

Western Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council (WUPCAC)
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 21, 2019
5:00-7:30pm Central / 6:00-8:30pm Eastern
Bay College West, Iron Mountain, MI

Chairman: Phil Wirtanen Vice-Chairman: Warren Suchovsky

Council Members Present

Jim Baker	Chauncey Moran	Travis Smith
Floyd Dropps	Mary Peterson	Tom Solka
Dave Hall	Jake Putala	Bob Stinson
Mike Holmes	Horst Schmidt	Trevor St. John
Dave Johnson	Kirk Schott	Warren Suchovsky
George Lindquist	Skip Schulz	

Council Members Absent/Excused

Joan Duncan	Jim Lorenson	Phil Wirtanen
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Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Staff & Guests

Lt. Ryan Aho, Law Enforcement Division, Marquette
Kristi Dahlstrom, Executive Division, Marquette
Stacy Haughey, UP Regional Coordinator, Executive Division, Marquette
George Madison, Fisheries Division, Baraga
Dan McNamee, Forest Resources Division, Crystal Falls
Terry Minzey, Wildlife Division, Marquette
Doug Rich, Parks & Recreation Division, Baraga
Chad Stewart, Wildlife Division, Lansing

Call to Order

Vice Chair Warren Suchovsky, in the absence of Chair Wirtanen who was on vacation, called the meeting to order at 5:02pm Central/6:20pm Eastern. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

New Member Introductions/Current Council Introductions

Ms. Stacy Haughey welcomed the Council, DNR staff, and public attendees. She introduced the new Council members and provided a brief background of each: Mr. Jim Baker of Chassell, Mr. Jake Putala of Pelkie, Dr. Kirk Schott of Bruce Crossing, Mr. Tom Solka of Marquette and Mr. Trevor St. John of Spalding. Current Council members introduced themselves and indicated their group affiliation.

Ms. Haughey also welcomed Mr. Chad Stewart, statewide deer, elk, and moose management specialist, out of Lansing, and Mr. Tom McNamee, representative for Sen. Ed McBroom. She congratulated Council member Ms. Peterson on her new family member, a baby boy born on January 3.

Adoption of Agenda

Vice Chair Suchovsky asked the Council if there were any additions or revisions to the agenda. **Mr. Hall motioned to accept the agenda as presented; Mr. Schmidt supported the motion. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: See attendance on page 1. Motion carried.**

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Vice Chair Suchovsky asked if there were any changes to the January 2019 meeting minutes. None were brought forth. **Mr. Schmidt motioned to accept the minutes as submitted; Mr. Schulz supported the motion. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: See attendance on page 1. Motion carried.**

DNR Reports from Division Staff

Written staff reports were provided to Council members on March 14, 2019. The following verbal updates were provided.

- **Stacy Haughey, UP Regional Coordinator:** Ms. Haughey noted DNR all staff meetings, which are held every two years, are occurring around the state February-April. The Sault Ste. Marie meeting was cancelled in February due to inclement weather and is rescheduled in April. The Marquette meeting was held on February 11th.
- **George Madison, Fisheries Division:** Mr. Madison indicated this is the time of year in which summaries from last year are completed and staff are preparing for the upcoming season. From the lake and stream writeups, 2018 was a real strong year for walleye recruitment with a late spring and less opportunity for cold weather to kill the eggs. He also discussed the Lake Gogebic creel surveys. Mr. Lindquist asked if the rising of inland lake levels, after 10 years of droughts, have helped the fisheries. Mr. Madison stated it has, noting that in 2012 some lake levels were so low that boat launches were completely disconnected. Mr. Hall agreed that things seem to be going in the right direction. Mr. Madison reminded the group to purchase new fishing licenses for the season starting April 1.
- **Dan McNamee, Forest Resources Division:** Mr. McNamee stated he was attending on behalf of Mr. Don Mankee and who is also retiring on March 29. He indicated spring thaw has begun and most operations from 44 sales in the western UP have now moved to Class A roads. Fire equipment is also being prepared for the upcoming season.
- **Lt. Ryan Aho, Law Enforcement Division:** Lt. Aho stated a very trying snowmobile season is wrapping up. There were many rescues this year with officers working throughout the night hours getting people home safely. Without funding that was received the last few years for long track-type snowmobiles, some of the rescues would not have happened due to the extreme snow conditions. Routine sound and speed enforcements were also conducted throughout the season. Over 50% of snowmobile trails go through private property; with excessive noise and trespassing, property owners are restricting access.
 - Mr. Schulz asked how the Council could commend the officers involved in the rescues. Ms. Haughey suggested a resolution of commendation. Mr. Schulz motioned to commend the officers involved in the rescues this winter; several Council members supported the motion. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: See attendance on page 1. Motion carried.
 - Mr. Schulz stated he received a lot of calls asking if a trail sticker is needed if "boondocking". He suggested a press release early next winter as a method to educate riders.
 - Mr. Schmidt asked if rescue numbers had increased; Lt. Aho said yes, stating people were stranded in areas where they normally wouldn't be due to the extreme weather conditions this year. A member of the audience spoke about the blown over trails and the difficulties groomers had this year.
 - Mr. Moran stated many people were riding without regard to blown over trails. He thanked Lt. Aho and all the officers for the great job they did this year.
- **Doug Rich, Parks & Recreation Division:** Mr. Rich provided the following updates:

- There is an increased focus on stewardship efforts for boating access sites within the division to prevent the spread of invasive species at waterways. A marketing program is in the works and the overall effort will include education, increased law enforcement efforts, and random patrols.
- To help those laid off from the prison in Marenisco, supplemental funding was received to hire five full-time park ranger 8s, two full-time lead ranger 9s, one equipment operator, one administrative support, and one parks and recreation supervisor 10, which will function as a traveling maintenance crew.
- The Friends Group at Van Riper State Park is planning to install a pump track which will be the first of its kind at a Michigan state park. Ms. Deb Gill has been hired as the new unit supervisor for Van Riper State Park and two boating ranger positions will be hired for Van Riper and Baraga State Parks.
- A \$1.2 million electrical upgrade will begin this summer at Baraga State Park. It will be the first state park in the UP with full hook-up sites available.
- **Mr. Schulz** asked if Bond Falls will be open to ORVs. **Mr. Rich** stated he was not yet sure as they are working through the PA 288 process for this. He noted a trust fund grant was submitted to improve accessibility and improve the cement stair case at Bond Falls.
- **Mr. Schmidt** asked about the funding status for trails in the Houghton flooding area. **Mr. Rich** described the current status with FEMA grant submission which is the funding mechanism needed to rebuild those trails. Several will be open this year, but the Lake Linden trail, which received extensive damage, will not. **Mr. Schulz** stated funding is up to the federal folks now and local congressmen will help push it along.
- **Mr. Holmes** asked about the status of McLain State Park. **Mr. Rich** indicated phase one is done and phase two started last fall. The final phase, phase 3, is in the design process and should be going out to bid in 6 months.
- **Mr. Johnson** asked about the status of Houghton Douglass Falls and the Menominee River area. **Ms. Haughey** noted the Houghton Douglass Falls agreement is almost final, contact with owner occurred very recently and once a local issue is resolved, work can begin. **Mr. Rich** stated bridge projects and improvements to the Piers Gorge are still being planned once funding is secured.
- **Mr. Moran** asked about the status of the Porkies mining. **Mr. Rich** indicated Copperwood has applied to do additional explorational mining but on their own property in the area. **Mr. Schmidt** indicated there is a meeting on April 16; however, it was clarified the meeting is a public stakeholder meeting to discuss the Porkies management plan and not related to the mining application.
- **Terry Minzey, Wildlife Division:** **Mr. Minzey** referenced a MUCC flyer in the meeting packets, explaining MUCC commissioned a study to look at the economic impact of hunting and fishing in Michigan. He reviewed some of the statistics listed on the flyer, noting hunting and fishing contribute \$681 million a year in the UP. He thanked MUCC, one of the DNR's top partners in conservation, for conducting the study and giving people something good to talk about. He described the recent changes made by the NRC to bear hunting season dates for those who hunt with dogs and those who don't. As a result of these changes, there will be a recommendation to move the youth deer hunt to the second weekend of September, allowing it to end the day before bear hound hunters begin. He explained bear bait barrels will also be allowed on state-owned lands (not all public lands) and described the specifications.

Public Comment on Agenda Items Only

Vice Chair Suchovksy opened the floor for public attendees to comment on agenda items.

- *Mr. Ben Haight of Crystal Falls* spoke about the Council's resolution regarding muskies on the Paint River. He explained his experience on the Paint River as a guide and feels the muskies will not impact the trout population upstream and doesn't feel a lethal option is necessary or that the proposal is grounded in a science-based decision.

- *Mr. Seth Waters of Iron River* also spoke about the resolution regarding muskies on the Paint River. He introduced himself as a bait shop owner, a guide, a coffee business owner, and a pastor. He stated he has spoken to several stakeholder groups as well as two NRC Commissioners who all agree there is an issue on the south Paint River; however, there isn't enough science to allow a kill regulation to muskies. He indicated he and several others are interested in coming up with a better solution. He noted Iron County is the only county in Michigan that is still growing in license sales.
- *Mr. Jeff Joseph of Crystal Falls* spoke about the Paint River resolution. He stated he is also a guide on the Paint River, as well as a lifelong forester and sitting member of the UP Wildlife Habitat Workgroup. He indicated he has spent a lot of time on the stretch of river that is being targeted, and in reviewing the data that was provided to create the resolution, it didn't prove any cause and effect. He reviewed the state muskey management plan and has spoken to many people as well, including fisheries biologists, who don't agree with the proposal. He suggested having all groups, anglers, etc. to get together to come up with a sensible solution.
 - **Mr. Dropps** indicated the muskey management plan indicates if there is a conflict with another species, the DNR would lower the size limit. He stated if there is an overabundance, like there is, something has to be done to take the number down. He noted a Fisheries Division Coffee & Conversation session will be held on March 26 where the public can provide input.
 - **Mr. Holmes** explained where the muskeys are coming from and that they are not native to the Paint River. Discussion ensued.
 - **Vice Chair Suchovsky** ended further discussion, suggesting those with concerns may wish to attend the March 26 session to speak directly to Fisheries Division staff.

Old Business

1. Proposed Marquette County Shooting Range Update: **Ms. Haughey** indicated this proposal would allow the first public shooting range to be built in the UP (there are 12 in the lower peninsula). She provided a brief history of the process that has already occurred noting the current requested location is in Sands Township, Marquette County, where there has been unmonitored shooting for the past 20 years. Two weeks ago, the township approved a revised permit with 12 stipulations. Currently, the DNR is assessing whether the process can move forward with those stipulations, 9 of which were already planned. One stipulation is for it to be manned when open and random inspections of casings on the ground. There are thousands of casings on the ground there now. Grants in the amount of \$800,000 have already been earmarked for this project. She thanked everyone who has been in support of the project. **Mr. Hall** asked if there was going to be an organizational meeting in the near future to talk about the process going forward. He stated people from surrounding communities would like to see it happen and staff have put in years of time and effort making it senseless to go backwards. **Ms. Haughey** stated perhaps a stakeholder meeting could be held to look at options.
2. Chronic Wasting Disease & UP CWD Taskforce Updates: **Mr. Minzey** indicated a UP CWD Taskforce meeting was held just before the WUPCAC meeting today to reconfirm some of the recommendations the Taskforce had been discussing previously about how to deal with CWD in Dickinson County. There are three WUPCAC members on the Taskforce and two local farmers from Dickinson County were invited to attend to provide their viewpoints. The Taskforce's recommendations will be considered by the DNR and Natural Resources Commission (NRC). The NRC plans to review recommendations and pertinent information at the May and June NRC Meetings, with potential action on regulations at the July NRC Meeting.
 - **Mr. Schmidt** asked if the goal is to contain CWD; **Mr. Minzey** explained the history.
 - **Mr. Lindquist**, who is a member of the Taskforce, stated some of the discussed recommendations were agreed upon well before CWD was found in the UP. One was banning baiting and feeding in any township

within a 10-mile radius of the infected deer location, as well as looking at antlerless tags in that area and near the Wisconsin border. He noted the one infected deer could be from the UP or Wisconsin—it's not known. He stated the NRC has the authority to make these types of decisions.

- **Mr. Schulz** asked if roadkill in the core zone are being tested. **Mr. Minzey** replied the Wildlife Division is putting together their recommendations for the number of animals to be tested—it is not ready yet. Like last year, a seasonal employee will be hired to do this. He stated mandatory check is not being considered as the division feels their needs can be met through the testing already being done.
- **Mr. Moran** asked if there has been any necropsy done on the large number of eagles killed by vehicles on Highway 38 where there are also a lot deer. **Mr. Minzey** stated the eagles are turned over to the federal government and he is not aware that any testing is being done on them.

Mr. Minzey also reported briefly on the deer movement study indicating one collared deer has moved into Wisconsin. He stated the breeding facility in Goodman, WI that had a doe with CWD also has a shooting facility five miles to the west which is now also contaminated. Both facilities are within 15 miles of the CWD deer in Dickinson County. It was noted that one of the discussions in the Taskforce meeting earlier included the fact that WI has suspended baiting and feeding in any county with CWD, which includes those along the UP border, and those deer could potentially travel across the river to the UP where baiting and feeding still occur.

Vice Chair Suchovsky opened the floor for additional Council questions to Mr. Stewart.

- **Mr. Hall** stated he viewed a printout from USA Today regarding the CDC conducting studies on CWD and the possibility of humans consuming CWD-infected meat and contracting the disease. He asked if there are any studies in Michigan on this. He noted he could see license sales plummeting because of knee-jerk reactions to these types of articles. **Mr. Stewart** stated the DNR doesn't have expertise in human health related matters and tries to defer to what is known, relying on messaging from the CDC and WHO. Their formal recommendation is if there is a known positive CWD on an animal, they do not recommend consuming that meat. There are two pieces of published research, one of which is by NIH, who did not find any evidence of transference of CWD in a macaque monkey through traditional exposure routes. He stated there is emerging research out of Canada that said it does, but it's not yet published. The DNR will wait for the research to be published.
- **Mr. Schulz** asked if buying corn from areas that have CWD is a concern. **Mr. Stewart** replied there is a concern, as research states prions will remain in agricultural items, but no research has been done on commercial grade material. **Mr. Lindquist** added corn is low risk on the ladder of transmission methods.
- **Vice Chair Suchovsky** stated when he had the opportunity to tour the Diagnostics Lab at MSU, he asked them about working with the College of Agriculture at MSU and they do communicate back and forth regarding these types of issues. It was noted there is a fair amount of activity occurring that the general public is not aware of. A \$4.7 million appropriation was granted for the sole purpose of researching CWD which is housed at the MSU Lab.
- **Mr. Schmidt** asked if the technology is available to do the research needed. **Mr. Stewart** replied yes, as it's a matter of finding the person who can do it.
- **Mr. Lindquist** commented on the good information the UP deer camp survey provides, showing trends over the years. However, he feels the check station data is even more valuable and suggested it include statewide check station data.
- **Mr. Schulz** stated since he's not a deer hunter, he feels left out with deer studies even though deer are important to him too.
- **Mr. St. John** stated he appreciates Mr. Schulz's comments regarding deer camp surveys as they don't take into account other deer stakeholders, like the logging/forester community, which should be taken into

consideration in any deer management plan. **Mr. Lindquist** added there are a number of non-hunters on the deer team.

- **Vice Chair Suchovsky** agreed this is an important issue with lots of standpoints and it is an important point to include those that like to watch deer and those that like to hunt them. He feels the ecosystem needs more attention and managing resources with good science.

3. Trail Signage Update: **Ms. Haughey** indicated this issue has been a hot topic at recent Council meetings and there have been multiple conversations, one with Mr. Lorensen, and internal meetings since then where this issue has been discussed. She stated she spoke with Mr. Paul Yalk, statewide trail coordinator, who after discussion at the Michigan Trails Council's ORV Advisory Workgroup (ORVAW) meeting, has asked trails staff to provide an overview and costs to implement the signage in the UP. He indicated he believes this issue can be resolved. **Mr. Schulz** explained how he feels the WUPCAC and the ORVAW are at the same level and one shouldn't precede another. **Ms. Haughey** stated generally there are two advisory groups that disagree; both need to come together, have a conversation, and move the issue forward. She added although it may seem stalled, there is incremental progress. Discussion ensued.

New Business

1. Deer Camp Survey Results: **Mr. Minzey** presented a presentation on a summary of the 2018 UP Deer Camp Survey results which includes a few statistics from the western UP.
 - A total of 468 camps and 1901 hunters participated in the survey. This is down slightly from 2017 which included 500 camps and 2500 hunters. Dots on a UP map showed the location of the camps with DMU's listed. Some DMU's had little participation.
 - Percent total hunting effort by day across the UP: The average hunter spent 5 days in the field. 60% of deer hunting is done after day 5. Thursday, November 15 was 15% and Thursday, November 22 (Thanksgiving Day) was down to 4%.
 - Deer observed per hunter day across the UP: Remained consistent over the course of the season with the lowest being 3.3 to the highest at 4.8 from November 15-November 30.
 - Deer seen per hunter day by DMU: DMU 022 had the highest rate of 6.3.
 - Fawns per 100 does by DMU: Ranged from 24 on the far west end of the UP to 68 also in the far west end. Average was 60 in the south central UP.
 - Adult does per adult buck in the UP region: Ranged from 3:1 to 4:1 on what hunters were seeing on the landscape on opening day.
 - Percentage of bucks observed that were actually killed: The low was 7% in DMU 122 and the high was 43% in DMU 127.
 - Buck hunter success rate by DMU: Ranged from 23% to 54% across the UP.
 - 2012-2018 hunter success rates across the UP: The chart showed trends over these years. 2015 bottomed out at 14%. 2018 is at 33% which is the highest it has been in a while.
 - Age class distribution of UP buck harvest (all seasons): This chart was from check station data. In 2018, the 2 ½ year old class made over 50% of the harvest and the 1 ½ year old class made up only 16%. Comparatively, in 2017 the 2 ½ year old class was 37% and the 1 ½ year old class was 41%. He indicated he has not seen the 2018 figures in his career and explained why it may have occurred (reduced antler development, reduced yearling survival, etc.).
 - Upper Peninsula region: Deer seen per hunter day remained similar (2017-4.0, 2018-3.9), percent of hunters harvesting a buck increased (2017-29%, 2018-33%), and fawn observations per 100 does decreased (2017-58, 2018-51).
 - Western UP: A map was shown indicating the DMU's that make up the western UP.

- Western UP buck hunter success over the last 20 years: Between 1996-2018, there were only two years higher than this year (2018-34%, 1999-35%, 2000-39%).
- Western UP: Deer seen per hunter day decreased (2017-4.3, 2018-4.0), percent of hunters harvesting a buck increased (2017-30%, 2018-34%), and fawn observations per 100 does decreased (2017-60, 2018-52).

2. Moose History/Discussion: **Mr. Minzey** provided a presentation on the moose population in the UP in response to Mr. Lindquist's desire for the DNR to development a moose management plan.

- Pre-settlement moose range in Michigan: A map was shown indicating the entire UP and north eastern portion of the lower peninsula (LP) was considered pre-settlement moose range. It was colder back then than it is now.
- History: Extirpated in LP by 1880's and numbers declining in the UP. Full protection was granted in 1889. The reintroduction of moose was attempted in the 1930's from Isle Royale.
- Isle Royale moose trapping program 1934-37: Isle Royale didn't have moose until the early 1900's. Between 1934-37, 71 moose were captured and removed from Isle Royale. 63 moose were released on the mainland UP, 2 moose when to the Detroit Zoo, and 6 moose were held at the Cusino Research Station.
- Snowfall zones: A map showing the northern portion of the UP considered high (>100"), mid-section medium (50-100") and southern portion low (<50").
- Moose reintroduction in 1985 and 1987: The release site was in western Marquette County, north of Michigamme. 29 moose were translocated in 1985 from Ontario and 30 moose were released in 1987. It was considered a big festival with school buses arriving full of people.
- Moose management goal: The goal at the time was to establish a self-sustaining population of free living moose. The optimistic objective was 1000 moose by the year 2000.
- Resident moose distribution/range: The west UP, which was the location of the 1985 and 1987 release sites, encompasses 3,500 km² and the east UP encompasses 3,110 km². The population estimates provided only pertain to the west UP area.
- Aerial survey: Fixed wing, sightability model (group size, canopy cover), sex/age classification, stratified sample.
- Sightability model: The model allows staff to see approximately 40% of the moose population during the survey.
- Moose abundance monitoring strategy: A chart showed the moose survey plots in the western UP range according to high and low density spots.
- Moose population growth in the western UP: There was a 10% growth between 1997-2007 and has slowed to less than a 2% growth between 2009-2018.
- Moose hunting: Full protection was granted in 1889, renewed interest in hunting, 2010 law allowed NRC to establish a season and a Moose Hunting Advisory Council was established. The Council recommendations: moose hunting is a viable concept, management priority should be continued growth of the moose herd ($\geq 3\%$ growth), first year harvests should be ≤ 10 bulls, only hunt in years following a survey. The herd has not been able to get to the level the Council recommended to have a moose hunt.
- Pics from the air: Two pics were shown of moose on the landscape from the air, showing how difficult it can be to spot them.
- Ticks: Moose carry a specific tick, called a moose tick, and one animal can carry an infestation of 10,000 nymphs on them without a problem. If over 100,000, the moose can become anemic. There are no real concerns of tick infestation at this time.

3. Resolution Responses: **Vice Chair Suchovsky** indicated responses from the DNR to three of the WUPCAC's resolutions have been received and asked the Council to review.

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- *Resolution for special regulations on the Paint River (from January) – DNR Fisheries Division is proposing a regulation related to muskies on the Paint River for public comment at the Coffee & Conversations session in Escanaba on March 26.* **Mr. Dropps** stated the WUPCAC fisheries committee worked with a DNR fisheries biologist in Crystal Falls to develop 5 options and ultimately chose the one for the resolution, so there was DNR input. He added the DNR doesn't have a plan to estimate how many muskies are in the Paint River. When they shock for brook trout, they had the lowest number of brook trout and brown trout. The number of fishermen complaining about muskey is at an all time high. He again encouraged those interested to attend the Coffee & Conversation sessions in March, stating something does need to be done and the committee doesn't know all the answers. The DNR is looking into it. Mr. Seth Waters, who provided public comment earlier, thanked the committee and stated he appreciated their position on this issue.
 - *Resolution for a youth bear hunt (from January) – DNR did not support this resolution based on lack of support among various user groups.* **Vice Chair Suchovsky** stated the DNR is not very receptive to a youth bear hunt as they did not support this resolution. He said there seems to be a lot of concern from a lot of different angles.
 - *Resolution for yellow perch and northern pike (from September) – DNR Fisheries Division put into effect the proposed daily possession limit for yellow perch from 50 to 25 statewide (except for Lake Erie), but did not see a scientific need to change to a 25 fish limit with only 5 fish over 12 inches statewide (it is currently in place on Lake Gogebic only), and the DNR Fisheries Division is not pursuing any further regulation changes for northern pike, instead focusing on their new statewide management strategy.* **Mr. Lindquist** stated the yellow perch regulations will be up for comment at the Coffee & Conversation sessions. It was supported by MUCC and the EUPCAC and WUPCAC, but there is a lot of pushback from the lower peninsula. He suggested perhaps it can be set for the UP only. **Mr. Dropps** further elaborated.

4. Additional Agenda Items Added by Council: There were no additional items added.

Reports from Committee Meetings Held

Vice Chair Suchovsky opened the floor for Committee reports:

1. Fisheries: **Mr. Dropps** reported a new law pertaining to aquatic invasive species became effective today. He encouraged members to read up on it and to view a short video from DEQ online to learn more. He stated the committee discussed the new perch regulations, muskies in the Paint River, and Mr. Hall's concern he brought up at the last meeting regarding the lack of fish in a few Marquette County inland lakes. He provided a brief presentation to give a basic understanding of an ecosystem of a lake. Topics included a typical simplified food cycle, chinook salmon population down 75% caused by loss of alewives, results of low plankton, too many nutrients, winter kill, lakes after a winter kill, and Little Lake of Marquette County. He stated he spoke to Mr. Darren Kramer, fisheries biologist, about Little Lake which has a fair amount of nutrients than other lakes with good growth, some deep water and a good support system and growth rates for fish.
2. Trails/Recreation/Law: A report was deferred to the next meeting in May.
3. Wildlife: **Mr. Lindquist** stated there was no report. He will be scheduling a meeting soon to talk about a moose management plan and any other items members wish to discuss. He invited new members to serve on this committee if they wish.

Vice Chair Suchovsky echoed Mr. Lindquist invitation to new members to serve on any of the committees. Those interested can contact Ms. Dahlstrom and she will inform the lead members.

Next Meeting

1. **Next Meeting Date:** **Vice Chair Suchovsky** noted the next meeting will be on Wednesday, May 22 in Houghton beginning at 5:30pm eastern at MTU's Memorial Union Building-Ballroom A.
2. **Items for Next Meeting Agenda:** **Vice Chair Suchovsky** asked the Council if there were any topics to be considered for the next agenda. The Council provided the following suggestions: a trails update from Mr. Ron Yesney (Mr. Schmidt) and status of natural areas in Michigan approved for protection and those needing more protection (Mr. Moran).

Public Comments

Vice Chair Suchovsky explained this portion of the meeting and opened the floor for public comment.

- *Mr. Larry Mellstrom of Iron River* (5 minutes) distributed a copy of his recommendations for changes to deer hunting regulations. **Vice Chair Suchovsky** asked if his recommendations were different than what he presented to the Council at the last meeting in March. He indicated he had a lot to share and reviewed the same recommendations along with his views on why deer regulations should be changed. A copy of his written documents will be referred to the Council's Wildlife Committee for further consideration.
- *Mr. Rob Lalonde of Escanaba* (5 minutes) voiced his concern with the process of reserving backcountry cabins at the Porkies, stating he has been backpacking there for 20 years in the fall and it has been increasingly difficult to reserve the cabins despite trying 6 months in advance when reservations open. He feels there is something wrong with the reservation system. He also noted with the increase in advertising through social media and Pure Michigan, the usage in the park seems like it has quadrupled and may be good for tourism, but there aren't enough facilities to accept the volume of people. **Ms. Haughey** thanked him for voicing his opinion and continuing to backpack all these years and encouraged him to stay afterwards to talk with park staff.

Council Closing Comments

- **Mr. Schmidt** stated the UP Environmental Coalition (UPEC) will be having its annual Celebrate the UP in Marquette March 29 and 30. Conga Se Mene will be playing on March 29 and a program of speakers will be held on March 30.
- **Mr. Schulz** noted he is not against hunting.
- **Mr. Solka** indicated as a new member he enjoyed the meeting and all the comments from the public and council alike, and he enjoyed meeting everyone.
- **Mr. Hall** stated he received an email in the last few days regarding HB 4362 sponsored by Reps. Sheppard and LaGrand limiting the operation of a boat between the hours of 8am and sunset. He indicated he completely disagrees with this. **Mr. Lindquist** noted MUCC is working against this bill.

Adjournment

Vice Chair Suchovsky thanked everyone for their contributions. The meeting adjourned at 8:24pm central / 9:24pm eastern.