

**Eastern Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council (EUPCAC)**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, February 4, 2016**  
**6:30-8:30pm EST**  
**LMAS Health Department Conference Room, Newberry**

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*Chair: Dick Pershinske   Vice-Chair: Glenn Moll   Secretary: Tom Buckingham*

**Council Members Present**

Keith Aldrich	Jason Garvon	Michael Lawless
Allan Augustyn	Gary Gorniak	Glenn Moll
Ivan Darling	Tim Hass	Dick Pershinske
Grant Dewitt	Jim Hoy	Chad Radka
Jim Duke	Bernie Hubbard	
Hawk Erickson	Travis Kangas	

**Council Members Excused/Absent**

Tom Buckingham	Mark Spencer
Al Garavaglia	

**Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Staff Liaisons**

Kristi Dahlstrom, Executive Assistant, Marquette  
Lt. Skip Hagy, Law Enforcement Division, Newberry  
Stacy Haughey, U.P. Regional Coordinator, Marquette  
Terry Minzey, Wildlife Division, Ishpeming  
Tom Paquin, Parks & Recreation Division, Newberry  
Karen Rodock, Forest Resources Division, Sault Ste. Marie  
Steve Scott, Fisheries Division, Newberry  
Jon Spieles, Marketing & Outreach Division, Newberry

**Call To Order**

The Eastern Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council (EUPCAC) meeting was called to order at 6:32pm EST by **Chair Pershinske**. Three new Council members were introduced by **Mrs. Haughey**:

- **Mr. Hawk Erickson**, former Schoolcraft County commissioner, former Wolf Roundtable member, serving as an Independent;
- **Mr. Travis Kangas**, the EUPCAC's youngest member from Chippewa County, Michigan Tech graduate, grew up in Ontonagon, was a fire fighter out west, representing the Chippewa Luce Mackinac Conservation District;
- **Mr. Grant Dewitt** from Luce County, retired from downstate, motel owner, groomer, ORV operator, representing the Chippewa County SORVA.

Introductions of Council members were made.

**Adoption of Agenda**

**Chair Pershinske** asked if there were any additions or revisions to the agenda. There were none. **Mr. Lawless** motioned to adopt the agenda as presented; **Mr. Erickson** seconded the motion. **Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: Mr. Buckingham, Mr. Garavaglia, Mr. Spencer. Motion carried.**

### **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

**Chair Pershinske** asked the Council if there were any corrections to the December 3, 2015 EUPCAC minutes; none were brought forth. **Mr. Hass motioned to approve the minutes as submitted; Mr. Lawless seconded the motion. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: Mr. Buckingham, Mr. Garavaglia, Mr. Spencer. Motion carried.**

### **Chair Comments**

**Chair Pershinske** stated he asked to be a part of the bear advisory forum which was held recently. Everyone in attendance seemed to be on the same page for management of black bear, but not necessarily how they are hunted. There was a good discussion on the use of chocolate as bait. It was mentioned there is a movement by the Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) and some dog federations to have a voluntary effort to ban the use of chocolate in baiting bears. **Mrs. Haughey** asked if it would be of interest to discuss this at the Joint UPCAC meeting in March. It was determined the topic is being discussed with the right groups at this time. **Chair Pershinske** stated there are some strong opinions on the hunting of whitetail deer and he will be asking Mr. Buckingham to convene the Council's deer subcommittee to discuss some of these ideas. It was noted the WUPCAC put forth a resolution recommending the banning of deer hunting altogether; **Mrs. Haughey** confirmed no resolution has been passed by the WUPCAC to date. **Mr. Minzey** indicated he had a conversation with Dr. Schott from Senator Casperson's office after the last WUPCAC meeting and it may have spurred the assumption of a resolution.

### **Officer Elections**

**Chair Pershinske** noted the Bylaws require the Council to have an officer election at the first meeting of each year. He opened the floor for nominations for 2016.

- **Chairperson:** **Mr. Duke** nominated Mr. Pershinske to continue as Chairperson; **Mr. Hoy** supported the nomination. **Mr. Pershinske** accepted the nomination. No additional nominations were received.
- **Vice-Chair:** **Mr. Aldrich** nominated Mr. Moll to continue as Vice-Chair; **Mr. Erickson** supported the nomination. **Mr. Moll** accepted the nomination. No additional nominations were received.
- **Secretary:** **Mr. Erickson** nominated Mr. Buckingham to continue as Secretary; **Mr. Hass** supported the nomination. **Chair Pershinske** accepted the nomination on behalf of Mr. Buckingham who is not present, but did express his desire to continue serving should he be nominated. No additional nominations were received.
- **Mr. Hass made a motion to close all nominations; Mr. Aldrich seconded the motion. A vote was taken in favor of all three nominees for the positions discussed. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: Mr. Buckingham, Mr. Garavaglia, Mr. Spencer. Motion carried.**
- **Final Results:** **Mr. Pershinske** remains Chairperson for 2016, **Mr. Moll** remains Vice-Chair for 2016, and **Mr. Buckingham** remains Secretary for 2016.

**Chair Pershinske** stated this Council has gained a huge amount of respect throughout the DNR and with stakeholders, which is significant and due to the work of everyone on the Council. He stated the DNR staff support to the Council is equally important and he thanked staff for the great job they do.

### **Public Comments**

**Chair Pershinske** opened the floor for public comments. No comments were brought forth from the audience.

## Reports

1. Stacy Haughey, UP Regional Coordinator: **Mrs. Haughey** provided the following updates:
  - The DNR lost one of its UP family members, wildlife technician Bill Rollo, 40 years old with two young children, who passed away unexpectedly at work January 21<sup>st</sup> at the Marquette Office. A very nice memorial service was held yesterday (February 3). She asked that his family be kept in everyone's thoughts.
  - There have been several temporary changes in DNR leadership recently. Dr. Bill Moritz has been appointed DNR Director in Director Keith Creagh's absence, while he has been temporarily appointed to head the DEQ. Director Moritz has been with the department for several years and had previously worked with the Safari Club International. Forest Resources Division Chief Bill O'Neill has been appointed as Natural Resources Deputy, Director Moritz's previous position, and Ms. Debbie Begalle has been appointed interim Forest Resources Division Chief.
  - **Mrs. Haughey** stated Mr. Jon Spieles will be interim U.P. Regional Coordinator during her maternity leave, which is expected to begin the end of March. She is expecting another baby girl.
  
2. DNR Division Reports: Written staff reports were provided via email to Council members on January 28, 2016. The following are verbal additions to those reports:
  - Lt. Skip Hagy, Law Enforcement Division: **Lt. Hagy** discussed the recent partnership with the Michigan Snowmobile Association (MSA) in spearheading a sound testing program throughout the state. Testing for the public will be available on February 20<sup>th</sup> at the Marquette, Newberry and Gaylord DNR offices. He stated another officer academy is currently being held with 24 new recruits. He is hopeful some of these recruits will be placed in the U.P. **Mr. Duke** added there have been complaints about the sound testing program; however, MSA is advising people they are the ones who have asked for this and they are pleased it is now available. **Mr. Hass** mentioned several sleds traveling through a recent dog sled race and how cautious and courteous the riders were. It was a very positive interaction with snowmobilers for about 7 ½ hours. **Lt. Hagy** noted there have been some recent snowmobile fatalities in the U.P. Most of the accidents have been due to speed and going off trail on corners. He also mentioned that donations for the Rollo family are being accepted at the Marquette DNR office. **Mr. Caswell** from the audience asked a specific law question; **Lt. Hagy** indicated he will talk with Mr. Caswell after the meeting.
  - Steve Scott, Fisheries Division: **Mr. Scott** stated he did not have any additions to the fisheries report. He cautioned the group on lake conditions; they are very unstable with the mild winter conditions. Several sleds and vehicles have gone through the ice or are getting stuck in slush.
  - Jon Spieles, Marketing & Outreach Division: **Mr. Spieles** stated the DNR is very engaged on social networks, educating the public on the state's parks and encouraging them to visit. Tahquamenon Falls has a video of the falls on its Facebook page and it has received more than 400,000 views. **Chair Pershinske** added he is amazed at the reach of the Pure Michigan ads, being shown in California.
  - Karen Rodock, Forest Resources Division: **Ms. Rodock** stated she is attending for Mr. Jeff Stampfly who is working with several U.P. forestry staff with incident management in lower Michigan due to their specialty with fire management. She added residents may notice some blasting and trucking of material in the area; Graymont is conducting testing in a local quarry.

**Chair Pershinske** noted that Graymont has contributed their first \$100,000 to the Mackinac County Economic Alliance and are currently accepting grant proposals.

- **Tom Paquin, Parks & Recreation Division:** **Mr. Paquin** added the Parks and Recreation Division also has some staff helping with incident management in lower Michigan, which is why he will be presenting later on for Mr. Paul Gaberdiel on the ORV trails topic. **Dr. Garvon** asked if trails were being groomed in a specific area; **Mr. Paquin** replied it should be the testing of a groomer only and he will look into it.
- **Terry Minzey, Wildlife Division:** **Mr. Minzey** added the following:
  - He touched on Bill Rollo's work history and dedication with the DNR over the past 15 years, along with his family life. The memorial held yesterday (March 3) included tributes from the Governor, Senator Casperson, Representative Kivela, MUCC, UP Whitetails of Marquette County and the Ruffed Grouse Society. He stated the South Marquette GEMS site will be renamed in his honor in the spring/summer. **Mr. Augustyn** stated Bill was always quiet at the UP Sportsman Coalition meetings, but he was a very hardworking guy from Alger County and he cared about what he did. **Mr. Minzey** stated Bill had three goals in life: to be a wildlife technician with the DNR, to have a family, and to teach his family to love the natural resources like he did. He succeeded in all his goals.
  - For position updates, a new wildlife tech position will be filled on February 28<sup>th</sup> in Newberry. A tech position is also being filled in Crystal Falls to replace Mr. Dave Dragon who left for a position in Minnesota.
  - The investigation of a dead 120-pound cougar found alongside the road in Iron Mountain is continuing. There is no further information at time.

## **Old Business**

1. **Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Update:** **Mr. Minzey** stated CWD is present in southern Michigan with the fifth case now being confirmed, and it is within 30 minutes of the U.P.'s southern border in Three Lakes, Wisconsin. In total, there has been over 4000 deer tested in southern Michigan with 5 found positive for CWD. There are currently no baiting and feeding laws in the five counties in and around the positive areas. When it was first discovered, it was hopeful it was in an isolated area; however, there seems to be an east to west spread. The economic impact of the disease to the Wildlife Division's operational budget will be significant with \$825,000, and possibly upwards of \$1.5 million, going towards testing and sampling and it may affect habitat work. **Chair Pershinske** asked if there is any possibility of funding through legislative efforts; **Mr. Minzey** replied there is potential, but the request would have to come from the legislators. Discussion ensued with questions pertaining to the number of deer farms, CWD symptoms in deer and the progression of the disease in deer. He stated as a precautionary measure in the U.P., they will begin testing deer (those taken in crop damage permits, road kills and hunter harvested deer) in the four counties that border Wisconsin (Gogebic, Iron, Dickinson, Menominee). He described the process of reporting a sick deer and the response plan. Discussion again ensued with questions pertaining to the length of symptoms, winter effects, the spread of the prion through baiting, the disease effects in other states, and the unique type of deer habitat in the U.P. which could be devastating if the disease enters the U.P. It was noted the disease found in southern Michigan likely occurred due to the transfer of an infected deer from another state.
  - **Mr. Caswell** from the audience asked what would happen if humans ate a CWD-infected deer. **Mr. Minzey** indicated there is no current evidence to suggest any risk to humans; however, the Centers for Disease Control recommend infected animals not be consumed as food by

humans. If a coyote were going to feed on a CWD-infected deer, it wouldn't contract the disease; however, it could spread the prion through defecation in the environment. Deer, moose, and elk can contract CWD.

- **Mr. Gorniak** asked what exactly is CWD if it's not a bacteria. **Mr. Minzey** explained it is a self-multiplying protein called a prion that is contained in saliva and other body fluids of infected animals. **Mr. Gorniak** stated he doesn't understand how it can live in the ground for years, be spread to a plant, and then infect a deer through the plant. **Mr. Minzey** stated the disease kills brain cells. **Mr. Augustyn** stated there are several reports about it from the west.

### **New Business**

1. **ORV Trails in the Eastern U.P.:** **Mr. Paquin** reported as part of the state trails program, Mr. Paul Gaberdiel, Eastern UP Trails Specialist out of Newberry, met with every township involving trails that link connecting communities. He explained the details to them and received their support. He is also talking with county road commissions. A trails proposal will be submitted this winter; once approval is given a map will go out, signs will be put up in the spring, and they will become designated ORV routes. Sponsors are already lined up. The entire route will be designated. A lot of the area is existing snowmobile trail; however, there is some private property involved as well.
2. **Camp Survey Results / 2016 Sportsman Coalition Meetings:** **Mr. Minzey** provided an overview on the latest summary of the U.P. Deer Camp Survey which just came out. He stated the deer numbers have substantially collapsed and the results of the survey support it. He discussed the antlerless deer to buck ratio; buck hunter success rates, which was expected to be low; and the adult doe to buck ratio, which indicates a small ban from the central western U.P. eastward ranging from 7-13 does to 1 buck. The most significant aspect of the summary is the loss in the reproduction of fawns. He discussed the predator aspect as well. His prediction is the mild winter this year will let the few fawns that do exist survive. It will take a while to build the deer population back up; he doesn't expect this year to be a good hunting season. He stated the full report will be coming out in the next day or two. He noted the 2016 schedule for the Sportsman Coalition meetings were in the meeting packet.
  - **Mr. Joe Caswell** from the audience was concerned with the use of dogs for hunting and/or training in July, thinking it would separate fawns from their mothers. **Mr. Minzey** stated fawns are larger by the summer and can handle being separated and do get back together with the mother. There is no data to indicate there is a problem.
  - **Chair Pershinske** asked if there have been conversations with the tribes regarding management of deer. **Mr. Minzey** replied the DNR does not have the authority to open negotiations with the tribes regarding deer management. He stated they are working to establish a teamwork effort, however. **Dr. Garvon** stated he knows a tribal wildlife biologist and they are aware of the issues.
  - **Chair Pershinske** asked what will happen next season. **Mr. Minzey** stated Rep. Dianda held three public meetings over the holidays collecting ideas and is sharing them with the NRC Commissioners. The DNR will not be making any recommendations this year as those that were made last year are still in effect; however, the NRC can make changes if they choose. The Wildlife Division will be meeting to discuss regulations for the next regulation cycle.
  - **Chair Pershinske** stated deer management may be a good issue for the Joint UPCAC meeting coming up. **Mrs. Haughey** stated efforts have been underway for some time, such as the regulation changes for last season and the work of the U.P. Wildlife Habitat Workgroup.

- A member of the audience suggested going back to 40 years ago when it was one deer per person and with a 15-day season, rather than 90 days.
- **Mr. Dewitt** asked if the DNR would bring back a bounty on coyotes. **Mr. Minzey** stated it would not be effective as 70% of coyotes would have to be killed to make a difference and the cost would be immense. Coyotes can be harvested from July 15 to April 15 with a base license or fur harvest license.

### **Next Meeting**

1. **Next Meeting Date:** **Chair Pershinske** noted the next meeting will be a Joint UPCAC meeting with the WUPCAC on Thursday, March 3 at the Marquette Township Community Center. The next regular meeting of the EUPCAC will be held on Thursday, April 21 at the Pentland Township Hall in Newberry.
2. **Topics for Joint Meeting & Next EUPCAC Meeting Agenda:** **Chair Pershinske** asked if there were any topics to consider for the Joint meeting. Mr. Moll suggested the cooperative agreements between the DNR and the US Forest Service (the Good Neighbor Authority).

### **Public Comments**

**Chair Pershinske** opened the floor for additional public comments.

- **Ms. Pat Wright** with the Chippewa County SORVA provided an update on the trail proposal they have been working with. She stated the SORVA group is sponsoring the DNR designated trail from the Soo to east of Raco and they are working with the forest service on a route from Raco. They are also working with them to open up more roads; however, it is a long process. She also stated there was a grant to have a study done in the eastern U.P. on what trails would be suitable for ORV use. A group is working with the study and two meetings have been held to present all the routes they would like to see open to ORVs. More information will come out in March. Discussion ensued regarding snowmobile and ORV registration issues, funding to clubs, law enforcement, etc. **Mrs. Haughey** stated it may be helpful to see a list of the grants and funding.

### **Closing Comments from the Council**

- **Mr. Gorniak** explained the recent action involving the delisting of wolves. He encouraged other council members to be involved.
- **Mr. Augustyn** asked for an update on the aquaculture proposals. **Mr. Scott** stated the three Quality of Life Departments (Departments of Ag, DEQ & DNR) have finished the intensive review process and are submitting a recommendation to the Governor's office. MUCC is sponsoring a bill to ban aquaculture on the Great Lakes. There are also multiple bills being created for and against aquaculture. **Mr. Augustyn** also discussed the number of U.P. fatalities involving snowmobiles. Discussion ensued regarding permits. **Lt. Hagy** encouraged those with complaints to call.

### **Adjourn**

There being no further business, **Chair Pershinske** adjourned the meeting at 8:27pm EST.