

Minutes of the Game, Fish, and Parks Commission  
January 12-13, 2012

Chairman Jeff Olson called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM at the Holiday Inn Express conference room in Fort Pierre, South Dakota. Commissioners present were Jeff Olson, Susie Knippling, Mike Authier, Jim McMahon, John Cooper, Jim Spies, and Barry Jensen. Cathy Peterson was absent. Secretary Jeff Vonk was present along with public, staff, and media numbering approximately forty five.

Division of Administration

Chairman Olson called for any additions or corrections to the minutes of the December 2011 meeting and no changes were provided.

Motion by Cooper with second by Spies TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 2011 MEETING AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Olson called for additional Commissioners salary days and Knippling and McMahon requested four days each for the WAFWA conference last week and Cooper requested two days for the Access Committee meeting.

Motion by Jensen with second by Authier TO APPROVE THE ADDITIONAL COMMISSIONERS SALARY DAYS AS REQUESTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Director Chris Petersen presented a license list request from Tom Slowey of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation for a list of the 2011 elk applicants to mail chances for the 2012 CSP elk tag and other prizes to raise funds for GFP projects. The fee for this would be waived.

Motion by Jensen with second by Cooper TO APPROVE THE LICENSE LIST REQUEST FROM TOM SLOWEY AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Petersen presented a license list request from Charles Ross for a list of preserve license holders to be used for marketing purposes. This would be at full fee.

Motion by McMahon with second by Authier TO APPROVE THE LICENSE LIST REQUEST FROM CHARLES ROSS AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Director Petersen presented the Final License Sales Report for 2011. The report showed an overall decrease of 1% indicating stable sales for 2011. The nonresident small game licenses were down 5% representing a \$500-\$600,000 loss of income for the Wildlife Division and considering the pheasant forecast and economic conditions a greater loss could have been seen.

Director Petersen indicated the current licensing system would be under major renovation during the next 30-60 days. The renovation will update the system to operate for the next ten years. There should be little if any noticeable changes on the website and includes combining the over-the-counter sales and big game or limited issue license data systems. Discussion included the current system is not outsourced but rather in-house, and the down-time and server issues have been addressed with public users already seeing the enhancements.

Secretary Vonk outlined the GFP bills for the 2012 Legislative session beginning with HB 1018 known as a "Red Tape bill" of obsolete codes. The HB 1019 - Snowmobile license bill- is designed to coordinate with the current license renewal system for other vehicles allowing snowmobile licenses to go to an annual license to accommodate the renewal process. HB 1020 - Marcotte Tract sale bill is for the surplus property near Sturgis allowing for negotiations with City of Sturgis to purchase the surplus property. SB 10 – Boating Under the Influence bill – gives authority to a conservation officer to administer a compete blood test following probable cause.

#### Open Forum

Jim Twamley of South Dakota Bowhunters invited Commissioners to hospitality night and the convention in Spearfish on February 25.

Marvin Jobgen of Dakota Safaris near Wall SD would like to propose an increase of 250 nonresident private land buck tags licenses allowing for repeat customers.

Phillip Wilson of Dakota Trophy near Wasta, SD, stated his support for additional special buck licenses and believes this would decrease the number of nonresident applicants for the regular draw.

Randy Kemink shared that West Whitlock refuge is doing well. He reminded the Commission of a suggestion to extend the January doe season by allowing hunting on adjoining counties. He shared that college students and service men come home for holidays; therefore, he would like to see the pheasant season extended a week.

Bill Antonides, President of the South Dakota Wildlife Federation visited about the mountain lion season and recognizes there is no landowner preference when purchasing a license but landowners are allowed preference when protecting their property. He is concerned about landowner/operators following rules when taking a lion when not protecting their property. He is very concerned about this issue and believes there should be documentation for the landowner preference. These cases and other violations should not be tried in the media or with legislators; and officers should be supported when doing their job.

## Division of Parks and Recreation

Director Hofer asked to present the Lewis and Clark public water change recommendation with the Public Water recommendation the Wildlife Division will present later on the agenda.

Hofer indicated that last month the Commission was briefed regarding the possible change in ownership of Cedar Shore Resort. The Lyman County Commission did not agree to the terms of a lease modification which would have relinquished their role in the management of the Cedar Shore lease. Staff will facilitate the effort between Ramkota and Lyman County regarding the necessary transfer and assignment of the sublease.

Dave Sweet of Ramkota shared an update of the negotiations for the Cedar Shores sale as well as the lease changes necessary to complete the transactions. Lyman County wants to dissolve all of their interests in the current lease which includes the ownership and maintenance of the County road leading to the resort. Hofer indicated that high water does threaten the road which could pose a significant problem and he will research whether a viable fix exists. Hofer plans to be back in March with an action item should the sale be finalized.

The final 2011 Visitation and Revenue Report was presented by Director Hofer indicating fees were adjusted allowing for anticipated increase revenue of about 6%. Flooding caused fewer reservations and a few park closures thus creating a loss of projected revenue of about one million dollars. Publicity regarding the flooding, cool weather, and lower bike rally participation led to a decrease of revenue for Custer State Park. Visitation state wide was down 8.8%.

Discussion included how amazing the income in the parks and over-the-counter license sales remained as good as they did for 2011. Tree survival in the parks and on the islands in the waterways, soil displacement, and the dunes that were developed were included in the discussion. It is anticipated that the hiking and biking trails will return just in a different version.

Director Hofer indicated that a Request for Proposal for the State Park System's Point-of-Sale/Reservation System has been developed and advertised. The current system has been sold to a new company. The new company has put the Parks Division "on notice" that the current software will not be serviced beyond the current contract period. It appears there will be competition for a new contract and Hofer provided a rough schedule for the process. Changes made to the RFP included a preference for an in-state call center that operates 24/7 with more operators.

## Division of Wildlife

### Public Water Marking and Zones

Assistant Director Emmett presented the recommended changes for Public Water Markings and Zones indicating the changes on Richmond, Mina, and Lake

Mitchell would allow for a “no wake zone” during certain times when the water is high and when the waters recede, the “no wake zone” would be lifted; this process would be much more efficient to manage. There is a suggested change to the boundaries on Lake Mitchell for the “no wake zone”. Changes to Rollings GPA and Family Park would allow electric motors on those bodies of water.

Parks Assistant Director Bob Schneider presented the change to Canary Beach on Lewis and Clark Lake making it into a boating beach with a “no-wake zone” instead of a swimming beach.

1. Create a “no wake zone” on Richmond Lake (Brown County) during certain periods of high water.
2. Create a “no wake zone” on Mina Lake (Edmunds County) during certain periods of high water.
3. Create a “no wake zone” on Lake Mitchell (Davison County) during certain periods of high water.
4. Amend the boundaries of the existing “no wake zone” on the west end of Lake Mitchell (Davison County).
5. Create an “electric motors zone” on the waters of Rollings Game Production Area (Lincoln County).
6. Amend existing zoning on the waters of Family Park (Minnehaha County) from a “no motors zone” to an “electric motors zone”.
7. Amend existing zoning on the waters of Lewis and Clark Lake (Yankton County) adjacent to Canary Beach from a “public swimming zone” to a “no wake zone”.

Motion by Knippling with second by McMahon TO PROPOSE CHANGES TO PUBLIC WATER ZONING AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

#### Motorboats and Watercraft

Keyser presented recommended changes to Motorboats and Watercraft establishing that the required fire extinguishers carried on boats need to be in working order, and to amend provisions for emergency lights on emergency and law enforcement boats.

1. Add a provision to 41:04:05:03 that would clarify that Coast Guard approved fire extinguishers carried on boats must be in working order.
2. Amend 41:04:05:16 to revise the provisions for emergency signals on law enforcement boats

Motion by Authier with second by Knippling TO PROPOSE CHANGES TO MOTORBOATS AND WATERCRAFT AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Olson called for a recess at 2:39 PM and meeting resumed at 3:05 PM.

Kirschenmann indicated that Refuges are on the schedule for this month and the Department has no recommended changes for Commission consideration.

## Special Buck

Kirschenmann indicated special buck season falls within the regular season and is on private land not on walk-in-areas and outlined the current requirements for the special buck license. The application requires the name and permission from the landowner along with other information. The 2011 harvest numbers are not available at this time and the 2010 harvest information was provided. The Wildlife Division presented no recommended changes to the current rules.

Discussion included concerns and requests from the open forum comments and management issues as the special licenses are spread out statewide and not a unit specific harvest as in the regular season. The special buck harvest effect on the herd is minimal because of the large area the licenses are spread out in. Biologists and managers are still looking closely at the herd in the specific units. This has been a mild winter and harvest surveys have not been tallied; however, there could be reductions in the antlerless licenses. The fees were last adjusted in 2002.

Motion by Authier with second by McMahon TO PROPOSE INCREASING THE WEST RIVER SPECIAL BUCK NONRESIDENT LICENSES TO 600 AND THE WEST RIVER RESIDENT SPECIAL BUCK LICENSES TO 600 AND INCREASE THE FEE FOR THE WEST RIVER NONRESIDENT SPECIAL BUCK LICENSES TO \$600.00 EACH. Roll call vote: Authier-yes; Cooper-yes; Jensen-yes; Knippling-no; McMahon-yes; Spies-yes; and Olson-yes. Motion carried six yes votes and one no vote.

## Mountain Lion

Director Leif and Tom Kirschenmann presented changes to the mountain lion rules as requested by the Commission in December.

The Commission directed the Department to bring forward a rule change for consideration that would allow an individual to retain a mountain lion harvested or killed outside the Black Hills Fire Protection District. These alternative changes to administrative rule would provide a means of addressing the Commission's request and would allow additional lion hunting opportunity to SD residents by affording all licensed persons, not just landowners, to hunt a lion outside the Black Hills. This will not change the Department's focus of mountain lion management (South Dakota Mountain Lion Management Plan 2010-2015) which has been and remains in the Black Hills region of the state.

Currently landowners that possess a lion license may kill and retain a lion provided it was harvested on land they own or lease. A lion killed under state law (SDCL 41-6-29.2) due to threatening a person or an individual protecting property has been retained as property of the State of SD. Lions killed under the provisions of this statute may not be retained if desired because state law specifies the conditions in which a big game animal can be taken and possessed. Mountain lions are classified as a big game species (SDCL 41-1-1(4)) and in order for a person to take and possess such an animal it must have been lawfully taken (person must be properly licensed in accordance with SDCL 41-8-6). The alternatives, if adopted as rule changes, would allow a licensed person (whether the lion is taken in the act of hunting or exercising the provisions of SDCL 41-6-29.2) to retain a lion outside the

area of the Black Hills Fire Protection District once the harvest quota or March 31 date is reached for that area.

Motion by Cooper with second by Authier TO PROPOSE CHANGES TO THE MOUNTAIN LION SEASON AS PRESENTED. Roll call vote: Authier-yes; Cooper-yes; Jensen-yes; Knippling-yes; McMahan-no; Spies-no; and Olson-no. Yes votes were four and no votes were three, motion failed the required five votes to carry.

Information items:

A PowerPoint presentation on the impacts of flooding of the Missouri River was presented by Senior Biologist Mark Fincel. The information included the future of the fishing on Lake Oahe, rainbow smelt, entrainment, numbers and process to determine the information, predation, safety, smelt count on Oahe, and population estimates. Fincel indicated gizzard shad will be stocked in Lake Oahe next year and outlined the process to do this. All other prey fish are above average in numbers and any stockings will supplement the prey resource. Future scenarios were presented and current conditions will be monitored so adjustments and recommendations can be considered.

Discussion included the political climate, water levels on the river system, pools of water, and relationship with the CORP.

A mountain lion hunting season update presented by Tom Kirschenmann indicated current harvest is at 16 with 10 females and 6 males. The Custer State Park season has gone well with an increase of hunters wanting to participate for the different time intervals and one lion has been harvested in the park. Discussion included mortality outside of hunting, collared lions, snow conditions, license sales, and age of the lions harvested.

Eastern South Dakota Bobcat Populations was a PowerPoint presentation by Kevin Robling beginning with bobcat history. Robling outlined the objectives and location of a study including 41 bobcats fitted with collars and shared information about bobcat habitat, topography, population, survival rates and mortality, harvest numbers, techniques use to harvest bobcats, adjacent states harvest information, fur prices, and demographics of bobcat populations. Public meetings were held with about 100 people attending.

Chairman Olson called for a recess at 5:00 PM with meeting to resume at 8:30 AM the next morning. Meeting resumed at 8:28 AM on Friday morning, January 13, 2012, with Commissioners Olson, Knippling, Authier, McMahan, Cooper, Spies, and Jensen. Commissioner Peterson was absent. GFP staff and public numbered about twenty.

Paul Coughlin presented a potential land exchange for a new shooting range in Fall River County. Possibilities were examined and it was determined we did not want to develop a range on current properties held by the Department. A local landowner presented a proposal for a range near the Buffalo Gap GPA and staff spent considerable time checking out the area, visiting with neighbors, and

searching for a location with highway access. Appraisals have been completed and an exchange agreement has been drafted which includes a grazing and fencing agreement.

GFP staff reached out to local people to ensure they understand that the Buffalo Gap GPA will no longer be available for public hunting or shooting range activities. The local shooting club has agreed to monitor the proposed shooting range and can host events while keeping the new range open for public use. Coughlin indicated he might have a resolution for consideration at the March meeting.

Cooper asked about the Saltsman property presented at the December meeting and Coughlin indicated an evaluation of the restrictions is ongoing and Vonk indicated he will work with the Parks and Wildlife Foundation towards a recommendation as there is no urgency on this issue.

Hunting season recap began with Kirschenmann sharing about weather conditions and events for the 2011 hunting seasons. The Regional Supervisors updated the Commission regarding the different hunting seasons, depredation issues, law enforcement, access, and trapping in their respective regions. Discussion included loss of habitat due to loss of CRP acres, the tiling or draining of wetlands, converted sloughs, and tree belts that are being removed.

The Division of Wildlife Annual Report was handed out by Director Tony Leif along with the Law Enforcement Annual Report indicating both reports are produced internally and very cost effective with a professional quality. These reports will be posted on the GFP Website.

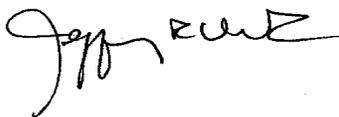
Director Leif gave an update on public Information and communications strategies used by the Department including the internet, Facebook, and email notifications of open houses or meetings in a specific location or region about specific concerns. He believes the email notices for meetings generate additional participation from the public.

Director Leif thanked Mike Authier for his years of service on the GFP Commission.

Knippling and McMahon provide a brief summary of the WAFWA conference.

Motion by Knippling with second by Authier TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.  
Meeting adjourned at 11:01 AM.

Respectfully submitted,



Jeffrey R. Vonk, Department Secretary