

## MINUTES

### NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

July 14, 2016  
MSU Diagnostic Center  
4125 Beaumont Road, Lansing, MI 48910

#### Present for the Natural Resources Commission

John Matonich, chair  
J.R. Richardson, vice-chair  
Vicki Pontz  
Rex Schlaybaugh  
Christine Crumbaugh  
Louise Klarr  
Tim Nichols

#### Present for DNR staff

Bill Moritz, DNR director  
Bill O'Neill, DNR deputy director  
Peter Manning, legal counsel, Office of the Attorney General  
Dennis Knapp, DNR chief of staff  
Cheryl Nelson, executive assistant to the NRC

#### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**Chairman John Matonich** called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

**Parks and Trails Update** Parks and Recreation division chief **Ron Olson** shared that lodging is up 10.3 % and harbor nights are up almost 20%. On July 13, there were 20,000 kids and volunteers for Metro Youth Sports Day at Belle Isle. This is a great annual event that went smoothly. Great Lakes Beach Partners flagging system has been changed so people can see the color of the flags in letters. On July 11, there was a two-day first annual WJR with **Paul W. Smith** harbor tour. **Olson** participated and was interviewed by **Paul W. Smith** at the Algonac Harbor Club. There were two days of programs which featured boating statewide. **Olson** also shared that at Fayette State Park progress is being made on Snail Harbor with floating piers. On Monday, July 18, he will be heading to ribbon cutting of the William Field Hart-Montague Trail. He also shared that the Porkies boating access site was recently renovated with a deeper access, a mini-harbor feature. **Olson** talked about large amounts of rain recently in the Upper Peninsula that resulted in the temporary closing of ten campsites and cabins, washed out bridges and a flooded boardwalk on the Lake Superior Trail.

**Scorecard Update** **John Cherry** from the Executive division gave the commission an update on the department's performance scorecard. These performance measures are shared with the Governor's office on a quarterly basis.

**Water Strategy** **Dr. Tammy Newcomb**, senior water policy advisor, provided an update on the water strategy and its implementation moving forward. She shared the vision for the 30-year plan, which has a 5-year implementation plan. It is a roadmap for future water use, enjoyment and conservation of water resources. **Newcomb** added that there has been much opportunity for public involvement. **Governor Snyder** has also defined five priorities for his administration including ensuring safe drinking water for all Michiganders and developing and implementing Michigan's water trails system. Lastly, **Newcomb** talked about the invasive carp \$1million challenge; there will be global reach, partnering with MEDC, ACOE, USFWS and others, and that there will be a call for proposals in fall 2016, with an award in 2017.

**Invasive Carp Stakeholder Project** **Dr. Newcomb** and **Dr. Meredith Gore** from MSU gave a retrospective of what has happened to date and what will be done in the future regarding aquatic invasive species management. **Gore** indicated that the federal government will be spending \$57.3 million in 2016 to stop the threat of aquatic invasive species. She talked about the risks if Asian carp are discovered in the state, including that they will threaten native mussels, Lake trout and other invertebrates. Other impacts include degraded waterfowl habitat and human injury. Risk assessments are ongoing. Preventing introduction is considered to be more successful, sustainable and cost effective. Public opinion is being studied as public support is necessary. **Gore** discussed the studies done in 2014 and 2016 which where to inform the public of policy decisions. Key expected outcomes include preparedness for engaging public with information and decision-making steps, issue awareness by stakeholders and risk communication worksheets for engaging the public.

**Montgomery Drain Project – Ingham County** Ingham county drain commissioner **Patrick Lindeman** shared information on the Montgomery Drain Project which is located in the east side of Lansing. The goal of the project is to manage storm water by capturing, treating, cleaning, polishing and discharging it into the Red Cedar River. When completed, the project will eliminate 94 – 97 percent of pollutants that go into the river through the Frandor watershed and will reduce flooding in the area. Grants for this project currently total \$3,118,417, and they have applied for additional grant monies through the department and the fisheries division. **Lindeman** added that the county is looking for partnerships with the commission and department with projects that would help build habitat. He also shared information about Art in the Wild that will enhance environmental restoration through art and human imagination. This project is slated to begin later this year.

**Legislative Report** **Trevor VanDyke**, Legislative and Legal Affairs Office director provided a written report of legislation related to the department.

#### **Committee Reports:**

1. **NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries** Commissioner **Rex Schlaybaugh** stated that the committee received updates from Wildlife and Fisheries divisions. Chief **Dexter** talked about the five options for Fisheries Order 200.16A concerning chumming. He also brought the committee up to date on the New Zealand Mud Snail. Chief **Mason** also covered topics including EHD, West Nile virus, Type C botulism and indicated that oral comments will occur in October on wolf litigation. He brought the committee up to date on land use orders on state game and wildlife areas as well as target shooting.

### PUBLIC APPEARANCES BEFORE THE NRC

(**Dennis Knapp** read the official timekeeping procedures and guidelines for the meeting's public appearances which began at 3:56 p.m.)

**Kevin Feenstra** owner of Feenstra Guide Service came before the commission to share his views on chumming. He stated that fish move to an unnatural part of the run with chum and that recreational boaters are also hurt with the use of chum. **Feenstra** is against the use of chum.

**Matt Zudweg** also from Feenstra Guide Service came before the commission to speak about chumming. **Zudweg** has been a guide since 2003 and fishing since he was a child. He was taught fair chase in fishing, to leave things better than you found them. He believes that chumming goes against fair chase, is an abusive practice and would like to see it banned.

**John Hunter** has been a professional guide for 40 years. He believes the issue of chumming is a social issue. He believes those against chum are the minority. He would like to see status quo.

**Merle Jones** from Michigan Predator Hunters for Centerfire at Night. **Matonich** noted that information **Jones** provided was extremely informative.

**Chuck Hawkins** representing Hawkins Fly Fishing shared his views on chumming. He stated that the fishery is in great disease risk from the importation of eggs for chumming and that there is no need to chum to catch fish. There should be no economic loss. A large part of the steelhead business comes from out of state clientele. **Hawkins** thinks chumming is too risky to continue.

**Dr. Bryan Burroughs** executive director and **John Walters**, president, from Michigan Trout Unlimited shared the views of their organization regarding chumming. **Walters** does not view chum as bait in its raw form. Chumming is putting foreign matter into Michigan waters. The organization supports the total ban of chum in Michigan. He went on to list the reasons for this decision, including that there are no regulations on where the eggs come from. **Burroughs** shared how the group came to their conclusion; chum is a disease vector. They want the commission to take a precautionary approach and prohibit chumming.

**Gary Gritter** also shared his views on the practice of chumming. He is opposed to chumming and considers it unsporting, and that it is unfair and discriminates against anglers who cannot afford chum or a guide who chums. Banning would give all a level playing field.

**Dave Peterson** representing Great Lakes Council of the International Federation of Fly Fishers came before the commission to share the group's thoughts on chumming. Their board of directors has taken the position that they are against the practice of chumming.

**Steve Kuieck** from RiverQuest Charters asked that the commission take the position to ban chumming. Chumming on the Muskegon River affects everyone's ability to enjoy the resource. He talked about option 5, needing to have COs determine the amount of chum used is not a good use of their time. He would like chumming banned on all trout streams in Michigan.

**Zach McCann** came before the commission to talk about hunting with disabilities. He loves to hunt. Physical limitations do not limit the passions or desires of persons with disabilities to participate in the activities that they enjoy and make them happy. **Sharon St. Croix**, his caregiver, shared his thoughts. She shared the difficulties that **Zach** has had trying to take the hunter safety course. The way the course is as it stands now prevents **Zach** and others with disabilities from taking the course in order to obtain their own license.

**Matonich** asked that chiefs **Mason** and **Hagler** report back to the commission on a way to make the changes necessary for individuals with disabilities be able to hunt.

**Mark Guzniczak** spoke on chumming, specifically in the Muskegon River. He would like to see chumming banned in Michigan. **Guzniczak** stated that it would make the Muskegon River a better fishery.

**Brian Pitser** provided the commission with a packet regarding the illegal take of salmon for eggs. He has been a guide on the Manistee River since 1997 and is a fly fishing guide. He believes that chumming is an issue about protecting our fisheries. **Pitser** would like to see chumming banned.

**Mark Earle**, Michigan Trapper and Predator Callers Association, spoke about centerfire at night. His group supports the use of centerfire at night. They are in favor of unrestricted caliber use.

**Jeff Watrous** shared his views on chumming, noting that he does not want to see chumming banned.

**Adam Trenz** also shared his views on the options and would like to see option 5, restrictions on the amount of chum used. He talked about how many regulations are in the fishing digest. **Trenz** stated that if the Law Enforcement division can't get behind option 5, he would like to see status quo.

**Pete Miller** spoke on the subject of chumming. He believes that it's a special interest group who wants to see the use of chum banned. **Miller** said that chumming is not bad for the fish.

**Kevin Cawley** discussed the upcoming closure of the South Grand Haven pier. He would like to see a temporary fisheries order implemented restricting the number of lines per angler to not more than two on the North Grand Haven pier during the closure period. He stated that this would lead to a better angling experience for many fishermen.

**Jane Waldron** provided her comments on chumming. She uses small amounts of chum responsibly, and believes that it is a good tool in the fishing toolbox. She supports a limit on chum, but wants to be able to continue to use chum.

**Chad Betts**, a professional fishing guide since 1996, said that more regulations makes fishing hard to understand. He said that people book guides because they want to catch fish. Chumming is a tool to get people to fish. He thinks that anglers should be allowed to continue to chum.

**Drew Rosem** from Feenstra Guide Service spoke on the subject of chumming, saying that he is against the use of chum. He said that it will negatively affect the fisheries. It opens the window to fish disease and breeds unrealistic fishing expectations.

**Dr. Ken Merckel**, President, Michigan Steelhead and Salmon Fishing Association shared the views of his organization on chumming. He contacted biologists from the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission and Great Lakes Science Center and they indicated that there is no scientific impact to the fishery on the rivers. He was informed that it was a social issue. His organization supports chumming in the state. **Commissioner Pontz** indicated that the commission had received several scientific studies that show potential for impact.

**David Whitfield** considers the Muskegon river as his home river. He stated that we need to be stewards of the resource. He would like to see chumming banned.

**Tom Mundt** from Trout Unlimited came to say that he fishes the Muskegon river and believes that you don't have to chum to catch fish. The sport is called fishing, not catching. Banning chumming would level the playing field.

**Chairman Matonich adjourned the public appearances portion of the meeting at 5:06 p.m. and called to order the regular meeting of the NRC at 5:07 p.m. He 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

### NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION ACTION ITEMS

#### Approval of Minutes, June 9, 2016 Natural Resources Commission Meeting

**Commissioner Nichols** made a motion that the minutes of the June 9, 2016 NRC meeting be approved. **Commissioner Crumbaugh** supported the motion. **Matonich** called for discussion, there being none, a vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

#### Statewide Trout, Salmon, Whitefish, Lake Herring and Smelt Regulations

**Commissioner Schlaybaugh** moved that Fisheries Order 200.16A, Statewide Trout, Salmon, Whitefish, Lake Herring and Smelt Regulations be adopted implementing option 3; to prohibit chumming with organic material in types 1, 2 3, and 4 streams. **Commissioner Pontz** supported the motion. **Matonich** called for discussion, **Crumbaugh** stated that she will not be supporting option 3; adding that there are a lot of people who fish with chum, and comparing it to the bass regulations, which were tightened and this would be loosening a regulation, our biologists do not have scientific evidence to ban the practice. She would support option 5, limiting the amount of organic materials to be used. **Schlaybaugh** added that they have had much discussion on this topic and there are strong feelings both ways, he noted the earlier discussion regarding Alaska's decision to ban chumming which supported the conclusion that chumming causes adverse impacts. He stated that the most important thing is how the commission resolves risk for the resource. **Pontz** added that she appreciates middle ground and also appreciates simplifying regulations. However, she does not feel that option 5 addresses the potential risks to the resource related to the source of the chum or the method of curing the chum. **Klarr** also said that she sees red flags with option 5, therefore will be voting

for option 3. The motion carried to adopt option 3. A vote was taken with five votes to carry the motion, **Crumbaugh** voted against it.

### FOR INFORMATION ONLY – DIRECTOR

**Chairman Matonich** listed the “for information only” items on the agenda.

### DIRECTOR’S ACTION ITEMS

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

### COMMISSIONER REPORTS

**Commissioner Pontz** attended the MUCC annual meeting, which she really enjoyed. She enjoyed the Coffee with the Commissioners this morning.

**Commissioners Crumbaugh** chairs Michigan Farm Bureau’s Feed Grains, Wheat and Oilseed committee, and continues to have dialog regarding agriculture and natural resources working together.

**Commissioner Richardson** he referred to **Zach McCann’s** speech, who wants the ability to be able to hunt, **Richardson** said that it reminds him why they are here.

**Commissioner Klarr** spoke to a group of mid-career conservationists about grassland management at the University of Western Washington. She successfully went bear hunting on Vancouver Island.

**Commissioner Nichols** spoke at the Youth Conservation Council’s meeting at the Kettunen Center about keeping their engagement, input and vision in the future. He also told them how valuable it would be for them to come to the commission meetings to update the commissioners and constituents on activities they are working on. He thanked the constituents who have come to share their comments on how the commission should manage the state’s natural resources.

**Director Moritz** shared that he was proud that **Governor Snyder** went to Holland State Park to sign Michigan’s budget bill. He noted that the department is coming out well on the next year’s budget thanks to the support of conservation organizations.

**Chairman Matonich** attended a meeting of the Gogebic County Conservation District who had **Kevin Swanson**, the department’s wolf and bear specialist, give a wolf presentation, who did a phenomenal job. He also attended a meeting in Bergland with MSU’s Qualitative Fish Center, where an analysis of data that was done at Lake Gogebic over a number of years.

### Next Meeting

**Chairman Matonich** announced that the next meeting of the NRC is scheduled for Thursday, August 11, 2016 at the MSU Diagnostic Center, 4125 Beaumont Road in Lansing. Committees

**Next Meeting**

**Chairman Matonich** announced that the next meeting of the NRC is scheduled for Thursday, August 11, 2016 at the MSU Diagnostic Center, 4125 Beaumont Road in Lansing. Committees meeting in August will be the NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries and Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee.

**Adjournment**

**Commissioner Nichols** made a motion to adjourn. **Commissioner Pontz** seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 6:00 pm.

APPROVED: Date: 8/11/16

  
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John Matonich, NRC Chairman

  
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William E. Moritz, Ph.D., DNR Director  
for   
Director