

**Eastern Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council (EUPCAC)**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, June 6, 2018**  
**6:00-8:30pm Eastern**  
**Little Bear Arena, St. Ignace, MI**

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

**Council Members Present**

Kristy Beyer	Gary Gorniak	Tom Paquin
Tom Buckingham	Bernie Hubbard	Dick Pershinske
Ivan Darling	Travis Kangas	Russell Utych
Jason Garvon	Glenn Moll	

**Council Members Excused/Absent**

Keith Aldrich	Jim Duke	Tim Hass
Allan Augustyn	Hawk Erickson	Jim Hoy
Grant Dewitt	Al Garavaglia	Mark Spencer

**Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Staff Liaisons**

Eric Cowing, Parks & Recreation Division, Newberry  
Kristi Dahlstrom, Executive Assistant, Marquette  
Stacy Haughey, UP Regional Coordinator, Marquette  
Cory Kovacs, Fisheries Division, Newberry  
Terry Minzey, Wildlife Division, Marquette  
Karen Rodock, Forest Resources Division, Sault Ste. Marie  
Jon Spieles, Marketing and Outreach Division, Newberry  
Michelle Zellar, Finance and Operations Division, Newberry

**Call to Order**

The Eastern Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council (EUPCAC) meeting was called to order at 6:02pm Eastern by **Chair Pershinske**, who welcomed everyone to the meeting. Council members introduced themselves and cited the groups they represent.

**Adoption of Agenda**

**Chair Pershinske** asked if there were any additions to the agenda; there were no further additions or revisions suggested. **Mr. Buckingham motioned to adopt the agenda as presented; Ms. Beyer seconded the motion. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: See above listing. Motion carried.**

**Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

**Chair Pershinske** asked the Council if there were any corrections to the March 22<sup>nd</sup> Joint UPCAC and April 19<sup>th</sup> EUPCAC minutes, which were emailed to the Council previously. **Mr. Buckingham motioned to approve both sets of minutes as submitted; Ms. Beyer seconded the motion. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: See above listing. Motion carried.**

**Chair Comments**

**Chair Pershinske** spoke about a recent event he attended in which Ms. Haughey participated in a community fundraiser for hospice. He indicated it was a wonderful opportunity to see a staff

member outside of their work environment doing good for their community. Pictures of the event were shared, and Ms. Haughey elaborated on the experience and what good the funds raised will do for hospice patients.

### **Public Comments**

**Chair Pershinske** opened the floor for public comments; none were brought forth.

### **DNR Reports from Division Staff**

Written staff reports were provided via email to Council members on May 30, 2018. The following were verbal additions to those reports:

1. Stacy Haughey, UP Regional Coordinator: **Ms. Haughey** stated she will be addressing a few items on the agenda and did not have any new updates to pass along.
2. Eric Cowing, Parks & Recreation Division: **Mr. Cowing**, as follow-up to discussion at the April EUPCAC meeting regarding a user fee for kayaks and other non-motorized paddle watercraft, reported this topic originated with the Michigan State Waterways Commission (not the DNR) and has been discussed by that group for some time. A letter from Mr. Ron Olson, Chief of DNR Parks and Recreation Division, explaining the commission's proposal was included in the meeting packets. Recently, the legislature has indicated opposition to the commission's proposal. **Mr. Cowing** also indicated there are still several openings for workers at state parks, such as DeTour Harbor and Straits State Park. He explained all the mechanisms they have used in promoting the openings (career and job fairs, social media, etc.) but parks are operating with less staff this year due to the shortage.
3. Paul Gaberdiel, Trails – Parks & Recreation Division: **Mr. Gaberdiel** stated most of the trails in the eastern UP are open. In Mackinac County, grant sponsors are just now signing the Moran to Curtis ORV route. **Mr. Gorniak** asked if there is a plan to level out some of the trails; **Mr. Gaberdiel** stated funds for grading are going out to grant sponsors and he explained what a few of the clubs are doing. **Chair Pershinske** asked about responsibility for a two-mile road to an access site; **Mr. Gaberdiel** stated it depends on the land administering division or if it was a county road. **Ms. Rodock** indicated if the damage is due to logging activity, the Forest Resources Division would work with the producer to take care of the road. Discussion ensued.
4. Cory Kovacs, Fisheries Division: **Mr. Kovacs** reported on the walleye egg take which will result in a lower than normal production for walleye rearing this year. He also touched on the smelt runs and thanked the Straits Area Sportsmen's Club for their help with the Brevort Lake status and trends (S&T) survey, which is a standard protocol on all the lakes that are surveyed. **Chair Pershinske** asked about the issue brought up by Mr. Caswell at the last meeting regarding the stocking of a lake on commercial forest (CFA) property. **Ms. Haughey** stated she appreciated the issue being brought forward as it brought to light an issue that some weren't aware of. She explained the land/lake in question changed ownership and although the previous owner allowed vehicular access on the property to get to the lake, the new owner now does not allow it. CFA landowners in statute must provide foot access

to the public for hunting and fishing; however, they retain all other property rights and can choose to allow vehicular access or not. She referenced a handout in the meeting packets which is the DNR's interpretation of the CFA statute. She stated they were aware of the change in ownership, but they were not aware of the change in access, which was Mr. Caswell's main concern as he frequently rode his ORV to access the lake. **Mr. Kovacs** added the lake could potentially still be stocked as public access still exists and it boasts a good fishery. **Ms. Haughey** indicated she will be responding to Mr. Caswell.

5. Michelle Zellar, Finance & Operations Division: **Ms. Zellar** shared a summary of the Becoming an Outdoorswoman (BOW) program recently held June 1-3 at Bay Cliff in Big Bay. A total of 104 ladies (with 53 first-timers) from 18-80 years old took part in 21 different classes provided by 52 instructors. The instructors are volunteers who come to offer their expertise, talents, and equipment to teach participants outdoor skills they might not otherwise have. This year resulted in 18 new hunter safety certificates and 13 new boater safety certificates. There are summer and winter workshops. Trapping will be a new class offered at this winter's BOW program.
6. Karen Rodock, Forest Resources Division: **Ms. Rodock** stated a forest tech position is being filled in Newberry and a 16-acre burn for red pine regeneration was completed in Naubinway. **Mr. Gorniak** asked about stands of small red pine drying up and brown along several county and forest roads. **Ms. Rodock** stated she will get more information on location from him and investigate.
7. Terry Minzey, Wildlife Division: **Mr. Minzey** reported the following updates:
  - The statewide regulations for nuisance beaver trapping will be reviewed next week to establish a statewide coordinated directive for staff; he explained each division (Wildlife, Forestry, etc.) currently uses different processes on how to handle nuisance beaver.
  - A young male bear that was closely following a couple of hikers into a Munising subdivision was euthanized and sent to Lansing for testing.
  - The Wildlife Division's budget for fiscal year 2018-2019 will have a probable \$4 million reduction, due to a projected 30% decrease of Pittman Robinson (PR) dollars. PR funding comprises about 50% of the division's budget. There will be tough decisions to make in the budget in the next few months, one being the inability to fill the Sault Ste. Marie wildlife tech position because of the budget shortfall.
  - The translocation project of 25 sharp-tailed grouse from the eastern UP to the western UP that he spoke about at the last meeting did not occur. The students, however, will stay on for a while to do some background work in preparation for next year.
  - A map was shown indicating the travel routes from collared deer in the Deer Movement Study in the western UP. These routes show movement from the winter range to the summer range. The collaring effort began on January 1 and the routes shown were through June 4. **Chair Pershinske** asked what the longest distance traveled is to date; **Mr. Minzey** indicated a deer from Iron County traveled to Ontonagon County. He noted the goal of the study, which is in relation to concerns about CWD, is to understand how vulnerable the UP deer herd is, how they mix with the Wisconsin deer herd, and how

they mix with each other within the UP. UP deer move around quite a bit, while southern Wisconsin deer stay in one small area. **Mr. Gorniak** indicated this study will open a whole new discussion regarding CWD. **Ms. Beyer** asked how many deer were collared; **Mr. Minzey** responded 153 deer, with another 30 through the Predator Prey Study. The mortality rate from June 2017 to June 2018 to date has been around 27%. **Mr. Utych** asked if there is any progress on a readily accessible CWD field test; **Mr. Minzey** stated it could take years to develop a field test. **Mr. Moll** asked what the mortality is from; **Mr. Minzey** indicated predators, abandonment from the doe, malnutrition, low birth weight, etc. Discussion ensued.

8. *Jon Spieles, Marketing & Outreach Division:* **Mr. Spieles** provided a few highlights:
  - Through the end of May, 47 state workers have been hired around the state as park interpreters or in other education roles, with 8 being in the UP.
  - The Explorer Program will be held at the Ram Center and includes 5 full days of training for 50 teachers this year.
  - The first Careers in Natural Resources Camp will also be held at the Ram Center the end of June. Young individuals will spend a week learning about all aspects of DNR work with a goal that some of them will become interested in a natural resource career.
  - Staff see between 35,000-40,000 visitors at DNR hatcheries each year. Most will say there is a need to plant more fish, but the S&T study mentioned earlier helps to understand the aspects about why planting more fish isn't always an option.
  
9. *Law Enforcement Division:* **Ms. Zellar**, on behalf of Lt. Hagy, mentioned the press release about a recent kayak rescue operation that took place in Schoolcraft County. Conservation Officer Evink (District 2 Eastern UP) risked his life to rescue one of the individuals; a second individual drowned despite efforts to retrieve him in rough water. It was an extremely, intensive, emotional and dangerous situation. The DNR officers are highly skilled and trained members of the community and often respond to general law enforcement duties and lifesaving operations. This is the second life-saving award for CO Evink and everyone is proud of his actions.

### **Subcommittee Reports**

1. *Firewood Movement Subcommittee Report:* **Mr. Paquin** introduced Mr. Jason Fleming, section chief of Resource Protection and Promotion for the DNR's Parks and Recreation Division in Lansing, who came to provide an update on the firewood movement initiative. **Mr. Fleming** stated as most are aware and have discussed before, there are a lot of issues in Michigan's state parks with invasive species affecting trees and it's almost always due to firewood brought in. The DNR is working to develop protocols to help slow down disease or get rid of it altogether. The goal is for campers to still have a campfire without killing the trees. He stated he wants to make it clear that people can bring firewood into the parks. He explained a scoring system for firewood vending contracts (to sell firewood at state parks) which includes stronger requirements. USDA certification is part of the treated wood process. There were 8 vendors awarded statewide, with 4 vendors located in the eastern UP, and all but one park for the entire UP supplies wood that has been certified by the USDA. Pricing (firewood for sale in the parks) was kept at a flat rate across the state. **Mr.**

**Moll** asked if there is any profit gained from the sale of firewood; **Mr. Fleming** indicated the DNR will at least break even or have a small amount of revenue, despite selling wood at 5 parks below cost. This is to ensure that firewood sold at parks remains affordable. Currently, 68% of parks statewide will have a product of wood at the desired standard. How the wood is delivered and how to store it can affect pricing. How it is distributed within the parks long-term is something to consider for the future. This year, firewood movement was not restricted beyond existing quarantines. Instead, the goals were to focus on the vendor/contract process, have a quality wood product for sale and to boost the educational process. **Mr. Fleming** opened the floor for questions.

- **Chair Pershinske** asked about private firewood sales alongside area roads; **Mr. Fleming** stated the DNR cannot enforce what is being sold outside of state parks. However, the DNR can restrict what can be brought into the parks by campers by order of the Director. The focus of this year is the educational component, to encourage people to buy or bring firewood that is certified/heat treated or buy firewood from a certified vendor in the park. He stated the EUPCAC's resolution supporting the firewood movement initiative was extremely beneficial and shows the Council is willing to take a stand and support the DNR in this effort.
- **Mr. Stephen King** from the audience asked if the DNR is looking to restrict people from selling firewood. **Mr. Fleming** stated again that it is not the DNR's purview to restrict what people are selling, but rather to restrict what campers can bring into the parks. This will be the main focus of the educational process.
- **Chair Pershinske** asked if restricting the type of firewood being brought into the parks will pose an enforcement issue. **Mr. Fleming** replied if a restriction were implemented, there will be no search and seizure; campers will be asked. Bad wood is typically bagged when it's confiscated in other areas, not burned.
- **Mr. Moll** stated these are good essential steps being taken to reach the ultimate goal of restricting all wood coming into the parks. **Mr. Fleming** stated most states around Michigan are ahead in the process.

**Chair Pershinske** asked **Mr. Paquin** if there was any direction he'd like to take as subcommittee lead. **Mr. Paquin** stated the group is still researching the issue of wood transport across the bridge and there is no other direction at this point. He stated he was in on these discussions when he worked with the DNR and knows **Mr. Fleming** well. **Mr. Fleming** stated giving people treated wood upon entering and perhaps including it in camping fees has also been suggested. It is really important to find good ways to get treated wood into the parks, such as giving a bundle of wood away to each camper is an example. **Chair Pershinske** stated the Council has determined this to be a critical issue and indicated **Mr. Fleming** can use the Council as a resource. **Mr. Fleming** thanked the Council for their support.

2. *Fisheries Subcommittee Report:* **Mr. Gorniak** reported that he met with Ms. Rachael Pierce from US Fish and Wildlife and she explained the logic on why they keep saying there isn't enough documentation on the effects of cormorants on free swimming fish—because other states are not filling out their information correctly. He stated he doesn't see any forward movement on this issue at all. He indicated he has continued to work with Rep. Bergman on US House Bill 4429. The bill, if passed, would supersede the court order. He encouraged

everyone to write a letter to Rep. Bergman's office in support of this bill, who will then use the letters to gain support from other legislators. **Mr. Gorniak** indicated he has been organizing clubs in southern Michigan to support this effort as well, as support there has been minimal. **Ms. Haughey** added letters sent by email will be processed quicker. **Mr. Gorniak** also mentioned the UP Fish Committee spearheaded by NRC Commissioner Richardson is looking to lower the pike size across the UP to 22 inches. **Mr. Kovacs** indicated there are multiple proposals being discussed and there will be a report at the June 14<sup>th</sup> NRC meeting.

3. Legislation Subcommittee Report: **Chair Pershinske** stated Mr. Hass was unable to attend at the last moment; however, he is finalizing the format of the subcommittee with Ms. Haughey's guidance and is considering a name change to better reflect the purpose of the group. An update will be forthcoming.

### **Old Business**

1. Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Communication: **Ms. Haughey** stated there were several CWD communication meetings held across the UP in April and beginning of May which had decent attendance (80 in Iron Mountain, 30 in Marquette, 9 in Newberry, low turnout in Houghton). She indicated the CAC's have done well in getting the message out and talking about it often as there were some background and knowledge known by attendees. At the May 10<sup>th</sup> NRC Meeting in Traverse City, several presentations were provided to commissioners relating to the data gathered during the first phase. For the next phase of the CWD communications timeline, the NRC will be looking at recommendations for any regulation changes at their meeting on June 14<sup>th</sup> in Lansing. It will be known then what is being considered. She also referenced a handout in the meeting packets that includes the CWD website address ([www.michigan.gov/cwd](http://www.michigan.gov/cwd)) and shows the website page that includes all the information gathered to date, including the presentations from the May NRC meeting. She encouraged everyone to review it.
2. UP Road Inventory Public Comment Options Reminder: **Ms. Rodock** stated several public meetings were held on PA 288 across the state, including four in the UP, which were not well attended. At those meetings, participants were able to review the information and provide comments to the DNR. Comments are still being taken on the project in one of three ways: 1) Online at [www.michigan.gov/forestroads](http://www.michigan.gov/forestroads), which have maps enabling anyone to click on a particular road and comment on it (those comments cannot be seen by anyone else but a few people in the division); 2) Email at [roadinventoryproject@michigan.gov](mailto:roadinventoryproject@michigan.gov); and 3) Mail at ATTN: DNR Roads Inventory Project, 1990 US 41 South, Marquette, MI 49855. She indicated the highest attended meeting was in Newberry and noted she doesn't see any real issues with the roads listed on the maps for the eastern UP.
3. Invasive Carp Update: **Ms. Haughey** indicated she spoke with Dr. Newcomb who oversees this initiative and she reported there is still no evidence of invasive carp in the Great Lakes and that surveillance work continues. **Ms. Haughey** mentioned the Carp Tank, which was a contest to come up with solutions to prevent invasive carp from entering the Great Lakes,

and the winning solutions are being reviewed for implementation. She also discussed Gov. Snyder's Great Lakes Basin Partnership which includes commitments from bordering states.

### **New Business**

1. **New DNR Forest Health Specialist Introduction:** **Ms. Haughey** provided a brief bio introduction of Mr. Simeon Wright, the DNR's new forest health specialist whose office is in Sault Ste. Marie. Mr. Bob Heyd who held the position prior to Mr. Wright retired last year. **Mr. Wright** indicated he is one of three forest health specialists within the DNR, with the other two located in Cadillac and in Lansing. He indicated he is new to the UP forest, having worked in Missouri the last seven years. He provided an overview of the pests causing issues in the UP currently, including the forest tent caterpillars, which are ramping up their cycle in the eastern UP with defoliation seen on sugar maples. It also affects aspen and oak trees. Spruce budworm is another native pest which cycles every 30-40 years. Damage from spruce budworm is expected for several more years before it subsides. There have been several detections of hemlock woolly adelgid in the northern lower peninsula and surveys are being done in the UP. Another disease, heterobasidion root disease (HRD), affects red pine plantations and other conifers and there is one known location in Newberry where it is present. The DNR will be reviewing some timber specs to address that concern in another year. He opened the floor for questions.
  - **Chair Pershinske** asked if emerald ash borer will continue its movement across the entire UP. **Mr. Wright** stated it is very likely, and although it isn't in every county in the UP, reports are coming in from Marquette County and other counties where damage hasn't been seen before. **Chair Pershinske** also asked if beech bark disease will follow suit and if there is anything being developed in nurseries resistant to beech; **Mr. Wright** replied yes and further explained.
  - **Mr. Utych** asked if there was any good news on forest health. **Mr. Wright** indicated funding for research on the hemlock woolly adelgid is plentiful and researchers are looking to make headway on this disease to slow it down.
  - **Chair Pershinske** asked what Mr. Wright is currently working on; **Mr. Wright** indicated in the next six weeks, he will be conducting aerial surveys to spot areas of damage and disease, which once found can affect the management plans in those areas. He stated he works closely with local foresters, attends unit meetings, and works with them on training.
  - **Mr. Kangas** welcomed Mr. Wright to the UP. He asked if there are any statistics on oak wilt, such as how much it has spread and how much it has increased since it was first found. **Mr. Wright** stated he may be able to show statistics by year and will get back to him.

**Chair Pershinske** thanked Mr. Wright and indicated if there is anything the Council can do to help him in his efforts to contact him or Ms. Haughey.
2. **Muskie Regulation & Call-In System:** **Mr. Kovacs** presented a few slides in relation to the new muskie regulations, which include lake sturgeon, and the harvest mandatory reporting decision that was made by the NRC. There is now a one fish per year harvest limit. Harvest tags were discontinued in 2018 and a mandatory harvest reporting mechanism is in place.

Starting April 1, anglers are required to register their harvest via online, phone, or at a DNR customer service center in person, within 24 hours of harvest. Do not bring the harvest to a hatchery as it becomes a biosecurity issue. He provided visual aids on how to access the website to report a harvest ([www.michigan.gov/registerfish](http://www.michigan.gov/registerfish)). This information is also included on page 9 of the 2018 Michigan Fishing Guide. A valid license is needed to complete the information. The phone registration number is 1-844-345-FISH (3474); anglers can leave information on that line, which is date and time stamped. He indicated he is personally responding to every call for the entire state. Mr. Stephen King from the audience asked if catch and release must be reported; **Mr. Kovacs** stated no, however, he encourages anglers to fill out the online survey. The survey is not mandatory, but it is very helpful to biologists. **Chair Pershinske** asked how many muskies are caught annually; **Mr. Kovacs** stated the answer is not known; however, this new reporting mechanism will help. **Ms. Haughey** asked what happens if an angler doesn't register their catch; **Mr. Kovacs** indicated law enforcement could be involved. Additional questions regarding taxidermists and pictures were answered.

3. *Additional Agenda Items Added by Council:* No additional items were presented.

#### **Next Meeting**

1. *Next EUPCAC Meeting:* **Chair Pershinske** indicated the next regular meeting of the EUPCAC will be on Wednesday, August 1 at the LMAS Health Department conference room in Newberry beginning at 6:00pm.
2. *Items for Next Meeting Agenda:* **Chair Pershinske** indicated any items that need follow-up from this meeting will be placed on the August 1<sup>st</sup> agenda. If there are any other items that arise before then, please let him know.

#### **Public Comments**

**Chair Pershinske** opened the floor for additional public comments; there were none.

#### **Closing Comments from the Council**

1. **Mr. Gorniak** mentioned a free children's fishing tournament on June 9 at Castle Rock ponds from 10am to 2pm, sponsored by the Straits Area Sportsman's Club. Everyone is welcome.
2. **Mr. Moll** stated the CFA handout in the meeting packets is an excellent resource and appreciated those who prepared it. **Ms. Rodock** indicated that Mr. Ernie Houghton and Ms. Shirley Businski prepared the handout based on the DNR's interpretation of the state statute.

#### **Adjourn**

There being no further business, **Chair Pershinske** thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting at 8:21pm Eastern.