



Natural Resources Commission

Meeting Minutes

Date: July 15, 2021

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Location: Okemos Conference Center
Comfort Inn Okemos
2187 University Park Drive
Okemos, MI 48864

Roll call

Present for the Natural Resources Commission (Commission):

- Carol Moncrieff Rose, Chair
- Tom Baird
- David Cozad
- Keith Creagh
- Michael Lashbrook, *Absent*
- David Nyberg
- J.R. Richardson

Present for the Department of Natural Resources (Department) Staff

- Bob Reichel – for Dan Bock, Legal Counsel, Office of the Attorney General
- Shannon Lott, DNR Natural Resources Deputy – for Daniel Eichinger, DNR Director
- Trevor VanDyke, DNR Director of Legal and Legislative Affairs Office
- Brooke Parmalee, DNR, Legal and Legislative Affairs Office
- Su Schrauger, Executive Assistant to the NRC

Meeting minutes

Opening Comments:

Chair Rose called the meeting of the Commission to order at 9:03 a.m. **Chair Rose** called for a roll call, all Commissioners were present (with the exception of Commissioner Lashbrook), Shannon Lott, DNR Natural Resources Deputy attended for Daniel Eichinger, DNR Director, and Bob Reichel attended for Dan Bock, Assistant Attorney General were present. Chair Rose then asked that everyone else in the room to introduce themselves and if they were there representing a specific organization or group. **Chair Rose** called for a motion to approve the day's agenda, **Commissioner Creagh** made the motion

to approve, **Commissioner Nyberg** supported the motion. **Chair Rose** called for discussion, there being none, a vote was taken, and the agenda was approved unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was the approval of the June 10, 2021, Commission meeting minutes.

Chair Rose called for a motion to approve the June 10, 2021, Commission meeting minutes.

Commissioner Cozad made a motion to approve; supported by **Commissioner Creagh**. **Chair Rose** called for additional discussion, there being none, called for a vote, **Commissioner Nyberg** abstained - he was not present. The motion passed unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was the approval of the closed session minutes for January 14, 2021, February 11, 2021, March 11, 2021, April 15, 2021, and June 10, 2021. **Chair Rose** called for a motion to approve all five months of the Commission's closed meeting minutes. **Commissioner Nyberg** made a motion to approve; supported by **Commissioner Baird**. **Chair Rose** called for additional discussion, there being none, called for a vote, which passed unanimously.

Committee of the Whole:

Natural Resources Deputy Lott welcomed the audience and summarized the Director's report.

Director's Report:

[Upcoming Fisheries Order Update](#) (*James Dexter, Chief, Fisheries Division*)

Spring Fish Production Update (*James Dexter, Chief, Fisheries Division*)

[Cormorant Control Opportunities](#) (*Randall Claramunt, Fisheries Division*) Upon completion of his presentation, Chair Rose expressed concern about the absence of any funding for implementing the cormorant control tactics recently approved in the cormorant control permit secured by the State of Michigan.

[Restrict Beach Access Under Certain Conditions](#) (*Nicole Hunt, Parks and Recreation Division*)

[2020 Preliminary Deer Harvest Survey Report](#) (*Brian Frawley, Wildlife Division*) Upon completion of Mr. Frawley's presentation, Chair Rose asked Deputy Director Lott for an update on the status of the APR/CWD study at the next meeting.

[State Land Review](#) (*Scott Whitcomb, Executive Division*)

Presentations for the Director's reports may be found on the Commission's webpage at www.michigan.gov/nrc under "Presentations".

Natural Resources Deputy Lott announced the first Wolf Management Advisory Council has been scheduled for August 4, 2021. The meeting will be held at the River Rock Lanes and Banquet Center, Ishpeming. Look for updates on the DNR website [DNR - Wolf Management Advisory Council \(michigan.gov\)](#). Dan Kennedy is the Director's Representative and Victoria Lischalk is the administrative assistant. Contact Dan or Victoria by emailing - dnr-wmac@michigan.gov.

The Director's report ended at 10:53 a.m. at which time **Chair Rose** asked for a 10-minute break before beginning the Public Comment Period. The meeting resumed at 11:03.

Public Appearances Before the NRC:

(**Brooke Parmalee** provided the guidelines from the Open Meetings Act which will be followed for future public comments. Public appearances began at 10:12 a.m.)

5 Minute Comments:

- i. None

3 Minute Comments:

- i. Andrea Wotan – Wolves
- ii. Gary Gorniak – Wolf management
- iii. Bee Friedlander, Attorneys for Animals – Wolves
- iv. Jim Sweeney – CWD issues
- v. Josh Wayner - Regulations for "straight wall" zones
- vi. Nate Knoth – Water safety and swim regulations on "Red Flag" days
- vii. Anju Madan – Wolves
- viii. Ken Gothman – Water access restrictions
- ix. Nicholas Occhipintt – Land Use Order 5
- x. Robert Pannett – Beach ban
- xi. Vince Deur – Beach ban
- xii. Eric Little – Proposed beach ban
- xiii. Timothy Haadsma – Beach ban
- xiv. Dustin Hollenback – Beach access
- xv. Mark Cox – Beach red flag restrictions
- xvi. Shelley Ritter – Beach red flag restrictions

Chair Rose adjourned the public appearance portion of the meeting at 11:16 a.m. The regular meeting of the NRC was called to order at 11:17 a.m.

REGULAR MEETING OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

NEW BUSINESS

DIRECTOR

Chair Rose read the new business for the Director, which may be acted on during the day's meeting:

Director's Orders

- i. [State Land Review Recommendations – Group 1](#)
- ii. [Land Use Order of the Director Amendment 5 of 2021 Restrict Beach Access Under Certain Conditions](#)

Land Transactions

- i. [Sale of Surplus DNR-Managed Land Forest Resources Division, Crawford County Land Transaction Case #20200207](#)
- ii. [Conveyance of DNR-Managed Land for Public Use Forest Resources Division, Kalkaska County Land Transaction Case #20190251](#)
- iii. [Gift of State Forest Land The Shupbach Gift of Land Forest Resources Division, Roscommon County Land Transaction Case #20210093](#)
- iv. [Exchange of State Forest Land The Tokie Exchange Forest Resources Division, Presque Isle County Land Transaction Case #20200178](#)

Natural Resources Deputy Lott indicated she would sign all land transactions.

NRC Orders for Information only this month

- i. None

OLD BUSINESS

Director's Orders

- i. None

NRC Orders

- i. None

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Baird – recognized the Anglers of the AuSable. They're a group of conservationists that devote their attention to the AuSable River system and fishing. The group pledged \$500,000 over 10 years for habitat improvement on the river system. He reported the Elk Rapids Harbor Commission sponsored a Free Fishing Expo in Elk Rapids. He contacted Eric Crissman and Dave Clapp, Cheboygan DNR staff. They were able to attend the expo with the DNR Research Vessel. He reported the vessel was a huge hit. **Commissioner Baird**, his family, and visitors at the expo were able to tour the vessel. He appreciates the staff for having the vessel available and attending the expo.

Commissioner Cozad –reported he is very happy to meet in person. He thanked the staff who helped arrange the meeting. He also thanked everyone for their public comments and those that did not comment but traveled considerable distances to attend the meeting. The comments were very thoughtful and right on point. He stated the comments reinforce the notion that natural resources management, by its very nature, is participatory. He also stated he is happy to hear the Wolf Management Advisory Council will be meeting the first week of August. He thanked the members of the council for their commitment and staff for arranging the meeting. He hopes to see more people at the next NRC meeting.

Commissioner Creagh – thanked **Commissioner Richardson** for hosting a fishing trip and sharing his fishing spots with him. He congratulated the Department in receiving \$250 million to improve the Michigan State Park system and another \$150 million for local public recreation facilities. He requested a visit for the Commission to the Thompson Fish Hatchery. He expressed that it's great to meet in person. He reminded special interest groups, as they meet, to invite Commissioners to participate. Thanked the water sports enthusiast for attending and discussed the opportunity to have an intersect to providing safety and working together for appropriate regulations. He thanked Scott Whitcomb for the overview of the land strategy. He encouraged direct outreach and conversations with the counties. Commissioner Creagh indicated he will be out of state for the August Commission meeting.

Commissioner Lashbrook – *ABSENT*

Commissioner Nyberg – expressed it is great to see all the participants. He recognized the value of having interpersonal communications that can't be replaced. He appreciated the diverse range of topics, for which the Commission has regulatory authority and advisory authority to the Department, brought forward by public comment. He reminded those who might be new to the wolf conversation that in February 2021 the Commission unanimously adopted a resolution to the Department, which was consistent with the Department's plan, to update the wolf management plan, consult with tribal governments, conduct a public attitude survey, and reconstituting the Wolf Management Advisory Council, which has since been appointed and will meet in August. He stated it's been seven months since the federal delisting of wolves. He also stated that it's important to act post-haste on those items to have a thoughtful conversation about the biological data and the best course of action may be for wolf management. He expressed it's still possible to achieve an updated plan by the end of this year. He stated his intention, for a Commissioner from the Upper Peninsula who lives in an area and talks with lots of people that live among the state's wolf population, is to hear the thoughts and opinions for management and solutions they might suggest. The public attitude survey should have a breakout of the public attitude of the people who live in the UP about management. He also appreciated being back in person and thanked everyone for their participation.

Commissioner Richardson. – Thanked the DNR staff and **Chair Rose** for their work on the virtual meetings over the last several months. He recognized that the virtual meetings gave the public a chance to understand how effective the Commission can be and also gave the public a chance to interact. He thanked **Commissioner Creagh** and his family for coming to the UP for a visit. He stated

the UP Habitat Workgroup meeting on July 29, 2021, at the River Rock Lanes and Banquet Center in Ishpeming. He reported he was a guest on the Ryan Report where he discussed creating a UP Fallen Officers Award. There are currently six fallen officers in the UP and thirteen statewide. He appreciates what the officers and their families go through. He announced that he will kiteboard the Ontongan River...with an entourage.

Deputy Lott – discussed the Department receiving \$250 million to improve the Michigan State Park system. The Department is currently building teams to make sure the funds are utilized to work on priorities. Infrastructure for human health and safety will be at the top of the list. She reported the Department was released from telework on July 12, 2021. Staff are in the office preparing for the opening. There will be lots of cleaning and preparing facilities for the public to visit. The Department's customer service centers will be open three days a week. There will be press releases coming out with the schedule of openings. Staff will be phased in by September 7, 2021, she requests to be patient with the staff while they work on getting back to the offices. She also stated she does plan to sign the July 29, 2021, Oil and Gas Lease Auction.

Chair Rose – expressed delight in meeting in public as others have stated and to hear about interesting new topics, about which we all learned a great deal. Kudos to the staff for helping with the virtual meetings over the last year and working on providing hybrid meetings. The Department is working on allowing the public to participate virtually. Many thanks to the staff for running the meeting and thanked the public for making the trip to join the meeting.

Adjournment

Chair Rose asked for a motion to adjourn. **Commissioner Nyberg** made a motion to adjourn the meeting. **Commissioner Cozad** supported the motion. **Chair Rose** called for discussion, there being none, a vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously. The meeting is adjourned at 12:41 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the NRC is scheduled for Thursday, August 12, 2021, at Okemos Conference Center, 2187 University Park Drive, Okemos, MI 48864.



Carol Moncrieff Rose, NRC Chair



Daniel Eichinger, DNR Director

DATE: August 12, 2021