



# Regular Commission Meeting Minutes

## South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks

523 E Capitol Avenue | Pierre, South Dakota 57501

Matthews Training Center | Pierre, SD | April 4-5, 2024

### Call Meeting to Order

---

Chair Rissler called the meeting to order at 1 pm CST at the Matthews Training Center in Pierre, SD, on April 4, 2024. Commissioners Stephanie Rissler, Julie Bartling, Jim White, Robert Whitmyre, Jon Locken, Travis Bies, Travis Theel, and Bruce Cull were present. With eight commission members present, a quorum was established. The public and staff can listen via SDPB Livestream and participate via conference or in person, with approximately 83 total participants attending via Zoom or in person.

### 1. Conflict of Interest Disclosure [Action Item]

---

Chair Rissler requested the disclosure of any potential conflicts of interest, but none were brought forward.

### 2. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes [Action Item]

---

Chair Rissler called for any additions or corrections to the regular minutes of March 2024 meeting. Minutes are available at <https://gfp.sd.gov/commission/archives/>.

MOTIONED BY BIES, SECONDED BY LOCKEN TO APPROVE THE MARCH 2024 REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES. The motion carried unanimously.

### 3. Additional Salary Days [Action Item]

---

Chair Rissler called for additional salary days from the Commissioners. The following additional days were submitted: Whitmyre (1), White (1), and Locken (1).

MOTIONED BY BARLTING, SECONDED BY THEEL TO APPROVE THE ADDITIONAL SALARY DAYS. The motion carried unanimously.

### 4. South Dakota Shooting Sports Complex Update [Info Item]

---

Secretary Robling provided the Commission with an update on the South Dakota Shooting Range Complex. A YouTube video of the progress can be found at [https://youtu.be/H\\_Vd0iW3A3U?si=C1btpP78A0zzi0eh](https://youtu.be/H_Vd0iW3A3U?si=C1btpP78A0zzi0eh).

### 5. New Staff Introduction [Info Item]

---

Director Kirschenmann informed the Commission that the Division of Wildlife has two employees to introduce. Both employees are Wildlife Conservation Technicians working on our public habitat teams. John DeWit is based out of Mobridge and Dustin Hackens works from the Ft. Pierre office. Both staff members will work on habitat management activities on Game Production Areas in central South Dakota. And Jeff VanMeeteren, Parks and Recreation Director, introduced several new staff. Those new staff introduced were Seth Hofer, KayCee Smith, Hannah Hansum, Seth Schilousky, Sunni Josephson, and Lee Isaak.

### Public Hearing

---

Senior Staff Attorney Nick Michels opened the floor at 2:03 pm CST for discussion from those in attendance in matters of importance to them that are listed on the agenda as a finalization.

2:04 pm: George VanDel of Pierre testified in opposition to the Nonresident Waterfowl Hunting Season finalization.

#### **Agenda Item #13: Use of Parks and Public Land: Tree Stands and Trail Cameras**

No testimony provided.

#### **Agenda Item #14: Time Restrictions for Use of Park Systems and Public Lands**

No testimony provided.

#### **Agenda Item #15: Bighorn Sheep Hunting**

No testimony provided.



# Regular Commission Meeting Minutes

## South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks

523 E Capitol Avenue | Pierre, South Dakota 57501

Matthews Training Center | Pierre, SD | April 4-5, 2024

### Agenda Item #16: Elk Hunting Seasons

No testimony provided.

### Agenda Item 17: Waterfowl Hunting Seasons

2:09 pm: Jake Sheffield of Brandon, SD representing the South Dakota Waterfowl Association testified in opposition to the Nonresident Waterfowl Hunting Season finalization.

2:13 pm: Chuck Dieter of Brookings, SD representing the South Dakota Waterfowl Association and the South Dakota Wildlife Federation testified in opposition to the Nonresident Waterfowl Hunting Season finalization.

2:16 pm: Paul Lepisto of Pierre, SD representing the Izaak Walton League testified in opposition to the Nonresident Waterfowl Hunting Season finalization.

2:18 pm: John Simpson of Pierre, SD testified in opposition to the Nonresident Waterfowl Hunting Season finalization.

2:22 pm: Michael Mol of Brandon, SD testified in opposition to the Nonresident Waterfowl Hunting Season finalization.

2:25 pm: Dana Rogers of Hills City, SD representing the South Dakota Wildlife Federation testified in opposition to the Nonresident Waterfowl Hunting Season finalization.

2:28 pm: Cody Warner of Webster, SD representing the South Dakota Waterfowl Association testified in opposition to the Nonresident Waterfowl Hunting Season finalization.

2:32 pm: Zachery T Hunke of Watertown, SD representing the South Dakota Wildlife Federation testified in opposition to the Nonresident Waterfowl Hunting Season finalization.

Senior Staff Attorney Michels closed the Public Hearing at 2:35 pm CST.

### Open Forum

Senior Staff Attorney Nick Michels opened the floor following the conclusion of the public hearing at 2:36 pm for discussion from those in attendance in matters of importance to them that are listed on the agenda not as a finalization or may not be on the agenda.

2:35 pm: George VanDel of Pierre testified in support of the grouse season extension.

2:37 pm: Tom Frier of Pierre, SD representing the Sunset Lodge in support of the Bush's Landing project.

2:39 pm: Chuck Deiter of Brookings, SD representing the South Dakota Waterfowl Association and the South Dakota Wildlife Federation testified in opposition to the current guide structure in South Dakota.

Senior Staff Attorney Michels closed the Open Forum at 2:42 pm CST.

### 6. Petition #210: Landowner Muzzleloader Deer Preference

[Action Item: Petition]

Chris Hitzeman of Lake Andes, SD submitted petition #210 in which requested the Commission to apply landowner preference to muzzleloader tags.

Director Kirschenmann introduced the petition submitted by Mr. Chris Hitzeman from Lake Andes, SD. The petition submitted was asking the commission to consider incorporating landowner preference to the 1,000



# Regular Commission Meeting Minutes

## South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks

523 E Capitol Avenue | Pierre, South Dakota 57501

Matthews Training Center | Pierre, SD | April 4-5, 2024

any deer Muzzleloader licenses or even possibly providing the allowance for East River landowner licenses to convert to Muzzleloader licenses. Mr. Hitzeman provided reasons for his request, including the opportunity to take advantage of the weather to harvest a buck with a muzzleloader versus archery. By incorporating landowner preference, it would greatly increase the odds of drawing this license versus waiting for up to 5-7 years. The department recommended not moving forward with the petition and discussed the many landowner opportunities for obtaining buck licenses above nonlandowners, the balance of fair and equitable distribution of licenses, how the current structure does not include landowner preference for statewide seasons, and the consideration of a license conversion creates a lot of confusion and complexity.

MOTIONED BY LOCKEN, SECONDED BY THEEL TO DENY PETITION #210. The motion carried unanimously.

MOTIONED BY BIES, SECONDED BY THEEL TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 24-04 DENYING PETITION #210. The motion carried unanimously.

### 7. West River Turkey Tag

[Action Item: Petition]

Kyle Gutormson of Brookings, SD submitted petition #212 in which requested the Commission a “West River Special” Turkey tag be created.

Director Kirschenmann introduced the petition from Mr. Kyle Gutormson from Brookings who requested the creation of a west river special turkey license for the spring turkey season. Mr. Gutormson was not present nor joined via remote options. Kirschenmann proceeded to describe the petition as submitted and then explained why the department recommended the commission to deny the petition. Reasons for recommending not to move forward with the petition included it only considered western SD, licenses would only be available to nonresidents, and that the licenses would be unlimited in number. The commission agreed with the recommendation but did acknowledge a level of some interest should the petition had included this approach statewide, included residents, and have a limited number available.

MOTIONED BY THEEL, SECONDED BY BIES TO DENY PETITION #212. The motion carried unanimously.

MOTIONED BY WHITE, SECONDED BY LOCKEN TO ADOPT RESOLUTION #24-05 DENYING PETITION #212. The motion carried unanimously.

### 8. Hunting Raccoons with Dogs

[Action Item: Proposal]

John Kanta, Terrestrial Section Chief presented the proposal that would allow nonresidents to use a dog as an aid in taking of a raccoon.

MOTIONED BY WHITE, SECONDED BY THEEL TO APPROVE THE CHANGES TO HUNTING RACCOONS WITH DOGS PROPOSAL, BRINGING FINALIZATION IN THE JUNE 2024 MEETING. Motion carried unanimously.

### 9. Firearm Deer License Unit Changes

[Action Item: Proposal]

Andrew Norton, Wildlife Program Administrator, brought forward the Firearm Deer License Unit Changes proposals.

#### 9a. East River Prairie and Archery Deer Hunting Season

Harvest data and observation reports from GFP staff, landowners, and hunters all suggest deer numbers are low in southeastern South Dakota following die-offs because of the severe 2022-2023 winter and hemorrhagic disease in 2023. In response, changes are being recommended to the numbers and types of East River Deer Hunting Season licenses. The recommended changes would result in a reduction of 860 firearm deer licenses (38% reduction) or 985 tags (650 fewer any deer



# Regular Commission Meeting Minutes

## South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks

523 E Capitol Avenue | Pierre, South Dakota 57501

Matthews Training Center | Pierre, SD | April 4-5, 2024

tags and 335 fewer antlerless whitetail tags) among seven counties including: Bon Homme, Clay, Hutchinson, Lincoln, Turner, Union, and Yankton. In addition, archery and muzzleloader hunters in Clay, Lincoln, and Union Counties would no longer be allowed to harvest antlerless deer using their antlerless whitetail deer license (LM1 type). However, they would still be allowed to harvest a deer using their archery or muzzleloader any deer license type (01 type).

Potential administrative action to modify deer license numbers would occur during the May Commission meeting.

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN.

### 9b. Archery Deer Hunting Season

Harvest data and observation reports from GFP staff, landowners, and hunters all suggest deer numbers are low in southeastern South Dakota following die-offs because of the severe 2022-2023 winter and hemorrhagic disease in 2023.

In response, changes are being recommended to the numbers and types of East River Deer Hunting Season licenses and this would modify the open unit for archery antlerless whitetail deer based on § 41:06:22:01.01 (4). Archery hunters in Clay, Lincoln, and Union Counties would no longer be allowed to harvest antlerless deer using their antlerless whitetail deer license (LM1 type). However, they would still be allowed to harvest a deer using their archery any deer license type (01 type). Potential administrative action to modify deer license numbers would occur during the May Commission meeting.

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN.

### 9c. General Muzzleloading Deer Hunting Season

Harvest data and observation reports from GFP staff, landowners, and hunters all suggest deer numbers are low in southeastern South Dakota following die-offs because of the severe 2022-2023 winter and hemorrhagic disease in 2023.

In response, changes are being recommended to the numbers and types of East River Deer Hunting Season licenses and this would modify the open unit for muzzleloader antlerless whitetail deer based on § 41:06:45:02 (4). Muzzleloader hunters in Clay, Lincoln, and Union Counties would no longer be allowed to harvest antlerless deer using their antlerless whitetail deer license (LM1 type). However, they would still be allowed to harvest a deer using their muzzleloader any deer license type (01 type). Potential administrative action to modify deer license numbers would occur during the May Commission meeting.

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN.

## 10. Landowner Own Land Elk Application for License

[Action Item: Proposal]

John Kanta, Terrestrial Section Chief, brought for the Landowner Own Land License proposal to the Commission. He reported that currently there are landowners that are not receiving an elk license in Prairie elk hunting season units where GFP is seeking to mitigate depredation and landowner conflicts with elk. GFP recommends establishing a landowner own land elk license to ensure that landowners can hunt elk on agricultural lands they own or operate within some Prairie elk hunting season units. Landowner licenses help to build tolerance for elk and promote elk hunter access and serve to demonstrate the appreciation that GFP has for landowners and producers that help support elk populations, hunter access, the GFP's mission and other wildlife management objectives. Because antlerless elk harvest with landowner own land licenses is currently unknown, the Department recommendation is to be conservative initially. The Department recommends opening the Bennett and Jackson County units (PRE-11D and PRE-11E) and the West River Area unit (PREWRA) for landowner own land antlerless elk licenses. These units are almost



# Regular Commission Meeting Minutes

## South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks

523 E Capitol Avenue | Pierre, South Dakota 57501

Matthews Training Center | Pierre, SD | April 4-5, 2024

exclusively privately owned and have a high potential for elk-landowner conflict from agricultural crop depredation, specifically in corn fields.

MOTIONED BY BIES, SECONDED BY THEEL TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE LANDOWNER OWN LAND ELK APPLCIATION FOR LICENSE, BRINGING THE FINALIZED VERSION BEFORE THE COMMISSION IN THE JUNE 2024 MEETING. Motion carried unanimously.

### 11. Custer State Park Hunting Seasons

[Action Item: Proposal]

#### 11a. Custer State Park Bison

Jason Gooder, Natural Resources Manager at Custer State Park, brought the Custer State Park Bison proposal before the commission for its second reading. proposal to clean-up administrative rule to remove “bull” and edit “nontrophy” for rule consistency when referring to non-trophy bison harvest in § 41:06:07:01. Will allow the use of archery equipment during the Custer State Park trophy and non-trophy bison harvest season. Decreases the allowable hunting days for trophy bison from three to two days. Increases the number of trophy bison licenses available by random lottery drawing from eight to ten. Increases the number of non-trophy bison licenses from fifteen to twenty.

NO ACTION TAKEN. THE FINALIZED VERSION WILL BE BROUGHT BEFORE COMMISSION IN MAY 2024.

#### 11b. Custer State Park Coyote Hunting Season

Andrew Norton, Wildlife Program Administrator, brought for second reading a proposal to extend the Custer State Park Coyote Hunting Season to November 1 through April 30 and allow coyote hunting any time of the day or night. Previously, the season started December 26 and shooting hours were restricted to one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset. In addition, a rule in the Custer State Park Hunting Season chapter was removed because it was redundant to a rule in the Custer State Park Restrictions chapter describing restrictions to hunting on roads and rights of ways.

NO ACTION TAKEN. THE FINALIZED VERSION WILL BE BROUGHT BEFORE COMMISSION IN MAY 2024.

### 12. Small Game Hunting Seasons

[Action Item: Proposal]

Andrew Norton, Wildlife Program Administrator, brought the Small Game Hunting Seasons before the Commission for their second reading.

#### 12a. Grouse Hunting Season

This proposal modifies the grouse season end date to align with the end date for the pheasant season of January 31. This will result in an approximate 4-week extension to the season.

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN. THE FINALIZED VERSION WILL BE BROUGHT BEFORE COMMISSION IN MAY 2024.

#### 12b. Partridge Hunting Season

This proposal modifies the partridge hunting season end date to align with the end date of the pheasant season of January 31. This will result in an approximate 4-week extension to the season.

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN. THE FINALIZED VERSION WILL BE BROUGHT BEFORE COMMISSION IN MAY 2024.

#### 12c. Quail Hunting Season

This proposal modifies the quail hunting season end date to align with the end date for the pheasant hunting season of January 31. This will result in an approximate 4-week extension to the season.

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN. THE FINALIZED VERSION WILL BE BROUGHT BEFORE COMMISSION IN MAY 2024.



# Regular Commission Meeting Minutes

## South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks

523 E Capitol Avenue | Pierre, South Dakota 57501

Matthews Training Center | Pierre, SD | April 4-5, 2024

### 12d. Cottontail Rabbit Hunting Season

This proposal would extend the Cottontail Rabbit hunting season to September 1 through March 31 on publicly accessible land.

MOTIONED BY WHITE, SECONDED BY BIES TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE PROPOSAL, BRINGING FINALIZATION IN THE MAY 2024 MEETING. Motion carried unanimously.

### 12e. Tree Squirrel Hunting Season

This proposal would extend the Tree Squirrel Hunting Season to September 1 through March 31.

MOTIONED BY CULL, SECONDED BY BARLTING TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED CHANGES, BRINGING FINALIZATION IN THE MAY 2024 MEETING. Motion carried unanimously.

### 12f. Snipe Hunting Season

This proposal would remove the word “common” before snipe to allow harvest of all snipe species.

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN. THE FINALIZED VERSION WILL BE BROUGHT BEFORE COMMISSION IN MAY 2024.

## 13. Use of Parks and Public Lands: Tree Stands and Trail Cameras [Action Item: Finalization]

Law Enforcement Section Chief Sam Schelhaas presented the finalization to expand requirements on trail camera placement, tree stand placement and construction on Walk-In-Areas and all private lands leased by the Department for public hunting access. This proposal will allow an individual to hunt without permission from the landowner or lessee on all private lands leased for public hunting access by GFP. This was previously only described as walk-in areas. This proposal would also specify the restriction to only active hunting on lands leased for public hunting by GFP. In addition to all public lands owned, leased, managed, and controlled by GFP, on all private lands leased for public hunting access by GFP, this proposal would restrict an individual from constructing or using permanent tree stands, permanent blinds, and climbing devices. It would require an individual's name and address, or customer identification number (instead of big game license number) to be legibly labeled on the exterior of unoccupied portable blinds, tree stands, and trail cameras.

Schelhaas reported there was a singular amendment from the proposal to the finalization the commission in which would strike the words “or phone number” and the words “name and” from 41:03:01:19 and 41:03:01:36. This limits the amount of personal identifiable information that a person puts out for the public to see.

MOTIONED BY BARTLING, SECONDED BY WHITMYRE TO APPROVE THE FINALIZATION. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTIONED BY BIES, SECONDED BY CULL TO RECALL THE ACTION PREVIOUSLY TAKEN TO ADOPT THE FINALIZATION. The motion carried unanimously.

MOTIONED BY BIES, SECONDED BY BARTLING TO ADOPT THE AMENDMENT TO THE FINALIZATION. The motion carried unanimously.

MOTIONED BY BARLTING, SECONDED BY CULL TO ADOPT AMENDED USE OF PARKS AND PUBLIC LANDS: TREE STANDS AND TRAIL CAMERAS FINALIZATION. The motion carried unanimously.





# Regular Commission Meeting Minutes

## South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks

523 E Capitol Avenue | Pierre, South Dakota 57501

Matthews Training Center | Pierre, SD | April 4-5, 2024

### **14. Time Restrictions for Use of State Park Systems and Public Lands** [Action Item: Finalization]

Law Enforcement Section Chief Sam Schelhaas presented the finalization that would clarify that Oahe Downstream Recreation Area and West Shore Lakeside Use Area, and other areas north of Fort Pierre, observe the Central Time zone. This clarifies that while these areas are technically located within the Mountain Time zone, they operate on the Central Time zone as that is what the communities in which they are associated with operate.

MOTIONED BY WHITE, SECONDED BY LOCKEN TO ADOPT THE TIME RESTRICTIONS FOR USE OF STATE PARK SYSTEMS AND PUBLIC LANDS FINALIZATION. Motion carried unanimously.

### **15. Bighorn Sheep Hunting Season Proposal** [Action Item: Finalization]

Chad Lehman, Senior Wildlife Biologist at Custer State Park, recently shared an update with the Commission regarding the Hell Canyon Bighorn sheep herd. He noted that the herd has encountered exposure to *Mycoplasma ovipneumonia* since March 1, 2024. Before this exposure, the herd boasted an estimated population of at least 85 bighorn sheep in Hell Canyon. From March 1 to March 31, staff have observed 26 mortalities, with pneumonia confirmed as the cause of death in 19 cases (73%). Despite these challenges, the survival estimate for March remains relatively promising at 53% (95% CI 34-70%). While the situation presents uncertainties, staff anticipate that approximately 25-30 sheep will likely survive at the conclusion of this initial period of mortality.

Andrew Norton, Wildlife Program Administrator, brought forth the finalizations for the Bighorn Sheep Hunting Seasons.

#### **15b. Bighorn Sheep Hunting Season**

This finalization would modify administrative rule from last year to specify a maximum of 20 ram bighorn sheep licenses. License number and tag type recommendations for the next two years are included in the following administrative action item. It would also remove BHS-BH1. Expand the unit boundary for BHS-BH4 to include the former boundaries of BHS-BH1 and those portions of Pennington County west of Interstate 90, Elk Vale Road and SD Highway 79.

Amendments to the proposal would be to Rule (§ 41:06:56:02) clean-up to edit SD Hwy 16 and SD Hwy 18 to US Highway 16 and US Highway 18, respectively. And Rule (§ 41:06:56:02) clean-up to edit Highway 79 to SD Highway 79.

MOTIONED BY LOCKEN, SECONDED BY BARTLING TO ADOPT THE AMENDMENT TO THE FINALIZATION. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTIONED BY WHITMYRE, SECONDED BY BIES TO ADOPT THE AMENDED BIGHORN SHEEP HUNTING SEASON FINALIZATION. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **15c. Bighorn Sheep Hunting License Allocation**

Surveys resulting in a minimum count of 61 bighorn sheep in Custer State Park (CBS-CU1) suggest the ram population could sustain additional harvest without significantly affecting age structure. Although 85 bighorn sheep were counted in 2023 in the Hell Canyon unit (BHS-BH4), this herd is currently experiencing a *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* related die-off and projected losses before the upcoming hunting season are unknown. The March Commission proposal was to absorb the current Rapid City unit into the Hell Canyon unit (BHS-BH4). As a result, it is expected the resulting population between the two herds, even after projected losses as a result of the *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* related die-off will be enough to sustain the ram harvest.



# Regular Commission Meeting Minutes

## South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks

523 E Capitol Avenue | Pierre, South Dakota 57501

Matthews Training Center | Pierre, SD | April 4-5, 2024

This administrative rule change would set the 2024-2025 Ram Bighorn Sheep License Allocation as follows: Custer State Park (CSB) – 4 licenses, Bighorn Sheep (BHS) BH2 – 3 licenses, Bighorn Sheep (BHS) BH3 – 0 licenses, Bighorn Sheep (BHS) BH4 – 2 licenses, Auction (All) – 1 license. A total of 10 bighorn sheep licenses to be allocated.

MOTIONED BY WHITE, SECONDED BY THEEL TO ADOPT THE BIGHORN SHEEP HUNTING LICENSE ALLOCATION ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION. Motion carried unanimously.

### 16. Elk Hunting Season Proposals

[Action Item: Finalization]

Andrew Norton, Wildlife Program Administrator, brought forth the finalizations and administrative actions for the Elk Hunting Seasons.

#### 16a. Custer State Park Early Archery Elk Hunting Season

This finalization would increase the maximum number of licenses from ten to twenty “any elk” licenses and provide the option for up to twenty “antlerless elk” licenses. License number and tag type recommendations for the next two years are included in the following administrative action item.

MOTIONED BY BARTLING, SECONDED BY BIES TO ADOPT THE CUSTER STATE PARK EARLY ARCHERY ELK HUNTING SEASON FINALIZATION. Motion carried unanimously.

#### 16b. Custer State Park Early Archery Elk Hunting License Allocation

This administrative rule change would update the 2024-2025 Custer State Park Early Archery Elk hunting season licenses from 4 to 5 resident CEE-CU1 “Any Elk” licenses and keep the resident CEE-CU1 “Antlerless Elk” at zero licenses.

MOTIONED BY CULL, SECONDED BY LOCKEN TO ADOPT THE CUSTER STATE PARK EARLY ELK HUNTING LICENSE ALLOCATION ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION. Motion carried unanimously.

#### 16c. Custer State Park Firearm Elk Hunting Season

This finalization would increase the maximum number of licenses from twenty to thirty “any elk” licenses and the option to provide up to thirty “antlerless elk” licenses. License number and tag type recommendations for the next two years are included in the following administrative action item.

MOTIONED BY WHITE, SECONDED BY THEEL TO ADOPT THE CUSTER STATE PARK FIREARM ELK HUNTING SEASON FINALIZATION. Motion carried unanimously.

#### 16d. Custer State Park Firearm Elk Hunting License Allocation

This administrative rule change would update the 2024-2025 Custer State Park Firearm Elk hunting season licenses from 11 to 15 resident CUE-CU1 “Any Elk” licenses, zero “Antlerless Elk,” and would keep the resident Raffle at one license.

MOTIONED BY BARTLING, SECONDED BY WHITE TO ADOPT THE CUSTER STATE PARK FIREARM ELK HUNTING SEASON ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION. Motion carried unanimously.

#### 16e. Special Custer State Park Antlerless Elk Hunting Season

This finalization would specify the option to provide up to twenty “antlerless elk” licenses. No antlerless licenses are recommended for this season.

MOTIONED BY LOCKEN, SECONDED BY WHITE TO ADOPT THE SPECIAL CUSTER STATE PARK ANTLERLESS ELK HUNTING SEASON FINALIZATION. Motion carried unanimously.





# Regular Commission Meeting Minutes

## South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks

523 E Capitol Avenue | Pierre, South Dakota 57501

Matthews Training Center | Pierre, SD | April 4-5, 2024

### **16f. Black Hills Archery Elk Hunting Season**

This finalization would increase the maximum number of “any elk” licenses from 200 to 300 and “antlerless elk” licenses from 150 to 300. It also cleans-up administrative rule to match unit boundary descriptions for Black Hills Archery Elk with Black Hills Firearm Elk.

MOTIONED BY BIES, SECONDED BY LOCKEN TO ADOPT THE BLACK HILLS ARCHERY ELK HUNTING SEASON FINALIZATION. Motion carried unanimously.

### **16g. Black Hills Archery Elk Hunting License Allocation**

This administrative action would update the total “Any Elk” licenses from 182 to 192 licenses and would keep 90 “Antlerless Elk” licenses for a total of 282 Black Hills Archery Elk Hunting licenses.

MOTIONED BY BARTLING, SECONDED BY LOCKEN TO ADOPT THE BLACK HILLS ARCHERY ELK HUNTING SEASON ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION. Motion carried unanimously.

### **16h. Black Hills Firearm Elk Hunting Season**

This finalization would increase the maximum number of “any elk” licenses from 600 to 800 and “antlerless elk” licenses from 1,200 to 1,500. License number and tag type recommendations for the next two years are included in the following administrative action. It would also provide a rule clean-up to include BHE-9A among units with a season that runs from October 1 through October 31. These season dates include all any elk licenses during the Black Hills Firearm Elk hunting season. It would also change BHE-2B and BHE-2E season dates from October 15 through October 31 and December 1 through December 16 to only occur from October 15 through October 31.

MOTIONED BY CULL, SECONDED BY BARTLING TO ADOPT THE BLACK HILLS FIREARM ELK HUNTING SEASON FINALIZATION. Motion carried unanimously.

### **16i. Black Hills Firearm Elk Hunting License Allocation**

This administrative action would increase the Black Hills Firearm Elk hunting licenses from 535 to 570 “Any Elk” licenses and would keep 730 “Antlerless Elk” licenses for a total of 1,300 total Black Hill Firearm Elk hunting season licenses.

MOTIONED BY WHITMYRE, SECONDED BY LOCKEN TO ADOPT THE BLACK HILLS FIREARM ELK HUNTING LICENSE ALLOCATION ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION. Motion carried unanimously.

### **16j. Prairie Elk Hunting Season**

This finalization would increase the maximum number of “any elk” licenses from 150 to 200 and “antlerless elk” licenses from 300 to 400. License number and tag type recommendations for the next two years are included in the following administrative action. It would also provide a minor rule clean-up to specify PRE-27A currently includes the portion of Fall River County not included in units BHE-H3 and BHE-H4. Previously, only BHE-H3 was listed as areas within Fall River County not included in PRE-27A.

An amendment to the finalization was proposed by the department to include the month of November in the elk season dates for units 15A, 35A, and 35B. The resulting season dates would be September 1 through December 31 for unit 15A and September 15 through December 31 for units 35A and 35B.

MOTIONED BY BIES, SECONDED BY BARTLING TO ADOPT THE AMENDMENT TO THE FINALIZATION. The motion carried unanimously.

MOTIONED BY WHITE, SECONDED BY LOCKEN TO ADOPT THE PRAIRIE ELK HUNTING SEASON FINALIZATION. Motion carried unanimously.



# Regular Commission Meeting Minutes

## South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks

523 E Capitol Avenue | Pierre, South Dakota 57501

Matthews Training Center | Pierre, SD | April 4-5, 2024

### 16k. Prairie Elk Hunting License Allocation

This administrative action would increase “Any Elk” Prairie Elk hunting season licenses from 102 to 126 and the “Antlerless Elk” licenses from 175 to 210, increase the total Prairie Elk hunting season licenses from 277 to 336.

MOTIONED BY CULL, SECONDED BY THEEL TO ADOPT THE PRAIRIE ELK HUNTING LICENSE ALLOCATION ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION. Motion carried unanimously.

### 17. Waterfowl Hunting Seasons Proposals

[Action Item: Finalization]

Wildlife Director Kirschenmann brought the following finalizations to the Commission for consideration.

#### 17a. August Management Take

This finalization provides changes from last year to remove Aurora, Beadle, Bon Homme, Brookings, Clay, Davison, Hanson, Hutchinson, Jerauld, Kingsbury, Lake, Lincoln, McCook, Miner, Minnehaha, Moody, Sanborn, Turner, Union, and Yankton counties from the August Management Take Hunting season unit from the August Management Take Hunting Season unit.

Director Kirschenmann described the changes to the August Management Take season, which focused on removing 20 counties from the season from the southeast part of the state. The department has no recommended changes to the proposal and asked the commission to formally adopt.

MOTIONED BY CULL, SECONDED BY LOCKEN TO ADOPT THE AUGUST MANAGEMENT TAKE FINALIZATION. Motion carried unanimously.

#### 17b. Nonresident Waterfowl Hunting Season

The proposed finalization would add 210 additional licenses to NRW-00B, 50 additional licenses to NRW-00V, and 55 additional licenses to NRW-00Z for a total of 315 additional licenses added to the Nonresident Waterfowl Hunting Seasons.

Director Kirschenmann described the details of the commission proposal and where the additional licenses would be distributed amongst the different hunting units. The commission discussed the numerous call, emails, and text messages over the proposal and through that conversation was the thought of finding some middle ground from the proposal to the concerns expressed by hunters. In particular, the commission discussions led to the question of how to avoid adding additional hunters in the northeast part of the state. The discussion then moved in the direction of adjusting the proposal so no additional licenses would be added to the 00Y unit, which would mean issue no additional licenses to the 00B statewide 10-day licenses. Director Kirschenmann again explained that by issuing zero additional license to the 00B would eliminate additional licenses in the 00Y unit and by moving forward with the 5% increase to the two units of 3-day licenses that the 105 additional licenses would be added in units that only have licenses available on private land. The commission collectively agreed it would be appropriate to amend their proposal and move forward with only a 5% increase to the 3-day temporary licenses (50 in 00V; 55 in 00Z) and remove the 5% increase to the statewide 10-day licenses.

MOTIONED BY COMMISSIONER WHITMYRE TO AMEND THE FINALIZATION BY REMOVING THE ADDITIONAL LICENSES TO THE NRW-00B FROM THE FINALIZATION. The motion carried unanimously.

This amendment results in the following licenses per season unit: NRW-00A (250), NRW-00B (3,925), NRW-11A (25), NRW-00V (600), NRW-00X (750), NRW-00Y (500), NRW-00Z (355) for a total of 6,405 licenses available for nonresident waterfowl hunter licenses.



# Regular Commission Meeting Minutes

## South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks

523 E Capitol Avenue | Pierre, South Dakota 57501

Matthews Training Center | Pierre, SD | April 4-5, 2024

MOTIONED BY BIES, SECONDED BY THEEL TO ADOPT THE AMENDED NONRESIDENT WATERFOWL HUNTING SEASON FINALIZATION WHICH WOULD INCREASE 3-DAY NONRESIDENT WATERFOWL LICENSES BY 5% FOR A TOTAL OF 105 ADDITIONAL LICENSES; 50 LICENSES ADDED TO 00V AND 55 LICENSES ADDED TO 00Z. The motion carried unanimously.

### 18. DOT Collector Road Program

[Park & Recreation: Information Item]

Adam Kulesa, Planning and Development Administrator, provided a verbal update to the commission about the DOT Collector Road project list from FY24 and the proposed FY25 projects. The update provided confirmation to the commission that the funding was approved through the department's annual agreement with the Department of Transportation and their DOT Commission.

### 19. Water and Sewer Project List

[Park & Recreation: Information Item]

Adam Kulesa, Planning and Development Administrator, provided a short presentation to the commission that highlighted the progress the department is making on the American Rescue Plan Act funds that were approved by the SD Legislature in 2022. The funds are required to be under contract by the end of the 2024 calendar year with several projects planning on getting out to bids within the next several months.

### 20. Fish Theme Marketing Update

[Park & Recreation: Information Item]

April Larson, Marketing Coordinator, Shala Larson, R3 and Relevancy Manager, and Jason Jungwirth, Aquatic Habitat and Access Coordinator, shared updates on local park efforts in South Dakota State Parks to promote fishing opportunities with the ongoing 2024 'Reel in Memories' campaign. Currently, fish board signs are being installed in parks with great fishing to boost social media engagement and increase visibility of parks and fishing. More park fishing programs and events are currently being planned and will be listed on the GFP event calendar website. Shala Larson introduced the new 2024 First Catch Center events to be hosted statewide in many of the state parks, while Jason Jungwirth highlighted completed Habitat Stamp projects, including a new kayak launch at Pickerel Lake, shoreline cleanup at West Bend, and improved parking at Fort George Lakeside Use Area.

### 21. Parks & Recreation Revenue and Camping Reports

[Park & Recreation: Information Item]

Director of Parks & Recreation Jeff VanMeeteren presented the Commission with the revenue and camping reports for March 2024 and Year-to-Date.

### 22. Bon Homme County Land Donation

[Wildlife: Information Item]

Ryan Wendinger, Habitat Program Administrator, provided a short presentation on Snatch Creek Game Production Area. A county commissioner from Bon Homme County reached out to staff. The county has 0.21 acres that they acquired in 1938 at a tax sale for \$0.99, which is part of an old Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad right of way. The property is a triangle in the corner of the Snatch Creek GPA, which is owned by the department. Bon Homme County wants to remove this tract from their inventory of property. The county wants to sign a quit claim deed to GFP as part of the GPA. Acquiring this corner would straighten out the GPA boundary.



# Regular Commission Meeting Minutes

## South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks

523 E Capitol Avenue | Pierre, South Dakota 57501

Matthews Training Center | Pierre, SD | April 4-5, 2024

### 23. Krause Land Donation – Day County

[Wildlife: Information Item]

Ryan Wendinger, Habitat Program Administrator, also provided a short presentation on the Krause Farm Game Production Area. The GPA is 237 acres near Roslyn, SD. 150 acres in southeast corner is very difficult to access due to a wetland across the township road. The cost to improve road to make it passable across wetland would be upwards of \$80,000. GFP currently has permission to cross Ryan Wagner's property to access GPA for management. Staff asked about formalizing an agreement for public access and Wagner proposed GFP purchase the corner from him. After staff met with Wagner, a couple of local NGOs, Whitetails Unlimited and Brown County Pheasants Forever, are willing to purchase 4.84 acres and donate it to the department. A draft purchase agreement between NGOs and Wagner has been developed. If acquired, staff will work with the township to improve the township road leading up to the new parcel by adding some gravel and create a parking lot for the public using habitat stamp funds.

### 24. Nest Predator Bounty Program

[Wildlife: Information Item]

Jacquie Ermer, Regional Wildlife Supervisor, gave a brief update on results from the month of March during which only youth (17 and younger) were eligible to participate in the program. A total of 125 participating youth submitted eligible tails in March 2024 totaling 1,621 tails. Although youth participation slightly increased from March 2023, they submitted double the tails this past March compared to March 2023 which was likely the result of milder weather and snow conditions this year. Additionally, 79 free live traps were given to participating youth that did not receive a trap last year and 69 of the youth indicated they used their traps they previously received to harvest eligible species this year. Starting April 1, all ages of SD residents are eligible to participate in the program.

### 25. License Sales Update

[Wildlife: Information Item]

Wildlife Director Kirschenmann provided a short summary on the monthly licenses sales. Kirschenmann indicated there has not been a lot of change in small game licenses sales, however over the past month the department has seen about a 5,500 increase in resident and nonresident fishing license sales combined. It is anticipated that those sales will continue in a positive direction with temperatures and weather improving.

### 26. Adjourn

[Action Item]

A Commissioner Governance Meeting will be held on May 2, 2024, starting at 9 am MT, at the Event Barn located in Custer State Park. The next Regular Commission Meeting will be held on May 2-3, 2024, starting at 1 pm MT also at the Event Barn located in Custer State Park.

MOTIONED BY BARTLING, SECONDED BY BIES TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:40 AM CST ON APRIL 5, 2024. Motion carried unanimously.

Submitted respectfully,

Kevin Robling, Department Secretary