

Minutes of the Game, Fish, and Parks Commission  
July 8, 2013

Chair Susie Knippling convened the Governance meeting at 10 AM at the Ramkota RiverCenter in Pierre, South Dakota. Commissioners Susie Knippling, John Cooper, Barry Jensen, Jim Spies, Cathy Peterson, Duane Sather, and Gary Jensen were present along with Department Secretary Jeff Vonk, Debra Ascher, and Bob Mercer.

The purpose was to discuss governance issues including the importance of public involvement and stakeholder relationships; Commission and Department response to communications; and correspondence with stakeholders, the public, and the media.

There was a review of the Commissioner Handbook and the meeting concluded at 11:48 AM.

Chair Knippling called the regular meeting to order at 1 PM at the Pierre Ramkota RiverCenter with Commissioners Susie Knippling, John Cooper, Barry Jensen, Jim Spies, Cathy Peterson, Duane Sather, and Gary Jensen present. Department Secretary Jeff Vonk was present along with public, staff, and media numbering approximately twenty-five.

#### Division of Administration

Chair Knippling called for any additions or corrections to the June 6-7, 2013, minutes or a motion of approval.

Motion by Cooper with second by Sather TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 6-7, 2013, MEETING AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Knippling asked for additional salary days with Peterson and Knippling each requesting one for the building committee meetings in June.

Motion by Spies with second by Barry Jensen TO APPROVE THE ADDITIONAL SALARY DAYS REQUESTED BY PETERSON AND KNIPPLING. Motion carried unanimously.

Director Chris Petersen presented two license list requests for Commission consideration. The annual requests are at the full fee rate.

Lee's Meats and Sausage, Inc. of Tea, SD, requested a list of east and west river deer hunters to mail brochures promoting their wild game processing business.

Rebeckah Craddock of Sioux Falls, SD, requested on behalf of Calamity Peak Lodge a list of elk license holders for Unit H-3 and Custer State Park to send a letter of invitation to stay at the lodge while hunting in the Custer area.

Motion by Peterson with second by Spies TO APPROVE THE LICENSE LIST REQUESTS FROM LEE'S MEATS AND SAUSAGE, INC. AND CALAMITY PEAK LODGE AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Director Petersen presented the July 1, 2013, License Sales Totals Report stating the percentage of change from last year is down 1.3% and nonresident fishing and senior combination sales are above last year's sales.

#### Open Forum

There were no comments received from the attending public during the open forum portion of the meeting.

#### Public Hearing

The Public Hearing began at 2 PM and concluded at 2:23 PM and minutes follow these regular meeting minutes. Chair Knippling called a fifteen-minute recess following the public hearing.

#### Finalizations

##### Antelope Hunting Season 41:06:23

Director Leif asked to have the Antelope Population Update prior to the finalization of the antelope season and Chair Knippling granted the request. (The information provided follows the agenda and is later in these minutes.)

Chad Switzer presented the season dates, license allocations, requirements, and restrictions as well as proposed changes and a change to proposal to adjust the license allocations following the completion of the aerial survey. Discussion included a threshold to base recommendations, resident demand for licenses, social issues regarding the number of licenses, social demand in the population management objectives, and concern for Bennett County late season hunting opportunity and depredation concerns.

Offer resident hunters 100 more one-tag licenses (100 tags) and 100 less two-tag licenses (200 tags) than proposed.

Motion by Cooper with second by Gary Jensen TO AMEND THE ANTELOPE HUNTING SEASON PROPOSAL AS RECOMMENDED. Motion carried unanimously.

1. Offer resident hunters 65 less one-tag licenses (65 tags) and 445 less two-tag licenses (890 tags) than 2012.
2. Units 45A (Lyman) and 45B (Ft. Pierre National Grasslands) will be issued zero firearm licenses. Therefore, Units 45A and 45B will also be closed to archery antelope hunting.

Motion by Cooper with second by Spies TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO THE ANTELOPE HUNTING SEASON 41:06:23 AS AMENDED. Motion carried unanimously.

Early Fall Canada Goose Hunting Season 41:06:50 and  
Waterfowl Hunting Seasons 41:06:16

Chad Switzer presented the proposed changes along with season dates, open areas, daily limit, possession limit, requirements, and restrictions and a recommended change in possession limit as approved by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

1. Increase the possession limit for geese from two times (2x) the daily limit to three times (3x) the daily limit as recently approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
2. Amend 41:06:07 to include the current proposed unit boundary change and to correct an error in current administrative rule pertaining to Custer and Fall River counties in the Unit 1 description.

Motion by Peterson with second by Cooper TO AMEND PROPOSED CHANGES AS RECOMMENDED. Motion carried unanimously.

1. Increase the possession limit for geese from two times (2x) the daily limit to three times (3x) the daily limit as recently approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
2. Change the opening date from the first Saturday in September to September 1.
3. Amend 41:06:16:07 to include the current proposed unit boundary change and to correct an error in current administrative rule pertaining to Custer and Fall River counties in the Unit 1 description.
4. Amend 41:06:16:07 to modify the boundaries of Units 1 and 2 near the Missouri River to remove portions from Unit 1 (area open to Early Fall Canada Goose Hunting Season) and include in Unit 2. This modification would include all of Tripp County and that portion of Charles Mix County east of U.S. Highway 281 and north of S.D. Highway 46.

Motion by Peterson with second by Gary Jensen TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO EARLY FALL CANADA GOOSE 41:06:50 AND WATERFOWL HUNTING SEASONS 41:06:16 AS AMENDED. Motion carried unanimously.

Sage Grouse Hunting Season 41:06:10

Chief Tom Kirschenmann presented the proposed changes to close the season due to the decrease lek counts which also indicated fewer males per lek and less than 100 male sage grouse were counted.

Close the 2013 Sage Grouse Hunting Season.

Motion by Barry Jensen with second by Spies TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO CLOSE THE SAGE GROUSE SEASON 41:06:10 AS PROPOSED. Motion carried unanimously.

Harvested wolf inspection requirement 41:06:04

Chief Kirschenmann presented the proposed new rule to establish mandatory inspection of harvested wolves. There is no intention to manage wolves in South Dakota; however this is a way to verify species and collect information about wolves traveling in or through South Dakota. Discussion included ramifications if a wolf was not presented indicating it could be a Class II Misdemeanor that carries maximum penalties of a \$500 fine and 30 days in jail, dependent on the circumstances.

Establish in administrative rule a mandatory inspection of harvested wolves.

Motion by Gary Jensen with second by Barry Jensen TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO HUNTING REQUIREMENTS AND PROHIBITED METHODS 41:06:04 ESTABLISHING IN RULE THE MANDATORY INSPECTION OF HARVESTED WOLVES AS PROPOSED. Motion carried unanimously.

#### Bobcat Trapping and Hunting Season 41:08:01

Chief Kirschenmann and Keith Fisk presented the proposed changes with a recommendation not to adopt a bobcat harvest limit for the west river season. Discussion ensued about public testimony, season dates, harvest of females, access and opportunity on private land, and research to determine the population.

1. Open the west river season at sunrise on December 26 and close it at sunset on February 15.
2. Do not adopt a bobcat harvest limit for the west river season.

Motion by Cooper with second by Sather TO AMEND PROPOSAL AS RECOMMENDED. Roll call vote: Cooper-yes, Barry Jensen-yes, Gary Jensen-no, Peterson-yes, Sather-yes, Spies-no, Knippling-yes. Motion carried with five yes votes and two no votes.

1. Open the west river season at sunrise on December 26 and close it at sunset on February 15.
2. Change the east river season dates from December 14 through January 5, to December 26 through the third Sunday of January (January 18 for the 2013/2014 season).

Motion by Cooper with second by Sather TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO BOBCAT TRAPPING AND HUNTING SEASON 41:08:01 AS AMENDED. Roll call vote: Cooper-yes, Barry Jensen-yes, Gary Jensen-no, Peterson-yes, Sather-yes, Spies-no, Knippling-yes. Motion carried with five yes votes and two no votes.

### Hunting Season Proposals

#### Waterfowl Hunting Seasons

Chief Kirschenmann provided the federal framework and schedule used by the Central Flyway to determine goose and duck hunting seasons along with the season dates, open areas, daily limits, and possession limit. The recommended changes are to increase the daily bag limit of scaup from four to six, and increase the possession limit from two times the daily limit for ducks, coots, and mergansers to three times the daily limit as approved by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

1. Increase the scaup daily limit from 4 to 6.
2. Increase the possession limit for ducks, coots, and mergansers from two times (2x) the daily limit to three times (3x) the daily limit as recently approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Motion by Barry Jensen with second by Gary Jensen TO PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE DUCK HUNTING SEASON AS RECOMMENDED. Motion carried unanimously.

Switzer presented the Goose Hunting Season dates, open areas, daily limits, and possession limits along with recommended changes explaining that changes to increase the white-front goose daily bag limit requires a shorter season within the federal guidelines. The increase possession limit from two to three times the daily limit was approved by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and this is the time to adjust the rules to follow suit. There are strong numbers of geese in South Dakota and this provides for additional harvest.

1. Increase the Canada goose daily bag limit from 3 to 5.
2. Increase the white-fronted goose daily bag limit from 1 to 2.
3. Modify the white-fronted goose season from 86 to 72 consecutive days beginning the last Saturday of September.
4. Increase the possession limit for geese from two times (2x) the daily limit to three times (3x) the daily limit as recently approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Motion by Cooper with second by Spies TO PROPOSE CHANGES TO THE GOOSE HUNTING SEASON AS RECOMMENDED. Motion carried unanimously.

#### Depredation Hunts and Resolutions

Kirschenmann and Keith Fisk presented the requirements and restrictions for depredation permits. These permits are utilized after the regular season closes to harvest deer in depredation situations. Hunters register online for depredations hunts selecting specific counties and of the 610 registered hunters that registered last year, 239 of them registered in more than ten counties. The recommended change is to limit the number of counties a hunter may select to participate in a depredation hunt.

No person may register for more than 10 counties.

Motion by Spies with second by Sather TO PROPOSE THE CHANGE TO DEPREDATION PERMITS AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Kirschenmann requested approval of Resolution 13-08 authorizing Secretary Vonk or designee to issue depredation hunt permits as needed.

Motion by Spies with second by Barry Jensen TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 13-08 AS PRESENTED (Attachment A). Motion carried unanimously.

Keith Fisk presented the Elk Depredation Permit requirements and restrictions indicating there have been no hunts in the last four years and no changes were recommended.

Kirschenmann requested approval of Resolution 13-09 authorizing Secretary Vonk or designee to issue the elk depredation hunt permits should there be a need to do so.

Motion by Peterson with second by Gary Jensen TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 13-09 AS PRESENTED (Attachment B). Motion carried unanimously.

## Division of Parks and Recreation

### Good Earth State Park Dedication

Director Doug Hofer indicated the Good Earth State Park Dedication will be July 19 and Governor Branstad from Iowa and South Dakota Governor Dennis Daugaard will be present. Invitations were sent to the Commissioners, the SD Parks and Wildlife Foundation Board, the SD Legislators, donors, tribes, and the congressional delegation. The ceremony will take place from 11 AM to noon and it is open to the public.

### Major Project Building Committee Reports

The Building Committee for the Custer State Park Visitor Center and the Good Earth State Park Phase 1 Development and Visitor Center met in June to interview and select an Architect/Engineering firm to design both projects. Director Hofer indicated Architecture International in Rapid City was selected for CSP project and HDR in Sioux Falls was selected for the Good Earth project. Discussion included the types of presentations made to the Building Committee, timeframes, and fundraising efforts.

### June Park Revenue and Visitation Reports

Director Hofer presented the parks revenue report ending June 30th indicating revenue is up 4.8% statewide. Park use continues on a record pace as the July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend found all campgrounds full and the day use was high due to the great summer weather.

## Division of Wildlife

### Renzienhausen Slough State Game Refuge

Chief Tom Kirschenmann presented a letter of request to remove sixty acres of private property owned by Kent Perkins from State Game Refuge status at the Renzienhausen Slough in Brown County. Kirschenmann indicated there are three types of refugees and this refuge has been in place since 1987 and provided a map of the refuge with depiction of the property proposed for removal.

Modify the Renziehausen Slough State Game Bird Refuge to remove the sixty acres currently owned by Kent Perkins.

Motion by Gary Jensen with second by Peterson TO PROPOSE CHANGES TO REFUGES AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

### Antelope Population Update

Andy Lindbloom provided a PowerPoint Presentation that included historical perspective of the season, current surveys and management, harvest data, harvest success, trend info, aerial surveys information, with archery and mentored youth season information.

Lindbloom indicated the fawn to doe ratio shows minimal increase and the 2013 adult antelope population is estimated at 25,000 for a 9% increase from last year. The buck to doe ratio is 45/100 which is consistent with past years; and the management

goal is 50,000 statewide. Lindbloom showed data of severe winter impacts on antelope populations and nonresident firearm licenses history. Staff continues to develop population objectives and is in the second year of a research project.

#### Rocky Mountain Elk Annual Report

Tom Slowey and Larry Gehrke of the SD Chapter of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) provide the 2013 Elk Raffle results indicating an increase in sales with net revenue of \$26,953. Slowey thanked the Commission for changing the open area to include the Black Hills units making the auction tag a more desirable hunting opportunity and assisted with the increased sales. RMEF submitted the request and require documentation for the 2014 raffle tag.

Kirschenmann indicated the RMEF request was complete and the only request received for the 2014 elk raffle tag; and with Commission concurrence would be awarded to the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. Commission concurrence was given.

#### Wildlife Diversity Update

Eileen Dowd Stukel provided a PowerPoint Presentation on wildlife diversity and the importance of early efforts in protecting species verses recovery of a species. Education is an important when protecting all animal and plant life. Stukel explained the Teaming with Wildlife Initiative, the State Wildlife Grants program, and the State Wildlife Action Plan and how they work together. There have been 55 projects completed with 18 projects currently in process and gave three examples of projects.

#### Education Events

Chuck Schlueter education activities are in full swing with twelve Step Outside events scheduled in July and August. There are fifty naturalists providing programming in the state parks. The family fishing events in the parks are averaging thirty people. The Outdoor Expo in June was the last one and will not happen next year. The two Outdoor University events are scheduled in Rapid City on July 20 and August 3 in Sioux Falls.

Knippling asked about elk calves in Custer State Park and Switzer indicated 57 calves have collars with fourteen lost to lion depredation, five to coyotes, and one lost the collar. The Hill City herd have 33 collared calves with three lost to lion depredation and one other loss unsure as to the cause. The Wind Cave elk continue to seek ways back into Wind Cave and some elk including twelve of the collared cows did find a hole in the fence and returned to Wind Cave.

Motion by Spies with second by Gary Jensen to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 4:32 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeffrey R. Vonk, Department Secretary

**RESOLUTION 13-08**

**BIG GAME OTHER THAN ELK AND MOUNTAIN LION  
DEPREDAION HUNTER POOL**

**WHEREAS**, the Game, Fish, and Parks Commission has promulgated rules to provide for a big game depredation pool of hunters designed to assist in reducing wildlife damage to property by big game species other than elk and mountain lion, and;

**WHEREAS**, applications for depredation pool permits have been received and a random drawing held to establish the lists of depredation pool hunters for each county, and;

**WHEREAS**, it is anticipated that high populations of game animals coupled with severe winter weather conditions may cause property damage, which in some instances cannot be resolved by any other method except by reducing the number of game animals in a specific geographic area;

**NOW, THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT**, the Game, Fish, and Parks Commission authorizes the Secretary of the Department of Game, Fish, and Parks or his designee to issue no more than the maximum number (600 permits plus an additional 200 landowner/operator permits) of depredation pool permits to depredation pool hunters to respond to property damage caused by game animals.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that in issuance of the depredation pool permits, the Secretary of the Department of Game, Fish, and Parks or his designee is authorized to establish when and where each permit is valid and the number, species and sex of the game animals other than elk and mountain lion permitted to be taken by the holder of each depredation pool permit.

Appendix B

**RESOLUTION 13-09**

**ELK DEPREDATION HUNTS**

**WHEREAS**, the Game, Fish, and Parks Commission has promulgated rules to provide for elk depredation hunts designed to assist in reducing wildlife damage to property, and;

**WHEREAS**, applications for elk permits have been received and a list of elk applicants is available in Game, Fish, and Parks license application records, and;

**WHEREAS**, it is anticipated that high populations of elk have caused property damage, which in some instances cannot be resolved by any other method except by reducing the number of animals in a specific geographic area;

**NOW, THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT**, the Game, Fish, and Parks Commission authorizes the Secretary of the Department of Game, Fish, and Parks or his designee to issue up to 50 elk depredation permits (as approved in rule) to respond to property damage.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that in issuance of the elk depredation permits, the Secretary of the Department of Game, Fish, and Parks or his designee is authorized to establish when and where each permit is valid and the number, species and sex of the game animals permitted to be taken by the holder of each elk depredation permit.

Public Hearing Minutes of the Game, Fish, and Parks Commission  
July 8, 2013

The Public Hearing began at 2 PM with Chuck Schlueter stating public testimony would be accepted on items 5-9 listed on the agenda. Schlueter would read the written testimony received and oral testimony, from the attending public, would follow. Those wishing to address the Commission are to come forward and introduce themselves, sign in with name and city, and provide comments.

#### Antelope Hunting Season

Larry C. Strompurd of Mud Butte, SD, wrote: "...In the past the Regional and State staff have been very good in incorporating my recommendations into their Antelope Season proposal. This year, however, it seems my recommendations have fallen on deaf ears. In particular I am disappointed you have again proposed to eliminate non-resident licenses. Last year, it took me by surprise, but this year I must object to how unfair this is compared with other seasons. When pheasant populations are down, I don't see you eliminating nonresidents. Heck, when west river deer populations are down, you still issue 8% to nonresidents. What's the difference? If I did have a commercial hunting operation-which I don't-why should I be penalized because I have antelope habitat verses pheasant, or goose, or trophy mule deer habitat?..."

My recommendation for this year: Reinstate an allocation of 8% non-resident licenses. In my unit of Northern Meade County this would be an addition of only 32 licenses for the unit. A plus for you would be increased revenue. If the biologists think 432 is too many, then reduce the resident licenses by 32..."

Jay Stomrud of Mud Butte, SD, wrote: "I don't think it is right to limit antelope tags only to residents. In fact, non-residents that have purchased preference points may even feel like they have been cheated out of their preference point fees in the past by being denied the chance to apply. I recommend that non-residents be eligible for 8% of the total tag quota."

No oral testimony was received.

#### Canada Goose Early Fall Season

No written and no oral testimony was received.

#### Sage Grouse Hunting Season

Katie Stevens of Crawford, NE, emailed: "Sage grouse -- an excellent decision. With only 9 birds taken last year, it is perhaps symbolic, but it does show commitment to recovering this species. I attach an article from a Utah paper which gives an enlightened hunter's view of this issue. Thank you for following suit."

Nancy Hilding of Black Hawk, SD, representing the Prairie Hills Audubon Society emailed: "PHAS thanks the Department of Game, Fish and Parks for moving to close the sage-grouse hunting season, this action is long overdue."

Larry A. Bowles of Rapid City, SD, wrote in a letter to Tom Kirschenmann: "I realize there is way much more involved in this scene than 9 birds killed last season. However if you have any input into this process I'm asking that you speak up for those

of us who enjoy the opportunity to get out of doors and stroll the prairie kicking rocks, looking at flowers, scouting for deer and/or antelope, spooking jack rabbits, wondering what happened to that dead sheep and what will eventually become of her lamb and enjoying a cool one at the close of a frustrating day, an activity called Sage Grouse hunting.”

No oral testimony was received.

#### Harvested Wolf Inspection

Nancy Hilding of Black Hawk, SD, representing the Prairie Hills Audubon Society emailed: “PHAS thanks the Department of Game, Fish and Parks for proposal to require the presentation of wolf carcasses to GFP staff. This will help wildlife biologists to understand what is happening with the grey wolf recovery in the lower 48 states.”

Craig Lemon of Watertown, SD, emailed: “Establishing a new rule regarding the taking of a wolf does not match the intent of the legislation passed this past session. Wolves should be treated as any other predator. Once again the commission is by passing legislative intent...which in the long run will have detrimental effect.”

No oral testimony was received.

#### Bobcat Trapping and Hunting Season

Casey Ellerton of Custer, SD, emailed: “I think the your proposal for the bobcat season is ridiculous. A 600 cat quota will do nothing for our hurting bobcat population but make the trappers set more traps and harvest every cat they catch. I would like to see an individual quota per license. I love hunting bobcats and don't want to see the numbers get any worse.”

Katie Stevens of Crawford, NE, emailed: “thanks for lowering the take (although I do not think that is is low enough, it is a start). The reason pelt prices are so high is that Africa has stopped the sale of spotted pelts. Furriers are buying bobcat furs and passing them off as African cats. I really don't see why Africa is more protective than we are, but . . . Felines reproduce quite slowly, and I am not sure that the state's population can sustain the loss of 600 animals per year (and these are just the legally taken animals). I urge you to watch this quite carefully.”

Kris Weinburger of Piedmont, SD, emailed: “I have hunted and trapped bobcats for the last 15 years and have noticed an obvious decline in the numbers in the black hills and the prairies of western South Dakota. I support a restriction on the bobcat total take. After extensive review of the 28 page report put out by the gfp my concern is the season would be too short on a productive year.

Why would the gfp allow a very small majority of permit holders to take an unlimited amount of cats when our population is in question. For one person to take 20,30,or 40 cats per year when the future of our cat population is in jeopardy is just wrong.

Why not a per person limit of 2 or 3 per person per year for a few years and let the population come back a bit. You could let the season run for 3-4 months and if you only get 200 to 300 cats so what, then adjust it in a few years. This would allow everyone hunting turkey, deer, elk and coyotes all winter long to have the opportunity of taking a cat if they want. Even until March.

All of our game animals, birds and fish have a limit, why not bobcats. Especially when the population is in question. So open the season from Dec till March and limit it per person to 3 per person and we all can have opportunity for the the entire winter if we choose. This will ensure the bobcat population will still be there for our kids."

Larry W. Bowden of Hot Springs, SD, President of Western South Dakota Fur Harvesters Association, wrote: "After discussing the proposal to shift the season dates and add a 600 cat quota with our directors and members WSDFHA would like to give the following recommendation.

We would recommend that the 2013-2014 season remain exactly like the 2012-2013 season. We do not see the need to change the season without further discussions with SD GF&P and some clarifications of the "Bobcat Harvest Summary 2012-13". There are lots of differing opinions about altering the season dates and a harvest quota. We do not see the urgency to rush to a decision.

If the current proposal is adopted we would like to have the quota raised to 650. We are firmly against the first proposal by GF&P to change the season dates to December 26th thru February 15th.

WSDFHA has a long history of working with SD GF&P on furbearer issues. We suggest that SD GF&P meet with WSDFHA and the South Dakota Trappers Association and discuss the further."

Nancy Hilding of Black Hawk, SD, representing the Prairie Hills Audubon Society emailed: "We are concerned if harvests are or will be sustainable without such increased restrictions. We support a 600-bobcat quota, while we wait for the upcoming management plan's release. This is an improvement towards more conservative management. We request a quota also for the counties along the east side of the River. We think a management plan should be completed ASAP and released for public view.

We are concerned for the incidental take of mountain lions by people trapping or snaring for bobcats. Such take while a "hunting take", even if unintended, it is never counted against the mountain lion annual quota. If there is anything that can be done in the bobcat hunting rules to reduce incidental take of cougars, please do so.

We also believe that hound hunting is allowed for bobcats. We believe bobcats can live in areas without trees, thus bobcats might not actually be "treed" and hound hunting may result in a confrontation and fight between the hound(s) and the bobcat. We suggest you review the habitat in which hounds may hunt bobcat and at least eliminate via this rule change, hound hunting of bobcat in any habitat without trees.

The mountain lion hunting rule protects lions traveling together and spotted kittens from the hunt. It also places another restriction on the hound hunts in Custer State Park: "No person may release dogs on tracks indicating multiple mountain lions traveling together."

We are not sure if section of rule this is meant to protect kittens or dogs or both. We don't think that mountain lion kittens deserve a protection that bobcat kittens don't. We think equity should allow similar protections with bobcats and request the rule be modified to protect bobcat kittens and mother bobcats with dependent kittens."

Oral testimony from Anna Hermanson, Newell, SD, and President of the SD Trappers Association and representing them stated: Bobcats are elusive species, and a challenge to trappers. Larry Bowden is a member and loves bobcat hunting and trapping is a challenge and requires an art and skill. SDTA supports decisions based

on sound scientific data and concerned the data presented is solid evidence to change dates and quota is questionable on the impact to the population and the male to female ratio. They {SDTA} support the season dates as proposed if a quota is done for a one-year trial period and be reviewed before changes next year. The Quota should be raised to 650 as the average of the last 10-11 years and prevent an overharvest. Logistics' is a problem with a quota system and to get a GFP people to tag a bobcat is difficult. Trap check days is an issue for them {SDTA} and considered in the quota system with the three day line check. She also talked about the types of traps and that the cats are killed and could not be released after three days.

The Public Hearing concluded at 2:23 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey R. Vonk, Department Secretary

DRAFT