

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

Chairman Jeff Olson called the meeting to order at 1:07 PM with Commissioners Jeff Olson, Susie Knippling, Jim Spies, John Cooper, Bill Cerny, Cathy Peterson, Duane Sather, and Barry Jensen present. Secretary Vonk was absent and media, staff, and public numbered approximately fifty.

Division of Administration

Chairman Olson called for additions, corrections, or approval of the October meeting minutes.

Motion by Cooper with second by Sather TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER MINUTES AS PRESENTED IN THE COMMISSION BOOK. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Olson called for additional Commissioner Salary Days claiming one for him. Motion by Jensen with second by Peterson TO APPROVE THE ADDITIONAL SALARY DAY FOR OLSON. Motion carried unanimously.

Director Chris Petersen presented two license list requests for Commission consideration:

The South Dakota Wildlife Federation Camo-Coalition requested a list of 3,000 resident fishing license holders for 2012 to send a letter soliciting membership and their representation in the Legislature. This would be at the reduced fee.

Motion by Cooper with second by Spies TO APPROVE THE LICENSE LIST REQUEST FROM THE SD WILDLIFE FEDERATION CAMO-COALITIOIN AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Petersen presented a request from Alaska's Inside Passage Resorts for a list of small game preserve nonresident license holders and elk license holders to promote their all-inclusive wilderness adventure. This would be at the full fee.

Motion by Jensen with second by Cerny TO APPROVE THE LICENSE LIST REQUEST FROM ALASKA'S INSIDE PASSAGE RESORTS GROUP. Motion carried unanimously.

Director Petersen presented the License Sales Totals ending on October 25, 2012. The list shows an increase of 5.6% from October 25, 2011. The resident and nonresident small game license had an additional week of sales last year due to how the calendar days fell during this time frame. In review of the calendar days he looked at the opening weekend sales for both years. Resident small game sales for this year were up 3% and the nonresident small game license sales were up about 10% over opening weekend last year.

GFP Attorney Richard Neill indicated the Department received a letter from Kevin Fuerst of Sioux Falls, SD, after the October meeting. Fuerst asked that only public comment with names and addresses be considered for public comment as indicated in the public notice. Neill indicated no statute or rule requires this information; however, with email and ease of submitting comments to Wildlinfo@state.sd.us often times the address and/or name is omitted from the comment. Anyone appearing in person at a Commission meeting to comment on rule changes is asked for name, city, and state on the sheet. Discussion ensued and the Commissioner consensuses were to include name, city, and state in the Public Hearing minutes. Staff are to contact the person emailing without name and address and share that comments require name, city, and state to be considered at the Public Hearing.

Open Forum

Dave Bein of DeSmet, SD, expressed his desire that the nonresident waterfowl July 1st application deadline should be later as often times hunters don't have their pheasant trip planned by July 1st. As a guide and pheasant outfitter, it would be beneficial to have these nonresident sportsmen hunt the waterfowl. He suggested allowing resident guides access to buy nonresident waterfowl for visiting hunters.

Bein indicated the eastern SD pheasant population is in crisis, due to loss of cover and there are not enough birds in the area. Motels are not full and the bar business is down as hunters are going further west in South Dakota. He would like a meeting between GFP, farmers, and conservation groups to address the habit and find dollars that would be available to release birds on public ground.

Jan Nicolay of Chester, SD, expressed her thanks to the staff on the pine beetle efforts in the Black Hills. She thanked GFP and the Commission for Sportsman Against Hunger program and the improvements. Nicolay stated her concern about the surcharge on licenses sold that was designated for depredation and public access, requesting an accounting of surcharge expenditures. She indicated she serves on the committee that created this surcharge and that the committee may need additional or new members. As a member of this committee she wants an accountability of funds from the \$5 depredation fee before movement forward for the increase of the fee. Chairman Olson requested a list of committee members from her.

Chris Hesla, Executive Director of the South Dakota Wildlife Federation stated the organization supports Dr. Huhnerkoch petition. While they believe in the hunting of lions, they do not support a statewide lion hunting season.

Gary Beboubien of Howard indicated that he would like to have a split license fee for those only using the boat ramps as he does not use the parks. He also inquired about the dollars used to purchase Blood Run State Park and why raise the park fees when they can pay farmer so much.

Parks Director Hofer responded to Gary Beboubien that especially on Lake Oahe the cost per visitor is same as in any park and probably more. Fish cleaning stations are expensive to maintain and in a combination of simplicity and expenses to maintain the boating facilities it is better to have just one park entrance license to cover boat ramps and parks across South Dakota. The dollars used to purchase the Blood Run

property were private donated dollars and project specific. The Federal dollars used were designated dollars to preserve the forest.

Public Hearing

The Public Hearing began at 2 PM on items listed under Finalizations on the agenda. The hearing concluded at 2:49 PM. (Minutes of the Public Hearing follow these minutes of the Commission meeting.)

Finalizations

Fishing Season and Fish Limits 41:07:02; 41:07:03

Geno Adams presented the proposed changes to the fishing seasons and limits indicating there were three public meetings as well as meetings with SD Tourism, SD Walleyes Unlimited, and some outfitters. Public comment showed strong support to keep the one fish over 20 inch requirement in the regulations. Adams indicated the only recommended change to proposal is: to keep the one over 20 inch size limit on the daily take of walleye, sauger, or combination of. This is not a biological but a social issue.

Motion by Cooper with second by Peterson TO AMEND THE PROPOSAL AS RECOMMENDED. Motion carried.

1. Modify 41:07:02:05 "Special management waters." by removing the following streams and creeks from the spring fishing closure list:
 - a. All creeks in Codington County except those associated with Punished Woman and Round Lakes;
 - b. The outlet stream from Lake Poinsett;
 - c. All creeks in Grant County;
 - d. Creeks in Roberts County below White Rock Dam on the Bois De Sioux River and below Reservation Dam Gates on Lake Traverse.
2. Modify 41:07:03:03. "Daily, possession, and length limit restrictions on special management waters." By:
 - a. Adding the Grand River above Shadehill reservoir to the waters where catfish may be taken without limit under subsection (1)
 - b. Changing the county designation for Richland Dam from Jerauld to Jones and Curlew Lake from Pennington to Meade in subsection (2), and;
 - c. Removing subsection (4), "In Patten Dam in Aurora County, the daily trout limit is 2."
 - d. Adding subsection (14) (13 if subsection 4 is removed) stating "In Lake Oahe, the daily limit for walleye, sauger, walleye-sauger hybrids, or combination thereof is 8 and of the walleye taken daily no more than four may be 15 inches or greater in length, possession limit is 24;" The stipulation that no more than one walleye, sauger, or saugeye in the daily limit may be 20 inches or greater in length will remain on Lake Oahe.

Motion by Knippling with second by Spies TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO FISHING SEASONS AND FISH LIMITS 41:07:02 AND 41:07:03 AS AMENDED. Motion carried unanimously.

Snagging of Paddlefish 41:07:05

Adams presented the proposed changes with no recommended changes to the proposal.

Modify 41:07:05:03 "Paddlefish snagging, processing, and transportation restrictions." by removing transportation restrictions on paddle fish harvested during the May season on Lake Francis Case.

Motion by Cerny with second by Spies TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO SNAGGING OF PADDLEFISH 41:07:05 AS PROPOSED. Motion carried unanimously.

Spearing 41:07:06

Adams presented the proposed changes to spearfishing following the Power Point presentation on the Fish spearing survey presented by Dr. Longmire. Public comment supported these changes although many wanted a year round season. Discussion on the start dates ensued.

Modify 41:07:06:03. "Areas open to spearing of game fish – Additional permit required." by:

- Allowing northern pike spearing statewide.
- Changing spearing end dates for inland waters to March 15.
- Include text regarding year-round take of catfish on the Missouri River system

Motion by Cooper with second by Cerny TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO SPEARING 41:07:06 AS PROPOSED. Motion carried unanimously.

Hoop Net and Set Lines 41:07:08

Will Saylor presented the proposed changes with no recommended changes from proposal.

Modify 41:07:08:06 "Areas and restriction on the use of hoop nets, traps, and setlines."

- Lengthen season from May 1 through October 31 to year-round for all South Dakota inland waters open to hoop net or set line use.
- Expand areas on the mainstem Missouri River system open to use of hoop nets and setlines to the entire length of the river and reservoirs from the NE/SD state line to the ND/SD state line
- Standardize the number of set lines that can be used in any water where allowed in South Dakota at six
- Extend the areas of western tributaries open to use of setlines to the entire length of the tributary within South Dakota
- Add Angostura, Belle Fourche, and Shadehill reservoirs to the list of waters open to use of setlines.
- Prohibit use of whole baitfish as bait for setlines.

Motion by Jensen with second by Knippling TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO HOOP NETS AND SET LINES 41:07:08 AS PROPOSED. Motion carried unanimously.

Bait 41:09:04

Will Saylor presented the proposed changes with no recommended changes to proposal. A map was distributed to better show the areas on the James River corridor that are closed to the taking of bait and modifying the list opening some waters and closing others to aid in preventing the spread of aquatic nuisance species. The map

showed waters that are managed for game fish populations and waters to be opened that are no longer managed for game fish. Discussion included taking bait by hook and line, meeting with bait dealers, and the need of bait for anglers.

1. Modify 41:09:04:03 Rename "Waters open to taking of bait." To "Waters closed to taking of bait." And modify the list as proposed.
2. Modify 41:09:04:04 "Seines, net, and traps limited." to clarify that permission to use seines, nets, and traps larger than those specified may be issued by the department in association with the department's approval to stock public waters with white suckers for rearing and harvest.
3. Modify 41:09:04:12 "Transportation of other fish by bait dealer." change rule title to: "Transportation of bait and other fish by bait dealer" and add the sentence "Transportation equipment shall allow for inspection of bait and other fish at all times".
4. Modify 41:09:04:16 "Records Required." to add the words "or electronically in a format approved by the Department".

Motion by Cooper with second by Sather TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO BAIT 41:09:04 AS PROPOSED. Motion carried unanimously.

Turtles 41:07:10

Will Saylor indicated the proposed changes to Turtles received no public comments and there were no recommended changes.

1. Modify 41:07:10:01 "Seasons." to add the word legal before spears and to specify turtle traps as defined in 41:07:10:03.
2. Modify 41:07:10:04 "Restrictions." to add the words "any species of" and remove reference to 41:09:04:02:02 that defined turtles as biological specimens and has been repealed.

Motion by Sather with second by Peterson TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO TURTLES 41:07:10 AS PROPOSED. Motion carried unanimously.

Special Management Categories 41:10

Geno Adams presented the proposed changes indicating the additions to the list of aquatic nuisance species and the change in watercraft restrictions will assist law enforcement. There are no recommended changes to proposal.

1. Modify 41:10:04:01. "List of aquatic nuisance species" by adding the following species:
 - a. Western mosquitofish *Gambusia affinis*
 - b. Purple loosestrife *Lythrum salicaria*
 - c. Flowering rush *Butomus umbellatus*
 - d. Red rimmed melania *Melanoides tuberculata*
2. Separate 41:10:04:03 "Watercraft restrictions -- Aquatic nuisance species inspection." into two rules as follows:
 - a. 41:10:04:03 "Watercraft restrictions" No person may launch or attempt to launch a boat, motorboat, or boat trailer of any kind into the waters of the state with an aquatic nuisance species attached or onboard. Law enforcement officers may require the removal of aquatic vegetation from boats, motors, trailers and associated equipment.
 - b. 41:10:04:04 "Watercraft inspections" Any boat, motorboat, or boat trailer is subject to inspection by a department representative. If an aquatic nuisance species is found during inspection, a department approved decontamination process, specific to the aquatic nuisance species present, shall be required prior to launching.

Motion by Jensen with second by Peterson TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO SPECIAL MANAGEMENT CATEGORIES 41:10 AS PROPOSED. Motion carried unanimously.

Administrative Rules Reduction

Chief John Lott presented the proposed changes that would repeal six rules as part of the Governor's initiative. There are no recommended changes to the repealing of these six rules due to the finalization of rules earlier today.

List of Rules to Repeal.

Artificial lights	41:07:01:06
Possession limit for one-day license	41:07:03:04
Seasons and areas open to taking of catfish	41:07:06:05
Minimum length of catfish	41:07:08:03
Baitfish prohibited	41:07:08:05.01
Transportation by dealers -- Inspection.	41:09:04:11

Motion by Spies with second by Cerny TO FINALIZE THE REPEAL OF SIX RULES AS PROPOSED. Motion carried unanimously.

Nonresident Hunting License Fees 41:06:02:03

Director Tony Leif presented the proposed nonresident license fee increases with no recommended changes. Leif indicated all preserve operators received a letter from him regarding the increase fees and there was public comment regarding the fee increase from residents and nonresidents alike.

Raise the following nonresident license fees:

<u>License</u>	<u>Recommended fee*</u>
Small Game – 10-day	\$120
Shooting Preserve – annual	\$120
Shooting Preserve – 1-day	\$45
Shooting Preserve – 5-day	\$75
Waterfowl – 10-day/annual	\$120
Waterfowl – 3-day	\$85

* These fees include the \$5 surcharge imposed by state statute.

Motion by Jensen with second by Knippling TO FINALIZE THE NONRESIDENT HUNTING LICENSE FEES 41:06:02:03 AS PROPOSED. Discussion followed concerning the resident small game fees and the need for resident license fees to be adjusted. Resident fees have not been adjusted since 2005 and they need to share a part of the financial burden of the budget deficit. Motion carried with a roll call vote: Cerny-yes; Cooper-yes; Jensen-yes; Knippling-yes; Peterson-yes; Sather-yes; Spies-no; Olson-yes.

Park Licenses 41:03:03

Parks Director of Operations Bob Schneider presented the proposed changes to park entrance licenses and the Fort Sisseton Special Event indicating there was only two comments received regarding the fee increases.

1. Modify 41:03:03:06. Park Entrance license fees. The park entrance license fees are as follows:
 - a. The fee for an annual park entrance license sticker is ~~\$28~~ \$30 for the first vehicle and ~~\$14~~ \$15 for each additional vehicle registered to the same owner;
 - b. The fee for a transferable annual park entrance license is ~~\$60~~ \$65;
2. Modify 41:03:03:08. Fees for special events. The daily fee for admission to the annual Fort Sisseton Festival at the Fort Sisseton State Park is ~~\$4~~ \$5 for each person who is 12 years old or older. This admission fee is in lieu of any other park entrance license. Persons who have paid a daily camping fee for the event and program participants are exempt from paying the fee.

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

Camping and Lodge Fees 41:03:04:03

Schneider presented the proposed changes with no recommended changes to the proposal and no public comments were received regarding the proposed changes.

Modify 41:03:04:03 Camping permit fees.

1. Add South Scalp Creek, Walth Bay, and White Swan Lakeside Use Areas to the list of areas that require a basic campground fee.
2. Increase the daily group lodge fee at Mina Lake, Shadehill, Lake Thompson, Palisades, and Newton Hills and increase the additional person rate to \$17 for these lodges.

Motion by Cerny with second by Peterson TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO CAMPING PERMIT FEES 41:03:04:03 AS PROPOSED. Motion carried unanimously.

Camping Permits and Rules 41:03:04

Schneider presented the proposed changes with no recommended changes indicating these changes will clarify the definition of a camping unit for both the public users of the campgrounds and park staff. It allows the repeal of a two rules.

1. Repeal 41:03:04:09 Camper units limited to two per site.
2. Modify 41:03:04:10 Campsite occupancy restricted and defined.
3. Repeal 41:03:04:10.01 Additional camper unit occupancy permitted – Fee.

Motion by Cooper with second by Spies TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO CAMPING PERMITS AND RULES 41:03:04 AS PROPOSED. Motion carried unanimously.

Hunting Season Proposals

Spring Turkey Hunting Season

Chad Switzer presented the requirements and restrictions for the different spring turkey seasons with dates, locations of the seasons, and available licenses in each season. The recommended changes include fewer tags in the prairie units, allocated tags in the Blood Run Nature Area, and modify the Black Hills boundary to be consistent with the fall turkey season boundaries.

1. Offer residents 105 less one-tag “male turkey” licenses and 200 less two-tag “any turkey” licenses for the Prairie Units than 2012 for an overall decrease of 505 tags. Offer

- nonresidents 16 less two-tag "any turkey" licenses for the Prairie Units than 2012 for an overall decrease of 32 tags.
2. Allow 10 resident archery licensees to hunt at Blood Run Nature Area and 10 resident archery licensees to hunt at Adams Homestead and Nature Preserve through the issuance of "access permits" issued via lottery drawing. Access permits valid from April 6 – April 30.
 3. Modify spring unit boundaries for Black Hills and 49A to be consistent with fall turkey unit boundaries.

Motion by Cooper with second by Spies TO PROPOSE CHANGES TO SPRING WILD TURKEY HUNTING SEASON AS RECOMMENDED. Motion carried unanimously.

Custer State Park Spring Turkey Hunting Season

Switzer presented the current dates, licenses, requirements, and restrictions indicating there are no recommended changes for the 2013 season.

Waterfowl Hunting Seasons

Chief Tom Kirschenmann presented the spring light goose Conservation Order season dates, requirements, and restrictions indicating there are no recommended changes for the 2013 season.

Division of Parks and Recreation

Director Hofer introduced the Lake Herman State Park Manager John Bame, Assistant Manager Patty Heermann, and Intern Tonna Hartman all from the Madison area.

Angostura Concession RFP Update

Concessions Manager Sean Blanchette reported the current concessionaire/operator submitted a proposal that met all conditions of the Request for Proposal at Angostura. The final contract/lease is under development and discussion with the intent to present an agreement to the Commission at the December meeting.

Angostura Sewer System Update

Director Hofer indicated preliminary engineer concepts and cost estimates have been completed for the Angostura Sewer System for a bond package and repayment plan to be presented to the Legislature for consideration next January. The plan provides for a force main to the lagoons from each of the two cabin areas providing for a modern sewer system. The existing lagoon will need to be expanded and the plan is to include a system that would also serve the park. The cabin owners and the park will share costs of the improvements and repayment of the bond package. Current estimates on a shared system will be \$800 for each cabin/trailer site and provides a long term solution to the sewer system Angostura Recreation Area. The Bonding package is for a \$1.5 million dollar project and cabin owners will pay back their share of the bond annually with the Parks Division paying their share as well. A letter to the cabin owners will go out next week requesting earnest dollars equal to one year's annual rent

payment of \$800. It is anticipated the bonding authority will plan support a 25-year bond to help keep it affordable for all parties involved.

Angostura and Shadehill Seasonal Cabin/Trailer Annual Fee

Blanchette presented the proposed 2013 rental rates for Angostura and Shadehill cabins and trailers that reflected history of rental rates and Consumer Price Index information. The suggested increase at Angostura of \$15 a cabin and \$10 a cabin/trailer at Shadehill was recommended. Hofer indicated this is an action item for the Commission and requests approval for the increase rental rates at Angostura to \$810 and Shadehill to \$420 for the 2013 season. Hofer shared that these rentals are located on Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) property and managed by the Department. The BOR has requested to have these lot rentals appraised to determine the fair market value at today's conditions. Hofer indicated that more discussion with the Commission will occur before such an appraisal was initiated.

Motion by Sather with second by Knippling TO APPROVE THE 2013 RENTAL RATE INCREASES AT ANGOSTURA TO \$810 AND SHADEHILL TO \$420 AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Campground Reservation System

Hofer indicated the contract with Leisure Interactive began today, November 1st, with Lawrence and Schiller of Sioux Falls hired as the subcontractor to operate the reservation call center. The reservation system improvements include a new website where park licenses can be purchased online, reservations can be made through the call center year round 24 hours/7 days a week beginning on May 1st for all campsites and cabins. The 90-day window will continue to be utilized for sites and cabins from May 20 thru Labor Day except for lodges and at Custer State Park. Lodges and Custer State Park reservations will be on a 365 day window. All reservation cancelations or changes can be made online or thru the call center.

Visitation and Revenue Report

Hofer indicated the October revenue and campsite use are above last year's totals for October and 2012 is best year ever for camping units in the state parks system. Revenue has recovered from 2011 and it was a good year.

Chairman Olson called a recess at 5:17 PM with meeting to resume at 8:30 AM on Friday, November 2nd, in the same location. The meeting resumed at 8:33 AM the next morning with Commissioners Olson, Knippling, Spies, Cooper, Cerny, Peterson, Sather, and Jensen present. Secretary Vonk was absent. Media, staff, and public were present and numbered about twenty-five. Rosie Jamison, Executive Director of the Madison Chamber of Commerce was present and welcomed the Commissioners, GFP staff, and members of the media to Camp Lakodia and Madison.

Division of Wildlife

Written Concise Statement for mountain lion season

Director Tony Leif advised the Commission that Tom Huhnerkoch of Lead, SD, Helen J. McGinnis of Harmon, WV, and Nancy Hilding of the Prairie Hills Audubon Society of Western South Dakota, Inc. and on behalf of herself requested a Concise Statement of Reasons for and against the mountain lion amendments for the 2013 Mountain Lion Hunting Season. Leif indicated a Written Concise Statement with Resolution 12-15 were provided in the Commission book as a draft response for the Commission to consider in response to the request. The Commission reviewed the statement and Resolution 12-15 that were presented.

Motion by Knippling with second by Jensen TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 12-15 WITH THE WRITTEN CONCISE STATEMENT AS PRESENTED (Appendix A). Motion carried unanimously.

Mountain Lion Petition for rule change

Director Leif presented a Petition from Tom Huhnerkoch for the repeal of change listed as change number 3 on the Finalization sheet for the Mountain Lion Hunting Season at the October 5th meeting in Deadwood. A letter of support for the petition from Nancy Hilding of the Prairie Hills Audubon Society and herself was received on October 31st. Leif indicated this is the petition that Chris Hesla, Executive Director of the South Dakota Wildlife Federation commented on during the open forum portion of the meeting.

Leif reviewed the process for petitions such as these indicating that Commission action is required to either initiate rule promulgation in accordance with the petition or adopt a resolution denying the petition. Resolution 12-16 is a draft for Commission consideration for denial of the petition. Discussion followed regarding the history of the mountain lion season.

Motion by Sather with second by Spies TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 12-16 TO AS PRESENTED TO DENY THE PETITION (Appendix B). Motion carried unanimously.

Trapping Petition for rule change

Director Leif stated many letters of petition were received from trappers across the country for change in the nonresident trapping laws. Leif indicated Resolution 12-17 was a draft for Commission consideration to deny the petition or allow due process for the request.

Motion by Cooper second by Cerny TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 12-17 AS PRESENTED TO DENY THE PETITION (Appendix C). Motion carried unanimously.

Boating Officer of the Year award

Brandon Gust, Scott Lindgren, and Kraig Haase presented the 2012 Boating Officer Award posthumously to Cerrisa Brown, the widow of Conservation Officer Brook Brown stating "We are very proud of his service to Game, Fish, and Parks and the State of South Dakota" Gust indicated this award is selected at the state level with the South Dakota Officer submitted to the National Level. Haas thanked Brook's wife and parents for the support they gave Brook during his service to the Department. Assistant Director Emmett Keyser indicated that with Mrs. Brown's consent henceforth this award

shall be bestowed to future recipients as the Brook Brown Boating Officer of the Year Award. Director Leif presented Mrs. Brown with three Division of Wildlife Lifetime Achievement medallions, one for Mrs. Brown and one for each of Brook's children, Tucker and Norah, to remember their fathers' dedicated service and love for the wildlife of South Dakota.

Shikar Safari Wildlife Conservation Officer Award

Emmett Keyser presented the Conservation Officer of the Year award was presented to Brian Humphrey. Humphrey was nominated by Marty Pennock and has served as a Conservation Officer since 1997. This award will be formally presented Humphrey in November by the Shikar Safari Wildlife group.

Outdoor Campus East activities report

Thea Ryan introduced Pat Klotzbach of the outreach program at the Outdoor Campus East in Sioux Falls. Ryan indicated the Step Outside Program and trailer reaches out to schools and with speaking events provide activities to all twenty counties in Region 3. Ryan provided numbers of participants and upcoming events for the Outdoor Campus.

August/September Canada Goose season reports

Chief Tom Kirschenmann indicated an estimated 8,200 geese were donated to SAH from the August Management Take season and the first 21 days in September with more than 10,000 pounds of ground goose processed for food pantries across South Dakota.

Chief Scott Simpson indicated the promotion to advertise that geese could be donated to SAH and where to do so was beneficial to the harvest of geese and food pantries. Simpson shared the names of the hunters that received prizes for taking others out goose hunting for the first time.

Fish spearing survey report

Dr. Longmire indicated 1,276 responses were received from the 2011 spearing/archery angler survey providing information about underwater spearing, dark house spearing, types of equipment, locations participated at, conflict with regular anglers, regulations, and satisfaction of their experience. Longmire indicated a survey with hook and line anglers is in the process and preliminary indications show little conflict with spear fishermen or bow fishermen with few anglers concerned about safety issues.

Fishing access development projects

Steve LaBay presented fishing access projects for the northeast part of the state showing slides of before and after improvements. He showed areas with fishing platforms, an ADA accessible trail, and outlined upcoming projects.

Gavin's Point Dam boating closure

Director Leif indicated the US Corp of Engineers closed the most popular area for paddlefish anglers without consulting the Department or the public. Leif provided copies

of letters from Secretary Vonk and himself to the Corp regarding this issue and indicated the Commissioners may receive calls from the public about the closing of these waters.

Miscellaneous updates

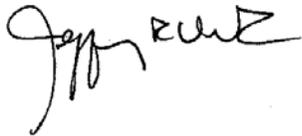
Director Tony Leif shared that approximately 400 east river deer licenses and 650 west river deer licenses have been returned for a refund. Reports from the public and staff indicate about 3,400 deer were lost to EHD.

Director Leif asked the Commission members interested in attending the Winter WAFWA meeting in January to contact Deb Ascher regarding registration.

Commissioner Cooper shared the Parks and Wildlife Foundation would be meeting prior to the December Commission meeting on December 6 in Pierre.

Motion by Knippling with second by Peterson to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 10:02 AM.

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 "V".

Jeffrey R. Vonk, Department Secretary

Appendix A

RESOLUTION NO. 12-15

Whereas, Tom Huhnerkoch, DVM, RN, of Lead, South Dakota, on his own behalf; Helen J. McGinnis of Harmon, West Virginia, on her own behalf; and Nancy Hilding, on behalf of the Prairie Hills Audubon Society of Western South Dakota Inc., and herself as an individual (PETITIONERS) submitted written requests to the Game, Fish, and Parks Commission (COMMISSION) pursuant to SDCL 1-26-7.1 for a concise statement of reasons for and against the COMMISSION's adoption of the 2012 amendments to mountain lion hunting season rules in ARSD Chapter 41:06:61; and

Whereas, all members of the COMMISSION have earlier been furnished a copy of PETITIONERS' written requests for a concise statement; and

Whereas, the COMMISSION has reviewed and carefully considered:

1. PETITIONERS' written requests for a concise statement;
2. Requirements and procedures contained in SDCL 1-26-7.1; and
3. Comments, data, opinions, arguments, and reasons submitted by members of the public, COMMISSION, and staff and consultants of the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks (DEPARTMENT)

relative to the above described rule amendments to ARSD Chapter 41:06:61 as adopted by the COMMISSION at its regular meeting held on November 1, 2012; and

Whereas, the COMMISSION has reviewed and carefully considered the attached WRITTEN CONCISE STATEMENT prepared and previously submitted to the COMMISSION for its review and to further assist the COMMISSION in making its decision required by SDCL 1-26-7.1.

Now, therefore, BE IT RESOLVED that the COMMISSION hereby adopts the attached WRITTEN CONCISE STATEMENT in its entirety in support of this RESOLUTION and that said WRITTEN CONCISE STATEMENT is made a part of this RESOLUTION.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this RESOLUTION and attached WRITTEN CONCISE STATEMENT constitutes the COMMISSION'S written concise statement of the principal reasons for and against the adoption of the 2012 rule amendments to ARSD Chapter 41:06:61, incorporating therein its reasons for overruling the considerations urged against the adoption or rejection of the said rule amendments as required by SDCL 1-26-7.1.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that true and correct copies of PETITIONERS' written requests for a concise statement, the COMMISSION'S "WRITTEN CONCISE STATEMENT", and this "RESOLUTION" be made a part of the Minutes of this COMMISSION meeting and that in compliance with SDCL 1-26-7.1 the DEPARTMENT is authorized and directed to serve by mail true and correct copies of the PETITIONERS' written requests for a concise statement, the COMMISSION'S "WRITTEN CONCISE STATEMENT", and "RESOLUTION" upon:

1. All members of the Interim Rules Review Committee;
2. Director of the Legislative Research Council; and
3. The PETITIONERS.

WRITTEN CONCISE STATEMENT

SDCL 1-26-7.1

This WRITTEN CONCISE STATEMENT was prepared for and adopted by the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Commission (COMMISSION) on November 1, 2012, pursuant to request and SDCL 1-26-7.1.

A. REQUEST FOR WRITTEN CONCISE STATEMENT

In August 2012 the COMMISSION proposed several amendments to ARSD Chapter 41:06:61 - Mountain Lion Hunting Season which are more completely described in Section B of this Written Concise Statement. Following a public hearing on the proposed amendments held on October 4, 2012, the COMMISSION adopted the proposed rule amendments with revisions.

On September 14, 2012, Tom Huhnerkoch, DVM, RN, of Lead, South Dakota, on his own behalf; on October 2, 2012, Helen J. McGinnis of Harmon, West Virginia, on her own behalf; and on October 8, 2012, Nancy Hilding, on behalf of the Prairie Hills Audubon Society of Western South Dakota Inc., and herself as an individual (PETITIONERS), submitted written requests pursuant to SDCL 1-26-7.1 for a concise statement of reasons for and against the adoption of the rule amendments. (See attached **EXHIBITS 1, 2, and 3**)

SDCL 1-26-7.1 provides:

"Upon adoption of a rule . . . an agency, if requested to do so in writing by an interested person . . . shall issue a written concise statement of the principal reasons for and against the rule's adoption, incorporating therein its reasons for overruling the considerations urged against the rule's adoption or rejection. A copy of the statement shall be served on the members of the Interim Rules Review Committee and the director of the Legislative Research Council."

The above quoted statute does not provide a deadline for serving the written concise statement. However, the COMMISSION (with the assistance of the Department of Game, Fish and Parks (DEPARTMENT)) has attempted to complete, consider, adopt, and serve the same within a reasonable time following PETITIONERS' requests.

B. 2012 PROPOSED RULE AMENDMENTS - ADOPTION

The rule amendments pertaining specifically to mountain lion harvest limits and establishing a mountain lion hunting unit in Custer State Park as originally proposed and later revised by the COMMISSION are as follows:

PROPOSED AMENDMENT (original). Amend ARSD Chapter 41:06:61 as follows: (a) increase the maximum allowable mountain lion harvest from 70 to 100, and increase the female mountain lion harvest limit from 50 to 70; (b) change the season starting date from January 1 to December 26; (c) allow any properly licensed hunter (both landowners and non-landowners) to hunt mountain lions outside of the Black Hills Fire Protection District from January 1 to December 31; (d) close Custer State Park to mountain lion hunting except during established hunting intervals for 162 hunters who possess a valid mountain lion hunting license and a temporary access permit issued by random drawing and free of cost. This structure includes five (5) hunting intervals (14-16 days in length) with each having 30 access permits (no dog hunting allowed) and three (3) intervals (7 days in length) with each having 4 access permits (dog hunting allowed). (e) allow use of dogs during specified hunting intervals in Custer State Park.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT (as revised and adopted by the GFP Commission). Amend ARSD Chapter 41:06:61 by adopting all of the original proposed amendments revised to add the following: (f) a lion hunter and houndspersons are not allowed to release dogs on tracks indicating multiple lions traveling together; and (g) hunters using dogs must attempt to harvest the first legal mountain lion that the hunter has a reasonable opportunity to harvest, except under the condition where the lion pursued shows obvious signs of lactation.

A NOTICE OF HEARING was published advising the public of the COMMISSION'S original proposed rule amendments, time and place of public hearing, and the manner in which written and oral comments, data, opinion, and arguments could be submitted. The original proposed rule amendments were served upon and reviewed by the Director of the Legislative Research Council prior to the public hearing.

A public hearing was conducted on October 4, 2012, at which time, and prior thereto, the COMMISSION received written and oral comments, data, opinions, and arguments relative to the proposed rule modifications. Attached **EXHIBITS 4** and **5** are

copies of the Minutes of the public hearing conducted on October 4, 2012, together with attached written public comments received and considered by the COMMISSION. Following the hearing, the COMMISSION adopted the revised proposal.

C. COMMISSION WRITTEN RESPONSE

SDCL 1-26-7.1 provides that upon request the COMMISSION shall issue a written concise statement of the principal reasons for and reasons against the rule's adoption as well as incorporating therein its reason(s) for overruling the considerations urged against the rule's adoption.

Rather than the COMMISSION attempting herein to summarize the information provided at the public hearing, the COMMISSION advises members of the IRRC and Director of LRC that it is of the belief that Minutes of the public hearing of October 4, 2012, together with the attached copies of the written public comments (See attached **EXHIBITS 4 and 5**) accurately summarize the oral and written comments received from the public and contain the principal reasons for and reasons against the adoption of the proposed rules.

As required by SDCL 1-26-7.1, the COMMISSION hereby submits the following written concise statement which contains the principal reasons for and against the adoption of the amendments to the mountain lion rules (incorporating therein the COMMISSION'S reasons for overruling the considerations urged against the adoption of said amendments):

The Department's objective is to manage mountain lions in the Black Hills entirety as stated in the South Dakota Mountain Lion Management Plan of 2010. The management plan calls for a reduction in the Black Hills mountain lion population. The adjustment to the existing rule increases harvest to reduce the mountain lion population towards the stated objective, without causing irreparable damage to the sustainability of the Black Hills mountain lion population. Adjusting the start date from January 1 back to December 26 lengthens the mountain lion season by six days providing more opportunity to participate in the mountain lion season when individuals are likely to have time to hunt.

Currently, administrative rule allows landowners outside the Black Hills Fire Protection District to harvest a lion with a valid mountain lion license year around. Allowance of all

licensed hunters to harvest a lion outside the Black Hills Fire Protection District establishes a fair and equitable approach for all persons possessing a valid mountain lion license. As stated in the management plan, population management is focused on the Black Hills and the plan further states that the Department will not implement management intended to establish mountain lions in any part of South Dakota outside of the Black Hills region. This change is consistent with the management plan.

Ongoing research by the Department has determined elk calf survival and recruitment to be extremely low within Custer State Park as predation by mountain lions has been a significant mortality factor. To assist in reaching the overall mission and objectives of the Park, which includes higher elk numbers, a limited number of permits (12) that allow the use of dogs to hunt lions will be made available. The anticipated result is a higher lion harvest within the Park, ultimately leading to increased elk numbers due to elevated elk calf survival and recruitment.

To minimize the possibility of orphaning young lions, current administrative rule makes it illegal to harvest a mountain lion with a spotted coat or any lion accompanying another lion. The adopted rules related to the use of dogs to hunt lions parallels the existing rule by not allowing hunters to release dogs on tracks with multiple lions traveling together as well as allowing a hunter to pass on the harvest of a lion if they can observe obvious signs of lactation.

Written and oral testimony both supported and opposed the proposed modifications to the harvest limits, year around hunting outside the Black Hills Fire Protection District, and the use of dogs within Custer State Park. In general, opposition to the harvest limit increase and hunting all year outside the Black Hills for all licensed persons was based on the fear that changes would jeopardize the long term sustainability of the mountain lion population by lowering the population too low and limiting immigration and emigration. Opposition to the use of dogs in Custer State Park is generally based in differences in philosophy on the appropriate methods of hunting mountain lions. The most common theme from those testifying in favor of the proposed rule modifications was their support of reducing the predation done by mountain lions on the deer, elk, bighorn sheep and mountain goat populations in the Black Hills. Another issue which brought support to the adopted rules is the human-conflict concern.

After full consideration of the opinions expressed in written and oral testimony, the COMMISSION adopted the revised mountain lion harvest limits, the hunting of lions all year by properly licensed hunters outside the Black Hills Fire Protection District, and the limited allowance of hunting lions with dogs in Custer State Park. COMMISSIONERS took this action under the supposition that these rule changes were appropriate given the current population status of mountain lions in South Dakota. Furthermore, COMMISSIONERS believe that the adopted rule changes represented a responsible mountain lion harvest strategy that is consistent with stated mountain lion management objectives of the DEPARTMENT and the COMMISSION.

In summary, the COMMISSION is of the belief that the adopted amendments to the existing permanent rules relating to the mountain lion hunting season address and include appropriate and sound management of mountain lions in South Dakota and will benefit the citizens of South Dakota. The COMMISSION deems the rule amendments to be reasonable and necessary as a proper and legal exercise of its authority granted by the South Dakota Legislature.

Appendix B

RESOLUTION NO. 12-16

Whereas, Tom Huhnerkoch, DVM, RN, (PETITIONER) of Lead, South Dakota, by e-mail transmission dated October 23, 2012, with an original thereof delivered to the Department Secretary by certified mail received on October 24, 2012, submitted his petition (PETITION) requesting that the GFP Commission repeal that portion of the 2012 amendments to the mountain lion hunting season rules (ARSD 41:06:61) which establishes a statewide mountain lion hunting season in which any properly licensed hunter (both landowners and non-landowners) may hunt mountain lions outside of the Black Hills Fire Protection District from January 1 to December 31; and

Whereas, all members of the COMMISSION have earlier been furnished a copy of the PETITION; and

Whereas, the COMMISSION has been advised that counsel for the COMMISSION served a copy of the PETITION on all members of the Interim Rules Review Committee and the Director of the Legislative Research Council by email transmission dated October 23, 2012, and by U.S. Mail dated October 24, 2012; and

Whereas, the COMMISSION has been advised that SDCL 1-26-13 requires that within 30 days of submission of the PETITION the COMMISSION shall either deny the petition in writing (stating its reasons for the denials) or shall initiate rule-making proceedings in accordance with SDCL 1-26-4; and

Whereas, the COMMISSION has been advised by counsel and is of the opinion that a hearing on the PETITION is not required or necessary; and

Whereas, the COMMISSION has reviewed and carefully considered the requirements and procedures contained in SDCL 1-26-13, the PETITION, and reasons advanced by the PETITIONER for repeal of that portion of the 2012 amendments to the mountain lion hunting season rules (ARSD 41:06:61) which establishes a statewide mountain lion hunting season in which any properly licensed hunter (both landowners and non-landowners) may hunt mountain lions outside of the Black Hills Fire Protection District from January 1 to December 31; and

Whereas, under the South Dakota Mountain Lion Management Plan, mountain lions in South Dakota are to be managed in the Black Hills in its entirety without any effort or intention to establish mountain lions in any other part of the state; and

Whereas, the COMMISSION has concluded that sufficient biological foundation exists to determine that the rule amendment in question is consistent with the adopted management plan for mountain lions in South Dakota; and

Whereas, the COMMISSION has determined that the adopted rule amendments will not cause irreparable harm to mountain lion populations in the Black Hills.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Commission does hereby deny the Petition for the reasons hereinabove stated in this Resolution, which said Resolution as adopted by the Commission shall constitute the Commission's written denial of the Petition and reasons therefore.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Petition, a record of the Commission's discussions concerning same, and this Resolution be made a part of the Minutes of the Commission meeting at which this Resolution is adopted, and further, that the Department be and it is hereby authorized and directed in compliance with SDCL 1-26-13 to serve a copy of an extract of that portion of the Commission minutes which pertain to the Commission's discussion of the Petition and its adoption of this Resolution, including a copy of the Resolution, on all members of the Interim Rules Review Committee and Director of the Legislative Research Council with copies also to be provided to the PETITIONER.

Appendix C

RESOLUTION 12-17

WHEREAS, Patrick E. Rose of Rockford, MI, Gary L. Mills of Byron, MN, Richard Nations of Clinton, MS, Bob Jordan of Henderson, NY, Jack Dodson of Monticello, KY, Calvin Cook of Farmington, MN, Kelly L. Peterson of Blue Grass, IA, Steve Cherkas of Maryville, MO, Gary Mather of Oregon, WI, Bob Mochinski of Winsted, MN, Bryan Jones of Roberts, ID, Todd J. Tipton of Omaha, NE, Glenn Sotona of Iron River, WI, James Blakley of Pine Island, MN, Larry Lidgett, Jr. of Council Bluffs, IA, T. Dwaine Knouse of Pella, IA, Robert Wendt of Greenfield, IN, Robert Waddell of Memphis, MO, Nick Zirkelbach of Center Junction, IA, Ronald Sheldon of Grand Rapids MI, Dallas Greenwood of Big Cabin, OK, Doug Ozment and Crystal Ozment of Sheridan, AR, Mark E. Wernert of Corydon, IN, Phillip S. Brown of Gap, PA, and David Countryman of Ames, IA, submitted Petitions requesting that the GFP Commission take the following actions with reference to certain rules found in ARSD Chapter 41:08:01 – Furbearer Seasons, to wit: repeal ARSD Section 41:08:01:12 (Nonresident restrictions), and amend ARSD Sections 41:08:01:01 (Mink and weasel hunting and trapping season established), 41:08:01:02 (Muskrat trapping season established), 41:08:01:07 (Beaver trapping and hunting season established in East River and Black Hills Fire Protection District – Exception), 41:08:01:08 (Beaver trapping and hunting season established in West River – Exception), 41:08:01:08:01 (Bobcat trapping and hunting season established – Hunting season restrictions – Tagging requirements), 41:08:01:04:01 (Muskrat hunting season), and 41:08:01:08:02 (Skunk, opossum, fox, raccoon, and badger trapping and hunting season established), for the reasons contained in the petitions; and

WHEREAS, all members of the Commission have been furnished with and have reviewed a copy of said Petitions; and

WHEREAS, the Commission has been advised that a copy of the Petitions have been served on all members of the Interim Rules Review Committee and Director of the Legislative Research Council; and

WHEREAS, the Commission has been advised that SDCL 1-26-13 requires that within thirty (30) days of submission of a Petition the Commission shall either “deny the petition in writing (stating its reasons for the denials) or shall initiate rule-making proceedings in accordance with SDCL 1-26-4.”; and

WHEREAS, the Commission has been advised and is of the opinion that a hearing on the Petitions is neither statutorily required nor necessary; and

WHEREAS, the Commission has reviewed and carefully considered the requirements and procedures set out in SDCL 1-26-13 and the contents of the Petitions, including the reasons advanced by Petitioners in support of the proposals contained in the Petitions; and

WHEREAS, adoption of administrative rules that differentiate between residents and nonresidents of South Dakota with reference to the take of the renewable yet

limited resource of furbearers in South Dakota is a legitimate exercise of the authority granted to the Commission by South Dakota Law; and

WHEREAS, adoption of administrative rules that differentiate between residents and nonresidents of South Dakota in regulating the take of the renewable yet limited resource of furbearers in South Dakota is a legitimate exercise of the right of the state of South Dakota to manage resident wildlife populations; and

WHEREAS, exercising the rights of the state of South Dakota to manage the renewable yet limited resource of furbearers in South Dakota through the use of rules that differentiate between residents and nonresidents of South Dakota does not violate the Constitution of the United States.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Commission does hereby deny the Petitions for the reasons hereinabove stated in this Resolution, which said Resolution as adopted by the Commission shall constitute the Commission's written denial of the Petitions and reasons therefore.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Petitions, a record of the Commission's discussions concerning same, and this Resolution be made a part of the Minutes of the Commission meeting at which this Resolution is adopted, and further, that the Department be and it is hereby authorized and directed in compliance with SDCL 1-26-13 to serve a copy of an extract of that portion of the Commission minutes which pertain to the Commission's discussion of the Petition and its adoption of this Resolution, including a copy of the Resolution, on all members of the Interim Rules Review Committee and Director of the Legislative Research Council with copies also to be provided to the petitioners.

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

Public Hearing Officer Chuck Schlueter began the Public Hearing at 2:00 PM. Testimony given by individuals present today are to approach the microphone and provide their name, city, and state on the sheet provided, then introduce themselves to the Commission, and will have three to four minutes to express their support or opposition to the items listed under finalizations on the agenda.

Schlueter shared a comment from Robert D. Varick of Buffalo Gap, SD, who emailed: "I am in agreement with these changes."

Spearing

Oral testimony was received from:

Bill Donovan of Donavon's Hobby and Scuba Center in Sioux Falls, SD, expressed his desire for change in the spearfishing regulations and asked many of the divers he knows to attend. Donavon wants a year round season with an opening date of Jan 1 thru Dec 31 with all lakes open; similar to other angling opportunities. Donavon read emails from Robert and Teresa Matthies, Mike McGuire, Jaci and Dave Vande Kamp, Ken McGhinnis, Scott Burgess, and provided a letter from William E. Coester of Milbank (see the written testimony).

Bill Donavon wants the \$5 spear fishing fee to go away. He also requested back in 2006 and again today to include all of Lake Oahe. The season has been extended by two weeks in eastern SD and these changes are a good start. He believes hook and line fishermen and spear fishers will not affect the population of game fish. He requested northern pike added to list. The season does not allow divers to have a successful season as they need an earlier open season because the waters gets dirty by June 15. Divers will not have an impact on the population and wants a year round spearfishing opportunity.

Dave Cross of Brandon, SD, testified that he purchased a \$5 spearfishing pass and wants an earlier season and wants more places in eastern SD to go spearfishing.

Mike Dunse of Webster, SD, talked about dark house spearing and Rush Lake is the only place to go. He wants additional opportunity to take trophy northern pike and wants more fisheries open for him and his sons. He wants a longer season to allow for more spearing and wants more inland lakes opened.

Chad Johnson of Colton, SD, stated he has 100-120 dives with 140 hours on Lake Oahe and hunts and fishes and this year has been a challenge. Limitation of size of fish is okay and can only spearfish during the spring and fall when water is clear. Suggested test areas and wants Lake Brant, Thompson, Poinsett, or Waubay open to try spear fishing as he wants a local opportunity.

Brian Dorn of Sioux Falls, SD, stated he wants an open year round season same as hook and line anglers and he wants additional lakes to spear fish in. He supports additional discussion for a statewide-year round season.

Written testimony on spearfishing:

Robert and Teresa Matthies of Hartford, SD, emailed: "We would love to have more access to lakes in South Dakota. We are very busy people and this would allow much more flexibility in spearing at home."

Scott Burges of Sioux Falls, SD, emailed: "My wish is to be able to enjoy our sport in the lakes of South Dakota, even on a trial basis. Having a regulated season that is well managed, would be a "dream come true". I would encourage the Commission to give us the chance to prove traditional fishing and underwater spear fishing can co-exist in South Dakota."

Ken McGhinnus of Sioux Falls, SD, emailed: "I would look forward to an equal opportunity to share the waters of our great state with the same rules as hook and line fishermen at some time in the near future."

William E. Coester of Milbank, SD, wrote: "I request and strongly recommend that the rules be changed in South Dakota to allow spearfishing anywhere other types of fishing are allowed, and that the season be open year around."

Jackie and Dave VandeKamp of Sioux Falls, SD, emailed: "We both think it would be great to have more options for where we can go. It would be wonderful if we could spear all year around or at least a longer period of time!"

Mike McGuire of the Rocky Mountain Spearfishing Association emailed: "We support year round seasons, the opening of all waters for everyone to enjoy the resources equally, and the access to equally take of game fish. As we all pay the same price for a fishing license, it would only make sense that we might enjoy the same fishing rights as everyone else."

Chuck Byrum of Highmore, SD, emailed: "I am totally opposed to the (spearing of any game fish) and I have always felt this way....Spearing rough fish is just fine..."

Tony Dinger of Aberdeen, SD, emailed: "I would like to voice my support for the proposed changes to pick and catfish spearing."

Kyle Dinger of Aberdeen, SD, emailed: "I am emailing in regard to the spearing expansion allowing dark house, archery, and underwater spearing to be a legal form of fishing in all inland waters of SD. I have heard stories from my Dad from the days of spearing on the James River near Hecla where he grew up. Now because of water clarity dark house spearing is no longer an option. This expansion would allow more people to experience what used to be in dark house spearing and help control the catfish and pike population. Thank you for your time and efforts to make this possible."

Curt Tesch of Rosholt, SD, emailed: "I applaud you for taking this initiative. I remember talking about this with GF&P personnel about two years ago at one of the local get together meetings. We thought it was a good idea then...I think our dark house spearing should be for residents only unless our largest neighbor is willing to revise their regulations."

Jim Gruber of Estelline, SD, emailed: "My first comment to the proposed regulation to allow spearing of northern is why? ...in other words if it is not broke, do not break it...we do not need this practice allowed."

Derek Schiefelbein of Pierre, SD emailed: "Moving the date all the way back to March 15 will lead to many more house melting through the ice and ended up on the bottom of the lake. On an average year by March 15 the majority of the ice is weakened around the edges and folks will not be able to access the better ice to remove houses. The houses are an eye sore on the bank and bottom."

Jay R. Bellinger of Corona, SD, emailed: "This change in regulation would allow me to spear right at home and I am sure would result in being able to enjoy much more time at one of my favorite sports. I definitely support this change in the regulations."

Mitch Reker of Brandon, SD, emailed: "I think opening all the lakes to spearing pike would be a great move to keep people like me spearing as well as controlling the pike population. I think it is a win-win. I also like using March 15 as the end date for spearing."

Troy Erickson of Rapid City, SD, emailed: "As input for your next meeting I would like to propose the idea of a year around spearfishing season in all South Dakota waters. This would be for both rough & game fish. This would take off much pressure in the summer months at Lake Oahe where most of the divers seem to congregate after the June 15 opener."

Fishing Seasons and Limits

Schlueter read a couple of comments received that the Commission had not seen prior to the meeting as over forty emails and letters were received.

Written testimony was received from:

Mike Schortzmann of Rapid City, SD, emailed: "I support the GF&P's proposal on raising the limit to 8 walleye with possession limit of 24 and removing the one fish over 20" on Lake Oahe."

Bob Zimmerman of Aberdeen, SD, emailed: "I totally agree with raising the fishing limit to eight per day with a possession limit of 24. I do understand the reasoning for that. However, I do not agree that the rule allowing only one walleye over 20 inches be eliminated. My recommendation would be leaving the 1 over 20 inches or possibly increasing it to 2 over 20 inches per fisherman with the daily limit of 8 fish."

Kirk D. Steege of Volga, SD, emailed: "In regards to the proposed changes for Lake Oahe walleye regulations I would like to offer the following observations. These observations are based on approximately 30-35 fishing days on Lake Oahe between 1 July and 30 September. The numerous number of small (under 15") undernourished fish caught and released absolutely warrants your proposed change as it pertains to fish under 15". Based on the number of fish caught over 20" and their condition I would not recommend allowing 4 fish per day over 20" and subsequently a possession limit of 12 fish over 20". Granted, some of these fish may be malnourished and may perish before being caught, but allowing that many fish over 20" will only seriously degrade the population of our bigger fish. Our statewide one fish over 20" has worked extremely well and provides opportunities to catch some really nice fish...let's leave them alone and let them grow!!!"

Lyndon Lemberg of Gary, SD, wrote: "I am against doubling the walleye limit on Lake Oahe, especially the part about eliminating the one over 20 inch rule. This would eliminate many of the breeding fish over 20 inches and hurt walleye reproduction years to come. Please leave the limit as is. I would like to see all lakes in SD have same 15" minimum size and 4 limit. Thank you."

Gerald Schlekeway of Pierre, SD, President of SD Izaak Walton League emailed: "We support the proposed walleye regulation changes for Lake Oahe...The League

appreciates the opportunity to comment on the proposed regulations and we strongly urge the Commission's support of them."

Larry Talley of Rapid City, SD, emailed: "I support the following modifications: In Lake Oahe, the daily limit for walleye, sauger, walleye-sauger hybrids, or combination thereof is 5 and of the walleye taken daily, with no restriction on size, possession limit is 15."

Mark Swenson of Pierre, SD, by iphone: "Why don't we net, seine, or shock walleye and stock Lake Sharpe or other areas that they could survive."

Martin Luebke of Garretson, SD, emailed: "I really think that in the long run, we may be hurting our walleye population by increasing the number and size limits. Just look around at what MN and CA do. I realize the MO System has some unique problems with recent flood and smelt but fear my kids and grandkids won't have the quality fishing in time to come."

Dan Henderson of Rapid City, SD, emailed: "I feel your proposal to raise the walleye limit is a little too drastic and far too late. If you anticipate large walleyes to die off this winter. Why would you raise the limit for next summer? You should have placed an emergency increase for a few months this fall. From what I've been told, the larger walleyes being caught recently are very healthy. If you keep going down the road you're going you will turn Oahe into Lake Francis Case. You should leave a good thing alone for a year or two to see what Mother Nature has in store. Why don't you consider a "season" for walleye fishing on Lake Francis case since? You can use a boat almost year round there which has decimated the walleyes."

Jim Larson of Sioux Falls, SD, emailed: "I applaud for the staff and commission for being proactive on fish management throughout the state, not just in the river or lakes. I am concerned, however, about letting a person keep four walleye over 20 inches from Oahe. Would two work as well? I think so when combined with an eight-fish limit...and I think just raising the limit to 8 per day will bring a substantial increase in pressure yielding the desired results while allowing more people to catch the larger fish."

Jeffrey Lerud of Mobridge, SD, emailed: "I think raising the walleye limit to 8 with triple possession is perhaps too much. I fish many days each year and I agree many of the larger fish are thin and look underfed. But, many do not show those signs. As a trout fisherman, I did catch and release many walleyes over 20"s this last season. Those that looked healthy for spawning went back unless injured. Maybe keep the triple possession, but put limit at 6 with 3 over some arbitrary inch limit. But, you are the professionals and I will accept your judgment and support you. I just find myself thinking only a little different and I am willing to express that."

Christopher Brown of Rapid City, SD, emailed: "I don't agree with the proposed new limits and regulations on Lake Oahe. The new limits do not address the overabundance of smallmouth bass, and northern pike. Most of the fishermen want the walleye. We have a healthy population. I think the increase of the possession limit to 24 would negatively impact the fishery. I do agree that continued gizzard shad stockings is needed on Oahe, and I applaud the efforts of the GF&P to add this food source."

Brad Bargmann of Rapid City, SD, sent by iPad: "Keep the possession limit to 2 days, increase daily limit as proposed."

Bryan Roth of Salem, SD, emailed: "I don't have a problem with the proposed plan; it probably makes the most sense to harvest those fish before they're lost to starvation. My biggest concern is with the reproduction of bait fish. What can we do to assure the Corp with work with GFP to hold the reservoir at an ideal level for reproduction?"

Brad Wilkins of Salem, SD, emailed: "For the proposed Lake Oahe walleye limits, I see it has 8 walleye/Sauger Daily with 4 of them over 15". What about listing 1 over 20"? The proposal sounds like you could have 4 large fish as it just says over 15"? Did I read it wrong? Is that not a concern to protect are larger egg producing female walleye?"

Gregg Yonkovich of Aberdeen, SD, emailed: "I strongly support the proposed revision to the walleye limits on Lake Oahe (8 fish). From what I saw fishing the Akaska area this summer & fall, many of the fish are starving. I have caught numerous fish over 20 inches that yielded fillets comparable to a strip of bacon. When similar changes were made a few years ago, it had a dramatic effect on the fishery. I haven't heard if the proposal includes increasing the possession limit, but it would be helpful to increase this to at least 3 days, to keep fisherman at 'the river' for long weekends."

Michael and Brenda Johnson of Rapid City, SD, emailed: "I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed regulation changes for Oahe...the best thing you can do is nothing-leave the limits where they are...it is too soon to make the kind of radical changes proposed this year."

Fred Carl of Rapid City, SD, emailed: "I am writing in opposition to the removal of the upper size restriction portion of the recent proposal. This will end up in anglers keeping 4 over 20 inch fish and forgetting about the smaller fish. I remember very well the days when there was no size restriction and sadly watching as guide boats came to the fish cleaning station with limits for 4-5 people and nothing under 4 lbs in their boat--and we saw the long term results. Please remember history and don't return to those days."

Marti Rathert of Aberdeen, SD, emailed: "Do not increase the number of larger fish taken from Oahe. The numbers of smaller fish up to 17 inches could be reduced but over 17 should stay as it is. You will only make Oahe a lake of fourteen inch fish if you let everyone take a higher number of large fish. There is a very high level of "highgrading" now and increasing the limits of larger fish will only make it worse. I say increase the limits of walleye on fish up to seventeen inch fish and leave the over twenty inch limit as it is. As a sidenote, I really think the limits should be left alone. Nature will run its course."

Mark Douglas of Pierre, SD, emailed: "I think they should have done something like this last year. The lake is obviously out of balance again – not enough food or prey fish for the amount of predator fish. Just compare the fish from last year to this. The fish weight are substantially less on average... I personally don't have a problem with them raising the limits – I'd even suggest doing more like a 12 fish limit for a year. The sooner the Lake Oahe is able to support itself, the better for everybody."

Chuck Byrum of Onida, SD, emailed: "I think you are planning to increase the limit to 8 per day. 4 must be less than 15 in. and the remaining (4) can be any length? From under 15 in. to the remaining 4 being any length. ? Possession limit to be changed to 3 times the new limit? Thank you for doing this. I did think the GFP had introduced a

couple of other species of (prey fish), for Walleyes and other predator fish to supplement the forage base.”

Justin Larson of Pierre, SD, emailed: “I am 100% against removing the “over” restriction, I understand upping the limit to remove some of those younger class fish but I am really worried of allowing anglers to take out so many bigger fish. If we would have a decent smelt spawn I have to believe a lot of these can be saved. If they die over the winter they die over the winter, we don’t have enough anglers during the winter months to make a huge difference. PLEASE RE-THINK THIS PART OF THE PROPOSAL.”

Nathan Schulte of Gretna, NE, wrote: “you should put a different size limits on the walleye. I believe that some people should have the privilege of having to keep smaller fish. Also some people will keep 13” fish because they have some meat on them. A 13” fish will give a nice fillet, but the limit of 14” or longer prevents this. I also believe that you should bring up the walleye limit to five.

Chuck Krause of Gettysburg, SD, emailed: “I support the limit increase for 4 over and 4 under 15 inches.”

Loren J. Kasuske of Rapid City, SD, emailed: “I would like to comment on the current proposal to the fishing seasons/limits regarding Lake Oahe and walleye. In my opinion this could possibly be one of the worst things you could do to the walleye resource we have in Lake Oahe. In my opinion the GFP has done a great job managing the walleye resource in Lake Oahe. All of increases in walleye population and size have come about because of size restrictions and realistic possession limits. I think if the biologists feel the larger fish are not going to make it then a possible one year increase in the daily limit of fish over 20” for Oahe would be acceptable, allowing 2 fish of 20 or more” and 3 under would be good. In my opinion it would not be acceptable to increase the possession limit to 3 days or to encourage anglers to harvest fish less than 15” by changing the size limits.”

Jim Carpenter of Pierre, SD, emailed: “The proposal of 4 fish less than 15 inches and 4 fish over 15 inches without concern for the number over 20 inches originally caused me concern. After attending the meeting in Ft. Pierre last night (10/23/12), I am confident and secure in my belief that this is the right thing to do. I would encourage the Commission to adopt the recommendation as proposed and not succumb to the emotional pleas of the uninformed.”

Ken Ekel of Rapid City, SD, wrote: “I recently seen the slide show and listened to the biologist information on the proposed walleye limits on Oahu Reservoir. I do appreciate the fisheries personnel taking efforts that benefit the angler. I however do not support the proposed limits. Nobody likes to see what is happening to our walleye fisher, but our first concern should be what our walleye population will look like after the famine. We should be doing what we can to salvage the survivors, not on how many can we salvage for the freezer...I encourage this commission to stay the course; we do not have to pass this regulation now. Spring data may be more encouraging than we expect and if we feel the need, we have the emergency regulation rule we can implement accordingly.”

Hiene Junge of Rapid City, SD, emailed: “I support increasing the daily walleye limit to eight, with no more than four, 15 inches or greater in length.”

Dennis Bohls of Rapid City, SD, emailed: “What bothers me is the 8 per day with a total of 24 in possession. If Lake Oahe had a high fish take last year with the 4 limit,

I'm afraid the new limit will take an excessive amount of fish out of the lake. I would feel more comfortable with lowering it to 6 per day with a 2 day possession. Leave the 4 of 15" or larger with a 2 under 15". When you're taking fish there is always a few 14 3/4" healthy walleye's that is caught, that took the hook deep and you have bleeding from the hook set or removal, under the current rules they need to be returned to the lake. If there was a place in the live well for those 14 3/4" to be taken, that also would help with the current problem."

Tom Wanttie of Aberdeen, SD, emailed: "While I applaud your proposal to increase the daily limit, I think you would be doing an injustice by allowing anglers to take 4 fish over 20". Your slot limit has done a great job for the fishery in growing some really nice sized fish. If you allow 4 over 20" to be taken, I believe you will be defeating any gains you have made in making Oahe a great fishery."

Clayton Larson of Selby, SD, emailed: "There should only be one or two over 20". The limit of eight is fine and 4 over and under 15" is fine."

Greg Hassel of Sioux Falls, SD, emailed: "While I do trust the management ability of the Fisheries staff and the GF&P, I do not agree with removing the proposed 1 over 20 inch limit. At times it can be relatively easy to catch fish over 20 inches and too many anglers will take as many big fish as they are allowed, often times catching/culling smaller fish until larger are caught. Increase the limit but keep the 1 over 20 inches in place."

Richard Trapp of Rapid City, SD, emailed: "I really don't feel the limit should be over six fish and also only one over twenty. I feel the one over twenty is very important. Also 24 possession limit is too many. A two day limit is plenty."

Barry Higginbotham of Fort Pierre, SD, emailed: "I think the increased daily limit to 8 is ok but to reduce the size over 20" to 15" is a mistake. The limit for over 20" should be increase to 2 to preserve the natural reproduction."

Larry Anderson of Gettysburg, SD, emailed: "I live on Lake Oahe and agree with your assessment and limit changes except dropping the one over 20 inches. I believe you need to keep that rule in effect, by allowing an angler to keep four fish over 20 inches you will deplete the opportunity for weekend anglers, family outing etc the opportunity to possibly catch a trophy fish in the years to come."

William Blinkenderfer of Rapid City, SD, emailed: "I suggest no change on Oahe. The bays are full of bail fish, if you fish the main channel fish are skinny, you fish the bays the fish are healthy. Most fishermen took the 17 to 20 inch year class out last year they are harder to find so they are greatly reduced. Just look at the posts on SD insider every day he says we were able to fill the clients limits with nice under's after catching 50 fish a day. Now you take the small fish and the over fish, oh boy. If you do change to that many fish, be prepared for more maintenance on fish cleaning stations and ramps. I believe the efforts by game fish are starting to take effect, I am seeing a bounce back of the health of the fish, and we just needed to give it time. If you do change it I will go to Oahe more."

Mark Abrams of Rapid City, SD, emailed: "I heard that they are looking to increase the daily limit to 8, which would be great but eliminate the only 1 fish over 20". Why eliminate that? If you are allowed to keep 8 fish why does anyone need to keep more than one fish over 20"? Makes no sense to me as most boats have 3-4 people,

so technically they can already keep 3-4 fish over 20" - seems like plenty of big fish to me. Plus the smaller fish make much better fillets."

Chris Nelson of Pierre, SD, emailed: "I would like to express my support of the current proposal on the daily/possession limit changes proposed for Lake Oahe. The fisheries and wildlife staff have done an excellent job over the years of managing our resources through incredibly difficult (and unpredictable) situations that Mother Nature, the public, and politicians have handed them."

Mike Behm of Pierre, SD, emailed: "This is an extremely unfortunate even for Lake Oahe and appreciate the work by GF&P to manage the resource. It's also unfortunate these rules, if adopted, were not adopted during the summer 2012 angling season. We lost a great opportunity to impact the population while allowing anglers/spear fishers the chance to harvest quality fish."

David Erickson of Sioux Falls, SD, emailed: "I support the increased daily limit of 8 fish. I'm concerned with removing the 1 fish over 20 inch regulation might impact the trophy quality of fishing and hop you will retain the one daily over 20."

Eric Anderson of Rapid City, SD, emailed: "I support the regulation as presented."

Greg Bohls of Spearfish, SD, wrote: "I had concerns with raising the limit and 1 over 20" requirement. With increased fishing pressure I thought that taking more large fish >20" would hurt the larger fish population. I learned that angler pressure is less than fish natural mortality. I support your proposal and only ask that you monitor it carefully."

Oral testimony received from:

Mike Cummings of Pierre runs bait shop in Rapid City and wholesale bait business and asked why the small mouth and northern pike do not have expanded limits. He believes small mouth bass are an invasive species and a pest. Oahe has an unfair advantage with the economic for other small towns. He is worried about the fish taken from the deep water as they will die, so fishermen can get their four over 20 inches with the current proposal.

Ron Barthel of Madison and fishes and commented on a local incident for over limit of perch. His question is party fishing can I help my friend his limit of fish. Is it against the law to party fish?

Snagging of Paddlefish

No written comments or oral testimony was received.

Hoop Nets and Setlines

Written testimony was received from:

John Koenig of Chamberlain, SD, emailed: "I find the proposed changes consistent with making catfish populations more utilized by fishermen. I'm in favor of the increased opportunities for fishing with setline, a very relaxing and enjoyable endeavor."

L. A. Cameron of Avon, SD, emailed: "There is not a lot of set lines and hoop

nets being used and I think most people do not fish for cats...it is walleyes, crappie, and bass. Nebraska on the other hand, have quite a few setlines as I fish with some of these people ...we need rules similar to theirs in this area, as I know people living in South Dakota who purchase a nonresident Nebraska license...most of the fish that are caught on lines are cats with minnows. The purchase of minnows Helps the local bait shop and makes it easier to fish for cats, because we don't have to look for or catch our own bait and we can spend more time on the water."

Greg Girard of Mitchell, SD, emailed: "Please consider allowing 25 hooks on a set line. Most factory made set lines are made to allow 25 hooks per line."

Tom Heberlein of Rapid City, SD, emailed: "I like most of your proposals for setlines, hoop nets, and traps. I know in this state we have a very prolific catfish population, especially in the Missouri River... I would like to see more hooks per line; I've fished 5 lines with 100 hooks. Most of the people I know who have setline licenses don't even use 20 hooks, maybe 5 or 6 and use them as throw lines. I am not that kind of fisherman. I consider myself a part time commercial fisherman. I hope there is a way where you could allow more hooks per line."

No oral testimony was received.

Bait Fish

Written testimony was received from:

Mike Eisenmenger of Yankton, SD, and he emailed: "Your proposal to increase areas where bait fish could NOT be extracted from SD waters is a very good rule change. I firmly believe that using bait fish in any State will eventually allow unwanted fish into the State's fishing waters, but I do not have an answer to prevent this from happening unless live bait fish is outlawed!"

Oral testimony was received from:

Jan Nicoley of Chester SD the 29-90 Club supports the protection of unwanted fish in South Dakota lakes and waters. She also wants further education and believes that lake associations would to encourage support and awareness of the issues to boaters and users.

Mark Froning of Brookings opposes closing of small lakes and water and bait is culled often. No one has come up with a solution and Mother Nature will take care of this esp. with low water conditions. Bait dealers would help locate where these carp are located and this change would have a detrimental effect on the bait industry.

Mike Cummings of Pierre stated he is against the closing of additional water for the taking of bait. Almost all bait comes from sloughs in SD and with current conditions he may have hard time locating live bait except in northeast SD and what will happen when there is no bait for the bait shops and fishermen. He wants more waters opened up especially with current drought conditions and wants half of the closed waters opened rather than closing more waters.

Don Ackerwold of Brookings stated there are already a lot of waters closed and he likes the signs to educate anglers. Spends hours sorting product for his bait shop and goes to great lengths to provide a product that is legal and satisfies the anglers.

Diane Froning of Brookings stated the importance of staying on top of Asian carp and traps minnows and depends on good management of waters for a good clean

product. She is diligent on getting a good product for fishermen and would like the proposal tabled to discuss effects of rivers and streams as this request was extended further than expected. She wants a chance to clarify rules in discussion.

Turtles

No written or oral testimony was received.

Special Management

Written comments were received from Ron Moehring the State Weed and Pest Supervisor with the SD Department of Agriculture suggesting Yellow Flag Iris be added to the list of Aquatic Nuisance Species.

No oral testimony was received.

Administrative Rules Reduction

No written or oral testimony was received.

Nonresident Hunting License Fees

Written comments were received from:

Will Stone of Gary, SD, emailed: "GFP seems intent on biting the hand that feeds them by increasing non-resident and preserve licenses again."

Stan Mozak of Elk Point, SD, emailed: "do not raise fees on out of state hunters. Times are tough enough and we will price ourselves out of this valuable market."

Brad Moore of Aberdeen, SD, emailed: "I would support the increase in non-resident hunting fees, contingent upon revising the 2 five-day sessions, to a 3, 3, 4 day session or any combination. Limiting the opportunity to 2 five day sessions limits the opportunity for an additional trip to SD, which would result in increased sales tax collected from money spent."

Robert Foote, of Whittier, CA, emailed: "I see you are planning to increase the non-resident small game hunting license another \$10. It amazes me that you could only generate the million plus dollars from the non-resident and not increase any of the resident fees. If you must generate a million dollars then make the increase across the board to all hunters. This only seems fair especially considering that the resident has the opportunity to hunt every day of the entire season while I only get to hunt for 10 days."

Tim Lembke of Mound, MN, emailed: "with the license fee increases we don't plant to hunt SD anymore."

Paul Tellinghuisen of Sioux Falls, SD, emailed: "I don't think that out of state alone should burden the extra expense of SD GFP. If you are going to increase the license fees I feel that it should be for SD hunters and out of state."

Lana Greenfield of Clark, SD, emailed: "as business owners of two businesses oppose the proposed rate increase in out of state hunting licenses."

Jack Zacher of Spearfish, SD, emailed: "I've been hunting for 50 years and a proposal to raise hunting and fishing license in a bad economy is suicide."

Kevin Koenig of Wayne, NE, emailed: "I find it disappointing that South Dakota does not allow a nonresident landowner with a residence to hunt deer and only 10 days for pheasant at a cost of \$228 on my own property. My family and I enjoy wildlife and the people in South Dakota but the cost associated with hunting and fishing seems to be extremely high considering our investment in the state."

Alan Kruse of Illinois emailed: "I am a nonresident and a frequent pheasant hunter in SD. I was a former SD military member and now live in Illinois. I heartily OBJECT to the commission's proposal to raise fees for us nonresidents."

George Bogenschultz of Nunda, SD, emailed: "I feel that if NR license fees are to be increased, then the license should be for the entire season. This would benefit the commercial community that caters to hunters and probably wouldn't have much effect on bird populations or hunting pressure."

Kevin Pontje of Worthing, SD, emailed: "Already, we've made pheasant hunting in South Dakota a pursuit of the wealthy. I've had friends who've come to South Dakota for several years in the past, but since the fees are now so excessive, they can only afford to do so once every few years."

Robert Schonefelder of Mitchell, SD, emailed: "Due to the economy, I suggest you leave the fee alone for now. Raise it when the economy is much better."

Norbe Barrie, of Turton, SD, emailed: "I am writing to protest the Game, Fish, and Parks plans to increase nonresident license fees."

Joseph Parzick of Portland, OR, emailed: "Please keep your user fees non-resident freely... This is not the time to raise fees as most hunters have trouble paying for their hobby."

Oral testimony was received from:

Jan Nicolay of Chester stated her support for the increase in license fees.

Will Stone of Gary, SD, testified that he has a preserve and increased that fees have increased from \$9 to \$87 and referenced letter from Director Leif. He talked about the history of preserves and hunters coming to SD. He believes GFP and SD has benefited from preserves as it is landowners land and habitat that provide opportunity for all pheasant hunters. Preserves provide birds on public areas adjacent to the preserves. He provided information about his operation and asked "What does the state provide to preserves other than regulations?" He suggested a \$15 license for a day or \$45 for a three-day license. The \$120 is too much for annual license as neighboring states have \$45 annual preserve fee.

Park Entrance License Fees

No oral testimony was received and written comments were received from:

E. C. Schroder of Brandon, SD, emailed: "I feel that out of state visitors to our state parks and campers need to pay more for their state stickers."

Jeff Peterson of Hartford, SD, emailed: "I oppose an increase in park entrance fees. I am a middle class resident of South Dakota and for the last several years I have not seen a raise in income, but have experience numerous increases in daily needs."

Camping and Lodge Fees

No written or oral testimony was received.

Camping Unit Definition

No written or oral testimony was received.

The Public Hearing concluded at 2:49 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