

## MINUTES

### NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

April 14, 2016  
MSU Diagnostic Center  
4125 Beaumont Road, Lansing, MI 48910

#### Present for the Natural Resources Commission

John Matonich, chair  
Vicki Pontz  
Rex Schlaybaugh  
Louise Klarr  
Christine Crumbaugh

#### Present for DNR staff

Bill Moritz, DNR director  
Marc Miller, DNR regional initiatives deputy  
Peter Manning, legal counsel, Office of the Attorney General  
Dennis Knapp, DNR chief of staff  
Cheryl Nelson, executive assistant to the NRC

#### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**Chairman John Matonich** called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

**Minerals Management and Auction Process Overview** Section director, **Mark Sweatman** gave a presentation on the upcoming auction process, minerals management and the importance of minerals. He stated that the Office of Minerals Management consists of 17 employees who help manage 6.4 million acres of publicly-owned mineral rights. He talked about the different classifications which include non-leasable, leasable non-development, development with restriction and leasable development. Auctions are held twice per year. **Sweatman** reminded all that the next auction will be held on May 4. Last year alone, \$32 million in revenue was raised through mineral development for the State Parks Endowment Fund and \$2.9 million for the Game and Fish Protection Fund. Since its inception in 1976, more than \$2 billion has been raised through mineral development on state-managed public land to advance outdoor recreation opportunities.

**Parks and Trails Update** Parks and Recreation division (PRD) chief **Ron Olson** provided updates on performance measures including that lodging reservations are up 12% while harbor nights are flat but should pick up as they go into boating season. Snowmobile permit sales are down 7.5 %, meaning they are about 10,000 permits down which will affect equipment opportunities for next year. ORV permits are up 1%. Last month PRD staff met with city council members in Detroit and shared a good annual report for Belle Isle. The council was pleased. Initially the department promised that they would be investing in volunteerism and grants to the equivalent of \$20 million in first three years, but has hit this goal within the first two years.

Regarding Flint, the department is teaming with Michigan Department of Transportation on the trail connection, part of Iron Belle trail, and also park, riverfront and dam restorations. They are testing water spigots in state parks to ensure water is safe. A Trust Fund grant was received a couple years ago for Trolls Property; which will now be the Watkins Lake State Park completing the acquisition of 726 acres; in addition, Washtenaw County bought 405 acres. This will be the 103<sup>rd</sup> state park and will be run collaboratively with Washtenaw County. The division commissioned 28 park rangers last Friday. Two weeks ago PRD held the Friends Summit with 100 participants; it was a 2-day program to make friends groups better. **Olson** passed out a new brochure on rustic campsites that show opportunities to camp in state forests.

**North American Fish and Wildlife Conference Overview** Wildlife division chief **Russ Mason** shared information on the recently-held conference noting that staff received recognition from the Forest Service for the work on the long-eared bat conservation (**Bill Scullon**) and for the decades of work on the Kirtland warbler (**Dan Kennedy/Keith Kintigh**). At the conference they discussed what they will be doing with other states on chronic wasting disease (CWD) work. The USDA Wildlife Service has two good toxicate candidates for feral swine; both have great potential to dispatch pigs. The agency will be sending letter for rapid review of the compounds, with the results coming within one to two years. The groups came together for nationwide monarch butterfly conservation and management.

**Budget Updates** **Erik Eklund** of the Finance and Operations division updated the commission on the Fiscal Year 2017 budget, which is moving smoothly through the legislative process.

**Kalamazoo Dam Removal** **Mark Mills** from Wildlife division reported to commissioners on the Otsego Township Dam removal. The dam has been in operation since 1903. The state acquired the dam in 1964 and had targeted it for removal as far back as the 1980s. The removal process was complicated by contamination at the deteriorating dam, but significant progress is being made to remove it at a cost of \$3.5 million. **Mason** added that **Mark Mills** has been a great leader on this project.

**Fisheries and Wildlife Grant Updates** Fisheries division chief, **Jim Dexter** updated the commission on the Aquatic Habitat Grant Program and recent awards of \$1.25 million. Wildlife division chief **Russ Mason** provided information on the Upper Peninsula Deer Habitat Partnership Improvement grants. The amount of these grant awards is \$100,000. He noted that this is a unique opportunity to build partnerships.

**Director Moritz** introduced **Scott Goeman**, the new manager of the real estate section within the Finance and Operations division.

**Legislative Report** **Trevor VanDyke**, Legislative and Legal Affairs Office director, provided a written report of legislation related to the department. In addition to the written report, **VanDyke** provided updates on recent legislative highlights.

#### **Committee Reports:**

**NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries** Commissioner **Rex Schlaybaugh** stated that the committee received a report from chief **Dexter** on current fish issues; including the status of egg take for steelhead and walleye and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of salmon planting in the

Great Lakes. He also briefed the committee on problem Chinook salmon stocking in lakes Huron, Michigan and Superior. **Chief Mason** reported on many issues, including a winter severity update for Upper Peninsula; Turkey Tracts event in Allegan County; and that the division is working on finishing the deer management plan. They received reports from **Al Stewart** on turkey regulations; **Chad Stewart** on CWD response measures, that the core area is being enlarged and how the department is responding to those; clarification on spinning winged decoys from **Joe Robison**; an update of bovine tuberculosis data from **Dan O'Brien** and **Dr. Rick Smith**, which showed for the last year a slight uptick in positive surveillance. They also received an excellent report from **Amy Derosier** on the Wildlife division's Guiding Principles and Strategies and the annual report.

**Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee Commissioner Louise Klarr** provided comments on the committee meeting noting that they met at the Demmer Center; they had a presentation of Fisherman's Island State Park general management plan; resolution #4 was passed for this plan. They also received a presentation on Sleepy Hollow State Park and its green initiatives team; recycling, proper infrastructure to make areas more sensitive to environmental quality. They also received an update on the park endowment fund, a parks update and an update from the new working group within the committee on funding. Their next meeting is a conference call in May.

**NRC Marketing, Partnership, Outreach and Youth Advisory Committee Commissioner Christine Crumbaugh** shared that the agenda included a presentation on social media which included reports on all social media channels that the department engages in. The focus for 2016 is getting people to share their stories with the department via Facebook. Also received were excellent presentations on the marketing plans from Parks by **Maia Turek**, Wildlife by **Kelly Carter** and Fisheries by **Elyse Walter**.

#### **PUBLIC APPEARANCES BEFORE THE NRC**

(**Dennis Knapp** read the official timekeeping procedures and guidelines for the meeting's public appearances which began at 4:10 p.m.)

**Shiawassee Flats Citizens & Hunters Association** came before the commission to discuss a project at the Shiawassee Flats state game area which has failed. The group was represented by **Brian Siess, Dean Gross** and **David Roberts**. The purpose of their appearance was to seek the involvement of the commission to assist in bringing responsible parties to a timely correction of the infrastructure, which is referred to as the siphon tube, which transports water beneath the Shiawassee River in order to flood 8 critical Prior road habitat units. Due to a series of design/construction errors, the 24" plastic liner tube collapsed during the grouting process. No corrective action was taken. Due to this, the damages were the loss of flooding capability for eight diked management units, loss of hunting opportunity and refuge habitat is negatively impacted by lack of water.

**Siess** also spoke to spinning wing decoys; the prohibition has been a success at Shiawassee and the group wants to expand to motion winged decoys.

**Moritz** added that the department is talking about putting a parallel process in place regarding the infrastructure project.

**Siess** added that they are proud of partnership with Wildlife division, but this project is a failure that needs to be remedied.

**Matonich** added that **Mason** should to put in language for future projects to have local input put into DTMB specs for the design engineer. **Schlaybaugh** added that **Mason** needs to keep the commission updated.

**Diane Miller** was concerned about the methods used to make the decision to shoot coyotes. She suggested that the commission should not make policy based on complainer's misguided perceptions. The proposed expanded hunting season made no sense to her. She stated that putting people with guns into the woods at night is not an intelligent response based on science, this proposal allows pandering to those who just want to kill things. She is surprised that the department does not see this opportunity to educate people. Extension of coyote season does not have to be a done deal. **Miller** asked that they listen to the stakeholders and do not extend season or pass Amendment No. 4.

**Mark Janeczsko** believes in ethical standards for dispatching animals. Wildlife belongs to everyone. He shared a reading from the Wildlife Officer's book. He believes if you aren't going to eat it don't kill it. Wildlife belongs to everyone. **Janeczsko** stated that having a 24/7 hunting season for coyotes is unethical. He added that our legacy is going to be based on what we leave for future generations not what we destroy.

**Paul Conners**, representing the Harsens Island Waterfowlers Hunters Association, shared his concerns regarding spinning wing decoys, and asked for the continuance for spinning wing decoy ban in St. Clair Flats area. The group mailed ballots to all members, 139 people, with 78 returned, results were 60 to continue ban, 18 to discontinue ban. With this vote, it shows there is support for the ban at the end of the three years. In their opinion, the ban creates a higher quality hunt.

**Conners** also commented regarding a concern about the DNR's decision to make the wildlife refuge a seasonal refuge; they conducted a vote at a recent meeting, the results were 47 to keep refuge closed, 3 to leave it open for seasonal refuge. They believe there are enough viewing and recreation opportunities, this needs to be a quiet place where wildlife will not be disturbed by the general public.

**Dale Hendershot** of the Michigan Trapper and Predator Callers Association came before the commission to thank the department for putting #3 & 4 buckshot in the order; it will enable youth and smaller framed people to utilize a 20 gauge gun. **Hendershot** also talked to the commission about the use of centerfire at night, he said in other states there are no safety issues, no evidence of any increase in poaching or activity that would not be approved by the hunting population. He would like the commission to move forward on this. He believes it would be much more efficient.

**Will Schultz** representing the Michigan Muskie Alliance talked about the muskellunge fishery and shared concerns of the group regarding the Muskie management plan.

**Tom Callison** from the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians came before the commission to discuss section 11 of Consent Decree; the Tribe would like to see black bear harvest decreased by about 25% for the next couple of years while they look at the population in the Ceded territory.

**Merle Jones** from the Michigan Predator Hunters for Centerfire at Night spoke on the topic of centerfire rifle use at night. He talked about terminal ballistics and the use of centerfire over rimfire. **Jones** thinks that the idea of year-round coyote season is positive and centerfire rifle use at night will provide far greater opportunity for the most humane take of coyote.

**Chauncey Moran** thanked all the employees of the department for the work they have strategically and conscientiously undertaken. Moran talked about spinning wing decoys and that he would like to see the process of the seven wetland wonderland challenge be expanded to include the Upper Peninsula. **Moran** invited the commission to come to the Upper Peninsula twice annually for meetings.

**Drew YoungeDyke**, Chief Information Officer from MUCC noted that they support year-round coyote season and #3 & 4 buckshot at night. It won't solve the issue but it is another tool in the toolbox to take pressure off of deer. He did note that they do not support poaching. For CWD, MUCC would like to see more help from the general fund, and hope they will see that in the final budget bill. They do support the aggressive CWD response. **YoungeDyke** added that they will be planting trees on Tuscola state game area on Friday and the next day at Crane Pond state game area, an activity that was funded by the wildlife habitat grants. MUCC currently has no official position on centerfire rifle; it will be up before membership in June.

**Sam Morello**, President, Michigan Bow Hunters spoke of their concerns over continuation of the no-doe rule for the Upper Peninsula. Michigan Bow Hunters recommend that the single license holder have the same antler point restrictions as those in place in the northern Lower Peninsula. With reference to the pneumatic arrow launchers, they are actively working with other agencies to better define this newer technology as a firearm. They believe that this technology acts as another shortcut to harvest rather than an actual technology that will bring more people into hunting that will sustain the sport in the future.

**Robert Schultz**, Michigan Predator Hunters for Centerfire at Night stated that his group supports the extended coyote season and urged that the commission consider centerfire at night. He added that using centerfire at night will increase the odds of a humane kill.

**Jeremiah Moran** came before the commission representing duck hunters that couldn't be present to speak on spinning wing decoys on Harsens Island, which should be moved to motion winged decoys. He asked the commission to continue the ban on spinning wing decoys.

**John Caretti**, Michigan Trappers and Predator Callers Association stated that #3 & 4 buckshot will give hunters a better opportunity.

**Jill Fritz**, HSUS, thinks the mistaken idea that killing more coyotes is not supported by the best available science. She added that **Adam Bump** stated in January that there was no indication that having an extended season will have a large-scale effect on population. With more liberalized laws, it is harder for citizens to find a safe place to recreate.

**Dennis Cronk** from Michigan Predator Hunters for Centerfire at Night shared that he has taught companies in the Detroit area how to trap coyotes. The number of pets killed by coyotes has risen. He asked that educational tools are used for species identification and safe depredation.

**Michael R. Schippa** from Michigan Trappers and Predator Callers Association, runs the landowner assistance program and said that there is a need to keep pressure on coyote populations. He added that district 20 from MUCC supports the use of centerfire rifle at night. They also support the resolution with the Michigan Bow Hunters concerning the use of pneumatic arrow launchers.

**Chairman Matonich adjourned the public appearances portion of the meeting at 5:27 p.m. and called to order the regular meeting of the NRC at 5:28 p.m. He noted that all commissioners who were present at the Committee of the Whole were present for the regular meeting.**

#### **REGULAR MEETING OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION**

#### **FOR INFORMATION ONLY - NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION**

**Matonich** reviewed the items up for information only.

#### **Fall Turkey Regulations and License Quotas, Wildlife Conservation Order No. 6 of 2016**

#### **Chronic Wasting Disease Response Measures, Wildlife Conservation Order No. 7 of 2016**

#### **NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION ACTION ITEMS**

#### **Approval of Minutes, March 10, 2016 Natural Resources Commission Meeting**

**Commissioner Crumbaugh** made a motion that the minutes of the March 10, 2016 NRC meeting be approved. **Commissioner Schlaybaugh** supported the motion. **Matonich** called for discussion, there being none, a vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

#### **Migratory Game Bird Hunting Seasons; Managed Wetland Area Regulations. Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 2 of 2016**

**Commissioner Schlaybaugh** moved that Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 2 of 2016, Migratory Game Bird Hunting Seasons; Managed Wetland Area Regulations be adopted. **Commissioner Crumbaugh** supported the motion. **Matonich** called for discussion, there being none, a vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

#### **Elk Regulations and License Quotas, Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 3 of 2016**

**Commissioner Schlaybaugh** moved that Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 3 of 2016, Elk Regulations and License Quotas be adopted. **Commissioner Crumbaugh** supported the motion. **Matonich** called for discussion, there being none, a vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

**Coyote and Nighttime Predator Hunting Regulations, Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 4 of 2016**

**Commissioner Schlaybaugh** moved that Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 4 of 2016, Coyote and Nighttime Predator Hunting Regulations be adopted. **Commissioner Crumbaugh** supported the motion. **Matonich** called for discussion, **Schlaybaugh** clarified making it absolutely clear in the memorandum in support of this order, page 1 talks about department's recommendation that it provides an additional three months of daytime hunting, not both day and night. **Matonich** added that the actual order will provide for both increased day and nighttime hunting. **Pontz** asked where we are in the cycle, if we approve this now is there another opportunity to discuss centerfire rifle. **Matonich** noted that the commission is not bound by the cycle. The commission can adopt a commission order at any time. A vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

**Bear Harvest Allocation in Newberry and Red Oak Bear Management Units; Red Oak Bear Management Unit Bow and Arrow Only Season, Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 5 of 2016**

**Commissioner Schlaybaugh** moved that Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 5 of 2016, Bear Harvest Allocation in Newberry and Red Oak Bear Management Units; Red Oak Bear Management Unit Bow and Arrow Only Season be adopted. **Commissioner Pontz** supported the motion. **Matonich** called for discussion, there being none, a vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

**Fish Disease Control, Fisheries Order 245.16**

**Commissioner Schlaybaugh** moved that Fisheries Order 245.16, Fish Disease Control be adopted. **Commissioner Crumbaugh** supported the motion. **Matonich** called for discussion, there being none, a vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

**DIRECTOR'S ACTION ITEMS**

**Director Moritz** listed the "for action" items on the agenda and indicated that he would approve all items.

**Schlaybaugh** asked about Pigeon River Equestrian order, **Moritz** responded that this is a long-standing discussion about conflict between equestrian usage and wildlife viewing. After closure of trails throughout the area there has been a systematic process to reexamine on a piece by piece basis. They have come to consensus on these and there are others under further review that will be coming forward.

**COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

**Commissioner Pontz** attended Sportsmen's Caucus breakfast saying that it was exciting to see the first roll-out of the Wildlife Council work. She had the opportunity to attend funeral of **Dr.**

**Gordon Guyer**, and noted that it is appropriate to recognize this loss and at the same time all that the state gained from his leadership.

**Commissioner Schlaybaugh** also attended Sportsmen's Caucus and is looking forward to all the activities that the season will bring.

**Commissioner Crumbaugh** shared that on Saturday she will be attending the Let 'em go, Let 'em Grow summit and is looking forward to the comments she will hear on antler point restrictions.

**Commissioner Klarr** attended the 50 year anniversary of salmon stocking celebration at the Platte River Hatchery. She also participated in the Sportsmen's Caucus breakfast earlier in the day.

**Director Moritz** mentioned the Kirtland warbler recent celebration; they were one of first group of 78 species listed in the endangered species act with less than 200 birds in the world; now it stands at 2,300 plus birds. He added that it is truly significant to move from being a partner in a working group spending time on recovery to now on working on Kirtland warbler management.

**Chairman Matonich** attended Michigan Bear Hunters' convention, Northwood's chapter of Safari Club International in Escanaba, and Wildlife division's former assistant chief Doug Reeves' retirement party. He will be on Ask the DNR in Marquette next week.

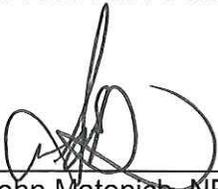
#### Next Meeting

**Chairman Matonich** announced that the next meeting of the NRC is scheduled for Thursday, May 12, 2016 at the MSU Diagnostic Center, 4125 Beaumont Road, Lansing, MI. Committees meeting in May will be the NRC Policy Committee on Finance and Administration, the NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries and the Governance Workgroup.

#### Adjournment

**Commissioner Crumbaugh** made a motion to adjourn. **Commissioner Klarr** seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 5:41.

APPROVED: Date: 5/12/16

  
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John Matonich, NRC Chairman

  
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Dr. William E. Moritz, DNR Director