

Minutes of the Game, Fish, and Parks Commission
January 14-15, 2016

Chairman Cooper called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. CDT at the RedRossa in Pierre, South Dakota. Commissioners John Cooper, Cathy Peterson, H. Paul Dennert, Barry Jensen, Gary Jensen, Russell Olson, Jim Spies and W. Scott Phillips were present. Secretary Kelly Hepler was present along with approximately 30 public, staff, and media.

DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Cooper called for any additions or corrections to the December 10-11, 2015, minutes or a motion for approval.

Motion by G. Jensen with second by Spies TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 10-11, 2015, MEETING. Motion carried unanimously.

Additional Commissioner Salary Days

Commissioners Dennert, B. Jensen, and Peterson requested four additional salary days each for their attendance at the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife winter conference.

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

The Commission welcomed newly appointed Commissioner Russell Olson.

Motioned by Peterson with second by G. Jensen TO ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION. Motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Executive Session began at 1:04 PM in a private room located in the RedRossa Conference Center. Commissioners Cooper, Peterson, G. Jensen, Spies, Olson, B. Jensen, Dennert, and Phillips were present. Secretary Hepler, Attorney Neill, Doug Hofer, Al Nedved, Sean Blanchette, and Rachel Comes were present. Contracts were discussed with the Commission. Concluded 1:21 PM

Motioned by B. Jensen with second by Spies TO CONCLUDE EXECUTIVE SESSION. 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 Peterson TO NOMINATE B. JENSEN AS VICE CHAIR. Motion carried unanimously.

License List Requests

Chris Petersen, Administration Division Director presented a license list request for Turkey archery and firearm from the Lake County Longbeards chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation to be used to invite interested parties to their inaugural banquet to be held February 26, 2016.

Motion by Cooper with second by Phillips TO APPROVE THE LICENSE LIST REQUEST. (Olson abstained) Motion carried.

GFP-Sponsored Legislation for 2016 Legislative Session

Secretary Hepler provided the Commission with an overview of GFP sponsored legislation. Hepler indicated the the Department will be sponsoring two bills for the 2016 Legislative Session. One will clarify GFP Commission authority to authorize the Department to make capital improvements on all lands leased by the department. The other repeals obsolete or unnecessary statues concerning game preserves and refuges.

PROPOSALS

Resolutions for allocations of limited-draw hunting and paddlefish licenses

Deputy Director Tom Kirschenmann presented a proposal of a new rule that would allow the Commission to allocate restricted licenses and access permits for deer, antelope, turkey, elk, mountain goat, bighorn sheep, mountain lion, bison, goose, swan and paddlefish by resolution. Kirschenmann further explained how this rule would reduce the overall pages of administrative rules by eliminating license types and numbers for each unit description within each specific rule. This new approach would not however eliminate the public input process as a public notice will be published and the Commission would still take public comment prior to adopting resolutions.

Motioned by G. Jensen with second by Cooper TO PROPOSE CHANGES TO THE APPLICATION FOR LICENSE AND PADDLEFISH LICESES AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

Repeal of Dry Creek Waterfowl Refuge in Sully County

Kirschenmann and Regional Supervisor Cliff Stone presented the information received from Chris Hesla, Executive Director of the South Dakota Wildlife Federation (Appendix C) and the 2015-2016 waterfowl hunting access map for Lower Oahe.

Stone explained the proposal to remove the Dry Creek State Waterfowl Refuge by noting each of the three recommendations outlined in the letter received from the South Dakota Wildlife Federation. The first is to remove the Dry and Plum Creek waterfowl refuges as there is no longer landowner participation. Second reinstate the original Okoboji Creek Waterfowl Refuge boundaries as water levels have increase.

The final recommendation is to return to the plan to have walk-in strips located on GFP land within the Mail Shack Creek area. It was discussed that once the land comes out of refuge individuals can access the area by boat and hunt the shoreline.

Kirschenmann and Stone presented the Department recommendation to remove the Dry Creek State Waterfowl Refuge based on the fact a key landowner has pulled out of the Lower Oahe Waterfowl Access program and within that landowner contract was the contingency of having this refuge in place. Stone also described to the Commission that staff will be further evaluating other refuges on the Missouri River system and obtaining public input over the next year.

Motioned by Dennert with second by Phillips TO PROPOSE CHANGE TO REMOVE THE DRY CREEK STATE WATERFOWL REFUGE AS RECOMMENDED. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearing

The Public Hearing began at 2:00 PM and concluded at 2:05 PM. Minutes of the Public Hearing will follow the regular commission minutes.

FINALIZATIONS

Authorization for Terminally Ill Persons to Hunt

Director Tony Leif provided information on the request from Verne Boer and the Outdoor Adventure Organization that would allow for terminally ill residents to hunt deer, antelope and turkey through a onetime authorization granted by the Department. Leif further explained the differences which determine the qualifications for the authorizations surrounding the age criteria outlined in the administrative rule. He also stated recipients must be a resident and are not eligible to receive multiple licenses for different species as this is a onetime license for each species and that authorizations will only be valid within established hunting seasons. Request will be submitted by field office staff to the Department Secretary who would grant the authorization based on each individuals circumstance within the guidelines provided in the administrative rule.

Commissioner B. Jensen inquired as to what specific restrictions may be waived by the Department Secretary.

Leif clarified the restrictions to be considerations such as physical limitations to help facility and not to season structures.

Commissioner Phillips noted the three public comments against the proposal asking if this opens the door for multiple other special requests. He noted terminally ill do need consideration but there should be discussion as to what should be done for future special requests.

Commissioner Leif stated the concern on comments received was possible limitations for applicants. And because the Department only expects a limited number

of terminally ill authorization requests this should not affect the number of license allocations.

B. Jensen asked what special provisions are already in place.

Commissioner Leif responded with the allowance to shoot from motor vehicle for those with disabilities that do not allow them to exit the vehicle, special licenses for disabled vets and people with total disabilities to purchase licenses at discounted rates, and a designated shooter allowance for the visually impaired.

Commissioner Spies inquired how often the rule would be reviewed.

Leif indicate that upon adoption the Department will annually provide a report to the Commission noting applicant statistics and types of license and success rate. If requests are much more than expected future commission would have the ability to modify or repeal the rule.

Motioned by G. Jensen with second by Dennert TO APPROVE THE CREATION OF A NEW RULE AUTHORIZING TERMINALLY ILL PERSONS TO HUNT. 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 and no one came forward.

DIVISION OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Spearfish Falls Acquisition

Director Doug Hofer provided an update on the Spearfish Falls acquisition and proposed Spearfish Canyon State Park. Hofer explained the approved purchase of property that includes Spearfish Falls and the current issues due to current litigation as well as a solution to move forward. The solution is to issue a revised purchase agreement closing on the 73.3 acre parcel for \$750,000 which excludes 3/10 of an acre of land and the steel bridge. The Department would then be able to move forward on a trail improvement plan excluding the easement and bridge. Once the litigation concludes the Department can acquire the remainder of land for \$50,000. Hofer noted this would become the second largest state park in South Dakota.

Commissioner Phillips inquired if the land to be traded had been identified and if so how many acres

Hofer responded the trade land will be isolated tracks within holdings of US Forest Service lands. Hofer stated the details will ultimately come from legislation, but it should be close to an acre for acre trade.

Motioned by Cooper, seconded by Spies TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 16-01 (Appendix A) AUTHORIZING GFP TO CONSUMMATE AN AMENDED PURCHASE AGREEMENT WITH SPEARFISH CANYON FOUNDATION. Motion carried unanimously.

Roy Lake Concession

Sean Blanchette, concessions manager provided background on the concession noting facilities and services available at Roy Lake. Also provided was a request from resort owner Jan Pitzl to reissue a new prospectus for sale of the resort. Blanchette noted the only change from the prospectus presented at the November Commission meeting would be to extend the offering for another 45 day period allowing interested parties time to submit proposals.

Motioned by Spies with second by Olson TO AUTHORIZE THE DEPARTMENT TO ISSUE AND ADVERTISE A PROSPECTUS FOR THE SALE OF ROY LAKE. Motion carried unanimously.

Oahe Marina Concession

Blanchette provided background on the concession at Oahe Marina and Downstream noting facilities and services available as well as details on the current lease set to expire in 2041. As no bids were received from the last prospectus Blanchette presented a request from resort owner Steve Rounds to reissue a new prospectus for sale of the resort. He noted that no changes were made from the prospectus presented at the November Commission meeting except to extend the offering for another 45 day period allowing interested parties item to submit proposals.

Motioned by B. Jensen with second by Phillips. TO AUTHORIZE THE DEPARTMENT TO ISSUE AND ADVERTISE A PROSPECTUS FOR THE SALE OF OAHE MARINA. (Olson abstained) Motion carried.

Good Earth State Park Development Update

Assistant Director Al Nedved provided a powerpoint presentation on development at Good Earth State Park noting construction began late October. Nedved stated a bid was accepted for the visitor's center with hopes to have construction begin late January. The first phase of the project than included rough construction of the entrance road, parking lot, and visitor center site work was conducted in December allowing for future construction access to the site.

Nedved mentioned interpretive planning is also taking place at this time. The Department has a contract with Split Rock Studios for a design which will give visitors a feel of what the site was like 500 plus years ago. This will allow visitors to experience the activities, trade, culture and spiritually of the past. Consultation is also taking place with descendant tribes regarding the interpretive planning for both the Visitor Center and the film that will be featured in order to provide a historically and culturally accurate message.

Custer State Park Visitor Center and Resort Improvements Construction Update

Nedved provided an update on the improvements and construction at Custer State Park visitor's center and resort. He indicated work to be done at the visitor center is schedule to be completed by spring of 2016. The projects provided by the 2015 bonding projects totaling \$11M are underway as well. The main architectural building projects at the resorts are schedule to be completed by early summer of 2016, with the remaining infrastructure and renovation projects completed by the spring of 2017.

Hofer noted the land acquisition and money raised was a partnership between the Parks and Wildlife Foundation and the Department to be approximately at 15 million dollar project.

A short preview of the Custer State Park visitor center film was shown.

Concessions Review

Blanchette provided a brief background of 6 concessions including Lewis and Clark Marina, Lewis and Clark Resort, Spring Creek Resort, Oahe Marina, Dock 44 and Roy Lake Resort. He informed the Commission that the Division is conducting a comprehensive review of these 6 concession operations to achieve best possible business model scenario that will be economically beneficial to the operator and the Department. This will also allow the Department to preserve and steward assets that are critical to visitor experience and ultimately maintain the highest level of visitor services. To complete this review the Department has contracted with CHM Government Services a leader on aiding private and public partnerships who Parks staff have partnered with in the past. Staff are currently compiling information and analysis will begin February 1st. The final memo and executive summary will be completed in April with the final draft to be ready by May or June.

Commissioner Spies stated seasonal businesses are a challenge and restaurants are also difficult. He also asked about concession liquor license and restrictions as they can be difficult to obtain as well as expensive.

Blanchette responded that all visitor services are subject to Commission approval through lease approvals. Settlement agreements will ensure these licenses are offered to the next operator as long as they meet the requirement and want the license.

Land and Water Conservation Funds

Hofer provided information on the land and water conservation funding source for grant program that provides 50 percent match grants for state and local parks. He explained that at this time the program authorization has expired, but it was decided to do a 3 year fix restarting the program with a one year appropriation.

Revenue, Camping and Visitation reports

Hofer provided the year to date comparison of state park system revenue, camping and visitation. Revenue was up 11% due to increase park entrance license sales and a 9 percent increase in camping units served over 2014. This includes

10,000 more camping units this fall than fall 2014 due largely to promotion of late season camping opportunities, use by hunters and favorable weather. Overall visitation was up by 4 percent concluding a record year.

DIVISION OF WILDLIFE

Big Sioux Lake Access Site in Moody County

Paul Coughlin, habitat program administrator provided a request to acquire the Big Sioux Lake access site in Moody County from SD Department of Transportation allowing GFP the opportunity to develop the area for public usage

Commissioner Olson inquired about additional costs.

Coughlin noted costs would be associated with the installation of a ramp and parking lot development which would include signage, gravel, and spraying of weeds.

Motion by Spies with second by Dennert TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 16-2 (Appendix B) AUTHORIZING AND CONFIRMING THE PURCHASE OF 3.5 ACRES IN MOODY COUNTY.

Land Acquisition Guidance Document Update

Coughlin provided the current land acquisition and disposal report to the Commission. He noted the guidance documents have been distributed to staff for review and suggestions. Recommendations received thus far include an emphasis on land with opportunities for habitat and hunting per the public's request. Coughlin will provide the document and a presentation at the next meeting.

Management Plan Report Schedule for 2016

Kirschenmann presented the Commission with the management plan update schedule for the 2016. He stated the schedule will aid the division in providing progress reports and updates to the Commission as well as providing hunting season date to the public sooner per their request. Kirschenmann also noted the schedule indicates the multi-year schedule approach which will eventually eliminate the need to bring hunting season date to the Commission each January.

DNA Marker Sample of Mountain Lions

Senior biologist Andy Lindbloom presented information on trend indicators, methods used to collect data, specifically biopsy darts, sampling areas, and the 56 samples collected in 2015. Lindbloom noted how this data is used to assess the trends of the population and to bring recommendations for proposals to the Commission.

Commissioners Cooper and Spies requested a briefing sheet that would highlight the work that has been done in the last 20 years. They would like this information to be accessible via the GFP website and distributed during the season.

Winter Lake Access Program Update

Rhet Russell, wildlife biologist and Dan Sternhagen, district park supervisor provided an update on the winter lake access program including information on resources used, access challenges, and ice fishing opportunities and changes. They stated there are 109 access locations statewide and provided a breakdown by region. Russell noted future plans and needs include adjusting service areas to meet angler needs, maximizing partnerships to create access as needed and to promote winter access and ice fishing as they try to provide as much access as possible for anglers.

Buck Deer Radio Collaring Update

Lindbloom provided the Commission with buck deer research updates noting the study objective to annually estimate survival and mortality rates of adult and neonate white-tailed deer and mule deer in designated data analysis units across South Dakota. Utilization of this data will provide for better allocation of buck licenses.

Radio-collaring was also explained by Lindbloom. He stated collar designs were problematic and that they tested multiple designs. Eventually GFP staff worked with manufacture to modify current expandable collar to allow the material to stretch as the deers neck swells during rut.

Lindbloom also provided survival rate and collar statistics per county surveyed. GFP will further modify collar designs with lesser tension strengths and will also utilize ear tag transmitters in 2016. Staff will recapture deer with current collars and will either replace collar or use ear tag transmitter.

Year-end License Sales Summary

Simpson provided the licensed sales report as of January 4, 2016 for resident and nonresidents for all license types. Also presented were resident and nonresident license sales by license types for 2005 – 2015. Simpson noted the trend of decreased youth license purchases. The education plan is to encourage youth hunting by working with partners and inspiring parents to take their children.

Commissioner Peterson noted the decline in youth hunters was discussed at the recent WAFWA conference and is a concern among many states. And the direction is to work with not only youth, but their parents as well to do these activities as a family.

DOW Distinguished Achievement Award

Leif presented to Jordan Kitts, grant and loan specialist with the Division of Wildlife Distinguished Achievement Award in recognition of achievements for wildlife resources and to the citizens of South Dakota.

Pactola Basin Project Update

John Carreiro, wildlife biologist provided an update on the Rapid Creek habitat restoration plan. Carrerio stated it contains 10 site locations which utilize the addition of rocks and logs creating natural structures that will keep the banks from eroding. Carrerio further explained how they utilized boulders used during the dam reconstruction to create pocket waters in the area below Canyon Lake.

WAFWA Commissioner Report

Commissioner Dennert provided the group a brief report on the WAFWA winter conference. Notable items presented at the conference were youth Commissioners or youth Commission, transferable landowner license, and outdoor education to urban populations

Motioned by Dennert with second by Cooper TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.
Motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 10:15am

Appendix A

RESOLUTION 16-1

WHEREAS, at its regular meeting held on December 11-12, 2014, the Game, Fish and Parks Commission approved the Department's acquisition of the SPEARFISH FALLS TRACTS from Homestake Mining Company of California, which property is described as follows:

SPEARFISH FALLS TRACTS

Lot Ab-2, being a portion of Cascade Placer, M.S. 991, located in the NW/4 of Section 31, Township 5 North, Range 2 East, as shown on Plat Document No. 1998-4970 and comprising 0.28 acres, more or less, and

Lot F-2, being a portion of Little Spearfish Placer, M.S. 953, located in the NE/4 of Section 36, Township 5 North, Range 1 East, as shown on Plat Document No. 2001-6172 and comprising 0.02 acres, more or less, and

HMC Lot 2, being a portion of the Cascade Placer, M.S. 991, located in the NE/4 of Section 36, Township 5 North, Range 1 East and the NW/4 of Section 31, Township 5 North, Range 2 East, as shown on Plat Document No. 1991-1769 and comprising 6.61 acres, more or less, and

Montana Placer, M.S. 991, excluding Spearfish Canyon Lots 36 and 37, as shown on Plat Document 90-5436 and excluding Highway Right-of-Way, located in the W/2 of Section 31, Township 5 North, Range 2 East and the NE/4 of Section 6, Township 4 North, Range 2 East; and

for the sum of \$800,000.00 to be donated by Spearfish Canyon Foundation, Inc. for use within the State Park system, provided the closing of the sale of the SPEARFISH FALLS TRACTS was to be finalized on a date and place to be mutually agreed upon by the parties, i.e., Homestake Mining Company of California, Spearfish Canyon Foundation, Inc. and South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks, once the litigation entitled *Romano, et.al. v. Homestake Mining Company of California, et.al.*, currently pending in the Fourth Judicial Circuit, Lawrence County, South Dakota, ("Lawrence County litigation") had been resolved; and

WHEREAS, the parties now desire to close the purchase of the SPEARFISH FALLS TRACTS except for that portion of the SPEARFISH FALLS TRACTS directly impacted by the Lawrence County litigation (the "portion impacted by the Lawrence County litigation"), at a price of \$750,000.00 to be paid to Homestake Mining Company by the Spearfish Canyon Foundation, with the Department agreeing to purchase and close on the portion impacted by the Lawrence County litigation at a price of \$50,000.00 after the Lawrence County litigation has been finally resolved; and

WHEREAS, the Commission is satisfied that it is in the best interests of the public to proceed with closing the transaction in the manner being proposed by the parties;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that GFP is authorized to execute and consummate an amended purchase agreement with Spearfish Canyon Foundation, Inc. and Homestake Mining Company of California, which is acceptable to GFP to acquire the SPEARFISH FALLS TRACTS, except that portion thereof directly impacted by the Lawrence County litigation, at a price of \$750,000.00 to be paid by Spearfish Canyon Foundation for use within the State Park system and, in addition, to acquire the portion impacted by the Lawrence County litigation at a price of \$50,000.00 to be paid to Homestake Mining Company in a manner to be mutually agreed upon by the Department and Spearfish Canyon Foundation after the Lawrence County litigation has been finally resolved.

Appendix B

RESOLUTION 16-2

WHEREAS, the Department of Game, Fish, and Parks (GFP) has expressed an interest in acquiring real property presently owned by the State of South Dakota – Department of Transportation, 700 E. Broadway Ave., Pierre, SD 57501, which property is described as:

Lot X in Outlot B of the Northeast Quarter (NE¼) of Section Twenty-nine (29) in Township One Hundred Seven (107) North, Range Forty-eight (48) West of the 5th P.M., Moody County, SD, containing 3.5 acres, more or less, and hereafter referred to as DOT PROPERTY; and

WHEREAS, said property is to be acquired by and utilized by GFP as a Water Access Area; and

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

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

WHEREAS, the Commission has reviewed any and all comments that may have been received relative to the intended purchase and after consideration of the same, the Commission approves the purchase of said property for use as a Water Access Area;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that GFP is authorized to complete negotiations for the purchase of the DOT PROPERTY and execute and consummate an agreement with State of South Dakota – Department of Transportation, which is acceptable to GFP to acquire by purchase, at the price of \$10,000.00, the DOT PROPERTY for use as a Water Access Area.

Appendix C

Presented during open Mic. To GFP, Dec. 10, 2015

Many of you know and remember 15 years or so ago when SDWF supported more non-res waterfowl licenses to be used for private land in Central SD. I and SDWF was very important to the passing of these licenses, since then some have been transferred to the NE and so on.

But during those negotiations the Lower Oahe Waterfowl hunting access was designed. Since then what was known as the Sheehan farm now has I think about 25 different hunting areas that you have to show up draw numbers and the GFP even has trailers of decoys that sportsmen/women can use for a day of hunting. This area was and still is very popular, other landowners at the same time pledged access to get certain things ie. (Refuges).

Late this summer a one of the major landowners pulled out of the walk-in plan, his land would be in the Mail Shack area on Lake Oahe. There were waterfowl refuges created at the beginning to secure this landowners participation in the walk in plan. They were Plum and Dry creeks which are the first 2 bays just north of Okoboji creek and very easily accessible to waterfowl hunts on the water by boat. These refuges restrict the public from access for on the water waterfowl hunting and some pass shooting opportunities, these are only accessible by boat.

There are not many of the people who worked on this issue still around, we believe is is an important issue and ask you and the staff to consider;

1. Do away with Dry and Plum Creek waterfowl refuges; these were created for landowner participation in the walk-in area. Of which they chose to no longer participate in.
2. Okoboji Creek waterfowl area was expanded due to low water levels on Lake Oahe that we no longer have, and ask you to go back to original boundary, of which is about a mile less of area, and includes some very good land to water hunt on.
3. Resurrect the old GFP plan on for walk-in in strips to be located on GFP lands (at the time of this idea,

the Corp of Engineers still owned the land) that now are in Mail Shack Creek and are in front of private land that had been leased to provide public walk in access to the bay and waterfowl hunting I believe that the Waterfowl refuge in Mail Shack is a take line refuge meaning no waterfowl hunting can occur over the water or on the take line (public land).

These are just suggestions to you. SDWF does believe it is time to look at changing some of these issues due to the fact private landowners are not doing what they said they would do in the conception of this great program, we continue to support any access we can lease from private landowners, but we also support the changing back to what we had before.

Thank You Chris Hesla
SDWF Executive Director

Public Hearing Minutes of the Game, Fish and Parks Commission
January 14, 2015

The Public Hearing Officer Scott Simpson began the public hearing at 2:00 p.m. at the RedRossa in Pierre, South Dakota with Commissioners Cooper, Peterson, Jensen, Jensen, Olson, Phillips, Dennert, and Spies present. Simpson indicated written comments were provided to the Commissioners prior to this time and will be reflected in the Public Hearing Minutes. Simpson then invited the public to come forward with oral testimony.

Authorization for Terminally Ill Persons to Hunt

No oral testimony was received.

Written testimony:

Rory Binkerd, Hartford, SD, emailed, "You've got my support on this."

Jason West, Pierre, SD, emailed, "Being Terminally Ill has nothing to do with deer management. Please focus on greater problems instead of trying to fix every special interest project that rolls along. These terminally ill tags look like just one more way to allow too many tags to roll into our already over hunted public lands. What next? Pregnant women tags? Thanks"

Gale Anderson, Pierre, SD, wrote, "As a lifelong resident and big game hunter in South Dakota I am dead against giving deer tags, antelope tags and turkey tags to terminal ill residents. It is hard enough to draw the tags as it is. The people that want this to happen are hunters. They love to hunt doesn't make any difference who pulls the trigger. If this goes through they will get to hunt more and more. I have cancer and I would not ask for a tag. I would get in the draw like everyone else. I should say a lot more, but will stop at this.

Alan Machmiller, Renner, SD, emailed, "Hi, I was in attendance in December with Vern Boer and the Outdoor Adventure Foundation. I have a couple of questions related to the proposal. Re: Application for License (Authorization for Terminally Ill Residents to hunt deer, antelope and turkey). Was it my understanding that the title actually should read something like "Application for authorization for hunting tag" rather than "application for license"? I understood there was a potential issue calling it a license as licenses must be sold or paid for? It is stated in the notice of public hearing, "The authorization would address requests based on each individual's circumstances within the guidelines provided in the new administrative rule." I am enquiring to what those guidelines will be? Or maybe better asked, have those guidelines been drafted yet?

Mike Dylla, Watertown, SD, emailed," I want to thank SDGF&P and private landowners for their commitment to making it possible for me, and my family, to harvest wild game in SD. 100% of the deer and 75% of the pheasants we harvested during the 2015 season was on privately owned land that was enrolled with SDGF&P.

West River Deer in Butte Co -- 5 hunters acquired the double whitetail tags, entitling us to 10 deer. We hunted public "walk in only" NE of Newell. We filled 7 tags in 2 1/2 days of hunting. (4 small bucks & 3 small does) All seven deer taken on SDGF&P "walk in only". Was first time any of us hunted west river & we considered it a success.

East River Deer -- we all grew up in Day Co & traditionally hunt Day Co. Only one of us qualified for 2015 Day Co deer. Two of us acquired Brown Co antlerless. One average buck harvested Day (west of Bristol), and two average does in Brown (east of Ferney). Again, all 3 east river deer harvested on SDGF&P "walk in only".

Of the ten deer harvested, one taken to a commercial locker plant for processing. We boned 9 deer, yielding 270# venison. When blended with beef (burger) and pork (smoked ring sausage and smoked snack sticks) we will have over 500# venison products for our families. Note, we hunt for the meat -- not for horns.

1-3-16 Pheasant -- my brother and I have tradition hunting on the final day of the season (anyone can fill on the opener, but can you fill at the last day of season?). We got 5 pheasants in 3 hrs. of hunting, combination of CREPE & "walk in only", between Andover and Groton.

The willingness of landowners to enroll in to SDGF&P programs is critical to us. I encourage SDGF&P to continue promoting the programs that enable us to enjoy the benefits of hunting.

SDGF&P must meet the economic challenges and continue/expand funding the public hunting areas -- it is doubtful that the five of us would purchase licenses, without these programs."

The public Hearing concluded at 2:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelly R. Hepler, Department Secretary