

MINUTES
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING
April 11, 2019
MSU Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory
4125 Beaumont Road, Lansing, MI 48910

Present for the Natural Resources Commission

Vicki Pontz, chair
Rex Schlaybaugh
John Walters
Louise Klarr
Keith Creagh
David Nyberg
Chris Tracy

Present for Department Staff

Peter Manning, legal counsel, Office of the Attorney General
Dan Eichinger DNR director
Bill O'Neill, DNR deputy director
Trevor VanDyke, DNR legal and legislative director
Brooke Parmalee DNR legislative assistant
Cheryl Nelson, NRC executive assistant

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair Vicki Pontz called the Natural Resources Commission (commission) meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Director's Report

Law Enforcement Division Lifesaving Awards

Law Enforcement division chief **Gary Hagler** presented lifesaving awards to Conservation Officers (COs) **Josiah Killingbeck** for his response to a domestic assault complaint and providing medical attention to a victim who had been removed from a burning home and to **Scott MacNeill** for providing lifesaving measures and CPR on an attempted suicide victim. **Hagler** thanked both COs and their families for their sacrifices for the department and the citizens of Michigan.

Shikar Safari 2018 Officer of the Year Award

Gunnar Klarr representing Shikar Safari Foundation, presented the 2018 Officer of the Year award to CO **Todd Thorn**. This award also carries the distinction of being Michigan's Wildlife Officer of the year and has been given for over 50 years for outstanding performance in conservation and overall performance of duty. Law Enforcement division chief **Gary Hagler** thanked **Mr. Klarr** and the Shikar Safari Foundation for this recognition. He also thanked **Thorn's** family for their support and stated that the division is proud that **Todd** was chosen Officer of the Year.

Bovine Tuberculosis Report Update

Wildlife division's **Dr. Dan O'Brien** provided an update on Michigan's apparent prevalence of bovine tuberculosis (TB) in the TB core area. **O'Brien** talked about trends in the core area and in the five-county area; trends are increasing, but not significantly, which relieves the department from the concerns of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In deer management unit (DMU) 452 and the remainder of the five-county TB endemic area, the five-year trends in TB prevalence are no longer statistically significant. **O'Brien** stated that TB prevalence in 2018 was 2.1% in the core area, and 0.1% in the remainder of the endemic area outside DMU 452. The trend in overall prevalence in the core area suggests continued gradual increase. Next, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's (MDARD) state veterinarian, **Dr. Nancy Barr**, provided an update on the bovine TB status of cattle in Michigan. **Barr** shared the history of Michigan's TB status, cattle surveillance in the state, the wildlife risk mitigation program, which includes feeding and watering cattle safely, storing their feed safely and removing deer attractants from farms. **Barr** shared information on the enhanced wildlife biosecurity program and the TB case update for 2018.

Turkey Patch Recognition

Art Pelon, from the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) provided a history about the Wild Turkey Management Program and the turkey patch. **Pelon** announced that **Dane Lewis** from Lake Orion, a freshman at Saginaw Valley, will receive a certificate of appreciation and a \$100 check for producing the winning patch design. **Pelon** added that NWTF appreciates the partnership with the department and presented each of the commissioners with the new patch.

Mississippi Flyway Recognition of Dr. David Luukkonen

Barb Avers, waterfowl specialist from the Wildlife Division recognized **Dr. David Luukkonen** for receiving the Don Rusch Mississippi Flyway Waterfowl Conservation Award. She shared many of **Luukkonen's** accomplishment's for both the Mississippi Flyway and the department. **Luukkonen** recently retired as the department's wildlife research specialist and is now a research associate at Michigan State University. The award was established to recognize significant, long-term contributions to waterfowl management and research.

Fisheries Division Annual Accomplishment Report

Elyse Walters summarized Fisheries division's report by highlighting stories that elaborated on the division's five goals of their strategic plan.

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Update

Chief Mason and **Chad Stewart** shared that CWD was identified on March 13, in a Montcalm county privately-owned cervid facility in a two year old doe. The facility was already quarantined as it was in the Montcalm CWD zone. The MDARD is currently determining how to proceed concerning possible depopulation of the facility. **Stewart** shared updates on the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agency's (AFWA) best management practices for prevention, surveillance and management of CWD. In addition, he shared the timeline for the 2019 deer regulations.

Stewart responded to several inquiries from the commission, including that antlerless quotas won't be affected by CWD regulations, there will just be adjustments through the 2018 evaluations, and there will be no changes regarding the use of attractants. **Stewart** provided an update on the UP CWD task force, noting that they met in March and will be incorporating recommendations in the deer regulations that will be presented in May. The APR five-county survey results will be finalized in May and presented to the commission in June.

Stewart also shared information on what other states are doing with regard to APRs in CWD areas.

At this point in the meeting, commissioner **Tracy** gave his input on the commission's Resolution No. 2 from 2018;

WHEREAS, it has become evident that there is a need to evaluate the implementation of an antler point restriction to assist in managing chronic wasting disease (CWD);

WHEREAS, the Department and the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) can experimentally assess the effectiveness of regulations, such as antler point restrictions, on the prevalence and spread of CWD and on antlerless harvest, by establishing a CWD assessment area;

WHEREAS, the NRC has jurisdiction over the establishment of antler point restrictions and works cooperatively with the Department with respect to the implementation process;

WHEREAS, the Department shall expedite the existing process to evaluate public opinion to establish a mandatory APR in the five-county CWD core area for the 2019 hunting season;

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved:

- 1. The NRC in cooperation with the Department shall appropriately establish a CWD assessment area, within the five-county CWD core area, for experimentally evaluating the effectiveness of regulations, such as antler point restrictions, on the prevalence and spread of CWD, increasing antlerless harvest, and decreasing deer populations, to be in place for the 2019 hunting season.*
- 2. Utilize Montcalm county, or any other appropriate county within the CWD management zone, as an experimental area for purposes of achieving the objectives in paragraph one.*
- 3. Work with stakeholders to establish objectives of research and studies to be conducted in this area.*

Tracy asked that the commission and department rewind to the October 2017 world-class CWD Symposium that brought in scientific and deer management leaders from around North America and the world, also noting the months of planning before the symposium by **Drs. Straka, Moritz, Mason, Chad Stewart, Bill O'Neill, Steve Chadwick** and former director **Keith Creagh**, along with many others from the department and counterparts at MDARD.

The symposium led to the formation of the CWD working group with representatives from varying stakeholder perspectives, which then led to months of meetings related to the commission and department consideration of off-cycle deer regulation changes specifically pertaining to the issue of CWD.

Tracy noted that not a single scientist/thought leader that attended the symposium recommended that as part of the effort to address CWD that mandatory APRs be used and there was definitely no recommendation that they be utilized in CWD areas. The CWD working group also did not recommend the use of mandatory APRs to address CWD.

Tracy continued saying that after months of meetings, discussions in the public realm, in the summer of 2018, prior to the commission meeting in August 2018; meetings, which were not public were held between some commissioners, some department representatives and representatives from MUCC and QDMA, which resulted in Resolution No. 2 (above), among a total of four resolutions, being brought before the commission at the August 2018 meeting. This process did not follow the letter or the spirit of **Governor Whitmer's** Executive Directive 2019-11 (ED 2019-11) from February 1, 2019. [Michigan.gov/Whitmer](https://www.michigan.gov/Whitmer). **Tracy** did not attend these meetings, does not feel that the Open Meetings Act was violated, but does not doubt that the process did not meet the standard of transparency that **Governor Whitmer** called for in ED 2019-11.

Tracy said that Resolution No. 2 along with the other resolutions, were addressed before the public for the first time at the August 2018 commission meeting. As he recalled, the first time he saw drafts of all resolutions was at that meeting, and that printed copies of the resolutions were not available for the public to look at that attended that meeting. He does not feel that the resolutions were put forth at that meeting with transparency, disclosure, public input, etc. **Tracy** voted no on Resolution No. 2. **Tracy** said that it appears that Resolution No. 2 was a result of compromise between certain commission members, certain department representatives, along with representatives from MUCC and QDMA. **Tracy** went on to say that compromise can be a good thing, but in this particular context the compromise should have involved representatives from all stakeholders and needed to keep in mind the context in which the issue(s) arose. The context was not the normal cycle of deer regulations, but a cycle of regulations pertaining specifically to CWD. **Tracy** said that despite that context, somehow the focus changed from regulations to address CWD to a resolution pertaining to APRs.

Tracy continued by adding that Resolution No. 2 was approved by the commission and after the 2018 deer season ended, the department, pursuant to the commission's request worked to come up with a potential experiment involving, in part, the use of mandatory APRs in certain areas where CWD exists. He said that the process should work that the department biologists bring the commission proposals, including a proposal involving an experiment, where the biologists have the freedom to develop an experiment without limitations. **Tracy** said that the process did not work that way in this instance, instead the commission placed limits, specifications and restrictions on the department based on the language of Resolution No. 2. He said that therefore they get a proposed experiment that the department biologists would not have proposed on their own without commission influence. Instead, the department biologists have at best, luke-warm enthusiasm on a proposed experiment that does nothing to address the main issue of CWD-related prevalence and/or spread, and one that would take place in an area where CWD has already been detected and which is at odds with everything that was presented at the October 2017 symposium, with the CWD working group's recommendations and with the department's on the record responses that they do not support the use of APRs in a known CWD area.

Tracy said that this is the context which had brought them to now and forms the basis for him requesting that this topic be on the agenda for the day's commission meeting and for his resolution request; if the department and commission are going to proceed with an experiment involving mandatory APRs potentially related to addressing CWD, noting that he is not advocating for the experiment as currently proposed to take place, that any such experiment take place outside the CWD zone. **Tracy** indicated that this could possibly delay the experiment taking place, but he wants to get it closer to right. Unfortunately, it appears that CWD is not going to go away, so there is time to fashion a proper experiment. **Tracy** said that there are options, if QDMA, MUCC and others that are advocating for such an experiment related to learning something about the use of mandatory APRs related to the management of CWD, then there are 13 counties in the northwest part of the Lower Peninsula where APRs are in place where an experiment could be conducted, or Drummond Island, or a number of counties outside, but nearby, the CWD zone.

Tracy said that he hadn't called any other commissioner to advocate related to his perspective; he thinks it is important to have the discussion in a truly transparent manner. In his opinion, if they proceed with the experiment including the implementation of mandatory APRs in an area

within the CWD zone, we will have moved in the wrong direction from being a leader regarding efforts to address CWD.

Chair Pontz responded to **Tracy's** comments by saying that resolutions do not dictate, they only recommend and do not have the force of law. Her understanding was that the department and MSU had a lot of flexibility in designing this study.

Legislative Report Craig Brunet, legislative liaison, provided a written report of legislation related to the department. In addition to the written report, **Brunet** provided information on recent legislative highlights.

Committee Reports

Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee: Commissioner Louise Klarr reported that the committee received presentations from PRD's **Deb Jensen** on the general management plans (GMPs) for North and South Higgins Lake State Parks; the committee approved resolutions supporting both GMPs. The committee also received a presentation for their information on phase 2 of the GMPs for Saugatuck Dunes State Park and Warren Dunes State Park; both have Lake Michigan frontage, critical dunes and natural areas. Assistant PRD chief **Jackie Blodgett** provided information on an upcoming land use order of the director that would prohibit sky lanterns in state parks because of fire concerns, grant the department the ability to temporarily close mountain bike trails when conditions might result in trail damage, close the DTE mountain bike trail and Mike Levine Lakelands Trail State Park to snowmobile use and regulate the use of electric bikes and unmanned aircraft on state land. **Lawrence Falardeau** of the Friends of Highland Recreation Area provided a presentation on the recreation area in northern Oakland county. **Paul Yauk** provided an update on state-managed trails and **Blodgett** provided an update on a proposed new ORV area in Oakland county that would be co-managed by the department and Oakland county parks.

NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries: Commissioner Rex Schlaybaugh reported that Fisheries chief **Jim Dexter** shared that the division had started walleye egg take on the Muskegon river; 35 million eggs are expected to be collected for the Lower Peninsula walleye program. The committee discussed the amendment to the applicable fisheries order to be proposed by commissioner **Walters** in the Committee of the Whole to sunset effective October 1, 2019, the authorization of a 10 brook trout bag limit in 33 trout streams in the UP and agreed to recommend approval of the amendment to the full commission. Wildlife division chief **Mason** provided information on the pheasant release hunting opportunity, provided by 2018 general fund dollars. The pheasants are to be released this fall at 13 state game areas. The Holly State Recreation Area will be designated as a turkey tracts site, with over 300 acres open this spring. **Mason** also reported that the National Woodcock Wingbee took place earlier in the month at the RAM center. **Al Stewart** told the committee about the proposed fall turkey regulations. **Adam Bump** reported on the proposed 2020 furbearer and marten and fisher regulations.

PUBLIC APPEARANCES BEFORE THE NRC

(**Brooke Parmalee** read the official timekeeping procedures and guidelines for the meeting's public appearances which began at 2:30 p.m.)

Jonathan Durtka asked the commission to recognize freedive spearfishing as an ecological sporting method of fishing that it is and would like spearo's allowed the same benefit of harvesting Northern Pike, Walleye and Lake Trout in the Great Lakes as enjoyed by the rest of Michigan's angling community.

Paul Plantinga, president, QDMA Thumb Area branch, spoke about APRs in Michigan's thumb area and feels that regardless of the survey results, he would like the department and the commission to take the necessary steps to ensure the natural health of our whitetail resource and approve the thumb five-county APR proposal, thus making it easier to reduce the antlerless deer population before CWD gets into this area.

Erik Schnelle, president, Michigan QDMA, provided the commission and director with copies of QDMA's Whitetail Report 2019 and spoke in respect to commissioner **Tracy's** concerns about the attendance at the symposium of scientists from other states who are in favor of CWD, saying that there were at least two specialists/biologists who were in favor of APRs. **Schnelle** also made reference to the CWD working group recommendations, page 8, No. 3 B: "All deer management and regulatory tools for hunting seasons, including season timing, length, APRs, etc., should be considered through the lens of science-based CWD management." **Schnelle** provided some specifics and statistics from the QDMA report and their efforts to fight disease.

Elliot Hubbard from Michigan's thumb area shared that he and his family and neighbors have self-imposed APRs on their own private property. **Hubbard** thinks the only way to reduce the herd is with antlerless harvest, targeting the older age antlerless population. He supports APRs because of the need for reduction of deer density.

Jim Sweeney, Concerned Sportsmen of Michigan, came to discuss NRC Resolution No. 2, and said that commissioner **Tracy** covered most of what he was going to cover at the day's meeting. He would like the commission to revisit Resolution No. 2 and look at other options, noting that four of the current seven commissioners did not vote in favor of this resolution. His group suggested a compromise and presented an amendment to Resolution No. 2; the department shall utilize a county designated by the commission located outside any established CWD management zone, as an experimental area for purposes of evaluating the effectiveness of regulations intended to assist in efforts to mitigate CWD in Michigan. **Sweeney's** amendment proposed several other revisions to assist with the department's ability to provide information to the commission for information only purposes and made available for the public to review and shall be subject to final approval by the commission at least six months prior to the initiation of any experiment.

Millard Holton came before the commission to request the ability to hunt turkeys with a shotgun from a treestand. **Holton** believes that there would be more turkey hunters if improvements to regulations were made that would improve hunting experiences. **Eichinger** asked if there were any questions on the survey that included the question about hunting with a shotgun from a treestand. **Holton** replied that he did not think there were.

Mel Smith, Let 'em Go, Let 'em Grow, would like to see all counties tested for CWD until it is determined where the disease is actually coming from. **Smith** supports the use of APRs in the CWD areas. He suggested lowering the cost of doe permits to \$10 and increasing buck tags to \$50, then more antlerless deer will be taken.

Bill Bledsoe spoke about antlerless harvest, APRs, CWD, and the future of hunting that will reside with the younger adults and children. **Bledsoe** believes that if APRs were passed it would energize young hunters in Michigan. He would like to see disease limited and believes that using APRs in the CWD zones would work; if desired results aren't seen, changes could be made to the regulations.

Aalden Guilmette, spoke about UP deer management and shared five items he would like to see; 1) remove all APRs on both tags, 2) bring back antlerless hunting in archery season, 3) baiting allowed, 4) work with Legislators to make hunter safety a mandatory part of public-school curriculum, and 5) make hunting more affordable.

Bernie Shaver speaking in reference to a targeted deer hunt that took place in Seville township in February or March; CWD communication-needs to be better within counties and townships. The township board nor Gratiot county administration knew of this hunt. **Shaver** also said added that his 93 year-old father had on several occasions been trying to contact and get a response from the department for over six weeks regarding a privately-owned cervid facility in Hayes township of Clare county. There has been one attempt at a response and no others. **Eichinger** told **Shaver** that he nor his father need to wait until a commission meeting to bring up the fact that they had not received return communication, they can reach out to him or to chief **Mason** as soon as a response is needed.

Sam Morello, Michigan Bow Hunters Association (MBHA) spoke on the topics of proposed season changes, CWD and APRs. **Morello** shared results from a survey taken within MBHA; there were mixed opinions on APRs. He suggested that a way to get better survey numbers would be to have every hunter take a survey when they purchase a license.

Jerry Keck, a Tuscola county resident, who is also on deer forum for the Michigan Longbow Association, agrees with shooting does but is opposed to APRs. **Keck** also agrees that there should be no APRs in the UP.

Dale Hendershot, thanked the department for their willingness to look at the information on all furbearer issues. Although the beaver regulations will be addressed in 2020, this year's season ends on April 14; **Hendershot** feels that the season should be extended in the UP as their ponds are still frozen, making beaver trapping impossible. **Hendershot** asked for an immediate decision so the information can get out to the public as soon as possible. The chair asked the director if this is something the department can do on an emergency order. With conversation between **Eichinger**, **VanDyke** and **Manning**, it was noted that this is a statutory item, not an emergency, therefore would have to go through the normal commission amendment and public input process.

Amy Trotter, executive director, MUCC, thanked all who attended the morning's Legislative Caucus breakfast, noting that they would have heard her comments on Proposal G that provides that the commission has the exclusive authority over the taking of game; baiting is defined within the taking of game. The question brought up was about feeding, which is not necessarily the taking of game. **Trotter** provided some history, noting that in 1999 the Legislature directed the commission the authority to remove feeding from elk and deer. This sunset issue went through in 2004, which was then extend to 2010. In 2009, ultimately the authority was granted to the commission until 2016. In 2015, the sunset was removed. MUCC opposes the use of bait and recreational feeding. They do approve the use of supplemental feeding for hard winters, such as the 2018-2019 winter. **Pontz** asked how

Representative Cole's bill differs from the Senate Bill (SB); **Trotter** responded that SB 37 removes the commission's authority for baiting and feeding of deer and elk, basically saying that feeding of deer and elk were legal in Michigan. It was a no vote from MUCC along with many other stakeholder groups. **Cole's** bill, House Bill 4439, deletes the commission's authority on feeding, and says if you meet two out of three conditions you can feed wildlife, but does not specify what wildlife. **Trotter** said that there are some challenges with this bill.

Bruce Levey, spoke about APRs and the complications of rules and regulations and the need to keep them simple. **Levey** said that if APRs are put into place, it will be hard to differentiate where the deer were actually taken. He feels that making the rules more difficult will send more people away from hunting and fishing in Michigan.

John Swartout, spoke about the reductions of the bag limit for brook trout and shared some history on bag limits from the 1900s to present. He also included information on what has happened to carrier pigeons and Grayling. **Swartout** feels that the streams in Michigan are over-harvested, he would like to see the bag limit go back to five. **Eichinger** commented that we need to be careful when we equate decisions that we make about creel limit and harvest under the umbrella of professional management that we have today, other than from a period of time when they were not available

Mark Lemke is the branch president of the Thumb area QDMA; he wanted it known that no monies were used from the Blue Water branch or Thumb QDMA to vote yes on the thumb area APRs. All monies spent on advertisement and education came from hard-working hunter funds. **Lemke** is only asking for three points on a side to give all hunters a chance to make a difference in the thumb area.

Wayne Sterzer, from the thumb Blue Water branch spoke on APRs and read a press release from Pennsylvania on their recent deer harvest report; their highest overall deer harvest in 14 years. The article said APR harvests for older bucks were 2.5 or older.

Chair Vicki Pontz adjourned the public appearances portion of the meeting at 4:45 p.m. and called to order the regular meeting of the commission at 4:46 p.m. She 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

Fall Turkey Regulations, Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 5 of 2019, FOR INFORMATION ONLY

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION ACTION ITEMS

Approval of Minutes, March 14, 2019, Natural Resources Commission Meeting

Commissioner Tracy made a motion that the minutes of the March 14, 2019, NRC meeting be approved. **Commissioner Klarr** supported the motion. **Pontz** called for discussion, there being none, a vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Statewide Trout, Salmon, Whitefish, Lake Herring, and Smelt Regulations, Fisheries Order 200.19A

Commissioner Tracy made a motion that Fisheries Order 200.19A, Statewide Trout, Salmon, Whitefish, Lake Herring, and Smelt Regulations be adopted. **Commissioner Walters** supported the motion. **Pontz** called for discussion; **Walters** moved to amend section VII, paragraph entitled *Upper Peninsula 10-Possession Brook Trout Waters* to add the following: the Upper Peninsula 10-Possession Brook Trout regulation will expire on October 1, 2019. **Commissioner Nyberg** supported the motion. **Pontz** called for discussion on the motion to amend, and added that this motion accomplishes three things; 1) to correct an error made in December 2018, 2) clears up any confusion that anglers might have with the fishing guide that has been published for the 2019 fishing seasons, which would allow 10 brook trout on the 33 streams, and most important, 3) it will allow the commission to thoroughly investigate this issue, to have discussions with biologists and stakeholders, bringing back the issue in the fall. **Walters** added this will allow for consistency for COs, and less difficulty in enforcing the law. **Schlaybaugh** reiterated what he mentioned in the NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries (NRC WLD/FISH); they recommend moving forward on motion and they believe that a process to engage recognized scientific people be used when this is processed. **Nyberg** added that he supports the motion and is in agreement and that the commission would benefit from looking at the issue with fresh eyes, looking at the biological information from stakeholders to help them make a more informed decision. **Nyberg** added that he appreciated the proposed amendment and looks forward to future discussion. **Pontz** said that discussion and presentations will be in September, with a decision to be made in December. **Pontz** called for additional discussion, there being none, she called for a vote on the motion to amend only, commissioners **Schlaybaugh, Walters, Nyberg, Klarr** and **Creagh** voted yes, commissioner **Tracy** abstained, motion passed. **Pontz** called for additional discussion on the order as amended; **Tracy** asked about MH-1, **Schlaybaugh** added that it will be discussed in the future. **Walters** noted that there are options on MM-4, he was unsure if NRC WLD/FISH had come up with a recommendation, **Schlaybaugh** said they have not, but characterized the discussion as a disappointment as much mortality will be seen in July and August. **Chief Dexter** is to come back next year and will look at this issue so there are not the same levels of mortality with new proposed regulations. **Dexter** said that the order has the information on MH-1 as discussed in February, and on MM-4 with recommendation to remove to one fish with the bag limit going into effect April 12, which includes catch and release. **Pontz** asked for additional discussion on Fisheries Order 200.19A as amended, commissioner **Schlaybaugh** moved that Fisheries Order 200.19A as amended be approved, **Walters** supported the motion. A vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

FOR INFORMATION ONLY – DIRECTOR

Chair Pontz read the item up for information only.

Regulate Use of Certain Managed State Lands, Land Use Order of the Director Amendment No. 2 of 2019, FOR INFORMATION ONLY

DIRECTOR – ACTION

Pontz listed the action items on the agenda, director **Eichinger** indicated that he would approve all items.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Schlaybaugh will be steelhead fishing later in the week.

Commissioner Walters commented that he has had the privilege to go to a number of different citizen advisory committees with a variety of subjects. He appreciates the opportunity to see what issues are being discussed and how they are coming to a conclusion. This makes it easier for him to come to a final conclusion on those issues.

Commissioner Klarr will be attending the opening of the Holly Turkey Tracts on April 13. She had the opportunity to go turkey hunting in Texas the previous week.

Commissioner Nyberg applauded the Safari Club International Northwoods Chapter, they will be having their annual banquet on April 27 and it is a tremendous event; he invited commissioners and the public to attend. **Nyberg** also shared his gratitude to the UP CWD task force, they have been very engaged and provided thoughtful recommendations to the commission and department regarding current status of the disease in the UP. Both staff and task force provide much support by talking to friends, neighbors, feed mills, farms, etc., they are a great example of conservation being a participant sport. **Nyberg** encouraged them to keep up the good work.

Commissioner Creagh met with **Representatives Cole** and **Wentworth**; who brought up supplemental feeding, criteria-based permits only in the UP, and they wanted to see if there might be some room for this in the northern LP. He has been seeing an increase on phone calls regarding Sandhill cranes. Lastly, **Creagh** had the opportunity to spend time with **William Kusey**, a former PRD staffer and friend to the department.

Commissioner Tracy asked if a decision was made on an extension to the beaver season. **Manning** said that it would need to be appropriately noticed as per statute and did not think this is covered as a department emergency.

Director Eichinger told the public that he appreciated that they take the time; a day off from work, away from family to share their comments and concerns with the commission.

Chair Pontz thanked **Tracy** for sitting in for her at the March meeting. She noted that she attended the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program celebration of 5000th verified farm. She spoke at House committee on natural resources and outdoor recreation earlier in the week to help define what the NRC and Legislature do and how they interact and interface. She appreciated the opportunity to attend the Sportsmen's Legislative Caucus breakfast earlier in the day, noting that she is glad it is held on a commission day. Her quote for the day; don't take your eye off those guiding principles.

Next Meeting

Chair Pontz announced that the next meeting of the NRC is scheduled for Thursday, May 9, 2019 at Lansing Community College, Gannon Building, Michigan Room, 422 North Washington Square, Lansing.

The committees meeting that day will be the NRC Marketing, Partnership, Youth and Outreach Advisory Committee and the NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries.

Adjournment

Commissioner Tracy made a motion to adjourn. **Commissioner Walters** supported the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.



Vicki J. Pontz, Chair



Daniel Eichinger, Director

DATE: 5/9/ 2019