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MINUTES
May 8, 2020

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission met in the third floor conference room at Nebraska Game and Parks Headquarters Lincoln, NE for the transaction of business, advance public notice having been given through release to news media and official public notice published in the Lincoln Journal Star on April 23, 2020.

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 A.M. Chairman Kreitman advised this meeting was being held in conformance with the State Open Meeting Act and the act was available for review on the table at the back of the room. He also reviewed the precautions being taken to maintain social distancing due to the Coronavirus COVID-19. Sheri Henderson took roll call, members present: Chairman Dan Kreitman. Members John Hoggatt, Kearney; Pat Berggren, Broken Bow; Bob Allen, Eustis; Jim Ernst, Columbus; Scott Cassels, Omaha; Rick Brandt, Lincoln; Doug Zingula, Sidney and Donna Kush, Omaha were present via video conferencing. The Commissioners all welcomed Commissioner Donna Kush who was appointed by the Governor to succeed Dick Bell to represent District II.

Minutes of the business meeting held March 20, 2020 were reviewed.

Motion by Mr. Allen and seconded by Mr. Brant to approve the March meeting minutes. Voting aye: Zingula, Berggren, Cassels, Ernst, Hoggatt, Brandt, Allen, Kush, and Kreitman; voting nay: None. Motion carried.

Financial vouchers for March and April were reviewed.

Motion by Mr. Cassels and seconded by Mr. Hoggatt to approve the financial vouchers. Voting aye: Berggren, Cassels, Ernst, Hoggatt, Brandt, Zingula, Allen, Kush, and Kreitman; voting nay: None. Motion carried.

Director's Report

Director Jim Douglas welcomed new Commissioner Donna Kush and thanked Commissioners and staff for continuing to work hard and continuing to being productive and efficient in this unprecedented time.

The Director gave reference to the Pandemic Plan that was developed in the early stages of the this pandemic and gave a brief overview of the newly developed Continuity of Operations Plan that defines essential employees and continuity of leadership that can be adapted to address a variety of emergencies.

Director Douglas shared that the agency was holding a series of zoom meetings the next week where all employees are invited to participate and ask questions regarding the COVID19 crisis

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and its effects on the agency and its operations. . Commissioners are invited to participate as well.

Director Douglas reported on the completed plan for phased re-opening of camping and other activities at state parks and recreation areas, including the first step, which will be implemented soon.

The Director also mentioned that due to state health directives and not knowing if the Governor will extend the ability for agencies to have tele/video conferenced meetings, the meeting scheduled for Hastings in June will take place in Lincoln at the Outdoor Education Center; which should allow for adequate space and avoid unnecessary travel.

End Director's Report

Chairman Kreitman read the staff recommendation to call for a public hearing at the June Commission meeting to consider amendments to Chapter 4 Wildlife Regulations Section 037, Mountain Lions.

Motion by Mr. Ernst and seconded by Mr. Cassels to approve staff recommendations. Voting aye: Cassels, Ernst, Hoggatt, Kush, Brandt, Zingula, Berggren, Allen, and Kreitman; voting nay: None. Motion carried.

Chairman Kreitman opened the public hearing at 9:21 AM to consider amendments to Commission Order C03, Antelope, Deer, Elk, regarding changes to permit numbers, season dates, bag limits, and areas open. Wildlife Division Administrator Alicia Hardin reviewed staff recommendations. Jake Kehr of Davey, NE present to testify, in reference to an email he submitted on a variety of Elk suggestions-his letter is marked Exhibit 14. It and other emails submitted for the Commissioners consideration are listed on the attached Exhibits List. They will be made part of the permanent record. Chairman Kreitman closed the hearing at 9:56 AM.

Motion by Mr. Brandt and seconded by Mr. Berggren to accept staff recommendations Voting aye: Cassels, Ernst, Hoggatt, Allen, Brandt, Kush, Zingula, Berggren, and Kreitman; voting nay: None. Motion carried.

Waterfowl Program Manager Mark Vrtiska was present to review the final recommendation for Waterfowl Zone changes for submission to the US Fish and Wildlife Service. He completed gathering the second round of input from hunters that he was working on at the last meeting. There were no drastic changes from what he had previously recommended.

Motion by Mr. Berggren and seconded by Mr. Cassels to approve staff recommendations. Voting aye: Allen, Brandt, Kush, Zingula, Berggren, Cassels, Ernst, Hoggatt; and Kreitman. Voting nay: None. Motion carried.

Furbearer and Carnivore Program Manager Sam Wilson gave an update on mountain lions via zoom. He shared the details of the past hunting season and the likelihood of holding another mountain lion season in 2020. Current data indicates that the management practices are effective in regulating the population as set forth in the Mountain Lion Management Plan.

Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Brandt and seconded by Mr. Berggren to adjourn the meeting at 11:10 AM. Voting aye: Brandt, Kush, Zingula, Berggren, Cassels, Ernst, Hoggatt, Allen, and Kreitman; voting nay: None. Motion carried.

I hereby certify the foregoing is a true and correct copy of action taken by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission at its meeting held May 8, 2020.

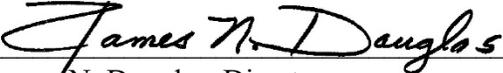

James N. Douglas, Director

Exhibit list attached

NEBRASKA GAME AND PARKS COMMISSION

**PUBLIC HEARING RE:
BIG GAME
RECOMMENDATIONS**

MAY 8, 2020

EXHIBIT LIST

The following constitute a complete list of all exhibits received in association with the above captioned public hearing:

1. Public Hearing Notice
2. Email from Rod Snogren-Ogallala concerns about non-resident permits and suggests making all mule deer units MDCA (sent two separate emails), The other was marked as Exhibit 7
3. Email from Bruce Armstrong-Scottsbluff allowing carrying of handguns while hunting.
4. Email from Monte Hankins establish landowner antelope privileges.
5. Email from Robert Post-Banner County-agrees with staff recommendations.
6. Email from John Fairbanks-eastern NE limit deer permits and out of state permits on all game
7. See exhibit 2.
8. Email from Jason Wurst-limit out of state permits
9. Email from Todd Schull Avon, CO-ad bonus doe tag to over the counter archery either sex tag.
10. Email from Michael Frank Grand Island-recommends early muzzleloader season for deer before regular rifle season.
11. Email from Gary Russell Chesapeake, VA-comment that earlier deer season diminishes the experience November 14 is ok. Appreciates \$5.00 youth license.
12. Email from Casey Wright Comments on public access for Elk and deer management and season suggestions.
13. Email from blubberm mehillebran@earthlink-expnad deer hunting in blue northwest from 1 week to 2 weeks.
14. Email from Jake Kehr Davey, NE- recommendations on Elk management
15. Email from Terry Munter Wahoo, NE- recommendations on Elk Management
16. Email from Dennis Lux have bobcat season open the first weekend of deer season.
17. Email from Byron Reimer-suggestions to increase the quality of bucks
18. Email from Connie Bennet, Ainsworth-Extend firearm season

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