

Minutes of the Game, Fish, and Parks Commission
April 4-5, 2012

Chairman Olson called the meeting to order at 1:02 PM at the Swiftel Center in Brookings, South Dakota. Commissioners Jeff Olson, Susie Knippling, John Cooper, Jim Spies, Cathy Peterson, Barry Jensen, and William Cerny were present along with Department Secretary Jeff Vonk. SDSU students, public, staff, and media numbered approximately 150.

Motion by Spies with second by Knippling TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION. Motion carried and Executive Session began at 1:05 PM to discuss contractual and personnel matters. Executive Session concluded at 1:25 PM.

Chairman Olson welcomed Commissioner William Cerny to his first Commission meeting and extended a welcome to the SDSU Human Dimensions class that numbered approximately seventy. Professor Dan Hubbard thanked the Commission for allowing the students to experience the Commission proceedings.

Division of Administration

Chairman Olson called for any additions or corrections to the March 1-2, 2012, minutes or a motion for approval.

Motion by Cooper with second by Jensen TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 1-2, 2012, MEETING AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Olson asked for additional Commissioner salary days indicating the March 29th elk meeting in Rapid City is a salary day as the meeting was called to order and minutes will be attached with this meeting.

Director Chris Petersen gave a brief explanation regarding Commission approval of license list requests for the benefit of Commissioner Cerny and the SDSU students. Petersen indicated there are no requests for Commission consideration today.

FY12 Budget Spending Authority Adjustment

Director Petersen presented Resolution 12-03 requesting spending authority for the current Fiscal Year 2012 budget. This adjustment of expenditure authority in the Wildlife Division and the Snowmobile Trails Program is due to the one-time bonus payments to state employees as provided in House Bill 1137 approved during the 2012 South Dakota Legislative Session. The Commission authorized the payment at the April meeting but the exact expenditure authority was not known at that time.

Motion by Knippling with second by Spies TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 12-03 AS PRESENTED (Appendix A). Motion carried unanimously.

Surplus Property Rapid City Wildlife Regional Office

Director Petersen presented Resolution 12-04 requesting Commission approval designating the former Rapid City Region Wildlife Office as surplus property. The 2012 Legislature approved Senate Bill 38 establishing the legal authority for the Department of Agriculture to take possession of the property. Legislative approval was needed to allow for the sale and transfer of the property to another state agency.

Motion by Knippling with second by Spies TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 12-04 AS PRESENTED (Appendix B). Motion carried unanimously.

License Sales Report

Director Petersen presented the March 27, 2012, License Sales Report indicating the unseasonably warm winter, good fishing, and mild spring showed overall increased license sales of 49.8%, a significant improvement over the March 2011 sales report.

FY13 Budget

Director Petersen stated he would request approval of the FY13 Wildlife Division Budget and the Snowmobile Budget at the May Commission meeting. Commissioners were presented the FY13 budget last fall which did not include the salary package that impacts all state government agencies in a consistent manner. The 2012 Legislature approved a 3% "across the board" salary increase for employees along with a 2.5% "mid-point" adjustment for employees below the mid level of their salary range. Final spending authority figures will be ready before the May meeting as the 2013 Fiscal Year Budget begins on July 1, 2012. The Commission will receive the complete budget package for review prior to the next meeting.

Division of Wildlife Employee Awards

Wildlife Division Director Tony Leif presented the following Wildlife Division Awards: Exemplary Public Service Award plaque and coin went to Conservation Officer Nick Cochran of Aberdeen.

The Distinguished Achievement Award plaque and coin were presented to Wildlife Investigator Scott Mikkelson. The Distinguished Achievement Award is selected from the Outstanding Performance Award recipients of Jack Alexander, John Oberle, Andy Gabbart, Mary Clausen, Sam Stukel, Travis Runia, Adam Oswald, and Scott Mikkelson.

The Excellence in Team Work Award went to the Missouri River Response Team for services and work provided during the 2011 Flood. This team has over 120 people and several plaques will be placed in the appropriate offices. The activities of this team were outlined and the hours logged numbered more than 23,400 which is 3,000 days or 11 man-years. These individuals stepped up to support the mission of the Wildlife Division and served people first and served as best as they could. The four Regional Supervisors and John Lott were presented

plaques in recognition for the response team's efforts. Arden Petersen indicated the staff really stepped up especially in the Dakota Dunes area with staff time and equipment beginning June 1st until August. All agencies worked closely together and strong relationships were developed.

Public Hearing

The Public Hearing began at 2:02 PM on the items listed 8-16 under Finalizations on the Agenda. The hearing concluded at 2:13 PM. Public Hearing Minutes follow the regular meeting minutes and Appendix D are the minutes from the March 29th Elk Meeting in Rapid City.

Open Forum

Jim Twamley requested a revamp of the elk hunting landowner preference system stating he would like to see those with 15-20 preference points receiving the elk licenses. These hunters are getting older and with the diminishing elk herd, the Black Hills hunt should be available for the aging hunters. He would like to see the first time applications not get selected thus giving the older hunters better opportunity for the drawing.

Bill Donovan of Donovan's Hobby and Scuba Center in Sioux Falls voiced his concern for additional time on water for spear fishing people of South Dakota. Diving and spear fishing lakes available last year had poor visibility. He would like to see more lakes opened to spear fishing and wants the season extended at the October meeting.

Joe Beech of the Lake Hendricks Improvement Association updated the Commission on Lake Hendricks the project and presented his concern of restoration on property at the south end of Lake Hendricks. The lake has had too much water the last two years which took care of itself. Now the waters have receded and it is returning to the old system. The GFP property improvements did not happen. Water studies indicate the pollutants come in from Deer Creek. The 2010 GFP plans have been on hold and the Association has money for matching grants to complete the project. He would like to finish what was started and left two handouts for the GFP staff and Commission.

Curt Tesch of Rosholt shared his concerns about nonresident waterfowl licenses and stated he moved to South Dakota for the resident hunting privileges. The 500 nonresident licenses that were transferred to the northeast area greatly impacted the area. He would like Roberts County to be exempt from the additional licenses as North Dakota and Minnesota hunters come for the day and have no economic impact but compete directly with resident hunters.

Mark Widman of Sioux Falls is an avid upland game hunter and wants GFP to purchase additional land for use as GPA's. The average hunter needs additional pheasant hunting areas as oftentimes cannot afford the preserve hunting or private lands experience. Walk-in-Areas are leased and often is not the best hunting for pheasants.

Finalizations

Unattended Vehicle Park Entrance License 41:03:03

Bob Schneider presented the proposed change indicating the change would encourage the park user to apply the fee towards the purchase of an annual Park Entrance License and visit the parks more often.

Modify 41:03:03 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 Jensen with second by Spies TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO PARK LICENSES 41:03:03 AS PROPOSED. Motion carried unanimously.

Black Hills Elk Hunting Season 41:06:26

Andy Lindbloom and John Kanta gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Black Hills elk herd providing updated information on the fall herd composition survey, cow/calf ratios in Unit 2, aerial survey, research project updates, and harvest trends and successes. Discussion included public comment, branch antler options, and units the antlerless tags would be issued. Total number of elk in the Black Hills including Custer State Park and Wind Cave National Park is estimated at 4,000 animals. The department goal is to increase this population to 5,500.

Motion by Cooper with second by Spies TO AMEND THE PROPOSAL TO LOWER THE NUMBER OF 2012 ANTLERLESS TAGS TO 40 IN UNIT H1 AND LOWER THE NUMBER OF 2012 ANTLERLESS TAGS TO 50 IN UNIT H2. Roll call vote: Cooper-yes; Cerny-yes; Jensen-yes; Knipling-no; Peterson-yes; Spies-yes; Olson-yes. Motion carried with 6 yes votes and 1 no vote.

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 175 "antlerless elk" licenses (total of 570 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 Cooper with second by Jensen TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO BLACK HILL ELK HUNTING SEASON 41:06:26 AS AMENDED. Roll call vote: Cooper-yes; Cerny-yes; Jensen-yes; Knipling-no; Peterson-yes; Spies-yes; Olson-yes. Motion carried with 6 yes votes and 1 no vote.

Archery Elk Hunting Season 41:06:43

Kirschenmann presented the proposed changes for the reduction of licenses, add land to Unit H7, and close the season in Unit 30A with no recommended changes to proposal.

Motion by Knippling with second by Cooper TO AMEND THE PROPOSAL AND REDUCE THE ANTERLESS TAGS IN UNITS H1 AND H2 TO FIVE LICENSES EACH. Motion carried unanimously.

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 15 “antlerless elk” licenses (total of 97 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 Knippling TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO ARCHERY ELK HUNTING SEASON 41:06:43 AS AMENDED. Motion carried unanimously.

Custer State Park Any Elk Hunting Season 41:06:27

Gary Brundige presented the proposed change for this sixteen day, once-in-a-life time tag with no changes to proposal.

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 Cooper with second by Spies TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO THE CUSTER STATE PARK ANY ELK HUNTING SEASON 41:06:27 AS AMENDED. Motion carried unanimously.

Custer State Park Late Archery Elk Hunting Season 41:06:48

Gary Brundige presented the proposed change to close the season with no recommended changes.

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

Motion by Peterson with second by Spies TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO THE CSP LATE ARCHERY ELK HUNTING SEASON 41:06:48 AS PROPOSED. Motion carried unanimously

Custer State Park Deer Hunting Season 41:06:41

Brundige presented proposed changes to eliminate the anterless whitetail deer licenses in the CSP deer hunting season with no changes to recommendation.

These licenses were used as a management tool to reduce the herd and are no longer needed.

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

Motion by Jensen with second by Cerny TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO THE CSP DEER HUNTING SEASON 41:06:41 AS PROPOSED. Motion carried unanimously.

Prairie Elk Hunting Season 41:06:59

Chief Kirschenmann presented the proposed changes with no change to proposal. These elk populations are in good condition and providing good hunting opportunity. Staff will continue to work with Nebraska on the shared elk herd.

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 Jensen with second by Peterson TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO THE PRAIRIE ELK HUNTING SEASON 41:06:59 AS PROPOSED. Motion carried unanimously.

Black Hills Bighorn Sheep Hunting Season 41:06:56

Kirschenmann presented the proposed change with no recommended changes to proposal.

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

Motion by Spies with second by Cooper TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO THE BLACK HILLS BIGHORN SHEEP HUNTING SEASON 41:06:56 AS PROPOSED. Motion carried unanimously.

Family Park Water Zone

Assistant Director Emmett Keyser indicated the Parks Division developed a policy that allows different mobility types for individual circumstances and the Wildlife Division will look at developing a similar policy for the Family Park boating concern.

Hunting Season Proposals

Chief Kirschenmann shared with the Commission discussions during the last legislative session regarding nonresident waterfowl licenses and indicated the US Fish and Wildlife Service determines the overall season structure. The update included that 4,000 nonresident licenses are split between the ten-day and the three-day nonresident license types.

Kirschenmann indicated the Wildlife Division recommends no change to the Nonresident Waterfowl Licenses, Special Canada Goose Season, and the Tundra Swan Hunting Season. He provided information showing the number of licenses available and sold including harvest information for the past five years.

Division of Parks and Recreation

Blood Run Land Purchase

Director Hofer reviewed the status of the Buzz Nelson property purchased in December that will become a part of Blood Run State Park. The Conservation Fund and the Parks and Wildlife Foundation each currently own a portion of the property with the agreement that all of the Nelson property will eventually be transferred to the Division of Parks and Recreation for the establishment of the park. The Legislature approved the expenditure of Other Funds and Federal Funds in FY12 to assist with purchase of this property and the Department would like to use a portion of those funds to purchase sixty acres at the appraised price of \$574,500.00 from the Parks and Wildlife Foundation. The Foundation will then use these funds to pay down the loan from The Conservation Fund on the remainder of the Nelson property. Hofer requested approval of Resolution 12-05 allowing the Department to complete the transaction to purchase of the sixty acres currently held by the Foundation.

Motion by Cooper with second by Spies TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 12-05 AS PRESENTED (Appendix C). Motion carried unanimously.

Revenue and Visitation Report

Hofer presented the 2012 January through March Revenue and Visitation Reports indicating everything is well ahead of the first quarter for 2011. Revenue is up 7.1%, visitation is up 31.6%, and camping is up over 400% with over 1600 campers since January 1st and more than 1400 campers in the month of March. This is a reflection of the summer like weather this year and in contrast to the cold, wet weather of last year. Comfort stations are opening up and preparations are underway for open house weekend May 18th.

Big Sioux Recreation Area

Director Hofer indicated the Parks and Wildlife Divisions would be asking approval to complete a land acquisition to the Big Sioux Recreation Area at the May Commission meeting. An additional fifteen acres is available and the City of Brandon has committed one third of the funding for the purchase of the property that will provide access and additional recreational opportunities. The Parks Division and the Wildlife Division will each provide one third of funding for the purchase.

Division of Wildlife

Black Hills Elk Landowner Preference Licenses

Chief Kirschenmann indicated that 50% of the Black Hills elk season licenses are set aside for landowners and in 2011, ninety any elk licenses were issued to landowners and these hunters had a 57% success rate. Only three cow tags were issued to landowners last year. All other seasons had even fewer landowner preference licenses issued. The license allows landowners to hunt anywhere in the unit the license was issued.

Elk Depredation Program

Assistant Director Keyser presented information regarding elk depredation in the Black Hills. Payments and assistance are down as the herd has declined. Assistance is available where necessary to landowners who allow hunters on their property.

SDSU Research Partnership

Dr. Michael Brown from SDSU gave a PowerPoint presentation which outlined the reorganization of the Department of Natural Resource Management in July of 2011, the graduate and undergraduate programs, the extension service, staffing, and research projects with Game, Fish, and Parks. He indicated South Dakota is one of the few states who retain such outstanding, two-way cooperation between the university and the agency.

Commissioner Cooper indicated his desire for a discussion with the Black Hills Forest Service following the public concerns expressed the past few weeks. Cooper suggested a subcommittee develop questions for a discussion regarding grazing, monitoring, and management guidelines with the Forest Service at the May Commission meeting as it is at Custer State Park and would be convenient for Black Hills Forest Supervisor Craig Bobzien to attend the meeting. Cooper will contact Shelly Deisch to participate in the subcommittee and other Commissioners were encouraged to provide input to the subcommittee.

Chairman Olson called for recess at 4:58 PM with meeting to resume the next morning, Thursday, April 5th at 8:30 AM in the same location. Meeting resumed on Thursday, April 5th at 8:30 AM with Commissioners Olson, Knippling, Cooper, Spies, Peterson, Jensen, and Cerny present. Department Secretary Vonk, SDSU students, public, staff, and media numbering approximately 100 were present.

CREP-CRP Enrollment and Hunter Access Update

Mark Norton gave a PowerPoint Presentation of the 2012 Habitat and Access efforts for the Division of Wildlife. He outlined the types of habitat, acres and dollars in the CREP and CHAP programs, CRP enrollment, Farm Bill update, Walk-In- Area data, Waterfowl Access information, and outlined the challenges and opportunities for providing hunting access opportunities in South Dakota.

Pheasant Season Harvest and Population Update

Chad Switzer gave a PowerPoint presentation showing the 2011 pheasant population decline and the decline in resident and nonresident hunters. Hunters harvested more than 1.5 million birds; the ninth highest in twenty years. Switzer provided a graph showing trends of land retirement and pheasant populations, loss of CRP since 1996, and projected loss of CRP acres through 2017 indicating that maintaining nesting habitat is going to be a challenge. The current winter weather conditions will help the population rebound; however, habitat is still the most important ingredient for continuing strong pheasant populations.

Annual Hunter Harvest Surveys

Chief Scott Simpson gave a PowerPoint presentation that showed the need for and history of hunter surveys. This allows hunters to rate their experience and share comments. This data is used when determining future hunting seasons and economic impacts.

Brookings Fishing Pond Development Project

Pete Carlson presented a PowerPoint showing the Dakota Nature Park project indicating construction should be complete in 2013 on this \$3.2 million project. Carlson provided background and features of the project as well as future plans.

Todd St. Sauver gave a PowerPoint presentation showing the ponds in the Dakota Nature Parks outlining the features of each pond and the Department's cooperative involvement in and management plan for each pond.

Brookings Shooting Range Development Project

Randy Hansen from the Brookings Outdoor Learning Center gave a PowerPoint showing features of the shooting range to be included in Dakota Nature Park. The range will be used for archery, air gun, BB gun, pistol and rifle sports including 4-H, schools, and the Boys and Girls Club. Membership will be available to families, individuals, sportsmen, SDSU students, and one time users and visitors. The public broadcasting show "Nature Adventures" is partnering with the project.

Administrative Rule Reduction Initiative

Chief Kirschenmann indicated the Department continues to review all 800+ administrative rules in order to reduce and simplify rules as directed to all state agencies. More than 450 rules have been categorized into non-controversial, minimal public input, and high profile. Staff will solicit input from special interest groups and the public as the internal review continues before bringing the reduction recommendations to the Commission for consideration.

NASP Tournament Report

Chief Simpson shared information from the National Archery in the Schools Program state tournament held at the Brookings Swiftel Center a week ago. He

provided background information along with funding, sponsorships, school and shooter participation, and tournament results.

Motion by Knippling with second by Peterson to adjourn the meeting.
Meeting adjourned at 10:20 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Vonk". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jeffrey R. Vonk, Department Secretary

Appendix A

RESOLUTION 12-03

REQUEST FOR BUDGET ADJUSTMENT

BE IT RESOLVED that the South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks Commission hereby authorizes a current year (FY2012) budget adjustment for costs associated with one-time bonus payments to state employees as defined and authorized within HB1137 of the 2012 Legislature.

The budget adjustment shall include an increase of \$97,871 in federal fund expenditure authority and an increase \$412,315 in other fund expenditure authority for the Division of Wildlife (0610) and an increase of \$11,941 in other fund expenditure authority for the Snowmobile Trails Program (0622).

Appendix B

RESOLUTION 12-04

Whereas, the State of South Dakota (held by and for the use and benefit of the Department of Game, Fish, and Parks) owns property described as:

Lot 4 of the SE1/4NE1/4 of Section 4 - Township 1 North, Range 7 East of the BHM, Pennington County, South Dakota, also known as the South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks Wildlife Regional Office, 3305 West South Street, Rapid City, SD 57702 (GFP PROPERTY); and

Whereas, SDCL 41-2-20 provides that the Department shall have the power, authority, and duty to sell buildings and real property owned by the State and held by the Department if the Game, Fish, and Parks Commission determines the buildings and real property to be obsolete or no longer useful to the Department for game, fish, and parks purposes; and

Whereas, SB No. 38 was approved by the 2012 South Dakota Legislature, signed by the Governor, and filed with the office of the South Dakota Secretary of State; and

Whereas, SB No. 38, §1, establishes the necessary legal authority for the Department to sell and transfer title to the GFP PROPERTY to the South Dakota Department of Agriculture, and for the South Dakota Department of Agriculture to purchase and take control and ownership of the GFP PROPERTY and hold fee title thereto.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Department of Game, Fish, and Parks is directed to sell and transfer title to the GFP PROPERTY to the South Dakota Department of Agriculture, and that the GFP Department is authorized to execute an agreement relative to the sale deemed appropriate by the GFP Department.

Appendix C

RESOLUTION NO. 12-05

Whereas, the Department of Game, Fish, and Parks (GFP) has expressed an interest in acquiring real property from the South Dakota Parks and Wildlife Foundation, of Pierre, South Dakota, which property is described as:

Parcel I: The Southwest Quarter of the Northeast Quarter (SW1/4 NE1/4) of Section 14, Township 100 North, Range 49 West of the 5th P.M., Lincoln County, South Dakota; and

Parcel II: The West Half of the Southeast Quarter of the Northeast Quarter (W1/2 SE ¼ NE ¼) of Section 14, Township 100 North, Range 49 West of the 5th P.M., Lincoln County, South Dakota.

Whereas, said property is to be acquired by and utilized by the Division of Parks and Recreation for the purpose of a State Park (Blood Run); and

Whereas, SDCL 41-4-1.1 requires that before GFP acquires and purchases property GFP must notify owners of land located adjacent to the property sought to be acquired by publishing notice of the same once in each legal newspaper of the county in which the property to be purchased is located; and

Whereas, GFP has published the required legal notice at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of action by the Commission authorizing the intended purchase, which notice included the time and location of the meeting at which the Commission's action is expected and by giving notice of instructions for presenting oral and written comments to the Commission; and

Whereas, the Commission has reviewed any and all comments that may have been received relative to the intended purchase and after consideration of the same, the Commission approves of the intended purchase; and

Whereas, it is the expectation of the Department that the Parks and Wildlife Foundation will utilize the proceeds from this sale to purchase Tract A of the Nelson Land to be added at a later date to property that will be included in Blood Run State Park.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that GFP is authorized to complete the purchase of the above described real property at the appraised value of \$574,500.00 and consummate the purchase agreement with the South Dakota Parks and Wildlife Foundation to acquire by purchase the above described real property.

Public Hearing Minutes of the Game, Fish, and Parks Commission
April 4, 2012

Public Hearing Officer Chuck Schlueter began the hearing at 2:02 PM at the Swiftel Center in Brookings, South Dakota. Commissioners Olson, Knippling, Cooper, Jensen, Peterson, Spies, and Cerny were present. Schlueter indicated the written comments were shared with the Commission prior to the meeting and are posted online and now is the time oral testimony is received from the public following the order on the Agenda under Finalizations items 8-15 and comments should be kept to three minutes. Public comment regarding the elk seasons received at the March 29, 2012, elk meeting at the Outdoor Campus West in Rapid City would be attached to the official minutes of this meeting (Appendix D). Full texts of written comments are available at the Pierre Game, Fish, and Parks office.

Unattended Vehicle Parks Entrance License
No oral or written testimony received.

Custer State Park Deer Hunting Season
No written or oral testimony received.

Bighorn Sheep Hunting Season
No written or oral testimony received.

Elk Hunting Seasons

Jim Twamley provided oral testimony supporting his written testimony to eliminate the harvest of any cow elk and requested that only branch bull elk be harvested. He believes hunters will hunt for the branched antlered elk to fill the any elk tag and he hopes that cow elk will not be harvested to fill the tag. He expressed his desire for the late season archery to have no tags allocated and no archery season elk harvested in CSP similar to actual harvest in the last two years. He desires to allow branch bulls be allowed for additional harvest.

Chris Hesla of the South Dakota Wildlife Federation testified and emphasized the need to review the landowner allocation. He cautions to take baby steps when setting the mountain lion season this fall, stay with the basics when making decisions, and continue to have a season.

Rich Widman of Brookings stated he agrees with the SD Wildlife Federation and is concerned about the elk population. He encourages GFP to look at the SD Wildlife Federation proposals. He emphasized that the average hunter should get a "fair chance" at a once in a lifetime hunt. Widman believes the Landowner preference formula is broken and it is not fair for the average person to wait for 10+ years for a chance to draw a license.

The following have emailed in opposition to any cow elk tags issued for the 2012 fall hunting seasons: Craig Solberg of Pierre, SD; Roger L. Knecht of Parker, SD; Ron McMahon; Kelly Koistinen; Mark J. Clausen of Pierre, SD; Mike

Schortzmann of Rapid City, SD; Gina Rose; Bob Schneider of Sioux Falls, SD; Vilas Schoenfelder of Mitchell, SD; Gene Addink of Rapid City, SD; Jason Olson of Sioux Falls, SD; Lester Spitler of Pringle, SD; Jay Baldwin of Lake Norden, SD; Josh Schneider of Rapid City, SD; Kit L. Cline of Rapid City, SD; Lance Perrett of Rapid City, SD; Don Kettering; Josh Horak of Spearfish, SD; Scott Eisenbraun of Vale, SD; David Mines of Yankton, SD; Jeff Williamson of Reliance, SD; Dick Horak of Spearfish, SD; Brian Slack of Sioux Falls, SD; Mike and Denise Burr of Huron, SD; Tom Iverson of Big Stone City, SD; Troy Lorensen of Oacoma, SD; Terrance Kvislen of Fort Pierre, SD; Chuck Stahnke of Platte, SD; Dale A. Buehler of Rapid City, SD; Jerry D. Gooding of Pierre, SD; Larry N. Rezac of Crooks, SD; Cliff Hallem of Montrose, SD; Craig Oberle of Mellette, SD; Steve Schelske of Pierre, SD; Shane Hyde of Pierre, SD; Curt Pudwill of Piedmont, SD; Gordon Bradley of Rapid City, SD; Rory Binkerd of Hartford, SD; Marla Sebade of Rapid City, SD; James A. Czywczynski of Rapid City, SD; John Duffy of Brookings, SD; Larry V. Chilstrom of Rapid City, SD; Clint Englehart of Pierre, SD; Gary Colbath of the Black Hills; Clarence Leen of New Effington, SD; Dana R. Rogers of Box Elder, SD; Dale Penning of Harrisburg, SD; Tim Berg; Timothy Udager of Rapid City, SD; Arlin Stratmeyer of Rapid City, SD; Kenneth Koistinen of Pierre, SD; Michael and Darlene Semmens of Mobridge, SD; Clay Solberg of Pierre, SD; Scott Johnson of Fort Pierre, SD; Sharon and Jon Kayser of Custer, SD; Mark W. Beaumont of Rapid City, SD; Gregory Christopher Delzer of Rapid City, SD; Greg Peterson of Clear Lake, SD; Justin Broughton of Sioux Falls, SD; Wayne Schneider of Mitchell, SD; Mike Hultunen of Custer, SD; Jared Vock of Pierre, SD; Jason Ohlsen of Summerset, SD; Bob Gooding of Andover, SD; Aaron Glasford of Aberdeen, SD; Mark Freese of Huron, SD; John Simpson of Pierre, SD; Mike Barnes of Murdo, SD; Steven K. Stauffer of Rapid City, SD; Jerome Tuschen of Sioux Falls, SD; Jim Langdeau of Fort Pierre, SD; Bob Stewart of Custer, SD; Jim Dahlberg of Hot Springs, SD; Patrick Gross of Vermillion, SD; Tom Juntti of Rapid City, SD; Carrold Kraemer of Aberdeen, SD; Neal Abeln of Groton, SD; Charles Eide of Sioux Falls, SD; Jim Glines of Rapid City, SD; Mike McKnight President of SD Bowhunters Inc, of Sioux Falls, SD; South Dakota Wildlife Federation; Paul Marso of Pierre, SD; Jennifer Hartman of Sturgis, SD; Bill Englehart of Pierre, SD; Aaron Erickson of Watertown, SD; Paul DeHaan of Custer, SD; Perry DeHaan of Sioux Falls, SD; Chris Pranger of Sioux Falls, SD; Denis Fokken of Yankton, SD; Kevin Hipple of Pierre, SD; Neil Waldera of Alex, SD; Dwight A Gubbrud of Belle Fourche, SD; Jason Smith of Pierre, SD; Perry L. King of Hot Springs, SD; Nancy Hilding of Black Hawk, SD; Prairie Hills Audubon Society from Nancy Hilding of Black Hawk, SD; Joel Wagner; Berdette Zastrow of Grenville, SD; Bob Koski; David Templeton of Pierre, SD; Janice Cronin; Les Wolff of Lemmon, SD; Randy Schaefer of Madison, SD; Rick Hultunen of Howard, SD; Richard Pearson of Webster, SD; Wayne Henderson of Lodgepole, SD; John Wrede of Rapid City, SD.

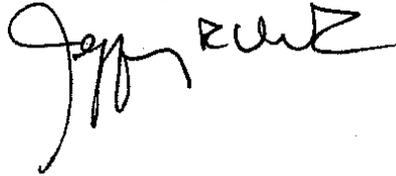
William and Cynthia Row of Hermosa, SD, emailed their request to close the elk season for 2012.

Letters and email supporting the current proposed changes were received from: Conda Williams of Watertown, SD; Jim Thomson of Rapid City, SD.

Letters and email containing comments regarding the managing of elk were received from: Bryan Schnell of Rapid City, SD; Bob Ingle of Cavour, SD; Dr. Tom Huhnerkoch of Lead, SD; Curtis Healy of Lake City, SD; Rod Leyendecker of Huron, SD; Steve Muilenburg of Virgil, SD; Leighton Knight of Beresford, SD; Thomas D. Novonty of Hill City, SD; Jeb Bordeywk of Rapid City, SD; Jason Schuldt of Spearfish, SD; Aron Martz of Rapid City, SD; Brian Zirpel of Lennox, SD; Steve Krier of Sioux Falls, SD; Julie Anderson of Rapid City, SD; Ralph Dupres Jr. of Ellsworth AFB; Gene Vostad of Big Stone City, SD; Jeremy Wells of Rapid City, SD; Alan Lien of Chamberlain, SD.

The Public Hearing concluded at 2:13 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Vonk". The signature is stylized with a large, looped initial "J" and a long, horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jeffrey R. Vonk, Department Secretary

Appendix D

Game, Fish, and Parks Commission Elk Meeting March 29, 2012

Commissioner Olson called the meeting to order at 6:10 PM MDT at the Outdoor Campus West in Rapid City, South Dakota. Commissioners present were Jeff Olson, Susie Knippling, John Cooper, Barry Jensen, and Jim Spies. Olson stated the purpose of the meeting is to hear public comment about the elk proposals from west river residents prior to the regular commission meeting in April.

Olson welcomed approximately 150 people from the public and indicated their opinion is valuable when making informed management decisions.

Chuck Schlueter asked speakers to sign in at the table before approaching the podium to share comments with the Commissioners. Schlueter indicated that with a group this size, many would want to provide comments and individuals are asked to limit comments to three minutes and while someone is speaking, another person please come forward to sign the sheet at the table providing their name and city.

Dana Rogers of Box Elder shared his concern for the significant decline in the elk population and herds in Custer State Park and the decline of elk licenses. Mountain lions do have an impact on the herd along with over harvest adding to the decline of elk. He expressed his desire that no cow elk to be harvested. The landowner license allotment and current herd density should be reviewed. He wants to stop the issue of cow tags and believes overgrazing by cattle contributes to decline of the elk herd and requests additional harvest of lions.

Tim Goodwin of Rapid City expressed his concern about the lack of credibility of the department. The department has failed to manage elk tags and lion numbers and wants accountability.

Jim Lentz of Hermosa stated his concern about the number of cats. Last year he had 120 elk on his place and was a problem. This year he had only one elk. Seven lions have been taken in a three mile radius of his place. The number of cats must be astounding and would appreciate no elk tags for the southern hills unit.

Greg Schroeder Chief of Resource Management at Wind Cave provided copies of the Wind Cave Elk Management Plan of 2009. Wind Cave has too many elk and the herd continues to grow. The management plan is to reduce cow elk by installing a gate, which is now in place, to allow elk to leave the park and then raise the upper portion of the gate to keep the elk out during hunting seasons. If the herd is not down to 475 elk in two years, the management plan calls for the next step which is to round up elk and euthanize the extra elk. He expressed the need to continue to work with biologists on elk management.

Leonard Wood of Pringle lives near Wind Cave and does not agree with Wind Cave and shared that last fall along Hwy 71 he saw 20 elk and 8 calves. The hunters are not hurting the calves and in the last four months has had four elk on his place. The elk herd at his place has been decreasing and harvest in past years has

been 13-15 elk killed per year, the last two years harvest has been 7-9 elk taken per year.

Shadrach Howie of Rapid City is a trapper and has seen signs that Wind Cave has good elk herd. He wants no elk cow tags issued except for the H3 unit. He has observed a low cow/calf ratio and believes Wind Cave elk should be available for harvest.

Dennis Cummings of Rapid City shared he is an avid hunter and lives on Hwy 385 by the Service City Turnoff and used to have deer there. He has seen only a half dozen elk the last couple of years. Lions have done it - killed deer and calves and has taken a toll. He favors opening the lion season for one year with no quota.

Charles Nicholas of Spearfish agrees with Dennis Cummings and believes mismanagement is similar to the Forest Service with the mountain pine beetle. We are in trouble and bad trouble. He expressed his concern for the loss of habitat due to bugs. He indicated Colorado has lost sediment in streams and the fallen trees create erosion decreasing habitat - all due to the beetle infestation. He has seen only three elk calves and he thinks there is a wolf problem.

Will Cooper of Lead, SD, feels it is too bad that this many people to come together and this should indicate that the general hunting public wants some change. Where will this go? Over harvest and winter conditions have affected the elk and need some drastic measures to get back on track. Where to go, and how to get there. Hunter masses depend on biologists and the number of people present - indicate the elk and deer population are down. What are costs of studies and who does the studies? Without game to hunt there will be fewer licenses sold and less Pittmann-Robertson dollars from the sale of sporting goods. How do we recruit new hunters without tags? Landowners are the good guys and best game managers we have and be sure to listen to the landowners as they see what is going on.

Jim Glines of Rapid City has seen good points, bad points, good points, and back to bad and it is hard to build a herd when calves are being taken by lions. Unit 7, 9, 5, 4 have few elk, no cows and no calves. Do not continue to issue cow tags we need to grow the herd.

Daniel J. Muth of Rapid City indicated he hunts and fishes the Black Hills and when camping in the 80's, he saw elk. GFP was conservative with the elk count and in the early 2000's had too many elk and the lions showed up and now we have too many lions. Formula to study animals is not correct and with 70+ cats harvested in 70 days tells us there are a lot of cats. Turkey populations are also down.

John D. Johnson of Black Hawk and ranches in Lawrence County indicated the elk are here now until July with a small herd near his field. Last year the herd had 8-10 calves and saw none by July. In early fall of 2011, 35-40 mature elk visited his salt lick and he couldn't tell if any were calves. His opinion is - we are beating heads against a stone wall by adjusting permits; now is the time, like pioneers, to set a bounty on the lions. Only this way can the deer, elk, and sheep herds be effectively managed.

Mike Jarding ranches near Hot Springs in Unit 3 and shared he had an elk archery tag last year and with cameras showed about 100 elk. The population is horrible and he is worried about Unit 3. He referenced a couple of studies and believes that the number of mature bulls have gone down. Trophy bulls promote

healthy managed herds and shared about the age of a mature bull in neighboring states. He desires a 50/50 cow/calve ratio and wants to lower the number of cow tags.

Shirley Mielke from Hermosa stated she had a nice herd of elk on her ranch and this year had one elk. She has seen five lions on her ranch. She is worried about their calves as the elk are feeding the lions and need to get the lions under control.

Nancy Hilding of Black Hawk representing herself testified against the “scape goating” of mountain lions and that many other factors affect the elk. The harvest of lions is excessive and predators have a place in the world and are part of the eco system. We need to share the function of predator with natural predators and believes over harvest by hunters is the real problem.

Jeb Bordewyk of Rapid City wants accountability as he feels he has been lied to about elk populations. He believes we will continue to have problems until cats are out of the system.

Rick Finn of Sturgis thinks people don't know what to say to the Commission anymore. It is not his job to manage wildlife and thinks the Commission has failed. He has had eight lions killed in his area and two are still in the area. Need to do something about the cats and he remembers seeing his first elk and he likes to see lions but they need to be managed. Listen to people and staff and he holds the Commission responsible.

Tate Glader of Johnsons Siding and thinks 99% of those present wants to see the elk herd rebuilt by eliminating predation and eliminate harvest of cow elk. He shared about the economics of hunting and closed by indicating that choosing to manage lions at current population estimates, means you choose not to manage other species in Black Hills.

Dennis Barrett of Deadwood believes the easy fix is to quit shooting cows. Don't let landowners draw trophy elk licenses as all people should have the same chance as landowners. The other thing is over grazing in the Hills is sickening and can't raise herd back to normal as the Forest Service is letting pastures be grazed down so there is no food source. Lions should be killed to the number you want and all wolves should be shot on sight. Need to work on a lot of things as the draw system does not work and we need to get the elk population back up, kill the lions, and leave 4-5 for people to look at.

Steve Bulle of Key Stone, SD, admitted being confused. GFP Website page population says 2,000 elk and email was sent to encourage people to come to this meeting and the number on website changed to 4,000 elk. More confused about recent articles were referenced about the population of elk in the Black Hills. I just don't get it.

Craig Solberg of Pierre shared his concerned about the elk population. He was a Wind Cave volunteer to harvest cow elk in 2010 and a plan has been developed. Currently, the CSP elk herd has been grossly mismanaged at 140 elk and wants the Wind Cave elk used to reestablish CSP herd.

Robert Dennis of Red Owl/Mead County indicated that rabies went thru his area and the wildlife immediately rebounded when the disease left. Herds will

rebound and believes when cows are not harvested the herd will rebound with a little wise management. Lions produce litters while elk rarely have two calves.

Joe Schacher of Rapid City expressed his concern about youth learning to hunt and fish and the need to control the lion population or all will be for naught. He referenced the different foundations present and that their money is used for the survival of wildlife.

Scott Guffy of Rapid City shared his concern about the pine beetle and the need to develop a plan to manage beetle. A diverse habitat is needed to increase the carrying capacity of the forest and invited Commissioners to participate in developing a plan.

Jerald Fraiser of Keystone thinks the problem is GFP and up the ladder and should eliminate all the staff.

Marvin Nuegebauer of Hermosa doesn't get it when 40 female lions at 4.5 years old are harvested and how many litters can they produce? How can GFP take a livelihood away from family man and many landowners want him to get his job back and will take to another level.

Dan Henderson of Somerset thinks the depredation of elk is from lions and would like to see some common sense on how to regulate this and suggested a lion depredation hunt to stop problem. He saw wolf tracks while in the park and suggested open the roads during lion season to help hunters protect elk from lions during the calving season. Cut down on cow tags as this is common sense.

Don Wrede of Rapid City questioned the attending public: Who is in favor of eradicating every cat in the area? Who could live without shooting a cow elk for a couple of years?

Gary Finn stated any high school science course teaches that it is necessary to manage animals using habitat. Mountain lions, if they are not controlled, will repopulate and will run out of a food source and then will spread out and will take the neighbors dogs and cats. Need to manage predators as well as deer and elk.

Will Cooper asked to comment about landowner preference and indicated he shoots elk on his own property as does many other landowner and he does not overgraze his land leased from the Forest Service. He stated when teaching HuntSafe classes, he teaches the students that the landowners are good guys and that they are the best game managers we have as their livelihood depends on it. He emphasized the need to listen to landowners as they are out there everyday all day long and know their area.

Lon Sharp of Hot Springs is an avid bow hunter he believes some sportsmen made some quick conclusions that lions are the problem or the over harvest of cows. How is it that the Wind Cave elk population is growing and CSP the population is plummeting? Could this be due to age structure? Why are there no lions in Wind Cave? The answer is in the interaction of the species and age of herds.

Pat Coy of Hill City, a rancher, indicated they have elk and live near the Jasper fire area where there are elk. Tagged elk in CSP moved to his ranch to calf out and then stayed there. He hunts elk on his own ranch and helps hunters that come to his place. Let's figure out how to make this work.

Jim Dahlberg of Hot Springs appreciates the Department and the Commission and has two suggestions about elk season. A person that draws an

any elk license receives a license once in ten years in any elk season. This would allow others to get tags. Second, the elk be managed through out the Black Hills including CSP this would simplify the process.

C. Paul Vinatieri of Rapid City shared that he has worked with many Region 1 staff and mentioned the many boards he serves on. GFP employees serve on these boards and they care about elk, kids, the trap club; they are not villains. The staff are good, conscientious people and gave examples of their community service. He stated the need to thank GFP staff and commissioners for their time for doing their jobs.

Tim Buchmann expressed his desire to open the lion season for a whole year to manage the cats and the use of dogs would help identify the type of a cat harvested. This gives others opportunity to harvest cats and help get the cats to a manageable level. He wants to drop cow tags to zero for a year or two to build up the elk herd.

Mark Miller of Black Hawk stated lions are taking a lot of wildlife and supports reducing cow tags and thinks closing the elk season for a couple of years to see what happens. Eliminate the quota on cats and see what the difference it makes on the population.

Matt Rippentrop of Lennox stated he would hate the landowners of Black Hills to leave this meeting thinking they are not appreciated. He thanked the landowners for allowing hunters to hunt their land.

Joel Hartman from Sturgis wants everyone to remember this meeting and to be able to come here in five years to discuss the elk herd. He stated the need to manage elk and lions in order to have a season in five years.

Ernie Getty of Rapid City hunts the Slim Buttes and gets reports that there are lions there along with wolves. He agrees the mountain lion population needs to be reduced and thinks GFP is doing a pretty good job. He would like to see the quota be increased again. He is not seeing an impact with the current harvest of lions and thinks there are more lions than we know. He knows lots of landowners in the Black Hills and pastures were always full of elk. Landowners can get a tag every year and it would be fair if they hunt on their own land. He realizes the loss the landowners take feeding the elk.

Bubba Johnston of Sugar Shack wants true answers and true work and a lot of the numbers have changed.

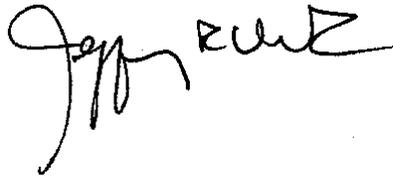
Mike Lindberg of Keystone has a lot of cats and wants to manage cats like the deer and wants to harvest more cats in different units like deer and elk.

Bob Watts of Rapid City is an ordinary guy who likes to hunt and fish, maybe a little too much, and spends \$300 a year on license fees to support GFP and fund operations. The people in this room are the GFP constituents and he has watched the decline of elk and deer herds. He believes there is more than one reason for it. Lower numbers of lions are needed and there is a need to work with the landowners as they are stewards of the land and are out there everyday.

Tom Blair echoed Paul Vinatieri's comments and believes tonight we have heard good and marginal ideas with some anger, but many people don't realize what the Commissioners do as he has served with some of the Commissioners on other boards and he said thank you to the Commissioners for their service.

Olson stated this is a valuable part of the process and thanked everyone for coming. Motion by Knippling with second by Cooper to adjourn the meeting and meeting adjourned at 7:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey R. Vonk". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a stylized "V".

Jeffrey R. Vonk, Department Secretary

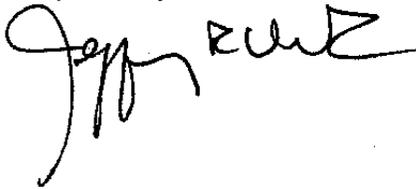
Game, Fish, and Parks Commission Governance Minutes
April 4, 2012

Chairman Olson called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM at the Brookings Days Inn. Commissioners present were: Jeff Olson, Susie Knippling, John Cooper, Jim Spies, Cathy Peterson, Bill Cerny, and Barry Jensen. Department Secretary Jeff Vonk and Executive Secretary Debra Ascher were also present.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss governance which included the legislative mandates, sharing of email and public comment, and stakeholder meetings and functions.

There was a review of the Commissioner Handbook and the 2007 Governance and Operating Policies Guidebook. Meeting adjourned at 11:40 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Jeffrey R. Vonk, Department Secretary