

Minutes of the Game, Fish, and Parks Commission
August 7-8, 2014

Chairman Cooper called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. with Commissioners John Cooper, Cathy Peterson, Jim Spies, Duane Sather, Gary Jensen, Barry Jensen, Scott Phillips, and Paul Dennert present. GFP Secretary Jeff Vonk was present about with fifty public, staff, and media present.

Chairman Cooper stated changes to the agenda are to move the History of Private Shooting Preserves to follow the Division of Administration followed by Petition for Rule Change. Open Forum comments may be accepted before the Public Hearing if time allows. The Public Hearing will begin as scheduled and Finalizations would come after the Petition and Open Forum Comments to accommodate folks who traveled to attend the Commission meeting.

DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION

Approve Minutes

Chairman Cooper called for any additions or corrections to the July minutes or a motion of approval. Phillips indicated it was the Rapid City Airport Wildlife Hazard Manager that called him last month in support of the waterfowl rule changes and requested the correction in the minutes.

Motion by Peterson with second by Phillips TO APPROVE THE JULY 8-9, 2014, GFP COMMISSION MINUTES WITH CORRECTION. Motion carried unanimously.

Additional Commissioner Salary Days

Chairman Cooper called for any additional Commissioner Salary days and Barry Jensen requested one, Cathy Peterson requested five for WAFWA Conference, and Gary Jensen requested five for the WAFWA Conference.

Motion by Spies with second by Barry Jensen TO APPROVE THE ADDITIONAL SALARY DAYS AS REQUESTED. Motion carried unanimously.

License List Requests

Director Petersen presented a license list request from MacFarlane Pheasants, Inc. of Janesville, WI, for a list of licensed preserve operators to send a letter and brochure introducing their company. This is a full fee request.

Motion by Barry Jensen with second by Sather TO APPROVE THE LICENSE LIST REQUEST FROM MACFARLANE PHEASANTS, INC. AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

License Sales Report

Director Chris Peterson presented the License Sales Totals as of August 1 indicating the fishing license sales remain strong and in October the report will show increased sales with the beginning of hunting seasons.

Governors Pheasant Habitat Working Group update

Policy Advisor Nathan Sanderson recapped the Governor's Pheasant Habitat Summit event held in December 2013 in Huron indicating thousands of comments and suggestions were received at the event and the following weeks. Sanderson shared the members of the Pheasant Habitat Working Group indicating six meetings have already been held with a seventh teleconference meeting scheduled for next week. Sanderson quoted the Governor as saying the Working Group is searching for "Practical solutions to maintain pheasant habitat."

Sanderson indicated three things to take away from the working group were: 1) landowners care about conservation in SD; 2) there are a lot of programs available to landowners; and 3) it will take an effort beyond that of the Working Group to find ways to reach out to SD citizens to bring the value of conservation to them. A final report will be available by the October Commission meeting.

DIVISION OF WILDLIFE

History of Private Shooting Preserves in SD

Shooting Preserve Program Manager Janelle Blaha provided the history of Private Shooting Preserves Program enacted by the 1963 South Dakota Legislative Session giving general authority to the Game, Fish, and Parks Commission to regulate and approve permits within the guidelines contain in the 1963 Act. The history included changes made by the South Dakota Legislature and GFP Commission to the present time.

PETITION FOR RULE CHANGE

Petition to remove Shooting Preserve Daily Bag Limit

Sal Roseland withdrew the petition presented at the July Commission meeting and presented a new petition for consideration. The new petition was revised and has several operators listed on the petition. The petition suggested creating a \$120 unlimited pheasant certificate for purchase by shooting preserve license holders to allow for the take of additional pheasants. The funds could be used for pheasant habitat improvement.

Roseland indicated this petition was shared with the Governor's office as they are concerned about pheasant habitat as this would supplement habitat restoration providing a new revenue stream for the Department. This could be a win-win and requested the Commission's favorable consideration and to move this to public comment.

The Commissioners were concerned about the process used to develop the petition and were all options considered, where to start public comment, consideration for an increase of the kill tag fees, stakeholder input, and/or a collaborative involvement process with stakeholders.

Nathan Sanderson, Policy Advisor to the Governor, indicated that Roseland approached the Governor's Office with the idea to remove the cap of harvest on released birds on preserves. Discussion included if there was a habitat opportunity here and how many would purchase the \$120 unlimited pheasant certificate. Other ideas were discussed including the fee per bird tag increase and stakeholders.

Sanderson indicated he did visit with the SD Wildlife Federation about the idea and that it would generate revenue for habitat.

Cooper shared the importance of stakeholders and Department involvement when making rule changes and Vonk stated that the proposal process opens a specific rule for action and public comment. Discussion included that any changes at this time would not be in place for the 2014-2015 Private Shooting Preserve season. The legislative process was discussed as was the need to be specific when opening rules for the public hearing notice. Sal Roseland also withdrew the new petition dated August 4, 2014.

OPEN FORUM

The open forum began with George Gisi of Watertown sharing his concern that landowners in several townships in Day County are trying to vacate roads claiming liability as a reason for closure. Gisi believes they are trying to privatize land and the roads around lakes for compensation. Sportsmen's organizations should attend these meetings; however, they are at a private residence in the country on a weekday afternoon. Gisi wants the South Dakota Government and Attorney General to assist with the situation.

Secretary Vonk indicated he would address this concern following the Public Hearing and Petition agenda items.

Chairman Cooper indicated now was the time for the Public Hearing and the Commission would come back to the Open Forum following Public Hearing and Petition Consideration agenda items.

Secretary Vonk and Region IV Supervisor Scott Lindgren provided an update in response to George Gisi comments that included a PowerPoint of photos of the area townships in Day County where Townships are taking action to vacate roads and a map showing the location of the roads to be vacated. Currently, there have been seven notices in three townships to vacate 43 miles of roads around lakes. Townships have the authority to vacate roads due to public safety with proper notice and the roadway then returns to the adjacent landowner. Vonk stated he has written a letter of opposition to each of the seven notices and GFP staff attended each of the meetings. Two of the notices have roads that are adjacent to public lands. The Association of Towns and Townships' attorney sent a letter and Secretary Vonk responded to that letter as well. Vonk indicated he believes an appeal process would begin a dialogue regarding the closed/vacated roads and he believes this action is a direct result of the non-meandered waters issue brought before the 2013 Legislature.

Secretary Vonk shared that he has been served papers for a new lawsuit filed in Day County this is similar to the Parks vs. Cooper lawsuit. The new complaint alleges that the Department of Game, Fish, and Parks openly encourages sportsmen to trespass on private land owned by Duerre's to access fishing waters for open water fishing and ice fishing.

Commissioner Dennert shared that he had a call from a Brown County resident inquiring about the future of Amsden Dam and requested a handicap fishing ramp for that

Lakeside Use Area. Directors Hofer indicated he would review the area, visit with local staff, and get back to him.

PUBLIC HEARING

The Public Hearing began at 2:02 p.m. and concluded at 2:14 p.m. and minutes follow the regular minutes of this meeting.

FINALIZATIONS

Goose Hunting Season 41:06:16

Rocco Murano gave the waterfowl population update prior to Commission consideration of Finalizations as recorded later in these minutes.

Chad Switzer presented the goose hunting season information and proposed changes indicating there were no recommended changes to proposal.

1. Increase the daily bag limit for light geese from 20 to 50.
2. Change Unit 2 so the season is open for 105 days preceding the Sunday closest to February 15th.

Motion by Sather with second by Spies TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO THE GOOSE HUNTING SEASON 41:06:16 AS PROPOSED. Motion carried unanimously.

Duck Hunting Season 41:06:16

Switzer presented the Duck Hunting season information and proposed changes with no recommended changes to proposal. Discussion ensued green-winged teal were not included for the bonus birds.

1. Decrease the canvasback daily limit from 2 to 1.
2. Allow 2 bonus blue-winged teal for the first 16 days of the duck season.

Motion by Dennert second by Gary Jensen TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO THE DUCK HUNTING SEASON 41:06:16 AS PROPOSED. Motion carried unanimously.

Fall Turkey Hunting Season 41:06:14

Chief Tom Kirschenmann presented the Fall Wild Turkey Hunting Season information and the proposed changes. The recommended changes were two housekeeping items and a decrease in licenses in Union County. Discussion began with a question as to why not limit the west river unit tags as well. Kirschenmann indicated with the change to one-tag licenses and the proposed shorter season will reduce the number of turkeys harvested.

1. Decrease the number of "any turkey" licenses from 100 to 50 in Unit 62A (Union County).
2. Repeal Unit BFT-ZZ1.
3. Repeal Unit PFT-ZZ1.

Motion by Barry Jensen with second by Peterson TO AMEND PROPOSAL AS RECOMMENDED. Motion carried unanimously.

1. Offer 205 more one-tag licenses and 650 less two-tag licenses for resident hunters on the East River Prairie Units.
2. Offer 750 fewer one-tag licenses for resident hunters and 60 fewer one-tag licenses for nonresident hunters for Unit BH1.
3. Change the season dates from the October 1 – January 31 to November 1 – January 31.
4. Modify Unit BH1 unit to include those portions of Custer, Fall River, Lawrence, Meade, and Pennington counties within a line beginning at the junction of U.S. Hwy. 85 and Interstate 90 at exit 17; south on U.S. Hwy. 85 to U.S. Hwy. 385; south on U.S. Hwy. 385 to S.D. Hwy. 89; south on S.D. Hwy. 89 to Pilger Mountain Road; west on Pilger Mountain Road to Dewey Road; west on Dewey Road to the WY/SD line; south on the WY/SD line to U.S. Hwy. 18; east on U.S. Hwy. 18 to the Cheyenne River; east along the Cheyenne River to S.D. Hwy. 79; north on S.D. Hwy. 79 to Interstate 90; north and west on Interstate 90 to exit 17, the point of beginning (see attached map).
5. Change the unlimited WR Prairie licenses from a two-tag license to a single tag license.
6. Close Bennett, Corson, Custer, Fall River, Haakon, Jackson, Meade, Pennington, Shannon, and Ziebach counties to fall turkey hunting in the West River Prairie Unit.
7. Reduce the maximum number of licenses a person is limited from five to two fall turkey licenses.
8. Decrease the number of “any turkey” licenses from 100 to 50 in Unit 62A (Union County).
9. Repeal Unit BFT-ZZ1.
10. Repeal Unit PFT-ZZ1.

Motion by Gary Jensen with second by Barry Jensen TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO THE FALL WILD TURKEY HUNTING SEASON 41:06:14 AS AMENDED. Motion carried unanimously.

PROPOSALS

Bobcat Hunting-Trapping Season

Chad Lehman provided a summary of a research project to document bobcat locations, harvest data, male to female ratios, and trend data to determine the bobcat population to assist with management. Fisk provided information hunter information and stated that all bobcats harvested have to be checked by a Conservation Officer.

Keith Fisk presented the season dates, areas, requirements, and restrictions for the Bobcat Hunting and Trapping Seasons with no recommended changes.

Mountain Lion Hunting Season

Chief Tom Kirschenmann presented the Mountain Lion Hunting Season dates, open area, licenses, harvest limits, requirements, and restrictions following the update from SDSU Professor John Jenks. Kirschenmann indicated the Department had no recommended changes to the season and should the Commission accept the recommendation and take no action to propose changes to the season there would be no public hearing at the next Commission meeting for the 2015 season. No action was taken and the season remains as presented.

Chairman Cooper called for a recess at 5:18 p.m. with meeting to resume at 8 a.m. the next morning at the same location.

Meeting resumed at 8:03 a.m. on Friday, August 8, 2014, at the same location with Commissioners Cooper, Peterson, Jensen, Jensen, Spies, Sather, Phillips, and Dennert present. Secretary Vonk was present along with approximately 25 public, staff, and media.

DRAFT

DIVISION OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Park Lodge and Camping Occupancy Fee Proposal

Assistant Director Bob Schneider presented the Review of Park Fees prior to recommended changes to Park Lodges and Camping Occupancy fee Permits and Rules to change the maximum occupancy numbers for camping cabins and lodges within the Parks system and adjust the fee changes for additional persons in the lodges; define a sleeping space in a camping cabin; and establish a fee for the event shelter in Palisades State Park.

1. **41:03:04:03. Camping permit fees.** The daily fee for the use of a campground site by one camper unit is as follows:
(14) The group lodging fee at: Mina Lake State Recreation Area is \$185 and Shadehill State Recreation Area is \$185 a night for the first eight persons ~~age 12 and over~~ plus \$17 **\$10** for each additional person ~~age 12 and over~~; **with a maximum occupancy of 10 persons.** Lake Thompson State Recreation Area, Palisades State Park, Sheps Canyon State Recreation Area, and Newton Hills State Park is \$240 a night for the first 12 persons ~~age 12 and over~~ plus \$17 **\$10** for each additional person ~~age 12 and over~~; **with a maximum occupancy of 15 persons.**
2. **41:03:04:10.02. Camping cabin and rent-a-camper occupancy restricted.** ~~No more than four persons~~ **Camping cabin and rent-a-camper occupancy is restricted to the number of sleeping spaces provided,** or one "family" with an extra tent. ~~may reserve a camping cabin or rent-a-camper.~~ **A single bed is one sleeping space, and a double or larger bed is two sleeping spaces.**
3. **41:03:04:13. Park facility use fees.** The fee for the use of the following state park facilities is:
(7) Palisades State Park event shelter located adjacent to the lodge, \$50.00 per day.

Motion by Sather with second by Spies TO PROPOSE CHANGES TO CAMPING PERMITS AND RULES AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Lewis and Clark Marina - consideration of proposals

Concessions Manager Sean Blanchette reminded the Commission that in July he shared that two responses were received in June for the Lewis and Clark Marina Concession Prospectus. A proposal from Doug Kelley of Norfolk, Nebraska and a second proposal from Chris Donlin of Pickstown, SD, and that neither met the criteria in the Prospectus. Blanchette stated the Department offered both parties a July 7th deadline to provide the information needed to meet the criteria and neither did so. The Department recommended the Commission reject both proposals. Blanchette outlined the process moving forward should the Commission reject the proposals received.

Motion by Barry Jensen with second by Peterson TO REJECT THE PROPOSALS RECEIVED FROM DOUG KELLEY AND CHRIS DONLIN FOR THE LEWIS AND CLARK MARINA CONCESSION PROSPECTUS ISSUED ON MARCH 5, 2014. Motion carried unanimously.

Project A.W.A.R.E. clean up on Big Sioux River

Lynette Siegley of Iowa shared about the A.W.A.R.E. (A Watershed Awareness River Expedition) project held on the Big Sioux River near Sioux Falls on July 12-19, 2014. Siegley spearheads the program for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources where volunteers of all ages and paddlers of all skill levels do a seven-day, seven-night float on a portion of a river to learn about and clean up the waters. This year the route was 91 miles

along the Big Sioux River from Sioux Falls south into Iowa and 388 participants collected 28.8 tons of trash with 88 sponsors assisting with the clean-up effort. Eric VanderStouwe provided pictures and information on Department participation, recycling partners, and sponsors in the Sioux Falls area.

Mt. Rushmore to Mickelson connector Trail Environmental Impact Study Proposal

Al Nedved provided information on the Memorandum of Understanding and that the Environmental Impact Study (EIS) has been ordered. The Department is a third party to EIS and will pay for it. The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) is the lead agency/decision maker of the process. A professional consulting firm is required with a statement of expertise is to negotiate a contract. The EIS requires a lot of data, organization, collection of soil samples, and knowledge of federal and state laws. The process will include weekly updates and monthly reports, an extensive public involvement process, the development of alternatives from findings, biological assessments, and cultural impact. In July consultants were advertised for and seven good proposals were received. The next step is to review the seven proposals and three are in SD, and select three firms to interview, and the Building Committee will make a recommendation to the USFS. The Building Committee is comprised of GFP Department Secretary Jeff Vonk, State Engineer Kristi Honeywell, a Parks Division representative, and a member of GFP Commission. Interviews could happen in the next few weeks. Chairman Cooper appointed Gary Jensen to represent the Commission. Hofer indicated Governor Daugaard appropriated funds for the Environmental Impact Statement during the 2013 Legislative Session.

Review of Park Fees

Director Hofer provided the current fee structure and how adjustments may be needed for the coming year and in planning the FY16 budget. At this time he is not looking for any fee increases in developing the budget and considering FY16 expenses. Hofer did caution that the Healthcare costs are not under Department control when planning the FY16 budget. Discussion included the nonresident reservation fee.

June Revenue and Visitation Report

Director Hofer presented the Year-to-date Revenue Report showing and 9% increase over July 31, 2013 sales. Districts 10 and 11 both had a 19% increase in revenue and the new area at Sheps Canyon near Hot Springs is exceeding expectations.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The executive session was canceled.

DIVISION OF WILDLIFE - continued

Antelope Management Plan

Chief Kirschenmann shared about changes made to the Antelope Management Plan and objectives; winter severity index has been added to plan, asked for formal adoption of plan. Discussion included the overall population objective statewide the objectives for each

unit; that winter severity is not included in the narrative of the effect of weather events on the population for the average person to understand; and need to determine tolerance per unit by landowners and private landowner's participation. This will be revisited at the October meeting.

Land Acquisition - North Rush Lake FEMA Property

Paul Coughlin presented maps of FEMA property located on North Rush Lake in Day County near Waubay. Day County acquired the property as part of a FEMA funded buy-out, and the County approached the Department with the idea that this would serve the public as a water access along Highway 12. The Department evaluated the property and determined it would adequately serve as a public water access area with a vault toilet, picnic shelter, and parking area. Coughlin presented Resolution 14-10 for Commission consideration to accept the gift of 2.44 acres and express gratitude to Day County for their generosity.

Motion by Sather with second by Peterson TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 14-10 ACCEPTING THE GIFT OF 2.44 ACRES OF FEMA PROPERTY OWNED BY DAY COUNTY TO BE USED AS A PUBLIC WATER ACCESS AS PRESENTED (Appendix A). Roll call vote: Dennert-yes; Barry Jensen-yes; Gary Jensen-yes; Peterson-yes; Phillips-yes; Sather-yes; Spies-no; Cooper-yes. Motion carried with seven yes votes and one no vote.

Land acquisition update

Paul Coughlin shared the appraisal process and environmental process has begun on the Hydro #2 property of the Homestake Mining Company in Spearfish Canyon.

Waterfowl population update

Rocco Murano gave a PowerPoint Presentation on the Status of Waterfowl 2014 Breeding Population and Habitat Condition Estimates from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service indicating the total duck population is up 8% and the 2014 Mallard Flight Estimate is at 13.4 million mallards. The estimate of ducks in South Dakota is down 8.6% at just over four million; however, still above the long term average of 2.4 million. In 2013, resident duck hunters increased 3% and harvested more than 240,000 ducks.

Murano indicated the South Dakota 2014 Canada geese Breeding Index is down 29%; harvest was down 25% at 124,156; and resident goose hunter numbers were down 11% from 2013. South Dakota habitat conditions are good as the number of ponds counted were up 30% from 2013 and provided good breeding conditions; however, CRP acres continue to expire and wetland drainage will significantly impact future waterfowl.

Mountain lion update

SDSU Professor John Jenks presented an update on the Prey Use research of mountain lion diets. Jenks presented objectives, results, kill rates, consumption rates, kills and scavenging of lions, and scavenging in the winter by other species. Preliminary conclusion is that lions predominately consume deer. Jenks indicted the genetics of the Black Hills mountain lion population remain stable.

Jenks shared information obtained from SDSU research on bighorn sheep ewes and lambs and cause of deaths from 55 collared sheep.

John Kanta gave a PowerPoint Presentation that included history of mountain lions in SD, the Mountain Lion Management Plan objectives, observation reports since 1995, documented mortalities since 1996 that included hunter harvest, Custer State Park season information, 2014 harvest locations, snowfall events, Wyoming hunting season update, and the recommendation of no changes for the 2015 season.

Andy Lindbloom continued the PowerPoint Presentation with research of mountain lions in SD indicating there are currently 25 collared lions in the Black Hills. The report included elk research projects with preliminary results of the Custer State Park and Unit 2 elk calf survival rates related to lion predation; population trends of lions; hunter harvest data; hunter experience; methods of population estimations; and future lion monitoring techniques.

Discussion included number of licenses sold, licenses for nonresidents, future of collaring lions, location of deer and elk during the lion hunting season, and elk calf survival in Custer State Park.

Review of license fees

Director Leif recapped the fee review and budget situation from last year and the three step plan was used for the current FY15 Budget was to: 1) reduce expenditures, 2) increase use of federal grant dollars, and 3) increase license fees.

Leif indicated that budget development for FY16 is to align revenue with expenditures and at this time there are no plans for fee increases. However, health care costs are a concern and not determined by the Department.

Peterson indicated she had a conversation with WAFWA members and shared how South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks addressed the increase budgets due to health care costs. South Dakota is not alone in this situation as many other states face the same budget concerns.

Deer hunter opinion survey

Dr. Longmire indicated she has two very different drafts of a survey design for the deer hunter opinion survey. The challenge is how to educate the public about the different options and to develop survey questions to glean information that is useful. Longmire stated the survey will need to be sent soon as there is a short timeline to have preliminary results for the December Commission meeting.

Deer fawn survival study

Kevin Robling gave a PowerPoint Presentation on the Statewide Mule Deer and White-tailed Fawn Survival Update. The report included justification of the modeling process, the need for accurate and up to date data, primary objective of research project, methods used, and potential causes of mortality of fawns. Robling shared that fawn survival of 50% can grow the herd and there are other factors to consider when growing the herd. Fawn disease issues are a concern.

Sage-Grouse management plan

Kirschenmann presented the current version of the Sage-Grouse Management Plan as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is developing a recommendation whether or not to list the Sage-Grouse in 2015 as threatened or endangered and all efforts are moving

to try to avoid listing. The Department's effort has been habitat based by contacting private landowners about the Sage-Grouse Initiative. This is the best opportunity to assist and work with landowners and habitat. USFWS is looking at regulatory systems to assure sage-grouse threats are being minimized as well as protect the population status and future of the population. The USFWS is updating their management plan and other states are developing management plans or updating their existing plan.

The revised current Sage-Grouse Management Plan for South Dakota 2014-2018 was presented to Commission for review, discussion, and approval at the next meeting. Kirschenmann stated the public was involved at two meetings and a letter was sent to the eighty landowners in the sage-grouse area to make them aware of the plan and welcome comments. The USFWS has reviewed the plan. Discussion included West Nile virus in the western states and the impact on grouse, coyote, and other predation impact on the population, and effects of listing of sage-grouse.

Public opinion of stocking Atlantic salmon on Lake Oahe

Cindy Longmire state that a 4-5 minute video was shared on YouTube and the GFP Website that led folks to a survey about salmon and their support or opposition to stocking Atlantic salmon in Lake Oahe. A survey was also sent to salmon fishermen. There were more than 4,100 views of the video and 2,358 comment forms were submitted. Survey results indicated 72% of fishermen supported the stocking and 80% of salmon anglers supported the stocking of Atlantic salmon. The survey showed 11% of salmon anglers opposed the stocking.

WMI big game action plan update

Kirschenmann gave a handout the written report covering 1) identifying the roles and responsibilities of the Commission and the Department staff in the rules recommendation process, and 2) evaluate the feasibility, pros and con, and schedule to address regulations on a multi-year approach.

Chief Kirschenmann included the 2014 Schedule for Setting Season-Regulations showing when proposals are considered by the Commission and when the changes are finalized. Discussion included how often do other states consider regulation changes, the need to educate the staff and public on the pros and cons of a multi-year approach to season setting, the development of management plans that allow license adjustments without using the rule making process, and how comments the Commissioners receive and public forum comments fit into the process.

The Commission was supportive of moving forward in planning for a multi-year season setting process.

Miscellaneous

Director Leif thanked the Commissioners their dedicated effort in setting hunting seasons for 2014 and that the USDA just announced that South Dakota is one of ten states that will receive a \$1.5 million enhancement grant for the Walk-In Program.

Adjourn

Motion by Dennert with second by Sather to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey R. Vonk, Department Secretary

DRAFT

Appendix A

RESOLUTION 14 - 10

WHEREAS, Day County owns real estate (Property) described as:

Lot One (1), Reuben and Helen Butler Subdivision, located in Government Lot Four (4), in Section Thirty (30), Township One Hundred Twenty-two (122) North, Range Fifty-four (54) West of the 5th P.M., Day County, South Dakota, and

Dembowski's Outlot A of Government Lot Four (4) in Section Thirty (30), Township One Hundred Twenty-two (122) North, Range Fifty-four (54) West of the 5th P.M., Day County, South Dakota;

WHEREAS, Day County desires to gift to the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish, and Parks (Department) the Property for use as a Water Access Area; and

WHEREAS, the Department has evaluated and determined that the Property would serve very well as a Water Access Area, offering water-based public recreational opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the Department is authorized to accept gifts of property for Water Access Areas as per SDCL 41-2-19; and

WHEREAS, the South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks Commission desires to acknowledge the Department's acceptance of this gift of property from Day County as a Water Access Area, and further acknowledge the extreme generosity of Day County.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks Commission does hereby confirm the decision by the Department to accept the gift of the Property from Day County, subject to deed restrictions of record, to be used as a Water Access Area.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks Commission, on behalf of the citizens and sportspersons of South Dakota, does hereby acknowledge and express its deepest appreciation and gratitude to Day County for their generosity, and further acknowledge the water-based outdoor recreation opportunities this gift will provide to South Dakotans for many years to come.

Public Hearing Minutes of the Game, Fish, and Parks Commission
August 7, 2014

The Public Hearing began at 2:02 p.m. with Public Hearing Officer Chief Scott Simpson inviting the public to come forward with comments on the proposed changes for the goose, duck, and fall turkey hunting seasons. Written comment received has been provided to the Commissioners.

Waterfowl Hunting Seasons

Jamie Huizenga and Troy Spitzer of Pierre, SD, emailed: "We recently read there is a proposal to increase the snow/blue goose/ross limit during the fall 2014 season from 20 to 50 birds/day. We are in support of the increased limit although getting to 20 birds/day is generally quite a challenge but when the stars line up and birds cooperate shooting more than that can be done. On a couple occasions last fall we could have harvested more than 20 birds each.

Scott Christopherson of Volga, SD, emailed: "I would prefer to see the duck opener start when the goose opener does, in general. I believe there is less confusion by hunters on season start date. I would like to see the duck opener start on Oct. 4th and carry through till December 14th on the low plains North and low plains Middle units. The change in climate and cultural farming practices in the North have changed migration. I think it would allow 5-7 extra migrator hunting days. Please consider this as an amendment to your proposal. I also feel that only 1 Pintail and 1 Redhead should be included in daily bag limits. It was only a couple of years ago that both were struggling."

Justin Allen of Pierre, SD, emailed: "I'm against the season date changes for Unit 2 Canada Goose. Currently the Unit 2 Canada goose season starts on Saturday and ends on a Friday... I'm against the proposed change because there are ample opportunities throughout Unit 2 during the first weekend of the current season to hunt geese. These birds are not on the river but stock ponds/dams...If passed, the proposed season date change to Unit 2 would take away one of only 4 or 5 weekends these geese are able to be targeted before they leave the area...Please realize that not all Canada geese in Unit 2 are harvested within 15 miles of Lake Oahe/Missouri River and by changing the dates so the season ends on a Sunday you will take away opportunities throughout Unit 2 during the first weekend (which would be eliminated). Please leave the season dates/length as is and do not pass the proposal."

Paul Bezkicek of Rapid City, SD, emailed: "...I'm against the season start and end date proposal for Unit 2. It is my understanding Pennington County has now been included in Unit 2...if this proposal passed it would start the season around here on a Monday in late Oct./Nov. each year and the season would end on a Sunday in Feb. I'll be the first to say that I'm totally against the change. By being included into Unit 2 we have already lost the September season plus basically all of October to hunt Canada Geese in Pennington County. While it will be nice to hunt in Dec and Jan. right outside of Rapid City we are losing the best two months of great hunting from the Base east to New Underwood to Wall. If you pass the proposal, area goose hunters will lose another two days or a weekend of the best fall hunting in late Oct/early Nov. By December the only geese in the county to hunt are city birds the rarely feed in fields outside of city limits. Great hunting throughout

the county is here in Oct. and Nov.” Please do not take another weekend away of great goose hunting in Pennington Co. and Unit 2. Do not change the current season date structure.”

Oral testimony: none

Fall Turkey Hunting Season

Simpson indicated the Commission took action at the July Commission meeting to continue the Public Hearing for the Fall Turkey Hunting Season and public testimony will now be accepted on the Fall Turkey Hunting Season proposed changes.

Written testimony:

Kim Mydland of Sioux Falls, SD, emailed: “I agree with the commissions suggestion on reducing the max number of licenses to be issued from 5 to 2. I’ve witnessed it first hand as we hunt the spring & fall out west & have for several years...”

Gary Colbath of Rapid City, SD, emailed: “I am writing to ask that you close or severely limit the west river and black hills fall turkey licenses...”

Robin Stephens of Sioux Falls, SD, emailed: “I would like to see the fall turkey season start in the middle of October. I don’t want it to start November 1st because that is deer season and the farmers won’t let me hunt there opening weekend. My son like to hunt when its nice outside and October still is a nice month to spend outdoors.”

Roland Ten Wick of Hot Springs, SD, emailed: “Due to the extremely low numbers of wild turkeys remaining in the Black Hills and surrounding area, I strongly urge you to consider closing the fall turkey season...”

Joel Amick of Lead, SD, emailed: “I was very surprised to read that they are planning on reducing the number of licenses. In Lawrence County and Pennington County I have seen close to, if not more than, 30 in the past week.”

Kevin Tribell of Black Hawk, SD, emailed: “I am very opposed to changing the turkey season to November 1st. When the deer gun season opens, the turkeys in the Black Hills leave the Forest Service land. True turkey hunters need the season start at October 1st. Besides, they close the gates on Forest Service land on December 15th. I do agree with changing the limit to 2 from 5.”

Don Buckentin of North St. Paul, MN, emailed: “I see you’re proposing a Nov. 1st start date for fall turkey? We’ve been hunting a prairie unit for archery deer and turkey for over 30 years. The later start date will essentially take away the opportunity at a turkey by Bowhunters, especially those of us who travel from out of state and purchase your ridiculously high priced deer tag. The unit we hunt (Whitewood River area) is overrun with turkeys. The rancher begs us to take as many as possible. The later start date will not allow us to take any. It will probably cause us to quit hunting your state altogether as the October archery deer turkey combo hunt is a long standing tradition for my group. Please reconsider the later start date and keep it at Oct. 1st as it has been in the past.”

Maria May of Custer, SD, emailed: “Turkeys are in trouble. There has been miserable successful turkey harvesting rates, and they are only going to get worse...In order to...CONSERVE our turkey species, I propose we shut down turkey hunting for one whole year. Just shut down completely. Let them breed without the pressure of being shot...”

Bud Shearer of Sioux Falls, SD, emailed: “Eliminate all non-resident BH1 permits when in state is cut by this percentage.”

Mike Kervin of Brookings, SD, emailed: "...I am not a Black Hills turkey hunter, I have only hunted there three springs and never in the fall, but I am a turkey hunter and have been since 1978. I really question why GFP and the Game commission wouldn't take a stand to close a season for one fall and then adjust the tag limits and dates in the future to support the resource of the wild turkey. Make the right decision not the popular one! True turkey hunters will understand and support you."

Curtis L Neises of Howard, SD, emailed: "Why are you allowing hen turkey's to be harvested. It appears to me the numbers are way down. Can you confirm where the numbers are over a ten year span? I don't even hunt the hills anymore because of this."

Toby Hinckley of Sturgis, SD, emailed: "I fully support the changes for the fall turkey season."

Adam Golay of Sioux Falls, SD, emailed: "The fall turkey season should start the same day as antelope season so that way people can hunt antelope & turkey on the same trip without making a special trip west river to shoot turkeys in the fall. If it starts in October the odds of selling more tags is probably better than if it starts in November."

Sam Owen of Dupree, SD, emailed: "As you finalize the proposals to cut back the tags and shorten the season, please keep in mind that the lower success numbers in recent years is not necessarily because the turkey populations has swindled, but more that the number of landowners allowing hunting has dwindled...I would ask that you reconsider and let the West River have two tags for the fall season. I would also ask that you rethink shortening the season by a month and leave it as it was."

Robert Foote of Whittier, CA, emailed: "...I do not see anything about non-resident license availability. I am hoping that the 2014 Fall ER turkey season will allow at least a few nonresident turkey license in the drawing...I feel if each hunter should only get 1 tag that way there would be more opportunities for more hunters...Also, changing the opening season date to November 1st is okay but I think the state should wait till 2015 to make this change. Many hunters have already planned their hunting trips for 2014 thinking the season would open the same time as last year..."

Tom Kuck of Aberdeen, SD, emailed: "I would like to on record as favoring a complete closure of the Fall Turkey Season in the Black Hills...If complete closure of the Fall Season in the Black Hills is not an option, please take a real hard look at a closure for the Northern Hills and west of Highway 385 down to Highway 16 and west to the Wyoming border."

James A. Elsing of Lemmon, SD, emailed: "...delaying opening to November 1st cuts a whole month of fall turkey hunting recreation out of my life. I resent that. I suspect a number of others feel the same...In general, the delay of opening the turkey season to November 1st instead of October 1st and the reduction in number of left over licenses allowed to one hunter are a few more notches of yet another seemingly unending ratcheting up of the reduction and end of hunting..."

Kevin J. Hansen of Zell, SD, emailed: "...I do not feel there should be a fall turkey season in Gregory County this fall...I strongly encourage the commission to close Gregory County to turkey hunting this fall..."

Oral testimony: none

The Public Hearing concluded at 2:14 p.m.
Respectfully submitted, Jeffrey R. Vonk, Department Secretary