

West Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, December 16, 2008

Country Inn and Suites

919 Razorback Drive, Houghton

6:30-8:30 p.m. EST

WUP CAC Members Present:

Donald Britton

Marcy Cella

Floyd Dropps

Shawn Hagan

Pete Jandro

Fred "Mick" Jarvi

Lorana Jinkerson

David Johnson

Martin Johnson

George Lindquist

Rory Mattson

G. Dale McNamee

Chauncey Moran

James Schmierer

Warren Suchovsky

Philip Wirtanen

WUP CAC Members Absent:

Marvin Roberson

Robert "Skip" Schulz

Dennis Stachewicz, Jr.

Department of Natural Resources Staff Present:

Stacy Welling, Upper Peninsula (UP) Field Deputy, Marquette

Tom Courchaine, Acting Assistant Chief, Law Enforcement Division

Craig Albright, Wildlife Division, Escanaba

Debbie Begalle, Forest, Mineral and Fire Management (FMFM), Escanaba

Rich Hill, Parks and Recreation, Marquette

Darren Kramer, Fisheries, Escanaba

Tim Melko, Land and Facilities, Marquette

Lt. Tim Robson, Law Enforcement Division, Marquette

Steve Scott, Fisheries, Lake Superior Basin Coordinator, Newberry

Penny Bacon, Executive Division, Marquette

The West Upper Peninsula (WUP) Citizen Advisory Council (CAC) was called to order at 6:40 p.m. by Warren Suchovsky. Warren recognized Representative Mike Lahti and thanked him for coming to the meeting.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:

Floyd Dropps made a motion to accept the minutes. Jim Schmierer supported the motion. Motion passed.

Public Comment:

Keith Machiela opposes the new deer regulations for the UP. Mr. Machiela urges the CAC to ask the NRC to repeal the hunter's choice licensing program.

Discussion followed on the new antler restrictions in the UP. Dale McNamee thinks there needs to be some tweaking of the new restrictions.

Dave Cella would like the CAC to support a designated access site with sanitary facilities at the mouth of the Huron River. This area is heavily used by day users, campers, and serves as access to the river and Lake Superior

Discussion followed regarding funding, maintaining, and type of designation for the site. Warren Suchovsky asked Marcy Cella to provide a follow-up for a future agenda item.

Reports - Facilitator:

As the newly elected facilitator, Warren Suchovsky provided his leadership style:

- Help the council arrive at an action not to determine for the council what that action should be, except when presenting the concerns of the organization I represent.
- Responsible for developing the agenda in coordination with Dave Johnson, Co-facilitator, Stacy Welling and staff.
- Make decisions relative to the day to day operation of the council.
- The Council makes decisions relative to the council's position on issues
- Strongly encourage all members of the council to participate in discussion of issues. I will often go around the table and give each member a chance to voice their opinion.
- All debate on an issue is directed through me. I want all who wish to speak on an issue to do so before rebuttal by those who have already spoken. We must listen to others!
- According to the bylaws, the facilitator is the designated spokesperson for the council but in many instances other council members will be better versed in the particulars of an issue and they will be invited to present the council's position e.g. presentation to NRC, legislative committees, press functions.
- We are an advisory body! Our decisions on issues will usually be couched in terms of a recommendation and not a directive.
- Except when time is of the essence, I strongly encourage taking time to better understand an issue before developing a position; refer to committee, bring in "experts."
- The council represents many stakeholder groups, agenda items must show balance between resource concerns over the course of a year.
- Recognize the need for perception of concerns originating from the citizenry as well as the DNR's need to present information and to solicit input to their issues
- Constraints e.g. financial, staff availability, outside presenters. (I'll be working with Stacy on resolving constraints.)

Agenda preparation:

- Top priority is to bring forth issues identified by the council or its members.
- Bring issues originating from the DNR to council.

- Have a stockpile of issues so that similar topics can be made a focal item for a particular meeting.
- Old business will pertain to issues that have been tabled, referred to committee, or postponed.
- Special presentations are usually by DNR staff, non-governmental organizations, state or federal agencies in response to informing the council on an issue. Often 15 to 30 minutes in length.
- Heed need for timeliness relative to pending DNR Commission and division's calendars and legislature's committee activity.
- The presenter of an issue should: outline the issue in a brief sentence or two, suggest the amount of time they will need, supply an action verb that signals the council as to what the presenter expects the council to do, e.g. support a non-governmental organization position, develop a position on an issue, testify at a commission meeting, and suggest at which future meeting they would like to present their issue.
- Future agenda items can usually be very briefly suggested during discussion on next meeting or in closing comments and followed up with a note to Warren, Dave, Stacy and Penny with the information requested in the above bullet.
- We need to have agenda item information at least a month in advance so that various deadlines and arrangements can be met.

For presentations:

- We will have a flip chart and scribe available.
- We will have a laptop and projector available.
- If using a computer put your info on an "usb" quick, flash or jump drive device so we can plug it into the laptop.
- Let us know in advance other needs you may have.

Potential agenda items:

- How do treaties affect the WUP
- US Government agency regulations and motorized access
- Creel limits for salmon
- Forest health impact on various stakeholder groups
- A primer on DNR budget and accounting process
- Adding a college student to the council
- Bears
- Non-industrial landowner resources
- Inland fish stocking
- DNR road use

Warren also said we will listen to others, it's extremely important that we listen to each other and try to understand and begin to understand where each other is coming from.

UP Field Deputy: Tom Courchaine said he is impressed with the CAC and feels they made a good choice electing Warren as their facilitator. Tom suggested to the CAC as they develop their agenda to keep agenda items local to the meeting location, for example the Huron River. More local agenda items will have more positive results. Tom's acting position as the UP Field Deputy has ended. Tom said developing the CAC's took up most of his time as acting UP Field Deputy. He said the Council has

come a long way in just a few short meetings. Tom introduced Stacy Welling, the newly appointed UP Field Deputy and read a brief bio on Stacy.

Stacy Welling thanked Tom for his support during this transitional period. Stacy said she is looking forward to working with the Council on issues. Stacy provided some of her job duties. She said the position functions as the Director's representative in the UP, building and maintaining relationships with the local NRC Commissioners, community leaders, legislators, stakeholder groups, employees and citizens of the state. The position assures that departmental activities are appropriately communicated and the local issues are included in the department process. My responsibility is to serve as a liaison between the Department and the public...it's a two way street of communication. My job is not to run operations in the UP. We have experts in the DNR and some of them are in this room, my job is to take information from them and the public

Please let Stacy know if your group or organization has a meeting. Stacy would like to attend if her schedule permits.

Stacy attended a budget meeting today via conference call. She reported, as of right now the Game and Fish fund is projected less than our anticipated revenue. We don't have a specific amount yet but Stacy will provide a detailed report at the next meeting. From a Federal standpoint the Department has provided projects for the Federal stimulus package in case it gets approved. If approved, this will eliminate some of the pressure on that fund.

Rory Mattson thanked Stacy for the clarification on her position. Rory has received well over 300 phone calls asking questions and if Stacy is qualified for the position. The average person looks at you as being the head of the DNR in the UP. Rory asked Stacy if she will be making recommendations directly to the Director. Stacy said yes, but the recommendations will come from the public and the experts in the field within the Department not my own personal beliefs. Stacy also said her boss is the Director and if there is an issue it goes right to the Director.

Warren thanked Tom for being instrumental in the development of the CAC's and getting the Council moving in the right direction.

Staff Updates:

Darren Kramer, Fisheries are conducting winter work, repairing gear, entering data, aging scales, writing lake prescriptions and management reports. In the spring they'll be taking walleye eggs.

Craig Albright, Wildlife Division said the snowfall and extreme temperatures will have an impact on deer survival. We'll be measuring snowfall and checking deer yards. We can use your help by reporting imperiled or dying deer sightings so we can factor that information into next year's recommendation. This year for the WUP the black bear harvest was at 1,025, right at eight year average and we are managing for a stable and stationary population. We'll be conducting our bi-annual aerial survey for moose in January. We'll also be doing our annual wolf survey January through March, sampling in 13 of the 21 wolf survey units. The wolves are back on the Federal endangered species

list. The US Fish & Wildlife along with the DNR feel that the wolves have recovered and we'll be working to have them removed from the Federal list.

Rich Hill, Parks and Recreation said basically, state parks are shut down and most of their seasonal employees are laid off. The park employees are working inside conducting facility and equipment maintenance and building skid piers. The park reservation system can accept reservations six months in advance and currently accepting reservations for June 2009. They are hoping for an increase in reservations since camp nights are down 8% for the year.

Steve Scott, Fisheries said the three rod limit takes effect April 1, 2009. Anglers can use three rods for open water and ice fishing. Increasing the salmon bag limit from three to five is before the NRC. This year spearing season for northern pike started on December 1 and will close on March 15, 2009 along with the hook and line season for walleye and pike. We are struggling with our northern pike, walleye and muskies program because of Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS) virus. The disease hasn't spread in Michigan waters but we still need to be diligent in our day to day business. VHS hasn't been found in the Lake Superior basin but the consequence is not having a walleye stocking program in Lake Superior basin again this year.

Debbie Begalle, FMFM said grooming of snowmobile trails started December 1. Also, cross country ski trails are being groomed. They are also working on forest inventory and timber sales.

Special Presentations: - None

Old Business: - None

New Business:

Introduction to UP non-industrial landowner resources: **Rory Mattson** represents Michigan Association of Conservation District (MACD). The MACD is not developing a plan but supports the concept of a plan. Rory will present his proposal over three CAC meetings: introduction; ask for support; voting on support or non-support. Rory said this same plan will be presented to the EUP. Rory provided a handout outlining Michigan's land base and a breakdown of the UP non-industrial private lands. Rory said if you took everybody's budget it equals to 0.03 of 1% is spent on the non-industrial private land. Rory will bring a proposal that MACD put together, he said it affects the UP a lot, and we are asking you to support the concept.

Rory also noted at the last CAC meeting, members would provide handouts (at this meeting) on youth days/programs in their areas. Rory provided a handout on Delta County Agriculture & Natural Resources Tour.

Lorana Jinkerson represents Friends of Blueberry Ridge (FOBBR). Blueberry Ridge is a cross country ski pathway in Sands Township, Marquette County. Lorana provided a written proposal from the FOBBR proposing a fee to use cross-country ski trails to support the grooming of trails. The ski pass would be sold as an annual or daily pass. They have the support of Representative Steve Lindberg. Representative Lindberg will propose a bill in January for a statewide trail fee for all the ski pathways in the state. The FOBBR would like a letter of support from the Council to take to the State Legislators. The trail pass would be enforced and sold like hunting or fishing licenses.

Discussion followed on supporting a trail fee pass or an all encompassing user pass to use state land. Warren asked Lorana Jinkerson and Shawn Hagan to plan a presentation for the February meeting.

Marty Johnson represents Great Lakes Sport & Recreation Club; they will support the planting of brown trout in the waters of Green Bay off the Cedar and Ford Rivers in May. Because of the predator prey relationship between the walleye and the fingerlings they don't support planting in February. Marty said Mike Herman wants to eliminate the current slot limit for walleye on the bay. Marty said if Mike supports the planting of brown trout in the bay, they'll support the elimination of the slot limit. Marty also said they would like the plants doubled to 160,000. Marty asked the Council to support the position of the GLSRC. Discussion followed on the fish plants. It was suggested to stay with the options Mike Herman provided at the last meeting and not add anything to the current proposal. Rory Mattson made a motion to eliminate the splake plantings and replace with brown trout. The motion was supported by several members. Motion passed.

George Lindquist clarified proposed changes to the single buck license. Under this proposal a hunter could purchase one buck license, the license would be good for all seasons combined. Warren Suchovsky asked George to prepare a formalized proposal. Discussion followed on the licenses and deer management. Warren would like to have a position paper on this subject so the members could digest between now and the next meeting. Warren also asked Craig Albright to help on this subject. At the next meeting, we'll have a round table discussion on deer observations.

Next Meeting:

Warren asked Floyd Dropps to host the next meeting. Floyd made a motion to hold the next meeting at the Township Hall in Crystal Falls. Motion supported by Chauncey Moran. Motion passed. Discussion followed regarding where and when to meet. Rory Mattson said at the January NRC meeting, the Crossbow Committee will look at four or five options on crossbows, they will pick two options. Those options will be presented to the NRC in February and as an action item at the March NRC meeting.

Rory Mattson made a motion to meet in January in Menominee County and in February meet in Crystal Falls. Dave Johnson supported the motion. Motion passed.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 15, 2009 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. EST in Menominee County, possibly in Powers. The meeting location will be determined. The January agenda items will include deer and crossbows.

George Lindquist said Michigan United Conservation Clubs has formed a deer workgroup to look at deer management. They will host meetings across the State including the WUP.

Marcy Cella made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mick Jarvi supported the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.