

# Western Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council (WUPCAC)

## Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 20, 2020

5:30-8:00pm Eastern

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

---

*Vice-Chairman: Warren Suchovsky*

### Council Members Present

Jim Baker

Floyd Dropps

Joan Duncan

Barb Gajewski

Dave Hall

Dave Johnson

George Lindquist

Jim Lorenson

Chauncey Moran

Mary Peterson

Jake Putala

Horst Schmidt

Kirk Schott

Skip Schulz

Travis Smith

Tom Solka

Trevor St. John

Warren Suchovsky

### Council Members Absent/Excused

Mike Holmes

### 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

George Madison, Fisheries Division, Baraga

Lt. Ryan Aho, Law Enforcement Division, Crystal Falls

Doug Rich, Parks & Recreation Division, Baraga

Tom Seablom, Forest Resources Division, Marquette

Ron Yesney, Parks & Recreation Division-UP Trails, Marquette

### Call to Order

**Ms. Haughey**, on behalf of Vice Chair Suchovsky, started the meeting at 5:30pm by introducing herself, indicating this was the first virtual meeting via Zoom for the WUPCAC. She welcomed everyone in attendance (42 total). She explained the procedure by which the meeting will be conducted in this new format with the aid of a powerpoint presentation, and indicated Council members and registered members of the public were emailed copies of the agenda/presentation, division reports, and any other meeting handouts prior to the meeting.

**Ms. Haughey** provided an overview of the Upper Peninsula Citizens' Advisory Councils (East and West). She displayed a listing of current West Council members and the group/interest and UP county they represent. She also displayed a photo of Council member Travis Smith sharing his passion of the outdoors with his daughter on a recent turkey hunt.

**Ms. Haughey** displayed a listing of registered public attendees on the screen and welcomed them to the meeting. She noted Mr. Craig Woerpel from WYKX and East Council member Allan Augustyn, both with media, in attendance.

### A Moment of Remembrance for Phil Wirtanen, WUPCAC Chair

**Ms. Haughey** asked for a moment of remembrance for Phil Wirtanen, former Chair of the WUPCAC, who passed away suddenly in February. The January WUPCAC meeting was the last meeting for Chair Wirtanen and he is dearly missed. A moment of silence was observed to honor Phil and his work on the WUPCAC since 2008.

**Ms. Haughey** handed the meeting over to **Vice Chair Suchovsky**. Council members joined **Vice Chair Suchovsky** in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

### Adoption of Agenda

**Vice Chair Suchovsky** asked the Council if there were any additions or revisions to the agenda. **Ms. Haughey** indicated there was an adjustment made in the order of presenters under New Business to aid in the flow of topics. **Mr. Lindquist** motioned to accept the agenda as amended; **Dr. Schott** supported the motion. **Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: See attendance on page 1. No further discussion. Motion carried.**

### Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

**Vice Chair Suchovsky** asked if there were any changes to the January 15, 2020 WUPCAC meeting minutes that were distributed to the Council via email for review. None were brought forth. **Mr. Solka** motioned to accept the minutes as submitted; **Dr. Schott** supported the motion. **Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: See attendance on page 1. No further discussion. Motion carried.**

### Annual Election of Officers

**Vice Chair Suchovsky** noted the Bylaws require the Council to have an officer election each year, which traditionally occurs annually at the May meeting. He mentioned newly elected officers will begin their term at the next meeting in July. He turned the floor over to **Ms. Haughey** to conduct the election. She opened the floor for nominations for 2020:

- **Chairman:** **Mr. Hall** nominated Mr. Lorenson; **Mr. Lorenson** accepted the nomination. **Mr. Lindquist** nominated Mr. Suchovsky; **Mr. Suchovsky** respectfully declined. **Ms. Duncan** nominated Mr. Solka; **Mr. Solka** accepted the nomination. After three more opportunities, no additional nominations were brought forth. **Mr. Suchovsky** motioned to close the nominations for Chairman; **Mr. Lindquist** supported the motion. **A vote was conducted by an online Zoom poll visible to all in attendance. Results: Lorenson-14, Solka-3, Abstention-1). No further discussion. Motion carried.** **Mr. Johnson** noted after the vote that he was unable to vote since he was calling in and not on video. **Ms. Haughey** offered to have him text or email his vote; **Mr. Johnson** indicated he will abstain at this point. Congratulations were given to Mr. Lorenson.
- **Vice Chairman:** **Mr. Lorenson** nominated Mr. Suchovsky; **Mr. Suchovsky** accepted the nomination. **Mr. Lindquist** nominated Dr. Schott; **Dr. Schott** accepted the nomination. **Mr. St. John** nominated Mr. Hall; **Mr. Hall** accepted the nomination. **Mr. Hall** nominated Mr. Lindquist; **Mr. Lindquist** respectfully declined. After three more opportunities, no additional nominations were brought forth. **Dr. Schott** motioned to close the nominations for Vice Chairman; **Mr. Suchovsky** supported the motion. **A vote was conducted by an online Zoom poll visible to all in attendance. Results: Suchovsky-9, Schott-4, Hall-4, Absention-1. No further discussion. Motion carried.** Congratulations were given to Mr. Suchovsky.
- **Final Results:** **Mr. Lorenson** is the new Chairman for 2020 and **Mr. Suchovsky** remains Vice Chairman for 2020.

### DNR Reports from Division Staff

Written staff reports were provided to Council members on May 14, 2020. The following verbal updates were provided.

- **Stacy Haughey, UP Field Deputy:** **Ms. Haughey** noted that DNR staff have been given temporary layoff days (for example, she has Mondays and Ms. Dahlstrom has Fridays). If you contact a staff member via email, you may receive a return email indicating they are off that particular day. Most are providing an alternate person to contact in their absence. There are staff dedicated to answer calls and questions being made to the offices

during these times. She also mentioned the NRC reviewed a proposal last week at their meeting for UP deer regulations—this information is listed in the NRC summary in the division reports emailed out to everyone. No action was taken at the May meeting as it is just a proposal at this point. With the division report email, a link was included that allows the public to comment. She noted the NRC is down to four commissioners as Commissioner Walters recently moved to Colorado. Appointments to fill the three vacant positions have not yet been announced by the Governor's office.

- **George Madison, Fisheries Division:** Mr. Madison indicated he added information to the division reports regarding the proposed party fishing regulation being considered. He stated normally a proposal like this one would be vetted at the division's spring coffee & conversation meetings around the state but they have been cancelled this year due to COVID-19. He asked Council members to review it and if there are questions to email or call him. He explained the reasoning behind the proposal which was brought forward by the public. He added it has been a cold spring with smelt runs being happenstance and walleye fishing being slow.
- **Tom Seablom, Forest Resources Division:** Mr. Seablom stated he didn't have any additions to his report and noted that because of the state hiring freeze, Mr. Keith Magnusson was unable to continue his acting eastern UP supervisor role (it had expired just before the freeze). As a result, Mr. Seablom is now overseeing the entire UP at this time.
- **Lt. Ryan Aho, Law Enforcement Division:** Lt. Aho indicated officers have been very busy since people are either working from home or out of work and are recreating more. They have had to modify how they do business with social distancing, wearing gloves and masks, etc. It's making their job more difficult but there has been several good cases. He stated he was asked from the last meeting to provide an update on the number of snowmobile fatalities for the season. He reported statewide, there were 14 fatalities for the 2019-2020 season compared to 15 fatalities for the 2018-2019 season, down 1. Those same numbers will be reported at the next Snowmobile Advisory Workgroup meeting.
- **Doug Rich, Parks & Recreation Division:** Mr. Rich noted the National Guard is moving ahead with their training at the Porcupine Mountains from May 29-June 13. 140 troops from the 107<sup>th</sup> engineering battalion out of Ishpeming will do additional armoring on County Road 107, replacing some culverts on the visitors' center road, doing some gravel and grading and working on the old historic headquarters area. It is a great opportunity that has been two years in the making and the Director has supported it. The Michigan National Guard has not done this kind of interface with the civilian population since the 911 tragedy, so it is being used as a national showcase. He added COVID-19 has greatly affected the parks system, with changes happening daily. He mentioned to feel free to contact him if there are any questions.
- **John DePue, Wildlife Division:** Mr. DePue stated he didn't have much to add to his report. He thanked the Law Enforcement Division, who is already busy, for helping to deal with a number of nuisance issues as many wildlife staff were unable to be out in the field due to the stay/work at home order.
- **Ron Yesney, Parks & Recreation Division-UP Trails:** Mr. Yesney mentioned the Trails Program had several trail and construction projects occurring that were put on hold due to the state spending freeze. Staff have been able to move on a few of them, however, it depends on each project's funding source, such as a couple of bridge projects which were funded with federal dollars from the recreational trail program. Another project that has been able to move forward is shoring up the shoreline along US 41/Iron Ore Heritage Trail as a critical funding request. Engineering for the Lake Linden grade is being delayed due to the Executive Orders. Most other projects have been pushed back a year.
- **Questions by Council Members for DNR Staff:**
  - Mr. Lindquist asked Mr. Madison if, despite the hiring and spending freeze, stocking is occurring and if the website will be updated. Mr. Madison indicated COVID-19 hit when the fish were at the end of their rearing cycle, and because of the virus risk to employees for stocking, several sites were combined resulting in several interior lakes not being stocked. Staff were able to get fish out to some waters with difficult

social distancing measures, but many waters were missed this year. The fisheries shouldn't be affected with a one-year absence. The website will be updated soon to reflect what has been stocked. **Ms. Haughey** noted there is also a segment on the DNR's COVID-19 webpage about fish stocking.

- **Mr. Schmidt** asked **Mr. Rich** about the status of the stabilization of M-107. **Mr. Rich** indicated 1200 feet was stabilized, equaling to about a third of the mile and a half that needs to be done. The county and state have put in \$900,000. With the National Guard effort, another 500 feet of armoring will be completed.
- **Mr. Hall** asked **Mr. Madison** asked if the installation of docks has been done at boating access sites this spring and if Engman Lake will have an access site in the future. **Mr. Madison** indicated he believes most of the skid piers have been put in for the season but deferred the topic to Mr. Rich since it falls under PRD. **Mr. Rich** agreed with Mr. Madison and added that no additional access sites are planned due to the spending freeze and with local funding being tied up with the Oman Creek project.
- **Mr. Putala** asked **Mr. Rich** if PRD has had any discussions about reopening some of the closed park facilities as part of the regional COVID-19 approach in opening up Regions 6 and 8 earlier. **Mr. Rich** stated the division is not sure how the regional models of the Executive Order will affect them. With the hiring and spending freeze, park staff have not been hired and that will take time to accomplish once the go ahead is given. He added June 22 is the planned reopening date at this time.
- **Mr. Putala** asked **Lt. Aho** if the recruit school for new conservation officers that was planned this year will still be held. **Lt. Aho** stated the academy has been cancelled.
- **Mr. St. John** asked **Mr. DePue** asked why the antlerless quotas being proposed to the NRC are so conservative with only a 100 extra added and also asked about antlerless numbers for southern UP DMU's. **Mr. DePue** stated he is not familiar with those area details as it's out of his jurisdiction, however, there is a proposal to bring back antlerless hunting during the archery season which will provide opportunity as well. Those numbers were made at the local level by biologists at the Escanaba and Crystal Falls offices.
- **Mr. Schulz** asked **Mr. Rich** asked when Twin Lakes and the Porcupine Mountains will open up and asked for an update on ORV's at Bond Falls. **Mr. Rich** indicated FAQs were sent as a handout and addresses some of these questions. Day use areas are currently open to encourage recreation while being quarantined. Overnight lodging is closed until June 22. Once the order is given to hire state workers, they will be hired and trained and the necessary infrastructure can be prepared and opened for the season. He reviewed the dates provided in the FAQs. As for Bond Falls, **Mr. Yesney** stated the proposal has been submitted for consideration and now will follow the PA 288 process which will be discussed later on in the agenda.
- **Mr. Schmidt** asked **Mr. DePue** for the estimation of the number of deer in the UP as he didn't see it in the proposed UP deer regulations in the division reports. **Mr. DePue** stated the DNR does not have any estimations. They are reviewing a technique that may be available in the future, but it is expensive to do. He further explained. **Mr. Johnson** asked **Ms. Haughey** if it was 2010 when the last DMU estimates were done. **Ms. Haughey** stated she doesn't recall but can provide that information at the next meeting. **Mr. Schmidt** asked how harvest estimates are done without knowing the number of deer. **Mr. DePue** explained they utilize trends and other indices and not necessary population abundance. He further explained what helps biologists determine quotas on antlerless deer in DMUs.
- **Mr. St. John** asked **Mr. DePue** instead of doing deer census which can be expensive, has the DNR thought of concentrating on DMU's where there is a known presence of an abundance of deer causing issues. **Mr. DePue** noted one method using trail cameras across a grid in specific locations and moving them around is being investigated. There has been success with this method in the predator prey study using assumptions and cameras. There are still questions to be answered yet with this method, however, before it could be initiated.
- **Mr. Schulz** asked **Mr. DePue** about racoon problems in the western UP. **Mr. DePue** stated three years ago the racoon population when through a distemper outbreak, but with the decent crop in acorns as a good

food source creating a good survival rate for females and their young, the population may have increased. He stated there isn't much one can do except pursue them on trap lines and remove bird feeders and other attractants from yards.

### **Public Comment on Agenda Items Only**

**Vice Chair Suchovsky** indicated there were no public comment requests pertaining to agenda items received.

### **Old Business**

1. **Proposed Marquette County Shooting Range Update**: **Ms. Haughey** indicated this, along with the CWD Update, are standing agenda topics. She noted back in March, a scheduled public input meeting at the Richmond Township Hall with DNR shooting range coordinator Ms. Lori Burford about the new shooting range was cancelled. She stated she has kept in contact with Ms. Burford and after several reviews, Cliffs is getting closer to signing a lease agreement and she is very optimistic the lease will be signed. There has been a conversation regarding the designated funding in light of the current spending freeze and because almost all the specific grant funds for shooting sports come from restricted funds, and the grant from the Natural Resources Trust Fund received an extension, once the lease is signed, the project could move very quickly. She thanked everyone for being supportive throughout the long journey, indicating the project first was identified back in 1993.
2. **UP Habitat Workgroup Update**: **Mr. Lindquist** reported the March meeting was cancelled due to COVID-19 and all group habitat projects have been put on hold. He noted MUCC cancelled their group ground projects and DRIP projects aren't occurring as well. **Mr. Johnson** added that Mr. Alan Ettenhoffer of UP Whitetails, Inc. recently sent out a letter to various wildlife groups in the area requesting funding to support the UP Habitat Workgroup's support personnel salaries so they can continue to identify projects.
3. **CWD Update**: **Ms. Haughey** stated there is no significant information to share at this time.

### **New Business**

1. **Review of PA 288 Process (Forest Road Inventory)**: Ms. Kerry Wieber, DNR Land Specialist, reviewed the PA 288 process which was enacted in 2016. This act required the DNR to complete a forest road inventory and identify which state roads were open or closed to ORV use. In order to accomplish this inventory, the state was divided into regions with specific completion dates: the northern lower peninsula was completed by the end of 2017 and the UP and southern lower peninsula was completed by the end of 2018. The state has now moved past PA-288 and has developed an internal annual process on how updates are made. As part of this process, all identified roads that are open or closed are mapped by county on the DNR's website: [www.michigan.gov/forestroads](http://www.michigan.gov/forestroads). Maps are in .pdf format and downloadable, as well as geo-referenced for mobile use. The interactive webmap allows users to zoom in on specific areas.
  - ***Annual Forest Road Inventory Review Cycle***: Since roads that are mapped and listed as open or closed to ORV use are under the authority of the Director, the land use order process is followed. It is a lengthy process and is done annually from September 1 through August 31. There are several public input opportunities throughout the process. Public comments received by August 31 of each year will be considered, as appropriate, for a potential road inventory or status update to maps published by April 1 of the following year. Comments, whether suggesting a change to a road, involves a road that is missing from the inventory, or to recommend a road be open or closed to ORVs, can be made directly on the interactive webmap on the forest roads website, sent in by email, or submitted by postal mail. Comments can also be submitted to any DNR office when they are open. A majority of proposals come internally from DNR staff

due to errors, etc. Any member of the public or DNR staff member can submit a proposal for a change to the forest road inventory starting September 1 through August 31 of the following year.

- *Internal Multi-Divisional Review:* Proposals resulting from a comment received by the DNR are reviewed throughout the year by DNR staff from Forest Resources Division, Wildlife Division, Fisheries Division, Parks and Recreation Division and Law Enforcement Division.
- *Internal Management Review of All Proposals:* All recommendations from the previous year are then reviewed at a management level review meeting that occurs regionally—one in the UP, one in the northern lower peninsula and one in the southern lower peninsula in late September each year. At these meetings, staff review for statewide and regional consistency and ensures the recommendations submitted in each proposal makes sense for the DNR to do.
- *Local Government, Stakeholder and Tribal Notifications:* From the management level review, those that are recommended to be included in a land use order to the Director, notice is provided to local units of government, all tribal entities, and to stakeholders in October indicating the recommendations will be available for public input and review prior to going to the Director.
- *Draft Maps Available for Public Review and Comment:* In November each year, a press release is sent out notifying the public that the proposals are available on the forest road website in a separate map that people can comment on and note any concerns. Following public comment, staff will make adjustments based on those comments received and include them in a prepared memo to the Director.
- *Land Use Order of the Director Available for Information at NRC Meeting:* The land use order memo of the Director will go for information only at an NRC meeting each January.
- *Land Use Order of the Director Available for Director Action at NRC Meeting:* The land use order memo of the Director will go for Director's Action at an NRC meeting each February.
- *Updated Maps and Mileages Posted to DNR Website:* After the Director approves the land use order, which is in effect the new maps, recommended changes will be made to the maps and published in April each year. The intent is that new/updated maps will coincide with the new ORV permits on April 1. Maps are only updated once a year through this process.
- *Overview:* There have been several changes and data clean-up to the maps the last year or two and **Ms. Wieber** expects that to continue. In the UP for 2020 maps, 99.4% of the forest roads are open to ORV use totaling 6,181 open miles. Only 33 miles of forest roads are closed in the UP (very few).

In response to the earlier question about ORVs at Bond Falls, **Ms. Wieber** indicated a recommendation to allow ORVs at the Bond Falls Scenic Area parking lot has been submitted and it is currently in the midst of this process. It will get reviewed and if approved, it would be updated on the maps by April 1 of 2021. **Mr. Schulz** indicated he thought Bond Falls was a state park, whereas this process is for state forest roads. **Ms. Wieber** clarified state forest roads are any roads under the jurisdiction of the DNR including not only state forest land, but state parks, boating access sites, scenic sites and state game areas. The Council thanked Ms. Wieber for the presentation and update.

2. Michigan Wildlife Council Update: **Chief Kristin Phillips** provided an update about the Michigan Wildlife Council's (MWC) campaign and efforts and is the latest presentation that was developed for the legislature and delivered to them in March before the COVID-19 pandemic. The campaign is currently on hold due to the state's spending freeze.
  - *Creation:* The MWC was created in 2013 by PA 108 & 246. The council is a 9-member Governor-appointed body to oversee public education efforts. The MWC is funded through \$1 from the sale of every base hunting license and all-species fishing license.

- *Goals:* The goals of the MWC are to: 1) promote the essential role sportsmen and sportswomen play in furthering conservation, and 2) educate the general public about hunting, fishing and the taking of game.
- *Background:* Communication goals – Inform = shape opinions, inspire = move knowledge, intersect = change perception.
- *Research Tracks Success:* Survey overview: 800 Michigan residents via online sample panel, respondents are age 18+, balanced to reflect Michigan population by region for age, gender and race/ethnicity, fielded Sept-Nov 2019.
- *Hunting & Fishing Approval (2019):* Approval of hunting and fishing is high, but it is conditional.
- *Campaign-Advancing Knowledge:* Hunting and fishing are: necessary for conservation, the primary source of funding for conservation, an important driver of Michigan’s economy, a valued part of cultural heritage.
- *Advancing Knowledge-Conservation:* In 2015, less than 4 in 10 believed wildlife required human management. Following 3.5 years of messaging, 50% answered correctly in 2019.
- *Advancing Knowledge-Funding:* People are increasingly understanding that license fees pay for wildlife management work, but 1 in 6 won’t even guess on a multiple-choice question, reflecting lack of knowledge.
- *Advancing Knowledge-Economy:* Understanding that hunting and fishing create jobs and significantly impact the economy is rising.
- *Advancing Knowledge-Cultural Heritage:* Increasing recognition of the value and importance of hunters and anglers to wildlife, natural resources and Michigan’s culture.
- *Knowledge Gap-Key Audiences:* Key audiences have come a long way since 2015, but still lag other demographic groups in understanding.
- *Advancing Knowledge-Events:* **Chief Phillips** explained the success of a photo mosaic event sponsored by MWC all over the state, including at the UP State Fair last year. Over 10,000 people engaged, 14 media outlets and 1.2 million people reached.
- *What’s Next:* **Chief Phillips** stated the plan was to continue with a lot more media and events, however, that is on pause right now. If an exception is given to go forward, messages maybe adjusted to continue educating target audiences, but with a different layer of sensitivity due to the current crisis.
- *Questions:*
  - **Mr. Schulz** stated he feels most of the legislation regarding wildlife seems to come from those in southern Michigan, who, according to the campaign results, are the segment of population that needs the most education. **Chief Phillips** agreed.
  - **Ms. Gajewski** asked if outside variables may play a role in the results of increasing knowledge. **Chief Phillips** stated outside variables may play a decent role, however, some of the questions were specific to the campaign’s messaging. In focus groups, folks would provide answers that quote comments from specific campaign tv or radio ads. She added watching trends over time is showing an impact.
  - **Mr. Schmidt** asked about targeting specific populations of people in regards to hunting and fishing as well as the correlation to license sales. **Chief Phillips** stated the marketing will use specific populations in many of its commercials to connect people to them and get their attention. As for license sale trends, she explained the normal up and downturns of license sales. She also explained how the campaign educated people on what wildlife management means and how it correlates to hunting and fishing.
  - **Mr. Dropps** asked about working with school science classrooms and getting kids more involved. **Chief Phillips** explained the MWC’s primary focus is to use media and create more of an advertising camping. However, the DNR’s Marketing and Outreach Division collaborates with partners to work directly with kids in the classroom, especially with the Salmon in the Classroom program. And the visitor centers provide a lot of hands-on programs for school classrooms as well. **Mr. Dropps** stated Crystal Falls is too

far for a Salmon in the Classroom program and would encourage the DNR to sponsors eggs for a rainbow trout program instead.

- **Mr. Johnson** agreed with Mr. Dropps stating a segment of schools are being left out because they are too far from a body of water for the salmon program.

The Council thanked Chief Phillips for the presentation and update.

3. License Sale Trends: **Ms. Haughey** stated the license sales report that Chief Phillips will present was prepared for the May 14<sup>th</sup> NRC meeting and was a topic the Council was interested in at the January WUPCAC meeting.

**Chief Phillips** highlighted a few notables from the license sales report:

- *Fishing Customers*: Year to date increases are shown in general fishing customers, marked increases in younger age demographics that were showing previous declines and a small decline in the older generation, more females are fishing, new fishing customers have significantly risen, non-resident fishing and short-term license customers declined with the travel restrictions and repeat fishing customers about the same.
- *Hunting Customers*: Year to date increases are shown in general hunting customers, marked increases in younger age demographics, new hunting customers rose exponentially which are those who haven't bought a license in the last five years, repeat hunting customers are higher, non-resident hunting customers slightly higher and deer license customers with a significant rise which could mean that spring turkey hunters are buying their deer licenses early.
- *Waterfowl & Spring Turkey Customers*: Both had a significant increase in license sales.
- *Recreation Passport Sales and Revenue*: During the coronavirus pandemic, the requirement for a recreation passport at parks were waived and with the delayed opening of parks, revenue was expected to fall significantly.
- *ORV License Sales & Snowmobile Permits*: A definite increase was seen in ORV license and snowmobile permits so far this year.
- *Questions*:
  - **Vice Chair Suchovsky** asked if it is known if some of the license sale increases are due to families trying to stretch their food budget during the pandemic. **Chief Phillips** stated the motivation for the increase in sales is not known; however, with stay at home orders, school and sporting events cancelled as well as extracurricular activities and the encouragement to recreate outdoors, competition for hunting, fishing, hiking, and biking are gone, so there is some thought that these things have had some impact in the increase. She also spoke about looking to fall and the need to adapt to any changes that may be needed then.
  - **Mr. Schulz** asked if there was a breakdown on which states the non-resident customers are from. **Chief Phillips** stated she doesn't have that information in this presentation but can provide it.
  - **Mr. Schmidt** asked about the percentages between camping, motorized recreation, hunting and fishing in terms of revenue generated. **Chief Phillips** stated she would have to refer to the budget folks for that information and can get that information back to the Council.
  - **Mr. Dropps** asked about the increase in number of fishing customers through age 10. **Chief Phillips** explained that if a parent purchased a license for a 5-year old, it would show up in that age bracket. It's not the best measurement to determine how many kids are out fishing.
  - **Mr. Lindquist** stated he would like to thank the DNR and the Governor for responding to the wishes of motorboaters and allowing them to get out and fish in their boats responsibly using social distance protocols, which ultimately helped sell more licenses.

- 
- **Mr. Lorenson** asked if the stay at home orders impacted the increase in purchasing licenses online. **Chief Phillips** mentioned there has been a 250% increase in online license sales compared to last year and agrees it had a large impact so far.

The Council thanked Chief Phillips for the update.

4. Review of Supplemental Feeding Permit Requirements: Before Mr. DePue touched on supplemental feeding, **Ms. Haughey** asked for a few minutes to clarify a few points on recreational feeding, which is different than supplemental feeding, for some folks who joined the meeting. She stated currently, there is no feeding in the UP in the CWD core area, and there is no feeding allowed in the entire lower peninsula. She displayed onscreen the current order for recreational feeding, which includes but is not limited to, no feeding no more than 100 yards from a residence, is done primarily for wildlife viewing, and no more than 2 gallons of feed can be provided at one time. Supplemental feeding requires a permit and has different language, which Mr. DePue will talk about shortly. She indicated supplemental feeding specifically states all feed shall be placed one-quarter mile or more from the nearest paved public highway unless otherwise specified in the supplemental deer feeding permit. She stated the DNR has received many complaints regarding local recreational feeding practices, however, enforcement of this activity outside of the regulations are not currently in the DNR's jurisdiction. She indicated DNR law officers and wildlife staff have fielded these complaints and have done what they could within their realm of the regulation. Staff have brought this issue to the DNR's statewide team as they were preparing proposed deer regulations to send to the NRC. She noted she has spoken to local township officials to let them know that some communities pass ordinances to control recreational feeding within their townships. Marquette County officials, local legislators, UP Whitetails of Marquette County and the DNR's statewide legislative liaison are also aware of the situation. **Lt. Aho** added that if a township or city passes a local ordinance, the city and sheriff's department could enforce the ordinance; however, the DNR conservation officers can only enforce state law on non-local ordinances. **Ms. Haughey** stated the DNR has listened to those with concerns and wanted to let everyone know what has been done in response.

**Mr. DePue** reviewed the specific requirements for a supplemental feeding permit, which includes a key feature that feed must be one quarter mile or more from the nearest paved public highway. Feed must also be placed at least one mile from cattle, goats, sheep and livestock as well as agricultural fields. He stated it is up to the permittee to ensure that they meet these requirements as DNR staff do not do site visits due to liability. Applications are sent to those who were issued permit the previous year, they and sign and return it, and upon review, they are sent a permit. There are reporting requirements at the end of the year that must be submitted as well. He stated the process is fairly simple, turnaround time is fast and there is no fee. **Mr. Schmidt** asked how many supplemental permits are granted for the entire UP. **Mr. DePue** stated he doesn't have the number for the entire UP, but for the five western UP counties, he issues between 40-50 supplemental feeding permits a year. Discussion ensued regarding those that feed without getting a permit.

5. Parks & Recreation Call Center Video: **Mr. Rich** provided a quick overview of the recreation reservation system and then played a video that described the behind-the-scenes work of the agency (Camis) that handles all the reservations for the parks system. Agents are highly trained and experienced to handle all reservation needs. He stated the Parks & Recreation Division has been very pleased with the agency which holds a seven-year contract to provide reservation services.

### Reports from Committee Meetings Held

**Vice Chair Suchovsky** opened the floor for Committee reports.

1. Fisheries: **Mr. Dropps** indicated the committee received a response from the Director (that was emailed to Council members in March) regarding the resolution forwarded from the Council in February 2020 which pertained to the Michigan Inland Walleye Management Plan and recommending further input into the plan. The response indicated the plan's goals and the process by which it will be vetted and include a public review. He stated it was the committee's hopes that their resolution with recommendations will be considered in the draft plan and will wait and see how it develops.
2. Forestry: No report from the committee (connection lost with Mr. St. John).
3. Trails/Recreation/Law: **Mr. Lorensen** reported the committee received a response from the Director (that was emailed to Council members in March) regarding the resolution forwarded from the Council also in February 2020 which recommended converting Van Riper State Park to an equestrian and ATV/UTV friendly park, converting Lake Gogebic State Park to an ATV/UTV friendly park, and providing ATV/UTV access to the Bond Falls Scenic Area parking lot. The response indicates the three recommendations are moving forward. **Mr. Lorensen** stated he appreciates all those involved in working to provide trail connections to the park systems. He indicated the Committee did meet previously and developed two additional resolutions, which were emailed for review over a week ago, for the Council's consideration this evening. He reviewed them both:
  - *Snowmobile Noise and Trail Retention*: In summary, **Mr. Lorensen** stated the committee has learned from several sources, including dealer staff, that a number of trails have either been closed or re-routed because the permissions have been pulled often due to loud noise caused by modified/after-market snowmobile exhaust systems. The development of new and re-routing existing trails is more expensive than maintaining existing trails. The DNR's law enforcement conducts routine sound testing; however, new aftermarket replacement parts have been developed to comply with sound limits at test RPMs but exceeds sound limits at higher operation RPMs. Some states have already banned after-market exhaust systems to reduce noise. He stated after significant discussion, ***the committee recommends that the Council adopt a resolution that proposes the banning of any non-factory installed snowmobile exhaust system, with the exception of those snowmobiles operated exclusively on privately owned land for the purpose of improving snowmobile trail retention by reducing snowmobile noise and enhancing law enforcement efforts.*** **Mr. Lindquist** stated he has some reservations about a ban on after-market equipment, although he understands the noise issue. **Mr. Lorensen** stated the point is well taken and a recommendation of a ban was not taken lightly, and another way to distinguish the difference during enforcement is not known. **Mr. Lindquist** asked if there was more education that could be done. **Mr. Yesney** stated the DNR has worked hard to educate people, however, the aftermarket manufacturing folks have increased their development and marketing which many times negates the user-based education. He added this is a conversation at the International Snowmobile Congress each year and some states have passed bans as the only way to resolve the issue. **Dr. Schott** stated if other states have a ban in place already, is it worth researching as to their success; **Mr. Yesney** stated yes other states do, and he could find out more information if needed. **Mr. Johnson** asked about older snowmobiles whose parts are no longer available. **Mr. Lorensen** stated this proposal may be a way to at least raise the issue and figure out a solution. **Mr. Solka** stated snowmobilers have nobody to blame but themselves if the loss of trails is largely due to running loud systems and asked what the larger issue is, widespread use of loud exhaust systems or loss of trail mileage. **Mr. Schulz** stated the loss of a one-mile connector trail could result in a loss of an entire trail. **Mr. Yesney** noted trail mileage was at one point over 6,500 miles and is now down to about 6,100 with a loss of 400 miles due to loss of land control. Reasons for loss of land control could be trespassing, new ownership, or sound issues. He further explained the impact of a lost trail. **Vice Chair Suchovsky** concluded the discussion and asked for a motion if the Council desired. **Mr. Lorensen motioned to support**

---

**the Committee's recommendation previously stated (in bold); Mr. Solka supported the motion. No further discussion. A vote was conducted by an online Zoom poll visible to all in attendance. Results: Yes-12 (86%), No-2 (14%), No Response-4. Motion carried by majority.**

- **Snowmobile Trail Maintenance Funding:** Mr. Lorenson summarized the second resolution up for the Council's consideration **proposing a review and modification of the existing snowmobile trail funding formula to take into account changing labor and operational costs, as well as differences in regional trail usage and operating factors (snowfall, terrain, etc.).** Non-profit trail organizations are also seeing an aging membership/loss of volunteers and are having to pay for work thereby seeing a significant increase in costs. All these factors are causing these organizations to disband or reduce services which results in trail closures. Mr. Putula, a member of the committee, added additional background to the decision for the resolution stating they met with several local snowmobile clubs who discussed their concerns and feels this is a step in the right direction to help local clubs who are struggling with volunteers. He also noted that locations with 300 inches of snow compared to those with only 60 inches of snow creates a difference in the amount of money spent on grooming and equipment. Mr. Schulz, also a member of the committee, stated local clubs were trying to work with local businesses and chambers for sponsorship, but then the pandemic occurred, and now it will be extremely difficult to go that route. Mr. Schmidt talked about the significant role the snowmobile sport has on local economies. Mr. Schulz stated some people think the DNR will be able to take over for the clubs, but that will not happen; Mr. Yesney agreed. Vice Chair Suchovsky concluded the discussion and asked for a motion if the Council desired. Mr. Solka motioned to support the Committee's recommendation previously stated (in bold); Mr. Hall supported the motion. No further discussion. A vote was conducted by an online Zoom poll visible to all in attendance. Results: Yes-16 (100%), No-0 (0%), No Response-2. Motion carried by majority.

4. Wildlife: Mr. Lindquist stated the committee has not met, but he recently sent out the proposed UP deer regulations to the committee for review.

### **Next Meeting**

1. Next Meeting Date: Vice Chair Suchovsky noted the next meeting will be Wednesday, July 22 in Crystal Falls with the location or virtual meeting decision to be determined.
2. Items for Next WUPCAC Meeting Agenda: Vice Chair Suchovsky indicated suggestions for the next agenda can be sent to him, Ms. Haughey or Ms. Dahlstrom. Those submitted will be discussed at the next pre-meeting.

### **Public Comments**

Vice Chair Suchovsky the public comment process and opened the floor for public comment:

1. Peter Sheret, Marquette-Recreational Feeding (pre-registered): Did not join meeting.
2. Janet Schultz, Marquette-Recreational Feeding (pre-registered): Did not comment.
3. Sue Lockhart, Ontonagon-Paddle Craft Project Issues (pre-registered): Did not join meeting.
4. Jennifer Stoudt-Marquette-Recreational Feeding (1 min): Ms. Stoudt spoke about the recreational feeding being done in her (and Mr. Sheret & Ms. Schultz's) neighborhood that has greatly impacted their area with as many as 50-80 deer near the roadway. It's being done with two gallons at a time, but repeatedly throughout a day. They have sent letters, made phone calls, and talked with DNR personnel in the hopes that someone can do something about it. They would like to see a regulation preventing (recreational) feeding within so many feet of a roadway or in a residential area. Ms. Haughey asked if she was able to see the presentation early on recreational and supplemental feeding; Ms. Stoudt stated she did. Mr. Suchovsky thanked her for her comments.

5. *Jay Green, Hancock-Keweenaw Nordic Ski Club*: Mr. Green asked the WUPCAC Trails Subcommittee to support whatever they can for non-motorized recreation, including cross country skiing, mountain biking and snow biking, which are huge sports in the Keweenaw area. He said they would like to see more connected trails. **Mr. Suchovsky** thanked him for his comments.

### **Council Closing Comments**

**Vice Chair Suchovsky** opened the floor for Council comments:

1. **Ms. Duncan** stated she is a member of the Michigan Horse Riders Association, which is the largest trail riders' group in the state. Two different sections of easements were lost last year on the trails in which they ride, causing the cancellation of two major trail rides this year. With only four rides a year, they are now down to two. She said those trail rides have over 70 horses in them from all over the US. The trails, which are only equestrian trails, are over 55 years old. **Mr. Putala** asked why the easements were lost; **Ms. Duncan** stated the land was sold to another party and they didn't want anyone on their property. **Mr. Yesney** asked where the trails were located; **Ms. Duncan** stated in lower Michigan. She noted the extreme disappointment for equestrian enthusiasts.
2. **Mr. Schulz** indicated Ms. Lockhart (under public comments) wanted to speak about the kayak landing in the Village of Ontonagon, how it was developed using Michigan Natural Resource Trust Fund monies and it is currently unusable due to it not being ADA compliant and being next to a beaver dam. **Mr. Rich** spoke about a few ADA compliant landings in the Parks & Recreation Division. **Ms. Haughey** stated she will follow-up on this issue.

### **Adjournment**

**Vice Chair Suchovsky** thanked everyone for their contributions. The meeting adjourned at 8:31pm Eastern.