

Western Upper Peninsula Citizens' Advisory Council (WUPCAC)
Meeting Minutes – APPROVED 12/18/25
Thursday, July 24, 2025
5:00-7:30pm Central / 6:00-8:30pm Eastern
Lake Superior Sportsman's Club, Ontonagon

Council Members Present

Floyd Dropps	Carol Mason Sherrill	Ryan Tanner
Barb Gajewski	Kelly Bennett Simon	Lucas Vold
George Lindquist, Vice Chair	Tom Solka, Chair	
Gordon Maclean	Warren Suchovsky	

Council Members Absent/Excused

Erik Bessonon	Chauncey Moran	Skip Schulz
Brian Driscoll	Chris Peterson	Faye Williams
Dave Hall	Suzanne Petschke	
Dave Johnson	Horst Schmidt	

Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Staff & Guests

Dave Caroffino, Fisheries Division, Charlevoix
Kristi Dahlstrom, Executive Division, Marquette
Stacy Haughey, UP Field Deputy-Executive Division, Marquette
Doug Rich, Parks & Recreation Division, Baraga
Bill Scullon, Wildlife Division, Norway
Tom Seablom, Forest Resources Division, Marquette
CO Ethen Mapes, Law Enforcement Division, District 1
Carly Graff, Parks & Recreation Division-UP Trails Section, Crystal Falls

I. **Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance**

At 6:03pm Eastern/5:03pm Central, **Chair Solka** called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance. **Chair Solka** welcomed members of the public as well as DNR staff and fellow Council members. **Ms. Dahlstrom** indicated a quorum was not present (10 of 20, need 11) for the purpose of conducting Council business. The group agreed to proceed as an informational session, deferring any action items. **Chair Solka** noted the Council's purpose.

II. **Introduction of All Meeting Attendees**

All public attendees, DNR staff and council members introduced themselves at the request of **Chair Solka**. Members of the public in attendance were also welcomed.

III. **Lake Superior Sportsman's Club Facility Overview**

Chair Solka thanked the club for hosting the Council's meeting and invited Micah Brown to provide an overview of the new facility, which sits on property of the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park (Porkies). Mr. Brown, club secretary, noted the state-of-the-art facility which includes fully automated indoor shooting lanes and a fully equipped conference room to host meetings, provide youth classes for hunter's safety and CCL classes, as well as meet with the public. He displayed gratitude for the partnership with the DNR, including help by Mike Knack, supervisor of the state park. DNR grants provided 75% funding, and the club provided 25%. **Mr. Lindquist** thanked the club for providing the Council with a chance to shoot, noting it is a true asset for the community.

IV. **Adoption of Agenda**

Chair Solka asked the Council if there were any additions or revisions to the agenda and asked for approval despite the lack of quorum so the informational session could continue. **Mr. Mclean motioned to accept the agenda as presented; Mr. Tanner supported the motion. After no discussion, Chair Solka called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously.**

V. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

Chair Solka noted approval of the WUPCAC May 1, 2025 draft meeting minutes, which were sent out for review on June 3 allowing time for review and any corrections to be submitted, will be deferred to an email approval process after this meeting concludes so that the minutes can be posted on the website in a timely manner.

VI. **Reports from DNR Division Staff**

Written staff reports were provided to Council members on July 17, 2025. The following brief updates were added.

1. ***Stacy Haughey, UP Field Deputy***

- a. The sportsman's club was thanked for hosting the Council meeting.
- b. During the week of July 8, Director Bowen visited the UP and met with staff at the Au Train dam to learn about the history and recent issues, as well as enjoyed visits to Van Riper, Craig Lake, and Porcupine Mountains Wilderness (Porkies) State Parks.
- c. Mike Knack, supervisor of the Porkies, also thanked the club for hosting the meeting. He acknowledged his staff for their efforts in 7 rescues during the last 30 hours, including a fatality, vehicle accident, lost and injured hikers, and medical help. He thanked the involvement of local conservation officers who work together with the park's staff to provide health and human safety rescue operations, which are notably heavy this time of year.

2. ***Dave Caroffino, Fisheries Division***

- a. There were no additional updates to the report.
- b. **Mr. Dropps** asked about the walleye rearing pond at Thompson State Fish Hatchery. **Mr. Caroffino** discussed the challenges with egg survival. He noted egg limitation is becoming an issue on Little Bay de Noc and staff are working on a solution to provide more egg-take opportunities. The ponds have been stocked out and he will have Darren Kramer provide final numbers when available.
- c. **Vice Chair Lindquist** informed the group the Fisheries Division is scheduled to speak at an upcoming Big Bay Sportsman's Club meeting to talk about proposed slot limit regulations on Lake Independence in Big Bay and Teal Lake in Negaunee.
- d. **Ms. Gajewski** asked for an update on invasive red swamp crayfish found in an outdoor muskellunge rearing pond at Wolf Lake State Fish Hatchery in the lower peninsula. **Mr. Caroffino** indicated the minnows used to feed the muskellunge that came from Alabama are thought to have been contaminated. Minnows obtained from other states are less costly and are placed in closed systems only.

3. ***Tom Seablom, Forest Resources Division***

- a. A presidential declaration was granted on July 23 to aid in recouping costs related to the ice storm recovery in northern lower Michigan. Timber sales for salvage time from the storms are still active.

4. ***CO Ethen Mapes, Law Enforcement Division (attending for Lt. Ryan Aho)***

- a. Local officers assisted with the recent rescues in the Porkies and were thankful for the park's landing craft equipment, saving the officers several hours of hiking to two remote rescues.

- b. Two recruits from the DNR conservation officer training academy were assigned to Baraga and Gogebic Counties upon graduation. The recruit assigned to Gogebic County is from the copper country.
- c. **Vice Chair Lindquist** asked if CO Mapes helps with hunter’s education in the local schools. **CO Mapes** indicated Ontonagon schools are one of the only districts in the state that still hold it in the schools, and he sees it as an important part of the curriculum for the area.
- d. **Chair Solka** commented on the range of responsibilities for COs beyond their normal duties and noted the informative nature of the detailed division report. He stated he is proud to be affiliated with the DNR’s law division and thanked them for all they do.

5. ***Doug Rich, Parks & Recreation Division, Western UP***

- a. The new sportsman’s club facility is an honored partnership between the club and the Parks and Recreation Division. Funds from the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Act for shooting sports along with a percentage from the division were utilized in the state’s portion of the match.
- b. The land on which the club sits was reverted to the Parks & Recreation Division when the Department of Corrections closed the original facility in the 1960s.

6. ***Bill Scullon, Wildlife Division***

- a. Division staff have been busy with several items including a tour with Lyme Timber on lands in partnership with the DNR, bear collaring, goose banding, upcoming duck banding, as well as wolf collaring which wrapped up in July with a successful trapping of 16 wolves. Next month the division will be collaborating with tribal partners in holding a cooperative wild rice camp.
- b. One of the recently awarded Deer Habitat Improvement Partnership Initiative (DHIPI) grants was written by a 17-year old Alger County resident with help and sponsorship by the Alger Conservation District who will help him manage the grant and mentor him. His school has also embarked on a new program that will focus on conservation as a result.
- c. Caleb Eckloff, wildlife technician from the Marquette office, and his wife recently welcomed a new baby girl.

7. ***Carly Graff, Parks & Recreation Division-UP Trails Section***

- a. The Wakefield through Ironwood to Hurley, WI connector (ORV) has been approved. Discussions with the club will begin soon. The Aetna mine trail has also been approved (ORV/Snowmobile) and is in partnership with the Nature Conservancy.
- b. **Vice Chair Lindquist** asked if there were any washouts from the most recent storms (week of July 21). **Ms. Graff** stated the Chassell to Houghton walking path was hit hard with June storm washouts getting larger. There will be a joint meeting with townships, MDOT, road commissions and the DNR to talk about long-term solutions.
- c. **Mr. Maclean** asked if the trails impacted 7 years ago by major storms were impacted again. **Ms. Graff** stated the new culverts placed in those areas are holding up well.

VII. **Public Comment on Agenda Items Only**

Chair Solka opened the floor for public comments on agenda items only.

- 1. *Don Helsel, MiTRALE*: Mr. Helsel noted the Bill Nichols trail was assessed after the most recent storm and there is one small washout that will be taken care of this week. It is currently flagged.

VIII. **Old Business**

- 1. Follow-Up from May Meeting - UPDATE: Cormorant Control Site Locations & Frequency (**Petschke / Caroffino**)

- a. In response to a request by **Ms. Petschke** regarding cormorant control site locations and control frequency, **Mr. Caroffino** shared slides from a presentation by Doug Schultz, the DNR’s cormorant specialist, detailing cormorant management, including the federal permit process and current control activities.
 - b. Purpose & Permit: Michigan is a stopover location, in the middle of a migratory flyway. Ice out dictates migration, but photoperiod dictates nesting. The goal is to reduce Great Lakes colonies and prevent increase in nesting in inland waters. DNR applies for a federal permit each March to control cormorants. Requested take in 2025 was 9,455 birds (not permit limited). Nest destruction counts as 0.75 adults. Much of the control work is contracted to USDA-APHIS.
 - c. Control Update: Lethal control can only be done by sub-permittees, which does not include volunteers. DNR will supply “bird bangers” to the public for non-lethal harassment (no control on private waterbodies). No lethal control at stocking sites in 2025 (Platte Lake added for 2026).
 - d. 2025 inland adult take: 470 Manistique Lake and 38 Brevoort Lake. 2025 Great Lakes Adult Take (to date): 1,490 Bay de Noc, Les Cheneaux, Thunder Bay. 2025 Nest Oiling: 3,293 nests.
 - e. Moratorium on control from hatch until chicks are fledged. Lethal control continues after fledging until fall migration – Bay de Noc 7/21 and 7/22 active control continuing.
 - f. Bay de Noc nest counts: 2006-9,954; 2007-7,633; 2021-1,622; 2022-3,841; 2023-5,150; 2024-5,735; 2025-4,703.
 - g. For more questions, Doug Schultz can be reached at schultzd11@michigan.gov.
 - h. **Mr. Dropps** asked what can be done to increase funding. **Mr. Caroffino** stressed the importance of stable funding for effective management, noting it is hoped that more available federal funding would be granted, but it would be dependent upon the legislature.
 - i. **Vice Chair Lindquist** asked if sportsmen could help with control. **Mr. Caroffino** stated the DNR would have to employ the person(s) doing the control, and there was a federal change to not allow volunteers. **Mr. Scullon** stated there is also a rigorous process for staff to be certified shooters as well.
 - j. A member of the public mentioned Lone Rock is all cormorants now, no seagulls and the smelt populations are decreased. **Mr. Caroffino** thanked him for this information.
2. Withdrawal of Tabled Fisheries Resolution (Dropps / Caroffino)
- a. **Mr. Dropps** reported that he has requested the withdrawal of the Fisheries Committee proposed resolution that was discussed at the last Council meeting. The resolution opposed any changes to the size and possession limits of walleye on several lakes in Dickinson, Iron and Gogebic Counties as well as any protection slot limit regulations for those lakes. He indicated **Mr. Caroffino** and Fisheries Division Chief Randy Claramunt met with him, **Dave Johnson** and Bill Zigler from the UP Sportsman’s Alliance (UPSA) to discuss their recommendations. Based on this meeting and efforts put forth to work through some of the concerns, both the committee and the Fisheries Division have come to an agreement, thereby, no longer needing to submit a resolution. He thanked **Mr. Caroffino** for their efforts to compromise.
 - b. **Mr. Caroffino** reviewed a few slides to explain the changes made to the proposed regulation change since the initial resolution was discussed at the last Council meeting. He noted the initial proposed regulation changes were brought about by a region-wide decline in the walleye population. The list of lakes that would have a protected slot limit added to the basic regulation has decreased, down to 10 lakes. These 10 lakes have natural reproduction, are popular fisheries, have diversity in size and location, have the existence of pre-data, and good growth rates. The goals are to protect spawning females to benefit recruitment, improve size structure, increase density of walleye, and improve the quality of the fishery.
 - c. **Mr. Caroffino** indicated the proposed regulation changes will go before the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) for information in September and for action in October.

- d. **Mr. Tanner** asked if two lakes were considered in Houghton. **Mr. Caroffino** stated they weren't considered due to the lack of recent data on those lakes, clarifying staff in Baraga were not available and the need to utilize recent data as a benchmark for including a lake in this regulation proposal.
 - e. **Ms. Gajewski** asked about Pomeroy Lake, which is a federal lake. **Mr. Caroffino** stated surveys are conducted on that lake, partnering with tribal entities. Statistics can be provided if needed.
 - f. **Vice Chair Lindquist** stated he likes the follow-up surveys to see if regulations are working or not.
 - g. **Mr. Dropps** indicated some of the lakes are in treaty areas and he is hoping they will cooperate with the DNR to help monitor the take. **Mr. Caroffino** stated the next meeting with the tribal entity is on August 4 and if the regulations are approved by the NRC, they will meet with them again in February to let them know what has passed.
3. Review of March Wildlife Resolution Response (Haughey)
 - a. The DNR's response to the Council's March resolution recommending changes to the deer harvest reporting app to allow for better navigation was reviewed. Four suggestions related to the addition of separate headings, making a change in a heading title, and breaking down the deer harvest summary page to list the UP and lower peninsula counties separately.
 - b. Tom Weston of the DNR's technology and licensing section responded in writing to each of the four points, indicating the suggestion will be considered or explaining why it must remain the same. He reminded users of the app that increasing the screen size on a smartphone can cut off certain portions of the app.
 4. Acknowledge Receipt of May Wildlife Resolutions Response (Haughey)
 - a. The DNR's response, authored by Wildlife Division Chief Sara Thompson, to the Council's two May resolutions (submitted as Joint resolutions from both the EUPCAC and WUPCAC) was reviewed. A copy of the response was emailed to the Council on June 17 and were addressed individually below.
 - b. *Resolution #1: Support of Ongoing Moose Research Efforts:* The Council reviewed the DNRs response to this resolution dated June 11. The Wildlife Division thanked the UPCACs for their continued support of the research project and noted updates will be provided to the UPCACs as they become available.
 - c. *Resolution #2: Recommend the Development of a Framework for a Regulated Wolf Hunting & Trapping Season Across the UP & Allocation of Resources for Ongoing Management Program:* The Council reviewed the DNRs response to this resolution dated June 11. The Wildlife Division reiterated the outline of 11 actions needed for a wolf hunting/trapping season that were shared with the NRC in 2023 and were also shared with the UPCACs at their April and May 2025 meetings. The response stated the DNR will not begin development of a framework for a wolf hunting or trapping season unless asked to by the NRC after a federal delisting (action 1). The response also indicated which entity (NRC or DNR) had charge over each action along with the current status.
 - **Ms. Haughey** noted as a result of the response, a few issues arose from both Councils: 1) confusion regarding the Council's resolution response process; and 2) awareness of delisting actions, although shared multiple times with the Council and other groups.
 - The Council's resolution response process was reviewed. The Councils are advisory to the DNR and submit recommendations (i.e. resolutions) to the DNR, not to the NRC or to the legislature. It would be the DNR's directive to share information from the Council with the NRC, which does occur. In this case, **Ms. Haughey** stated she shared the resolution and the response with NRC commissioners.

- The 11 delisting actions listed in the response letter were briefly reviewed. Of these 11 actions, the DNR is involved with 8 of them and the remaining 3 involve another entity which the DNR does not have control over.
- **Vice Chair Lindquist** believes the confusion centered on the first action item, the DNR not beginning the development of the framework unless asked by the NRC after federal delisting. He stated it may not have been clear when the actions were presented in October 2023. **Ms. Haughey** stated the content, including that specific action item, in all subsequent presentations, slides and the response letter, were cut and pasted from the October 2023 presentation and have not changed. She noted the items are not listed in order of occurrence, but rather are action items; some items have been or are currently being completed. Members noted the term “steps” as written is being misinterpreted.
- **Discussion** took place regarding the existing complex wolf management plan dated 2022, with a reminder that the NRC has the authority to implement a hunt.
- **Vice Chair Lindquist** noted the action item involving the development of an education plan on responsible harvest and wolf management for the website should’ve already been done; he may have the wildlife committee review that section.

IX. **New Business**

1. Moose Project & Wolf Abundance Trail Camera Survey Status (Petroelje)

- a. **Dr. Petroelje** provided an update on the moose research project, focusing on moose population growth, and the wolf abundance trail camera survey currently in progress.
- b. Calf Production:
 - Positive pregnancy tests for 8 of the 10 collared female moose.
 - 8 of 8 confirmed parturient as of July 24.
 - 5 cows gave birth to singletons, 3 had twins.
 - Median birth date May 17 (May 10-June 19).
 - Drone coverage of a cow with a singleton and a cow with nursing twins was shown. An additional 40 moose will be collared next year with 25 of them being cows, which will provide a better understanding of birthing rates.
- c. *Survival Monitoring:*
 - Monthly drone flights for newborn calves. 8 of 11 newborn calves alive.
 - Daily updates on movements and survival of yearling and adult collared moose. 3 of 5 yearling moose (calves collared this winter) alive. 9 of 10 adult female moose alive. 5 of 5 adult male moose alive.
- d. *Neonate Moose Mortalities:*
 - Finishing 2-month survival checks.
 - GPS data demonstrated fast movement from birth site, necessitating investigation. Staff were able to get to the location quickly with a drone to assess in a non-invasive manner.
 - Black bear predation on singleton moose calf at birth site (peeling of hide, lack of fully disarticulated skeleton, leg bones intact, ribs not consumed).
- e. *GPS Collared Moose Mortalities:*
 - GPS collared female calf (~10 month old): March 15; head trauma; hemorrhaging on left mandible, sinuses, and brain; 1” irregular fracture on right nasal bone, femur fat content 64.2%. Determined to not be near any roads which ruled out a vehicle collision. Most consistent with a large trauma event such as a fall or encounter with another cow.
 - GPS collared male calf (~11 month old): April 12, wolf predation, female GPS collared wolf, evidence of multiple wolves at predation site (able to pin a collared female wolf in same area),

- confirmed hemorrhaging on neck, femur fat content 63.7%. Starvation not a factor in either case due to fat content.
- GPS collared adult female: June 18 by vehicle collision, internal organs and head collected and sent to disease lab for further assessment. This cow had 2 calves, were not observed at the mortality site and have been censored for survival monitoring due to the collision. 47 moose (uncollared) have been hit and killed by vehicles in the last 3 years.
- f. *Quarterly Research Updates*: <https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/education/michigan-species/mammals/moose/research-updates>
- g. *Wolf Abundance Trail Camera Project*:
- Cameras by the Numbers: Now over 1,300 cameras deployed (which will provide confidence in estimating wolf populations due to the high number of cameras per wolf home range); 1,211 usable/working cameras; 1,748,713 images; 462,391 sampling days; average of 1,434 images/camera. Statistics cited are after all photos of people or vehicles were removed.
 - The project will compare winter camera estimates with the minimum track survey count, providing valuable data on wolf population dynamics.
 - Wildlife by the Numbers: 1,475,217 wildlife images; images of people and vehicles filtered out from review; preliminary sorting using Wildlife Insights artificial intelligence; actively reviewing photos with human observer to confirm species ID; first population estimate will follow completion of human photo review.
 - Staff are working hard to identify coyotes vs. wolves as AI detection cannot sometimes distinguish between the two creating a separate category. White-tailed deer photos were the most common, with coyote photos second. Grey wolves, wild turkey and dogs were additional categories. The project can provide good estimates of occupancy and relative abundance but not absolute population numbers for all species. Species of note: ~6,000 photos of moose, 9 confirmed detections of cougar, and 2 confirmed detections of lynx.
 - Days with Detections of White-Tailed Deer at Camera Sites: A map showing the progression of days of deer detection at camera sites throughout the UP during the months of November through June was shown. Days of deer detection at camera sites in November were at 80% versus a low of 36% in February and high of 86% in June. These figures were AI-generated and not human verified.
- h. *Questions*:
- **Mr. Tanner** asked if a literature review and study comparison from other states on moose data will be done. **Dr. Petroelje** stated yes, as the study is a regional collaboration. Minnesota, Ontario and Maine are also doing studies. **Mr. Tanner** also asked about the mean detections for AI between coyotes and wolves; **Dr. Petroelje** explained.
 - **Mr. Maclean** asked about the types of cameras being used and asked if citizen volunteers can help with their own cameras. **Dr. Petroelje** stated the project is utilizing Browning Dark Ops Pro X cameras, which has great battery life. Although the DNR is partnering with other government agencies, they have not moved into a private citizen model at this time. Photo review is through Zooniverse, noting AI isn't the perfect tool, but it has done a fantastic job so far.
 - **Vice Chair Lindquist** thanked Dr. Petroelje and his team for the great work. He wondered if more would be learned about the UP deer herd such as buck-to-doe ratio through this type of camera survey. **Dr. Petroelje** stated a separate camera survey is done in August that estimates deer density. It can provide a buck-to-doe ratio, as well as a fawn-to-doe ratio, very well. It is hoped, although it's not the current goal, that a lot of data and information will be gleaned from the current wolf abundance camera survey to augment other research.
 - **Chair Solka** thanked Dr. Petroelje for this insightful update. A copy of the presentation will be forwarded to Council members after the meeting.

2. Western UP State Park Summer Season Update (Rich)

- a. An update was provided on state park construction, maintenance and improvement projects in the western UP, some of which were funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). The use of partnerships to enhance park amenities and facilities was highlighted. The challenges of balance project costs and available funding were noted, with some projects deferred due to budget constraints.
- b. *July 4th Weekend Final Numbers*: 96% occupancy for the July 4th weekend, despite some closed facilities. The western UP parks did better than the eastern UP parks and better than Detroit.
- c. *Houghton-Douglass Falls Scenic Site*: The DNR's Baraga construction crew has been working on the parking lot, clearing trees, and installing a vault toilet. A construction company will begin phase one soon which is slated to be completed by spring. A Land & Water Conservation grant was applied for phase 2 of the project. Phase 3 will occur if phase 2 funding is approved. It is hoped this site will be as popular as Bond Falls.
- d. *Porcupine Mountains ARPA Update*: \$6.6 million in projects. Historic building restoration; Union Bay sanitary sewer modernization; paving and resurfacing at visitor center, headquarters and Summit Peak; ski hill use and development study, critical maintenance to the ski hill's triple chair, visitor center modernization.
- e. *F.J. McLain ARPA Update*: \$1.1 million in projects. Sewage treatment and lagoon rehabilitations.
- f. *Fort Wilkins ARPA Update*: \$2.5 million in projects. Replace west campground toilet shower building, replace east campground underground electric system, source materials for a complete stockage fence replacement.
- g. *Bewabic ARPA Update*: \$3.7 million in projects. Resurfacing, chip seal, reconstruction of paving throughout the park; replace two toilet shower buildings with one centrally located building and associated sewer infrastructure; ADA access improvements in day use area.
- h. *Twin Lakes ARPA*: \$3.4 million in projects. Replace campground toilet shower building, build out of sanitary sewer system across the highway, replacement of critical water supply lines, resurfacing, chip seal reconstruction of campground roads.
- i. *Lake Gogebic ARPA Update*: \$3.6 million in projects. Sanitary sewer system modernization, replacement of electrical system, storm water and drainage management, waterline replacement.
- j. *ARPA Projects Deferred*: Fort Wilkins historic fort roofing and masonry repairs, Porkies Union Bay electrical, Twin Lakes beach building stabilization, and Twin Lake day use paving rehabilitation.
- k. *Menominee River Railroad Dock Boating Access Site*: \$1.1 million in Waterways funding. Repave entire boating access site, site drainage improvements, site erosion armoring, site lighting improvements, \$500,000 in partnership dollars from the City of Menominee to improve pedestrian/bicycle access to site.
- l. *Michigan National Guard Innovative Readiness Training*: First two weeks of June. Projects focused on Craig Lake State Park, McLain State Park, Van Riper State Park and Baraga Management Unit (King Lake State Forest Campground (SFCG), Big Lake SFCG, Parent Lake Boating Access Site (BAS), Vermilac Lake BAS, and Baraga Plains ORV staging area. These projects have allowed the National Guard to meet or exceed their recruitment and retention scores for their engineering battalion due to these projects, which keeps guardsman close to home.
- m. *Lake Gogebic Travel Crew*: Governor Whitmer and the legislature approved \$1 million general fund appropriation in 2019. It established 9 full-time positions to help support the local community with the closing of the Ojibway Prison in Marenisco. New model for park maintenance that has been worth its weight in gold. The crew assists with various projects including trail shelters, log replacement, and cabin repairs.

- n. *Staff Shout Out:* The Lt. Governor and the Director paid visits to several western UP state parks this season. Kudos to all park staff for their efforts in maintaining the western UP state parks to a high standard.
- o. *Questions:*
 - **Mr. Dropps** asked if there are more projects coming next year, adding that staff are doing a wonderful job. **Mr. Rich** indicated that there isn't enough funding to fix all that is needed, and critical decisions will be made in the months ahead for 2026.
 - **Mr. Tanner** asked if the Parks & Recreation Division has a capital improvement plan similar to that of a township. **Mr. Rich** replied yes, with projects prioritized according to health, safety and welfare, critical partnerships and leveraging of grant funding.
 - **Chair Solka** spoke about the wastewater systems in campgrounds. He spent three summers cleaning vault toilets when he was younger. He suggested instructions on keeping the lid down (this helps the system work better) as well as a broom in each vault toilet. He stated maintenance on these in state campgrounds has been excellent.

3. DNR Keweenaw Update (Irving / Haughey)

- a. An update was previously requested by Council member at the last meeting.
- b. A handout with an update on the Keweenaw Heartlands Project was provided in the meeting packets and put together by Tori Irving from the DNR's Office of Public Lands.
- c. **Ms. Haughey** indicated she recently attended a community update and distributed a copy of a handout that was provided at that meeting as well.
- d. If there are any questions about the information on either handout, please contact **Ms. Haughey**.

4. Forest Health Update (Wright / Haughey)

- a. Due to meeting time constraints, **Chair Solka** asked that the slide presentation be emailed to the Council to review after the meeting.
- b. Information in the slides related to hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA), balsam woolly adelgid (BWA), oak wilt, and heterobasidion root disease (HRD). What to look for, signs and symptoms, and reporting.
- c. If there are any questions about the information included in the slides, contact information for Simeon Wright, Forest Health Pathologist, and Pete Holodnik, Forest Health Forester, was included on the last slide.

X. Committee Activity

1. Trails/Recreation/Law (Ms. Gajewski)

- a. A member of the committee asked to reconvene the issue of wake boats, and the group has been communicating articles and information via email. If a meeting is warranted, one will be scheduled.

2. Fisheries (Mr. Dropps)

- a. **Mr. Dropps** and **Vice Chair Lindquist** are on a committee that has met 3-4 times to discuss underwater spearfishing regulations. The DNR's recommendation will be to stay with the current status quo (no expansion of regulations). Status quo is a limited number of locations on the Great Lakes (mainly in the lower peninsula) in which certain species can be speared.

3. Forestry (Mr. Vold)

- a. No report. A meeting on forestry topics may be held in the near future.

4. Wildlife (Vice Chair Lindquist)

- a. The DNR's response to the last resolution was forwarded to the committee via email. A meeting will be held at a later date to discuss recommendations on various points mentioned in the response.

XI. **Next Meeting**

1. Joint UPCAC Meeting

- a. Wednesday, October 8, 3pm Eastern/2pm Central, MTU Rozsa Center, Houghton.
- b. **Chair Solka** provided an overview of the Joint UPCAC meeting for new members and encouraged everyone to attend. He highlighted the importance of attending Council meetings to stay informed and engaged in natural resource management.

2. UP Natural Resources Commission Meeting & Events

- a. Wednesday, October 8: 6pm Reception (Location in Houghton TBD).
- b. Thursday, October 9: 8am Coffee with the Commissioners; 9am NRC Meeting, MTU Rozsa Center.

3. Next Regular WUPCAC Meeting

- a. **Chair Solka** noted the next regular Council meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 17, 6pm Eastern/5pm Central, via Zoom.

4. Topic Suggestions for Joint Meeting & Next Meeting

- a. Planned agenda topics to date for the joint meeting include the DNR land transaction process and harvest reporting app statistics.
- b. Future topic suggestions made to date for regular Council meetings include an update on white nose syndrome and the guiding process on the Great Lakes and inland lakes. These topics will be added to agendas as presenters become available.
- c. Any other topic suggestions can be sent to the Chair, Vice Chair, or Ms. Dahlstrom.

XII. **Public Comments (On Any Topic)**

Chair Solka opened the floor for public comments on any topic; none were brought forth.

XIII. **Closing Comments from the Council**

Chair Solka opened the floor for closing comments from the Council.

1. **Vice Chair Lindquist** shared the banding of eagles segment on a recent airing of Discovering (WLUC-TV6). He noted he was part of a crew that banded several eagles on Partridge Island. It is very interesting work, and he learned a great deal.

XIV. **Adjournment**

Chair Solka thanked everyone for attending the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 8:51pm Eastern/7:51pm Central.