

Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife

DRAFT of Minutes

Thursday ~ June 16, 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
Vacant

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., Sean Shea, Michelle Spencer and Cathy Smith.

ABSENT: None.

VACANT: One.

Jen Gustafson – Deputy District Attorney was also present.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS [Non-action item]

There were no public comments.

4. APPROVAL OF MAY 5, 2016, MINUTES (For possible action)

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

It was moved by Chair Shea, seconded by Member Humphreys, Jr., to approve the May 5, 2016, minutes, as submitted. The motion carried: Members Humphreys, Jr., Smith, Spencer and Chair Shea assenting; and one position vacant.

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: 1) June 24 and 25, 2016, in Elko, Nevada; and 2). August 12 and 13, 2016, in Yerington, Nevada.*

Chair Shea stated he would be attending the June 24 and 25, 2016, meetings.

Member Spencer stated she could most likely attend the August 12, 2016, meeting and would be at the August 13, 2016, meeting.

Member Humphreys, Jr., stated that he could also attend the August meeting.

Chair Shea stated later in the meeting that the August meeting of the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners was being held in Reno rather than Yerington.

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

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1). Correspondence (including sportsmen's concerns) and Announcements – Chair Shea commented that the correspondence received would be discussed under the appropriate agenda item.

2). Overview of the May 13 and 14, 2016, meetings of the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners – Chair Shea noted that he and Member Smith had attended the May meeting of the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners and that there was nothing of great importance to report.

7. LAW ENFORCEMENT UPDATE [Non-action item] – *An informational update on law enforcement issues.*

Kristy Knight – Game Warden, played a brief video and narrated a PowerPoint® (copy on file). The full presentation can be found on the Washoe County website: https://www.washoecounty.us/csd/all_boards_committees/nv_wildlife_commissioners/index.php
Click on additional meeting resources.

During a brief discussion it was noted that the part-time and seasonal employees focus on field work and have been used since 2015. Other discussion noted that under the authority granted to NDOW Game Wardens all state laws including speed limits can be enforced. Other discussion pointed out that NDOW has been understaffed for some time.

8. DUCK STAMP REQUEST (For Possible Action) – *A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify projects submitted for funding from duck stamp funds.*

Chair Shea opened the agenda item and asked for public comment. Hearing none, Chair Shea asked for board discussion or a motion.

Chair Shea suggested that all projects include a cost breakdown thus making it easier to understand noting that he would bring this up at the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners meeting.

Chairs Hampson – NDOW, suggested that Chair Shea share that idea with Russell Woolstenhulme.

It was moved by Member Humphreys Jr., seconded by Member Smith, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Duck Stamp Requests as written. The motion carried: Members Humphreys, Jr., Smith, Spencer and Chair Shea assenting; and one position vacant.

9. UPLAND GAME BIRD STAMP REQUEST (For Possible Action) – *A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify projects submitted for upland game bird stamp funds.*

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

It was moved by Member Humphreys, Jr., seconded by Member Spencer, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve the Upland Game Bird Stamp Request

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as presented. The motion carried: Members Humphreys, Jr., Smith, Spencer and Chair Shea assenting; and one position vacant.

- 10. HERITAGE PROJECT EXTENSION REQUESTS** (For Possible Action) – *A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify requests for extension of projects approved in previous years.*

Chair Shea noted that there was no support material provided and that he is reluctant to take any action.

Chair Shea opened public comment.

Rex Flowers stated that he had been reviewing the NDOW website and could find no support material. Mr. Flowers suggested that the Board recommend the Commission take no action since the public has nothing to base their recommendations on.

Chair Shea closed public comment.

Chair Shea commented that he would be attending both meetings and emphasize the issues when support material is not readily available.

It was moved by Member Humphreys, Jr., seconded by Member Spencer, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners taken no action due to lack of support materials and public input. The motion carried: Members Humphreys, Jr., Smith, Spencer and Chair Shea assenting; and one position vacant.

- 11. HERITAGE FUNDING REALLOCATION** (For Possible Action) – *A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify proposed reallocations of unused Heritage funds from previously approved projects to any other previously approved projects from the same fiscal year.*

Chair Shea opened the agenda item and asked for public comment noting that no support material had been received on this agenda item.

Rex Flowers recommended that same as prior agenda item.

It was moved by Member Humphreys, Jr., seconded by Chair Shea, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners taken no action due to lack of support materials and public input. The motion carried: Members Humphreys, Jr., Smith, Spencer and Chair Shea assenting; and one position vacant.

- 12. FISCAL YEAR 2017 HERITAGE PROJECT PROPOSALS** (For Possible Action) – *A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify recommended 2017 project applications for funding.*

Hearing no public comments Chair Shwa asked for Board discussion or a motion.

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Chair Shea noted that he would address the issue of support materials at the Heritage Committee meeting on Thursday, June 23, 2016. However, he did not identify anything of concern.

It was moved by Member Smith, seconded by Member Spencer, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve the Fiscal Year 2017 Heritage Project proposals, as written. The motion carried: Members Humphreys, Jr., Smith, Spencer and Chair Shea assenting; and one position vacant.

13. AMENDMENT OF BIENNIAL FISCAL YEARS 2016 AND 2017 UPLAND GAME RELEASE PLAN (For Possible Action) – *A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify a request to amend the Biennial Upland Game Release Plan for Fiscal Years 2016 and 2017 to consider additional release locations for wild turkeys.*

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

Responding to Member Smith's inquiry about the Wild Turkey populations, Chris Hampson explained that the populations are doing well and that turkeys are doing well in the park setting, which has been a positive experience.

It was moved by Chair Shea, seconded by Member Humphreys, Jr., to approve the Amendment of the Biennial Fiscal Years 2016 and 2017 Upland Game Release Plan, as presented. The motion carried: Members Humphreys, Jr., Smith, Spencer and Chair Shea assenting; and one position vacant.

14. COMMISSION REGULATION 16-13, 2016–2017 AND 2017–2018 UPLAND GAME AND FURBEARER SEASONS AND BAG 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 regulations for seasons, bag limits, and special regulations for upland game birds, rabbits, wild turkey, furbearers, and falconry seasons for 2016–2017 and 2017–2018 seasons.*

Chris Hampson – Game Biologist, drew attention to the modifications to weekend season permits for The Sheldon, which had been reduced due to the continued drought. Mr. Hampson noted that the Sage Grouse are doing well and the most recent weather patterns have enhanced water resources. Additionally, the lek count and other indicators are much higher in Western Nevada with good recruitment resulting in the addition of a second season for 75 hunters and the reopening of Unit 015. Mr. Hampson noted that there had also been discussion about making the total in possession 3 times the daily limit for other species as well. Mr. Hampson pointed out the wild turkeys are still brought in from other locations to augment the populations.

Member Humphreys, Jr. suggested that come clarification be added so that hunters can easily identify where and when applications can be obtained and returned.

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Mr. Hampson noted that the recommendations could be added and suggested that the suggestion be made to Mr. Espinosa. Mr. Hampson also noted that a larger scale map was now available on-line depicting what areas are closed.

Chair Shea recommended that an asterisk (*) be added to draw attention to and emphasize that the bag limit for rabbits does not include all species of rabbit (e.g., Pygmy).

Mr. Hampson commented that is a “great clarification” as it brings what might otherwise not be noticed to the forefront. Mr. Hampson encouraged Member Humphreys, Jr., to move forward with language to further clarify how and where to obtain the application forms and submissions timeline before the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners meeting.

Responding to Member Smith’s inquiry about the difference between additive kills and hunting, Mr. Hampson explained that populations are more at risk when the populations and recruitment is low the hunts can be adjusted, whereas predators cannot. Mr. Hampson noted that the hunter questionnaires and wing studies provide valuable information used in the population estimates. Mr. Hampson then explained that the kitten populations are up from the long term average of 66. This past year has seen excellent recruitment and that the intent is to stay as close to the long-term average as possible and that the young will be available for harvest in the future.

Chair Shea opened public comment.

Joel Blakeslee - Nevada Trappers Association, commented that in his opinion the biologist did an excellent job with the new protocol and that in his 40 years experiences this is the best data on Bobcats in the world. Mr. Blakeslee suggested that the Bobcat and Gray Fox seasons be 120-days from November 1 through February 28. Mr. Blakeslee noted that the number of trappers is down as are fur prices. Mr. Blakeslee emphasized that when the populations are low the Trappers Association recommends shorter seasons.

Bob Brunner concurred with Mr. Blakeslee’s comments noting that the increased moisture has increased the number of rabbits, small game and rodents. Mr. Brunner stated he too supports the 120 day season.

Mel Belding noted that when a predator is present birds are not able to breed for several days which harms recruitment as does the loss of eggs and young hatchlings.

Rex Flowers stated he supports the trapper’s recommendation of a 120-day season.

Mitch Bailey concurred with Mr. Blakeslee’s comment and recalled that NDOW biologists had dedicated several hours in early June to discuss the recommendations. Mr. Bailey noted that Mr. Blakeslee also represents all trappers in the State of Nevada.

Chair Shea closed public comment.

Member Smith noted that the additional rodent population can also be reduced by leaving predators in place. It is Member Smith’s belief that a decrease in the predator population could be a health

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concern for the general population. Member Smith pointed out that there are trappers in the Whites Creek and other urbanized areas and that she has observed a Bobcat in the area.

Member Spencer noted that she believes trapping in some urbanized areas may be appropriate to protect small children

Member Spencer noted that risks must sometimes be taken when living around wildlife.

It was moved by Member Humphreys, Jr., seconded by Member Spencer, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Commission Regulation 16-13, 2016–2017 and 2017–2018 upland game and furbearer seasons and bag limits with the following modifications: 1) Under the Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge, Sage Grouse hunt application reservations can be found online and must be received by NDOW, etc. 2) California Gambles, and Mountain Quail section the bag limits must be marked with an asterisk (*) to draw attention to special regulations; and 3) Under Bobcat season date changed to November 1 through February 28.

Chair Shea suggested that the Youth Rabbit Season and General Cotton Tail and Pygmy Rabbit seconded also be marked to draw attention to special regulations.

Member Humphreys, Jr., amended the motion by adding 4) page 6 Cottontail and Pygmy and Whitetail Jack rabbit also be marked with an asterisk (8) to draw attention to special regulations. Member Spencer amended the second. The motion carried with Member Smith dissenting; and one position vacant.

The meeting recessed at 7:12 p.m. and reconvened at 7:22 p.m.

Chair Shea drew attention to agenda item 5 noting that the August 12 and 13, 2016, meetings would be held in Reno not Yerington.

- 15. COMMISSION REGULATION 16-03 AMENDMENT #1, 2017 HERITAGE TAG SEASONS AND QUOTAS, HERITAGE TAGS ORGANIZATION/VENDOR SELECTION** (For Possible Action) – *A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify recommended selection of the 2017 Heritage Tag vendors/organization recommendations; and will also consider language changes associated with the sealed bid process to potentially address any outstanding Heritage tags not allocated to vendors.*

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

Mike Scott – NDOW, stated the he could not address Chair Shea's question about how the bid process would be handled. Mr. Scott recommended that Chair Shea contact Maureen Hullinger for additional information.

It was moved by Member Spencer, seconded by Member Humphreys, Jr., to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Commission Regulation 16-03

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Amendment 1, 2017 Heritage Tag Seasons and quotas, Heritage Tags Organization/Vendor Selection, as written. The motion carried with Chair Shea dissenting and one position vacant.

- 16. COMMISSION GENERAL REGULATION 458, ELECTRONIC RIFLE TRIGGERS, CALIBER AND CARTRIDGE LENGTH, AND SMOKELESS POWDER RESTRICTIONS, LCB File No. R144-15 (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 Chapter 503 of the Nevada Administrative Code. The proposed regulation amendment contains several changes. The first change will clarify the use of black powder substitutes that are considered smokeless powder. The second change would make it legal to hunt big game mammals with a handgun if the handgun uses a centerfire cartridge of .22 or larger [and has a barrel length of 4 inches or more]. The third change would make it unlawful to hunt a big game mammal with a rifle using a centerfire cartridge of caliber .50 or larger or case length longer than 3 inches. The amendment would also make it unlawful to hunt a big game mammal with any firearm equipped with any sighting system using a computer or electronically controlled firing mechanism.*

Chair Shea opened public comment.

Mike Cassidy spoke in opposition to the proposed restriction on caliber and cartridge length.

Rex Flowers reiterated his previous opposition to the modifications noting that the mostly anecdotal claims have never been substantiated. Mr. Flowers noted that a weapon capable of firing extra-large cartridges would most likely weigh in excess of 35 pounds making this an unnecessary regulation.

Joel Blakeslee expressed his opposition to the caliber restrictions noting that this appears to be a mostly political regulation with no basis in science. Mr. Blakeslee noted that the Coalition for Nevada Wildlife was also opposed to the proposed regulations.

Ray Kebisch noted his support for the proposed regulations noting that he had witnessed a 50 caliber distance and would prefer to keep the sport in the sport.

Mel Belding concurred with Mr. Cassidy and Mr. Blakeslee about the 50 caliber cartridge and drew attention to what a 55 grain shell and 75 grain shells which do more damage.

Mitch Bailey suggested that before any such modifications are made that perhaps a review of what constitutes a legal weapon should be reviewed. Mr. Bailey noted that #9 birdshot is more dangerous as it typically only results in a wound.

Chair Shea closed public comments.

Responding to Member Smith's inquiry about the use of 50 caliber cartridges, Kristy Knight – Game Warden, explained that she had received a call for information about the use of a 50 caliber weapon but had not ever seen one in the field.

Chair Shea read correspondence from Nevada Back County Hunter (copy on file).

A motion by Member Humphreys, Jr., to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners deny Commission General Regulation 458, Electronic Rifle Triggers, Caliper and Cartridge Length, and Smokeless Powder Restrictions, died due to lack of a second.

It was moved by Chair Shea, seconded by Member Spencer, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Commission General Regulation 458, Electronic Rifle Triggers, Caliper and Cartridge Length, and Smokeless Powder Restrictions, with the following modifications: 1) direct that additional review and discussion be held on the section dealing with 50 caliber ammunition and cartridge lengths of 3 inches before any final action is taken. The motion carried: Members Humphreys, Jr., Smith, Spencer and Chair Shea assenting; and one position vacant.

17. COMMISSION GENERAL REGULATION 459, UNMANNED AERIAL VEHICLES (Drones), LCB File No. R145-15 (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 Chapters 501 and 503 of the Nevada Administrative Code. The proposed regulation amendment contains several changes. The first change would make the prohibition of using aerial devices for the purpose of hunting and scouting from July 1 to the last day of February each calendar year rather than the current prohibition of 48-hours prior to and during any open season. The second change is to clarify existing language that prohibits the use of unmanned aerial vehicles for the purpose of hunting, locating, or observing big game animals. The changes would extend aerial scouting prohibitions and clarify the existing regulation by explicitly listing unmanned aerial vehicles. The third change is to clarify real-time satellite images. The proposed amendment would also add game birds and fur-bearing mammals to the aerial scouting and hunting prohibition.*

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

It was moved by Chair Shea, seconded by Member Spencer, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Commission General Regulation 459, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (Drones) LCB Fil no. 145-15, as written. The motion carried: Members Humphreys, Jr., Smith, Spencer and Chair Shea assenting; and one position vacant.

18. 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 the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify proposed amendments to 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. A workshop was held in Yerington on March 25, 2016 and further discussion on the proposed amendment occurred in Reno on May 14, 2016. The Commission amended the version of language for consideration at the June meeting that defines "spike" as any antlered elk having no more than two points above the top of the ear on either antler.*

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

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It was moved by Member Smith, seconded by Member Humphreys, Jr., to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Commission General Regulation 460, Definition of “Spike Elk” LCB File No. R013-16, as written. The motion carried: Members Humphreys, Jr., Smith, Spencer and Chair Shea assenting; and one position vacant.

- 19. 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 August 4, 2016.*

No new agenda items identified.

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

Caron Tayloe expressed her appreciation to member Smith for her service on the board. Ms. Tayloe finds it interesting that while NDOW typically does not return her telephone calls they have spent hours with the Trappers Association.

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

Chair Shea adjourned the meeting at 7:44 p.m.