

**NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
December 10, 2020
Conference Call/Virtual Meeting**

Present for the Natural Resources Commission (commission)

Carol Moncrieff Rose, chair, Hillman, MI
David Nyberg, Marquette county, MI
J.R. Richardson, Carp Lake township, MI
Keith Creagh, Williamston township, MI
Louise Klarr, Jackson, Liberty township, MI
Chris Tracy, Kalamazoo, MI
Mike Lashbrook, East Lansing, MI

Present for Department of Natural Resources (department) Staff

Dan Bock, legal counsel, Office of the Attorney General, Lansing, MI
Daniel Eichinger, DNR director, Isabella county, MI
Trevor VanDyke, DNR director of legal and legislative affairs office
Brooke Parmalee, DNR, legal and legislative affairs office
Cheryl Nelson, executive assistant to the NRC

Chair Rose called the meeting of the commission to order at 9:05 a.m., at which time she asked for a roll call of the commissioners; all commissioners, the director and assistant attorney general were present virtually for the December 10, 2020, Natural Resources Commission meeting.

Chair Rose then called for a motion to approve the December 10, 2020, Natural Resources Commission's meeting agenda. **Commissioner Klarr** made a motion to adopt the day's agenda; commissioner **Richardson** supported the motion. **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 November 12, 2020, commission meeting minutes. **Chair Rose** called for a motion to approve the minutes; commissioner **Lashbrook** made the motion to adopt the November 12 minutes, commissioner **Nyberg** seconded the motion, **Rose** called for additional discussion, there being none, a vote was taken and the November 12, 2020 meeting minutes passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Director's Report

Director Eichinger formally introduced and welcomed the new Wildlife division chief, **Jared Duquette**, to the commission and to the public. **Duquette** originally hales from St. Charles, Michigan, and is a graduate of Central Michigan University. His most recent position was with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, where he took a major part in the chronic wasting disease program and their retention, recruitment, and reactivation

research. **Duquette** is known to be a collaborative leader.

Next, the director walked through the system failure of the new license retail sales system (RSS) on November 14. The issues were caused by the stress on the vendor's, S3, system. The department worked together to come up with an alternative by offering hunters the ability to be able hunt on opening day by tagging their own harvest and following up with the department. It was determined that the problem with the system was not volume-based but was due to a backup of the vendor's licensing system at the same time the license buying surge occurred in Michigan. The problem was not isolated to Michigan. **Eichinger** said that it was made known to S3 that this situation would not be acceptable in the future. It was also noted that there was good hunter compliance.

Chair Rose welcomed chief **Duquette** and thanked the department for their follow through with the RSS issue.

That concluded the director's report at 9:20 a.m. and chair **Rose** called for another roll call at 9:21 a.m.

PUBLIC APPEARANCES BEFORE THE NRC

(**Brooke Parmalee** read the official timekeeping procedures and guidelines for the meeting's public appearances which began at 9:23 a.m.)

Ed Flanigan spoke about advanced hunting techniques that utilize no weapons or traps; also known as ambush hunting.

Steve Dey, a resident of the Upper Peninsula (UP) shared his thoughts on the delisting of the gray wolf. He is pleased that they have been delisted and would like to see a revised wolf management plan.

Gary Gorniak said that he is not anti-wolf but said there are few deer and a lot of wolves in the UP. He would like to see an updated wolf management plan in Michigan.

Ian Fitzgerald, MUCC, thanked commissioners **Klarr** and **Tracy** for their years of service to the great state of Michigan. **Fitzgerald** also spoke about the supplemental feeding plan and that MUCC supports this in the UP in areas with harsh winters that run into the spring months. MUCC also supports the permit process. He is also in agreement with commissioner **Nyberg's** suggestion to hold off on voting on the deer regulations amendment until January or February due to the number of amendments and additional public feedback that should be expected.

Herb Martin spoke to the commission about including hand-thrown spears in the bear and deer archery seasons.

Nancy Warren shared her thoughts on what she said are the devastating impacts of wolves in Michigan.

George Lindquist spoke on behalf of the UP Whitetails of Marquette County and thanked Commissioners **Klarr** and **Tracy** for their service on the commission. His group supports both **Nyberg's** and **Richardson's** amendments (described in the business portion of minutes later on) to Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 8 of 2020, Deer Regulations. He closed by

saying that age classes in bucks are what keep hunters hunting in the UP and that we need to keep that deer herd.

Commissioner Rose suggested that the commission still hold the discussion on deer regulations but table the decision to another month so there is more time for public input and for the new commissioners can get up to speed.

Erik Schnelle, president, Michigan Chapter of the National Deer Association, welcomed chief **Duquette** and thanked commissioners **Klarr** and **Tracy** for their years of service on the commission. **Schnelle** would also like to see the deer regulations held over, noting that additional discussion is needed.

Jed Welder from Trinity Farms in Montcalm county said that he and other farmers in the area would like to see consideration for a Sandhill crane hunting season because of the damage they continue to cause to their farms.

Bee Friedlander representing Attorneys for Animals welcomed chief **Duquette**. She also indicated that her group is against trophy hunting for wolves and Sandhill cranes. **Friedlander** said that they are against lead ammunition citing the number of bald eagle deaths. She added that the group would also like to see non-consumptive users at the table for the various working groups.

Jenny Stout from Marquette supported proposed recreational feeding in the UP.

Jenny Cook shared that National Day of the Horse was to be celebrated on December 13 and spoke about the benefits of horses to our society and treating them with respect.

Molly Tamulevich from the Humane Society of the United States said that there is no reason for a hunting season for Sandhill cranes. Depredation permits are available to farmers where they are causing damage to their crops.

Brian Plank representing the Michigan Cattlemen's Association from Montcalm county would like to see a recreational hunt for Sandhill cranes. He spoke about the increased antlerless population and the damage they are causing. Concerning wolves in the UP, **Plank** would like to see their numbers lower. In closing, he shared his concerns regarding getting enough deer heads in the bovine tuberculosis area.

Dale Hendershot spoke about trapping, its misconceptions, and benefits. **Hendershot** added that trapping should be added in wolf management.

Allissa Sullivan from Hazel Park does not want a trophy hunting season for wolves in Michigan.

Trish Marie shared her thoughts on a wolf hunt in Michigan, indicating that she does not want to see one.

Chair Rose adjourned the public appearances portion of the meeting at 10:55 a.m. and called to order the regular meeting of the NRC at 11:06 a.m. She asked for another roll call of commissioners and noted that all who were present at the Committee of the Whole were present for the regular meeting.

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:

LTA #20200091 Sale of Surplus DNR-Managed Land Gaylord Management Unit Charlevoix County

LTA #20190257 Sale of Restrictive Covenant on DNR-Managed Land Traverse City Management Unit-Kalkaska County

LTA # 20200144 Release of Deed Restriction on DNR-Conveyed Land Charlevoix Management Unit-Charlevoix County

LTA # 20180150 State Trail Easements Acquisition Western Upper Peninsula District-Ontonagon County

LTA # 20200174 State Trail Easements Acquisition Western Upper Peninsula District-Dickinson, Gogebic, Houghton, Iron and Ontonagon Counties

Project Boundary Dedication and Transfers in Jurisdiction Between Divisions

Director Eichinger indicated that he would be signing these land transactions.

NEW BUSINESS
COMMISSION

There was no new commission business at the December 10, 2020 meeting.

OLD BUSINESS
DIRECTOR

There was no old business for the director to act upon at this meeting.

OLD BUSINESS
COMMISSION

Chair Rose read the item up under old business for the commission:

Deer Regulations, Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 8 of 2020

Commissioner Tracy made a motion to adopt Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 8 of 2020. **Commissioner Klarr** supported the motion. **Rose** called for discussion, which follows in part the amendment proposed prior to the day's meeting:

Commissioner Creagh: immediately terminate the antler point restriction study in deer management units 034, 054, and 059, if the CWD prevalence rate in the APR townships is higher than the prevalence rate in the non-APR townships.

After further discussion, commissioner **Creagh** withdrew his amendment. He then proposed a new amendment that the APR regulation would be rescinded in those same deer management units at the end of 2021 deer hunting season. The amendment will be brought forward to future NRC discussions.

Commissioner Nyberg: retain Section 3.101a; deer hunting in zone 1 season limit and, antler restriction, or "Hunter's Choice," and all associated references throughout the order.

Commissioner Richardson: remove the proposed changes that would allow the use of crossbows during the late archery season in the UP.

Commissioner Richardson: During bow and arrow season in zone 1, antlerless deer may only be taken in DMUs that allow antlerless licenses. Specifically, antlerless deer shall not be taken in DMUs 127, 066, 131, 042, 031, 007, and 048. This does not apply to any DMU within a designated core CWD surveillance area.

In preparation for the second package of regulations for the 2021- 2022 deer hunting seasons, the department reviewed various regulations, including antlerless quotas and licenses, and antler point restrictions. These regulations were reviewed and developed by internal staff and discussed with partners and the public through surveys and public meetings. The department's recommendations, as explained in a DNR memorandum, are intended to simplify, and reduce confusing regulations, and remove barriers to participation in deer hunting. In addition, deer management tools and regulation recommendations that must be implemented into the retail sales system must be acted on to allow time for development and implementation by the March 2021 license year.

After much discussion, the commission decided to allow for more public input and to give new commissioners more opportunity to review Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 8 of 2020, therefore holding the amendment over to January 2021.

Chair Rose took a few minutes to talk about commissioners **Klarr** and **Tracy** and thank them for their dedication and passion to the state of Michigan.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Richardson thanked the department for their work on the deer regulations. He also thanked commissioners **Klarr** and **Tracy** for their dedication, respect, and friendship.

Commissioner Tracy thanked the commission and the chair, they have been a passionate group to work with the past eight years. He added after sharing a few hunting stories that his fellow commissioners were always welcome to hunt his property.

Commissioner Creagh also thanked **Klarr** and **Tracy** for being great commissioners and supporters of the department. He welcomed chief **Duquette** and is looking forward to having him as a part of the department.

Commissioner Klarr shared a update on a recent Michigan State Parks Advisory committee meeting. She said that it has been a pleasure working with that committee and the commission.

Commissioner Lashbrook thanked commissioners **Klarr** and **Tracy** for what they have taught him over the past months. He added that he is looking forward to in-person meetings.

Commissioner Nyberg thanked Klarr and Tracy, they were very welcoming and great to be around. He appreciates their service to the state, the department, and the commission. He wished all very happy holidays.

Chair Rose reminded all to hunt in the ten bovine TB counties to get heads in for testing. **Rose** once again thanked **Klarr** and **Tracy** for their service and wished them the best.

Director Eichinger thanked commissioners **Klarr** and **Tracy** for their service on the commission; this unpaid position indicated their true public service to the people of Michigan.

Next Meeting

Chair Rose shared that the next meeting of the commission will be held on Thursday, January 14, 2021 and will once again be in a virtual format.

Adjournment

Commissioner Klarr made a motion to adjourn. **Commissioner Tracy** supported the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 12:46 p.m.



Carol Moncrieff Rose, NRC Chair



Daniel Eichinger, DNR Director

DATE: January 14, 2021