

Minutes of the Game, Fish, and Parks Commission
March 1-2, 2012

Chairman Jeff Olson called the meeting to order at 1:01 PM in the conference room of the Holiday Inn Express in Fort Pierre, South Dakota. Commissioners present were Jeff Olson, Susie Knippling, John Cooper, Barry Jensen, and Duane Sather. Olson welcomed Duane Sather to his first Commission meeting. Absent were: Jim Spies, Cathy Peterson, and Bill Cerny. Secretary Vonk was present along with staff, media, and public numbering approximately fifty.

Olson asked for changes to the agenda and indicated the budget amendments items 27 and 32 would be combined and added to the Administration action items. Parks added the Big Sioux Recreation Area to their information items.

Chairman Olson requested additions or corrections to the January 12th minutes or a motion for approval. Motion by Jensen with second by Knippling TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 12 MINUTES AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Olson requested additions or corrections to the January 27th minutes or a motion for approval. Motion by Cooper with second by Knippling TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 27TH TELECONFERENCE MEETING AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Olson called for any additional salary days and Cooper requested three days for teaching at SDSU and the Conservation Officers meeting. Olson and Spies requested one day each for the 1st Annual SD Wild Sheep Summit in Chamberlain.

Motion by Jensen and second by Knippling TO APPROVE THE ADDITIONAL SALARY DAYS AS REQUESTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Director Chris Petersen provided background information regarding license list requests, fees, and the required Commission action for the requests he presents today.

Petersen presented a request from Dakota Wholesale Bait, Inc. of Brookings for a list of wholesale bait dealers and private fish hatchery dealers. This list will be used to invite the dealers to meetings to share industry information. This request would be at full fee.

Motion by Cooper with second by Knippling TO APPROVE THE LICENSE LIST REQUEST FROM DAKOTA WHOLESAL BAIT AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Director Peterson presented a list request from the Pierre Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau for a list of nonresident hunters and fish license holders for a direct mailing to promote hunting and fishing in the Pierre area. The fee for this would be waived.

Motion by Jensen with second by Cooper TO APPROVE THE LIST REQUEST FROM THE PIERRE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Director Petersen presented Resolution 12-01 requesting Commission permission to comply with SB193 should the 2012 Legislature pass the bill providing a one-time payment to employees on March 30, 2012. This bill, when approved by Legislature, requires payment be made prior to the next regular Commission meeting in April and will affect the Wildlife and Snowmobile budgets. Petersen indicated the June 2012 Wildlife and Snowmobile Budgets do not reflect pay increases and a budget adjustment with spending authority will be presented at the April meeting for Commission approval. (See Appendix A)

Motion by Knippling with second by Jensen TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 12-01 AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Director Petersen brought Resolution 12-01 back to the Commission on Friday morning indicating the Legislature debated the one-time payment on the previous afternoon defeating it but bringing it back in HB1137. Petersen requested Commission approval to change all references to SB193 in Resolution 12-01 to HB1137.

Motion by Jensen with second by Sather TO AMEND RESOLUTION 12-01 TO CHANGE ALL REFERENCES TO SB193 WITH HB1137. Motion carried unanimously. (See Appendix A)

Petersen presented the February 22, 2012, License Sales Report showing increased fishing licenses sales over the February 2011 Sales Report.

Secretary Vonk indicated Jim McMahon served as Commission representative on the South Dakota Parks and Wildlife Foundation Board and a new Commission representative should be appointed. John Cooper agreed to fill the position and Knippling made a motion and Jensen second the motion TO APPROVE JOHN COOPER AS THE GFP COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE ON THE PARKS AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION BOARD. Motion carried unanimously.

The 2012 Legislative Session will complete regular business this week. Secretary Vonk indicated all legislative bills have been dealt with except the budget. The Snowmobile license was changed to an annual license and signed by the Governor. The "Red Tape" bill is on the Governor's desk as is the Boating Under the Influence bill. The bill to transfer the old Wildlife Office in Rapid City to the Department of Ag has been approved. The Legislature approved additional dollars to address the mountain pine beetle infestation and flood recovery efforts. There were several bills regarding mountain lions that kept staff busy. Vonk complimented and thanked the staff for their work during the Legislative Session and thanked the Chris Hesla and Dave Nauman of the Wildlife Federation for their time and assistance on several bills.

Habitat Partner of the Year was presented to Ken McIlravy of Haakon County by Wildlife Director Tony Leif. Leif outlined the many programs Ken has been participated in while operating a 12,000 acre ranch. McIlravy expressed his appreciation for the award indicating his family and the Wildlife Division staff were instrumental in achieving the award.

Open Forum

Dale Wedekind from the Fall River Gun Club (Club) indicated they have been working for three years on the project to acquire a public shooting range near Hot Springs. The land exchange with Conger is as close to a perfect situation as one could arrange. There is room for a skeet range, a .22 range for kids, a pistol range for law enforcement, and all of these things are needed and is a win-win for everyone. Club President John DiCiacio stated the January membership drive increased membership by 55-60% to 115 members and he anticipates an increase of membership following the land exchange. He indicated the Club will assist with the development of this range and believes nonresidents will participate in shooting events. This will allow the Club to move forward with an environmental impact study for the range.

Craig Solberg of Pierre provided a handout to discuss big game management issues and requested the discontinuance of cow elk tags in the Black Hills units and to discontinue antlerless licenses when herds are in decline. Black Hills elk herds continue to decline as well as the deer and with the last three tough winters, he has seen little reduction of tags. He is concerned as a Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation member - what is benefit of their support if the herd continues to decline. He requested the Commission be proactive in making decisions to improve big game herds before they hit rock bottom.

Kevin Hipple of Pierre supported Solberg's testimony and is concerned about the number of antlerless tags and wants to decrease the antlerless tags to increase populations.

The Public Hearing began at 2:00 PM and concluded at 2:31 PM. Minutes of the Public Hearing will follow the regular commission minutes. Chairman Olson called for a recess at 2:43 PM and meeting resumed at 3 PM.

Finalizations

Public Water Zoning 41:04:02

Assistant Director Emmett Keyser presented the proposed changes that create "no wake zones" on Richmond Lake, Mina Lake, and Mitchell Lake during periods of high water. This would assist the homeowners on these lakes, the GFP Department, and the Governor's office to efficiently and timely respond to high water situations. There are no recommended changes to proposal.

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.

Motion by Jensen with second by Cooper TO FINALIZE THE CHANGES FOR “NO WAKE ZONES” AS PROPOSED. Motion carried unanimously.

Keyser presented the proposed change to the “no wake zone” on Lake Mitchell that allows homeowners better access to a channel this change is supported by staff and the City of Mitchell. There are no recommended changes to proposal.

Amend the boundaries of the existing “no wake zone” on the west end of Lake Mitchell (Davison County).

Motion by Cooper with second by Knippling TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO THE MITCHELL LAKE “NO WAKE ZONE” AS PROPOSED. Motion carried unanimously.

Keyser presented the proposed change to the Rollings GPA in Lincoln County to allow only electric motors on boats on the Rollings GPA. This comes as a request from homeowners while allowing fishing opportunities on this 7.5 acre pond. There are no recommended changes to the proposal.

Create an “electric motors zone” on the waters of Rollings Game Production Area (Lincoln County).

Motion by Jensen with second by Cooper TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO THE ROLLINGS GAME PRODUCTION AREA AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Keyser presented the proposed change to Family Park near Sioux Falls to allow electric motors on the thirty-acre body of water allowing additional boat fishing opportunity. Discussion began with public comment received about the change to Family Park fishing, a request by a disabled person, size of boats on this water located adjacent to Sioux Falls, and that the donor of the property was consulted prior to the recommendation.

Amend existing zoning on the waters of Family Park (Minnehaha County) from a “no motors zone” to an “electric motors zone”

Motion by Cooper second by Jensen TO TABLE ACTION ON FAMILY PARK. Motion carried unanimously.

Keyser presented the proposed change to make Canary Beach at Lewis and Clark Recreation Area a “no wake zone” from a “swimming zone”. There are no recommended changes to proposal.

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 Cooper with second by Knippling TO FINALIZE THE CHANGE AT LEWIS AND CLARK LAKE CANARY BEACH AS PROPOSED. Motion carried unanimously.

Motorboats and Watercraft 41:04:05

Assistant Director Keyser presented the proposed changes with no recommended changes. These changes clarify that fire extinguishers on boats be in working condition and that rescue and enforcement boats have flashing red or blue lights.

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 Jensen with second by Knippling TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO MOTORBOATS AND WATERCRAFT 41:04:05 AS PROPOSED. Motion carried unanimously.

Special Buck Licenses 41:06:20 and 41:06:21

Chief Tom Kirschenmann provided a handout showing the resident and nonresident projected harvest of the 200 additional proposed Special Buck Licenses. Kirschenmann reminded the Commissioners that all applications for Special Buck require landowner permission and harvest is on private land only. The Department recommended no changes at the January meeting.

Discussion included public comments, landowners currently get 50% of west deer license allocations, the tags should not be a guarantee for operators/outfitters, special buck licenses were not developed as a management tool, and how does this effect the chances in the regular draw.

Motion by Cooper with second by Sather TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO THE SPECIAL BUCK LICENSES AS PROPOSED. Roll call vote: Cooper-no; Jensen-yes; Knippling-no; Sather-yes; Olson-yes. Motion failed the required five votes.

Paddlefish 41:07:05

Chief John Lott and Geno Adams presented the proposed changes with no recommended changes. Adams indicated this change would allow harvest on Lake Francis Case and meet the management goal to provide fishing opportunity by stocking paddlefish as it does not have natural reproduction of paddlefish.

41:07:05:03. Paddlefish snagging, processing, and transportation restrictions. Any paddlefish taken below Gavin's Point Dam, by snagging, which measures between 35 inches and 45 inches, inclusive, from the eye to the notch in the fork of the tail must be immediately released to the water from which it was caught. A person may not attempt to snag rough fish or paddlefish after reaching the limit on paddlefish. A gaff hook or other penetrating device may not be used as an aid while landing snagged paddlefish.

Motion by Knippling with second by Sather TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO PADDLEFISH 41:07:05 AS PROPOSED. Motion carried unanimously.

Hunting Season Proposals:

Custer State Park Bison Hunting Season

Gary Brundige indicated these hunts are used for surplus bison in Custer State Park and there are no recommended changes to the current season regulations.

Custer State Park Deer Hunting Season

Brundige presented changes to eliminate 35 antlerless white-tail tags and a change regarding open area as this is in another rule.

1. Eliminate the 35 one-tag antlerless white-tail deer licenses.
2. Delete the last sentence of 41:06:41:01 as this is covered in covered in 41:06:07:10.

Motion by Knippling with second by Cooper TO PROPOSE CHANGES TO THE CSP DEER HUNTING SEASON AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Custer State Park Elk Seasons

Brundige indicated there are no recommended changes to the CSP Early Archery or Antlerless Elk Hunting Seasons.

Custer State Park Late Archery Elk Hunting Season

Brundige recommend closing the season by reducing the number of tags from 15 to 0.

Reduce any elk licenses from 15 to 0. The late archery elk season would be closed.

Motion by Knippling with second by Jensen TO PROPOSE CHANGES TO CSP LATE ARCHERY ELK HUNTING SEASON AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Custer State Park Elk Hunting Season (Any Elk)

Brundige recommended reducing the any elk licenses from 11 to 4 with one of the four to be available for the special raffle tag. Surveys indicate there are approximately 38 large bulls in the park and the maximum harvest of four would have little impact on the herd. There is a mandatory check-in of all harvested elk to collect data and the data with hunter comments are provide to the Commissioners. Discussion ensued on the harvest of bulls only.

Reduce any elk licenses from 11 to 4. The license allocation of 4 includes 1 license made available through a special raffle conducted by the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.

Motion by Sather with second by Cooper TO PROPOSE CHANGES TO THE CSP ANY ELK HUNTING SEASON AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Archery Elk Hunting Season

Chief Tom Kirschenmann presented recommended changes to the season to adjust the total available licenses to 107. Hunter success rates for the past five years run from 26-33% with only seven cows harvested in the 2011 season. He also recommended a boundary change for Unit 7 and to eliminate the season for Unit 30A in Gregory County.

1. Adjust the number of licenses available from 89 "any elk" and 37 "antlerless elk" licenses (total of 126 licenses) to 82 "any elk" and 25 "antlerless elk" licenses (total of 107 licenses).
2. Adjust the boundary of Unit 7 to include the area located within a line beginning at I-90 and Pleasant Valley Rd, then east and south on Pleasant Valley Rd. to Tilford Rd. then west on Tilford Rd. to I-90.
3. Eliminate the archery season for Unit 30A.

Motion by Cooper with second by Jensen TO PROPOSE CHANGES TO THE ARCHERY ELK HUNTING SEASON AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Black Hills Elk Hunting Season

Kirschenmann presented changes to decrease the number of licenses available and to adjust the boundary of Unit 7. Hunter success rate for 2011 was 55% with 295 bulls harvested and 170 cows harvested. The herd in the northern portion of the Black Hills is healthy and calf recruitment is good which allows for the recommended license allocation for the 2012 season.

1. Adjust the number of licenses available from 470 "any elk" and 395 "antlerless elk" licenses (total of 865 licenses) to 395 "any elk" and 260 "antlerless elk" licenses (total of 655 licenses).
2. Adjust the boundary of Unit 7 to include the area located within a line beginning at I-90 and Pleasant Valley Rd, then east and south on Pleasant Valley Rd. to Tilford Rd. then west on Tilford Rd. to I-90.

Motion by Jensen with second by Cooper TO PROPOSE CHANGES TO THE BLACK HILLS ELK HUNTING SEASON AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Prairie Elk Hunting Season

Kirschenmann presented recommendations for a reduction of elk licenses, a boundary adjustment for Unit 27, a season date adjustment for Unit 09A, and the adjustment of the season dates for Unit 30A to coincide with the season dates of this shared unit to align with the date changes made by Nebraska. Discussion included the size of the shared herd with Nebraska and the Pine Ridge boundary change.

1. Adjust the number of licenses available from 49 "any elk" and 79 "antlerless elk" licenses (total of 128 licenses) to 47 "any elk" and 53 "antlerless elk" licenses (total of 100 licenses).

2. Add Unit 27 (Fall River County) to include that portion of Fall River County south of the Cheyenne River and west of Highway 385. Season dates: September 1 – October 31.
3. Adjust the season dates for Unit 09A from September 1-October 31 to a split season of September 15-October 31 and December 1-15.
4. Adjust the season dates for Unit 30A. Currently written in administrative rule as "beginning on August 15 and remains open to the Friday closest to November 12, inclusive, and from the Monday closest to November 22 to December 31, inclusive". Change dates for 2012 season to September 29 – October 28 and from December 1-31. This will coincide with the changes made by Nebraska for this shared elk unit.

Motion by Cooper with second by Sather TO PROPOSE CHANGES TO THE PRAIRIE ELK HUNTING SEASON AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Black Hills Bighorn Sheep Hunting Season

Chad Switzer presented the recommendation to reduce the licenses from two to one in Unit 1. The number of mature rams in the population has declined and overall there are fewer rams available for harvest. A reduction of licenses is needed to ensure that a sufficient number of mature rams are available for hunting opportunities and to ensure adequate reproduction for the next few years.

Adjust the number of licenses available from 2 "any bighorn sheep" to 1 "any bighorn sheep" in Unit 1.

Motion by Jensen with second by Cooper TO PROPOSE THE CHANGE TO THE BLACK HILLS BIGHORN SHEEP HUNTING SEASON AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Hunting Season Proposals and Dates

Chief Kirschenmann indicated there are no recommended changes to any of the additional seasons listed on the agenda. This includes the Hunting Season Dates and with Commission consensus, no action is required on these items at this time. The 2012 Hunting Handbook and season applications will be printed with the dates listed as presented.

Division of Parks and Recreation

Operations Director Bob Schneider recommended a change to increase the unattended vehicle park entrance fee in Custer State Park to \$15 and allow the full amount of the unattended vehicle park entrance be applied toward the purchase of an annual park entrance license. The unattended vehicle park entrance fee will remain at \$10 for parks other than Custer State Park. The allowance to apply the full amount of the unattended vehicle park entrance fee towards the purchase of an annual park entrance license will encourage the operators to purchase the annual license and visit the parks more frequently.

Modify 41:03:03:06 Park entrance license fees. If a vehicle does not have a valid park entrance license displayed as required in 41:03:03:02, the operator or the registered owner of the vehicle must pay \$10.00 for a daily park entrance license for each day the vehicle is in

the park, except at Custer State Park where the fee is \$15.00. The operator or registered owner may apply ~~\$7~~ the entire amount of the cost of this daily park entrance license toward the purchase of an annual park entrance license.

Motion by Cooper with second by Knippling TO PROPOSE CHANGES TO PARK LICENSES AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

The mountain pine beetle update was presented by Custer State Park Manager Matt Snyder. Snyder indicated efforts began in 2004 in the Sylvan Lake area in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture. More than 71,000 acres of forest cover has been treated in the last five years. The Governor approved \$2.1 million over the next three years to assist with beetle control efforts. During the fall of 2011 staff, estimated 142,000 trees were infested. After working on this effort this winter, staff believes the number closer to 120,000. Currently, there are five crews consisting of twenty people identifying and marking the beetle infested trees ahead of seven private contractors, four Wildland Fire Crews, and a Department of Corrections Crew. After the trees are identified, these crews cut the trees down. Logs that can be salvaged go to the mill and logs that are in areas inaccessible by logging equipment are cut into two foot chunks and left to dry out killing 80% of the beetles. The marking crews have marked over 91,000 trees and over 67,000 trees have been cut and chunked or removed and taken to the mill. Over 60% of trees that have been cut are salvageable and taken to the mill. The cutting and chunking process needs to be completed by March 17 and the loggers need to have the salvage logs hauled out of the park by June 1.

Another aspect of the beetle effort will be lethal baiting. Lethal baiting consists of spraying an insecticide on cut or chunked trees which attracts the merging beetles to the chunked trees and there they will die. Preventative measures will also be taken on selected trees around the resorts (estimated 250 trees) and campgrounds (110 trees). The 25 private cabin owners throughout CSP have been contacted and made aware of a 50/50 cost share program that will pay up to \$10 per tree not to exceed \$200 through the South Dakota Department of Agriculture.

Park staff also identified approximately 1,500 trees along the Mickelson Trail right-of-way between Custer and Lead. A private contractor is cutting the trees and taking the salvageable logs to the mill and the cull wood is being chipped by park staff. All efforts are going well and the work will be completed by the established deadlines.

Flood restoration efforts update was presented by Al Nedved. He indicated the current estimate is \$9 million for flood damage incurred during 2011 floods. Funding for repairs thus far was achieved by reprioritizing \$1.5 million in the FY12 budget. The Division of Parks and Recreation FY13 budget contains \$3 million for flood repairs and the Governor proposed that \$2 million in general funds be made available through an appropriation to the Office of Emergency Management. The remaining \$2.5 million of unfunded repairs will be deferred until FY14.

Trees in the flooded areas are being monitored and park workers remain optimistic as they are seeing some root growth and additional trees are scheduled to be planted. Shoreline protection and rip rap is taking place on Lake Oahe, Lake

Francis Case, and Lake Thompson. Grass plantings continue and all campsites should be open by June 15th. Repair of electrical components continue on camp pads and in comfort stations. Plans are to develop a new boat ramp and parking lot at Farm Island providing access directly to the main channel of the Missouri River.

Fisher Grove has flooded four times in the last five years, damaging the bridge across the river. The campground is currently inaccessible because the bridge has been rated for passenger vehicles only and it would cost about \$800,000 to repair. Discussions are ongoing with the public regarding options for relocating the 21 campsites to the south side of the river while using the bridge for hiking and biking as this may be cost effective in the long run. The campground will be closed for the upcoming summer and decisions will be made by August regarding the FY14 budget request.

Hofer shared the LaFramboise Island funding to replace the causeway and road reconstruction will be the responsibility of the City of Pierre and the US Army Corps of Engineers.

The Blood Run update was presented by Director Doug Hofer indicating the master plan has been completed and is posted online. Additional property has been identified to optimize opportunities for the Blood Run project.

Parks will have a naturalist onsite this summer to work with interested groups and individuals and to develop awareness and enthusiasm for the area. Next year the Legislature will be asked to establish Blood Run as a state park.

Next month the Commission will be asked to purchase a 60 acre parcel of Blood Run property held by the Parks and Wildlife Foundation. This will allow the Parks Division to utilize FY12 spending authority approved by the Legislature for the purchase of this property and it will allow the Foundation to utilize those funds to pay down the loan from The Conservation Fund for the remainder of the Blood Run property acquired from Buzz Nelson.

Doug Hofer indicated that Ramkota has been put a hold its plans to purchase Cedar Shore Resort due to concerns of slumping and slide issues in the marina and along the entrance road. There is no pending sale/transfer and no need for action at this time.

A 12 acres acquisition of land at Big Sioux Recreation Area will be brought to the Commission for consideration in April or May. This property will supplement the existing area and provide for additional trail access on the west side of the Big Sioux River. The City of Brandon supports the acquisition and agreed to provide one third of the cost with the balance coming from the Wildlife Division and Parks Division.

Division of Wildlife

Paul Coughlin presented Resolution 12-02 requesting approval to exchange the Buffalo Gap GFP with land from the Conger's to develop a shooting range. The Fall River Gun Club testified supporting the exchange during the open forum.

Coughlin provided background on the exchange of the GPA for a property with good access for the public and providing needed criteria for a shooting range from Tom and Lesta Conger. These properties were appraised at equal value and acres. This exchange works well for the Congers and the Department. The gun club is actively involved in developing the shooting range and with the upkeep of the area.

Motion by Cooper with second by Knippling TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 12-02 AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously. (See Appendix B)

Tom Kirschenmann provided a map showing the locations of the harvested mountain lions for the 2012 hunting season. The season is now closed and information will be gathered for research and season setting guidelines. Most lions were harvested after snow events and some days four five lions were harvested following the snow event. A handful of hunters have harvested more than one lion since the first season in 2005. The CSP limited access hunters will be surveyed to collect additional data for the setting of future seasons.

There was increased interest in the season as 1,100 additional licenses were sold from the 2011 sales. Sixteen of the lions harvested during the 2012 hunting season wore radio-telemetry collars and eleven were functioning. Currently, there are approximately fifty collared lions in the hills with 38 of the collars functioning. The Forest Service road closures affected the hunting opportunities and of those hunters that harvested a lion, 35 hunters reported tracking lions while 27 hunters called the lions in then tracked the lions.

Andy Lindbloom presented an update on the elk population in the Black Hills including CSP and the ongoing research projects. Lindbloom stated the current elk population estimate in SD is approximately 4,000 elk. He then outlined the different types of surveys, how they are conducted, and shared the results and data. Lindbloom also shared recruitment, bull/cow ratios, harvest data, research updates, and that Wind Cave National Park is in the second year of a research project monitoring the movement of elk in and out of the park. He shared about the research on lion predation of sheep, elk, turkey, and deer species in Unit 5 in the hills indicating this is preliminary data.

Gary Brundige presented survey and population status of elk in Custer State Park using helicopter surveys. The elk herd was at its highest in 2000 and the last few years the cow/calf ratios showed a low pregnancy rate that led to the current study. So far, 41 cow elk have been captured with 39 of them pregnant and all were in good health. A lot of data was collected as the cows were checked for body fat, ultra sound for pregnancy, and given an implant to indicate when and where the calf was dropped. Staff will capture the calves within hours of birth, fit them with collars, and monitor them for continued research.

The Bighorn Sheep Population update in Custer State Parks was presented by Gary Brundige. Bighorn sheep were introduced in 1922 from Vancouver and stabilized there. No hunting was allowed and all died off in 1959 and reintroduced in 1965 as a viewable herd. In November 2004, the park had 200 head and in 2004-2005, eagles led staff to the sheep which had contracted pneumonia. The season closed with population of about 48 with no survival of lambs until this past year

(2011). Current estimate is 25, with 14 mature ewes and their lambs are looking healthy.

John Kanta shared that there are four herds of bighorn sheep in the Black Hills showing their locations on a map. Bighorn sheep are easily stressed by a change of habitat, competition of other animals, domestic animals that carry bugs or illness, lions, and fire management suppression efforts.

The Prey Selection Study of female bighorn sheep and their calves and survival rates in the past two years has provided valuable data. Plans are to collar more sheep in 2012. Currently, two lambs are alive and most died of pneumonia. Another research project in the Elk Mountain region will begin very soon to monitor movements, survival, mortality, recruitment, genetic diversity, disease prevalence, and ram locations for hunting seasons and recruitment.

Forest Service Cooperative Fishing project update began with John Lott introducing Ruben Leal from the Forest Service located in Fort Pierre. The Fort Pierre Grasslands contain prairie habitat for wildlife and small lakes that provide fishing opportunities for shore anglers and small boats. An inventory of the grassland dams indicated there are 735 acres of water with 36 bodies of water having road access for fishing. Management practices are taking place on these 36 bodies of water. June of 2011 had significant rain events that threatened some of the dams and due to the cooperative efforts of the Department and the Forest Service, Richland and Sheriff Dam were quickly repaired. The Forest Service and GFP have plans for the continued cooperative management of the fisheries located on the Fort Pierre Grasslands.

“East meets West” was a education event utilizing staff from the Sioux Falls Outdoor Campus and the Rapid City Outdoor Campus to provide a kick off event with four days of activities at the Rapid City Outdoor Campus. Scott Simpson presented photos showing that one day was dedicated for school programs with 300+ students participating in the event. More than 1300 people experienced the Outdoor Campus activities through out the weekend. The event provided staff development opportunities and concluded with a great eagle awareness event.

Emmett Keyser provided open house dates and locations that will take place across the state during the next few months. Keyser indicated the dates and locations are listed on the website under “Agency Info” and Keyser extended an invitation for the Commissioners to attend meetings in their area.

Director Leif shared his desire for an additional meeting to gather public input on the elk seasons especially in the Rapid City area prior to the April Commission meeting. Leif encouraged the Commissioners to attend the Rapid City meeting. He also reported that the email blast sent about this Commission meeting resulted in the additional public participation and comments.

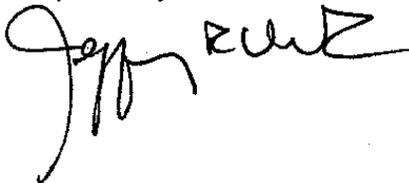
Leif presented information regarding wolves which historically wandered the entire North American Continent. Wolves are not a state endangered species; and

are recovering across the country. Wolves have distinct population segments in the United States and the US Fish and Wildlife Service has delisted wolves in the Great Lakes area and the northern Rocky Mountains of the US. Wyoming wolves will be delisted soon and South Dakota and North Dakota are split down the center with eastern South Dakota as delisted while western South Dakota continues to be listed as a recovery area. The Southern Rocky Mountain population is under recovery and a five year review was published on February 29. The Department is waiting to receive the review. The incidental take of wolves are allowed and is under federal regulation in western South Dakota while eastern South Dakota incidental take is under state regulations. Delisting places the management of the wolf under state authority and GFP does not intend to establish wolf populations anywhere in the state.

Chairman Olson indicated there would be a Governance meeting prior to the April Commission meeting in Brookings.

Motion by Knippling with second by Jensen TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.
Motion carried unanimously and meeting adjourned at 11:36 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Vonk". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Jeffrey R. Vonk, Department Secretary

Appendix A

RESOLUTION NO. 12-01

WHEREAS, Governor Dugaard has introduced for consideration by the 2012 Legislature legislation (~~SB193~~) HB1137 which would authorize a one-time payment to active, permanent state employees hired before March 24, 2011, for the purpose of encouraging public service and for continued service in the state government workforce; and

WHEREAS, the 2012 South Dakota Legislature has approved ~~SB193~~ HB1137 which, upon being approved by the Governor, will direct that the one-time payments to employees shall commence on March 30, 2012;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that following the Governor's approval of ~~SB193~~ HB1137, the Game, Fish, and Parks Commission hereby authorizes the Department of Game, Fish, and Parks to comply with the provisions of ~~SB193~~ HB1137.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Game, Fish, and Parks is hereby directed to prepare and submit to the Game, Fish, and Parks Commission for the April 2012 meeting, a FY2012 budget adjustment request reflecting the expenditures directly related to complying with the provisions of ~~SB193~~ HB1137.

Appendix B
RESOLUTION 12-02

WHEREAS, the State of South Dakota (held by and for the use and benefit of the Department of Game, Fish, and Parks [GFP]) owns an interest in real estate described as:

NE1/4, except Tracts A & B, of Section 8, Township 7 South, Range 7 East of the BHM, Fall River County, containing 156.3 acres, more or less, hereinafter referred to as GFP PROPERTY, which is valued at \$109,410.00, hereinafter referred to as GFP PROPERTY; and,

WHEREAS, Conger Ranch, by and through its owners Tom and Lesta Conger (CONGERS), 13831 Beaver Creek Road, Buffalo Gap, SD 57722-9612 own an interest in real estate described as:

S1/2SW1/4SW1/4SW1/4 of Section 13; S1/2SE1/4SE1/4, S1/2NW1/4SE1/4SE1/4, and that portion of SW1/4SE1/4 lying South & East of Highway 79 of Section 14; N1/2NW1/4NE1/4, N1/2NE1/4NE1/4, and N1/2S1/2NE1/4NE1/4 of Section 23; and NW1/4NW1/4 of Section 24, all in Township 7 South, Range 6 East of the BHM, Fall River County, containing 155.8 acres, more or less, which is valued at \$109,410.00, hereinafter referred to as CONGER PROPERTY; and

WHEREAS, South Dakota law (SDCL 41-2-29.2) provides that GFP has the power, authority, and duty to trade or exchange real property owned by the State and held by GFP if the GFP Commission shall first determine that real property more suitable to GFP purposes may be obtained by an exchange, provided the parcels of real property to be exchanged are of equal value; and

WHEREAS, GFP and CONGERS desire to exchange interests in the above described properties, and the GFP Commission having determined that CONGER PROPERTY is more suitable to GFP for GFP purposes than GFP PROPERTY, and that GFP PROPERTY and CONGER PROPERTY are of equal value (\$109,410.00 as determined by a qualified appraiser); and

WHEREAS, South Dakota law requires that the conveyance of GFP PROPERTY be approved and executed in the manner provided by SDCL 5-2-11.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the GFP Commission hereby takes final action on and approves the above referenced exchange of the above described parcels of real property and hereby directs GFP to take all steps necessary to effectuate the exchange of GFP PROPERTY for CONGER PROPERTY under procedures mandated by statute.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the GFP Commission does hereby ratify and confirm the Department's designation of the CONGER PROPERTY being acquired pursuant to the exchange authorized by this Resolution for utilization by the Division of Wildlife for the purpose of game production and, further, does hereby expressly designate and classify the CONGER PROPERTY being acquired pursuant to the exchange authorized by this Resolution for use as a game production area.

Public Hearing Minutes of the Game, Fish, and Parks Commission
March 1, 2012

Public Hearing Officer Chuck Schlueter began the hearing at 2:00 PM by indicating the public comment would be received on the topics listed under Finalizations on the Agenda. Written and email comments would be presented prior to any oral comments from the attending public. Written and email comments received before Feb. 27th were provided to the Commissioners prior to today's meeting and will be reflected in the Public Hearing Minutes.

Public Water Markings and Zones

Written testimony:

Randall L. Pratt of Mitchell, SD, emailed his support for the Lake Mitchell No Wake regulations.

James Serfoss of Aberdeen, SD, emailed: "understandable---- but there better be a sign, no more game wardens with some guess work they have enough power."

Steve Marquardt of Aberdeen, SD, emailed: "I agree there is a need for protection during high water events. My fear is that the no wake rule change will be over used. It seems that even with the current method the department is slow to remove it. Even with the high water levels of 2011, the current method functioned well. I did not have any damage due to boats operating during high water events. Most property owners can make adjustments to their docks and beach within a day or two. I feel the rule change will result in arbitrary no wake rules being used for extended periods when they are not needed.

Dave Fischer of Assistant Director, Sioux Falls Parks and Recreation, Sioux Falls, SD, emailed: "After discussions with our staff, city police, and your staff we believe that allowing the use of electric motors for everyone will not only make it much easier for those with disabilities to enjoy the lake, but will also enhance the experience for many others. As a result, I am writing to support the change in regulations that would allow electric motor use at Family Park."

Mike Majeres, of Sioux Falls, SD emailed: "I just read the proposed changes regarding electric motors on Family Park in Sioux Falls. I have to respectfully say that this is a terrible idea... I just think that the GFP and the city of Sioux Falls have a great thing going right now with Family Park just the way it is. I know they took a lot of time to decide on the current regulations there and I think they got it right. I just think the negatives outweigh the positives with this proposal.

Terry Sanderson of Sioux Falls, SD, emailed: "I would not like to see any rule changes that would encourage heavy boat traffic on such a small body of water as I feel it would detract from the shore fisherman's experience. This would be particularly true if the size and type of watercraft was unlimited. My opinion is that I would like the rules to remain as they are with respect to watercraft or at the very least to limit the size of watercraft. The pond is not large enough to accomodate the larger bassboats and fishing boats."

No oral testimony was presented.

Motorboat and Watercraft

Clayton Siegfried of Sioux Falls, SD, emailed: "I can see the rule about not having a used Extinguisher on your boat it should be a new one for sure.. Put messing with charging them that is over the top.. If I have a brand new one in my boat that has never been used that should be good enough for the state.. Unless you are looking to generate business for the business's that have an interest in this.. Which is wrong of course.. Just another item that a boater will have to hassle with and how are you going to prove that I did not have mine checked?? What is the fine for not having it checked?? Where do I take the extinguisher to be serviced?? All of these questions should be answered by the State if you are going to mandate this rule up front... Not after I get a fine. Sounds like a rule that may be tough to enforce."

No oral testimony was presented.

Special Buck Hunting Licenses

Terry Sanderson of Sioux Falls, SD, emailed: "I am opposed to increasing the number of these licenses. Trophy bucks are a fragile resource and are extremely important in maintaining a quality deer herd... I think that increasing this type of license will only lead to quicker decimation of the quality deer herd."

Robert Eddy of Rapid City, SD, emailed: "I would like to take this time and discourage the increase in the Special Buck tag allotments for the 2012 season... Please consider reducing the number of Special Buck tags in an equal proportion to the number of General tags in the 2012 season. Thank you!"

John H. Johnson of the Grasslake Conservation Club, Inc. of Ortle, SD, faxed a letter opposing the proposal to add 100 more nonresident special buck licenses to the West River deer season.

Jim Twamley of Parker, SD, emailed opposing the increase in Special Buck Tags.

Bob Struck of Platte, SD, emailed; "I think there is enough tags issued already - population seems to be down."

David Peck of Cherokee, IA, emailed: "I agree with the increase in number, but I feel that the \$100 price increase is not."

Russ Roberts of St. Onge, SD, emailed: "There are currently not enough non-resident licenses to supply the demand. As someone who is running a business to trying and accommodate out of state hunters this creates a hardship. It is hard to book repeat clients and plan any kind of schedule without knowing they have a good chance of obtaining a license. Today those repeat clients are the only thing that keeps many businesses running. These hunters are not only benefiting my family but many others in the community every year and everyone needs the business. The West River Special Buck licenses are designed to be used on private land only, so no opportunity is being taken away from anybody that would have had access to that ground otherwise. Having the ability for hunters to draw a Special Buck license allows the landowner to manage their property as they see fit and in many circumstances on land that would have no hunting opportunity otherwise. The only

non-residents that are spending \$505.00 on the Special Buck tag are hunters that are going with an outfitter or paying trespass fees to landowners that would not allow access otherwise. Game and Fish is losing revenue on license sales and local communities are losing out on money that would be generated by non-residents.”

Mike Grunewaldt emailed: “I'm disappointed that east river has failed to offer this option. Chuck S. has stated that the public comment is against any out of state E. river buck tags. Has any attempt been made to poll the landowners(the people who actually provide the habitat and bear the expense of raising the deer) as to their wishes? Personally, I'm tired of all the pickups driving down the right of ways shooting anywhere and everywhere with no regard to the law. At the same time we are not even able to allow my out of state brother-in law to shoot an east river buck. I'm also aware of the tremendous influence that the Minnehaha Sportsman have on your decisions, I'm just asking to please consider the sportsman who are in charge of the factory, not just those who think it is their SD born right to be the sole beneficiary of the bucks.”

Paul and Blair Thomson of Spearfish, SD, emailed: “I encourage you to add more buck licenses to the seasons... You can say all you want about the special licenses that are available for the younger hunter, but if they don't have a license for dad also it probably isn't going to happen as we have already seen. The way the hills buck licensing is handled now is only going to kill the sport and in the future there will be fewer and fewer hunters out there until the sport eventually goes away.”

Greg Van Hull of Brandon, SD, emailed: “. By allowing more and more special buck tags, and raising cost of tags, the residents of SD will be slowly pushed out. As you increase the number of special buck tags to any one, out of state or in state, and decrease by the same number resident tags, you are creating a pay to hunt and a business instead of wildlife being accessible to every resident of SD. SD has one of the lowest pay scales in all 50 states. The wealthy are already purchasing tracts of land for all types of pay hunting. You are only allowing their foot hold on SD's prime hunting resources a stronger hold. This is only the first of many steps to close out recreational hunting.”

Bob Woerman of Brandon, SD, emailed: “My input, keep the tags like they are as it appears GFP is now recommending.”

Doug Lake of Pierre, SD, emailed: “I support more special buck licenses.”

Darrin Christensen of Watertown, SD, emailed: “I am absolutely against the increase number of tags for the special buck tags!”

Larry Crawford of Sturgis, SD, emailed: “I do not believe this is a good idea. If they need more licenses give them access to antlerless permits in area's where deer population control is desired.”

Larry Disanto, of Rapid City, SD, emailed: “Happy to hear these permits will be increased.”

Dayle and Lind Veen of Milbank, SD, emailed: “Special buck licenses should be issued by zone like other west river licenses. Some zones the deer numbers have decreased over the years especially mule deer.”

Scott Stone of Rapid City, SD, emailed: “Why just west river? East river gets a majority of the licenses for west river all ready. People that live west river see nothing but east river licenses plates driving through the hills during elk season &

deer season, while we can't draw a tag. West river should get some preference for living on this side of the state. Increase of tags should be for people that live west river only.”

Randall Callesen of Estelline, SD, emailed: “I personally think that the number of licenses should stay at current level. The reason I think so is because if you increase the license you have more young bucks being harvested and with the decline in populations that I seen this past year only puts stress on the population. “

Robert D. Keeler of Douglas, WY, emailed: “Rasing the price of the nonresident special buck license another \$100.00 is putting it out of my capablity to partiipate in this draw. I am a nonresident landowner and enjoy no special privledges as do the resident landowners other than having access to my own land to hunt. Raising the price to this level is nothing short of extortion.”

William Menne of Doland, SD, emailed: “I really think the special buck permits are wonderful for residents to draw for I have applied often and will continue to do so.”

Chuck Clayton of Huron, SD, emailed: “A proposed rule to allow landowners to increase non-resident tags, or transfer tags, will only divide the hunting community that supports and funds wildlife management.”

Troy S. Kern of Piedmont, SD, emailed: “I am extremely disappointed in the idea of raising the number of West River non-resident special buck tags.”

Donovan Stefanich of Selby, SD, emailed: “The result is many special tags being used all in the same areas.. Any deer tags are hard to get in Campbell and Walworth counties then get people here able to hunt mule deer ahead of those waiting on perference points. Not fair for the local hunters.”

Jay Behrends, of Summerset, SD, emailed: “I fully support the increase. I know of many out of state hunters that want to come to SD and are willing to pay for a special buck tag to do it, but do not get drawn. These hunters also help local small communities with their type of tourism. “

Gene Wallace of Swoope, VA, emailed: “my son and I had the special buck lic this past Nov in the west river area..we had a good hunt...both of us scored...I got a good non-typical mulie (which was what I wanted and my son got a good white tail buck)...we saw lot of deer...mostly females and only 4 bucks)3 white tails and 1 mulie...we would like to get drawn again..but the increase in tags of \$100.00 for non-residents might just be a little much.”

John Wirtz of Brookings, SD, emailed: “Please do not allow deer tags to be sold by commercial outfitters. I believe that if there is one SD res. that missed his lic. he should have first and second choices.”

Jim Dahlberg of Hot Springs, SD, emailed: “I am admantly opposed to the proposal to increase "special buck tags". In a time when it appears that mule deer in many areas are decreasing in numbers, it is time to curtail non-resident tags when those tags may infringe on resident hunting opportunities. Please do not increase these "special buck tags". Please decrease them.”

Colton Wientjes, Watertown, SD, emailed: “the nonresident special tags should come from the 8% allotted to nonresidents. Tags issued will be down in 2012 due to low deer populations, meaning even more residents will be turned down for a license. However, if the number of “Special Buck Licenses” is increased, the

percentage of tags going to nonresidents will increase and the percentage going to residents will decrease yet again. sounds like this is in the interest of the commerical hunting lodges and not of the intrest of the common hunter. Please really take a good look at this before doing anything!"

Bill Antonides, President, South Dakota Wildlife Federation emailed: "PLEASE take the time to look at the history of the special buck tags before you increase the numbers. If we are concerned with quality buck management at all, it is time to reduce the number of tags to the levels originally agreed to. In addition, the nonresident special buck tags should come from the 8% of tags set aside for nonresidents. "

James Sitter of Aberdeen, SD, emailed: "It is time to cut back on the special treatment of buck tags for the out of state hunters and the people who close there land and only let people in who pay. This is a form of selling our wild life. Turn this practice around."

Micah Mauney of Sioux Falls, SD, emailed: "Reduce the nonresident WR Special Buck tags to 250 and double the cost of the voucher and there will be no revenue loss and it will help our deer herd take a step in the right direction."

Dan Schmeichel of McLaughlin, SD, emailed: "I am so tired of out of state hunters coming here with no regard to whose land they are on. I feel the number of out of state license should be "decreased" not increased! Also the fee should be at least \$800.00 to hunt."

Mark Wolf of Aberdeen, SD, emailed: "It is simply wrong to allow commercial interests to sell one of South Dakota's finest natural resources at the expense of the average sportsman and any semblance of quality deer management. It is time to reduce the number of special buck tags, not increase them. At the very least, the nonresident special tags should come from the 8% allotted to nonresidents."

Tony P. Busche of Brookings, SD, emailed: "My opinion...I suggest you go back to the original Special Buck tag regulations..."

John Morgenstern of Rapid City, SD, emailed: "The number of Special Buck Licenses have already grown substantially since the inception of this program, and in light of current deer herd numbers, increasing landowner allocations to their financial benefit at the expense and disregard of the average resident hunter is simply wrong. Enough is enough! It is simply wrong to allow commercial interests to sell one of South Dakota s finest natural resources at the expense of the average sportsman and any semblance of quality deer management. It is time to reduce the number of special buck tags, not increase them. At the very least, the nonresident special tags should come from the 8% allotted to nonresidents."

Scott Hed of Sioux Falls, SD, emailed: "As a South Dakota resident hunter and member of numerous sporting conservation groups (including SD Wildlife Federation, 29-90 Sportsmen's Club, Dallas Safari Club, Pheasants Forever, and Duck Unlimited), who hunts West River nearly every season for deer, I am asking you to not support the proposed increase in Special Buck tags. It is time for sportsmen to say, "Enough!" It is simply wrong to allow commercial interests to sell one of South Dakota's finest natural resources at the expense of the average sportsman and any semblance of quality deer management. It is time to reduce the

number of special buck tags, not increase them. At the very least, the nonresident special tags should come from the 8% allotted to nonresidents.”

Mike McKnight, President of SD Bowhunters, of Sioux Falls, SD, emailed: “My name is Mike McKnight and I am the President of the South Dakota Bowhunters Inc. On behalf of SDBI I would like to voice opposition to an increase in the special buck tags on Thursday's agenda.”

Kent Carlson of Lake City, SD, emailed: “Every year us non landowners have less and less deer hunting opportunities because of wealthy people and commercial hunting groups. Please reduce the number of special buck licenses available to anyone. We choose the live in South Dakota because of the hunting opportunities and now it is becoming difficult to even go hunting deer. Please help us!!!”

Marvin Bouska of Rapid City, SD, emailed: “I am opposed to increasing special buck licenses for guides/landowners/big game dealers. Is the GFP commission an agent of commercial hunting operators/big game. Please allow resident big game hunters an opportunity to obtain a "first choice" big game tag, by putting a limit on these perpetual requests for more "special" permits.”

Paul Sand of Rosholt, SD, emailed: “Please do not increase non-resident deer tags for the 202 season. We need to decrease all tags period.”

Scott Smallwood of Rapid City, SD, emailed: “The amount of Special Buck Tags given out must decrease. Local hunters should have preference and the tags should be never exceed 8% as a ratio under normal conditions. I know it is a money raiser for many but they should be able to live within the confines of the limitations set forth by our wildlife managers.”

Terry Larson of Rapid City, SD, emailed: “Increasing the number of high dollar special buck tags while reducing the tags available to the average resident hunter who buys tags year after year is not fair to SD hunters. Please consider my opinion as you deliberate this matter.”

Bryan Barness of Sioux Falls, SD, emailed: “There is no justification to even consider an increase in the number of Special Buck licenses. In fact we should be debating just how many licenses should be excluded from that pool.”

Patrick Gross of Vermillion, SD, emailed : “It is time to stop the expansion of commercial hunting at the expense of resident hunters! Please oppose additional tag allocations for outfitters in the name of better wildlife management and the protection of outdoor opportunities for local families.”

Justin Allen of Pierre, SD, emailed: “please do not increase Special Buck Tag in eastern or western SD...Please vote against the proposed increase in special buck tags.”

Leon Callahan of Gettysburg, SD, emailed: “With Deer population down do to disease, cold and wet winters, and over hunting, and early harvest of crops. It makes no sense to me to increase the number of tags from 500 to 600. I would like to see better deer management of the deer in South Dakota. I used to hunt out of state for a second tag. Now I hunt out of state for better quality of deer.”

Francis Barnett of Aberdeen, SD, emailed: “I am apposed to increasing the number of deer tags to nonresidents. Now when a nonresident recieves a tag it is something special to them. Lets keep it special.”

Jeff Albrecht of Brookings, SD, emailed: "I would ask that the commission oppose the increase in Special Buck Tags."

Gary Harr of Brandon, SD, emailed: "South Dakota should not increase the special buck allotments for east or west river. Just change the amount of regular draw tags to regulate the harvest."

Richard Barnett of Sioux Falls, SD, emailed: "There are already too many special buck licenses...we should have never developed them in the first place. Where does it all end?"

Justin Allen of Pierre, SD, emailed: "As a longtime resident of South Dakota and avid sportsman please do not increase Special Buck Tag in eastern or western SD."

Harold and Kristine Goeden of Sioux Falls, SD, emailed: "We are writing because of our concern regarding the number of special buck tags and feel that this number should be looked at closely and a reduction in the number of special buck tags should be made."

Curt Tesch of Rosholt, SD, emailed: "I certainly hope you will not consider any increases in the Special Buck licenses, especially when this increase is being sought by commercialized hunting...Enough, please no more."

Billy Wientjes of Watertown, SD, emailed: "It is time to reduce the number of special buck tags, not increase them. At the very least, the nonresident special tags should come from the 8% allotted to nonresidents."

Cody Warne of Pierre, SD, emailed: "I AM ALL for adding 100 more NON-RESIDENT Special Buck tags but instead of West River, I feel they should got to the East River Special Buck pool. This isn't East or West Dakota, IT'S SOUTH DAKOTA....."

John Simpson of Pierre, SD, emailed: "I would strongly urge the commission to reject this request for an increase in the # on non-res deer tags. Mule deer #'s are down, resident interest is high, if this request is granted the result could be more non-res hunters & fewer resident. The current system was set in place after numerous situations, reviews, lengthy considerations and processes. It has worked well and there is no solid biological reason to grant this request. Please oppose it."

Larry Rezac of Crooks, SD, emailed: "I would like to see NO increase in these tags."

David Larson of Groton, SD, emailed: "It is simply wrong to allow commercial interests to sell South Dakota's finest natural resources at the expense of the average sportsman and any semblance of quality deer management. It is time to reduce the number of special buck tags, not increase them. At the very least, the nonresident special tags should come from the 8% allotted to nonresidents."

Shawn Pliska of Sioux Falls, SD, emailed: "Please do not increase the number of special buck tags. I believe we have accommodated the number of special tags more then enough for nonresident hunters. At what point will the request to increase the number of tags for nonresident stop growing. We are already taking the back seat on pheasant hunting from nonresidents."

John Wrede of Rapid City, SD, emailed: "I respectfully request that the Commission actually lower the number of special buck licenses to pre-1990 levels in consistent relationship with lower license numbers during the regular west river

deer season, and I further request that the Commission seriously consider eliminating entirely, the late West River antlerless season in response to rapidly declining and unstable deer populations, particularly on public lands in Western South Dakota.”

Oral testimony:

Bob Barden of member of SD Bowhunters and on behalf of the organization testified on the number of licenses not fees. SD Bowhunters believe the additional tags would give nonresident hunters more opportunity over residents and with fewer west river deer the only people to benefit from this change are outfitters. This does not benefit the majority of SD residents and opposes the changes.

Brian Heidbrink of Brandon, SD, provided a handout and is opposed to the additional special buck licenses. He feels this is selling out to SD people. He stated his procedural opposition to the change as these should have a unit designation for West River and he feels this is not fair or consistent with management objectives. He provided information on demand and availability and believes these special buck tags are taking away opportunity for resident hunters. The management issue of the special buck licenses does affect the herd and management practices. Please reconsider this proposal and put the tags where the true demand for tags are needed.

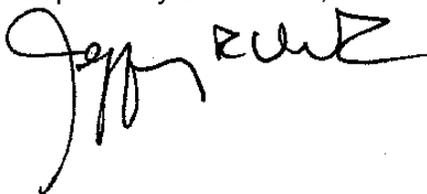
Chris Hesla testified for SD Wildlife Federation and commented only on the number of tags as only seven landowners did not received their special tags. If passed, look at earmarking the additional tags to go away when the herd is decreasing. When regular tags are decreased so should the special tag. He stated that he does not agree that the special buck tag has no affect on the management of deer.

Paddlefish Snagging

No written or oral comments were received.

The Public Hearing concluded at 2:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeffrey R. Vonk', written in a cursive style.

Jeffrey R. Vonk, Department Secretary