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Governor

STATE OF NEVADA
DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE

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Leadership Team Minutes
Oct 13, 2008
KENNETH E. MAYER
Director

DOUG HUNT
Deputy Director

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 17, 2008
TO: Board of Wildlife Commissioners; Governor's Office; County Advisory Boards to Manage Wildlife Members; Department of Wildlife Employees; and Director Allen Biaggi
FROM: Kenneth E. Mayer, Director
SUBJECT: Department Activities Report – Oct. 13, 2008, Leadership Team Minutes

Attendees: Deputy Director Doug Hunt, Executive Assistant Suzanne Scourby, Management Assistant III Kim Jolly, Wildlife Diversity Chief Laura Richards, Acting Law Enforcement Chief Fred Messmann, Administrative Services Officer III Dave Prather, Chief of Fisheries Rich Haskins, Acting Game Chief Mike Dobel, Chief of Operations Bob Haughian, Chief of Conservation Education Kelly Clark, and Chief of Habitat Dave Pulliam.

Director's Office

Deputy Director Doug Hunt said Fisheries Chief Rich Haskins will be the acting deputy director upon his retirement and Mr. Haskins will be training with Deputy Director Doug Hunt over the next few weeks. Deputy Director Doug Hunt's retirement party is Nov. 15, 2008, at Bartley Ranch Park in Reno.

Director Ken Mayer is on annual leave this week, and the group decided to go forward with the format of the last meeting with emerging issues and regular written reports provided to the Director's office. Tomorrow is a Board of Examiners meeting and Administrative Services Officer III Dave Prather said there are five items, and he will be attending.

Deputy Director Hunt said in regard to regional meetings that a flow chart will be developed by the Management Analyst III with directions going out to the regions for further clarification of the process of producing a product from their meetings. Chief of Habitat Dave Pulliam suggested an agenda be developed for the Leadership Team meeting as well so that meaningful discussions are held. The group agreed and Deputy Director Hunt asked for agenda items by this Friday for next Monday's Leadership Team meeting.

Chief of Habitat Dave Pulliam said to the group that in regard to the Peer property acquisition in Southern Nevada near the Overton Wildlife Management Area that a decision by the agency was already made to go forward with acquisition of water rights. Mr. Peer will sell us 10 shares of water rights, and the discussion point for the group is to decide whether to go forward with the acquisition of six acres with two ponds and that area is of value to the agency as a buffer zone to the Visitor's Center. The price of the water is \$545,000 and Mr. Peer is asking for \$85,000 per acre but with the downward trend of property values, it is closer to \$54,000 and the total

acquisition would be around \$1 million. Chief of Fisheries Haskins said he will check with Southern Region staff on the availability of Multi-Habitat Conservation Species Management money. Chief of Wildlife Diversity Richards said a formalized list of items out of the bond sale is Dave's Island, ongoing projects wildlife management projects, wildfire restoration, deferred maintenance project, Cave Lake restoration, Peer water rights, Basset, Comins Lake, Elko urban pond, Fujii pond, Black Rock match, and Warm Springs match. Mr. Pulliam said if money is not available from Question 1 we cannot commit and ask Mr. Peer to hold off while we find other sources, and to look at it in the future if it remains available. The decision made by the group was that we do not have adequate money in Question 1 at this time, and we will look for partners and other funding. The water right acquisition process will proceed.

Management Analyst III Kim Jolly said the reply to the civil rights audit was received and we are asked for an implementation plan. She said she scanned the document and if anyone wants to read it all or just parts, let her know and it will be posted on the S drive. Mrs. Jolly said the Douglas County Commission is working on the nuisance bear ordinance for garbage and public feeding relative to wildlife and a hearing is scheduled tomorrow. She and Biologist Carl Lackey will be attending the meeting.

Conservation Education

The Conservation Education chief presented wildlife education resources available for teachers at the Environmental Literacy Conference with about 40 teachers participating in the conference.

The outdoor education coordinator completed the Humboldt County Shooting Range draft interlocal contract and also revised the ATA/NASP (Archery Trade Association/National Archery in Schools Program)-NDOW archery education position proposal for the Southern Region.

The volunteer coordinator finalized the agenda for the upcoming Aquatic WILD workshop this weekend being held in Reno and at the Oxbow Nature Study Area for educators, college students and wildlife enthusiasts to facilitate interest in outdoor education opportunities. A training workshop was also set up for waterfowl survey participants (avian influenza and other diseases surveillance), and during the first full week of deer season led Chronic Wasting Disease sampling with volunteers collecting 19 samples to date.

The wildlife education coordinator is working with the Division of Environmental Protection's, Water Quality Section to provide Project Webfoot training for teachers and, in conjunction with the National Park Service and Public Lands Institute; began a project on "environmental etiquette for ecotourism operators."

The angler education coordinator participated in the annual Cast for Kids event held at Lake Mead. This event is for disabled or terminally ill children and adults.

Fisheries Division

Environmental contractors will be sampling bottom materials at Comins Lake to document the distribution of mercury laden sediments. Once the distribution of contaminated materials is delineated, a remediation plan can be developed.

Western Region staff are investigating the reported loss of fish at Squaw Creek Reservoir.

The report from the biological working group formed as a result of the Department of the Interior's stipulated agreement for withdrawal of protests against Southern Nevada Water Authority's Spring Valley's applications, will reportedly be available in December.

Game Division

To date Game Division has sent out approximately 3,000 letters to big game hunters requesting that they bring in their harvested animal to department offices for CWD testing. Twelve hundred were sent to early season deer hunters and 1,400 were sent out to late season deer and elk hunters. Another 400 were sent to antlerless deer hunters requesting that they bring their harvested animal in for body condition analysis. We are attempting to gather information on mule deer body condition which overtime will help evaluate where specific deer herds are in relationship to the carrying capacity of the range. To date we have tested approximately 40 animals.

Postseason pronghorn surveys have continued in various areas of the state this past week. Management area 10 was looked at recently with over 750 antelope classified. This population continues to remain well above historic numbers and is a success of our big game trapping and transplanting program.

Telemetry surveys continue with contractor Owyhee Air. Desert bighorn surveys continue in the Las Vegas area with department helicopter 3FG. We hope to have these surveys completed within the next week and finish up desert bighorn surveys in central Nevada in Management Areas 18 and 20 by late October.

A number of sage grouse trapping and collaring projects have been conducted over the last month. These projects are being conducted in an effort to gain more information about sage grouse within various Population Management Units throughout the state.

Habitat Division

No submission

Law Enforcement

Mistaken kills resulting from negligence is on the increase in the Eastern Region: A buck tag holder shoots a doe by mistake when the herd is frightened by ATVs and the doe jumps into the line of fire; an experienced hunter shot a large buck and as he moves in to confirm, observes a buck leaving the thick cover and assumes it is the same one. He shoots and kills that mature buck only to discover his first shot was true and buck number one is also dead. A first year, first time ever deer hunter (adult) sees what he believes to be a buck deer in heavy trees. He shoots and before he can shoot again his rifle jams. He clears the jam and looks to see the buck still standing so shoots again. The buck drops. He walks over to discover two dead bull elk. Wardens worked till 1 a.m. to field dress, load, and skin and quarter the two bulls. An experienced long range shooter knocked a large buck down. On his way to confirm, he believed the same large buck got back up and started to run off. He shot and killed that one. He then discovered he had killed two bucks. An experienced cow elk hunter takes a 400 plus yard shot at an elk he thought was a cow. It was a four point bull. Regardless of their actions, all of the above hunters did one right thing and turned themselves in. Here are ones who did not: A 3 x 4 bull elk was shot and left while cow elk season was on in the unit and deer had not opened; a spike bull was shot and left; a mule deer buck was shot and left, 75 yards from a

road; a 13 year-old hunter in the company of an adult shot an antelope and left it to waste when he and the adult realized it was not a deer. A witness reported their actions to game wardens.

Western Region game wardens reported the opening day of deer season (a Sunday) was uneventful and the number of hunters was low compared to past years when the season opened on a Saturday.

TRPA (Tahoe Regional planning Agency) has offered to fund a third Lake Tahoe seasonal game warden position to work specifically on buoy issues. NDOW is preparing the manpower and equipment budget numbers for the position.

Boating education coordinators developed and distributed a boating education poster to all the boat desks; developed and procured other new boating information materials for next year's boating program, including calendars, kind's information booklets and other materials.

A Utah man has been sentenced in a plea agreement in District Court of Lincoln County to Unlawful Possession of a mule deer, a gross misdemeanor violation of NRS 501.376(5). This was a state line border case during the 2007 Utah muzzleloader deer season. He was sentenced to \$2,000 Criminal Penalty and \$2,500 Civil Penalty.

Two Utah men and a third Nevada man have been bound over for trial in Lincoln County District Court on all charges as a result of a residency investigation. Charges include felony unlawful killing of a big game animal, felony aiding and abetting the unlawful killing of a big game animal, gross misdemeanor false information to obtain a big game tag, gross misdemeanor conspiracy to commit big game tag fraud.

We had a report from a man who claimed to have shot three hen turkeys with one shot. The man possessed a tag for turkey but mistakenly killed three birds. The investigation is on-going.

Wardens discovered three separate bull elk that were shot and left during the cow elk season in Unit 231. Two were spike elk and the third was a 5x3 rag horn bull. Two of the bulls had been killed many days prior to finding the kills. The investigation is ongoing.

State game warden recruitment posters for game warden vacancies to colleges in Nevada and nationwide, preparing for game warden testing and hiring. In accordance with the state and Coast Guard agreements all boating accident reports must be completed and data entered in the data base prior to 1 November. Staff following up with local, state and the National Park Service officers to have the reports submitted, reviewing them, assigning causes and having staff enter them. We have 7 fatal boat accidents so far this year, one in an Elko County reservoir, one at Rye Patch Reservoir, one on Lake Mohave, and four on Lake Mead. One non reportable (voluntarily left the boat) fatal occurred at Lake Tahoe.

Beta testing began on GrantWave software that will provide grant, communications and contract tracking, scheduling, and reporting of USFWS Boating Access Program. This software was partially funded with Wildlife Diversity for the Land Incentives Program. NDOW is the first state agency in the nation to use this software other than non-profits it was originally designed.

Boat Access Program is currently waiting for a decision from USFWS on the decommissioning and demolition of Walker Lake Boat Dock, located at Sportsman's Beach on BLM property, Mineral County, Hawthorne, NV. This purposed action is in response to the current deteriorated

state of the Dock that has reached its potential length of life of 20 years, poses a public hazard and a liability to NDOW.

Wildlife Diversity

The Wildlife Diversity Division has completed this year's efforts on the Rose Guano Cave bat radio telemetry study in the Spring Mountains of White Pine County. This is a joint study between NDOW, the BLM and three proponents of wind energy development projects. Rose Guano Cave supports a large migratory population of Mexican free-tailed bats. Three wind developments projects are in the planning stages in Spring Valley, just west of Rose Guano Cave. The telemetry study is being conducted to try and determine what flight characteristics the bats use when exiting the cave each night to forage. Additional field work is scheduled during late summer of 2009.

The Division continues to service two reptile/small mammal arrays in northern Elko County. The arrays on the Bruneau River and Salmon Creek are being used to survey and inventory reptile and small mammal populations along these two riparian systems.

Coordination with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) on constructing wildlife friendly closures at abandoned mine sites in the Eastern Region continues. Two major adit closures at Ward Mountain were completed in a joint project between NDOW, the Ely District of the BLM and the USFS contract crew. Final foam plugging and backhoe work on the Ward Mountain private land abandoned mine sites were completed in September as well. Many thanks to all involved for their efforts. Closures at Spruce Mountain will follow in October as weather permits. Additional surveys of abandoned mine sites in the Elko District documented two more Townsend's big-eared bat maternity roosts. These sites will become priority sites for wildlife friendly closure activity.

Final exclosure configurations for the Beaver Creek aspen fencing project have been completed. All that awaits to allow this project to proceed is the NEPA documentation from the Elko Field Office of the BLM. This documentation should be forthcoming in October, 2008. The Nevada Conservation Corps crew completed the previously approved projects on Stag Mountain.