

Western Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council (WUPCAC)

Meeting Minutes

Monday, September 15, 2014

5:30-6:00pm EST DNR Division Reports * 6:00-8:00pm EST Council Meeting

Michigan Tech University, Memorial Union Building, Houghton, MI

Facilitator: Phil Wirtanen Co-Facilitator: Warren Suchovsky

Council Members Present

David Anthony

Ken Buchholtz

Floyd Dropps

Larry Heathman

Mick Jarvi

Dave Johnson

Katherine Kruse

George Lindquist

Jim Lorenson

Rory Mattson

Chauncey Moran

Jim Schmierer

Robert "Skip" Schulz

Bob Stinson

Warren Suchovsky

Phil Wirtanen

Council Members Absent/Excused

David Anderson

Jerry Divine

Michael Holmes

Travis Smith

Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Staff Liaisons

Kristi Dahlstrom, Executive Division, Marquette

Bill Doan, Parks and Recreation Division, Baraga

John DePue, Wildlife Division, Baraga

Stacy Haughey, Upper Peninsula Regional Coordinator, Marquette

George Madison, Fisheries Division, Baraga

Tim Melko, Finance and Operations Division, Marquette

Brian Roell, Wildlife Division, Marquette

Jeff Stampfly, Forest Resources Division, Marquette

Sgt. Denny Gast, Law Enforcement Division, Houghton

Special Guests

Commissioner JR Richardson, Chair of the Natural Resources Commission (NRC)

Mrs. Haughey began the DNR Division Reports portion of the WUPCAC meeting at 5:36pm EST. She welcomed two representatives from Senator Casperson's office, Dr. Kirk Schott and Mr. Dale McNamee. She also welcomed NRC Commissioner JR Richardson.

She explained the public comment portion of the meeting and encouraged those in the audience who wish to speak to fill out a comment card.

DNR Division Reports

Written staff reports were provided to Council members on September 8, 2014. The following verbal updates were provided.

- **Stacy Welling Haughey, UP Regional Coordinator:** **Mrs. Haughey** thanked Michigan Tech University for hosting this evening's meeting and she thanked the public for attending as well. She also thanked those Council members who attended the August Natural Resources

Commission (NRC) meeting held in Munising. There was a large UCPAC presence there. After the meeting concluded, Commissioner John Madigan announced his resignation from the NRC. He was recently appointed to the state's Travel Commission by the Governor. The open NRC position will be filled by the Governor's Appointment Office. Interested individuals can apply online. She also informed the group that language in the new license package legislation indicates the DNR does not have the authority to reprint a license if it's lost. If a license is lost, it has to be repurchased. If a license was purchased through the online system, there is the ability to reprint it from a personal printer if the file was saved. The DNR is working on ways to fix the issue, but until then, keep licenses in a good location.

- It was asked, if a Conservation Officer (CO) checks someone out in the field and they have lost their license, is the CO able to verify if the person is a license holder from out in the field. **Sgt. Gast** indicated yes, but only as long as the person has good identification on them. If a kill-tag is lost, it has to be repurchased regardless. **Mr. Melko** indicated they are working on getting the language regarding lost licenses changed.

Mrs. Haughey also informed the Council that Mr. Ron Yesney, a recreation specialist from Marquette, has been at Mayo Clinic for 3 months with a serious illness. She stated Mr. Bill Doan and Mr. Rob Katona are covering his projects in the meantime.

- **Commissioner JR Richardson, NRC:** Commissioner Richardson thanked everyone for volunteering their time, energy and thoughts for the Council. He stated the Council is a vital part of the NRC's decision making process.
- **Jeff Stampfly, Forest Resource Division:** Mr. Stampfly stated there were no additions to his written report.
- **George Madison, Fisheries Division:** Mr. Madison stated he didn't have any additions to the written report. He noted that due to the big rain/wind storm last week, a lot of debris has been washed up, causing hazards in the waters and hampering fish outings. Several fishing tournaments start in the darkness and they should be aware of floating logs and debris which could cause damage to boats.
 - **Mr. Moran** asked about the salmon trout river project. **Mr. Madison** stated DEQ staff were at the project last week to check on the sediment control efforts during the storm. He provided a brief update on the status, stating things seem to be controlled.
- **Bill Doan, Parks and Recreation Division:** Mr. Doan noted the storm last week also caused infrastructure damage in several parks and access sites. McClain State Park lost 10-12 feet of shoreline and part of a campground road. The management plan for that park is in the planning stages and this brought the reason for the plan forward. They will continue to work on a long-term solution to the erosion issues. The Ohman Creek boating access site lost about 20 feet of the parking lot and about 50 feet of shoreline. Crews cleaned up the parking lot today and will continue this week. Hopefully by midweek it will be usable again.
 - **Mr. Schulz** asked if there was an update on the Ironwood/Wakefield ORV trail and the acquisition of two different grades. **Mr. Doan** stated there has been some progress; however, the project is with the Attorney General's office and he is not aware of status. **Mr. Schulz** also asked if Bewabic State Park is open to ORV's yet. **Mr. Doan** replied that it is not. He stated he is not aware there has been a formal request, unless it was before he began as a supervisor. He noted anyone can submit a request.

- **Commissioner Richardson** stated there are plans to hire another recreation specialist in the U.P. specifically for real estate/easement issues. **Mr. Doan** added this type of position has been lacking for years. The position will be funded as of October 1st and it is hoped it will be filled by January.
 - **Mr. Anthony** asked if there were resources available to compensate landowners for easements; **Mr. Doan** replied yes and explained the process.
 - **Mr. Suchovsky** asked if the Land and Water Conservation Fund could be used to purchase easements; **Mr. Doan** stated most likely not. The trust fund is more of a possibility.
 - **Tim Melko, Finance & Operations Division:** **Mr. Melko** stated hunting season is now underway. He informed the group that baiting for deer can now begin on September 15th this year. There are leftover turkey licenses available as well.
 - **Brian Roell, Wildlife Division:** **Mr. Roell** stated he is representing Mr. Minzey this evening and did not have any additions to the report. He noted that bear season has been a little slow, which started during the storm last week. Hound hunting started today. The bear being brought into check stations are good size bears. Grouse seem to be up. Across the grouse production states, it's being suggested the grouse are up 17%.
 - **Mr. Lindquist** stated he lives on a gravel road and tracks woodcock along that road each year. This year with the late snow, the birds seem to have disappeared.
 - **Mr. Dropps** asked which bird benefits from fluffy snow. **Mr. Roell** replied grouse and explained why.
 - **Mr. Moran** asked if there was any report on the GEMS areas. **Mr. Roell** stated the south Marquette County GEM has seen a lot of grouse. The GEMS areas will be very helpful to the person just getting into grouse hunting or to young people learning to hunt grouse.
 - **Mr. Jarvi** stated in the Keweenaw, the grouse are way down. **Mr. Roell** stated there isn't a lot of aspen in that area. However, west of Iron County is doing very well.
 - **Mr. Schulz** stated he feeds geese and asked if there were any rules against it. **Mr. Roell** stated unless there is a county or township ordinance against it, he's not aware of any laws; **Sgt. Gast** concurred.
 - **Mr. Suchovsky** talked about clear-cuts up to the water's edge, which is good for woodcock, and asked if this is being looked at. **Mr. Roell** stated he's been encouraging cutting up to the edges when able to. The Wildlife Division works with the Fisheries and Forestry Divisions on those areas.
- Mr. Roell** introduced the new biologist located in Baraga, Mr. John DePue, who comes from Maine's DNR and has years of furbearing experience. **Mr. DePue** provided a brief synopsis of his background. He was in Maine for 6 years and his wife has family in the Houghton area. He is an avid trapper and also enjoys fishing, bird hunting, biking, skiing and ice fishing. He also noted he has done research on trapping of tigers in Africa. **Mr. Lindquist** asked him about the ballot proposal in Maine on bears; **Mr. DePue** provided a brief overview.
- **Sgt. Denny Gast, Law Enforcement Division:** Sgt. Gast stated he is attending for Lt. Wright. If there are any questions for him, let him know.

Call To Order

Facilitator Wirtanen called the regular meeting to order at 6:09pm EST. Members recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Adoption of Agenda

Facilitator Wirtanen asked if there were any additions to the agenda. **Mr. Schulz** asked if a get well letter could be added to the agenda; **Facilitator Wirtanen** stated he will add it to #4 under New Business. **Mr. Lindquist** asked if the topic of NRC appointments be added as well; **Facilitator Wirtanen** stated this also will be added to #4 under New Business. **Mr. Suchovsky** motioned to accept the amended agenda; **Mr. Lorensen** supported the motion. **Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: Mr. Anderson, Mr. Divine, Mr. Holmes, Mr. Smith. Motion carried.**

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Facilitator Wirtanen asked if there were any corrections or additions to the July 21, 2014 WUPCAC meeting minutes which were emailed to each member previously. **Mr. Mattson** stated he would like a sentence stricken on Page 2 under Item 2. **Facilitator Wirtanen** agreed. There were no other corrections noted. **Mr. Johnson** motioned to approve the minutes with the correction made; **Mr. Buchholtz** supported the motion. **Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: Mr. Anderson, Mr. Divine, Mr. Holmes, Mr. Smith. Motion carried.**

Public Comments on Agenda Items Only

Facilitator Wirtanen explained the procedure for this section of the meeting and opened the floor for public comments.

- Ms. Nancy Warren, who registered to speak prior to the meeting, discussed the wolf management plan as it pertains to wolf-dog conflicts. She distributed a handout to the Council. She stated her issue is with bear baiting, as there is no science to support the need for it. Wolves are attracted to bear bait piles. She spoke about chocolate bear bait not being banned. She stated there is a need to discourage activities that increase the incidences of wolf depredation and to remove wolf visitation at bear baits.
 - **Facilitator Wirtanen** asked her to summarize her intent; Ms. Warren stated she'd like to see a restriction on the amount of bear bait utilized. It shouldn't be unlimited amounts (meat products), which attracts wolves, but doesn't necessarily attract bear, and increases wolf depredation.
 - **Mr. Schulz** asked about the status of chocolate as bait. **Mr. Roell** stated the DNR did propose banning chocolate; however, the NRC did not have enough justification to endorse it. He stated he knows of a few raccoons killed, but to his knowledge, no bears or wolves were killed by eating chocolate bear bait. **Mr. Schulz** asked to have some justification to using chocolate for bear baiting.
 - **Mr. Mattson** stated presenters sometimes put a spin on the science they reference. Bears can digest chocolate fine, but other animals cannot. He stated the DNR cannot get the bear kill if bait was banned or limited. He stated to Ms. Warren that she stated she's not interested in banning hunting, but the groups in which she associates with

does. Ms. Warren said she is not opposed to hunting and is not here representing a group. She wanted to state there is a need to take steps to control wolf depredations.

Old Business

1. **Wolf Management Update:** **Mr. Roell** provided an update on the wolf management plan. He stated the latest initiative was passed by legislation, and it will not take effect until 90 days after last day of legislation, which will be in March or April 2015. There are two initiatives still on the ballot for November. If defeated, the authority would go back to the NRC. However, there would still not be enough time for a wolf hunt to occur; votes have to be vetted, etc. The NRC has stated there will not be a wolf season in 2014 at its last meeting.
 - **Mr. Mattson** asked if the initiatives are defeated in November, would the DNR recommend a hunt in January or February 2015, or wait until the fall of 2015. He stated these hunts are to control the population and it shouldn't wait another year. He feels something should be set up to have one soon. **Commissioner Richardson** stated the NRC is waiting to be briefed on the matter. The NRC has to be briefed and if it's something they wish to pursue they would have to vote on it.
 - **Facilitator Wirtanen** asked if the opposing referendum is passed in November, would there be any impact on the legislation just passed. **Mr. Roell** stated no, it would not affect the legislation just passed.
 - Mr. Tony Demboski from the audience stated the Upper Peninsula Sportsman's Alliance spearheaded this campaign and he would like to offer his thank you to everyone in the U.P. who set the pace.

New Business

1. **Houghton Keweenaw County Recreation Authority's Trail Proposal:** Mr. Glen Tolksdorf, member of the Houghton Keweenaw County Recreation Authority, presented the Authority's trail proposal. He stated the Authority represents all aspects of recreation, such as mountain biking, ORV riding, horseback riding, etc. They are proposing permanent trail access, representing both motorized and non-motorized users, up to Calumet and beyond that to Keweenaw Point (approximately 200 miles). The Authority has been together since 2013 and has worked on the proposal for over a year. He stated they want to work with the DNR through the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund to eliminate the need for a 25% match. There are some land trades involved. He has spoken with Mr. Bill Doan and Mr. Rob Katona from the DNR for their support. They also have great support from Senator Casperson and Representative Dianda. He stated he is looking to the Council for their support as well.
 - **Facilitator Wirtanen** asked if all recreation types will be able to use the entire trail or just portions of it. Mr. Tolksdorf stated segments, as some are walking trails, etc.
 - **Mr. Johnson** asked if the Authority was taking it through eminent domain. Mr. Tolksdorf stated many pieces of the trail are corporate-owned by GMO. The rest are small domains.
 - **Mr. Mattson** asked if this was done about four years ago. **Mrs. Haughey** stated that it was a different project. This is really a unique proposal, with motorized and non-

motorized users working together. She felt it would be helpful for the Council to be aware of it as it moves through the process.

- **Mr. Lorenson** stated the Trails/Recreation/Law Committee will review the information and if/when necessary, forward a resolution of support for the Council's consideration.
- **Mr. Schulz** stated, historically, the landowner GMO has been very specific as to which type of ORV can be used on trails on his land. For instance, motorcycles are not allowed, but other types are. It would be important to obtain a connector to other trails for those not allowed.
- **Mr. Suchovsky** asked if the Authority has tied into recommendations from a Keweenaw acquisition. It was stated that the Copper Harbor Trails Club is working on trails that were part of that project. There has been very slow progress on those recommendations.

The Council thanked Mr. Tolksdorf for coming to the meeting and providing the information on the proposal.

2. Habitat Update

- *U.P. Wildlife Habitat Workgroup:* **Commissioner Richardson** stated the NRC has started a grassroots group for U.P. wildlife habitat. Last winter wasn't good for wildlife and this winter may not improve the situation. The group will meet on Friday, September 19 with representatives from U.P. Whitetails and U.P. Sportsman's Alliance (UPSA) as well as other local groups involved. This is a group put together to advise the NRC/DNR on what should be done and how it should be done. He noted Mr. Mattson has been asking about purchased game lands; habitat is part of it. The NRC wants to make sure they are doing the right thing. Everyone works hard to work together. There isn't a mission statement yet for the group as he would like the group to create one at their next meeting.
 - **Mr. Schulz** asked if "habitat" is animal specific or includes all animals. **Commissioner Richardson** replied all habitat will be considered. He stated if the group wants to set deer as a #1 priority and rabbits as a #5 priority, for example, it will be their prerogative. The workgroup will also be looking at deer yards as well.
 - **Mr. Moran** asked about waterfowl hunting in the UP. **Mr. Roell** stated the Wildlife Division is looking at all kinds of wildlife floodings for waterfowl. **Commissioner Richardson** recommended talking to George Lindquist (WUPCAC and U.P. Whitetails) or Tony Demboski (UPSA), both who are on the workgroup, to get specific issues, like waterfowl, brought into the workgroup's conversation.
 - **Mr. Schulz** asked about the role of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) with habitat. **Commissioner Richardson** stated he gives Forest Resources Division Chief Bill O'Neill all the credit as he has gone out of his way to reach out to the USFS. **Mr. Roell** stated Mr. Terry Minzey has also worked with the USFS in collaborating with their GEMS process. It was stated the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) has been working with the USFS to set up timber sales to do more cutting, specifically in the Ottawa Forest. **Commissioner Richardson** stated he is looking forward to the workgroup.

- **Mr. Buchholtz** mentioned the NWTf has a biologist, whose salary is partly paid by the USFS. This collaborative relationship helps to make things better.

- *Habitat Improvements:* **Mr. Roell** stated the Wildlife Division is look at setting up contracts for more oak plantings to replace the Beech. They are looking at different types of oak and reviewing options with the forest health specialist. He added it would be nice to have all pure red oak, which won't transmit oak wilt, and to have breaks of other species as well. A lot is hinging on the budget for the next year, but another round of aspen, especially mass producing trees, is being expected. The new license package has allowed for staff to accomplish several different projects that weren't able to be done previously, such as widening openings, etc. They are also working with local farmers on crop rotations.

- *Deer Herd Forecast:* **Mr. Roell** stated early indicators point to a very low fawn production based on their fawn survivability reviews. A good indicator will be to see what kind of production there is mid-winter. It is estimated that there are three age classes of deer that have been lost due to the recent severe winters. As a result, the Wildlife Division has really cut back on crop damage permits this year. Granting of Deer Management Assistance Permits (DMAPs) are very conservative; permits for population control are being denied. As for a projection for this winter season, it is difficult to determine as there hasn't been a good prediction of the type of winter we will have.
 - **Facilitator Wirtanen** asked about the fawn predation study. **Mr. Roell** stated the study is ongoing. There is one more year of capturing adult does and corresponding predators. Then there will be a year off, and with funding, the study will hopefully move to the high snowfall zone since they have already completed the low snowfall zone. **Facilitator Wirtanen** asked if there was mention of predation by nature. **Mr. Roell** replied in 20 below zero degree weather, deer have to move to maintain body heat.
 - **Mr. Schulz** asked if there was any concern about the CWD reported in central Wisconsin. **Mr. Roell** stated it is high on the radar and they continue to watch where it travels.
 - **Mr. Lindquist** asked about the Petrel deer yard in the eastern U.P. and if there were any plans to start something similar in the western UP. Mr. Roell replied not at this time.
 - **Mr. Suchovsky** mentioned he has a game camera this year and hasn't seen as many twin fawns this spring. Only in one instance was there a picture of a doe with a fawn. **Mr. Roell** stated it goes back to the poor fawn survivability. The does coming through the winter weren't producing viable fawns.
 - **Mr. Mattson** stated he brought the topic up to numerous people about relaxing the feeding regulations based on science. It is known what's been lost and what is expected of the deer herd. He stated predators are at an all-time high and deer are at an all-time low. He is hoping, rather than wait until January when people cannot get into the areas to help or cannot get the feed, the DNR and NRC will choose to

relax supplemental feedings earlier. **Mr. Roell** stated the predators suffered just as much, so they may not be at an all-time high as Mr. Mattson said.

- **Mr. Jarvi** stated he has been trying to get the DNR up to the Keweenaw to help the deer in that area. Local clubs have put out 62 tons of feed. He asked for the DNR to come up there and help, possibly with cutting. **Mrs. Haughey** stated the state only owns 3.2% of the land in Keweenaw County, indicating the need for more private partnerships. **Mr. Jarvi** if state land isn't the best habitat in that area, then they need help to find an alternative.
 - **Mr. Suchovsky** stated discussions talk a lot about the use of good science. He recently seen an article that doesn't recommend supplemental feeding and he wonders which science should be listened to—biological/physical science vs. social science. He suggested bringing in experts for a discussion at a future meeting.
 - **Mr. Schmierer** asked about deer browse and with the numbers down, would it be time to move on planting projects. **Mr. Roell** stated this is the time. If the population is up, it cannot be done.
 - **Mr. Schulz** asked if the DNR is thinking of increasing the harvest of bear to decrease bear predation on fawns. **Mr. Roell** replied no, this is not being discussed.
 - **Mr. Stinson** asked if the DNR is taking into account the vast number of wolves that are eating a lot of deer in the winter. In light of the wolf population, it should be considered on whether or not supplemental feeding is good or bad and whose version of science is used.
3. Trapping Update: **Mr. Stampfly** stated a letter was included in the meeting packets which was sent to commercial forest (CF) landowners and DNR staff that confirms trapping as an extension of hunting, thereby allowing it to be done on CF properties. This also means that traps no longer have to be pulled daily.
4. Additional Agenda Items Added by Council: During the beginning portion of the meeting, the following items were added to the agenda:
- *Get Well Letter*: **Mr. Schulz** asked that a get well letter be sent from the Council to Mr. Ron Yesney. As Mrs. Haughey mentioned earlier, he has been hospitalized with a serious illness for the last 3 months. Mr. Yesney has been instrumental in trail development and progress throughout the U.P. **Mr. Schulz motioned to send the letter; Mr. Jarvi supported the motion. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: Mr. Anderson, Mr. Divine, Mr. Holmes, Mr. Smith. Motion carried.**
 - *Letter of Thanks & Congratulations*: The Council suggested a letter of thanks and congratulations to NRC Commissioner Madigan, who recently resigned from the NRC to seek a position on the state's Travel Commission, for all the good work he has done with his years on the NRC and to offer best wishes on his new position. **A motion was made and supported to send a letter as indicated. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: Mr. Anderson, Mr. Divine, Mr. Holmes, Mr. Smith. Motion carried.**
 - *Letter of Recommendation*: **Mr. Lindquist** asked that the Council support a letter of recommendation for the appointment of another U.P. member to the NRC. He distributed a paragraph including sample language. He would like to see Commissioner

JR Richardson retained when his term expires in December and he would like to see another U.P. representative be appointed to Commissioner Madigan's open position. Discussion continued on language of the letter as well as to whom it should be directed. The Council understood that the Governor's Appointments Division handles the appointments, but the letter will be forward to DNR Director Creagh with a copy to Mr. Dave Nyberg, Director for the Governor's Northern Michigan Office. **Mr. Moran** stated that he's met with Director Creagh several times and he is a team builder, visits the U.P. frequently, and would most likely be supportive of another U.P. appointment. **Mr. Suchovsky** stated he recalls several years ago the Council supporting two commissioners from the U.P. It was agreed by the Council that Facilitator Wirtanen, Mr. Lindquist, and Mrs. Haughey can develop the appropriate language for the letter on the Council's behalf. **Mr. Anthony motioned to send the letter of recommendation; Mr. Moran supported the motion. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: Mr. Anderson, Mr. Divine, Mr. Holmes, Mr. Smith. Motion carried.**

Committee Reports

1. **Trails/Recreation/Law**: **Mr. Lorensen**, lead for the committee, reported the committee has met (copy of minutes in meeting packet) and prepared a resolution for the Council's consideration regarding supporting the creation of legislation to revise the ATV/ORV registration and trail permit fees to be more understandable and easier to administer. **Mr. Lorensen** stated he surveyed a few vendors himself and they either did not know the answer or gave different answers regarding the permits. **Mr. Mattson** stated he agrees with the concept, but he feels it doesn't solve the problem. There are still roads with very small sections of trails that people use to get to camps that could cause a person to be in violation. The two-part system isn't working. **Mr. Lindquist** indicated there is only one state-designated trail in Marquette County and he would hate to see his rates go up for such a small section of trail he might use. **Mr. Lorensen** noted the point is people don't understand the current system and it's not working the way it was intended. **Mr. Schulz** stated his association was against the change in the fees from the start. He feels officer discretion on those small sections of trails is not the way to go. **Mr. Lorensen motioned to approve the resolution; Mr. Suchovsky supported the motion. Ayes: 15. Nays: 1. Absent: Mr. Anderson, Mr. Divine, Mr. Holmes, Mr. Smith. Motion carried. Mr. Suchovsky** added it is a small price to pay for the types of recreation we have. **Mr. Schulz** stated he is worried about the tourism and getting others to come to the U.P.

Mr. Schulz noted that the committee also talked about encouraging current clubs to help support new clubs by sharing maintenance contracts. **Mr. Lorensen** explained and noted the discussion will continue at a future committee meeting.

2. **Fisheries**: **Mr. Anthony** stated there is no report from the committee at this time.
3. **Forestry**: **Mr. Schmierer**, lead for the committee, stated there is no report.
4. **Wildlife**: **Mr. Lindquist**, the new lead for the committee as Mr. Smith had to step down due to a job promotion, stated there hasn't been a meeting yet; however, he has sent out an

email with a link to the predator prey study to review. Items the committee will look at in the near future include game purchased lands and habitat improvements. He is a member of the NRC's new U.P. Wildlife Habitat Workgroup so he is hoping to bring back information from that group to this committee and the Council. Discussion ensued regarding ideas on how/when to meet, such as conference call use. **Mr. Suchovsky** mentioned the EUPCAC has a CWD subcommittee. Mrs. Dahlstrom provided a brief update on that committee's goal to increase public education about CWD. The Council agreed they would like to have a WUPCAC member sit in on one of their meetings in the near future. **Mr. Mattson** reminded the group he had an item on the agenda (game purchased lands) at the last WUPCAC meeting and it was approved to send it to the Wildlife Committee. It hasn't been addressed yet. He stated UPSA met with Director Creagh and the NRC in August, so it would be timely to talk about it. Mr. Demboski (UPSA) from the audience noted that he talked to Director Creagh and Wildlife Division Chief Russ Mason, and UPSA will be moving forward on a separate committee for game purchased lands.

DNR Reports on Requested Information

Mrs. Haughey stated the following were requests for additional information at the last meeting or prior to this meeting and follow-up has been forwarded to the Council via email: 1. ORV Press Release, 2. List of Wildlife Committee Members; and 3. Links to Veterans Events. If there are any further question regarding these items, members can contact her.

Next Meeting

1. **Next Meeting Date:** **Facilitator Wirtanen** noted the next WUPCAC meeting will be held Monday, November 10, 2014 in Dickinson County, which was previously rescheduled from December 8, 2014 due to a history of inclement weather in December. Members debated the date change and the majority came to the conclusion that the November date remains a better option. A location for the November meeting will be forthcoming.
2. **Items for Next Meeting Agenda:** **Facilitator Wirtanen** asked if there were any suggestions for agenda items for the next meeting. **Mr. Suchovsky** suggested a short presentation on the Menominee State Recreation Area with an update on the management plan. **Mr. Schulz** suggested having a representative from the Forest Service talk about partnerships with the DNR. CWD and GEMS accessibility were also topics proposed.

Public Comments

Facilitator Wirtanen opened the floor to members of the audience for their comments about general topics.

- Mr. Dale McNamee stated there was a very successful meeting the other night regarding a road closure in Menominee County. He thanked Mrs. Haughey and Mr. Stampfly for a very successful meeting. The area will remain open now. He stated Senator Casperson's office stands strong in that they want any state land to be open to the people. For instance, one of the GEM areas contains 7,000 acres in the U.P. He asked if it would be possible to have it divided in half, so half can be designated as walk-in only and the other half would be open to motorized vehicles. He would like this Council to consider having the GEM areas be

accessible to disabled persons. **Facilitator Wirtanen** suggested referring this topic to the Trails/Recreation/Law Committee for further review. **Mr. Lorensen** stated he will send an email to Mr. McNamee. **Mrs. Haughey** indicated the GEMS are a Wildlife Division initiative and discussion should also involve the Wildlife Committee and DNR Wildlife staff. **Mr. Lorensen** agreed and will have wildlife staff present to provide guidance. **Mr. Roell** explained the accessibility requirements for the GEMS. He stated trails are not being closed in the GEMS; they are already being used by folks now. Mr. McNamee stated with the GEMS listed as “walk-in only”, it is being closed to a large population. **Mr. Mattson** asked if there has to be a trail for disabled persons to use on this block of 7,000 acres with the only access being a parking lot and walking trails. **Mr. Roell** replied there is only one GEM area that is that large in size and eventually there will be 11 separate walking trails through it. There is not a hindrance in accessing the area. These are good areas to hunt because they provide easier mobility access and road grade for track chair use. **Mr. Buchholtz** stated he is a new member of the DNR’s Accessibility Advisory Council (AAC) and they may provide some assistance on this matter. **Mrs. Haughey** offered to have more information at the next Council meeting. **Mr. Mattson motioned for the Trails/Recreation/Law Committee to meet to consider the issue of the GEMS being available to people with disabilities and seniors with good access, and have Wildlife Division and AAC reps present to provide information; Mr. Buchholz supported the motion.** Facilitator Wirtanen asked if there was any further discussion on the motion. Mr. Dropps asked, generally, if people with impairments could hunt from their vehicle; Mr. Roell replied yes. Mr. Dropps stated if that is the case, then there are enough other areas for them to hunt without going specifically to the GEMS. **A vote was taken on the motion. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: Mr. Anderson, Mr. Divine, Mr. Holmes, Mr. Smith. Motion carried.**

Closing Comments

- **Mr. Schulz** thanked Mr. McNamee and Dr. Schott from Senator’s Casperson’s office for attending the meetings on a regular basis. He also thanked Mrs. Dahlstrom for her work with the WUPCAC.
- **Mr. Schmierer** stated he recently had the good fortune to be appointed to the Michigan Tech University Senate and as a result, is stepping down from the WUPCAC and the Forestry Subcommittee. He stated he has been on the Council since its inception; it has been a pleasure and there has been some good accomplishments made. He doesn’t rule out serving in the future, but feels his time will be limited with his new role. **The Council reluctantly accepted Mr. Schmierer’s resignation. Facilitator Wirtanen** thanked him for his years of service on the Council and for his contributions as well.
- **Mr. Buchholtz** mentioned a shooting unit was built for the Demmer Center at MSU. It was completed and delivered on August 8th. The cost of the unit was covered by AAC, the DNR, and the National Wild Turkey Federation. A total of 176 veterans will be starting in the Demmer Center’s shooting program in 2015.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:18pm EST.