

Western Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council (WUPCAC)

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 19, 2021

5:00-7:30pm Central / 6:00-8:30pm Eastern

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Chairman: Jim Lorenson - Vice-Chairman: Warren Suchovsky

Council Members Present

Jim Baker	Mike Holmes	Mary Peterson
Erik Bessonon	Dave Johnson	Horst Schmidt
Joan Duncan	George Lindquist	Kirk Schott
Barb Gajewski	Jim Lorenson	Travis Smith
Dave Hall	Chauncey Moran	Tom Solka

Council Members Absent/Excused

Floyd Dropps	Skip Schulz	Warren Suchovsky
Carol Mason Sherrill	Trevor St. John	

Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Staff & Guests

Kristi Dahlstrom, Executive Division, Marquette
John DePue, Wildlife Division, Baraga
Stacy Haughey, UP Field Deputy, Executive Division, Marquette
Dan Heckman, Forest Resources Division, Gaylord
Rob Katona, Parks & Recreation Division-UP Trails, Marquette
Sgt. Mark Leadman, Law Enforcement Division, Marquette
George Madison, Fisheries Division, Baraga
Doug Rich, Parks & Recreation Division, Baraga
Tom Seablom, Forest Resources Division, Marquette
Bill Scullon, Wildlife Division, Norway

Welcome & Call to Order

At 6:00pm Eastern, **Chair Lorenson** called the meeting to order with 32 participants in virtual attendance, including Council members, DNR staff, and registered public attendees. He led the Pledge of Allegiance. He asked Ms. Dahlstrom to read off the names of all those attending virtually and by phone. A list of Council members was also show on screen.

Ms. Haughey, DNR UP Field Deputy, introduced herself and thanked Council members, DNR staff, and guests for joining the meeting. She indicated the meeting will be guided with a powerpoint presentation and asked those attending to review a slide with virtual meeting tips. She then noted the Upper Peninsula Citizens' Advisory Councils (East and West) are advisory groups to the DNR.

New Member Introductions

Chair Lorenson and **Ms. Haughey** welcomed two new members to the Council. **Ms. Haughey** explained when openings occur, a press release is initiated to solicit applications and the CAC Selection Team, made up of citizens and DNR staff, meet to consider applications received based on a variety of factors (interest, group representation, UP county of residence, etc.). She noted it is often questioned whether those who permanently reside in the lower peninsula and have a camp in the UP can apply to be a Council member; however, Council bylaws indicate Council members must be a permanent UP resident to apply/serve. Several applications were received this year from well

qualified individuals and the two new members were congratulated: **Mr. Erik Besson** of Gladstone (affiliated with UP Whitetails of Delta County, avid outdoorsman) and **Ms. Carol Mason Sherrill** of Watersmeet (independent, extensive conservation background, silent sports interest).

Adoption of Agenda

Chair Lorenson asked the Council if there were any additions or revisions to the agenda. None were brought forth. **Mr. Hall motioned to accept the agenda as presented; Mr. Besson supported the motion. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: See page 1. No further discussion. Motion carried.**

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Chair Lorenson asked if there were any changes to the March 18, 2021 WUPCAC meeting minutes that were distributed to the Council via email for review. None were brought forth. **Mr. Johnson motioned to accept the minutes as submitted; Mr. Solka supported the motion. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: See page 1. No further discussion. Motion carried.**

DNR Reports from Division Staff & Follow-Up from Last Meeting

Written staff reports were provided to Council members on May 12, 2021. The following verbal updates were provided.

- **Ms. Stacy Haughey, UP Field Deputy:** **Ms. Haughey** shared the latest licenses and permits sales report from April 2021 on screen. Trends of various licenses and permits sales were displayed for fishing customers (new customers, age breakdown, female/non-resident/repeat fishing customers) and the same demographics for hunting customers. All have had a dramatic increase already through April 2021 over the entire year of 2020. For example, there were 9,600 new female fishing customers in 2020 and in the 4 months of 2021, there are over 17,000. She indicated this year's sales are showing a very promising trend. **Ms. Gajewski** asked if the reports are posted on the DNR website for the public to view. **Ms. Haughey** stated they are presented to the NRC each month, and she will have to check to see if they are available on the website.
- **Mr. George Madison, Fisheries Division:** **Mr. Madison** mentioned he also is noticing a tremendous interest in the outdoors, including recreational land purchases. He stated he and other fisheries biologists have been fielding a number of calls from folks living in cities who watch outdoor shows and want to live in the woods. Once they do purchase land, many of them do not want to share their land with the public. As for fish activity, the spring fish spawning was different this year with cold overnight temperatures causing fish spawns to be very slow for steelhead and walleye. Smelting was also slow, but those who waded into the river a bit could dip for some. He noted it will be a very busy summer this year with the increase in those recreating.
- **Mr. Tom Seablom, Forest Resources Division:** **Mr. Seablom** stated he did not have anything to add to the forestry written report.
- **Sgt. Mark Leadman, Law Enforcement Division:** **Sgt. Leadman**, who covers Marquette and Baraga Counties, stated officers have been busy in the woods and water with the high volume of people in the outdoors lately. He indicated 90% of the UP's officers helped in the search for the missing teen case in Ontonagon County which ended tragically. The weather was some of the worst to be conducting a search in. He thanked those who were involved including the large number of the public who helped. He noted the number of fires cropping up including a very large one at Goose Lake in Marquette County yesterday (May 18). This is near the area where the proposed shooting range will be located. He stated the area is still a huge mess from people shooting into

berms and trees. The same problem exists in North Lake with illegal shooting. He said he doesn't see a resolution unless there is more enforcement. He also reported an increase in the number of AED and CPR incidents the officers have been involved in, several of which end up well. This increase is a statewide trend. **Mr. Lindquist** commended the Law Division for their efforts in the search. He described series of unfortunate events surrounding the incident including bad weather and a diverted chopper to a capsized boat. **Dr. Schott** stated the search was near his home and the teen was one of his oldest son's students. **Chair Lorenson** thanked everyone and thoughts to the family were noted. He stated he is involved with the county search and rescue team and they appreciated the collaborative efforts from the DNR.

- **Mr. Doug Rich, Parks & Recreation Division:** **Mr. Rich** added to the license report mentioned earlier, stating recreation passport sales have increased 17.9% and reservation numbers are up by 23% so far this year, which means parks will be busier than last year's record numbers. He stated the increased lumber prices the public has experienced are also affecting some of the parks' construction projects, with at least a 15% increase in cost. Most planned projects will move forward, and some may have to be delayed as a result. He mentioned the work will begin this season on the new public indoor shooting range at the Lake Superior Sportsman's Club, which is in cooperation with the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park. **Mr. Solka** asked about the status of Highway 107 into the Porkies. **Mr. Rich** stated the areas that were armored held up well, but those areas that still need to be done received further damage. It is on their radar. **Ms. Duncan** asked if the indoor range would accommodate 22 calibers. **Mr. Rich** stated he isn't sure of the specs for the indoor range outside of pistols. He added Pittman Robertson funding will allow for expansion of the outdoor range in the future which will provide another great opportunity.
- **Mr. Rob Katona, Parks & Recreation Division-UP Trails:** **Mr. Katona** introduced himself as the central UP trails specialist attending on behalf of Mr. Ron Yesney. He noted several projects are on tap for the summer including ORV maintenance/improvement projects as well as several non-motorized projects including trail improvements at Little Presque Isle, Thunder Valley, Days River Pathway, and the Cedar River Pathway. He highlighted the increases in snowmobile and ORV license sales from 2019 to 2020 and then to date in 2021. ORV license sales increased from 249,385 (2019) to 287,086 (2020). Snowmobile permit sales increased from 196,796 (2019) to 231,788 (2020). That trend continued into 2021, with increases seen in just 3 months of 2021 compared to total year sales in 2020: ORV licenses increased 107%, ORV trail use permits increased 120%, and snowmobile permits increased 10.8%. By those indications, it looks to be another record year for usage. Grooming dollars not spent last year due to the pandemic will allow for increased maintenance this year due to the increased usage. He also noted they continue to work on the Lake Linden grade. **Mr. Johnson** asked if Michigan plans to drag their trails like Wisconsin does. **Mr. Katona** stated Wisconsin does this to their sandy condition trails and the UP does have a few like this that they drag more frequently. He would like to see more shared equipment/partnerships with clubs who do both sports (ORV and snowmobile) to help with maintenance. **Mr. Johnson** stated Wisconsin has better mapping and signage as well. **Mr. Katona** described the interactive mapping available on the website, and stated with the new alpha signage, both are heading in a positive direction.
- **Mr. John DePue, Wildlife Division:** **Mr. DePue** stated wildlife staff are wrapping up their woodcock surveys and have completed sharp tail grouse surveys. Crews are also beginning their plantings of trees and shrubs in fields in full force since this type of work was halted last year due to the pandemic. He also noted several big projects slated for this summer. **Mr. Hall** asked about reports of spring bear issues with bird feeders, etc. **Mr. DePue** stated this is the time of year when bears are out of hibernation and looking for food sources. The nuisance

bear calls are about average this year. He suggested putting away bird feeders, garbage cans, etc. away until mid-June when natural food sources become more plentiful as the woods green up.

Chair Lorensen thanked DNR staff for attending the meetings, preparing the division reports, and answering Council member questions.

Public Comment on Agenda Items Only

Chair Lorensen noted there were no pre-registered public comments. He opened the floor to any other public comments on agenda items. None were brought forth.

Old Business

1. Acknowledgement of DNR Response to March Resolution re: Comments to Inland Walleye Management Plan & Underwater Spearfishing: **Chair Lorensen** acknowledged receipt of the DNR's response to the Council's March resolution regarding comments to the draft inland walleye management plan and underwater spearfishing, which was emailed to Council members when it was received. He stated the response indicates the comments were appreciated and are under review. **Ms. Haughey** displayed a copy of the response onscreen. **Chair Lorensen** asked if the Council had any questions or comments; none were brought forth.
2. Moose Management Considerations (Lorensen-Mar 2021): **Chair Lorensen** stated the DNR responded to the Council's request at the last meeting to provide a listing of management considerations for moose. This document was received and forward to the Council last week. He asked if there were any comments or questions from the Council. **Mr. Lindquist** stated several points made in the document referred to hunting and the request wasn't regarding a hunting season, but rather what the DNR does to manage/enhance the herd in the UP as the herd doesn't seem to be growing. He said he'd like to see more attention to this important species. **Chair Lorensen** agreed the Council's request wasn't to advocate for a hunt, but rather what considerations for moose are used, absent a formal management plan. He will send a request back for more information. **Mr. DePue** explained a 3% growth rate was mentioned in the document, which is determined through biannual surveys. He also noted staff have begun to increase their sampling from roadkill moose to look at brain worm or different disease outbreaks. He stated Minnesota has been involved in extensive long-term research that indicates the number of moose has been declining over the past decade. Staff monitors that research. Climate change with warmer weather and ticks are thought to play a large part in their decline. He added limited resources in Michigan prevent an in-depth program, but it is hoped that it can occur in the future. **Mr. Lindquist** stated he appreciates the extra effort in looking at roadkill and the overall health of moose. **Mr. Bessonen** asked how many moose are lost each year in automobile collisions. **Mr. DePue** responded with an average of 12-15 moose (some years up to 20). He said collisions somewhat mimics a hunting season if there was one. Staff have placed caution signs in locations where frequent moose collisions have occurred to warn motorists. **Mr. Scullon** stated recently there have been four moose fatalities due to collisions and all four were pregnant. He added the necropsy information is valuable to staff. The highest mortality of moose is caused by vehicular collisions and usually exceeds annual production of the herd. He stated forestry and wildlife staff do actively manage the core moose range and habitat conditions for moose habitat. Habitat does not seem to be a limiting factor; however, warmer weather, road kills, ticks, liver flukes, brain worm and predation are more limiting factors in the UP. **Chair Lorensen** thanked Mr. DePue and Mr. Scullon for the information.

New Business

1. **State Forest Management Plan Updates:** **Mr. Dan Heckman** thanked the Council for letting him speak and introduced himself as a forest planning and modeling specialist with the Forest Resources Division out of Gaylord. He provided a review of his background which included a degree from MTU and working in the UP early in his career. He presented the following slides regarding the revision of the state's forest management plan:
 - *Goal:* Create a new State Forest Management Plan that will ensure Michigan's residents, stakeholders, partners, and industries trust and are confident that the Michigan DNR will sustainably and responsibly manage state forest land on their behalf. This includes three major parts: revise the regional state forest management plans created in 2013, incorporate the state forest management plan of 2008, and use a more sophisticated model incorporating multiple values utilizing new software that will use a more scientific approach with less assumptions. The goal is to combine the two plans into one concise planning document that is less redundant and easier to understand.
 - *Three Levels of Planning/Modeling:* 1) Strategic/long-term planning (150-200 years – sustainability, cover-types/age classes/harvest levels per decade); 2) Strategic/mid-term planning (10-year plan – SFMP, guides annual harvest prescriptions per MA/FMU); 3) Operational/short-term planning (1 year at a time implementation tool, focuses on a compartment/YOE scale).
 - *Strategic Plan for Regional State Forest Management Plan Revision:* A one-page strategic working document was shown indicating all the moving parts to the process. The goal, current conditions, lines of effort, strategies for each effort and desired end state were described in detail. The management plan needs to be updated to address some of the current challenges such as forest health concerns (spruce budworm, beech bark disease, emerald ash borer). One of the lines of effort includes engaging with staff, public, and stakeholders throughout the planning process, which is why this topic is on the Council agenda. Staff took a hard look backwards to see what has and hasn't worked to set a more meaningful direction forward. One item that has changed since the development of this presentation is the desired end state timeline, which is being pushed to January 2023 instead of October 2021, mainly due to the length of time it has taken during the pandemic environment.
 - *Team:* Three teams of staff have been assembled for this project: the modeling team, the writing team, and the engagement team with 6-8 staff members and all divisions represented on each. An explanation of each team and their responsibilities was provided.
 - *Timeline:* The project began in September 2019 and work has been slowly progressing since then with quarterly tasks, reporting and evaluation. Implementation and monitoring are slated to begin May 2022. Again, the timeline will be adjusted from this original version as stated previously.
 - *Consolidation of Management Areas:* Previous management units were small, very complex and required a sizable amount of analysis and harvest targets were difficult. As a result, management areas were increased to allow for realistic goals and a meaningful impact on the landscape. For the eastern UP, 33 management areas were consolidated into 6 and based on ecological subsections. For the western UP, 33 management areas were consolidated into 11. A map was shown of each.
 - *New Cover-Type Classification:* Another objective was to be more specific with the forest cover-type classification. A chart showing 25 forested cover-types (expanded to include planted cover-types and oak differentiation) and 11 non-forested cover-types (expanded for wildlife habitat classification and afforestation opportunities) was shown and explained.
 - *Developed Growth & Yield Data:* Data was assembled to provide yield information. When a harvest is projected, an analysis can be conducted to stratify the landscape into specific cover-types and then further stratify the cover-types in density classes, etc. producing yield tables. Examples were explained and shown.

Factors that describe the future condition of the forest can be reviewed. This data will help staff make better decisions and conduct better planning.

- *Standing Inventory & Harvest Volumes:* Additional information that has been gathered will allow for modeling and prediction of forest products that are sold. For example, a metric of diversity within the stands can help predict activity over time and can show what happens in the forest based on different scenarios.
- *Recently Incorporated Carbon & Canopy Information:* Carbon and canopy data for use as a potential future revenue factor was recently incorporated.
- *Developing Pilot Model for Pigeon River Country:* This pilot, which encompasses about 400,000 acres (10% of the state forest), will help test the concepts and theories being developed. There is an elk herd within this region requiring special goals to maintain a certain level of habitat along with a GEMs (grouse enhancement management site). This pilot will also help with determining needs for deer wintering complexes in the UP as well as grouse habitat management.
- *Stratum Level Strategic Model:* A flowchart was shown with information that has always been collected, produced, and reported which can be fed into this model to help better predict what to do in the future with regards to habitat and forest management.
- *Stand Level Implementation Model:* This model would influence and guide what should be cut each year to meet high level objectives and targets, which would go through the normal open house and compartment review process before treatments are approved.
- *Developed a Pilot Model:* This model is almost finished and will be ready to roll-out statewide. It involves a plan to grow a little bit bigger and older trees but still do harvesting. This model would be good for Kirtland warbler management, deer wintering complexes, or GEMs areas.
- *Engagement Team:* The engagement team has been busy creating stakeholder lists, categorizing them into groups, identifying level of engagement for each group, and identifying key points and methods of engagement. They also drafted a tribal contact letter, created website content, conducted public and stakeholder surveys and notifications, and created a glossy one-page flyer to inform legislators on the process. Survey results, when ready, will be posted on the website for everyone to review.
- *Engagement Plan:* A chart was shown indicating the primary methods of engagement at engagement points.
- *Writing Team:* The writing team assessed the 2008 state forest management plan and the 2013 regional plans, created a consolidated outline, and began work on the introduction (legal and policy framework, special resource direction, mission, vision, and strategic goals), Michigan's forest history, current conditions and trends, and desired future condition. They will also integrate feature species management and climate change adaptation.
- *What's Next?* The next steps include finishing the pilot implementation model, expanding the pilot strategic model to entire state (gather input on management direction from managers and staff, conduct scenario modeling, and incorporate goals), releasing the first draft this summer, and engage, revise, approve and release. Once the first draft is released this winter or next spring, there will be opportunities for comment with specific targeted engagement with groups like the UPCACs, and feedback will be incorporated into a second draft before seeking approval. **Mr. Heckman** opened the floor for questions.
 - **Mr. Johnson** asked what is done for game purchased lands. **Mr. Heckman** stated all funding sources were identified and put into two categories, one is purchased lands and one is not, and they have incorporated it into the model. He stated work will continue to refine that aspect of the model. **Mr. Johnson** also asked how they will reconcile the new inventory system based on cover type with what is actually on the ground. **Mr. Heckman** explained how the yield tables matched up with the forest inventory and the work staff is doing to ensure there is a good representation. **Mr. Johnson** also asked

about the carbon credit focus. **Mr. Heckman** stated the incorporation of carbon was to know how much carbon exists in the state forest, regardless of whether it will be sold or not.

- **Mr. Lindquist** asked if deer wintering complexes are being considered. **Mr. Heckman** stated there wasn't a good way to evaluate them previously, so they have been working with local wildlife staff that are directly involved in managing the wintering complexes and taking those already written plans with goals and incorporating them into forest management. **Mr. Lindquist** also asked whether white-tailed deer is listed as a featured species due to the differences in management of them in the UP versus the lower peninsula. **Mr. Heckman** stated the featured species list is almost ready to be released after an internal and public review, and stated **Mr. Lindquist** makes a good point about the differences in management.
- **Ms. Duncan** asked how recreational trail planning integrates into the model. **Mr. Heckman** explained all sorts of uses on state forest land are represented in the model and several team members represent those interests. He stated six principles were developed with one of them solely for recreation with a goal directly related to it. Non-motorized trails, including equestrian trails, is explicitly listed as one of the categories.
- **Mr. Besson** asked if any changes with the demand for pulpwood in the paper industry are forecasted. **Mr. Heckman** stated there has been less demand, but he is not aware of the latest information in the commercial field. He can check with those that do and respond back.

Chair Lorensen thanked Mr. Heckman for his informative presentation.

2. Review of Rules/Regulations for Equestrian Use on State Land (Duncan-Nov 2020): **Mr. Seablom** indicated Ms. Duncan asked previously about where equestrians can go or cannot go within the state forest system. He described only four areas in the state forest system that does not allow horse riding: Little Presque Isle (except the county roads), Blueberry Ridge area (except the new connector trail that goes from the fairgrounds to Thunder Valley), Gladwin Field Trial Area, and the Pigeon River Country (PRC). In summary, horse riding is allowed on county roads, identified state forest roads and on certain trails in the PRC. He stated essentially horse riders can ride cross country as long as they are not violating any environmental rules and except those areas where there is a Land Use of the Director, which would include closed forest roads if there is a berm. **Ms. Duncan** stated she would like the regulations published for the public because she feels it is not clear to a majority of riders and DNR staff are not well educated on them. **Chair Lorensen** stated **Ms. Duncan's** points are well taken and asked if the rules can be sent to him so that he can discuss/review it with the Trails/Rec/Law Committee. **Mr. Seablom** stated he will send a copy to **Chair Lorensen** as well as review the website to see what is listed for equestrians. **Mr. Solka** stated the regulations seem broad enough to understand; they just need to be visible. **Mr. Seablom** indicated the four areas mentioned above are well placarded to help riders know where they can and can't go. **Chair Lorensen** stated although the rules are simple, a lot of people don't know them. He also noted the issue that non-motorized folks don't understand or consider equestrians non-motorized recreation on several levels and that needs to be improved. He suggested the Committee look at developing ideas to help educate the public and inform DNR staff. **Ms. Haughey** mentioned the printed map of horse trails and where horses could go around the UP that was developed two years ago and asked if it should be recirculated; **Chair Lorensen** agreed. **Ms. Duncan** stated although the map is good, it is hard to hold on to while riding and is at such a small scale that it's hard to read and too small to label properly. She indicated it's a good start, but it needs more work. **Mr. Katona** stated he recalls an interactive map on the DNR's website with clickable layers that would identify all the forest roads and trails that riders could zoom in on a particular location. He suggested checking on the status of that option. **Ms. Duncan** mentioned a map app put together by a Bruce Crossing riding group that works very well.

Reports from Committee Meetings Held

Chair Lorensen opened the floor for reports from those Committees that held meetings.

1. **Fisheries:** **Mr. Dropps** was not present for the meeting this evening; however, several committee members presented the following overview of the resolutions up for Council consideration (which were deferred from the March meeting due to time constraints). Copies of the resolutions were emailed to Council members previously for their review.
 - *Resolution #1: Menominee (Round Whitefish) Separate Possession Limit:* **Mr. Lindquist** explained this resolution for consideration. He stated the Fisheries Committee is recommending the DNR allow for a separate possession limit of 20 Menominee on Lake Superior, not combined with lake whitefish and cisco for a combined possession limit of 10 fish as it is now. He cited an obligation for anglers to know what they are catching, enforcement and identification issues, and an abundance of the species in the upper Great Lakes. **Mr. Madison** concurred with the issues presented. **Chair Lorensen summarized the resolution and asked for a motion. Mr. Lindquist motioned to approve the resolution to recommend a separate possession limit of 20 Menominee for Lake Superior; Mr. Johnson supported the motion. Chair Lorensen** asked if there was any further discussion. **Mr. Madison** asked **Mr. Lindquist** how the committee arrived at the limit of 20. **Mr. Lindquist** stated it was not biologically based on anything as there is very little biological impact to the species. **Mr. Madison** explained another fish that looks like a Menominee that could be more threatened with a larger possession limit of Menominee. **Mr. Solka** asked if this proposal only pertains to Lake Superior; **Mr. Lindquist** stated yes. **Chair Lorensen called for a verbal vote. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: See page 1. Motion carried.**
 - *Resolution #2: Metrics of Fish Management Plans:* **Mr. Johnson** explained this resolution for consideration. He stated the Fisheries Committee is recommending that stakeholder groups (i.e., UPSA, UP Citizens' Advisory Councils, etc.) be integrated much earlier in the discussions of fish management plans prior to the point of development as well as be a part of the development. He cited several examples of instances where stakeholder groups were brought into the process well after plans were developed leaving very little or no opportunity for changes after that point. **Chair Lorensen summarized the resolution and asked for a motion. Mr. Bessonon motioned to approve the resolution to recommend increased involvement of stakeholder groups in the development of draft fisheries management plans prior to them being submitted for public review; Mr. Lindquist supported the motion.** There was no further discussion. **Chair Lorensen called for a verbal vote. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: See page 1. Motion carried.**
 - *Resolution #3: Northern Pike Immediate Catch & Release:* **Ms. Gajewski** explained this resolution for consideration. She stated the Fisheries Committee is making a recommendation to oppose a recent proposal to allow a catch and release season for northern pike. She stated the proposed catch and release season would overlap during what is now currently considered a closed season and that season is designed to protect spawning or post spawning fish. She also cited vulnerability of the fish and increased mortality as issues with the proposal. **Mr. Madison** mentioned there is a catch and immediate release season for bass and muskie in shallow water at the same time of year using the same types of bait. **Ms. Gajewski** stated the committee did discuss it and is aware there are some catch and release seasons for other species. **Chair Lorensen** asked if the committee discussed those other species and whether this resolution should be more encompassing or limited to northern pike. **Mr. Madison** added it has been discussed numerous times with different groups, such as the muskie and bass anglers, in the last five-year period. **Mr. Johnson** confirmed the Committee is only recommending northern pike. **Chair Lorensen summarized**

the resolution and asked for a motion. Mr. Johnson motioned to approve the resolution to oppose the proposal to allow a catch and release season for northern pike; Mr. Hall supported the motion. Further discussion took place. **Mr. Solka** asked who is advocating for the initial proposal the committee is recommending to oppose. **Mr. Madison** stated the proposal was brought up 2-3 years ago when staff began liberalizing other fishing seasons, such as pike, lake sturgeon, smallmouth bass, and since anglers are fishing the same waters with the same habitats, the DNR was asked to consider bringing in other species for catch and release. He added there are a lot of anglers that enjoy catch and release pike. It was brought to the statewide biologists committee as a proposal and then flowed through the usual public discussion format at coffee and conversation meetings, UPCAC meetings, etc. **With there being no further discussion, Chair Lorensen called for a verbal vote. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: See page 1. Motion carried.**

- **Resolution #4: Northern Pike 5 Fish NMS Limit:** **Mr. Holmes** presented this resolution for consideration. He stated the Fisheries Committee is recommending an overhaul of the northern pike regulations in the UP as the current regulations are counter-productive in the vast majority of UP inland lakes. The written resolution indicates *“a review of most of the UP lakes in a short time can be conducted with a combination of older lake surveys, lake type data and computer modeling. The review will show it would be beneficial to change the current northern pike regulations in the UP. The Committee also recommends trying the northern Wisconsin model that has been practiced successfully, is based on similar lakes and temperature types and is a better fit than the lower peninsula model. A five (5) northern pike daily creel limit and no minimum size limit (MSL) will greatly enhance the ability of UP. fisherman to take a meal of northern pike from their local waters, while helping to improve the quality of pike fishing in the Upper Peninsula.”* He reviewed a draft paper that provided historical perspectives of size and bag limits over the years and discussed a survey conducted through Michigan Outdoor News that indicated 78% of respondents were in support of eliminating the minimum size limit for northern pike in the UP. **Chair Lorensen** asked for further clarification of the Committee’s request to clear up any misunderstandings of the intent; discussion ensued in length. **Mr. Johnson** stated the northern pike regulations are much better in Wisconsin than they are in Michigan. **Mr. Madison** spoke about a presentation from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point about the current and future decline of walleye lakes in the Great Lakes region including Canada. The presentation indicated the reduction of pike populations causes an increase of small-mouth bass who feed on young walleye, thereby declining the walleye population. He stated he feels the walleye fishery will be severely impacted with a pike regulation change like this. He will forward the presentation to the Council when he receives it. **Mr. Hall** asked if this resolution includes a slot limit; **Mr. Holmes** explained it does not. Further discussion took place regarding the differences and similarities of lakes in Wisconsin versus the UP.

Chair Lorensen asked the Council if they wish to review the presentation data before voting, as he personally would like to see it before casting a vote. **Mr. Moran** suggested review of the additional information and a later vote via an online poll in between meetings. Discussions and questions by the Council regarding surveys, concerns, and studies ensued. **Chair Lorensen** presented three options to the Council: 1) vote on the resolution at this meeting; 2) table a vote until the next meeting to allow for a review of the presentation; or 3) schedule an online vote after the presentation is received but before the next meeting. **Ms. Haughey** indicated the bylaws do not currently allow for an online vote; however, the bylaws are due to be revised and it could be included as an option for future meetings. **Mr. Madison** noted the NRC will not be taking action on this item until the fall, allowing time for further review if needed. **Mr. Johnson** added the Fisheries Committee would like to review the

presentation as well and provide commentary if necessary before the Council were to vote. **Chair Lorensen** called for a decision on the action to take. **Mr. Solka motioned to table action on the proposed resolution until the July meeting to allow the extensive work of the Fisheries Committee to be reviewed in depth, allow for a review of additional information in the presentation, and allow for the Committee to provide further commentary after that review; Mr. Johnson supported the motion. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: See page 1. No further discussion. Motion carried.**

2. Forestry: No report.
3. Trails/Recreation/Law: **Chair Lorensen** reported the group did not meet and there is no report.
4. Wildlife: **Mr. Lindquist** reported he had forwarded an article from the Michigan United Conservation Club's online newsletter to the Council regarding a urine-based scents proposal being considered by the NRC. He stated the DNR is recommending a ban on all cervid urine-based products. The NRC will be voting on it at their June meeting. He added the deer seem to be doing well this spring and he has been planting a lot of trees.

Next Meeting

1. Next Meeting Date: **Chair Lorensen** noted the next meeting will be on Thursday, July 22, 2021 beginning at 6:00pm Eastern / 5:00pm Central. Whether the meeting will be held at a location in-person or virtually will be determined at a later time when state employee telework status is known.
2. Items for Next WUPCAC Meeting Agenda: **Chair Lorensen** explained he is managing agenda topics so there is an appropriate amount of information or education as well as preserving as much time as possible for discussion, since the Council is an advisory group and items need to be discussed if recommendations are to be given. Any suggested topics can be sent to him, Ms. Haughey or to Ms. Dahlstrom.

Public Comments

Chair Lorensen opened the floor for public comment on any topic:

1. *Mr. Jonathon Bartosiewicz, Saginaw – Keweenaw ATV Trail Closure (pre-registered)*: Mr. Bartosiewicz did not attend the meeting.
2. *Mr. Mark Sermon, UP Side-By-Sides*: Mr. Sermon stated he represents a new organization that is devoted to promoting outdoor opportunities for those with side-by-sides and other off-road vehicles and he would like to address the Keweenaw ATV trail closure. He stated this trail was closed last year due to logging and now it is closed through August of this year. He asked if there were any ongoing discussions about a resolution or reroute, or a person of interest that he could speak to. He indicated his group is suggesting a possible work-around by allowing side-by-side traffic alongside M-26 between Eagle Harbor and Copper Harbor. **Chair Lorensen** asked Ms. Haughey and/or Mr. Katona to address this specific issue. **Ms. Haughey** stated it is important to note the trail closure was not due to logging, but rather issues with trail rider interactions during logging activity causing unsafe situations. **Mr. Katona** stated the private landowner (TRG) has been a great partner to work with. They have been heavily logging in that area the last couple of seasons and DNR staff have had several meetings with them to find an agreeable solution to allow haul trucks and ATV traffic to co-exist; however, a resolution hasn't been reached and unfortunately a viable reroute is not currently available. He stated this decision is at the landowner's discretion and the encounters have caused risky situations. Mr. Sermon stated he understands many of the trails exist at the graces of private landowners, but he is concerned with the impact on the local economies in that area due to the lack of large riding groups. He stated he spoke

to a few local businesses to discuss the M-26 option. **Mr. Katona** stated the Michigan Department of Transportation would have to approve that option through its permitting process. He noted it is not the safest option for riders. Mr. Serman stated he will contact DNR trails staff to offer any assistance he can in finding a resolution.

Council Closing Comments

Chair Lorenson opened the floor for Council comments.

- **Ms. Duncan** stated the recreational use of horses is increasing drastically as everything else is. An average unregistered horse would be about \$1,000 any other year, but this year, they are costing \$4,000 and there is hardly any for sale. It is a good, quiet, and safe sport. **Chair Lorenson** agreed the sport is certainly not cheap.
- **Chair Lorenson** stated after encouragement from several people, he was able to get a turkey license this year and try it out. He was successful and it was a great deal of fun. He added he will certainly partake in the activity again.

Adjournment

Chair Lorenson thanked everyone who participated and for their contributions. He adjourned the meeting at 8:42pm Eastern/7:42pm Central.

Approved 7/22/21