

NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD

MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Natural Resources Board was held on Wednesday, February 28, 2007 in Room G09, State Natural Resources Building (GEF 2), Madison, Wisconsin. The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. for action on items 1-7. The meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Organizational Matters

1.A. Calling the roll

David Clausen – present	Dan Poulson – present
Jonathan Ela – present	Gerald O'Brien – present
John Welter – present	Christine Thomas – present
Jane Wiley - present	

1.B. Approval of minutes from December 5-6, 2006

Mr. Ela MOVED, seconded by Mr. Welter approval of the minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

1.C. Approval of minutes from January 23-24, 2007

Mr. Welter MOVED, seconded by Mr. Ela deferral of the January 23-24, 2007 minutes to the March 28, 2007 meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

1.D. Approval of agenda for February 28, 2007

Secretary Hassett noted that under Secretary's Matters, 7.A., he will have two items to speak on in addition to retirement resolutions, one topic being baiting and feeding.

Dr. Thomas requested the agenda be amended due to the legislative hearing which will interfere with the public and speakers that want to participate at both the hearing and this meeting. Items to be moved are as follows: Item 3.B.6 moved to 3.B.1; Item 3.B.7 moved to 3.B.2; Item 3.B.8 moved to 3.B.3; Item 3.B.1 moved to 3.B.5; Item 3.B.2 moved to 3.B.6; Item 3.B.3 moved to 3.B.7; Item 3.B.5 moved to 3.B.8. Item 3.B.4 will remain as 3.B.4

Mr. O'Brien MOVED, seconded by Mr. Clausen approval of the agenda as amended for February 28, 2007. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Ratification of Acts of the Department Secretary

2.A. Real Estate Transactions

Mr. O'Brien MOVED, seconded by Mr. Ela approval of the real estate transactions. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Action Items

3.A. Air, Waste, and Water/Enforcement

3.A.1 Adoption of Board Order AM-29-06, revisions to NR 463, related to incorporation of the national emission standards for hazardous air pollutants (NESHAP) for iron and steel foundries.

William Baumann, Section Chief, Compliance and Enforcement, Air Management Bureau stated the US EPA promulgated the NESHAP for iron and steel foundries on April 22, 2004 (69 FR 21906), and amended this NESHAP on May 20, 2005 (70 FR 29400). The proposed rule incorporates this NESHAP, as amended, into the Wisconsin Administrative Code by creating ch. NR 463 subchapter III and Appendix EEEEE in ch. NR 460. Chapter NR 484 is also amended to

incorporate by reference two test methods.

Section 285.27(2)(a), Stats., requires the Department to promulgate NESHAP into the administrative code. The Natural Resources Board has not acted on this NESHAP before. Since the proposed regulation is already in effect at the national level, there is little discretion for the Department and there are no policy issues to be resolved. The proposed rule will affect 7 facilities in Wisconsin and could potentially affect an additional 13 facilities in the state.

Mr. Ela inquired as to the interrelationship between MACT driven industry by industry approach, that we are doing here, and the NR455 pollutant by pollutant standard that seems to apply to the same substances and the same problem but in a very different approach.

Mr. Baumann stated that the basic idea of the NR 455 requirements preceded the MACT standards that the Federal government is developing. It just happened that the two programs, if you will, took different approaches. NR 455 state approach took a pollutant by pollutant approach.

The Federal MACT approach basically is a technology driven standard. If there are certain pollutants we are concerned about, EPA takes a look at what technologies are available to best control those. The control basically amounts to application of a certain control technology. Several years ago there was a provision added that addressed potential conflicts between those two approaches. Basically, the Federal MACT supersedes NR 455 requirements to the extent that the same pollutants are being addressed.

Mr. O'Brien MOVED, seconded by Mr. Poulson approval of adoption of Board Order AM-29-06, revisions to NR 463, related to incorporation of the national emission standards for hazardous air pollutants (NESHAP) for iron and steel foundries. The motion carried unanimously.

3.A.2 Request authorization to hold public hearing on Board Order DG-33-06, revisions to NR 809, related to the Safe Drinking Water Act Primacy Agreement with EPA.

Lee Boushon, Section Chief, Drinking Water Systems, Drinking Water and Ground Water Bureau stated that on January 14, 2002, U.S. EPA published National Drinking Water Regulations for Long-Term 1 Enhanced Surface Water Treatment (LT1); these changes impact all public drinking water systems using surface water or groundwater under the direct influence of surface water (GWUDI) and serve fewer than ten thousand (10,000) people. In order to maintain primacy, Wisconsin must adopt all federal requirements under the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) or have requirements that are equal to or more stringent than the SDWA.

This rulemaking will also include revisions to correct minor errors in and updates to the following:

1. the existing interim enhanced surface water treatment rule (IESWTR);
2. the stage 1 disinfection and disinfection byproducts rule (DDBPR);
3. the lead and copper rule (LCR);
4. the drinking water public notification rule (PNR);
5. the radionuclide rule; and
6. updating analytical methods.

Additionally, language is to be clarified with regard to total coliform rule (TCR) maximum contaminant level (MCL) determinations impacting systems collecting less than 40 samples per month.

Mr. Ela MOVED, seconded by Mr. Welter approval of adoption of request authorization to hold public hearing on Board Order DG-33-06, revisions to NR 809, related to the Safe Drinking Water Act Primacy Agreement with EPA. The motion carried unanimously.

3.A.3 Response to Legislative Committees request for modifications to Board Order AM-09-06, related to exemptions for certain minor air pollution sources from construction and operation permit requirements.

Caroline Garber, Section Chief, Environmental Analysis and Outreach, Air Management Bureau stated that the Natural Resources Board adopted this rule in August, 2006. Legislative hearings were held on the rule on October 12, 2006 by the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and

Transportation and on October 18, 2006 by the Assembly Natural Resources Committee. Both Committees returned the rule to the Department for unspecified modifications.

The Department proposes to amend NR 407.03(1m). This section creates an exemption from operation permits for facilities that meet certain criteria. The proposed modification clarifies that the requirement to notify the Department of the intent to operate the facility under the exemption also serves as a request for revocation of an existing permit or withdrawal of a pending permit application.

Mr. Ela asked what the circumstances are in which an operation that is already permitted would want to jettison that permit and go with the exemption. Why would it be beneficial to them?

Ms. Garber stated that even if you have a permit, every time you make a change, you need to get a construction permit. If you have the operation and are exempt, than as long as you stay under that level you can manage your operations.

Mrs. Wiley asked what the timeline is for a comprehensive review to be completed.

Ms. Garber stated they met earlier this week with various industry stakeholders. They are waiting to hear back from them as to what their priorities are in terms of that and will then move forward. If any rule changes are made then they would come back to the Board.

Mr. Ela MOVED, seconded by Mr. Clausen approval of response to Legislative Committees request for modifications to Board Order AM-09-06, related to exemptions for certain minor air pollution sources from construction and operation permit requirements. The motion carried unanimously.

- 3.A.4 Adoption of Germane Modification to Order AM-03-06, revising Table One and Table Two in Order to reflect updated generation data received after submittal of Board Order for adoption. Kevin Kessler, Director, Bureau of Air Management stated The Natural Resource Board adopted Board Order AM-03-06 on January 24, 2007. During the staff presentation to the Board, staff indicated that updated generation data that may affect the allocation of allowances to the CAIR units had been received after the submittal of the green sheet package to the Board. Staff has reviewed the updated data and concluded that changes to Tables 1 and 2 should be made to reflect the updated generation data. The proposed germane modification would revise Tables 1 and 2 in the Order to reflect the updated data.

Mr. Ela stated he had an email exchange recently that asked for an answer to a question as to the handling of renewables. It appeared from that email that the Board seemed to be misinformed as to what the impact was. This disturbed Mr. Ela because the Board actually passed a rule on false information. His question is can that issue be revisited. Can you explain what this misunderstanding was?

Mr. Kessler stated he did not recall the details but that Larry Bruss, Section Chief, Regional Pollutants and Mobile Sources Section, Air Management Bureau indicated in his response we did not have the discretion to do this. Subsequently through the emails it was corrected. We strongly feel they made the right decision and the rule should stand.

Mr. Ela stated this was an unfortunate situation.

Mr. Clausen MOVED, seconded by Mr. Ela approval of adoption of Germane Modification to Order AM-03-06, revising Table One and Table Two in Order to reflect updated generation data received after submittal of Board Order for adoption. The motion carried unanimously.

- 3.B. Land Management, Recreation, and Fisheries/Wildlife
3.B.1 (previously listed as 3.B.6) Land Acquisition, C. D. Besadny Fish and Wildlife Area, Kewaunee County

Mr. Ela MOVED, seconded by Mr. Poulson approval of adoption of Land Acquisition, C. D. Besadny Fish and Wildlife Area, Kewaunee County. The motion carried unanimously.

- 3.B.2 (Previously listed as 3.B.7) Land Acquisition, Western Prairie Habitat Restoration Area, Polk County

Mr. O'Brien asked why this property appraised higher per acre than the C.D. Besadny Fish and Wildlife Area - Kewaunee County property from agenda item 3.B.1. Is it due to the near proximity to the twin cities?

Mr. Clausen stated yes. He said that \$3,000 in that location is a fair price. Others properties listed for sale in that area go for a lot more than that.

Mr. Poulson asked what the total acreage is of state ownership in the western prairie habitat
Mr. Steffes, Real Estate Director stated that the green sheet designate state ownership as 967 acres and said he has his doubts on this and will get back to the Board with a confirmed acreage. He thought that the 967 acres might include state property in that area not part of the western prairie habitat. This has been a challenging project for them. They have pushed into Polk County to get away from the western side price values.

Mr. Clausen MOVED, seconded by Dr. Thomas approval of adoption of Land Acquisition, Western Prairie Habitat Restoration Area, Polk County. The motion carried unanimously.

3.B.3 (previously listed as 3.B.8) Land Donation, Statewide Wildlife Habitat, Dunn County

Mr. Clausen MOVED, seconded by Mr. Welter approval of adoption of Land Donation, Statewide Wildlife Habitat, Dunn County.

Discussion followed.

Mr. Welter stated the rich patchwork of grassland and wetland habitats play off each other. This is a model that should be encouraged.

The motion carried unanimously.

3.B.4 Request authorization to hold public hearings for Board Order LF-17-07 on revisions to Ch. NR 45, governing public use of department properties, NR 1 regarding Ice Age Trail areas and NR 51 regarding State trails.

Peter Biermeier, Trails and External Relations Section Chief, Park and Recreation Bureau stated that Ch. NR 45 contains the Administrative Rules for the use of department properties and applies to lands and facilities that are owned, acquired by easement, or leased by the department. This chapter is reviewed approximately every two years and revisions are proposed by department staff to address various issues that arise on the properties. The last set of revisions were approved by the Natural Resources Board in 2004. This package contains a number of changes for the purpose of improving or clarifying existing rules, creating a few property specific rules, and amending a number of rules affecting fees and reservations in State parks and forests. Affected individuals are the users of the properties.

Seven state parks are being proposed to be added to the list of parks that charge an additional \$3.00 per day for camping due to local market conditions and there is also a proposal that the fee be applied year round to all 15 parks that charge this differential. A state trail season pass fee increase of \$5.00 is being proposed to meet increasing costs of maintaining and managing the trails. This would increase the annual fee from \$15 to \$20. Other proposals are aimed at simplifying the fee system in response to requests by the users.

Rules are being proposed for the newly established Lake Shore State Park that will establish hours and prohibit alcohol consumption outside of organized events.

Language has been included in NR1 to clarify the purpose and management of State Ice Age trail areas, and to identify allowed uses and activities in order to provide consistency and improve management.

Of all the proposals, it is likely that the fee increases will be of most interest or concern to the property users.

Mrs. Wiley asked if there was an increase in the daily state trail fee.

Mr. Biermeier stated no

Mr. Ela stated his concern that the Department is pricing people out of the state park experience. He requested that before this item comes back before the Board with a final rule to provide the Board with what the impact of this is going to be for working families in Wisconsin.

Mr. Biermeier stated he would be happy to do that.

Mr. O'Brien stated it is the state's obligation to maintain its parks and the facilities must be in good, clean condition. This costs money. State park fees must adequately account for these expenses. We would like to provide to all but this is not possible.

Mrs. Wiley stated she does a lot of camping in Wisconsin and across the country. Compared to other states, our prices and facilities are very good. People with big RV's usually do not go to state parks since they are not designed for them. They go to big expensive parks where they can get their slideouts open. Wisconsin provides a real service with the various levels of service we have.

Mr. Clausen stated his concern on the heavy reliance on user fees to finance parks.

Mr. Poulson asked if there was anything on the drawing board for equestrian/horse sites. He stated this is an expanding area that the state needs to cater to.

Mr. Biermeier stated the equestrian demand has increased. Governor Knowles State Park has a planned horse trail site, as well as Peshtigo River State Forest and Kettle Moraine State Forest – Southern Unit campground.

Dr. Thomas asked if the income level of people that use our parks has been looked at. She also asked if it would be possible to have the friends groups sponsor a couple of camp sites for people who qualify for state assistance programs so they can stay at no charge.

Mr. Biermeier stated that he is not aware if income levels have been looked at. He will look into this and into obtaining assistance from the state friends groups.

Mr. Clausen stated he has an issue with the revision to NR 54.7. He had a discussion with Department staff and had an agreeable disagreement as to if this is allowable in the statutes. His contention is that by dropping the specific wording which mirrors the wording in the statute 22.175 that this would in fact allowing broader uses than what that statute allows.

Mr. Ela stated there is active litigation and he did not think the Board would want to inadvertently affect the outcome of litigation without being briefed.

Mr. Clausen MOVED to approve public hearings on Board Order LF-17-07 on revisions to Ch. NR 45 governing public use of department properties and with exception of modification to NR 51.73, and NR 1 regarding Ice Age Trail areas, but not on NR 51 regarding state trails. Seconded by Mr. Ela. The motion carried unanimously.

3.B.5 (Previously listed as 3.B.1) Adoption of Board Order WM-10-07, revisions to NR 10 relating to December gun deer hunt in DMU's north of Hwy. 8.

Secretary Hassett stated that the Department does recognize this as a very controversial subject matter and noted the Department's desire to maintain relationships with the groups involved. The snowmobilers asked to extend for one more year since there was not much snow. In the spirit of trying to respond to those concerns, the Department would offer to return to the Board in three years with their report on the status of how this is working out.

Keith Warnke, Wildlife Biologist, Wildlife Management Bureau stated The Department recommends that the Board adopt proposed modifications to ch. NR 10. These administrative rules would remove the 1-year sunset on the statewide 4-day antlerless only December gun hunt north of Hwy. 8 and implement housekeeping changes that correct drafting errors in the 2006 Deer Rule.

The department held public hearings in Park Falls, Rhinelander, and Madison and received written comments during the month of January. All comments received during that period related to eliminating the sunset of the December hunt north of Hwy 8. Of those who registered an opinion, 104 people supported the proposed rule and 37 people opposed the rule. Hunters generally supported the rule and opposition generally came from people with concerns about snowmobiling. The 2006 December antlerless hunt was important from a herd management standpoint. Staff report that 19,000 antlerless deer were harvested from Dec. 7 to 10, with 2,800 deer harvested from deer management units north of Highway 8.

Department staff did not document conflicts as a result of holding this season in areas north of

Hwy. 8. Snow conditions were unfavorable for riding and most trails were closed as a result. No complaints were received regarding problems with access to trails for the purposes of seasonal maintenance and preparation.

Department staff recommends lifting the one year sunset in order to continue providing added hunting opportunity and allow additional harvest of antlerless deer.

Mr. O'Brien asked what the results from the October hunt were compared to the December hunt.

Mr. Warnke stated the results are tough to compare. October gun hunting did not happen in every single unit in the past. The December season was open in all units. We are in the middle of a trial that is testing the effectiveness of a suite of tools compared to the October gun hunt. That suite of tools is intended to be tested against the history of the October hunt. Youth hunt, free doe tag, and longer bow season are a suite of tools we are trialing. We did not replace the October gun hunt with the December gun hunt.

Mr. O'Brien asked if there were any numbers.

Mr. Warnke stated for the month of October, north of Hwy. 8, the approximate numbers are: Year 2005 - 2,200; Year 2004 - 4,100; and Year 2000 - 25,600.

Public Appearances:

1- **Bill Pfaff**, President of the Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs (AWSC), distributed a handout. He stated his remarks were as an individual and was not representing AWSC's position. AWSC will meet again on March 18 and will entertain a motion to extend the trial period for this statewide December hunt for another year. The December 2006 snowfall was not significant. There is no way to truly evaluate the full effects of this hunt within one year. He hopes that the deer hunters and snowmobilers will be able to work this out together.

2- **Ed Harvey**, Chair of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress (CC), Waldo stated that regardless of the harvest, this December hunt had allowed hunters with an opportunity for recreation and the northwoods with tourism income in mid-December at a time of year when snowmobiling cannot typically occur there. Given the continued lack of snow and the success of the hunt, the CC urges the Board to make the December 4-day antlerless gun hunt north of Hwy. 8 permanent by adopting the Department's rule.

Discussion followed concerning the value and wisdom of:

- referring to a "permanent" policy, given the fact that deer hunting season policy is reviewed on an annual basis,
- continuing a one-year-at-a-time December hunt north of Highway 8,
- adopting the Department's recommended policy, but with a periodic review presented to the Board on user conflicts and other issues that come up with the northern December hunt, which can then be considered in the adoption of hunting season regulations.

Consensus was reached on the latter approach, and there was further discussion on whether the reporting requirement should be contained within the motion itself. Agreement was reached that it should, resulting in the following amended motion being agreed to by the original maker and seconder:

Mr. Welter MOVED, seconded by Mr. Poulson adoption of Board Order WM-10-07, revisions to NR 10 relating to December gun deer hunt in DMU's north of Hwy. 8, with the provision that the Secretary will report back to the Board on use conflicts during the northern December season. The motion carried unanimously.

3.B.6 Approval of Sex Age Kill (SAK) Audit final report, Stakeholders Steering Committee report and recommendations.

Mark Noll, Stakeholder Steering Committee Co-Chair stated that it would be hard to think of Wisconsin without the whitetail deer. Deer have become a big part of our culture, our landscape, and our economy.

He then stated the Steering Committee recommendations and conclusions.

Steering Committee Recommendations:

- The Stakeholder Steering Committee accepts and endorses the conclusions and recommendations of the expert panel, and recommends that the Natural Resource Board accept the Audit of the SAK as well.
- The Committee feels that there should be further follow-up by the Department to convey the key elements of the system and our panel of expert's evaluation of that system. Such a follow-up needs to be done in a manner that hunters can understand, in plain English, and then be widely distributed to the great majority of hunters. This follow-up should incorporate available data on widespread attitudes of "believability" of DNR deer population estimates that exist in different of the state's population.
- We also recommend that the Board identify ad hoc stakeholder study groups to review and analyze the recommendations and conclusions in the report and direct that a proposal for implementation be brought back to the Board within a time frame set by the Board.

Mr. Ela thanked Mr. Noll for an outstanding job.

Mr. O'Brien stated he thought that the part of the Steering Committee recommendation "that further evaluation by the Department be done in plain English should be distributed to the great majority of hunters" should also be distributed to the Board.

Keith Warnke, Wildlife Biologist, Wildlife Management Bureau stated that the Natural Resources Board commissioned an outside auditor's review of the Department's "Sex-Age-Kill" formula by a panel of nationally recognized experts under the direction of a citizen steering committee. The panel reviewed the formula, reported to the Board in December, and made its final recommendations to the steering committee in February. The Steering Committee's report and recommendations will give board members and department staff direction in setting deer season frameworks that are ecologically sound and provide ample hunting opportunity. Wisconsin has been using the "Sex-Age-Kill" model for more than 40 years to estimate deer populations. The model is based on deer registration information and deer aging stations that are set up around the state during hunting seasons. It uses a complex formula to estimate the statewide deer population based on the percentages of the sex and age of deer killed during hunting seasons. The effectiveness of the model for managing Wisconsin's deer herd and believability of deer population estimates remains a continuing concern with the public and wildlife officials. The estimated number of deer in specific Deer Management Units throughout the state determines in large part the hunting season structures that wildlife staff will recommend to the Board.

The panel of auditors was chosen by a steering committee of representatives from a diverse range of interest groups and individuals.

Mr. Welter asked if there are units that earn-a-buck are in place, is there another population estimating tool that might be a useful pilot to consider or do you think there is a way to tweak SAK to make those estimates?

Mr. Warnke responded that it is possible to tweak SAK, and that there are other models.

However, each alternative requires the collection and manipulation of a great deal of data.

Professor Tim Van Deelen, Assistant Professor, Wildlife Ecology, UW-Madison stated his role in the presentation is procedural. He has acted as the broker and consultant to the SAK review steering committee that oversaw this review of SAK for estimating deer numbers in Wisconsin.

The process that resulted in the Report the Board is asked to consider today began during the summer of 2005. He outlined the chronology of events that outline the process.

He then stated that the Final Report is a consensus of the 6 panelists and represents a review of SAK use in the context of quota setting in Wisconsin that is simply unprecedented. The scientific, statistical, and analytical rigor brought to bear on this review are likely the best that wildlife science has to offer. It is a truly remarkable effort and should be recognized as a singular landmark in the evolution of Wisconsin's deer management.

Dr. Thomas inquired as to one of the recommendations to make the DMU's larger so that there is more data feeding the model and therefore your confidence levels should be higher. She asked

what that is going to do to the likelihood that what is happening under her deer stand matches what the Department says is happening now in a DMU that is three times larger than the one previously. **Professor Van Deelen** stated the DMU's in Wisconsin were originally designed to represent some homogeneity in land use. They remained relatively stable but from time to time they were split because people were trying to bring more precision to that level of prediction. The downside of that because of sample size issues as you reduce the spatial area that you are looking at, the precision in those estimates gets worse. What the panel is recommending is aggregating units into larger spatial areas. He believes the Department data set is prepared to do that because most of the boundary changes were just split. If you take the split out and merge the data sets, you now have the same history per given unit stretching back to some earlier point in time. He stated his interpretation of what the panelists were saying is that we erred in the side of going forward too small.

Dr. Thomas stated what that means is we have a big education job to do because what the average person wants to know is what is happening under their deer stand. We need to tell them that we are not telling them that. Instead, we are telling them how many deer there are in this large area.

Mr. O'Brien stated he agreed with Dr. Thomas on educating the public.

Dr. Thomas stated that one of the things the Board was told earlier as a recommendation of the Committee was to train volunteers to gather information that would be plugged into the formula and add more dimensions to the information that the estimates are based on.

Professor Van Deelen stated he thought it would be worth a try. Assuming that the volunteers correctly report what they are seeing, then there is a big payoff.

Dr. Thomas stated she could see some great public relations benefits from this by having people in each DMU that were part of the process of the data gathering and understood more of what was going on. Do you have any experience in using volunteers in collecting information for population estimates?

Professor Van Deelen stated that he did have experience in this area. He thought the Department has probably the best information in the world on the population trend in wolves, because we have an army of volunteers doing track surveys. There is a precedent out there on doing it.

Mr. Welter asked that if Wildlife Management was to consolidate and reduce the number of DMU's, what kind of impact would that have on local harvests goal setting meetings and that part of the process?

Professor Van Deelen stated he does not have a lot of experience with running goal setting meetings. At some point you work against the dynamic that was described by Dr. Thomas where in spite of the fact that you get increased precision in a larger area, you may draw how the people, whose observation on their hunting property, is not matching the population trend. There may be a two edged sword as to how the public responds to this.

Mr. O'Brien stated that the larger you get is more accurate for the whole area, but inaccurate for the small area within that area. This hurts the public perception

Mrs. Wiley asked if this is not where the public perception is now.

Mr. O'Brien said yes. That is why it will get more confusing with larger units.

Mr. Welter asked if there are other types of approaches by which because of their regulatory approach is used when SAK is not best tool available. Do you see the availability of other types that can be used as pilots?

Professor Van Deelen stated that there is a formalized process that is used by the state of Illinois. They have three other models including SAK that are used to reconcile their deer population estimates at a county by county level. The modeling approach they take is to trying to get those models to agree with each other and take a consensus.

Public Appearance

1. **Scott Walter**, Richland Center, representing the Executive Board of the Wisconsin Chapter of The Wildlife Society distributed a handout and stated that the SAK model as used in Wisconsin has performed adequately over time and those other deer population management techniques currently available are not better or more cost effective. The Chapter recommends that white-tailed deer populations in Wisconsin be significantly lowered to unit goals to reduce the negative impacts this ungulate is having on native vegetation and other wildlife species. The Chapter also recommends additional research to document the ecological impact of various deer densities to further refine unit goals.

Mr. O'Brien stated he liked the comment on the bottom of page 2 that the Chapter also recommends that the Department train, certify and use hunters in summer sighting surveys to directly involve hunters in the data gathering process. It has value.

Mr. Welter thanked Dr. Walter for his comments and recommendations. He stated that one of the recommendations you have is that similar types of DMU's be consolidated into larger DMU's to give a more accurate reporting and estimating methods. He stated that one of the questions he had is that we have had this system of DMU's in place for many decades, if we were to talk about consolidating DMU's into larger units of similar cover type, would there be any sacrifice in the data that we are relying on. Can the old established DMU data be consolidated into the new DMU's?

Dr. Walter stated that there is no reason for the Department to be wedded to the smaller units. He felt the increase in sample size you get from joining or merging the homogenous units would be beneficial.

Mr. Welter asked if using existing data sets for those smaller existing units and merging them would provide reliable data for a bigger unit.

Dr. Walter stated that before any units are merged that is something that would have to be addressed.

Mr. Ela inquired that if the units are merged, we would have to merge them in their entirety in order to salvage the data. Would there be a need to start carving up parts.

Dr. Walter stated he would not advise that, no.

Mrs. Wiley asked for research purposes combine units and still keep the same traditional units in terms of where hunters hunt.

Dr. Walter stated that from a data collection point that would be easy to do. From a management point that might be hard to address.

2. **Greg Kazmierski**, Waukesha, Safari Club of Wisconsin stated that nothing in the report gives the Department rave reviews for their precision and accuracy of population estimates. The Department was complimented as the best in the nation for their efforts to collect data and transparency. However, the panel has serious doubts about the validity of SAK estimates at the DMU level. This raises serious concern since here in Wisconsin, all deer management decisions are made at the DMU level. Immediate responsible action must be taken by the Department to address the recommendations of the expert panel, or once again the Department will not pass the believability test and their credibility will take another step backwards.

Mr. Clausen asked Mr. Kazmierski if he believes the Department's deer numbers.

Mr. Kazmierski stated no. He believes just like the report states. We have a statewide number that is pretty close but he believes there are serious problems at the DMU level and has witnessed it himself. Some years there are deer all over the place and you can not buy a deer tag. Then when there are all kinds of doe tags available, the population is not there. That is what we need to work on. He thought it can be corrected.

Dr. Thomas asked the Board for their direction and comments on this issue.

Mr. Welter for discussion purposes MOVED, seconded by Mr. Clausen approval of Sex Age Kill (SAK) Audit final report, Stakeholders Steering Committee report and recommendations.

Mr. Poulson observed that we have gone out of our way to be sure that we know numbers, but there is still a public perception that there is something screwy going on. He does not understand this but has come to the point where he believes these numbers and listens to the structure which the Department goes through to get to it. He believes the numbers are there and applauds the work that is done in trying to present to the public that the numbers process we have are well done.

Mr. Clausen agreed with Mr. Poulson. The Department has gone out of its way and has done the best it possibly could do. He began hunting in 1958, at that time if he saw 10 – 15 deer a year that was a big deal. The total population back then was half of what our kill is now. At that time, people would talk about how the Department did not have any idea of how few deer there actually were. Things never change.

The motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Thomas stated she has heard from several members the suggestion that the Board has accepted the report, there are recommendations that the Committee has made, that the staff said they will act on some of those recommendations, and that we let the management staff continue. She stated that Mr. Clausen and Mrs. Wiley thought there could be some tweaking.

Mr. Welter stated it would be worthwhile in time terms of probably late summer or fall to hear from Wildlife Management about the extent they have acted in response to this data and recommendations in the report. It is not for us to pick and choose a particular recommendation because there is a fair amount of analysis here that he thought has been interpreted and is being evaluated from the perspective that you have to have understand the strengths and weaknesses in the data. He would like to hear at some point in August or September the extent to which this material is being incorporated or responded to by the Department in order to get us ready for the next season.

Dr. Thomas asked Mr. Warnke what a comfortable timeframe for Wildlife Management to put proposals into place, figure costs, and come back to the Board.

Mr. Warnke stated costing is going to be a longer timeframe. There are research proposals that are being submitted already to address some of these issues and there could be costs in those too. They could report back on fawn:doe this summer. Some of the larger issues might take longer.

Mr. Welter stated he would assume that you would be inclined to look at harvest of 2007, what you are going to do for 2008 season, and so on.

Mr. Warnke stated that there is an established process for changing DMU boundaries in code that occurs every 3 years. He thought the last process concluded in January 2005. After three years, January 2008, the Department will begin that DMU boundary changing process.

Dr. Thomas asked that at some point this summer there be an information item on where you are headed on the various report recommendations with the Board understanding that some things are on a longer timeframe than others.

Mr. Welter stated it would be nice to have a heads up of serious modifications to DMU's.

Dr. Thomas directed staff to keep the Stakeholder committee in the loop so they know what is going on.

3.B.7 (Previously listed as 3.B.3) Request authorization to hold public hearing on Board Order FR-13-07, revisions to NR 46, related to stumpage rates, catastrophic loss provisions and application fees.

Kathy Nelson, Section Chief, Forest Tax, Forest Management Bureau spoke in lieu of Carol Nielsen who could not attend today. She stated that a hearing is being requested to present the proposed stumpage rate changes in NR46, Wis. Admin. Code, including:

1) Annual Stumpage Rate Adjustments. Section 77.06 (2) and 77.91 (1), Stats., require that the department establish stumpage rates (values) used in calculating severance and yield taxes on timber harvested from land enrolled in the Forest Crop Law (FCL) and Managed Forest Law (MFL). This rule would repeal and recreate NR 46.30 (2) (a) to (d) to revise the stumpage values to be used in calculating severance taxes and yield taxes for timber harvested during the period of November 1, 2007 and October 31, 2008. Thirteen separate zones reflect varying stumpage values for different species and products across the state. The average change for saw timber is a 0.32% increase over current rates. The pulpwood prices, on average, would increase 1.52%. Stumpage values are collected from private, state and county timber sales to be used in calculating the proposed stumpage rates. 2) Catastrophic loss (30% reduction in stumpage value) is granted when timber harvested meets requirements set in NR 46.30 (1). The proposal is to reduce the acreage requirement from 10 to 5 contiguous acres and to increase the reduction in stumpage value from 30% to 70% for catastrophic loss granted as a result of fire. 3) Application fee revision resulting from 2005 Act 299. Previously petitions and orders of designation covered all land under the same ownership in the same municipality. Act 299 removed the municipality requirement. All land under the same ownership will be included on one petition. If there is more than one county the order of designation must be recorded in each county. The change proposed would require an application fee of \$20/county on the petition to cover the recording costs in each county.

Mr. Clausen stated that over the years, as he read woodland owners magazines, he has seen several letters of complaint from people not getting for their timber anywhere close to what the Department is saying the stumpage rates are. Has this been looked into or does the way we gather the data takes that into consideration?

Ms. Nelson stated that the average rates most people are paying between 3% – 6% based on their actual timber sale values. The Department does not track why some people pay more or less. Averages are used for reimbursement purposes.

Mr. Clausen MOVED, seconded by Mrs. Wiley approval of request authorization to hold public hearing on Board Order FR-13-07, revisions to NR 46, related to stumpage rates, catastrophic loss provisions and application fees. The motion carried unanimously.

3.B.8 (Previously listed as 3.B.5) Approval of the Buckhorn State Park, Buckhorn State Wildlife Area and Yellow River State Wildlife Area Master Plan

Jeff Prey, Program and Planning Analyst, Parks and Recreation Bureau stated that from a housekeeping standpoint that some of the Board has asked to be involved in state park planning. Typically, the Department has been mailing out the plan for final draft when they mail the green sheet, roughly 30 days before the Board meeting. They respect your request and are going give the Board a copy of the plan at the point that it is in the initial draft before it goes to public hearing. This will be roughly 90 days in advance rather than 30 days in advance. He then introduced Peter Biermeier who will walk through the plan for the Board.

Peter Biermeier, Trails and External Relations Section Chief, park and Recreation Bureau, stated this Master Plan encompasses three separate but adjoining properties: Buckhorn State Park, Buckhorn Wildlife Area A, and buckhorn Wildlife Area B. Together, the properties total 7,101 acres. In addition, two State Natural Areas are designated on these properties. The plan proposes to retain existing recreational opportunities within the park while also adding new facilities to enhance the visitor's experience within this unique setting. Major additions proposed in the plan are: an 80 unit family campground with 40 electric sites, four yurts, two shower buildings, picnic area upgrades, and seven additional miles of trails. Minimal developments are proposed for the wildlife areas. To reduce confusion, it is proposed that the wildlife areas will be renamed with more distinctive names. These name changes will address hunter questions relating to hunting opportunities, seasons, and regulations as they apply to each property. Buckhorn Wildlife Area A will simply be called the Buckhorn Wildlife Area. Buckhorn Wildlife Area B will become the yellow River Wildlife Area.

Several boundary adjustments are proposed between the park and wildlife areas that would make the respective property boundaries more easily understood by the public and to incorporate all existing intensive recreational facility developments, such as campsites, within the park. In addition, an expansion of 1,377 acres is proposed for the park and wildlife area boundaries. If acquired, these new lands would provide areas for expansion of recreational trails and would provide buffers from residential developments.

The public involvement process consisted of two open houses with no major objections expressed about this plan. These open houses were supplemented with two mailings to approximately 240 stakeholders.

The Master Plan can be located at http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/master_planning/buckhorn/.

Mr. Welter stated that when he read through the Plan, it appears that the Department is juggling the wildlife area of the park through the park boundary. The park itself has limited hunting opportunities and the wildlife areas have broader scale hunting opportunities. Can you summarize the upshot in terms of public hunting opportunities by these proposed changes?

Mr. Prey stated that the upshot for public hunting opportunities is that for the wildlife areas, by adjusting the boundaries, it is easier for the public to understand where they can and can not hunt. This is a pretty good balance of opportunities across the 7,000 + acres.

Mr. Welter asked if there are going to be more acres available to the full range of hunting?

Mr. Prey stated yes, especially in the waterfowl areas.

Mr. Ela asked if the Barron's management area is also comprised of natural area.

Mr. Prey stated yes.

Mr. Ela thanked Joe Stecker Kochanski, Park Superintendent for an excellent tour of the park. He

stated it was a very appropriate master plan.

Mr. Clausen stated he enjoyed going around the park and the thing that impressed him the most were the changes they did make did make it easier for hunters to figure out where they are at. As he looked at the different habitat types, the physical makeup of the whole area, this master plan really fits it very well.

Mr. Ela MOVED, seconded by Mrs. Wiley approval of the Buckhorn State Park, Buckhorn State Wildlife Area and Yellow River State Wildlife Area Master Plan. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Citizen Participation – 1:00 p.m.

4.A. Citizen Participation

Public Appearances

1. **Michael Orr**, Waupaca, AIR PERMIT, representing the Town of Waupaca and the Waupaca Coalition for Public Response stated that he wished to demonstrate that the final permit issued 04-RV-189 issued in December 2005 is substantially different than the permit that was presented to the public in August 2005, and which is inconsistent with the public hearing policy. They request the Board review their documents and address their concerns.

Mr. O'Brien asked why he is in front of the Board.

Mr. Orr stated he objects to the permit granted to Waupaca Foundry by the Department.

Mr. Ela stated that he was very sympathetic to his cause, but did not believe the Board has jurisdiction. Firstly, the board is statutorily limited from getting involved in matters of this sort. The law clearly reads that the Board sets policy and the Secretary administers it. Clearly, individual permit situations are at the discretion of Administration. Secondly, the Board does not have the time to look at individual permits, and thirdly, these are highly technical matters that the Board cannot make value judgments on. He suggested that if in fact illegal activity was taking place, you have a legal recourse to go through the court system. If you do not have a lawyer, there are advocacy groups such as Midwest Environmental Advocates that you can contact. He also suggested that he get in touch with his legislator not to have him lobby this Board on a permit, but to reestablish the office of Public Intervener at the Department of Justice which is designed for exactly this type of situation.

2. **Phil Nolan**, Waupaca, AIR PERMIT, representing Waupaca Coalition for Public Response stated he is not surprised by your recommendations. They did do that. They are aware of the recourses and believed this was an opportunity of the citizens to bring this to the Board and wish to advise the Board that matters of permits are not trivial. He believed they have not been significantly or administratively responded to. They will pursue future legal action.

Mr. Ela said he wished to clarify the spirit in which his remarks were made. It was in the spirit to be candid and honest with you.

3. **Ed Harvey**, DEER AND BEAR HARVEST RESULTS AVAILABILITY, Chair of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress. In order to provide the states hunters with more opportunity and time to review and discuss deer and bear harvest quotas, we recommend that Board action be delayed. We understand that deer numbers cannot be available by our Executive Council meeting but we urge the Board to set a policy requiring that these numbers be available for public release by the January Board meeting. If harvest totals and quotas cannot feasibly be provided by the January Board meeting, then we propose the DNR herd status meetings should be postponed until early March, with Board approval of quotas at the April Board meeting. We request that you establish a policy that the Board will review and approve bear quotas at their January meeting, that the Department will hold its quota setting meeting in early to mid-December, and that harvest results are available in early November as they are now.

Mr. Clausen asked if there was time to get a response from Wildlife Management staff.

Dr. Thomas asked Mr. Welter, Chair of the Land Management, Recreation and Fisheries/ Wildlife Committee to refer to staff and then come back with the recommendation as to how

we set up the agenda on this in the future.

5. Board Members' Matters

5.A. Committee Assignments

For the public record, the committees for this next year are:

Environmental

Mr. Ela will Chair the Air, Waste and Water Management/Enforcement Committee with Mr. Clausen and Mr. Poulson as members.

Natural Resources

Mr. Welter will Chair the Land Management, Recreation and Fisheries/Wildlife Committee with Mr. O'Brien and Mrs. Wiley and members.

Dr. Thomas stated that at the last meeting the Board dealt with the CAFO issue. Early in the day, she asked if staff knew how many of the CAFO's that did not already have 6 months of storage were in violation of the environment regulations. At the close of the meeting, she learned that approximately 6 out of the 11 CAFO's that did not have 6 months worth of storage had been in violation of environmental regulations. For the record, had she had that information earlier in the day, she would have voted for the regulation.

6. Special Committees' Reports

None.

7. Department Secretary's Matters

Secretary Hassett distributed and commented on a letter sent by the Department to Wisconsin Hunting, Fishing and Conservation Clubs regarding the importance of Stewardship reauthorization. He then stated the deer baiting and feeding issue is moving quickly, and has generated significant interest. Randy Stark, Director, Law Enforcement Bureau brought this matter before the Board at the December 5, 2006 meeting as part of an information item. This is a significant violations problem for the Department's wardens. Deer hunting is a great Wisconsin tradition and a more than \$1 billion industry in the state.

Unfortunately, the practice of baiting and feeding undermines Wisconsin's way of life and our economy. It privatizes a public resource, putting those who don't own land or can't afford to bait and feed at a disadvantage. It makes deer that come to feed on piles close to cabins or residences prime targets for nighttime poaching. Trophy bucks are often the target. It alters natural movement patterns of deer, often causing them to go nocturnal. It creates conflict between adjacent landowners and hunters on public lands. Baiting-related issues are often at the heart of arguments between hunters.

Furthermore, since Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) – as well as other diseases – can be spread through saliva, high concentrations around bait piles puts deer at a higher risk for catching the disease.

Most recently, many of the boards of leading outdoor groups (including the Conservation Congress, Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, and the Wisconsin Bowhunters Association) are on record supporting a statewide ban on baiting and feeding deer. Many legislators he had visited within the last few weeks are also concerned about the biological and social impacts of baiting and feeding.

These developments come at a time when the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection is concerned about Minnesota and Michigan state agriculture departments dealing with Bovine Tuberculosis. Deer feeding is connected to the incidence of TB in deer in Michigan.

From a scientific standpoint, the Department has long believed a ban on baiting and feeding deer would be prudent. A lot of things are coming together that indicate the time is now to engage this issue.

There has been a lot of momentum generated by the outdoors groups and things could start moving quickly. I believe the Board and the Department should be ready to take a position if legislation is introduced.

He suggested the Board consider directing Department staff to develop a position statement for the Board to take action on next month. Perhaps the ultimate result would be to add this to our Legislative agenda.

Dr. Thomas asked whether we would allow public participation if the Department made a recommendation next month and the Board chose to act. If we take action, are we then able to have open discussion on baiting and feeding?

Mary Schlaefer, Deputy Secretary responded to answering the legal question as a matter of the open meetings law. The Board is not legally required to take public participation on each item. It is at the discretion of the Board. She stated it is her understanding the Boards' adopting practice has been in general to allow public participation. The answer she does not have is whether that is something within the Boards discretion to alter the practice on.

Dr. Thomas stated that they would not essentially be setting policy; the Board would be asking someone else to take up that question.

Ms. Schlaefer stated that her understanding of the Boards' general procedural practice is that when you designated something as an action item, the practice is to allow public participation. It is the Boards' procedure and she believes it would be their discretion to modify or alter.

Mr. O'Brien stated the board has written policy on this. The Board will not allow for public appearances on public hearing authorizations or on information items. When the meetings are held in Madison, Agenda Item 4 - Citizen Participation is held every other month at 1:00 p.m.

Mr. Welter stated there is a tremendous amount of public interest and a lot will want to comment. He stated he would like to have the Board consider a procedure to post a proposal or question and invite comment whether it is in the form of a listening session before the meeting. The Board should consider this opportunity since public comment is valuable.

Mr. Clausen stated that this is a Legislative change and not a rule change. Ultimately this discussion is going to take place at the Legislature. We are not going to solve anything here.

Mrs. Wiley stated that the perception issue is to whether the board is willing to accept hearing from the public. This is a very important issue.

Mr. Ela inquired if public comment could be heard on March 27.

Dr. Thomas stated she had not heard any opposition and will work with Mary Schlaefer to see what we can do in March.

7.A. Retirement Resolutions

7.A.1 Clarence M. Nelson

7.A.2 Allan R. Nelson

Mr. Poulson MOVED, seconded by Mr. Clausen approval of the retirement resolutions. The motion carried unanimously.

7.B. Donations

None

8. Information Items

8.A. Air, Waste, and Water/Enforcement

None

8.B. Land Management, Recreation, and Fisheries/Wildlife

8.B.1 Development of a revised Fish, Wildlife, and Habitat Plan

Todd Ambs, Administrator, Division of Water stated that this briefing was intended to provide Board members with information on the Department's initiative to revise our Fish, Wildlife and Habitat Management Plan - including the schedule for finalizing the updated plan, and an overview of the public involvement approach we will be using. We intend to seek Board approval for the revised plan at the May 2007 Board meeting.

Updating our Fish, Wildlife and Habitat Plan is required in order to continue receiving funds under the Federal Sport Fish & Wildlife Restoration Acts - funds generated from an excise tax on fishing and hunting equipment and from a portion of the federal gasoline tax attributed to motorboats. Funds are apportioned to the states based on the number of people purchasing a hunting or fishing license and based on the size of the state. Wisconsin receives approximately \$18 million annually.

The scope of the Plan is on projects and activities eligible for funding under these acts - along with state matching funds primarily from fishing and hunting license fees. The work accomplished with these funds - and therefore the focus for this plan - includes priority projects and activities related to sport fish, wild mammal and wild bird conservation, and boating and hunter education activities. Given the source of the funds, the primary affected parties include anglers, hunters, recreational boaters, and hunter education students - although conservation organizations and members of the public with interest in fish and wildlife conservation in general, have interest as well.

The Department's Strategic Plan serves as a foundation for the Fish and Wildlife Plan, which is part of a portfolio of many other plans and reports that in combination establish overall direction and priorities for fish and wildlife conservation. The specific strategies and priorities that relate to sport fish, wild birds and mammals, boating, and hunter education - identified through this planning effort - serve as the starting point for the development of specific projects that will become part of the Department's biennial budget and the federal Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration grant programs.

Laurie Osterndorf, Administrator, Division of Land summarized the Department priorities for 2007 - 2013 for facilities, fish, wildlife and habitat monitoring, access and opportunity, conserve species and habitat, conserving our Land Legacy and creating a safe and enjoyable environment for everyone to enjoy our natural resources. The Plan also covers enforcement, sciences and educational programs. These programs will also be involved in the funding source and will be involved in the planning.

Invasive species are a very large threat to the state that the Department needs to classify, target what they can do to eliminate them from coming here, or to stop the spread of invasive species. The Department's timeline for this Plan is to seek Board approval at the May 2007 meeting and then to seek U.S. Fish and Wildlife (FWS) service approval in June 2007.

She stated the Department understands the importance of soliciting comments and recommendations from the public regarding the Fish, Wildlife and Habitat plan. The primary audience invited to participate will be hunters and anglers along with others interested in Fish and Wildlife Management and conservation issues.

Mr. Ela asked to what level of detail does the Plan go into.

Ms. Osterndorf stated that there are two different types of plans that FWS allows for access to this funding. The first type identifies every single project that goes through review and then the money flows from there. The second type is a broad plan that looks at what our goals and objectives are and then we tell them in a broad way this is what we will do to achieve those plans and the executive plan. It is not project by project. The Department prefers the second type.

Mr. O'Brien stated that one of the central elements is public input. How are you going to get people to take part in review?

Tom Hauge, Director, Wildlife Management Bureau stated that the Department is going to, as much as possible, to go to them. Most of the statewide organizations, such as the WI Wildlife Federation, Wisconsin Bear Hunters Association, tend to have their annual gatherings in this window of time. The Department will try to get on their agenda as much as possible to make the presentation and make it easy for them to be involved. The Department also plans on creating working groups at the county level to work as teams and to work with conservation groups in their areas on these issues

Dr. Thomas asked if the Board had seen this Plan.

Ms. Osterndorf stated they are in the process of developing it. The Board will see the Plan in May 2007.

Dr. Thomas stated that the Board would not see this Plan until after everyone else had reacted to it except the Board.

Ms. Osterndorf stated they are in the process of developing the Plan right now. We are not

taking the specific plan out there, but are taking what they are working on to them. We will use what we hear from them and bring back to the Board.

Dr. Thomas asked what the public would react to.

Ms. Osterndorf said they have conceptual information called a working track and would share that with the Board.

Dr. Thomas stated the Board would like to be in on the planning from the start and not just at the finish.

Mr. Ambs stated this is different from what the Department has done in the past. They usually do not have an extensive public input process. Normally, the Department would have something to bring to the Board for approval. This is something they are trying to do above and beyond what the FWS is requiring.

Mr. Ela stated that he would ask the same question he did last month in regard to SCORP. He inquired what the impact of this plan would be on actual policies and programs.

Ms. Osterndorf stated that the Plan does not significantly veer from what has been done in the past.

Mrs. Wiley asked if the Department, relative to public input, is to inform the Board on the meetings and to not only contact the stakeholders group but to reach beyond to include general public that are not part of an organized group.

Mr. Ambs stated this was an excellent point. The Department has a fairly ambitious goal. They are hoping to be able to have some sort of rather robust discussion about this in every county. At the county level, the Department also needs to look at other non-traditional audiences. His concern with general public input is that there is some concern of time and effort in inviting the general public in getting turnout. The Department is grappling with how to do this effectively. The Department is also looking at the ability for folks to comment via the Internet.

Mr. Clausen asked if this is in response to a federally imposed deadline. If so, when is it?

Mr. Ambs stated yes. The deadline is June 30, 2007.

Mr. Welter asked if the Plan will be available on-line.

Ms. Osterndorf said it would.

Mr. Clausen stated that you look back at the Land legacy Plan process, the Department had plenty of meetings noticed and received an extensive response.

Mr. Ambs stated this is an experiment but we are also trying to get more input and also to do some education here as we go forward.

Mr. Welter asked if the Department anticipates this report will address initiatives to encourage access to public and private lands for hunting.

Mr. Hauge stated the Department had identified one of the issues statewide as being portrayed as the changing map in northern Wisconsin. That is a statewide phenomenon. If you go on-line and check the 2001 to the current plan, it has a myriad of objectives and goals. The difficulty as we have our conversations around the state is to try to not get engaged in conversations at the very lowest level like how many pheasants are you going to stock, etc. The Department is trying to have these discussions with the Public to flush out trends and priorities.

Mr. Welter stated if we are talking about this being a blueprint of what the state's priorities are in Fish and Wildlife through 2013, it behooves the Board to look at things that have been suggested and for one reason or another not particularly moved forward, what the Board would see as an unrealized opportunities.

Mr. Hauge stated in reference to the December antlerless deer hunt, if there is a significant issue that arises in this six year period, then the Department would bring in an amendment to the Board. He is fairly confident that this Plan would be broad enough that will not be an issue.

Dr. Thomas stated the Board would much rather have your draft Plan ahead of time to review along with notations on it in how veers significantly from 5-6 years ago. It is difficult to have a meaningful discussion since the Board does not know what the Department is going to do.

Mr. Welter stated especially if the Department says the Plan has not changed much since 2001.

Mr. Ela stated it is a circular problem because you go out with a draft and then the public thinks the Department has already made up their mind.

Mr. Staggs stated that the Board has identified the central problem that the Department is dealing with. If you go out and say "here is our Plan," which is really what we did, then the public assumes it is final. On the other hand, if you go out with a blank slate, then you run into every

issue from stocking wildlife area to global warming which we may not be able to deal with. The Department is trying to do both here. They do have a vision of getting a draft. We do not have one but are in the process of obtaining pieces from different programs. Our goal is to get it out there for people to comment on it if they want. The purpose of the public meetings is to obtain comment and to educate.

Mr. Poulson stated the Department is missing point that the Board would like input on the Plan. How can the Board help with the direction of the Plan?

Ms. Osterndorf stated that is why they are here today. The Department does not have a draft. We will come back to the Board in May for an update.

Mr. Poulson stated this is Federal money and how can the Board help with some of the direction that they are going to be asked to pass.

Mr. O'Brien stated that the PowerPoint outlines a draft Plan. He took that as an idea of what you want to include in the Plan.

Mr. Ambs stated this is the way it has been done in the past, we put together a draft plan asking for comments and then we brought it to the Board for approval. We have not yet done this.

Mr. Welter appreciated your bringing this report to us. We can not help but be curious.

8.B.2 Progress report on antlerless deer harvest goals during two year trail elimination of the October 4-day antlerless hunt

Keith Warnke, Wildlife Biologist, Wildlife Management Bureau distributed handouts to the Board. He then stated that the 2006 deer season rule, WM-29-05, initiated trial hunting seasons with the requirement of harvesting specific ratios of antlerless to antlered deer utilizing a December antlerless only season that was favored by hunters. If minimum harvest ratios identified in Administrative Code are not met then the October hunt is reinstated. The harvest ratio of 1.7 in 2006 was high enough to continue the trial season in 2007. If the average antlerless to antlered harvest ratio in herd control units statewide had been below 1.4 in 2006 then the 4-day October antlerless deer gun hunt would return in 2007. Under that scenario, the start date would be the Thursday nearest October 15 and it would occur in DMUs where a regular season of buck plus quota will not bring the population to within 20% of the over-winter goal.

Mr. Welter MOVED, seconded by Mr. O'Brien to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.