at a Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners meeting about Mountain Lion interaction with the population density of bears and how far they have

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migrated in the state. It appears from the available data that the population is doing well and spreading. It is hoped that the information can be disseminated.

It was moved by Chair Robinson, seconded by Member Pitts, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Commission Regulation 20-02, 2020 Black Bear Seasons as written. The motion carried: Member DoMoe absent.

- 13. Commission Regulation 20-03, 2020–2021 Mountain Lion Season and Harvest Limits –** [For possible action] – A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify proposed 2020–2021 mountain lion hunting season open units, harvest limits by unit group, hunting hours, and special regulations.

Chair Robinson opened the agenda item noting that he always likes to see an increase in the harvest limits, which appears to need legislative approval. Chair Robinson is in favor of the regulation as written.

Chair Robinson opened public comment.

Sean Shea stated that he is in favor of the proposal and that he likes how it is broken up now.

Jonathan Lesperance recalled previous discussions and noted that, in his opinion, the current data is too preliminary and a more critical review is needed.

Chair Robinson closed public comment.

It was moved by Member Pitts, seconded by Chair Robinson, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Commission Regulation 20-03, 2020-2021 Mountain Lion Season and Harvest Limits as written. The motion carried: Member DoMoe absent.

- 14. Commission Regulation 20-04, 2021 Heritage Tag Seasons and Quota** [For possible action] – A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify a proposed regulation to set the 2021 Heritage Tag species, seasons and quota.

Chair Robinson opened the agenda item and hearing no presentation or public comment asked for Board discussion or a motion. Chair Robinson commented that this appear to be the same as previous years,

It was moved by Chair Robinson, seconded by Member Pitts to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Commission Regulation 20-04, 2021 Heritage Tag Seasons and Quota, as written. The motion carried: Member DoMoe absent.

- 15. Commission Regulation 20-05, 2020 Dream Tag** [For possible action] – A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify a proposed regulation to set the 2020 Dream Tag species, seasons and quota.

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Chair Robinson opened the agenda item and hearing no Board or public comments asked for a motion.

It was moved by Member Pitts, seconded by Chair Robinson, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Commission Regulation 20-05, 2020 Dream Tag, as written. The motion carried: Member DoMoe absent.

16. Commission Regulation 20-06, 2020 Partnership in Wildlife Tags [For possible action] – A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify a proposed regulation to set the 2020 Partnership in Wildlife tags hunt species, seasons and quota.

Chair Robinson opened the agenda item and asked Board comments.

Member Kabisch questioned whether it was possible to break this into quotas per region.

Mike Scott – NDOW, noted that it would have to be brought forward as a Petition to the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners to make it part of NRS (Nevada Revised Statutes) as a statewide tag.

Responding to Member Kabisch’s inquiry about whether this is the time to move toward that goal, Mr. Scott noted that the recommendation to the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners would be to direct NDOW staff to investigate and see how best to proceed.

Responding to Chair Robinson’s question about whether this might cause an undue burden in some areas, Mr. Scott noted that the biology has been reviewed and that the data did not support the position that the animals were being “hammered”

Responding to Member Kabisch’s question about previous harvests, Chris Hampson – NDOW, noted staff has seen it spread in some late seasons but tends to bounce around quite a bit.

Chair Robinson opened public comment.

Sean Shea stated that he too previously thought this could potentially blow a unit up. However, it appears that many PIW hunters are chasing ghosts and end up with smaller bucks than anticipated.

Chair Robinson closed public comment.

It was moved by Chair Robinson, seconded by Member Kabisch, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Commission Regulation 20-06, 2020 Partnership in Wildlife Tags as written. The motion carried: Member DoMoe absent.

17. Commission Regulation 20-07, 2020 Silver State Tags [For possible action] – A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify a proposed regulation to set the 2020 Silver State tag species, seasons and quota.

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Chair Robinson opened the agenda item and hearing no public or Board comments, asked for a motion.

It was moved by Member Kabisch, seconded by Chair Robinson, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Commission Regulation 20-07, 2020 Silver State Tag as written. The motion carried: Member DoMoe absent.

18. Commission Regulation 20-08, 2020 Big Game Application Deadlines [For possible action]
– A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify a proposed regulation to set the 2020 big game tag application deadlines and related information.

Chair Robinson opened the agenda item.

Jack Robb – NDOW, noted that the deadline had been extended one more week this year.

Chair Robinson commented that traditionally the season started the Friday before Memorial Day.

Member Pitts noted that he liked the deadline this year.

Chair Robinson opened public comments.

Rex Flowers questioned whether an online check-in will be required for everyone since there is no exclusion noted in the CR. Additionally, Mr. Flowers believes that any goat, sheep and bear harvested should require a physical check-in.

John Zenz concurred with Mr. Flowers' comments.

Mel Belding commented that he believes it should be mandatory for both rams and ewes as yearling rams can easily be mistaken for ewes.

Chair Robinson closed public comment and concurred that harvested ewes should also be physically checked in.

Jack Robb – NDOW, commented that a requirement to complete the form if checked-in has been corrected.

Member Rhea commented that the return cards part of this should definitely require check-in on ewes.

Member Pitts believes he can make this recommendation to the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners.

It was moved by Member Pitts, seconded by Chair Robinson, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Commission Regulation 20-08, 2020 Big Game

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Application Deadlines with the addition of mandatory check-in on ewes as well as rams. The motion carried: Member DoMoe absent.

- 19. Commission Regulation 20-09, 2020 Big Game Tag Application Eligibility and Tag Limits** [For possible action] – A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify a proposed regulation to set the 2020 big game tag application eligibility and tag limits and related information.

Chair Robinson opened the agenda item.

Jack Robb – NDOW, outlined the proposed modification which is based on the number of licenses sold. Mr. Robb commented that a hunter could apply for a depredation hunt when applying for a bull elk. Although a hunter can apply for all, only one tag will be issued so if the cow elk is lower the hunter will get a cow tag. Mr. Robb noted that the same restriction is applicable for all species.

Jonathan Lesperance commented that fees may be maximized if restructured for rams and bulls.

Chair Robinson closed public comment.

It was moved by Chair Robinson, seconded by Member Pitts, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Commission Regulation 20-09, 2020 Big Game Tag Application Eligibility and Tag Limits as written. The motion carried: Member DoMoe absent.

- 20. CHANGE OF MEETING DATE** [For possible action] – A review, discussion and possible action to modify the Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife meetings from Thursday to Wednesday.

Chair Robinson opened the agenda item noting that Member Domoe had indicated he could not attend Wednesday meetings.

Members Pitts and Rhea prefer a Wednesday meeting date.

It was moved by Member Pitts, seconded by Member Kabisch, to move the regular Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife to Wednesday. The motion carried: Chair Robinson dissenting; and Member Domoe absent.

- 21. PUBLIC COMMENTS** [Non-action item]

Jon Zenz provided a handout on percentage of trophy tags published by Systems Consultants, Inc.

David Goff noted that he had tried for 019.

Member Pitts noted that had changed this year.

Rex Flowers commented that that he had applied for Elk tags and got bonus points for two of his applications and received a tag for the application.

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22. ADJOURNMENT [Non-action item]

Chair Robinson adjourned the meeting at 7:18 p.m.