

## MINUTES

### NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

LANSING CENTER  
333 E. MICHIGAN  
LANSING

FEBRUARY 9, 2006

#### PRESENT FOR THE COMMISSION

Keith Charters, Chair  
Mary Brown  
Darnell Earley  
Bob Garner, Vice Chair  
Jerry Hall  
John Madigan  
Frank Wheatlake

#### PRESENT FOR STAFF

James Riley, NRC Legal Counsel  
Becky Humphries, Director  
Dennis Fox, Chief of Staff  
Dennis Fedewa, Chief Deputy  
Patricia Stewart, Office of Communications  
Rodney Stokes, Legislative Liaison  
Other DNR Staff

#### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**Chairman Charters** called the Committee of the Whole meeting of the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) to order at 3:02 p.m. on Thursday, February 9, 2006.

#### LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

**Rodney Stokes, Legislative Liaison**, reviewed a series of forestry bills recently introduced in the House of Representatives and the Senate, designed to assist the forest industry within the State of Michigan. These are: House Bills 5453, 5454, 5455, 5456, 5457, 5458, 5462, and 5428. Senate Bill 971 would require the Citizens Committee for Michigan State Parks (CCMSP) to review the sale of land within state parks. Senate Bill 972 would prohibit the DNR from designating any land within a state park as surplus land. House Bill 5144 would recognize Commemorative Bucks of Michigan, Inc., as the official keeper of Michigan big game trophy records.

For further information, go to the DNR website at [www.michigan.gov/dnr](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr). Click on "Inside DNR," then "Laws & Legislation," then "Current Legislation."

## **DEER POPULATION GOALS PRESENTATION**

**Doug Reeves, Wildlife Division**, presented the proposed Deer Population Goals for 2006-2010. He stated that the DNR's goal is to manage the deer herd using management practices based on scientific research to: 1) maintain healthy animals and keep the deer population within limits dictated by the carrying capacity of the range and by its effect on native plant communities, agricultural, horticultural, and silvicultural crops and public safety; and 2) maintain an active public information program designed to acquaint the public with the methods of deer management and the conditions needed to maintain a healthy, vigorous herd.

Deer goals public meetings have been held statewide. Approximately 2,900 people attended these meetings, a majority of which were hunters. Specific issues that came out of these meetings include: hunters do not agree with the DNR's population estimates so their initial reaction is to dismiss the proposed population goals; there was dissatisfaction with the notion of reducing deer numbers anywhere in Michigan; and hunters prefer more deer on land where they have access. Other issues arose and were varying depending on where in Michigan the meeting was taking place.

**Dr. Bill Moritz, Wildlife Division Chief**, commented that the highest deer and hunter densities are at the break from agricultural lands to the northern forests.

The next steps in this process are to establish support for the population goals; communicate with the public on the management methods to be utilized to achieve the goals; develop license and season structures; continue to develop deer habitat; look at predator issues; and develop a comprehensive management plan.

**Commissioner Madigan** attended the deer goals meetings in Marquette and Escanaba. One issue that arose at both meetings was disbelief of the deer population estimates. The most highly contested deer management unit (DMU) was DMU 007. **Dr. Moritz** said the deer goals in DMU 007 were 18 per square mile. It would be difficult to get a higher population in that area due to the weather. A series of mild winters may bring the numbers up, but it will have to be watched over time to determine if that can be sustained. **Commissioner Madigan** noted that the hunting public wants more deer in that area.

**Commissioner Madigan** noted that the other predominant issue was the one buck issue, i.e., issuing a two buck license will not produce more deer. **Dr. Moritz** said that the second buck license began originally in 1978 and there has been a gradual movement toward more conservative regulations since.

**Commissioner Brown** attended a deer goals meeting near Kalamazoo. The predominant issue addressed at this meeting was predators. **Dr. Moritz** noted that the predators issue will continue to be addressed. In southwest Michigan, the cougar issue will be addressed more diligently.

**Commissioner Wheatlake** favors changing the number of deer in the northern Lower Peninsula by 20-30 percent. If Newaygo County is at goal, the DNR should look at townships where those numbers are disputed. The DNR needs revenue to continue its programs. He said that the NRC and DNR are cognizant of low deer populations in the

northern Lower Peninsula and stressed that, other than for crop damage and disease management, he and the public do not want doe permits issued until deer numbers can be increased. **Dr. Moritz** agreed that there are several areas in the northern Lower Peninsula that are below goals.

**Chairman Charters** said that this issue is referred to the NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries.

**Chairman Charters** does not support the deer population estimates in the county where his hunting camp is located and surrounding areas. He asked how he and others address disagreement with the estimated deer populations. He suggested that the methodology of determining deer numbers may need to be reviewed in some areas.

**Commissioner Hall** recommended that Wildlife Division provide details on how deer population numbers were derived.

**Commissioner Garner** supports the science in determining deer populations and deer goals and will address this issue before the NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries (which he chairs). He hopes to create a broad based understanding of the science among the public before a decision is made on deer goals. **Dr. Moritz** said that staff and the NRC are working toward making the process transparent. **Chairman Charters** stressed the need to create an understanding of the process with the public before the process moves forward, thus proving that the deer population numbers are realistic. **Commissioner Wheatlake** stressed the need to get hunters involved in the goals and population estimates. **Commissioner Garner** said that hunters need to better understand the process and the science, as voted by the public in the general election in 1996 (Proposal G), behind it.

### **Hunter Recruitment and Retention**

**Director Humphries** will be naming a hunter recruitment and retention plan implementation team in the very near future.

### **Outdoor Events**

**Director Humphries** provided a listing of upcoming outdoor shows and noted that staff will participate and interact with the attendees at these shows.

### **Project GO-Get Outdoors**

**Director Humphries** noted that the winter Project GO-Get Outdoors events will take place across the state on February 18 and 19. She also noted that Free Fishing Weekend coincides with this weekend.

### **2006-2007 Executive Budget**

**Dennis Fedewa, Chief Deputy**, summarized the Fiscal Year (FY) 2006-2007 Executive Recommendation Changes to DNR's Operating Budget as released at noon on February 9, 2006. As approved, the Executive Recommendation reflects a 2 percent reduction in General Fund/General Purpose (GF/GP) from the previous FY.

## **PUBLIC APPEARANCES**

**Chuck DeLeeuw, Michigan Traditional Bow Hunters**, supported and/or proposed the following:

- Proposed that the northern Lower Peninsula and Upper Peninsula DMUs once again be based on landownership patterns and habitat rather than county borders;
- Proposed that all antlerless licenses (public and private land) in the northern Lower Peninsula and Upper Peninsula be issued by drawing rather than over-the-counter;
- Prefers seeing the current combination license tag structure remain the same with one exception – that in the DMUs currently below the stated population goals, hunters not be allowed to take antlerless deer during archery season until the population goal is reached and maintained.

He stated that the Michigan Traditional Bow Hunters are a pro-bow hunting group and want to do all they can as archery hunters to promote the long-term health of the deer herd. They also want to demonstrate to all that, as archery hunters, they are willing to make sacrifices that will benefit all deer hunters.

**Tom Morang, Michigan Bow Hunters**, supports the DNR in its efforts to maintain a healthy deer herd in balance with the habitat and understand, that the deer populations must be lowered first to prevent over-browsing. He encouraged the DNR to work with landowners to increase access to private lands in the southern Lower Peninsula where the deer population is abundant.

Michigan Bow Hunters supports the current combination license system. He also encouraged and supports the following changes to the deer regulations:

- DMU boundaries should be based on land ownership patterns and habitat rather than county boundaries;
- All antlerless licenses for the Upper and northern Lower Peninsulas be issued by drawing for both public and private land except for the bovine tuberculosis area;
- Require a 20 acre minimum for private land antlerless licenses in the Upper and northern Lower Peninsulas, except for the bovine tuberculosis area;
- In DMUs that are 20 percent below population goals, an archery license or combination license should not be valid for the taking of antlerless deer during bow season.

## **PARTNERS IN CONSERVATION AWARD – HIGHLAND FIELD TRIAL GROUNDS ASSOCIATION**

**Director Humphries** presented a Partners in Conservation Award to the Highland Field Trial Grounds Association. **Dave Carriveau** received the award.

The Highland Field Trial Grounds Association has a long history of volunteering at the Highland Recreation Area. The Association provides significant support for the management and restoration of the Highland Field Trial Area. Efforts include 3,100

volunteer hours and contributions totaling over \$62,000 towards maintaining the grounds and construction of a large picnic shelter. In addition, the Association has conducted an annual fund-raising banquet that provides significant financial support.

For the past 10 years, the Highland Field Trial Grounds Association has partnered with the State Park Stewardship Program to restore an oak barrens ecosystem within the Highland Field Trial Area. This vanishing Michigan habitat provides excellent field trial grounds and preserves the native plants and animals endemic to oak barrens.

The volunteer efforts of the Highland Field Trial Grounds Association have blended the preservation of the sport of dog field trialing with the conservation of biological diversity.

She stated that this is a unique partnership to protect such a special part of Michigan's natural heritage and a rich recreational tradition. She thanked the Association and congratulated them on receiving this honor.

**SHIKAR-SAFARI CLUB INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE OFFICER OF THE YEAR  
AWARD – CONSERVATION OFFICER WARREN MACNEILL**

**Chairman Charters** stated that the Shikar-Safari International Wildlife Officer of the Year Award is one of the major awards in Law Enforcement Division for recognizing outstanding performance. This honor also carries the distinction of being Michigan's Conservation Officer of the Year. The nominations are submitted by conservation officers, based on established criteria related to officer duties and personal attributes.

**Gunnar Klarr, Shikar-Safari Club International**, noted that protecting Michigan's resources is an honorable duty. Many dedicated resource protectors go unnoticed. This year's award recipient, Officer Warren MacNeill, from Alcona County, was selected by a group of his peers. **Mr. Klarr** presented him with the award.

**Officer MacNeill** thanked the Law Enforcement Division for nominating him and thanked the Shikar-Safari Club International for presenting him with this award. He said that the award represents the work of all officers in the field. He introduced his mother and dad, siblings, wife and children who were present. He was honored to receive the award.

**The NRC** congratulated **Officer MacNeill**.

**PUBLIC APPEARANCES (continued):**

**Wayne Winslow, Osceola County**, has hunted in Osceola County for over 33 years. He and other property owners (10 or more acres each) in Hartwick Township practice letting little bucks go to grow and maintain a healthy deer herd. There are over 12,381 acres involved in "Hartwick HUNT (Hunters Uniting Neighbors Together)". Many of the members of HUNT commented that deer sightings are significantly down. He recommended that the DNR and NRC eliminate doe permits in Osceola County until the herd recovers. He disputed deer population estimates. He also recommended a one buck per year permit, mandatory deer checks, all hunters receive surveys, and eliminate DMU county boundaries.

**Bob McReavy, Nester Lodge, Roscommon County**, said deer numbers in Roscommon are down and does not believe estimated deer populations are correct.

**Jeff Kucha, Jackson**, believe that the DNR's estimated deer population in Jackson County is incorrect. He said it doesn't matter how many deer there are, that the people of southern Michigan do not want a deer population reduction. Jim Riley advised that comments be restricted due to pending litigation.

**Ellen Nitz, Citizens for a Quiet Community**, requested that the shotgun portion of the Island Lake Shooting Range be eliminated.

**Marilyn Carr, Citizens for a Quiet Community**, believes that activities at the Island Lake Shooting Range are affecting the quality of the Huron River.

**Jenness Wiegand, Citizens for a Quiet Community**, provided a series of documents relative to the Island Lake Shooting Range and asked for relief from the level of noise from that range.

**Steve Cunningham, Wexford County**, said there is a lack of confidence amongst hunters in the estimated deer populations. He said that using doe licenses is an effective tool in controlling deer populations, but the use of doe licenses should not be left to the discretion of the hunters. He supports managing wildlife by DMU based on the habitat in that DMU rather than on political boundaries. Mr. Cunningham suggested that a 20 to 30 percent increase in deer numbers in Wexford County would be appropriate. **Commissioner Wheatlake** stated that this issue will be addressed on an on-going basis.

**James Skipper, Michigan Wild Turkey Hunters Association**, expressed a concern with spring turkey hunting regulations. The Association would like to see an end to late evening turkey hunting in the spring to prevent hunters from harvesting turkeys going to roost. They also request that license dollars be spent on turkeys in northern Michigan. The Association recommends that deer be managed based on habitat versus DMUs.

**Chairman Charters** entered letters from the following into the record:

- **Dale Sheltroun:** Supported mandatory deer check; discussed the diminishing deer population; and suggested that the decline in deer populations may impact hunter numbers and recruitment.
- **Wayne Wood, Michigan Farm Bureau:** Suggest that deer populations may need to be addressed differently within DMUs; goals for DMUs should not adjust upward without clear and convincing scientific justification; deer management tools for landowners must continue to be readily accessible to prevent excessive damage to crops and prevent the spread of disease; and pressure to achieve a healthy deer herd in balance with the natural habitat must occur statewide with special emphasis on areas with ongoing crop damage and areas where disease transmission is of special concern.
- **William Estlack, DMU 004:** supports higher deer numbers in the northeast Lower Peninsula; and asked for Deer Range Improvement Program (DRIP) monies in Alpena County.

- **John Ormsby, Afton Deer Management:** believes the deer population estimates for Cheboygan County; and recommended that doe licenses not be issued in Cheboygan County.
- **Larry Kirk:** disputes the estimated deer population for northern Lower Peninsula; and recommended no antlerless licenses be issued until the numbers rise.

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**Chairman Charters** adjourned the Public Appearances portion of the meeting at 6:12 p.m. and immediately convened the Regular Meeting of the NRC.

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### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 12, 2006 NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING**

**Commissioner Garner** made a motion, supported by **Commissioner Madigan**, for approval. Motion unanimously carried.

### **DIRECTOR'S ACTION ITEMS**

**Director Humphries** intends to approve all Director's Action Items on the Agenda. She noted that Item II.B.2, Sale of Dedicated State-owned Land, Newaygo County, was not land being sold to the U.S. Forest Service. The DNR will only exchange land with the U.S. Forest Service.

**Commissioner Garner** noticed that on some sales, the mineral rights were going with the sale. **Mindy Koch, Resource Management Deputy**, stated that there is a NRC policy that reviews the mineral rights on properties and allows the DNR to determine whether or not these mineral rights will be retained in the sale of the property.

### **NRC POLICY COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **NRC Policy Committee on Land Management**

This meeting convened on February 9, 2006 at 11:00 a.m. at the Lansing Center, 333 E. Michigan, Lansing. Minutes are attached.

#### **NRC Policy Committee on Technology, Information, Marketing and Education (TIME)**

This meeting convened on February 9, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. at the Lansing Center, 333 E. Michigan, Lansing. **Chair Mary Brown and Patricia Stewart** reviewed the 2005 goals of the TIME Committee. The committee's 2006 goals will be presented at the March NRC meeting for formal adoption.

## **NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries**

This meeting was convened on February 9, 2006 at 1:00 p.m. at the Lansing Center, 333 E. Michigan, Lansing. Minutes are attached.

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### **Leftover Turkey Licenses - Motion**

**Commissioner Brown made a motion, supported by Commissioner Garner, recommending that the Director work with the NRC to assure that any leftover quota hunt licenses for the 2006 spring turkey season are made available to individuals that did not participate in the lottery drawing (except for the guaranteed hunt unit number 234).** Discussion ensued, and it was determined that the DNR internal process allows the sale of excess licenses through the Retail Sales System. **The motion unanimously carried.**

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### **COMMISSIONER REPORTS:**

**Commissioner Garner** commended Sgt. Gregory Drogowski and Conservation Officer Richard Stowe for rescuing a man on a snowmobile on Black Lake who had gotten stuck in a crack in the ice. He also commented that the staff and individuals who assisted in the Black Lake sturgeon drawing did an excellent job.

**Commissioner Garner** attended deer goals meetings as well as the Hunting and Fishing License Package Development Work Group meeting and other events and meetings.

**Commissioner Earley** said that DNR staff does a wonderful job given the many difficult tasks they handle. He said it is important to gather the best information as possible and receive public input to find consensus on how to address various issues.

**Commissioner Wheatlake** noted that he chaired the first meeting of the Hunting and Fishing License Package Work Group on January 20, 2006. Originally, the goal was to establish a license package to propose to the legislature by the end of April. However, it has been determined that there are other issues, such as deer populations, that will need to be addressed prior to this Work Group's decision. More time will be necessary to address the many issues. **Chairman Charters**, who appointed this Work Group, said the Work Group deadline has been extended to "as much time as is needed."

**Commissioner Wheatlake** noted that the next meetings of the Work Group will be held on February 13, 2006 and February 27, 2006. He also reported that an NRC Policy Committee on Finance and Administration meeting will be held on February 27, 2006 also.

**Commissioner Wheatlake** met with various legislators regarding DNR matters.

**Commissioner Hall** chaired the Pigeon River Steering Committee on Vehicular Systems, Sand and Gravel and Local Community Planning meeting on February 8, 2006. He appreciates staff's efforts and professionalism in these meetings.

**Commissioner Hall** noted that it is important that the DNR regain confidence from the public.

**Commissioner Madigan** attended two deer goals meetings in the Upper Peninsula. He said that staff handled the meetings well under somewhat adverse conditions.

**Commissioner Brown** attended a deer goals meeting in Hastings. She noted that staff conducted the meeting well.

**Chairman Charters** met with legislators on various issues. He noted that it is imperative that the NRC and staff continue to address restricted fund issues with the legislature.

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The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

**NRC Policy Committee on Land Management  
Minutes  
February 9, 2006  
11:00 a.m.**

**Present:**

Commissioner Keith Charters, Chair  
Commissioner Mary Brown  
Commissioner John Madigan  
Commissioner Darnell Earley  
Commissioner Bob Garner  
Commissioner Frank Wheatlake  
Carrie Zuidema, MOGA  
Jim DeClerck, Saginaw Field and Stream Club  
Greg King, Saginaw Field and Stream Club  
Bill Bobier, Earthscape  
Judy McLeary  
Anne Woiwode, Sierra Club  
George Berghorn, Michigan Forest Council  
Bob Gwizdz, sports writer  
Erin McDoughna, MUCC  
Chris Claver, Gongwer  
Director Rebecca Humphries  
Resource Management Deputy Mindy Koch  
Chief Deputy Dennis Fedewa  
DNR Staff

**Chairman Keith Charters** called the meeting to order at 11:10 a.m.

**1. Update on Land Consolidation – Steve Sutton, Fisheries, and Bob Couvreur, Office of Land and Facilities**

**Steve Sutton** provided a handout on Phase 2. He also had a display board showing what counties have been completed, those currently under review, and the next group to be sent for field review. This map is also available on the DNR web site.

The recommendations for the third group of ten counties were approved by the Director at the January 2006 NRC meeting.

A total of 40 counties have had the field review completed, with 43 left to go.

Steve also provided an acreage summary, including the totals for the first 30 counties completed in Phase II, as well as a total of public lands inside DNR boundaries for each county reviewed.

Field staff has completed initial reviews for parcels in the fourth group of ten counties. These recommendations are now being reviewed by the regional Eco

Teams. It is anticipated that public meetings will be held for these ten counties in April 2006. Meetings are planned for the Baraga/Marquette area, Bad Axe area, Mount Pleasant, and probably Dundee. Final recommendations will be presented to the NRC/Director for action in June 2006.

Parcels listings for the fifth group of ten counties is currently being prepared by DIT/CGI for review by History, Arts, and Libraries, and Michigan Natural Features Inventory, which will begin in early April. Field review for the fifth group of ten counties will begin in early May.

**Bob Couvreur** gave an update on Phase III. Bob provided a handout showing the draft web pages that will be available on the web in the next few weeks.

The first step is making the parcels available to governmental agencies, but we want to have everything up on the web site at the same time for the public to view.

The web will show which parcels are available to governmental agencies, and which are available to the general public, by county.

All governmental agencies will receive letters explaining what is available, and the process to follow if they are interested. It was requested by **Commissioner Brown** that we also include conservation districts in this mailing. **Deputy Koch** stated that we do not intend to include school districts as a local unit of government, using the standards of the Michigan Natural Resource Trust Fund.

**Bill Bobier** questioned why lands can't go to school districts by Public Use Deed (PUD). **Mr. Couvreur** explained that we have had some problems with PUDs in that we can't control what the recipient does with the property, and the intent of this land review and consolidation process is to use the proceeds from sales to purchase replacement lands that are in holdings.

**Mr. Couvreur** also stated that the mailing and web page will state that these parcels are not available by PUD; but by purchase only.

**Anne Woiwode** asked about alternate conservation groups. The web page says they have 30 days to apply. Will there be some notification provided? **Bob** stated that the land conservancies in Michigan would receive a letter at the same time as the governmental agencies. **Bob** stated that we would also do a press release.

**Chairman Charters** asked Bob to pass on to the committee that he feels they are doing a wonderful job, and this will have a positive long-term affect on our resources.

## 2. **State Forest Management Plan – Cara Boucher, FMFM**

Cara began by introducing **David Price** who has joined FMFM to work on planning processes.

In Public Act 451, Part 525, The Department is required to adopt a Forest Development, Conservation, and Recreation Plan. At the same time, we were required to undergo forest certification. This was an impetus for us to develop a State Forest Management Plan.

The last time a plan was developed was in 1983. In addition, when we went through the forest certification audit, one of the items that came up in a corrective action is a requirement to complete, not only a State Forest Management Plan, but three Eco-Regional Plans. We are on a tight schedule to complete the East UP by December 2006, and the Northern LP and West UP by December 2007.

We have a first draft now and we are planning a press release. By mid-February we should have a final draft available for internal review. It should be available for public comment from mid-March until the end of April 2006. After that we plan to have a number of public meetings across the state to discuss the plan.

In May it should go before the Statewide Council, and then to the Director and the NRC.

**Chairman Charters** asked how many public meetings would be held – **Cara** said four are planned; southern LP, northern LP, East UP, and West UP.

**Anne Woiwode** requested plenty of advance notice of these meetings. **Chairman Charters** also suggested we strive for diversity by including local chambers of commerce, the timber industry, environmental groups, etc.

### 3. Limiting Factors Update

**Cara Boucher** explained that limiting factors is a term to describe “what is on the ground.” This is the forester’s description of what is at a particular location, such as threatened or endangered species, wet, etc. that either allow or hinder a timber harvest at that time.

**Ms. Boucher** gave a brief history of how we got to this point of identifying and recording these factors.

The 40 established limiting factors to evaluate the potential of land for timber harvest is available on the DNR website, and was passed out to the Commissioners. It is not a concrete number of 40, factors were added over time.

**Deputy Koch** pointed out that limiting factors are discussed at the compartment review, where industry may comment.

These factors are dynamic and by keeping track of the limiting factors in a database, we know which areas should be revisited for treatment. We have been tracking these factors in the database for about five years. About half of the state forest has been reviewed. About 165,000 acres had one of these 40 limiting factors mentioned. The top factors were too wet, about 61,000 acres; delayed treatment for age size-class diversity; and potential or designated old-growth, about 40,000 acres.

The Forest Industry perspective, given by George Berghorn of the Michigan Forest Council, was that they have not seen any revisitation to areas that previously had limiting factors. They support the hiring of additional foresters so that these areas can be revisited.

**Lynne Boyd** reported that we have not done a very good job of showing acreage that comes out of the limiting factors, because acreage does come out. Getting the word out is an area that the Department will work on.

**Chairman Charters** asked how many acres are leased or under contract that have not been harvested – there are 1,231 contracts for 113,735 acres. The number of cords 1.64 million. The value of those open contracts is \$76 million, and we have received about \$32 million. Due to the weather these last few months, we haven't been able to get into the woods, so the harvest has been down. These contracts average two to three years.

732,112 cords were harvested last year. Since 1980, we have averaged 700,000 per year.

#### **4. Committee Goals Development**

Due to time limitations, Chairman Charters briefly discussed the goals from 2005.

- *Continue to review and implement the Land Consolidation Strategy and ensure timely completion.* This has been done, but is also an ongoing goal.
- *Provide opportunities for the NRC and public to review of the Department's procedures and work instructions being developed to meet Forest Certification requirements by January 1, 2006.* This has been completed, but we will continue to monitor the compartment review process.
- *Continue developing working relationships with the U.S. Forest Service and Corporate Landowners.* This will be on-going.

**Chairman Charters** asked **Deputy Koch** to rework this list of goals for 2006. He also asked her to work with the Legislature as the draft bills that impact our dealings with all constituents. She will provide the list to **Chairman Charters, and Commissioners Brown and Earley**, and next month during the committee of the whole, they will confirm those, rather than schedule another meeting for this purpose.

**Chairman Charters** adjourned the meeting at 11:42 a.m.

**NRC POLICY COMMITTEE ON WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES  
FEBRUARY 9, 2006**

**MINUTES**

**Committee Chair Bob Garner** called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m.

Present for the Committee were Commissioners Bob Garner, Jerry Hall and John Madigan. Commissioners Charters, Brown, Wheatlake, and Earley were also present.

Discussion began about P.A. 154 – Appropriations Bill. There is boilerplate language in this bill stating that all **unused turkey licenses** must be allotted through the leftover system (similar to fall turkey). It is necessary for the Department to determine if we can indeed sell these licenses. **Commissioner Garner** asked if the committee wanted to recommend that leftover licenses be sold. **Commissioner Brown** asked Wildlife Division to clarify that the boilerplate language is asking DNR to sell the same number of licenses; we wouldn't be increasing our quotas. She believed that leftover licenses could be sold where there are quotas but leftovers should not be sold for hunt number 234. **Commissioner Charters** clarified that if there were 1200 licenses available for a certain area and 1000 were sold during the January application period then the additional 200 would be put up for leftover sales.

The Commission formally recommended that leftovers be sold within the areas where the quotas were not met excluding hunt number 234. The Wildlife Division will look into the boilerplate language and ensure of the legality of this recommendation. Leftovers must be purchased before the start of the Spring turkey season.

**Kelly Grumelot, Human Resources Division**, presented Hunting and Fishing Accessibility and provided background on the components of accessibility from legislative, Federal and State mandates to Michigan Compiled Law, Wildlife Conservation Orders and Law Enforcement Division procedure. The Department of Justice does not have accessibility guidelines for the outdoor environment. She also mentioned the current accessibility concerns, which include accessibility standards, permanence/temporal, and the need for a consistent application permit.

**Commissioner Garner** asked how it is decided if someone gets a Standing Vehicle Permit. **Commissioner Hall** requested a list of which of the accessibility permits fall under whose authority.

**Rod Clute, Wildlife Division**, updated the Commission on quality deer management (QDM), provided some QDM background information, then proposed changes to the QDM process, which included: provide sponsor with deer goals and population trends; create a Memorandum of Understanding with sponsor; fee based on the number of DMUs; public meeting for sponsors; formalize function of DNR as process providers at public meetings; start collecting base line data year of proposal; and have a survey that is attitude based.

**Bill Moritz, Wildlife Division Chief**, mentioned that there is currently a moratorium on new Quality Deer Management proposals. Wildlife Division asked if the NRC still wants to continue with the current QDM process or have some other process.

**Commissioner Hall** supports voluntary QDM, and he would like to keep the moratorium for two more years. He believes DNR staff time is too precious to be assessing QDM proposals. **Commissioner Madigan** concurs with Commissioner Hall but would like Drummond Island to continue.

**Commissioner Garner** asked if **Commissioner Hall** was recommending that a two year moratorium remain on new QDM proposals. **Commissioner Hall** stated he was. **Commissioner Madigan** supported. This committee will now pass this recommendation to the Committee of the Whole.

**Pat Lederle, Wildlife Division**, provided a wildlife research update. Pat focused on the following items: Why research is important, the process for choosing research projects and highlighted four current research projects. Wildlife Division currently has 31 university contracts. Five were new in 2006. Fifteen are ending in FY 06, 7 in FY 07, and 8 in FY 08. Pat also noted that due to fiscal concerns and realities, no new research projects are scheduled to be initiated in 2007.

**Mike Bailey, Wildlife Division**, presented the Wildlife and Fisheries updated calendar. Commissioner Garner would like Committee members to look it over so members can discuss next month. Chief Moritz noted that habitat projects have been added.

**Commissioner Garner** read the current goals of the Committee and complimented the other Commissioners on the Committee's hard work. The Committee agreed to keep the same goals for 2006.

The meeting adjourned at 2:33 pm.