

Minutes of the Game, Fish, and Parks Commission
January 12-13, 2017

Chairman Peterson called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. CT at the RedRossa Convention Center in Pierre, South Dakota. Commissioners Barry Jensen, H. Paul Dennert, Gary Jensen, W. Scott Phillips and Doug Sharp were present. Secretary Kelly Hepler was present along with approximately 30 public, staff, and media.

DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION

Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Chairperson Peterson called for conflicts of interest to be disclosed. None were presented.

Approval of Minutes

Chairperson Peterson called for any additions or corrections to the December 15, 2016, minutes or a motion for approval.

Motion by G. Jensen with second by B. Jensen TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 15, 2016, MEETING WITH MINOR REVISIONS. Motion carried unanimously.

Additional Commissioner Salary Days

Commissioner G. Jensen requested one additional salary day for attendance at the Spearfish Canyon planning meeting and Peterson requested three additional salary days for attendance at WAFWA.

Motion by Dennert with second by Phillips TO APPROVE THE ADDITIONAL SALARY DAYS AS REQUESTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Election of Officers

Motion by G. Jensen with second by Dennert TO NOMINATE PETERSON AS CHAIR. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by G. Jensen with second by Dennert TO NOMINATE B. JENSEN AS VICE CHAIR. Motion carried unanimously.

License List Requests

Chris Petersen, Administration Division Director presented a license list request from the Rapid City Journal for all elk licenses for the 2016 season statewide and in Custer State Park to be used for a news article about the distribution of elk licenses for the 2016 hunting season.

Petersen explained the fee structure for license list requests indicating the cost is \$100 for each 1,000 names for commercial and for profit businesses. The fee is waived for government entities and nonprofit organization can acquire the list for \$100 regardless of size. Petersen noted that all license holders have the option to opt out from the release of their information.

Petersen explained the request for elk license list from the Rapid City Journal would typically be assessed the standard fee of \$100 per 1,000 names as they are a for-profit business. He further noted that the Rapid City Journal asked that the fee be waived, which can be requested by any entity, but in the past all media organizations have been required to pay the fee.

He also informed the Commission that the standard form completed by the Rapid City Journal indicates they plan to use the list for news articles which may concern the potential release of license holder names. In the past GFP has released number of licenses sold, where they were sold and where license holders resided by county and city free of charge.

In response to Commissioner Peterson's question Petersen explained that license lists containing name and address only have been purchased by media outlets to be utilized for mailings and license lists containing demographic info without names has also been released.

The Commission agreed that if a list is provided they will need to pay the full fee as a for-profit business and requested Petersen follow up with the Rapid City Journal to collect additional information on how the information will be utilized.

The Commission agreed to defer the matter until the next meeting due to concerns for releasing license holder personally identifiable information.

Department Sponsored Legislation for 2017

Secretary Hepler stated that no Department sponsored legislation has been turned in, but there will be a special appropriation for 2.5 million dollars to facilitate the land exchange between the Black Hills Forest and School and Public Lands Trust Fund for Spearfish Canyon

Strategic Plan Update

Emily Kiel, communications director, provided the Commission an update on the GFP strategic plan. She indicated the four goals and 22 objectives will be utilized by staff as measuring tools to evaluate department programs and processes.

Chris Hull, communications outreach specialist, explained the significance of the department vision and mission statement noting the vision is who the department strives to be and the mission is what the agency does daily.

Nancy Surprenant, parks and recreation division staff specialist, noted the values are what the Department believes and why we do what we do. Surprenant detailed each of the four goals explaining that these goals guide the department in getting to where it wants to be. Surprenant and Kiel then highlighted the priorities under each goal area.

PROPOSALS

Duck Hunting Season

Chad Switzer, Wildlife Program Manager and Rocco Murano, Senior Wildlife Biologist presented the recommended change to decrease the pintail daily limit from 2 to 1.

Motioned by B. Jensen with second by Dennert TO APPROVE THE PROPOSAL AS RECOMMENDED. Motion carried unanimously.

Goose Hunting Season

Switzer and Murano presented the recommended change from last year to increase the number of days for the light goose hunting season from 86 days to 105 days as allowed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Motioned by Phillips with second by Sharp TO APPROVE THE PROPOSAL AS RECOMMENDED. Motion carried unanimously.

Tundra Swan Hunting Season

Switzer and Murano presented the recommended changes from last year to increase the total number of available licenses from 1,300 to 1,675 and of the adjusted total number of available licenses, increasing the number of nonresident licenses from 200 to 250.

Motioned by Sharp with second by Phillips TO APPROVE THE PROPOSAL AS RECOMMENDED. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Water Zoning

Emmett Keyser, Wildlife Regional Manager and Bob Schneider, Parks Assistant Division Director presented the recommended changes from last year to add a 'public swimming zone' on Lake Madison in Lake County, amend the size and configuration of the 'public swimming zone' on Lake Alvin in Lincoln County, amend and clarify the language contained in the 'public water safety zone' regulation for Sheridan Lake in Pennington County, and to add a 'no motors zone' on Lewis and Clark Lake in Yankton County.

Motioned by Dennert with second by Phillips TO APPROVE THE PROPOSAL AS RECOMMENDED. Motion carried unanimously.

Motorboats and Watercraft

Brandon Gust, Law Enforcement Training Supervisor, presented the recommended changes from last year to amend current administrative rule 41:04:05:14 for careless operation of a boat to appropriately address those instances of careless operation and define what careless operation of a boat is and to create a new administrative rule to address instances of eluding law enforcement by boat.

Motioned by B. Jensen with second by Sharp TO APPROVE THE PROPOSAL AS RECOMMENDED. Motion carried unanimously.

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)

John Lott, Aquatic Resources Chief and Mike Smith, Wildlife Biologist presented the recommendation to create four new rules and modify two rules related to aquatic invasive species.

1. Create a new rule that defines and identifies specific waters that will be classified as "Containment Waters".
2. Create a new rule that allows for the creation of local boater registries.
3. Create a new rule that requires the decontamination of boats with a compartment containing more than one gallon of water after use in a "Containment Water".
4. Create a new rule that requires the decontamination of boats that have been moored in a "Containment Water" for three or more continuous days.
5. Amend administrative rule to allow businesses approved by the department to transport and possess boats with aquatic invasive species attached for the purpose of decontamination.
6. Amend administrative rule to allow participants in a local boater registry to transport and possess aquatic invasive species in accordance with the provisions of the registry.
7. Amend administrative rule to allow participants in a local boater registry to launch a boat with an aquatic invasive species attached if it is done in accordance with the provisions of the registry.

Motioned by G. Jensen with second by Phillips TO APPROVE THE PROPOSAL AS RECOMMENDED. Motion carried unanimously.

Secretary Hepler further expressed the importance for concern with AIS.

Tony Leif, Wildlife Division Director provided an overview for a balanced approach between education and regulation with focus on existing rules to slow the spread of AIS as it is not possible to stop. Leif explained the need to take responsible steps to eliminate the transport of water or AIS from contaminated waters to another body of water. He noted a major concern is watercraft equipped with ballast tanks that cannot be fully drained as presenting the greatest risk of movement of AIS to other waters.

Commissioner G. Jensen proposes by way of resolution to have the Department develop a gold standard comprehensive AIS management plan combining education and regulation to include necessary authorities in rule and statute, partnership with other entities, staff, equipment and monetary resources.

Motioned by G. Jensen with second by Phillips TO CREATE A COMPREHENSIVE AIS MANAGEMENT PLAN BY WAY OF RESOLUTION. Motion carried unanimously.

OPEN FORUM

Chairwoman Peterson opened the floor for discussion from those in attendance on matters of importance to them that may not be on the agenda

George Vandell, Vice President SD Waterfowl Association informed the Commission that nonresident waterfowl licenses continue to be a relevant issue for his organization. He noted the season was unusual this year with a decrease in birds. Vandell stated the Association wants to be respectful of the Commission and indicated

South Dakota is a wonderful place with opportunities, resources and access largely in part to the management system that is in place, and they plan to bring a recommendation in March. At this time they are unsure what format the recommendation will be in.

Commissioner Sharp asked Vandel what they think caused the decrease.

Vandel responded that dry weather causes the lack in of production of ducks and habitat. He said conditions were better in Canada causing the birds to stay north. Vandel noted we need more fall moisture. He also stated this may also cause a decrease in waterfowl licenses.

DIVISION OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Custer State Park Buffalo Auction Results

Regional Supervisor Matt Snyder introduced Mark Henricks, new Resource Program Manager promoted from within the Parks Division.

Snyder provided an update on the video auction was offered this year to allow for the sale to be held indoors at the new visitor's center theater. He explained how this process met the objective with less stress on the animal. Snyder indicated there were 21 online bidders from 7 states and 35 bidders from 14 states in the visitor's center, with 15 buyers from 11 states total. He stated the majority went to private producers who are growing their herds and meat markets. They sold a total of 255 buffalo for \$671,900.00. Snyder explained they will winter over 950 animals with more available for auction next year.

Spearfish Canyon Proposed State Park Update

Katie Ceroll, Parks and Recreation Division Director, presented a powerpoint presentation to the Commission detailing the proposed Spearfish Canyon State Park. Ceroll explained how the park fits with the Department's mission and vision to provide outdoor recreational opportunities through responsible management by fostering partnerships and cultivating stewardship to connect people with the outdoors for current and future generations. Ceroll informed the Commission that state park designation is given to areas of outstanding natural beauty that contain significant historical, botanical, archeological, ecological or geological values. She further explained that any enhancements would harmonize with the natural environment with criteria in place to protect these areas.

Snyder explained that enhancing and preserving is what GFP does. Snyder detailed how the incorporation of Bismarck Lake into Custer State Park would not only eliminate confusion but make state park facilities available for Bismarck Lake visitors' use. He said there are currently 23 primitive campsites there on a different reservation system that could be handled by current GFP FTE for seamless management and projects from fisheries to day use activities. Snyder indicate that users of these sites are currently utilizing services provided by Custer State Park, but uses of Custer State Park are required to pay an additional fee to visit Bismarck Lake. Snyder also informed the

Commission that GFP is actively managing trail systems with commitments to replace sections each year and would also be able to handle the waste water handling issues at Camp Bob Marshall. These are all things the Forest Service does not have the funds to fix.

Ceroll explained the process of creating the vision through public input that will be led by consultant Peaks to Plains. She detailed the process over the next eight months beginning with meetings in January with the final plan to be delivered in September.

Parks Revenue, Camping and Visitation Reports

Parks and Recreation Assistant Director Bob Schneider provided the year to date comparison of state park system revenue, camping and visitation. He noted overall revenue was up 8 percent and with a 5 percent increase in camping units served over 2016 and visitation was up by 2 percent.

DIVISION OF WILDLIFE

Season Setting and Management Plan Reporting Schedules for 2017

Tom Kirschenmann, Wildlife Assistant Division Director provided overview of the 2017 season, regulation and management plan update schedule. Kirschenmann noted that many of the seasons are now on a multiyear schedule with the bulk of proposals being presented in May and June. He also stated that they will provide management plan updates as things progress.

Bighorn Sheep Population Update

Chad Lehman, senior wildlife biologist, presented a powerpoint on bighorn sheep research and management. Lehman provided an overview on population surveys, licenses and transplant history. He also provided detailed research data collected from Hell Canyon, Custer State Park/Rapid City and Deadwood herds. Lehman detailed diseases tested, survival rates and forage results.

WIA Survey Results

Cindy Longmire, wildlife division staff specialist presented a powerpoint on the Walk in Area (WIA) survey results for 2015. Longmire informed the Commission of the top issue reported by 46 percent of hunters to be not enough access to places to hunt. Longmire provided detailed statistics for hunting of upland game, big game and waterfowl in WIA as well as the overall evaluation of WIA's.

Statewide Fisheries Plan Update

Geno Adams, wildlife program administrator, provided an update on the statewide fisheries plan noting the priorities and programs for the fish management areas across the state. Adams also provided information on fish surveys, research, habitat management and non-game aquatic management.

Will Saylor, wildlife program administrator, updated the Commission on fishing access, fish production and stocking, bait and private aquaculture, aquatic invasive

specials and fish health and contaminants. Sayler also noted the timeline for plan updates for each management area.

Missouri River Fisheries Update

Jason Sorensen, fisheries biologist, provided the Commission an update on the Missouri River Fisheries by area. Sorensen provided detailed information on prey fish status, walleye population, creel survey data and sport fish for Lakes Oahe, Sharpe, Lake Francis Case and Lewis and Clark. He also updated the Commission in regards to on-going research projects: walleye tagging, rainbow smelt spawning locations, salmon tagging, gizzard shad telemetry, rainbow trout telemetry and shovelnose sturgeon telemetry.

History of Fishing Regulations

Sorensen provided the Commission information on the history of fishing regulations. He explained how these regulations are utilized as a management tool. Sorensen noted how fisheries vary from one body of water to another and that length restrictions only work in very specific scenarios.

Shoreline Improvement Projects

Rhet Russell, wildlife biologist, presented a powerpoint on the shoreline restoration program noting the importance of natural functioning shorelines. Russell presented examples of ideal habitat and what causes loss in shoreline habitat. He detailed the shoreline restoration process, benefits and specific projects.

Authorizations for Terminally Ill Hunters Issued in 2016

Wildlife Division Director, Tony Leif informed the Commission on the number of authorizations issued to terminally ill hunters in 2016. Leif stated that 5 individuals received authorizations to hunt, one received an antelope tag for Pennington County, one received an east river deer tag for Beadle County, one received a Custer State Park turkey tag and another individual received a fall turkey tag for Perkins County and statewide muzzleloader license. In addition access permits were provided to two son's to allow them to hunt alongside the terminally ill hunter.

Special Permits for Hunters/Anglers with Disabilities

Leif provided follow up information on the request received in November to allow special permits for hunters and anglers with disabilities. Leif indicated staff continues to look into options regarding authorities to provide these types of allowances. At this point staff have worked to provide individuals with disabilities the same opportunities as other hunters and anglers. Per discussion with the Commission Leif will bring additional information for the Commission to review for the possibility to expand the authority to allow individuals with disabilities additional opportunities to accommodate for a specific medical reason.

Year-end 2016 License Sales

Scott Simpson, wildlife administration chief, presented the 2016 licenses projections sales and revenue. Simpson explained how license sales projections are made by aquatic and terrestrial biologists and managers in July and August for the next

year. The presentation provided breakdown of licenses sales for 2016 and 5 years of licenses sales history for resident and nonresidents by license types.

License Returns due to EHD

Kirschenmann provided the Commission statistics on Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD) reports and license returns in 2016. Statistics presented indicated the number licenses returned by type for residents totaling 1,629 and nonresidents as well as the number of 3rd draw licenses pulled by unit totaling 1,251 statewide resulting in a fiscal impact of \$143,087.00.

Kirschenmann also provide a map of the deer mortality reports and EHD confirmations statewide. Numbers indicated 2,214 dead deer reported as of November 30, 2016 with 27 EHD positive results in 21 counties.

DOW Distinguished Achievement Award

Leif presented Rhet Russell with the Division of Wildlife Distinguished Achievement Award. Russell who began with GFP in parks and recreation then transferred to the wildlife division works to meet the needs of anglers as an aquatic habitat biologist. Leif commended Russell's ability to work with interested parties and complete important projects.

Motioned by B. Jensen with second by Sharp TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. Motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.