

Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife –
January 24, 2023 minutes

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

Members in Attendance

1. Coby Rowe, Vice Chairman
2. Steve Robinson
3. Jim Rhea
4. Ryan Browne

Members Absent

1. Matt Melarkey Chairman

Others in Attendance

1. Rex Flowers, public
2. Jon Ewanyk, Washoe County Wildlife Biologist
3. Kristie Knight, Department of Wildlife
4. Mel Belding
5. Joel Blakeslee
6. Jim Blamire

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

Sam Sadio introduced himself to the board members. Mr. Sadio is the fisheries biologist for Washoe and Storey counties.

4. **Approval of the November 2, 2022 minutes** -[For possible action]

Member Rhea motioned for approval of the November 2, 2022 CAB minutes. Member Robinson seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

5. **Approval of January 24, 2023 AGENDA** -[For possible action]

Vice Chair Rowe called for approval of the consent agenda and additional agenda items for the November 2, 2022 meeting. Member Robinson requested Agenda Item 8a be pulled from the consent block. Member Robinson also asked that 8d and agenda item 10 be removed from the committee's agenda.

Member Robinson motioned for approval January 24, 2023 meeting agenda, to remove 8a from the consent, remove agenda 8d, and agenda item 10 from the agenda. Member Rhea seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

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6. BOARD MEMBER MEETING ASSIGNMENT-[Non-action item]

Member Robinson said that if Chair Melarkey was unable to attend the meeting, he would be able to attend.

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

Vice Chair Rowe said the board had received two correspondences. Rex Flowers sent comment for an item that would be heard later in the meeting. The board received additional correspondence from the public which commented on the discussion to add a seat on the state wildlife board.

8. CONSENT ITEMS – [For Possible Action]

B. Commission Policy 23 – Predation Management – Second Reading
– [For Possible Action]

C. Commission Policy 62 - Mitigation Policy- Second Reading – [For Possible Action]

Vice Chair Rowe asked if there was any public comment, and no public comment was given.

Member Robinson motioned for approval November 2, 2022 consent items 8b, 8c. as written Vice Chair Rowe seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

9. Consent Calendar items pulled for further discussion – For Possible Action – [For Possible Action]

Vice Chair Rowe opened Agenda Item 8a for discussion and review The draft Fiscal Year 2024 Predation Management Plan. Member Robinson asked about the project to remove mountain lion to protect bighorn sheep and where the progress was. John Ewanyk, Washoe County Wildlife Biologist, said an individual had been contracted to survey the areas and gather further information. Member Robinson also asked about the deer monitoring project and why there appeared to be a change to the timeline of the project and why there had not been any updates on the project. Copper Munson, NDOW, said the contracted workers had not yet presented the Department with data and that was the reason for the extension in the timeline and why there had not been updates regarding outcomes. John Ewanyk also noted there were over one million photos that had to be analyzed and that work was continuing.

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Member Robinson asked if funding needed to be increased for certain projects 37 and 47 due to multiple counties asking for funding for predator removal projects. Cooper Munson said there was a fiscal note included as part of the plan which would call for additional input regarding the funding of the proposed projects.

During public comment, Rex Flowers spoke about project 40 and the request to add additional funding. He said the results from the project have been limited to date. He said only 77 coyotes had been removed as of last year. He said he would like to see the additional \$50,000 be used in projects 37 or 38. Mel Belding asked about the mountain lion removal project and why unit 014 was not being protected. John Ewanyk said unit 014 is being covered under other projects. Mr. Belding also asked what the lamb ratio was projected to be in unit 022. Mr. Ewanyk said the ratio 50 lambs to 100 ewes in 2022. Mr. Belding said he did not understand why some of the upland game fees could not pay for the protection the sage grouse.

Member Robinson said that he still has concerns with project 46 and the results based on the number of resources provided. He said the project continues to be extended without results and he would like to see the project no longer funded. He also said that he agreed with Mr. Flowers and would like to see the \$50,000 be reallocated to project 37 from project 40.

Member Robinson moved to adopt agenda item 8a Draft Fiscal Year 2024 Predation Management Plan with changes to reallocate \$50,000 from project 40 to project 37 and to end project 46 funding. Vice Chair Rowe seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

10. **Commission General Regulation 502, Junior Hunt and Turkey Program** – [For Possible Action]

No action was taken on Agenda Item 10

11. **Commission Regulation 23-04, 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 Big Game Seasons** – [For Possible Action]

Vice Chair Rowe opened discussion to consider approving the 2023-2024 and 2024- 2025 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, hunt boundary restrictions, and legal weapon requirements, and emergency depredation hunt structure and

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statewide quota. The board decided to break the agenda item into species. Member Rhea said he would like to see the seasons start on weekends instead of starting some seasons during the midweek. Member Browne said he liked the way the dates were since it allowed him to know the exact day a season starts each year.

Members of the board discussed the archery tag for bighorn sheep and goats. Member Browne said there was limited water in the Mormons and he felt that the archery hunts would lead to a slaughter of the sheep in those area. Mr. Munson noted that the Mormons do have limited water options, but it is expected that area will only have one tag allowed which would prevent too many animals from being taken out. Mr. Ewanyk said they are proposing to combine Units 011, 013, 012, and 104 for bighorn sheep due to collar data that had been analyzed and analysis of harvested rams. Member Robinson asked about the quota, and Mr. Ewanyk said the quota would be fairly low. Mr. Munson said that the harvesting data of mature rams was not what they would have expected to see. He noted that the Department did not foresee an impact to the population if a single ram was harvested. Member Robinson asked about the rationale of combining the units. Mr. Munson said the decision was based off data and that was the leading indicator of the proposed combination of units. Member Robinsons noted that even if the units were combined, hunters would still be hunting in areas that were unit-specific which may defeat the purpose of combining the units. Member Robinson said that overall, he was very much against the proposal. Member Robinson said he felt that units 011 and 103 should be removed and only have a season in units 012 and 014. Vice Chair Rowe added that he felt it was worth closing the units Member Robinson highlighted because it would be best for hunters.

The board discussed mule deer. Mr. Munson said statewide, there was nothing too out of the ordinary compared to previous seasons. Member Robinson asked if the board could change the junior mule deer hunts and having be antlered-only. Since that was policy, the board could not make that change.

During public comment, Mr. Belding said he appreciated the dialogue from the department. Mr. Belding said he was not in agreement with the proposals in units 011, 012, 013, and 014. He said he would like to know the data on the younger rams. He said he would like to see the units closed due the uncertainty around the younger populations. He said he would like to see those herds have a chance to comeback and he felt there should be no tags in 011, 012, 013 and 014. Rex Flowers said he agreed with Mr. Belding. He said they should be closed until the numbers could be reestablished. Mr. Flowers said he did not think it was right to combine units in order to be able to get a tag. Mr. Belding noted Unit 173 and the management hunt and asked the board to review that

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hunt.

During discussion, Member Rhea said he agreed that 011 and 014 should be closed. Member Robinson asked that if the board recommended closing 011 and 014 would there still be the ability to have hunts in 012 and 013. Mr. Munson said that unit 012 would be the preferable unit for a hunt.

Member Robinson moved to recommend the Commission adopt the 2023-2024 and 2024- 2025 hunting seasons and Commission for mule deer, pronghorn antelope, elk, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat with the exceptions to hunt 3172 restrict to the Arkdome wilderness boundary only and to hunt 8151 to not combine the units, close seasons for 011, 013, and 014, and leave 012 as open. Vice Chair Rowe seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

12. Commission Regulation 23-05, 2023 Black Bear Seasons – [For Possible Action]

Vice Chair Rowe opened the item to consider the 2023 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.

Mr. Munson said the Department's recommendation is to split the black bear season into three unit groups. This was being recommended due to feedback from hunters. Vice Chair Rowe asked what the sex-ratio was of the bears. Mr. Munson said that he did not have the exact numbers on hand, but generally the split was fifty-fifty. Vice Chair Rowe said that he was leaning towards recommending the unit be left as one group. Member Browne added that if there were three separate units it may lead to more opportunity for hunters to receive a tag.

Rex Flowers said he preferred the previous system that allowed hunters to hunt other units in the event one unit was closed. He said if the population is there, then there doesn't need to be changes to the units, because if the population dictates that more animals can be hunted, then that should be all that is needed. Mel Belding said it was an interesting concept. And he was in support of the proposed change. Other members including Jim Blamire of the public spoke in favor of splitting the units to allow for flexibility between the units.

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Member Robinson said he was initially against the splitting of the units but based on the public comment, he felt it would be in the best interest for everyone to split the units. He added that he would like to see all edible meat be taken off the mountain for the bear hunts.

Vice Chair moved to approve Commission Regulation 23-05, 2023 Black Bear Seasons as written, with the exception to review the ratio of male to sow. Member Robinson seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

13. Commission Regulation 23-06 2023-2024 Mountain Lion Season and Harvest Limits – [For Possible Action]

Vice Chair Rowe opened discussion to consider the 2023-2024 mountain lion hunting season open units, harvest limits by unit group, hunting hours, and special regulations.

Member Robinson said that he felt there should be more than a two tag minimum per person, but he recognized that would require NRS and NAC revisions. Member Rhea asked why trappers were not permitted to shoot mountain lions when they were trapped. Kristie Knight, Department of Wildlife, said that discussion was outside the scope of the agenda item, and would need to be taken up on a different agenda. The board did discuss the increase in mountain lion populations and said they hoped there could be improvements made to allow the Department to remove male mountain lions when they were captured in a trap. There was no public comment.

Member Browne moved to approve Commission Regulation 23-06 2023-2024 Mountain Lion Season and Harvest Limits as written. Vice Chair Rowe seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

14. Commission Regulation 23-07, 2023-2024 Restricted Nonresident Guided Mule Deer Seasons and Quotas – [For Possible Action]

Vice Chair opened the item to consider the 2023-2024 hunting season and quotas for restricted, nonresident, guided mule deer including hunt boundary restrictions.

Member Robinson asked how the quota was set. Mr. Munson said it was based in NRS, and Member Robinson said he would appreciate examining the statute further.

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During public comment, Mr. Flowers said the quotas were set to the previous years' numbers, but they only affected the non-resident hunters.

Member Robinson moved to approve Commission Regulation 23-07, 2023-2024 Restricted Nonresident Guided Mule Deer Seasons and Quotas, as written. Member Rhea seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

15. Commission Regulation 23-01, 2023 Application Deadlines & Draw Result Dates – [For Possible Action]

Vice Chair Rowe opened the item to consider the 2023 big game, upland, and waterfowl application deadlines and related information. Member Robinson asked if the Department had any comments. Mr. Munson said the Department had no comment. There was no public comment.

Vice Chair Rowe moved to approve Commission Regulation 23-01, 2023 Application Deadlines & Draw Result Dates as written. Member Robinson seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

16. Commission Regulation 23-08, 2023 Big Game Tag Application Eligibility and Tag – [For Possible Action]

Vice Chair Rowe opened the item to consider the approval of the 2023 big game tag application eligibility and tag limits and related information. There was no initial comment by members of the board and no public comment.

Vice Chair Rowe moved to approve Commission Regulation 23-08, 2023 Big Game Tag Application Eligibility and Tag as written. Member Robinson seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

17. Commission Regulation 23-09, 2023 Dream Tag – [For Possible Action]

Vice Chair Rowe opened the item to consider the 2023 Dream Tag species, seasons and quota. There was no initial board discussion.

During public comment, Mr. Belding said he did not foresee reaching fifty tags,

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and thus there would be no need for the dream tag. Mr. Flowers suggested the Commission forward the item to the main meeting and approve at that time in the event there was need for a dream tag.

Member Robinson asked the Department if there was a possibility it would be below 50. Mr. Munson said it was a possibility.

Member Robinson moved to approve Commission Regulation 23-09, 2023 Dream Tag as written, with addendum to examine the California Bighorn tag and quotas and possibly defer to the main meeting. Vice Chair Rowe seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

18. Commission Regulation 23-10, 2024 Heritage Tag Seasons and Quota – [For Possible Action]

Vice Chair Rowe opened the item to consider the 2024 Heritage Tag species, seasons and quota. There was no initial board discussion.

During public comment, Mr. Belding said he would have preferred to know the quota before action was taken on this item.

Member Robinson moved to approve Commission Regulation 23-10, 2024 Heritage Tag Seasons and Quota as written. Vice Chair Rowe seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

19. Commission Regulation 23-11, 2023 Partnership in Wildlife Tags – [For Possible Action]

Vice Chair Rowe opened the item to consider the 2023 Partnership in Wildlife tags hunt species, seasons and quota. There was no board comment or public comment.

Vice Chair Rowe moved to approve Commission Regulation 23-11, 2023 Partnership in Wildlife Tags as written. Member Rhea seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

20. Commission Regulation 23-12, 2023 Silver State Tags – [For Possible Action]

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Vice Chair Rowe opened the item to consider 2023 Silver State tag species, seasons and quota. There was no board discussion or public comment.

Vice Chair Rowe moved to approve Commission Regulation 23-12, 2023 Silver State Tags as written. Member Robinson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

21. Future Meeting Agenda Items – Informational only- Public Comment Allowed

Vice Chair Rowe said he recommended adding the examination of the male to sow ratio of bears for the next meeting.

During public comment, Joel Blakeslee said he was in favor of the board adding the examination of the bear ratio. He said he always appreciates scientific study.

22. PUBLIC COMMENTS [Non-action item]

Mr. Belding asked if a non-resident California Bighorn sheep season during the meeting. Member Robinson said it was approved during the meeting. Mr. Belding said he would like to see a discussion to consider having no non-resident tags unless there are 100 tags. He said he would like to see a minimum amount of tags for residents before it becomes available to non-residents.

23. ADJOURNMENT [Non-action item]

Vice Chair Rowe adjourned the meeting at 7:48 p.m.