

Eastern Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council (EUPCAC)
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 19, 2017
6:30-8:30pm Eastern
LMAS Health Department Conference Room, Newberry

Chair: Dick Pershinske Vice-Chair: Glenn Moll Secretary: Tom Buckingham

Council Members Present

Keith Aldrich	Hawk Erickson	Travis Kangas
Allan Augustyn	Al Garavaglia	Michael Lawless
Kristy Beyer	Jason Garvon	Glenn Moll
Ivan Darling	Gary Gorniak	Dick Pershinske
Grant Dewitt	Tim Hass	Mark Spencer
Jim Duke	Jim Hoy	

Council Members Excused/Absent

Tom Buckingham	Tom Paquin
Bernie Hubbard	

Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Staff Liaisons

Eric Cowing, Parks & Recreation Division, Newberry
Kristi Dahlstrom, Executive Assistant, Marquette
Lt. Skip Hagy, Law Enforcement Division, Newberry
Christina Hammill, Facilities & Operations Division, Newberry
Stacy Haughey, UP Regional Coordinator, Marquette
Cory Kovacs, Fisheries Division, Newberry
Kristie Sitar, Wildlife Division, Newberry
Jeff Stampfly, Forest Resources Division, Shingleton
Paul Gaberdiel, Eastern UP Trails Specialist, Newberry

Call To Order

The Eastern Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council (EUPCAC) meeting was called to order at 6:28pm Eastern by **Chair Pershinske**, who welcomed everyone to the meeting. Council members introduced themselves and the groups they represent. **Mr. Augustyn** indicated that Chair Pershinske asked him to inform the group that he sometimes tape records portions of the meeting.

Mrs. Haughey introduced new Council member **Ms. Kristy Beyer** from Drummond Island. She gave a brief overview of Ms. Beyer's background and welcomed her to her first meeting. She stated the second new member is **Mr. Tom Paquin** of St. Ignace, who will attend the next meeting. She further explained the selection process (under New Business, Item 4 on Page 7).

Adoption of Agenda

Chair Pershinske asked if there were any additions or revisions to the agenda; there were none. **Mr. Moll** motioned to adopt the agenda as presented; **Mr. Hass** seconded the motion. **Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: Mr. Buckingham, Mr. Hubbard, Mr. Paquin. Motion carried.**

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Chair Pershinske asked the Council if there were any corrections to the October 20, 2016 EUPCAC minutes; none were brought forth. **Mr. Duke** motioned to approve the minutes as submitted; **Mr. Augustyn** seconded the motion. **Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: Mr. Buckingham, Mr. Hubbard, Mr. Paquin. Motion carried.**

Chair Comments

Chair Pershinske mentioned an article in the St. Ignace News with misinformation about an EUPCAC meeting topic that prompted Council member **Mr. Gorniak** to submit a response. The response was very well done and he appreciated Mr. Gorniak's effort. He indicated he tried contacting the writer of the article twice but has not received a reply back. He stated he attended the bear forum meeting on behalf of the Michigan Farm Bureau and several changes on quota, chocolate bait, and other recommendations were made for the coming season. The management plan is also coming due soon. He stated things have been busy on the east end of the UP pertaining to trail development; he will provide reports on the progress as they become available.

Public Comments

Chair Pershinske opened the floor for public comments. No comments were brought forth.

Reports

1. Stacy Haughey, UP Regional Coordinator: **Mrs. Haughey** provided the following updates since the last meeting:
 - DNR all staff meetings will be held in Marquette and Sault Ste. Marie at the end of the month. These meetings are held every other year with the Director, Chiefs, and other Lansing staff to provide updates on agency initiatives, talk about local employee interests, etc.
 - The UP CWD Task Force will be meeting on January 30th at 2pm in Marquette. Council member Mr. Gorniak is a member of this group. A report will be provided at the next meeting.
 - The WUPCAC meeting was held last evening in Baraga. Suggested agenda items for the Joint UPCAC meeting in March will be shared later on in the agenda.
2. DNR Division Reports: Written staff reports were provided via email to Council members on January 12, 2017. The following are verbal additions to those reports:
 - Jeff Stampfly, Forest Resources Division: **Mr. Stampfly** stated he did not have any additional updates to the written report. **Mr. Moll** asked what an example of a minor infraction would be in the internal audit. **Mr. Stampfly** replied the internal audit goes into more detail than an external audit as the staff knows the processes. An example of a minor infraction would be a logger not having a spill kit. **Mr. Stampfly** also answered additional questions from **Mr. Moll** on the MSU hardwood research project, CFA certification and marketing of forest management benefits. **Mr. Augustyn** asked if there has been any new information on spruce budworm. **Mr. Stampfly** stated a new stand list was generated and there has been a little movement, but not as much as was anticipated. The hemlock wooly algid is more of a concern.
 - Kristie Sitar, Wildlife Division: **Ms. Sitar** stated she was attending in Mr. Minzey's absence and had no additional updates to the report. **Mr. Gorniak** noted the report indicates 11,000 deer

have been tested for CWD in the state and asked how it jumped from 5,000-6,000 to 11,000. **Ms. Sitar** stated hunter harvested deer over the last few months are now included. There have been 9 CWD positive deer now found in Michigan, all in the lower peninsula.

- Cory Kovacs, Fisheries Division: **Mr. Kovacs** noted the following updates since the report was distributed:
 - The 2016 State of the Great Lakes Report was completed and announced on January 4th. It is available at: http://www.michigan.gov/documents/deq/SOGL_2016_546173_7.pdf. It is a very valuable document detailing what is done in state government to manage the Great Lakes. The report includes information on why net pen aquaculture was not recommended.
 - The acting fisheries chief is looking into what can be done in 2017 for cormorant control measures in highly active areas. They can be harassed (hazing) but they cannot be culled. Follow-up with the US Fish & Wildlife Service is being done.
 - Free fishing weekend in the state is February 18-19, 2017.
- Paul Gaberdiel, Parks and Recreation Division/Trails: **Mr. Gaberdiel** stated the warmer weather has not been conducive for snowmobile trails. Groomers have been getting stuck and a few trails were closed.
- Christina Hammill, Finance & Operations Division: **Mrs. Hammill** added to her report that a developer is looking at purchasing the Soo DNR office and the DNR is looking at possible options for a new office location. The current location is not large enough for their staff and equipment needs. She will keep the group updated as the project progresses.
- Lt. Skip Hagy, Law Enforcement Division: **Lt. Hagy** indicated the division is moving forward on another recruit school in July. A television show on the Outdoor Channel, *Wardens*, will be airing on February 6 and will feature officers and cases from District 2. He noted it was a busy deer season; not many deer, but lots of people doing silly things. **Chair Pershinske** mentioned he is very glad to hear of local candidates applying for the recruit schools. **Mr. Hass** stated he read the recent news about Conservation Officer (CO) Michael Evink's life-saving efforts. He stated the training in search and rescue the CO's receive is absolutely incredible. They deserve to be complimented and the public is thankful for them. He asked that Lt. Hagy to pass along the Council's thanks. **Mr. Moll** stated there were several rescues in a short amount of time and he has nothing but respect for the CO's. **Lt. Hagy** added they have been conducting extensive search and rescue training to aide in these efforts. **Mr. Augustyn** asked if there were any hunting related deaths this year; **Lt. Hagy** replied he is not aware of any reported. **Mr. Augustyn** also asked if CO's rotate appearing on Ask the DNR and noted one seemed fairly new. **Lt. Hagy** stated most of the new CO's are asked to appear on the show and they may not have all the answers on the spot. **Mrs. Haughey** noted all questions that come in during the show are followed-up with if a person leaves their call-back information.
- Eric Cowing, Parks & Recreation Division: **Mr. Cowing** provided an update on the Naubinway marina project. He stated it is a township project; however, the DNR is involved in the grant. The project is moving forward; items that received high bids are being redone and a new consultant has been hired. **Mr. Hass** asked if the repairs at Muskallonge State Park will be completed in the 2017 season; **Mr. Cowing** stated the headquarters building should be finished this spring, which includes demolition of the old building. The electrical project will hopefully be done in the spring as well.

Old Business

1. **Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Update:** **Ms. Sitar** indicated statewide CWD testing numbers were touched on earlier in the meeting and there has been testing in the UP as well. Just over 600 deer have been tested from the western UP border counties: 100 road kill, 360 crop damage, and about 140 hunter harvested deer. Recently, two UP deer (one from Chippewa/Mackinac County and one from Menominee County) who were reported acting strange were tested and those tests results are not back yet. **Mrs. Haughey** noted the deer from a Wisconsin facility that was found in Menominee County was sent for testing as well. **Chair Pershinske** asked if there were any new cases close to the Wisconsin/UP border. **Ms. Sitar** stated Mr. Minzey just attended a meeting in Wisconsin on CWD and she has not received any new information from him yet. **Mr. Moll** asked if the DNR is looking at another company who can do the testing quicker; **Ms. Sitar** stated she is not aware of this. **Chair Pershinske** asked what the lead time is for the test results; **Ms. Sitar** replied approximately one month. **Mr. Augustyn** asked if a hunter brings in a head for testing will it be tested; **Ms. Sitar** replied yes. He also asked what the cost of a test is and where did the funding come from to test all those that have already been tested. **Mr. Gorniak** indicated that \$1 million has just been earmarked for testing. **Mrs. Haughey** also noted Michigan received some unused test kits from Wisconsin as well. **Mr. Augustyn** asked if there is any discussion on revising the CWD response plan specific to the UP; **Mrs. Haughey** stated this is being discussed at the UP CWD Task Force meetings, and a recommendation is planned by February 1st if revisions will be made. **Chair Pershinske** reminded folks that it was the EUPCAC who initially brought this issue to the forefront after the March 2014 Joint UPCAC meeting.

2. **Deer Subcommittee Report:** **Mr. Gorniak**, reporting on behalf of Mr. Buckingham, indicated that as directed by the Council at the October meeting, the four resolutions previously approved by the Council (see below) and responded to by the DNR were sent to the WUPCAC's Wildlife Subcommittee to garner support. (Note: The fourth resolution was revised after the October meeting to correct misinformation.) A conference call was held with the WUPCAC subcommittee on December 8th and each resolution was discussed. See below for discussion points under each resolution:
 - **Resolution #1:** *Contact tribal natural resource departments for those treaty areas in the Upper Peninsula to request they consider voluntarily reducing the number of whitetail permits issued to tribal hunters.* **Mr. Gorniak** indicated the WUPCAC subcommittee felt this resolution did not pertain to them.
 - **Resolution #2:** *Identify and provide a method or "trigger" on timber harvesting certain lands adjacent to a deer yard when the winter index hits a certain level.* **Mr. Gorniak** stated the WUPCAC subcommittee was in favor of this resolution.
 - **Resolution #3:** *Support the return of a bounty on coyotes.* **Mr. Gorniak** stated the WUPCAC subcommittee was in favor of this resolution.
 - **Resolution #4:** *End to all current hunting seasons in the U.P. and replace them with one season – 30 to 45 days long, ending no later than November 30th. Within the timeframe allotted, a segment for youth/veteran hunting, bow season, gun season and muzzleloader season will be assigned (i.e., 1st week-youth/veteran, 2nd and 3rd weeks-bow season, 4th and 5th weeks-gun season and 6th week-muzzleloader season).* **Mr. Gorniak** stated everyone on the conference call had an opinion of this resolution and after 90 minutes, there was no consensus.

Mr. Moll indicated one thing that became clear during the meeting was the hunter climate in the western UP is very different than that in the eastern UP. To divide the season within the UP in some fashion would be the only way to receive consensus. **Mr. Spencer** asked if the decisive issue was the length of the season or the number of deer shot; **Mr. Gorniak** stated it was the length of season; different types of hunters all with different ideas.

Chair Pershinske brought up a concern from a Garden/Cooks area citizen regarding hunters having to wear orange during musket season, but bow hunters can wear camo. The citizen felt this was a dangerous safety situation in which musket hunters cannot see bow hunters. **Lt. Hagy** indicated this also occurs between bird hunters and bow hunters. **Dr. Garvon** asked how many accidents typically occur due to this. **Lt. Hagy** stated a suggestion made was to put a patch of orange on a pop-up blind. **Mrs. Haughey** noted a legislative bill (Public Act 377) was recently passed which allows hunter's pink to be worn. The bill also gave the NRC authorization to allow other colors to be worn if they so designate.

3. Information and Outreach Subcommittee Report: **Chair Pershinske** indicated he is still gathering information and determining how best the subcommittee can help in the UP without duplicating similar efforts. He stated the subcommittee will be meeting in the next month or two to establish goals.

New Business

1. Forest Roads Inventory Update: **Mr. Stampfly** stated the handout in the meeting packet explains the current status of the Forest Road Inventory project. Public Act 288 signed into law in September 2016 began the process for the project. All state forest roads in the UP will be inventoried and mapped by December 31, 2018. He reviewed the requirements of PA 288, the project completion timeline and the road classification system. Right now, forest roads in lower peninsula are closed unless posted open, and in the UP, roads are open unless posted closed. It is very difficult to sort out when pertaining to ORV traffic. **Chair Pershinske** asked what the major impact will be for the eastern UP. **Mr. Stampfly** replied the impact should be minimal as UP state forest roads have been open to ORV's all along. What can be difficult are roads that go across corporate land for which there are no easements. It will be challenging to show these types of roads on a map since they aren't on state land. **Mr. Duke** stated a big problem with going across corporate land is that snowmobiles have leases and easements and signs don't have to come down in the summertime. It is difficult for an ORV rider to know when they've crossed the boundary into that corporate land if they follow the orange diamond signage. **Mr. Stampfly** agreed that ORV's ride the snowmobile trails because they know where those go. This is a work in progress. **Mr. Moll** asked Mr. Stampfly to review the road classification definition. **Mr. Stampfly** indicated the current definition is met in July, but is not met in April with spring run-off. One classification was developed to work in both the UP and the lower peninsula. The idea was to have primary roads, secondary roads, gated service roads and the catchall being the forest access route. To answer **Mr. Spencer's** question, **Mr. Stampfly** stated the forest road inventory is not an effort to map roads on private land. **Mr. Augustyn** stated the road classification system is well written but asked for further clarification to which **Mr. Stampfly** responded. **Chair Pershinske** asked for the target completion date. **Mr. Stampfly** stated it will be completed by the

end of 2017 for the northern lower peninsula and by the end of 2018 for the UP. **Chair Pershinske** asked that this item be put on all future agendas for a recurring update. **Mr. Aldrich** asked if there will be a public hearing on the project; **Mr. Stampfly** stated yes.

2. Eastern UP Trails Update: **Mr. Gaberdiel** reviewed the trail updates listed in the Division Report. The gates have been changed on the Soo to Raco grade project and it was opened up from 50" to 65" for side-by-side ORV use. The Mackinac County 109-mile ORV Route Proposal is in the approval path. Grant sponsors, staff, and others got damage projects completed before snowmobile season started. Plans are also in place to remove reassurance markers from trees and install carsonite posts with reassurance markers on ORV single track and 50" ORV trails with ORV maintenance clubs. New markers are also being installed according to the new motorized trails signing guide. A meeting will be held with Clark Township and Cedarville Les Cheneaux Snowmobile Club on February 7 regarding an ORV route proposal from Moran to Detour. He also provided additional updates on bridge replacements, wet trails, beaver issues, stuck groomers, and an equestrian workshop he attended. He noted a group of 25 antique snowmobiles recently crossed the Mackinac Bridge with success; **Chair Pershinske** added the leader indicated it will become an annual event. **Mr. Gaberdiel** provided a few statistics: 36,253 trail permits for snowmobiles have been sold so far this year. There were 24 total fatalities last year with 9 from January 3-22, 2016. This year, there's been 2 with 1 in early December and 1 a few days ago, both in the lower peninsula and neither on a trail. **Chair Pershinske** asked if Mr. Gaberdiel is involved in the regional trail planning consortium. **Mr. Gaberdiel** stated he will be a part of that group to help them with the direction of all trail aspects in the eastern UP. **Mr. Gorniak** explained working with the forest service on an ORV proposal submitted to them two years ago. **Mr. Duke** stated he heard on the radio about the Rapid River Relic Ride and they invited new sleds that aren't antique to ride and a permit was not required. **Mr. Gaberdiel** stated the group received a use permit for the event; *he clarified only those sleds 25 years and older are exempt from trail permits and registrations.* **Mr. Augustyn** asked if he has heard about a trail in Alger County to Trenary for snowmobiles on private land. **Mr. Gaberdiel** replied he has not heard anything and referred him to Mr. Katona at the Marquette DNR Office. **Mr. Moll** and **Mr. Gaberdiel** discussed a trail near Moss Lake.
3. Bear & Deer Seasons Update: **Ms. Sitar** began with a bear season update. She stated the handout in the meeting packet is generated each year after season for staff to review. The stats show the number of bears registered were slightly higher than the desired harvest. The number of females harvested is also measured to evaluate the effect on the population. She touched on the 2017-2018 harvest recommendations and the goal to increase the population but allow a little more hunting opportunity. The UP-wide bear harvest target is 1,234 bear and that increase is broken out such that all units will have a slight increase except for the Gwinn and Carney units. **Chair Pershinske** asked if the regulations were acted on yet; **Ms. Sitar** stated they haven't been to the NRC yet. **Mr. Hoy** asked if the hunt was in line with the estimates for Newberry; **Ms. Sitar** stated a population estimate is done by a total for the UP, not per unit and further explained. **Mr. Augustyn** asked what the desired harvest means; **Ms. Sitar** replied it is mainly a target. **Mr. Gorniak** asked if bear cubs are included in bear counts; **Ms. Sitar** stated cubs are not counted based on the model they use. **Mr. Moll** asked if there was any 5-year trend information available

and if beech bark disease had any impact on the bear population. **Ms. Sitar** stated she did not have trend information with her. There are still beech trees producing and they have not found a relationship between bear population and available beech. **Mr. Cameron** from the audience asked what the bear harvest was in Newberry; **Ms. Sitar** stated the age breakdown is not yet available but she estimates it was a little less than last year, not a significant difference. **Chair Pershinske** stated one item that came out from the bear forum was the predator prey study and the impact of bears on deer. The number of agricultural bear complaints in the UP is negligible; south of the bridge, the number of complaints is significant. **Ms. Sitar** stated there are more agriculture producers in the lower peninsula as well. **Dr. Garvon** asked about recent reports of human bear encounters; **Ms. Sitar** stated in many situations, it involves a sow and cubs.

Ms. Sitar moved on to the deer season update. Figures are still preliminary. At UP check stations, registrations are up about 20%, but still down from the 10-year average. There were a greater number of yearling bucks this year than the previous three years (22% normally with 40% this year). Antler development was a bit better than usual. The total number of deer harvested is still being determined. **Dr. Garvon** asked if the 1-year old harvest is getting closer to what it was; **Ms. Sitar** stated a little—it used to be 70+%. **Mr. Gorniak** stated there must be more single licenses sold this year with the 40% yearling harvested; **Ms. Sitar** stated she believes so. **Chair Pershinske** ask about the number of licenses sold totally in the UP; **Ms. Sitar** replied those figures will not be available until May.

Mr. Hoy asked if Michigan was going to send any wolves to Isle Royale. **Ms. Sitar** stated there has been no contact with Michigan that she is aware of. **Mr. Augustyn** added the Park Service held two public meetings seeking input on that question.

Mr. Dewitt asked about current snow depths in relation to deer. **Ms. Sitar** stated more snow makes it more difficult for deer, however, how early spring comes is a big factor. The southern UP counties reached triggers and can now supplemental feed on private land with a permit. **Mrs. Haughey** suggested supplemental feeding be a future agenda item as the WUPCAC also had questions on the same topic. **Chair Pershinske** asked if complaints are received on people feeding deer; **Lt. Hagy** replied not usually, unless it becomes a safety factor next to a highway. **Mr. Cameron** from the audience asked about an aerial moose survey in the eastern UP. **Ms. Sitar** stated an aerial survey was conducted in the western UP where the abundance of the moose population exists. She noted if it was done in the eastern UP, a lot of money would be spent in the air without finding many moose.

4. Update on Council Member Term Expirations/New Members: **Mrs. Haughey** noted that half the Council's terms were up for renewal (she read them off verbally) and all were renewed by the UPCAC Selection Committee, who met in the beginning of January to review all renewals and applications for two new members on each of the Eastern and Western UPCAC's. The UPCAC Selection Committee only meets when needed for this purpose. Those who serve on the Selection Committee are three community representatives and three DNR staff members. She explained the process by which the committee chooses new members from all the applications received, which is based on a variety of demographics, such as those areas not already

represented by a current council member (i.e. county of residence, group affiliation, cooperative group experience, etc.). She welcomed the new members again.

Next Meeting

1. **Next Meeting Date:** **Mrs. Haughey** indicated there were some staff conflicts for the upcoming scheduled February 16th meeting and offered February 23rd as an alternative. She also noted the Joint UPCAC meeting is scheduled for March 14th. After a brief discussion with members, **Chair Pershinske** indicated February 23rd was agreed upon as the next meeting at the LMAS Health Department's conference room in Newberry.
2. **Topics for Joint UPCAC Meeting Agenda:** **Mrs. Haughey** noted the topics suggested by the WUPCAC at their January 18th meeting for the March Joint UPCAC Meeting included: 1) Budget, mainly for new members; 2) Predator Prey Update; 3) DNR Grants. After a brief discussion, **Chair Pershinske** indicated the Predator Prey Update and the DNR Grants suggestions would be good topics for both groups.
3. **Council Member Survey:** **Chair Pershinske** asked Council members to complete the annual survey/evaluation on the EUPCAC meeting process in the meeting packets and return to Mrs. Dahlstrom by February 1. The results will be reviewed at the next Council meeting.

Public Comments

Chair Pershinske opened the floor for additional public comments. No verbal comments were made.

Closing Comments from the Council

- **Mr. Spencer** stated centerfire at night (Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 4 of 2016) was passed with immediate effect at the last Natural Resources Commission meeting with no restrictions on light usage. **Mr. Gorniak** indicated a predator hunt in Kalamazoo utilized the night centerfire for the first time and it increased their hunt significantly.
- **Mr. Augustyn** noted the offer from Mr. Rory Mattson to provide his habitat presentation to the Council still stands. He is presenting it also at the upcoming UP Sportsmen's Alliance meeting.
- **Dr. Garvon** stated, in regards to **Mr. Hoy's** discussion earlier on Isle Royale wolves, he went to a Rolf Peterson presentation who indicated if wolves were to be moved to Isle Royale, it should be those who feed on moose rather than deer.
- **Mr. Hoy** stated he has several copies of the 1836 Treaty if anyone would like a copy.

Adjourn

There being no further business, **Chair Pershinske** thanked everyone for coming and adjourned the meeting at 8:43pm EST.