

CARSON CITY ADVISORY BOARD TO MANAGE WILDLIFE

Minutes of the July 23, 2001 Meeting

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A regular meeting of the Carson City Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife was scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on Monday, July 23, 2001 in the City Hall Capitol Conference Room, 201 North Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada.

PRESENT: Chairperson Chris MacKenzie
Vice Chairperson Norman Pedersen
Greg Davis
Steve Walker

STAFF: Kathleen King, Recording Secretary
(ABMW 07/23/01)

NOTE: Unless indicated otherwise, each item was introduced by Chairperson MacKenzie. A tape recording of these proceedings is on file in the Clerk-Recorder's Office and is available for review and inspection during regular business hours.

1. **CALL TO ORDER, DETERMINATION OF QUORUM (1-0001)** - Chairperson MacKenzie called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. A quorum was present. Member Blank was absent.
2. **ACTION ON APPROVAL OF MINUTES - JUNE 11, 2001 (1-0007)** - Member Davis moved to accept the minutes as presented. Vice Chairperson Pedersen seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.
3. **MODIFICATIONS TO THE AGENDA (1-0016)** - None
4. **PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS (1-0019)** - Nevada Division of Wildlife ("NDOW") Biologist Walter Mandeville introduced Game Biologist Mike Dobel. Jack Robb, of Nevada Bighorns Unlimited, introduced himself and advised that he worked on the draft Bighorn Sheep Management Plan with Mr. Dobel.
5. **DISCLOSURES (1-0031)** - None.
6. **PRESENTATION BY NEVADA DIVISION OF WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST REGARDING SETTING SEASONS, BAG LIMITS, AND REGULATIONS FOR UPLAND GAME, MIGRATORY BIRDS, AND FUR BEARING SPECIES FOR THE 2001-2002 AND 2002-2003 HUNTING SEASONS (1-0036)** - Craig Mortimore, Supervising Biologist for the Western Region, provided an overview of the presentation. He referred to the Upland and Migratory Game Bird, Rabbit, and Furbearing Mammal Harvest Data, Population Status Reports, and Recommendations for Hunting Seasons, Bag Limits, and Special Regulations Book included in the Commission agenda materials and provided an overview of the same. He introduced Game Biologist Walter Mandeville and advised of the boundaries over which he has responsibility. He indicated he would review the material in the booklet species by species.

(1-0065) **Sage Grouse, pg. SS-1.** Mr. Mortimore reviewed harvest statistics, discussed changes to the season format over the last several decades, and the method by which populations are estimated. He advised that this year's unfavorable weather patterns will affect production. Mr. Mandeville advised that he had "outstanding results" in his population estimates in the Desert Creek, Sweetwater Meadows, and

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Sunrise Meadows areas, approximately three chicks per hen. He discussed diet requirements for newly hatched chicks, the status of vegetation on the south side of the Pine Nut Mountains, evidence of nesting and a good distribution of grouse on the north side of the Pine Nut Mountains, and populations in the area of Topaz Lake. He discussed individual area conservation plans to be developed in cooperation with California Fish and Game, the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Forest Service, NDOW, livestock owners, etc. Additional research is planned in the area of genetics and Mr. Mandeville plans to use radio collars. Mr. Mortimore discussed wing collection efforts and the subsequent classification of birds by gender and age. The composition data collected last year indicated an average of 1.51 young per hen. 1.6 chicks per hen is needed for a stable, viable population. The lower average was due to a decrease in chick production in a number of different areas in eastern Nevada. Mr. Mortimore advised that Mr. Dobel reported a record number of grouse in the leks on the Sheldon Range where grazing was discontinued a few years ago. In addition to discontinuing grazing, a number of other land management procedures were implemented to benefit wildlife. NDOW biologists will continue to gather data from the Sheldon Range in order to develop conclusions supporting the land management procedures. Mr. Mandeville advised that the Bureau of Land Management is currently rewriting the Pine Nut Mountains Management Plan. The draft revision will be submitted for public comment within the next few months. Mr. Mandeville encouraged the Board members and citizens present to provide comment on the revised plan.

Discussion took place regarding sage grouse populations on the Clan-Alpine Range, and Mr. Mortimore advised of the undocumented leks located by NDOW Biologist Chris Hampson on the Desatoya Range. In response to a question, he discussed the depredation study being conducted to measure the impacts of raven and coyote on sage grouse in the Grassy-Stephen's Camp area and in eastern Nevada where the sharp-tailed grouse is being released.

Mr. Mortimore referred to page R-1 and reviewed recommendations for sage grouse. He discussed concerns regarding impacts which sage grouse hunters and deer hunters are having upon each other on opening day in eastern Nevada. He further discussed criteria used to open a management unit and special hunt periods. He responded to questions regarding the concurrent sage grouse and duck hunting season opening dates on the first Saturday in October. Discussion took place regarding recent predation statistics on hen pintails and hen mallards.

(1-0521) **Forest Grouse/Blue Grouse, pgs. F-9 and F-10.** Mr. Mortimore explained the 10% questionnaire method for gathering data, and discussed blue grouse diet. He reviewed the recommendations for blue and ruffed grouse on page R-3.

(1-0643) **Snowcock.** Mr. Mortimore noted there was no statewide summary on snowcock. He reviewed the recommendation on page R-4.

(1-0635) **Chukar, pg. SS-4.** Mr. Mortimore reviewed harvest statistics and population status, and discussed the transects flown each year in a number of high-density areas across the State. The data gathered from the transects is compared to long and short term data to develop a prediction on the hunting season. The prediction was 70,000, and Mr. Mortimore advised that neither densities nor trend counts are declining significantly. Mr. Mortimore discussed the effect of climatic conditions, harvest trends, hunter numbers, and habitat effected by wildfires. He advised that chukar are poised to have exceptionally good production in the southern portion of the State. He reviewed the recommendations on page R-4.

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(1-0767) **Quail, pg. SS-6.** Mr. Mortimore reviewed harvest statistics for Gambels' and California Quail, and population statistics for all species. Mr. Mandeville advised that mountain quail are doing well in the Pine Nut Mountain Range and the Carson front. In response to a question regarding the two daily four in possession limit, Mr. Mortimore indicated that mountain quail is considered a sensitive species from the U.S. Forest Service's land management planning standpoint. Mr. Mandeville discussed elevational migration problems caused by power line corridors. Mr. Mortimore discussed mountain quail predators, and reviewed the recommendations for all quail species as outlined on page R-5.

(1-0898) **Pheasant.** Mr. Mortimore referred to the Pheasant Harvest History graph on page SS-8 and reviewed the same. He advised that the Department of Fish and Game, predecessors to the Nevada Division of Wildlife, stopped planting pheasants a number of years ago. Discussion took place regarding agricultural changes which have affected the pheasant population. Mr. Mortimore reviewed recommendations on page R-5. Discussion took place regarding the habitat in Mason Valley and hay cutting time tables.

(1-1011) **Turkey.** Mr. Mortimore advised there was no statewide report on turkeys as the staff biologist deferred to the regional reports. He referred to page F-29 and reviewed harvest statistics. He advised that first-time turkey hunters are given the opportunity to attend a turkey hunting seminar given by Steve Wilson. He reviewed hunter success rates and responded to questions regarding unlimited tags on private lands. He indicated that NDOW is attempting to keep government out of private lands as much as possible, and discussion took place with regard to the same. Mr. Mortimore reviewed the recommendations, pages R-6 through R-13. Discussion took place regarding population trends.

(1-1271) **Rabbit, pg. SS-9.** Mr. Mortimore reviewed harvest statistics and advised that NDOW is requesting hunters to be aware of pygmy rabbits. He provided information on pygmy rabbit habitat, their appearance and, in response to a question, discussed tularaemia in this area. He referred to Figure 6 on page SS-9 and reviewed decade averages from 1960 to 2000. He reviewed population status information and the recommendations on page R-14.

(1-1375) **Fur bearers, pg. F-43.** Mr. Mortimore reviewed bobcat harvest statistics, the value of fur, impacts on the bobcat harvest, and the importance of rabbits to the bobcat population status. He responded to questions regarding changes in the season length, fur prices, and the proposed 120-day season. Mr. Mandeville pointed out that seasons are set at a time of year valuable to the hunter and which will benefit the overall population. Mr. Mortimore acknowledged there are no set limits for bobcat harvest.

(1-1622) **Waterfowl.** Mr. Mortimore referred to an eight-page waterfowl report beginning on page SS-15 and reviewed the same. Discussion took place regarding the season opening date and the youth hunt opening date. Mr. Mortimore reviewed the recommendations for geese (pg. R-21) and swans (pg. R-23). Discussion took place regarding the increase in tag application fees and the limit on trumpeter swans.

(1-1856) **Falconry Season.** Mr. Mortimore reviewed the recommendations on pages R-26 and R-27. Previous concerns regarding non-resident falconers hunting sage grouse have generally diminished as there are so few sage grouse actually killed by falcons. He noted that pheasant season continues to remain closed to non-residents.

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(1-1888) **Common Crow.** Mr. Mortimore reviewed the season recommendations on page R-27. Discussion took place regarding hunting crows and the increase in the crow population over the last 5-6 years.

(1-1980) **Dove.** Mr. Mortimore reviewed harvest statistics on page SS-11, the dove call routes graph on page SS-13, and population trends. Member Davis commented on the large number of doves in the Lake Tahoe area. Mr. Mortimore reviewed the productivity potential on page SS-13.

Mr. Mortimore referred to pages R-29 through R-33 and reviewed the same. Chairperson MacKenzie thanked Mr. Mortimore for his presentation.

In response to a question, Mr. Mortimore advised that planting duck food sources at Washoe Lake at this time would be ill-advised as the lake is anticipated to be dry by next spring. He advised of participating in a nut grass planting project at Washoe Lake approximately 23 years ago.

7. DISCUSSION OF POINTS OF INTEREST FROM JUNE 15 AND 16, 2001 WILDLIFE COMMISSION MEETING (2-0170) - Reference was made to Member Blank's memo included in the agenda materials. Discussion took place regarding the master guide license revocation, the PIW hunt application revenues, the wildlife heritage tags, and the video.

8. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE AUGUST 3 AND 4, 2001 WILDLIFE COMMISSION MEETING: (2-0350) - Chairperson MacKenzie advised that the date of the Commission meeting was changed from July 27 and 28.

8A. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SETTING SEASONS, BAG LIMITS, AND REGULATIONS FOR UPLAND GAME, MIGRATORY BIRDS, AND FUR BEARING SPECIES FOR THE 2001-2002 AND 2002-2003 HUNTING SEASONS (2-0358) - Chairperson MacKenzie solicited input regarding specific concerns. Member Davis expressed disagreement with the two-bird limit for mountain quail, and discussion took place with regard to the same. Member Davis expressed support for the remaining recommendations. Vice Chairperson Pedersen commented that the recommendations were well-developed. Chairperson MacKenzie expressed a concern regarding the recommendation to open duck season a week later than chukar and deer season. He explained that the limited wetlands this year will provide the opportunity to hunt both chukar and duck and may create a "zoo atmosphere" for the opening of duck season. Member Walker expressed a preference for opening duck season later in October and extending it to the end of January, and discussion took place with regard to the same. **Vice Chairperson Pedersen moved to approve the recommendations as submitted. Members Davis and Walker seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0-1; Chairperson MacKenzie abstaining.**

8B. BIG GAME SPECIES MANAGEMENT PLANS (1-2150) - Mr. Robb referred to the draft Bighorn Sheep Management Plan included in the Commission agenda materials, and provided background information on its development and the individuals who participated. He advised that the development team was arranged into three subcommittees to address the following topics: habitat management, population management, and harvest management. Mr. Robb reviewed the subsections listed under each topic in the Table of Contents. Discussion took place regarding converting Animal Unit Months ("AUM") from domestic sheep to cattle, proper use of range lands, subspecies delineation, potential problems with

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mingling Rocky Mountain and California Sheep in neighboring states, disease problems, sheep which were introduced into the East Walker River area, the mandatory indoctrination course, mandatory check-in requirements, and the proposed ewe hunt management tool.

Mr. Dobel referred to the Law Enforcement, Economics, and Conservation Education sections. With regard to NDOW resources, Mr. Robb commented that "sheep are pretty much paying their way" for various projects. In response to a question, Mr. Mortimore discussed sheep acquisition procedures. Mr. Mandeville pointed out that capture is a management tool. Mr. Dobel indicated that the populations in Nevada are good enough that, other than a few Rocky Mountain Sheep, further acquisitions are not needed. There are enough California Bighorn Sheep in Nevada to conduct transplant projects. Mr. Mortimore advised that California Bighorns were exported last year.

The Board members commended Mr. Dobel and Mr. Robb on the management plan. Member Walker inquired as to future revisions to the plan, and Mr. Dobel commented that he considers the management plan a guiding document. Vice Chairperson Pedersen suggested revisiting the plan in two-three years to evaluate its effectiveness. Mr. Dobel suggested that the Board members recommend re-evaluation to the Wildlife Commission. Member Walker clarified that the suggestion was only to make minor adjustments to the plan as needed. Member Davis concurred with the suggestion to schedule review of the plan, and pointed out that things will change over the course of five years. He commended Mr. Dobel and Mr. Robb on the plan. Chairperson MacKenzie thanked Mr. Dobel and Mr. Robb for their presentation. (Chairperson MacKenzie recessed the meeting at 9:50 p.m. and reconvened at 10:00 p.m.)

(2-0535) As mentioned earlier by Mr. Mortimore, Chairperson MacKenzie reiterated that the elk management plan has been completed. Discussion took place regarding presentation of the elk management plan to the Board a few years ago. Member Davis suggested that a review of the elk management plan should be conducted. Discussion took place regarding the recommendation to schedule periodic review of the Bighorn Sheep Management Plan, and Member Davis suggested that five-year plans may be too long. Vice Chairperson Pedersen reiterated the need for periodic review, and suggested that the Board make the recommendation at the Wildlife Commission meeting. Discussion took place regarding attendance at the upcoming Commission meeting, and Vice Chairperson Pedersen suggested submitting the recommendation in writing. No formal action was taken.

8C. COMMISSION POLICIES: POLICY #22 - INTRODUCTION, TRANSPLANTS AND EXPORTATION OF WILDLIFE; POLICY #23 - RE-ESTABLISHING, INTRODUCING AND TRANSPLANTING BIGHORN SHEEP IN AREAS GRAZED BY DOMESTIC SHEEP; POLICY #24 - BIGHORN SHEEP SUBSPECIES REINTRODUCTION GUIDELINES; POLICY #25 - WILDLIFE DAMAGE MANAGEMENT; POLICY #26 - RE-ESTABLISHING, INTRODUCING, TRANSPLANTING AND MANAGING PIONEERING ROCKY MOUNTAIN ELK; POLICY #31 - LAHONTAN CUTTHROAT TROUT MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND POLICY; POLICY #33 - FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROGRAM; POLICY #40 - STATEWIDE BOATING SAFETY; POLICY #50 - DUCK AND TROUT STAMP PROCEDURE (2-0635) - Chairperson MacKenzie solicited input regarding the various policies. He acknowledged that policy review takes place periodically, and advised that the existing policy language was provided for review by the county advisory boards. No formal action was taken.

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8D. POLICY #27, ELK FREE ZONE (2-0665) - Chairperson MacKenzie provided background information on this item, and discussion took place regarding public access. No formal action was taken.

9. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING DESIGNATION OF CARSON CITY ADVISORY BOARD TO MANAGE WILDLIFE REPRESENTATIVE TO ATTEND THE AUGUST 3 AND 4, 2001 WILDLIFE COMMISSION MEETING IN ELKO (2-0597) - Member Davis offered to take August 3rd and 4th off from work in order to attend the meeting.

10. BUDGET UPDATE (2-0678) - Deferred.

11. FUTURE MEETING SCHEDULE (2-0681) - Chairperson MacKenzie advised that the next Wildlife Commission meeting is scheduled for September 7 and 8, 2001 in Lovelock. Consensus was for the entire Board to attend the Commission meeting, and Vice Chairperson Pedersen advised that NDOW has agreed to pay for two Board members to attend. (2-0737) Consensus of the Board was to schedule the next meeting for Wednesday, September 5th.

12. RESIGNATION OF CHRIS MacKENZIE (2-0705) - Member Walker congratulated Chairperson MacKenzie on his appointment to the Wildlife Commission, and thanked him for his service to the Board. He commented that the appointment will be beneficial to Chairperson MacKenzie as well as to the Carson City Advisory Board, and discussion took place with regard to the same. (2-0775) Chairperson MacKenzie officially resigned from the Board and passed the gavel to Vice Chairperson Pedersen.

13. DISCUSSION AND ACTION REGARDING ELECTION OF OFFICERS (2-0776) - Consensus of the Board was to defer this item until the next meeting.

14. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS AND DISCUSSION OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS - None.

15. ACTION ON ADJOURNMENT (2-0808) - Member Davis moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:40 p.m. and wished Chairperson MacKenzie the best of luck in his future endeavors. Chairperson MacKenzie thanked the Board members. Member Walker seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

The Minutes of the July 23, 2001 meeting of the Carson City Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife are so approved this _____ day of September, 2001.

NORMAN W. PEDERSEN, Vice Chairperson