

Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife –
draft minutes

October 28, 2021

1. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** [Non-action item]
2. **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL** [Non-action item]

Members in Attendance

1. Steve Robinson Chairman
2. Arnie Pitts, Vice Chairman
3. Jim Rhea
4. Matt Melarkey

Members Absent

1. Coby Rowe

Others in Attendance

1. Jon Ewanyk, Washoe County Wildlife Biologist
2. Mike Scott, Nevada Department of Wildlife
3. Rex Flowers, public
4. Mel Belding
5. Bryce Pollock
6. Tom Turk
7. Joel Blakeslee

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

There was no public comment.

4. **APPROVAL OF September 16, 2021 MINUTES**-[For possible action]

Member Melarkey noted his name was spelled wrong in the minutes. No other changes were made.

Member Pitts motioned for approval of the September 16, 2021 CAB minutes. Chair Robinson seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

5. **BOARD MEMBER MEETING ASSIGNMENT**-[Non-action item]

Members of the CAB had discussion and determined which member(s) would attend the upcoming Nevada Board of Wildlife Commission meeting. Chair Robinson, Member Melarkey, and Member Rhea said they would be able to attend.

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

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Chair Robinson opened discussion on the agenda item and said he had recently received correspondence. He said the Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife, Southern Nevada Coalition for Wildlife, and Northern Washoe Mule Deer Committee had submitted letters in opposition to the ban on predator and fur-bearing contests that had recently been heard by the Commission. The letters may be found at the end of the minutes.

Chair Robinson said he had also been contacted by John Zens, who said a friend of his had a tag but was injured, so he turned in his tag to the Department last year. The Department told him that he would receive a tag the next year, but subsequently said he only would be receiving his money back and not receiving a tag when he contacted them this year. Chair Robinson said this would be an issue that needed to be addressed with the Department.

Member Melarkey said he had recently attended the Commission meeting and said overall, it was an informative meeting. Chair Robinson said he was disappointed the public was not able to participate in discussion regarding the predator and fur-bearing contests and hopes there will be an opportunity for comment at the next meeting.

7. Commission Policy 1, General Guidelines for the Commission – First Reading–[For Possible Action]

Chair Robinson opened discussion on the recommendation that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify a first reading of Commission Policy 1, General Guidelines for the Commission. Chair Robinson said the change was mainly to amend the policy to accept gifts and donations for the Wildlife Trust Fund. There was no discussion from the board or comment from the public.

Member Melarkey moved to approve Commission Policy 1, General Guidelines for the Commission – First Reading as written. Member Pitts seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

8. Commission Policy 10, Heritage Tags and Vendors –[For Possible Action]

Chair Robinson opened discussion on the recommendation that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify changes to Commission Policy 10, Heritage Tags and Vendors. Chair Robinson explained the change was for individuals or groups who chose not to use the Heritage Tag, they would need to ask permission of the Department before allowing it to be used by others. Member Pitts said the change made sense to him.

Member Melarkey moved to approve Commission Policy 10, Heritage Tags and Vendors as written. Chair Robinson seconded. The motion carried

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unanimously.

9. Junior Hunt Program - Commission Policy 24 and Commission General Regulation 502 Changes –[For Possible Action]

Chair Robinson opened discussion on the recommendation regarding the Tag Allocation and Application Hunt Committee (TAAHC) approve, deny or otherwise modify Commission Policy 24. Chair Robinson noted the Committee will review the draft language amending Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) 502 chapters that would change the age eligibility to apply for the junior hunt program to 16-years-old and the eligibility to participate based on draw success to four years. Member Pitts said this proposal had been before the TAAHC for quite some time and asked if Mike Scott, Department of Wildlife, could speak to the proposed changes.

Mr. Scott said the discussion was about possibly changing the Junior Tag to have 2 tags with one being the any legal weapon tag and one being the muzzleloader and archery combo. This would allow youths who may have sports in the fall the opportunity to hunt earlier when they don't have sporting events on the weekend. By splitting the tags up, it would allow more youths the chance to hunt. Member Pitts said he assumed most youths hunt with rifles and the proposed changes would not affect them. Chair Robinson asked if the committee was certain they would change the youth tag from 16 to 18. Mr. Scott said the decision was being made by the TAAHC and said he wasn't sure what the final decision would be.

Member Melarkey said he supported the age change, but he wondered if the board should recommend to the TAAHC to eliminate the option to shoot does in units where doe hunts don't currently exist. He said this would allow for better wildlife management and would help the struggling mule deer populations. Mr. Scott said he doesn't personally hunt does but had seen youths who were able to hunt a doe be very excited they were able to bring home a deer. He said the numbers of does that are killed each year is a relatively low percentage and didn't think it negatively impacted the mule deer population. Mr. Scott said Policy 24 will have changes and asked the board review those changes when they had the opportunity. Member Rhea said he supported the changes to the Junior Tags because he thought having different seasons would help youths whose birthdays fell around the August cutoff.

During public comment, Rex Flowers said he was not in support of changing the age to 16 instead of 18. He said keeping it at 18 would allow youths more

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opportunities to draw a tag. He said he would like to see youths be able to apply for 5 years, but then make them ineligible after they have received 3 tags. He also said he supported recommending that juniors only be able to hunt does in areas where the commission has approved a resident mule deer, antlerless, any legal weapon hunt 1181 for the season. He also said he would like to see tags allocated by demand and treat all sportsman equally. Mel Belding added that he would like to see the age be at 16. He said he was in favor of does only being harvested in units where antlerless hunts are approved.

Member Melarkey moved to accept Commission Policy 24 and Commission General Regulation 502 Changes as written, but to amend and add the provision that junior antlerless mule deer hunts can only be harvested in units that have the antlerless hunt and only during the allocated season. Member Rhea seconded. The motion carried 3-1 with Member Pitts voting nay.

10. Commission General Regulation 503, LCB File No. RXXX-XX, Predator and Furbearing Contests –[For Possible Action]

Chair Robinson opened discussion to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify a workshop to discuss potential language on predator and fur-bearing contests proposed by Commissioner McNinch. Member Rhea said he was disappointed this was before the board again and hoped this would be the last time the board would have to discuss this item. All members of the board were strongly opposed to the proposed regulation. Chair Robinson said the item was brought to this meeting because there was draft language included, but he still did not support the proposal in any way, shape, or form.

During public comment, all members of the public who spoke were also strongly opposed to the proposed regulation. Joel Blakeslee said this issue has been ongoing since at least 2015, and the board should continue to voice its strong opposition to the item. He said that he felt if the issue came before the Nevada Legislature, opponents of the regulation would prevail. Mel Belding noted that he agreed with everything Mr. Blakeslee had spoken about and also encouraged the board to continue to oppose the regulation. Bryce Pollock said he too opposed the regulation and had written letters stating his opposition. He also said he felt the Commission was not using its time wisely by continuing to debate this proposal. Tom Turk agreed with Mr. Pollock and he was offended that people from out of state were trying to make decisions on behalf of Nevadans. Rex Flowers also spoke in opposition to the proposed regulation. He

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noted the Department appeared to have taken a neutral stance which was abnormal considering how other recommendations are made by the Department.

Member Pitts complimented the new members of the public who provided comment and encouraged them to provide comment at the next Commission meeting. He agreed with the other members and said he was opposed to the regulation as well.

Chair Robinson moved to recommend Commission General Regulation 503, LCB File No. RXXX-XX, Predator and Furbearing Contests be rejected and not placed on agendas of future Commission Meetings. Member Melarkey seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

11. Future Meeting Agenda Items – Informational only–[Non-Action item]

Members of the board discussed possible dates for upcoming board elections, and all felt the January 2022 meeting would be the best date to hold the elections.

12. PUBLIC COMMENTS –[Non-Action item]

Joel Blakeslee said he was tired of hearing about the human dimensions survey and he felt the results, and findings, of the survey are at odds with how the general public truly feels about the wildlife commission and boards. Mel Belding said he would like to see more presentations from various entities, such as the Bureau of Land Management, at future board meetings. Tom Turk appreciated the work the board has been doing and said he hoped there could be more outspoken sportsman in the Nevada Legislature.

13. ADJOURNMENT [Non-action item]

Chair Robinson adjourned the meeting at 7:06 p.m.



Danny Peltier <golfer6685@gmail.com>

FW: Supporting material to keep contests and tournaments

Steve <steve@nevadaperio.com>

Thu, Oct 28, 2021 at 10:46 AM

To: "golfer6685@gmail.com" <golfer6685@gmail.com>, "Arnie@Pittsorthodontics.com" <Arnie@pittsorthodontics.com>, Jim Rhea <jim@niacnv.com>, "Coby Rowe (crowe@goblueatteam.com)" <crowe@goblueatteam.com>, "Matt Melarkey (Matt.melarkey@nutrien.com)" <Matt.melarkey@nutrien.com>

Danny

Please put this correspondence into the record.

Steve

From: Mike Reese [mailto:mikereese224@gmail.com]**Sent:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 6:35 PM**To:** noxid1960@gmail.com; genegreen647@gmail.com; peghughes50@yahoo.com; Burnside <burnside@charter.net>; jcooney4@gmail.com; basinrange@att.net; Tom Cassinelli <t5ranch@hotmail.com>; torgyman@hotmail.com; Cory Lytle <clytle@lincolnnv.com>; rjacobson@lyoncsd.org; bunch.g.m.47@gmail.com; popechrissy@hotmail.com; Joe Crim <joewwtp@sbcglobal.net>; Steve <steve@nevadaperio.com>; mitchmcvicars@gmail.com**Subject:** Supporting material to keep contests and tournaments

Dear CAB members,

Please forward this email onto your board members and we ask for this email to be entered into the record at your CAB meeting.

I've enclosed the 2021 briefings from the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation as this is the group that attends hearings in Washington D.C. and at state levels as well. These are well thought out positions and have been the backbone /bible to which sporting families across America have accepted. I've attached pages 139-142 where they talk specifically about coyote/predator contests and they highlight the Nevada wildlife commission hearing this argument in 2015. It was actually heard again the following year and then in the 2019 legislature when it never even came up for a vote after hearing discussions on the matter.

The Southern Nevada Coalition for Wildlife echo's their position.

Mike Reese President

702-400-6501

2 attachments

 **CSF position on contests or tournaments.pdf**
3233K

 **CSF 2021 briefings.pdf**
6775K

Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife

**P. O. Box 70143
Reno, Nevada 89570**

Dear Commissioners,

The Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife would like to submit this letter asking that no action be taken regarding coyote hunting contests for the following reasons.

- 1. There is no biological science being presented that indicates these hunts are detrimental to coyote populations and in fact they may enhance populations of game animals, including deer, antelope and sage hen.**
- 2. Since almost all fishing and hunting is done socially, targeting one group of hunters is discriminatory.**
- 3. Contests, awards, trophies and social events regularly occur for fish, game animals and other unprotected species.**
- 4. Coyotes are one of the least likely species to experience adverse impacts from hunting.**
- 5. Adding regulations on an unprotected species would likely require a change of status to a game animal or a furbearer.**
- 6. Stopping contests will adversely impact small businesses that support hunters, i.e. hotels, restaurants, gas stations and sporting goods stores.**

**Larry Johnson - President
Tom Smith – Vice President
Joel Blakeslee – Director
Bob Brunner – Director
Judi Carron – Director
Rex Flowers – Director
John Hillenbrand – Director
Jonathan Lesperance – Director
Jim Puryear – Director
Linda Linton – Director
Bob Sack – Director
Mike Cassiday - Director**

**NEVADA SPORTSMEN AND CONSERVATIONISTS WORKING FOR
THE ENHANCEMENT OF WILDLIFE AND HABITAT**

Danny Peltier

To: Danny Peltier
Subject: RE: FW:

From: Joe Zweifel [mailto:joe@wildliferevolutions.com]

Sent: Tuesday, October 26, 2021 12:38 PM

To: wildlifecommission@ndow.org; Mike Scott <miscott@ndow.org>; arnie@pittsorthodontics.com; Larry Johnson <konkowlid@gmail.com>; Steve <steve@nevadaperio.com>; Jon Ewanyk <jon.ewanyk@ndow.org>; Jim Rackley <James.Rackley@newmont.com>; Cody Schroeder <cschroeder@ndow.org>; Cooper Munson <cmunson@ndow.org>

Subject:

As members of the Northern Washoe Mule Deer Committee we are writing to inform you and the wildlife commission that we are disappointed with the actions of the Nevada Department of Wildlife staff when submitting the Northern Washoe Mule Deer Committee proposals for project and management activities. Those proposals do not represent the substantive discussions and work of the mule deer committee, nor do they represent the views of the committee, rather they represent the views of the area biologist, predator biologist and Deputy Director. Unfortunately, the Department has been difficult to work with throughout this process, from organizing meetings to providing data to committee members. The Department's decision to submit proposals without allowing the opportunity for the committee to review the draft proposals is the latest decision that makes the committee members feel that the department is not working in a good faith and collaborative manner. This is especially frustrating because the committee members asked on numerous occasions to review and go over the draft proposals prior to them being submitted and only after they were submitted without prior committee review did we discover that the proposals were unilaterally modified from what the committee had discussed.

We are extremely disappointed that the Department essentially chose to eliminate the predator management proposal that we had discussed as a committee and instead submitted a proposal for removal of mountain lions that preyed on collared mule deer. At face value, this proposal seems well-reasoned, however, according to the Department, that proposal was going to happen anyway as a component of the collaring project. That management proposal involved numerous logistical considerations and barriers and served more as an opportunistic harvest of mountain lions than a comprehensive predator management program to improve declining deer populations in Northern Washoe. The proposal that the Committee discussed as a group submitting represented the views and opinions on what actions were needed to address the low population numbers from members of the committee that are not employed by the Department.

By the Department unilaterally choosing to not submit that proposal due to the perceived opinion that it would not stand as high of a likelihood of getting funded, the Department denied the ranking committee on proposals the opportunity to consider what the committee actually identified as the need for addressing declining deer numbers. The latest actions from the Department has left the Northern Washoe Mule Deer Committee with the impression that the entire concept of a mule deer working group is more a public relations ploy than a good faith effort to collaboratively work together under the North American Model for Wildlife Conservation. We have apparently wasted our time and good faith efforts. We feel the Department has abandoned their goal of reversing the downward trend of mule deer, and more importantly, their duty to protect and enhance our wildlife populations - all in the name of avoiding controversy.

We look forward to a response from the Department on how they intend to address these issues moving forward.

Sincerely,

The Northern Washoe Mule Deer Committee

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Danny Peltier

golfer6685@gmail.com