

MINUTES
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
August 9, 2018
Lansing Community College
515 North Washington Square
Lansing, MI 48933

Present for the Natural Resources Commission

Vicki Pontz, chair
J.R. Richardson, vice-chair
John Walters
Rex Schlaybaugh
Louise Klarr
Christine Crumbaugh
Chris Tracy

Present for DNR staff

Peter Manning, legal counsel, Office of the Attorney General
Keith Creagh, director
Bill Moritz, special projects
Trevor VanDyke, legal/legislative director
Brooke Parmalee, legislative assistant
Cheryl Nelson, executive assistant to the NRC

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair Vicki Pontz called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 1:50 p.m. and began the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Director's Report

Recognition of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Workgroup Members

Director Creagh and **Chair Pontz** recognized and thanked the members of the CWD workgroup for delivering recommendations that laid the critical groundwork for the commission and the department to evaluate, investigate and implement practices and regulations to address this issue. Workgroup members included **Dr. James Averill, Dr. Kelly Straka, Dr. Bill Porter, Dr. George Smith, Kent Syers, Chad Thelen, Paul Rose, Bill Rustem** and **Alan Ettenhofer**.

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Regulations

Chad Stewart provided an overview on the information that was in the order before the commission for approval; removal of the four-day October private lands antlerless firearms season, addition of Jackson, Calhoun, and Hillsdale counties to the 16-county CWD management zone, statewide restriction on the use of natural cervid urine-based lures and attractants, an immediate ban on baiting and feeding in the 16-county CWD management zone (CWD MZ), a ban on baiting and feeding in the Lower Peninsula effective January 31, 2019

(with exceptions for hunters with disabilities). The proposed regulations also included allowance of all legal firearms to be used in muzzleloader season in the 16-county CWD MZ, carcass movement restrictions in the five-county CWD core zone, antlerless options on deer license/combo during firearms season in five-county CWD core zone, expansion of early and late antlerless seasons in select counties and rehabilitation regulations. Proposed amendments for Upper Peninsula (UP) antlerless licenses included a proposed increase in the antlerless licenses in deer management units (DMUs) 055, 121, 122, 155 and 255. **Stewart** added that staff supports the additional harvest opportunities. Additionally, a purchase limit of ten private land antlerless licenses was proposed; although the department is neutral on this amendment as less than two percent of hunters purchase three or more antlerless licenses a year. There were proposed amendments with regard to carcass movement restrictions which include expanding carcass movement restriction to entirety of CWD MZ, limiting carcass movement to counties where CWD has been identified; this recommendation was made with the best available information known to date on the distribution of CWD in Michigan. There was a request for an amendment that would reissue licenses not purchased in a lottery, the current licensing system does not support this function.

There were two amendments brought forward on antler point restrictions (APRs); add an APR with a harvest goal; the department recommended that any APRs in a CWD area much achieve hunter support through a survey and be tied to antlerless harvest goals aimed at population reduction and assist with the CWD management goals of lowering prevalence and spread of the disease. The department does not recommend moving forward with APRs at the current time.

With regard to APRs moving forward, the department will work with stakeholders to design an experimental area to evaluate APRs in CWD core area to measure the impact on population reduction, prevalence and spread of the disease. The goal for 2018 is to make progress towards balancing antlered/antlerless harvest deficit. **Stewart** also mentioned the removal of APR on restricted portion of combo license; the four-point restriction was removed in core CWD areas in 2015 and data has not shown a discernable trend associated with the regulation change.

The final portion of **Stewart's** presentation focused on the baiting and feeding amendment. The current amendment proposed to remove baiting ban in the Lower Peninsula effective January 31, 2019 and would establish and/or maintain baiting bans in Alpena, Alcona, Montmorency and Oscoda counties as well as any CWD positive counties. In other counties within the CWD MZ, only shelled corn would be allowed and the amount could not exceed two gallons. Hunters with disabilities would be allowed to use two gallons of shelled corn in CWD and TB zones during the Liberty and Independence hunts. **Stewart** indicated that the reason for bringing forward such robust baiting and feeding amendments was due to the uncertain distribution of CWD in Michigan. He said that a majority of disease ecology studies recommend the elimination of baiting and feeding as a reasonable management response to disease. The department's current CWD Response Plan states that the department will implement a deer feeding/baiting ban within the entire CWD MZ and counties within a 10-mile radius from the finding of a known positive deer.

Commissioner Tracy shared comments with regard to the resolutions discussed in the NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries beginning with the first resolution that stated Thumb area deer hunters had submitted a request for the possible initiation of mandatory APRs; the department will expedite the process to evaluate public opinion for APR in Huron, Tuscola, Sanilac, St. Clair and Lapeer counties that will be brought to the commission so a decision may

be made prior to the 2019 deer hunting seasons. **Tracy** went on to ask about the second resolution and thought that the wording choice could be changed to "a need to evaluate." The commissioners had some discussion on the context of asking the question on the CWD evaluation efforts, surveys, costs.

Committee Reports:

Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee: Commissioner Klarr indicated that during the morning's meeting the group received several reports including an update on the expansion of field trial lands for hunting dogs at Highland Recreation Area, a presentation on the general management plan for Watkins Lake state park and county preserve, a discussion on the Grand Prix event on Belle Isle, plans for the state parks centennial celebration in 2019. The committee also heard that recreation passport sales are up \$1 million, while numbers are increasing, the passports sold at parks is declining while those purchased at the Secretary of State offices are on the increase

NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries: Commissioner Schlaybaugh said that the committee received an update on issues at fish production facilities due to the aging infrastructure, Fisheries staff assisted with clean-up in Houghton county following the storm/flooding damage there, and thirteen agencies participated in a targeted response to the presence of grass carp in Lake Erie. **Chief Dexter** introduced **Seth Herbst**, the new manager for the Aquatic Species and Regulatory Affairs unit. Wildlife chief **Mason** shared that recent changes will allow for animal damage nuisance control permittees to keep certain nuisance animals under the authority of an animal damage nuisance control permit issued by the department. He also shared that the department will work with the National Park Service to relocate Michigan wolves to Isle Royale, where the wolf population is in decline; the goal is to reintroduce up to thirty wolves over a three-year period. The committee also received a report on the dam removal at Otsego dam site.

The committee reviewed and adopted four resolutions for the purpose of recommending approval to the full commission with regard to CWD regulations. The resolutions are attached as an appendix to this document.

PUBLIC APPEARANCES BEFORE THE NRC

(**Brooke Parmalee** read the official timekeeping procedures and guidelines for the meeting's public appearances which began at 2:40 p.m.)

Tony Smith thanked the commission and said he values the opportunity of working with them through the CWD regulations process. **Smith** mentioned a conversation with **Schlaybaugh** to make available a lottery for antlerless licenses after a sunset date. **Smith** also mentioned fellow Eaton county QDMA member **David Yeomans** who, after attending a national meeting in Kentucky brought back the idea for an annual military youth hunt where the QDMA supplies everything from mentoring to lodging to guns to bring this experience to youth. He extended an invitation to the commissioners to attend and/or possibly sponsor one of these young hunters. They are anticipating 25-30 youth this year; it will be a life-changing event for the kids and the adults who give their time.

Jerry Keck representing the Michigan Longbow Association will be bow hunting for his 70th season in 2018; he would love to leave a legacy to kids and grandkids. **Keck** voiced concern that this will not be possible because of CWD. He shared his thoughts on the proposed

regulations noting that he supports eight of the ten amendments. He doesn't think that APRs should be a part of the regulations. **Keck** added that allowing ATA to monitor urine scent is a mistake, they are still a money-driven organization. He would like to see the banning of the use of all but synthetic products. **Keck** would like the commission, department and stakeholders to pull together and fight this disease.

Ed Flanigan spoke to the commission regarding the use of knives and spears in hunting. He believes that knives and spears should be legal to finish animals if not dead, and spears would be great for those who have that availability; anything allowed to be hunted by a gun or a bow should be allowed to be taken by a spear.

Bill Bledsoe thanked the commission for bringing the Michigan and United States flags to meeting; that small effort means a lot to many attending. He would like to see a higher quality deer herd and less deer. **Bledsoe** believes that disease comes for two reasons; weakness and over-population in Ionia and Kent counties. **Bledsoe** would like APRs and would like to see an antlerless goal, believing that this would help get disease out of herd.

Dave Buikema thanked commission for their work and was happy with resolutions presented in the Wildlife and Fisheries committee. Their work is a step in right direction.

Tom Lounsbury thanked for creating the limited firearm zone. **Lounsbury** would like hunting to be done legal and ethically; although he targets mature bucks. He likes the combo tag. Deer hunting dynamics are unique in every state; deer hunting is Michigan's biggest pastime. The decline in hunter numbers are due to the need to recruit new hunters. **Lounsbury** mentioned the youth deer hunt and mentoring those who don't normally have that opportunity. He thanked the commission and the department for the October symposium that was very enlightening. **Lounsbury** closed by saying that mandatory APRs are a social issue and should not be used for disease control.

Ed Beckley provided the commission with several resolutions from counties opposing the baiting ban and indicated that more may be coming. **Beckley** shared that he has been handing out surveys and provided the commission with specific numbers for various questions on deer hunting and CWD.

Jeff Anthes from Bacon Creek Co-op thanked the commissioners for their receptiveness to his many phone calls. **Anthes** shared that he has spoken with department staff and county road commissions regarding the roadkill deer issue in his area; communication has been working and all are working on a resolution as to how to handle these deer. He also mentioned a change that is needed in the verbiage on nuisance permits with regard to how to utilize carcasses and that they have been working with **Chad Stewart**. Again, **Anthes** thanked the commission for working with them.

Elliot Hubbard thanked commission for their efforts and for listening to the conversation. He talked about the science behind APRs, noting that it is ever-changing. There is always a risk involved. **Hubbard** talked about some information that he has learned from reviewing what has been done in Missouri, Illinois and Wisconsin. He said that the biggest thing is for the department and commission to work with hunters. **Hubbard** feels that antlerless harvest numbers need to increase. He would like to have the commission, department and hunters find a common goal and work together to achieve it.

Trenton Christensen is from Montcalm county and is part of a co-op. He said that APRs are needed to manage the deer herd and disease.

Ken Dalton and **Carl Griffin** from the Michigan Pheasant Hunting Initiative are looking to establish a state-sponsored pheasant release program. **Dalton** said that the support for this is tremendous. **Dalton** spoke about Pennsylvania's sale of pheasant stamps and how much it has brought into that state. He said that there needs to be more pheasants in Michigan for pheasant hunters. The Michigan Pheasant Hunting Initiative would like the commission to look into possibility of a pheasant stamp in Michigan, which would be funded by hunter money and not a burden to taxpayers. The funds would be to hire private game bird people to raise pheasants in the state. **Dalton** said that they would like to see more pheasant hunting in Michigan by next fall. The cost of the stamp would range from \$25 to \$30.

Jim Smith and **Dan McPhail** said that a self-sustaining population is not going to happen anytime soon, so that is why a pheasant release program is needed. They feel that a release program needs to be initiated now. **Smith** added that our state game areas are the perfect habitat for this program. There is no opportunity to hunt without a game animal. **McPhail** added that with the loss of hunters, the state can't afford to wait. He stated that a wide-spread system is needed throughout the state and would minimize hunter conflict.

Tom Shook also spoke about the pheasant hunting initiative and that he was in agreement with what the other members had already shared. He would prefer to buy his licenses in-state and hunt in Michigan.

George Lindquist, president, MUCC, is looking forward to working with the commission moving forward on the CWD issue. **Lindquist** thanked the commission for progressive amendments that were on the day's table; they are a refreshing look that could do much good. He said that identifying the footprint is critical. We need to educate the public and MUCC will work with the commission and the department on this and other issues. **Lindquist** also talked about the need of handling roadkill carcasses across the state.

Mike Taylor representing UP Whitetails and MUCC congratulated commissioner **Richardson** on receiving Conservationist of the Year award from the UP Sportsman's Alliance, who received a round of applause for this achievement. Regarding CWD in Wisconsin, it is within 15 miles from Michigan's border. **Taylor** said that the department is being proactive with tagging deer in the UP; he thinks that area (DMU 022) would be good for core sampling. Lastly, **Taylor** talked about wolves in UP and a recent article in papers; either people want to see all the wolves killed or all saved; he wants to see them scientifically managed.

Bob Walker, representing the United Sportsmen's Alliance said that the group was formed to protect hunting rights. He does not want to see APRs, and they will not support this amendment. They would support a statewide ban on all APRs. He doesn't think APRs are the answer for CWD. **Walker** said that increasing the harvest is the way to combat this disease.

John "Bear Claw" Wagner said that the public meetings on CWD were very biased. Much of the transmission that goes on is out of our control. His concern is that the limited approach is not being transparent, wants a scientific approach and feels that only population reduction will stop the spread of CWD. **Wagner** does not feel that "sound science" is being utilized for the regulation amendments before the commission today.

Melvin Smith said the presentations he saw today indicate that the commission and stakeholders are working together and they are having consideration for the group as hunters. **Smith** thanked the commission and department for all they have done in this regulation process.

Dan Eichinger, director and **Amy Trotter**, deputy director, MUCC shared several comments with the commission including on resolution #2, which they feel is a good solution and is being responsive and respectful for the advancement of the information attained to date. **Eichinger** said that this is the essence of science-based knowledge. He thanked the commission for all that they have done to inform and move forward to combat CWD. **Trotter** talked about the Highland Field Trial grounds and said that MUCC supports the expansion. They also support the pheasant hunting initiative, which was an MUCC policy resolution in 2017 that they supported. **Chair Pontz** would like to have conversation on what is needed from the commission, department, legislature.

Erik Schnelle, president for the Michigan QDMA thanked all for the engagement process that was put into the CWD issue. **Schnelle** said that he is confident if the commission approves the four resolutions that all will look back on this day as a historic one. He believes that the repercussions for this won't only help Michigan, but also the nation. **Chair Pontz**, thanked **Schnelle** and the QDMA for their input as well as for the invitation to the Deer Rendezvous.

Bob Hoffmeyer, president of Highland Field Trial grounds association; they have been looking for property in southeast Michigan that would be suitable for all of their needs. They support the expansion of the Highland Field Trial lands.

Lincoln Rohn thanked the commissioners for the conversations had. **Rohn** is a member of Let 'em go, Let 'em Grow. They would like APRs in Michigan. **Rohn** said that they have attempted to partner. They would like a deer management strategy for to lower deer densities and they want to manage for quality. Their group is passionate about getting the quality deer and APRs. They don't feel that are not getting anything substantial

Dan McMaster would like to see the Michigan pheasant initiative supported. He said that many hunters in the state are behind **Mr. Dalton's** effort.

Joe Fazekas does not want a baiting ban and asked the commission to think of the implication for small businesses that sell bait. He said that most hunters are weekend warriors, a ban would affect the hunter dollars brought into Michigan.

Bernie Shaver has a long family history of hunting. He stated that the commission shouldn't resume four-point APR on second license on combo tag in CWD zone. **Shaver** would like to expand the harvest of either sex deer also in the CWD MZ. He talked about the tiered approach for carcass disposal. **Shaver** would like to see hunter education in the CWD MZ, then more deer will be taken.

Carter and **Craig Brandt** from Valley Farms asked the commission to take in consideration economic impact a baiting ban would have on farms and would like commission to find reasonable solution for everyone

Mark Bartholomew doesn't think the commission or the department have the sound scientific information to authorize a ban baiting.

Chair Pontz adjourned the public appearances portion of the meeting at 4:41p.m. and called to order the regular meeting of the NRC at 4:41 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

Pontz reviewed the items up for information only.

Order to Expand the Boundary of Highland Field Trial Lands, Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 15 of 2018

Spawning Closures Fisheries Order 204.19

Fishing Regulations – Sylvania Wilderness Area, Ottawa Natural Forest, Gogebic County, Fisheries Order 212.19

Netting Regulations, Fisheries Order 229.18A

Ice Fishing Shanty Regulations, Fisheries Order 251.18

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION ACTION ITEMS

Approval of Minutes, July 12, 2018 Natural Resources Commission Meeting

Commissioner Tracy made a motion that the minutes of the July 12, 2018 NRC meeting be approved. **Commissioner Crumbaugh** supported the motion. **Pontz** called for discussion, there being none, a vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Resolutions for Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 12 of 2018, CWD Regulations

Resolution #1

Commissioner Schlaybaugh provided an overview on Resolution #1; requests the department to evaluate public opinion for an antler point restriction in Huron, Tuscola, Sanilac, St. Clair and Lapeer counties to be implemented in 2019. **Schlaybaugh** made a motion for the commission to adopt Resolution #1. **Commissioner Walters** supported the motion. **Pontz** called for discussion; **Schlaybaugh** made a motion to remove "in three years" from item #2 in the resolution. **Commissioner Walters** supported the motion to amend. **Pontz** called for discussion on the amendment only, there being no further discussion, a vote was taken and the amendment passed unanimously. **Pontz** called for additional discussion on Resolution #1 as amended, there being none, a vote was taken and Resolution #1 was adopted.

Resolution #2

Commissioner Schlaybaugh provided an overview on Resolution #2 where the commission in cooperation with the department establish a CWD assessment area within the five-county CWD core area for experimentally evaluating the effectiveness of regulations, such as APRs on the prevalence and spread of CWD and utilize Montcalm county for this purpose. **Schlaybaugh** made a motion for the commission to adopt Resolution #2. **Commissioner Walters** supported the motion. **Pontz** called for discussion; **Commissioner Tracy** indicated that this would not follow the normal survey process, he would like additional information and therefore was not comfortable approving this resolution. There being no further discussion, **Pontz** called for a vote, **Tracy** voted no, all others voted in favor, Resolution #2 was adopted.

Resolution #3

Commissioner Schlaybaugh provided an overview of Resolution #3; the commission and department shall establish a committee to review and update guidelines for initiation, evaluation and review of mandatory antler point restrictions. **Schlaybaugh** made a motion for the commission to adopt Resolution #3. **Commissioner Crumbaugh** supported the motion. **Pontz** called for discussion, there being none a vote was taken and Resolution #3 was adopted unanimously.

Resolution #4

Commissioner Schlaybaugh provided an overview of Resolution #4; work with stakeholders to consider additional opportunities to participate in achieving surveillance goals, provide updates related to surveillance goals and number of deer checked, consider future technologies to allow for alternative reporting work with stakeholders on joint communications about deer management in Michigan and to align management objectives on state property adjacent to hunter cooperatives. **Schlaybaugh** made a motion for the commission to adopt Resolution #4. **Commissioner Walters** supported the motion. **Pontz** called for discussion, there being none a vote was taken and Resolution #4 was passed unanimously.

Chronic Wasting Disease Regulations, Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 12 of 2018

Commissioner Schlaybaugh moved that Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 12 of 2018 be adopted as updated from the July commission meeting. **Commissioner Tracy** supported the motion. **Pontz** noted that there were multiple requests from commissioners for the department to bring forward proposed amendments to the order. **Commissioner Richardson** requested the department prepare an amendment that would resume antlerless option for archers on the combo tag in the five Upper Peninsula DMUs that are currently open to antlerless harvest and open DMU 022. **Commissioner Richardson** withdrew this amendment and moved to amend the order by increasing antlerless deer licenses available in DMU 055 to 850 public land and 6,500 private land for a total of 7,350; increase antlerless deer licenses available in DMU 121 to 300 public and 600 private for a total of 900; increase antlerless available in DMU 122 to 100 public and 850 private land for a total of 950; increase antlerless deer licenses available in DMU 155 to 250 public and 1,650 private land for a total of 1,900 and increase antlerless deer licenses in DMU 255 to 375 public and 750 private land for a total of 1,125. **Commissioner Walters** supported this amended motion. **Pontz** called for discussion and queried **Director Creagh** on the department's approval, who indicated that the department is in agreement. A vote was taken on the amendment only and passed unanimously. **Pontz** indicated that **Commissioner Walters** requested a director's letter for consideration that replicates the new CWD private land antlerless license at a reduced cost that expires on the first

Sunday in November in DMU 487, which includes DMU 452; **Walters** withdrew this amendment and moved to amend the order by setting a season limit of ten private land antlerless deer licenses in the core CWD area and CWD MZ until the quota has been met. **Commissioner Schlaybaugh** supported the motion. **Pontz** called for discussion and again queried **Creagh** on the department's approval, who again indicated that the department is in agreement, there being no further discussion, a vote was taken on the amendment only and passed unanimously. **Pontz** next indicated that **Schlaybaugh** requested the department require a lottery license that has been granted to expire if not purchased by November 1 and allow it to be reissued over the counter; **Schlaybaugh** withdrew this request as the department has no capability to do this. **Schlaybaugh** also requested that the department expand the restriction on carcass transportation to include the rest of the CWD MZ (8 counties) and indicated the department should respond if it should include the additional three counties (Jackson, Hillsdale and Calhoun). Based on the work being done on motion number 3, **Schlaybaugh** withdrew these requests. **Pontz** indicated that **Commissioner Crumbaugh** requested the department change the restriction on carcass transportation from the five-county core to the counties that have been detected with CWD and that the carcass cannot be moved to or through any county that CWD has not been detected. **Crumbaugh** withdrew this request. She then motioned to amend Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 12 by adding that a person taking a deer inside the CWD MZ shall not possess or transport the carcass outside of the CWD MZ and a deer taken within the core CWD area shall not be possessed or transported outside of the core CWD area, except for deboned meat, quarters or other parts of a cervid that do not have any part of the spinal column or head attached, antlers, antlers attached to a skull cap cleaned of all brain and muscle tissue, hides, upper canine teeth or a finished taxidermist mount, or if the hunter has presented the head at a designated drop off location within 24 hours after killing the deer. **Schlaybaugh** supported the motion. **Pontz** called for discussion, **Tracy** brought up if they only have to drop the head off and they don't have the results back yet, does this mean the hunter can move it out of the zone. **Chadwick** responded that if they drop the head off within 24 hours then they can move it out of the zone. **Creagh** said if a hunter dropped off the head they would want the results and the information provided should be accurate. **Crumbaugh** said that it provides motivation for hunters to drop heads off to be tested. **Creagh** indicated that the department is in agreement with this amendment. A vote was taken on the amendment only and passed unanimously.

The commission then moved on to the amendments that are commission authority requests. **Commissioner Schlaybaugh** requested implementation of an APR against a targeted antlerless harvest goal set by DMU in the CWD MZ with the opportunity for the department to evaluate whether they would suggest that Jackson, Hillsdale and Calhoun counties be included. In addition, if harvest objectives are not met the APR would be eliminated from the CWD MZ. **Schlaybaugh** withdrew this request. **Commissioner Tracy** requested removal of APRs on the combo license for the CWD MZ and that the commission leave it up to the department whether that should be the 13 or 16 counties and if it should be replicated in the TB zone. **Tracy** then moved to remove the four-point APR on the combination license restricted tag in the CWD MZ. **Commissioner Crumbaugh** supported the motion. **Pontz** called for discussion, **Schlaybaugh** asked what **Tracy** thought the commission would accomplish by this amendment; **Tracy** said that hunters would be able to harvest more deer in that zone and there would be more data to work from. **Schlaybaugh** said only about four percent of hunters use second tag and asked what this amendment would accomplish. **Pontz** called for discussion, there being no further discussion, a vote was taken on the amendment only; commissioners **Schlaybaugh** and **Walters** voted no, **Crumbaugh**, **Richardson**, **Klarr** and **Tracy** voted yes; the amendment only was passed. **Commissioner Crumbaugh** moved to implement a feeding ban in the CWD MZ

and a baiting ban in the counties where CWD has been detected and have a two gallon shelled corn limit in the remaining counties of the CWD MZ. **Crumbaugh** also proposed to allow eligible hunters with disabilities participating in the Liberty and Independence hunts to bait in counties with a confirmed case of CWD and also in Alcona, Alpena, Montmorency and Oscoda counties only if the bait is two gallons and shelled corn only. She also proposed to remove the proposed Lower Peninsula baiting ban effective January 31, 2019, except in Alcona, Alpena, Montmorency and Oscoda counties. **Commissioner Klarr** supported the motion, **Pontz** called for discussion, **Klarr** asked about single-bite baits, she hasn't heard any data on single-bite bait, in this situation and until she hears additional information on them she would vote for this amendment. **Crumbaugh** added that this is a complex ban, but thinks a surgical approach is necessary for dealing with a disease. She has concerns about hunters meeting surveillance goals and that single-bite bait would encourage harvest. She also said that the amendment would allow for further study where disease may show up. **Schlaybaugh** added that he appreciates the effort for this issue, but he can't support this amendment. **Crumbaugh** added that this does not change the feeding ban that would go into effect in January 2019, this would just change the baiting ban. Richardson said that because the commission put the baiting and feeding ban into effect in 2008 when there was only one positive, he would support a baiting and feeding ban in the entire Lower Peninsula as 60 deer have tested positive. He would like to see a sunset on this amendment. A vote was taken, **Crumbaugh** and **Klarr** voted yes, **Walters, Schlaybaugh, Richardson, Tracy** voted against this amendment. The amendment does not pass.

Crumbaugh then moved to change the proposed baiting ban exception for eligible hunters in the Liberty and Independence hunts to allow bait in Alcona, Alpena, Montmorency and Oscoda counties, and within the CWD MZ and core CWD area using up to two gallons if the bait consists of shelled corn only. **Commissioner Tracy** supported the motion. **Pontz** called for discussion, Tracy for clarification on disabled hunters only being able bait during these hunts. A vote was taken and the amendment only and passed unanimously.

Pontz asked for a motion to pass Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 12 with the five amendments as passed. **Schlaybaugh** moved to adopted Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 12. **Commissioner Klarr** supported the motion. **Pontz** asked for discussion, there being none a vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Expand Hunting at the Marl Lake Property at South Higgins Lake State Park During the Established Open Season, Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 13 of 2018

Commissioner Tracy moved that Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 13 of 2018, Expand Hunting at the Marl Lake Property at South Higgins Lake State Park During the Established Open Season, be adopted. **Commissioner Schlaybaugh** supported the motion. **Pontz** called for discussion, there being none, a vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Pierce Road Unit Special Hunt Opportunities at the Sharonville State Game Area, Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 14

Commissioner Schlaybaugh moved that Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 14 of 2018, Pierce Road Unit Special Hunt Opportunities at the Sharonville State Game Area, be adopted. **Commissioner Tracy** supported the motion. **Pontz** called for discussion, there being none, a vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

FOR INFORMATION ONLY – DIRECTOR

Chair Pontz listed the “for information only” items on the agenda.

DIRECTOR’S ACTION ITEMS

Director Creagh listed the “director’s action” items on the agenda and indicated he would approve all items.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Walters had a busy month; attending the Lake Huron fisheries advisory council, he also met with Trout Unlimited and Anglers of Au Sable with **Dexter** and **Schlaybaugh**. He thanked **Schlaybaugh** for hosting that meeting.

Commissioner Schlaybaugh had the opportunity to go to the Ontonagon area and fish the branches of the Ontonagon River.

Commissioner Crumbaugh said that she appreciates all the calls and engagement; she hopes that the public can see that the commissioners don’t rubber stamp amendments, there is a thought process that goes into them.

Commissioner Richardson invited all to September meeting in Ontonagon.

Commissioner Klarr said that she would be attending a regional Ducks Unlimited meeting the following weekend.

Commissioner Tracy reiterated **Crumbaugh’s** comments on how the department, the commissioners, stakeholders all put in the extra time, the discussion and the effort is real.

Director Creagh mentioned Law Enforcement division’s assistant chief **Dean Molnar’s** upcoming retirement and thanked him for everything he has done and wishes him well.

Chair Pontz thanked all the stakeholders for the meetings and conversations and for their engagement. She enjoyed attending the UP Sportsman Alliance meeting and added that commissioner **Richardson’s** “Conservationist of the Year” award was greatly deserved.

Next Meeting

Chair Pontz announced that the next meeting of the NRC is scheduled for Thursday, September 13, 2018 at Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park in the visitor center auditorium.

The committees meeting in August will be the Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee and the NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries.

Resolution #1

RESOLUTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

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 Thumb Area Deer Hunters have submitted a request pursuant to the guidelines for initiation, evaluation, and review of mandatory antler point restrictions;

WHEREAS, the Department delayed the proposal in order to implement CWD response measures and is now prepared to move forward;

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved:

1. The Department shall expedite the process to evaluate public opinion for an antler point restriction in Huron, Tuscola, Sanilac, St. Clair and Lapeer counties. Results of this evaluation will be brought to the NRC so that the Commission can make a decision whether or not to implement a mandatory APR for the 2019 deer hunting seasons.
2. The Department will share expenses with the Thumb Area Deer Hunters for costs incurred to conduct the required formal survey to measure support for the proposal and for subsequent surveys to evaluate continued support provided that the mandatory APR is implemented.

Resolution #2

RESOLUTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

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.

Resolution #3

RESOLUTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

WHEREAS, In 1997 Michigan implemented the first mandatory antler point restriction (APR) on the second buck tag of the Combination Deer License;

WHEREAS, In July 1998, the Wildlife Division formed an APR working group to develop such a process. The group consisted of Wildlife Division staff, field biologists, and representatives of seven organizations;

WHEREAS, In 2010 a new group was formed by the NRC to evaluate the effectiveness of the initial guidelines and address concerns raised by groups attempting to implement the process;

WHEREAS, Chronic Wasting Disease subsequently has been identified in free ranging deer in six Lower Peninsula counties;

WHEREAS, Hunters and organizations continue to express interest in implementing mandatory APR;

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved:

1. The NRC and the Department, shall establish a committee to review and update the Guidelines for Initiation, Evaluation, and Review of Mandatory Antler Point Restrictions.

Resolution #4

RESOLUTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

WHEREAS, coordination of disease response measures between the Department and NRC need to occur to enable hunters to assist in deer management efforts and goals;

WHEREAS, stakeholders have engaged in the communication process and shared many ideas regarding the management of deer and CWD;

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved the Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries encourages the Department to:

1. Work with stakeholders to consider additional opportunities to participate in achieving Department surveillance goals, which could include sponsoring drop box locations where needed.
2. Work with stakeholders to provide updates throughout the deer season related to surveillance goals and number of deer checked.
3. Consider future technologies that will allow for alternative harvest reporting methods capable of measuring real-time progress toward deer harvest goals by DMU.
4. Begin discussion with stakeholders to explore a cooperative position that will work with hunters in the CWD management area with various responsibilities.
5. Work with stakeholders on joint communications about deer management and disease management in Michigan.
6. Work with stakeholders to align management objectives on state property adjacent to hunter cooperatives.

Adjournment

Commissioner Tracy made a motion to adjourn. **Commissioner Crumbaugh** seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

APPROVED: Date: 9/13/18



Vicki Pontz, NRC Chair



Keith Creagh, DNR Director