

MINUTES

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

June 5, 2008

Lansing Center
333 E. Michigan
Lansing

PRESENT FOR THE NRC

Keith Charters, Chair
Frank Wheatlake, Vice-Chair
Mary Brown
Hurley J. Coleman, Jr.
Darnell Earley
John Madigan
J. R. Richardson

PRESENT FOR STAFF

Jim Riley, Legal Counsel
Rebecca Humphries, Director
Dennis Fox, Chief of Staff
Dennis Fedewa, Chief Deputy
Mindy Koch, Resource Management Deputy
Tom Courchaine, UP Field Deputy
Teresa Gloden, Assistant to the NRC
Other DNR Staff

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chairman Charters called the Committee of the Whole meeting of the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) to order at 3:10 p.m.

Go-Get Outdoors/Free Fishing Weekend

Ron Olson, Chief, Parks and Recreation Division (PRD), provided a summary of 54 events that were held at Michigan state parks and recreation areas during the months of April and May, 2008 and a list of 231 additional events that are currently scheduled through the end of November, 2008, including Free Fishing Weekend events to take place on June 7-8, 2008. Many activities are still in the planning stages and more will be added to the list as time goes on. Events are posted on the DNR website at: www.michigan.gov/dnr. Under "Recreation and Camping" select "GO-Get Outdoors" to view the calendar which is updated continually.

Kelley Smith, Chief, Fisheries Division (FD), summarized over 50 events to take place around Michigan during the weekend of June 7-8 during Free Fishing Weekend.

Commissioner Coleman thanked the staff of the Parks and Recreation Division for their outreach programs such as: inviting ministers from the Flint area to various parks and recreation areas to get exposure to outdoor activities provided by the DNR; and for inviting youths to five parks in that area to experience a “first time” fishing experience.

Chairman Charters commended Charters commended staff of PRD and FD for a great partnership.

Revision of Endangered and Threatened Species List

Todd Hogrefe, Wildlife Division, said Act 451, Part 365, Endangered Species Protection, requires a list of threatened and endangered species and legally protects those listed species. Periodically, the list is revised. Seven technical advisory committees were established to review the current lists with representatives from universities, the Michigan Natural Features Inventory biologists, agency biologists and other species experts. Information was gathered from several sources and changes were recommended including: name changes for 24 species, species status changes for 119; species listings for 61, and delistings for seven. The proposed changes on the DNR website at: www.michigan.gov/dnr. Specifically, it is recommended that wolves and eagles be delisted due to their increasing populations. Hearings will be held on these proposed delistings in Grayling, Lansing, Newberry and Houghton.

Budget Update

Sharon Schafer, Chief, Office of Budget and Support Services, reviewed the monthly budget update. This can be located at: www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,1607,7-153-39002_11862_49123---,00.html.

She noted that 18 new employees are attending the DNR’s New Employee Orientation. She also noted that all state forest campgrounds are now open. It is expected that the DNR legislative budget will be completed by the end of June.

Legislative Report

Dan Eichinger, Acting Legislative Liaison, presented a Legislative Update:

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund: In May, Mr. Eichinger offered comment on the package of bills proposing dramatic changes to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. Since that time the DNR has received indications that the proposal will not move forward this year. In the original proposal, Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) had offered an amendment that called for a comprehensive planning process to be undertaken in conjunction with the implementation of the other components. He believes that the concept of that planning process has been preserved and additional legislation that provides for that planning process may be offered.

Pigeon River: The House Tourism, Outdoor Recreation, and Natural Resources Committee took up the issue of the recreational uses in the Pigeon River Country. The DNR offered testimony in alignment with previous statements made by the Director and NRC that supports restoring the balance of recreational use in the Pigeon River Country. There were members of the horseback riding community on hand to offer alternative

opinions on the matter. The committee has not indicated an interest in pursuing the matter further.

House of Representatives Activity

HB 5957 (LeBlanc) exempts individuals from participating in hunter's safety training if that individual possesses a concealed pistol license. The DNR offered testimony in opposition to this bill, describing the significant differences between the training for CPL and hunter's safety. The committee did not vote on the bill and no vote has been scheduled. Further action on the bill is not anticipated at this time.

HB 6014 (Hammon) revises the legal hours of operation of a personal watercraft (PWC) and changes the age for legal operation of a personal watercraft. In its original form, HB 6014 restricted the use of a PWC to any individual over the age of 16 who has completed a boater's safety course. Currently, individuals under the age of 16 can legally operate a PWC under certain circumstances. The bill has been amended to allow certain individuals under the age of 16 to operate a PWC provided they are within 100 feet of a parent or guardian.

HB 6133 (Lahti), a bill to make changes to the Commercial Forestry Act withdrawal penalty, was heard for the first time this week. Essentially a tax issue, the bill has been assigned to the Department of Treasury as the lead agency. An attempt to revise the penalties in 2006 resulted in inconsistent and dramatically higher withdrawal penalties, in many cases far surpassing the intention of doubling what had been the current penalty. HB 6133 derives a formula that offers a penalty that will calculate to roughly double what the previous penalty had been, satisfying the original intent of the revision.

Senate Activity:

As of this writing, the Senate Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee is scheduled to begin work on several bills that I've briefed the NRC on before: **SB 1077**, **HB 4981**, and **HB 6014**.

Additional bill activity for the Senate:

SB 1327 (Richardville) specifies in statute what eligible expenses are for the Michigan State Waterways Fund. No hearing has been scheduled for this bill. This bill was introduced and developed in part by the Michigan Boating Industries Association.

SB 1331 (Prusi) would make changes to the spearing season, and lengthen the season to coincide with several new species regulations. Spearing regulations are set in statute, and you will recall that this issue was brought to the NRC by several constituents at which time they were informed that any changes to the spearing season require the action of the Legislature.

Water Withdrawal Legislation

Paul Seelbach, Fisheries Division, reported as a constructive alternative to the familiar polarized, adversarial approach to natural resource policy, the Michigan legislative leadership and their appointed Groundwater Conservation Advisory Council have invested great time and energies over the past six years in bringing together the many different societal perspectives on water conservation management, to collaboratively

and earnestly develop a science and social values-based water conservation policy framework that is represented in the Council's 2007 recommendations and that has helped shape the Senate and House bills now being debated.

The collaborative approach is the hallmark of modern ecosystem management approaches and is clearly the future mode of natural resources policy and management work in a collaborative setting. A diverse array of societal interests comes to recognize a common destiny and a shared responsibility for that destiny. Nontraditional structure embraces tentative, innovative, and adaptive solutions.

Using this collaborative approach, Michigan's water policy community has made important progress. All water user interests are now knowledgeable about, and sensitive to, aquatic ecosystem functions and needs. The key connection between groundwater and surface water ecosystems is widely acknowledged. Aquatic ecosystems are now an accepted and influential voice at the water users' policy table. All agree that "Adverse Resource Impacts" should not be allowed to occur. Aspects of river hydrology and ecology are regularly discussed within the Legislature.

A bipartisan agreement is close to being reached on new state water conservation policy. Both groups agree on the fundamental science and policy framework laid out by the Council. There are only a few remaining points of disagreement between Senate and House leaders. The remaining points of disagreement are:

1. Effective start date. House says immediately to avoid gold rush. Senate says one year to allow technical completion, implementation, and public vetting of the internet tool.
2. More explicit public trust language for groundwater. All language is already in the law. House wants more explicit linkages of the all language pieces, to enhance legal clout.
3. Whether permitting should be required at 1 million gallons per day instead of 2 million.
4. One element in the fish and flow thresholds that define the four policy zones.
First a little background:
 - a. Re-emphasize the Council framework contains two important thresholds: a signal FLAG and an ultimate NO line (ARI). Remember it is important what actions happen between these lines; not just where the lines are drawn. In Zone C several important actions happen; ideally actions here will prevent pushing the system to the NO line.
 - b. The two bills agree on both NO and FLAG lines for 10 of 11 river types.
History:
 - i. The council made recommendations based on: A) biodiversity conservation goals; and B) the average fish community responses; a policy balance between user and protector interests.
 - ii. Post-council discussions agreed to be more protective due to A) model uncertainties and B) valuable trout fisheries.
 1. Reduced NO lines by ~50%.
 2. Further reduced cold NO lines (10-5-3 story).
 3. Set cold trans NO lines at very protective level (2-4% flow).

4. Set FLAG lines at protective levels. Cold = ½ NO; and Zone B is eliminated. Cold trans = any withdrawal and Zone B is eliminated.

The only point of disagreement is for the cold streams NO lines. The House wants 1% fish (14% flow) compared to 3% fish (21% flow) for the Senate. Both alternatives are well below what the council recommended, are protective of the fish community structure and the fisheries, and have protective FLAG lines (7% vs 14%) with Zone B eliminated; the difference in fish impacts (1% vs 3%) cannot be measured.

Michigan is standing before the threshold of historic, environmentally-based, durable, collaborative state water management policy; neighboring states are watching; and the national science community is watching. The remaining differences among bills can certainly be resolved.

Mr. Seelbach urged the NRC to support this Legislation. He said that the Legislation is a good balance point and has continual updates of the models on a regular basis built into it. Discussion are being held on all water usages with fish populations as a priority because it is illegal to cause degradation to the waters that would ultimately be detrimental to the fish populations.

Great Lakes Strategy

Director Humphries reported that Lieutenant Governor John Cherry, the MUCC and the Office of the Great Lakes announced, at a Press Conference earlier in the day, a strategy to restore and protect the Great Lakes, “The Michigan Great Lakes Strategy Initiative.” The Michigan Strategy will serve as a framework to ensure Michigan carries its water when it comes to restoring and protecting the Great Lakes, and is designed to strengthen Michigan’s case for governmental policy and funding support.

Director Humphries stated that, at the same press conference, Dr. Charles Nelson received first Michigan Keeper of the Great Lakes Award which recognizes Michigan’s Great Lakes restoration heroes annually. She congratulated him on this award.

Universal Access Day Update

Director Humphries announced that the DNR Accessibility Advisory Council and the DNR Accessibility Team held an Accessibility Hands on Day on Wednesday, June 4 at the Island Lake Shooting Range. This was an opportunity for members of the DNR team to experience the latest advancements in adaptive equipment and help the DNR move forward with creating greater opportunities for people who have a disability to get out and enjoy Michigan’s natural Resources and to make the outdoors available to all.

Director’s Action Items - Discussion

Land Use Order of the Director, Amendment No. 9, Order to Regulate the Use of Lands in the Atlanta Management Unit, Alpena and Presque Isle County: Technical changes only to change “Gaylord to Cheboygan Trail” to “North Central Trail” per the name change at the May NRC meeting.

Special Presentation to Dr. William Taylor

Director Humphries recognized Dr. William Taylor as follows:

“Bill is one of those individuals who is an honor to know and an even greater privilege to work with. Until very recently, Bill was chair of the Fisheries and Wildlife Department at Michigan State University, and last year was awarded one of the university’s highest honors—that of University Distinguished Professor.

To attempt to cover Bill’s accomplishments would be an undertaking of gigantic proportion. Rather, I would like to use some descriptors that embody Bill Taylor: vision, leadership, globalization, sustainability of natural resources, governance, multi-dimensional, dynamic, innovation, motivation, a consummate professional, educator, mentor and partner.”

“One major partnership I would like to highlight was the formation of PERM, which stands for Partnership for Ecosystem Research and Management. PERM was formalized on Earth Day 1993, and remains today as a cooperative agreement between Michigan State University, the University of Michigan, the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, U.S. Geological Survey and the DNR that brings together cutting-edge research and applies it to natural resource management. PERM is viewed nationally as a novel approach to apply the research talent at MSU towards finding solutions for natural resource management problems.”

“Some examples of PERM at work include: investigation of how bovine TB is transmitted among and between white-tailed deer and cattle; effects of low-level aquatic toxins on lake trout reproduction; and genetic tagging to estimate black bear numbers in Michigan’s northern Lower Peninsula.”

Director Humphries said Bill has traveled the world and walked many paths following his passion for our natural resources, and has had a tremendous influence on untold numbers of students and leaders of tomorrow. She presented him with a white pine plaque and thanked him for his tireless dedication and selfless contributions. His efforts have helped protect and sustain our natural heritage for generations to come.

Dr. Taylor was honored to receive this recognition and thanked the DNR for the partnership and for providing opportunities to natural resources students. Several students from the MSU scholars program were present and were introduced.

Gary Hagler Appointed Law Enforcement Division Chief

Director Humphries announced that **Gary Hagler** had been appointed to the position of Law Enforcement Division Chief. Gary most recently served as the chief of police of the Flint Police Department where he was a 22-year veteran of the force.

Gary Hagler received his oath of office, his eagles and his official badge.

Commissioner Earley said one of the most rewarding aspect of his day job are coming in contact with individuals, and as acting Mayor of Flint, worked with Chief Hagler who then was promoted to chief deputy. He has always been impressed with his abilities and is pleased he was chosen as chief law enforcement officer.

Commissioner Darnell Earley, Saginaw City Management appointed President of the International City/County Management Association

Chairman Charters congratulated **Darnell Earley** on his appointment as President of the International City/County Management Association for 2009-2010.

Commissioner Coleman added his congratulations to **Commissioner Earley** on his appointment and said it was well warranted.

Personnel

Director Humphries introduced **Bob Gwizdz** who will work for DNR's Office of Communications.

Director Humphries introduced **Leisl Clark** who was recently appointed policy advisor for Governor Granholm.

DNR Organizational Changes

Director Humphries reviewed the following DNR organizational changes:

- To address one of the agency's top priorities of recruitment and retention, the expansion of shooting sports recreation, and education and outreach, the Office of Communications a Recruitment and Retention Section was established, which will be headed by Dennis Fox. She thanked Dennis for his service and assistance as Chief of Staff.
- Shooting ranges, recreational safety education programs (hunter education, ORV, snowmobile and marine safety), and the Archery in the Schools program will be transferred from Law Enforcement Division to the new Recruitment and Retention Section in the Office of Communications. Becoming an Outdoors Woman (BOW), already in the Office of Communications, will move to the Recruitment and Retention Section.
- Rodney Stokes will become Chief of Staff. The State of Michigan has consolidated human resources, financial services, and internal audit. The Chief of Staff will oversee management of the legislative liaison and services of internal audit, financial services, administrative operations, and the Grants Management Section. The Chief of Staff will also serve as the coordinator for the Natural Resources Trust Fund Board. Stokes was most recently acting chief of Law Enforcement Division.
- With the statewide consolidation of some of the service operations, Director Humphries is eliminating the chief deputy position. A new position has been created as the Administrative Operations Chief, which will assist in the consolidation plan for the Department. Director Humphries thanked Dennis Fedewa for his service as he moves into this new position.
- The Office of Budget and Support Services will report directly to Director Humphries.

- Emergency management will move from Law Enforcement Division to Human Resources in the Executive Division.
- Dan Eichinger will take over as Legislative Liaison from his acting status.

These changes will be effective on June 16, 2008.

Washington, DC Report to the Commission

Director Humphries highlighted efforts the Association of Fish and wildlife Agencies and the mid-western state fish and wildlife agencies are pursuing to understand issues of lead contamination recently found in ground venison donated to food shelves. **Dr. Steve Schmitt, DNR's Veterinarian**, is attending the conference and will report back at a future NRC meeting.

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The Committee of the Whole meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m. and the Public Appearances portion of the meeting convened at 4:45 p.m.

PUBLIC APPEARANCES

Leon Hank, QDMA, thanked the NRC for allowing Kip Adams the opportunity to make the deer management presentation during the NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries earlier in the day. **Mr. Hanks** supports the proposed Wildlife Conservation Order, Amendment No. 10 of 2008, Buck Hunting Regulations for the Upper Peninsula.

Al Trainer, Michigan Bow Hunter's Association, supports the current combination deer licenses and opposes proposed Wildlife Conservation Order, Amendment No. 10 of 2008, Buck Hunting Regulations for the Upper Peninsula. He said that the Michigan Bow Hunters, District 11 do not support any changes to the current combination deer regulations for the UP.

Chairman Charters entered a letter from **John Hongisto** relative to the proposed Wolf Management Plan. In his letter, **Mr. Hongisto** took issue where the DNR claims that it didn't bring wolves to the UP and requested those sentences be deleted. Also, he objects to specific language relative to cultural significance of wolves to Native Americans.

Ed Spinazzola, QDMA, supports proposed Wildlife Conservation Order, Amendment No. 10 of 2008, Buck Hunting Regulations for the Upper Peninsula.

Donna Stine, MUCC, recommended the NRC urge the Legislature and Governor Granholm to support the Great Lakes Compact relative to groundwater withdrawal. She does not believe the current laws adequately protect the water resources of the State.

Randy Severance expressed concern that if antler restriction requirements are ignored in the UP, other parts of the State may also be impacted.

SAFARI CLUB INTERNATIONAL AWARD PRESENTATIONS

The Michigan Involvement Committee of Safari Club International presented awards to the Wildlife Biologist and Conservation Officer of the Year.

Chairman Charters said that Safari Club International has provided supplemental funding and support to many Wildlife Division programs. Its support of research on moose, bear, bobcat, wolves, and deer has been instrumental in advancing our understanding of wildlife so that wildlife management is firmly grounded in scientific information.

He personally thanked the Michigan Chapters of Safari Club International for its support of the Wildlife Division and our law enforcement programs.

He Introduced Bob Taylor, chairman of the Michigan Involvement Committee, to make presentations.

Receiving the Wildlife Biologist of the Year Award was Brian Roell.

Receiving the Conservation Officer of the Year Award was Jane Gordon.

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PUBLIC APPEARANCES (continued)

Bob McReavy read a letter from the Roscommon County Board of Commissioners to Director Humphries and Chairman Keith Charters requesting no permits be issued for doe hunting on state or private lands in Roscommon County for the upcoming hunting season. He believes it is too soon to increase the antlerless harvest in Roscommon and Crawford counties.

Gaila Gilliland, Economic Development Director, Crawford County Economic Development Partnership, commented on the Main Street American theme parks project proposed for the site at I-75 and 4-Mile Road in Crawford County. She asked the NRC to direct Director Humphries support this project.

Director Humphries said this issue would be on the July 2008 NRC Agenda for public comment purposes. **Commissioner Coleman** said it is important to consider the significance of the Axiom Project but acknowledged that certain steps need to be taken before the DNR will be able to release the property to the developer, Mr. Crawson.

Fred Hawley believes that proposed Wildlife Conservation Order, Amendment No. 10 of 2008, Buck Hunting Regulations for the Upper Peninsula will lead to enforcement challenges and that license revenue would decrease as a result. **Commissioner Madigan** noted that a survey was sent out in the UP that reflected a 72 percent dissatisfaction with mature bucks.

Brian Burroughs, Michigan Coalition of Trout Unlimited, said he has been involved with the water withdrawal legislation for the past year and commended **Paul Seelbach** for his contributions in the process. He commented on difference between the House

and the Senate on the acceptable level of impact to coldwater fisheries and cold streams. Currently, negotiations are going on between a 14 percent (which equates to a 1 percent impact to the fish community) and a 21 percent (which equates to a 3 percent impact to the fish community) reduction in flow which are more protective than flow reductions being suggested a year ago. Currently, Michigan Coalition for Trout Unlimited supports the 14 percent option.

Julie Stoneman, Executive Director, Land Conservancy of Western Michigan, commented on Parks and Recreation Land Acquisition and Gift of Land, Muskegon State Park, Land Transaction Case #20030011. She said they are pleased to be a partner and facilitator in this transaction in support of outdoor activities.

Daryl Wiesel, Drummond Island, supports the proposed Wildlife Conservation Order, Amendment No. 10 of 2008, Buck Hunting Regulations for the Upper Peninsula. He also believes there should be more habitat management in the UP.

Will Vander Ende, Lowell, does not support the proposed Wildlife Conservation Order, Amendment No. 10 of 2008, Buck Hunting Regulations for the Upper Peninsula. He believes the majority of those in the UP like the current combination license.

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The Public Appearances portion of the meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m. and the Regular Meeting of the NRC convened at 5:53 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MAY 8, 2008 NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING

Commissioner Richardson made a motion, supported by Commissioner Madigan, for approval. Motion unanimously carried.

DEER MANAGEMENT UNITS (DMUs) OPEN OR CLOSED TO ANTLERLESS DEER LICENSES, WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ORDER, AMENDMENT NO. 8 OF 2008

Commissioner Madigan made a motion, supported by Commissioner Earley, for approval. Motion unanimously carried.

FURBEARER REGULATIONS, WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ORDER, AMENDMENT NO. 9 OF 2008

Commissioner Madigan made a motion, supported by Commissioner Earley, for approval. Motion unanimously carried.

BUCK HUNTING REGULATIONS FOR THE UPPER PENINSULA, WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ORDER, AMENDMENT NO. 10 OF 2008

Commissioner Madigan made a motion, supported by Commissioner Earley, for approval. Motion unanimously carried.

Doug Reeves, Chief, Wildlife Division, said that biological information from the deer check stations will be closely monitored. He does not believe that the resource will be in jeopardy with this proposal. Discussions will be held regarding how to address licenses sold prior to this decision. He believes that a determination of the impact of change will be recognized after three years.

Commissioner Coleman believes it is important to determine the science on both sides of the issue.

Commissioner Richardson believes this proposal offers no biological downside and said there could be an up-side to the proposal.

GREAT LAKES REGIONAL COMPACT

Commissioner Wheatlake made a motion, supported by **Commissioner Madigan**, to request that a resolution be sent to **Governor Granholm** and the **Michigan legislature**, in support of enacting the **Great Lakes Regional Compact and protection for Michigan's groundwater and the natural resources dependent upon our groundwater supplies. Motion unanimously carried.**

DIRECTOR'S ACTION ITEMS

Director Humphries intends to sign all of the Director's Action Items on the agenda with one technical change to Land Use Order of the Director, Amendment No. 9 of 2008 changing the name of the trailway system of the northern Lower Peninsula as a result of the Director's decision in May renaming the Gaylord to Cheboygan Trail to the North Central State Trail.

Director Humphries, in response to questions from Commissioner Coleman on the Carney Fen Natural Area Dedication, said there was at least on letter of opposition to this dedication. However, the Fen was reduced in size and many of the issues brought up were addressed. In answer to the question of whether there is potential physical infringement from logging or ATV use, she responded it would prohibit both motorized use and logging within the Fen. This is largely a preservation measure to create natural areas to have designated habitat available for both study and education purposes now and in the future. **Commissioner Coleman** said it was important to note that it would be a problem if there was a designated area but it wasn't available to the public to view. **Director Humphries** said the dedication does not preclude access.

NRC POLICY COMMITTEE REPORTS

Crossbow Disability Work Group

Commissioner Madigan said that the Work Group had developed a revised draft crossbow application and permit and would be bringing a Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment to the July NRC meeting agenda "For Information Only" and possible action in August.

NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries

Minutes are attached.

COMMISSONER REPORTS

Commissioner Richardson said that he and DNR staff met with the staff of the Ottawa National Forest and will be meeting in the future to discuss issues of mutual interest.

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

CROSSBOW DISABILITY WORK GROUP

PRESENT FOR THE WORK GROUP

Bruce Levey
Jerry Keck
Mark Velthouse
Christine Clements
Chuck Jordan
Tim Minge
Jeff Johnstone
Jeff DeRegnaucourt
Jim Larson
Merle Shepard
Amy Spray
Commissioner John Madigan
Commissioner J. R. Richardson

PRESENT FOR STAFF

Jane Gordon, MDNR
Mike Bailey, MDNR
Dennis Knapp, MDNR
Cecelia Gilson, MDNR
Patricia Spitzley, MDNR
Teresa Gloden, MDNR

The meeting convened at 9:30 a.m.

A draft permit application was presented and discussed.

Following discussion, Bruce Levey made a motion, supported by Jerry Keck, to change the draft permit testing criteria to 30 pounds of resistance and to eliminate the four second hold requirement. Motion failed with 6 voting yes and 7 voting no.

Merle Shepard believes an applicant should be tested for the ability or inability to pull a bow several times.

Discussion ensued relative to possibly adding language to the permit authorization that anyone who fraudulently authorizes a permit would be prosecuted. It was agreed that appropriate language would be added in accordance with law. Pat Spitzley will research this issue and address it accordingly.

Bruce Levey made a motion, supported by Jerry Keck, to remove the language to require the permit applicant to attach medical records to the permit. Motion unanimously carried.

Next Steps:

At the next regular meeting of the Natural Resources Commission, Commissioner Madigan will request that staff draft a Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment to address the changes made to the crossbow permit application form as was discussed and recommended by the Crossbow Disability Work Group. This Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment will be put on the July 10, 2008 NRC Agenda “For Information Only” and action at the August 14, 2008 NRC Meeting.

With concurrence from the Work Group, the NRC will adopt a resolution at the August 14, 2008 NRC meeting urging the Legislature to develop legislation relative to the “temporary” crossbow permits.

Commissioner Madigan thanked the Work Group and staff for their time and efforts in developing this draft permit.

Amy Spray, MUCC, will share this information with MUCC at their annual convention in June.

The meeting convened at 11:05 a.m.

NRC POLICY COMMITTEE ON WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES

The meeting convened at 1:00 p.m.

Kelly Smith, Chief of Fisheries Division, presented an update on a petition to the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to list coaster trout as threatened or endangered. Some implications that would be a result of this petition passing would involve fisheries and forest/wildlife management including timber management and leases for oil, gas and minerals. The presentation walked through the process of listing under the Endangered Species Act and the Fisheries' role. USFWS conducted the review and found only a few issues that could be warranted, but DNR research found no biological reason to believe the fish should be listed. The final step is for USFWS to review all information and develop a proposed rule by December 15, 2008.

Joe Robinson, Acting Waterfowl Specialist, Wildlife Division, discussed the migratory bird hunting regulations schedule and bag limits. The DNR proposed that the daily limit increase from 3 geese, to 5 geese per day. There has been a rise in goose populations and the upper limit goals has now been reached. The proposed opening date for the UP regular goose season is September 22, the day after youth water fowl season ends (September 20 and 21).

Rodney Clute, Big Game Specialist, Wildlife Division, reviewed the recommended antlerless deer license quotas. The deer population in the UP is decreasing while in the northern Lower Peninsula and southern Lower Peninsula deer populations continue to increase. Hunters are hunting for fewer days, and harvesting more deer. DNR proposed that license quotas in the UP decrease to 8,000 public and 31,000 private; NLP increase to 23,000 public and 136,400 private; SLP increase to 60,875 public and 574,200 private.

Kip Adams, Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA), discussed about QDMA and how it works with state agencies to present information to the public. The QDMA is growing rapidly in membership and research. They categorized deer management strategies into three ideas; traditional management used to restock populations by primarily hunting bucks; trophy management harvests does aggressively and saves bucks until they are five years of age; quality management protects young bucks and balances the numbers of does hunted. The QDMA supports quality management because it allows for a wide range of ages in herds and balances the population with what the habitat can support.

The building blocks to a successful management plan are: herd, habitat and hunter management and herd monitoring. Herd management can be organized by creating buck regulations defined by the following categories: antler point, antler spread, age (body characteristics), gross Boone and Crocket score, buck quotas or limits, and combination approaches. Antlerless regulations help control population growth. **Mr. Kipp** said the best habitat has a balanced sex ratio. An early antlerless season increases the birth rate because it allows for better nutrition during the winter months, it makes fawns easier to distinguish and helps avoid hunting button bucks allowing them to become a year older.

Brian Frawley, Research Biologist, Wildlife Division, presented estimates for the 2007 deer hunting seasons. In 2007, deer hunting license sales and the number of harvest tags declined about 1 percent. Most hunters purchased harvest tags associated with the combination license. Firearm season participants declined 7 percent and archery declined 3 percent. Combining all season, deer harvest increase about 6 percent from last year. Hunting success increased 2 percent.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.



Approved: _____

Keith J. Charters, Chair

Rebecca A. Humphries, Director