

Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife

March 11, 2021 Minutes

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. Anthony DoMoe secretary
4. Ray Kabish,
5. Jim Rhea

Others in Attendance

1. Wayne Carner – Deputy District Attorney, Washoe County
2. Cooper Munson, Western Region Game Supervisor
3. Russel Wollsten Hume, Nevada Department of Wildlife
4. Tiffany East, Chairwoman Nevada Wildlife Commission
5. Joel Blakeslee, public
6. Rex Flowers, public
7. Mark Ono, USDA-Wildlife Services
8. Mel Belding, public
9. Tiffany East, public

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

No members of the public provided Public Comment.

4. **APPROVAL OF January 21, 2021, MINUTES**-[For possible action]
Chair Robinson noted a typo on the agenda which listed the October 29, 2020 minutes instead of the January 21, 2021 minutes and asked if there were any changes needed in the minutes. No changes were noted.

Member Kabish motioned for approval of the January 21, 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 March 19 and 20, 2021, Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners meeting. Chair Robinson said he would be unable to attend the March commission meeting. Member Kabish said he would be able to attend.

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

Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife
March 11, 2021 Draft Minutes

Chair Robinson opened discussion on the agenda item. The CAB members discussed January 2021 meeting of the commissioners. Chair Robinson said he had received more correspondence for this meeting than any he could remember. He noted there was a lot of interest in the hounds for bears and wildlife killing contests. Chair Robinson said there was quite a bit of opposition to the department. The correspondence can be found attached to the end of these minutes.

Chair Robinson said he had also received numerous contacts from the public regarding the mule deer teams and he wanted to let the board know that to his knowledge nothing had happened yet and as soon as something changes, he will let everyone know.

Member Kabish asked the board who the Washoe County Biologist was now and when they would be able to introduce themselves to the Board. Cooper Munson, Western Region Game Supervisor, said there is no new biologist yet, but the hiring process is ongoing, and they hope it will be completed in the coming weeks.

7. Commission General Regulation 496, NAC 503 Simplification—[For Possible Action]

Chair Robinson opened the item and asked if there was any discussion from the members or the Department. There was no discussion, and Chair Robinson noted there was significant discussion regarding this item at the last meeting, specifically around trapping. Chair Robinson said some of the proposed language may not be exactly what the board had discussed at previous meetings and noted the definition of the cage trap needed to be changed. Mr. Munson said there had been discussion regarding the proposed language at the Department, but he said they did not have a position on it. Chair Robinson called attention to the specific language regarding the use of a suitcase trap in a waterway and said it was unclear who would be providing the written authority from federal, state, or local governmental agencies. Chair Robinson then opened the item to public comment.

Rex Flowers commented that he agreed with Chair Robinson calling attention to the suitcase trap language and noted that law enforcement officials who have also been involved in crafting the language said this was a public safety issue. Mr. Flowers felt that it was the direction of the Commission to force this issue and therefore asked for clarification on who one would need to contact on the state level to receive the proper permission for the use of the suitcase trap. Mel Belding added that the Department said on their website that the land under the river is considered public land and agreed with Mr. Flowers inquiry regarding which state agency was the approving authority. Mr. Belding also said the definition provided for the trap was not clear and this lack of clarity needed to be addressed through more detailed definition of the manufacturers.

Russel Wollsten Hume, Nevada Department of Wildlife, commented on the intent of the language stating that any municipality, water district, or other entities with authority in the area can provide permission and that permission does not need to come from

Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife
March 11, 2021 Draft Minutes

NDOW or a state agency Mark Ono, State Director of Wildlife Services, added that the definition did not come from Wildlife Services and was not sure where the origination of the definition came from.

Chair Robinson then asked for discussion from the board. Member Pitts said that he still does not see the safety issues with the suitcases and noted that he had used them in the past and never had an issue with inadvertently catching other animals. He said it appears the suitcases could, and should be able to be used, so long as the permission is given by the proper entities. There was no further discussion and Chair Robinson called for a motion.

Chair Robinson motioned to adopt Commission General Regulation 496, NAC 503 Simplification as written with the following changes to delete 503.165 Item 2 subsection E and to direct the Commission to properly define a suitcase trap. Member Pitts seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

8. Commission Regulation 21-13, 2021-2022 Seasons, Bag Limits and Special Regulations for Migratory Game Birds—[For Possible Action]

Chair Robinson opened the item and asked the Department if they had any input regarding the aforementioned item. Russel Wollsten Hume said that overall, there were no major changes from last year. He did note, the one significant change was a change to the zones the Commission had voted on last year and the Northwest Zone now has four fewer counties than it previously did.

Chair Robinson referenced a letter that had been received by the Board and asked if the Department had considered using adaptive management and starting the waterfowl season as late as possible. Mr. Wollsten Hume said the Department did have the ability to make this change and noted the waterfowl season does end on the 30th of January. He said that if the season was moved back, the closure dates would be changed from nine days down to two days. Mr. Wollsten Hume said the Board did have the ability to recommend changing the start and end of the season, but what was before the board is what he had sent to the Commission. Member Rhea said that he did not see the need or benefit to moving the dates back a day.

Chair Robinson asked if there was public comment regarding the item. Rex Flowers asked Mr. Wollsten Hume if Canvas Back or Nevada Waterfowlers had shown any interest in changing the dates that were proposed. Mr. Wollsten Hume said he had not received input from those groups this year, but the dates proposed were what those groups had recommended last year. There was no additional public comment.

Chair Robinson said this Board had made several recommendations to change dates in the past and those haven't been accepted. Since no one on the Board saw any issues with the proposed dates, he would like to see this recommendation adopted as is.

Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife
March 11, 2021 Draft Minutes

Chair Robinson moved to recommend the Commission Regulation 21-13, 2021-2022 Seasons, Bag Limits and Special Regulations for Migratory Game Birds be adopted as written. Member Kabish seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

9. Petition –Mr. Perry ‘Rob’ Pierce –Special Hunt Season for Disabled Persons –[For Possible Action]

Chair Robinson noted that Mr. Pierce had submitted a petition requesting a special hunt season be made available to disabled persons and the Board could take action to accept for deny the petition. Chair Robinson said there was no materials provided regarding this item, but Mr. Pierce sent a letter to the Board. Mr. Pierce would like to see a two week season for disabled persons prior to the normal season. Mr. Rhea said he appreciated Mr. Pierce’s request, but he believes there are already accommodations that can be made for disabled hunters and did not see the special two week season necessary because of the accommodations already in place. Member Pitts agreed with Member Rhea’s assessment and noted the special season may have an unintended impact on other seasons. Member Kabish also agreed with Member Rhea and Member Pitts comments.

In Public Comment, Mr. Flowers said he agreed with what had been discussed by the Board.

Chair Robinson said he agreed with what had been discussed by the Board and the public and did not see the space on the calendar to accommodate the special season.

Member Pitts moved recommend to the Commission to deny the Petition submitted by Mr. Pierce for a Special Hunt Season for Disabled Persons. Member Rhea seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

10. Commission General Regulation 498, NAC 503.147 –Ms. Cathy Smith – Petition Bear Hounds –[For Possible Action]

Chair Robinson opened the agenda item noting that Ms. Smith had submitted a petition to change language in NAC 503.147 to withdraw dogs from bear hunts which the Commission accepted during the November 6, 2020 meeting. Chair Robinson asked if the Department had input regarding the item. Cooper Munson, representing the Department, said the item had been improperly agendized at the Commission meeting, and would be moved to a workshop. The Commission will take public comment during the workshop. Member Kabish noted that he would like to see the use of hounds continued for the hunt.

Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife
March 11, 2021 Draft Minutes

Chair Robinson commented that what the Department proposed in the item was not consistent with what Ms. Smith has proposed in the petition. Ms. Smith's petition only strikes black bear from NAC 503.147 and so he was confused about the discrepancy.

Chair Robinson called for public comment. Mr. Flowers commented that the petition had already been accepted so the Commission could gather further information regarding using hounds in the bear hunt. Mr. Flowers referenced a letter he sent to the Board regarding his position on the item, and the letter can be found attached to these minutes. Mr. Belding noted he would like to see the Board oppose this recommendation.

There was no further public comment, and the item was opened for further comment from the Board. Member Pitts said he had seen considerable opposition to this petition and was also in strong opposition to the item. Member Rhea was also strongly opposed. Chair Robinson added that he too was opposed, and the use of hounds was a proper hunting tool to ensure the proper bears were hunted and that using hounds was not decimating the environment.

Chair Robinson moved to deny Commission General Regulation 498, NAC 503.147 from Ms. Cathy Smith – Petition Bear Hounds. Member DeMoe seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

11. Wildlife Killing Contests –Commissioner McNinch – [For Possible Action]

Chair Robinson opened the agenda item and noted this was an update that would be provided on the Wildlife Killing Contests in the State and recent action taken by the Clark County Commission specific to Wildlife Killing Contests. Chair Robinson asked if the Department had any input regarding the item, and Mr. Munson said the Department did not have a position at this time. Chair Robinson gave background regarding Clark County asking the Commission to end Wildlife Killing Contests. Member Kabish noted there are many types of contests that occur throughout the state and would like to see the contest continued. Member Pitts observed that this was a contentious issue and saw why it was contentious, but at this point since coyotes are legal to hunt, he did not see the reasoning behind the ban. Member Rhea added that the use of the phrase "wildlife killing contest" has been used to inflame the issue, and he is opposed to the ban as well.

Chair Robinson agreed with both Member Rhea and Member Kabish and listed other contests that are currently allowed in Nevada. He also disagreed with the notion that using killing contests is somehow against the model of North American wildlife and predator management.

During public comment, Mr. Belding said he appreciated Chair Robinson's discussion and was opposed to the item.

Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife
March 11, 2021 Draft Minutes

Finally, Chair Robinson noted that if the Commission were to bring up coyote killing, or culling, competitions, they would need to bring up all wildlife killing contests, because that is what was being brought up by the Clark County Commission. There was no further discussion.

Chair Robinson moved to recommend to the Commission to not consider the banning of wildlife killing contests. Member Pitts seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

12. PUBLIC COMMENTS –[Non-Action item]

Chair Robinson asked if there was any additional public comment. Mr. Flowers encouraged everyone present at the meeting to get involved with the 2021 Nevada Legislative Session. Tiffany East, Chairwoman, Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners, said there are any bills at the session that affect the hunting community and recommended those in attendance to oppose, or support, the bills if they could. The Nevada Wildlife Commission had put together a list of bills that had impacts. Mr. Belding complimented the Board and clarified that earlier when discussion the Hancock cage trap, he had consulted with a representative of the Department of Wildlife who said it had come from Wildlife Services.

13. ADJOURNMENT [Non-action item]

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