

Wisconsin Conservation Congress
Ex. Council Minutes
Jan. 09, 2009

Meeting called to order by Chr. Ed Harvey at 1:00 P.M. Roll call was taken with all councilors present except for two excused absentees. JoAnne Kuharske and James Wrolstad, both of District 12. Councilors present were Rich Kirchmeyer, Joe Weiss, Al Brown, Ray Smith, Mike Riggle, Roger Sabota, Wade Jeske, Arold Ninneman, Mark Noll, Marc Schultz, Frank Reith, Dave Puhl, Dale Maas, Richard Koerner, John Edelblute, Ed Harvey, Larrie Hazen, Mike Rogers, Ken Risley, Al Phealan, Al Shook, and Rob Bohmann.

Citizen appearances none.

The Chairman's update was next but because of the full agenda and time constraints Chr. Harvey indicated that his comments would appear in the next Congress newsletter. Chr. Harvey did comment on the United States Forest Service roadless area map. We now have a 3-year opportunity to have additional roads put on the open road access plan because of efforts from the WWF and others. He also commented on the efforts by the Congress, the Department and others for a question being forwarded to the spring hearing about the expansion of bobcat harvest zones and the extension of the length of the season to harvest bobcats.

Kurt Thiede gave the liaison's report. He needs to know where and when some of the district meetings will be held. All councilors will have a sample of clothes to display at district meetings. Councilors have the chance to either sell the items there, or return them to Kurt at the annual meeting. You must collect the money for the clothes you sell at the district meetings. An order form will also appear in the *Conservation Chronicle*. An update on how many counties are getting reimbursements was given. A few more counties are paying for some or all of delegate expenses. Conservation Lobby Day will be Feb. 25th, anyone interested should attend. You have a chance to meet your legislators and tell them what your priorities are on conservation issues and what they should support. The national Pheasant Fest will be in Wisconsin this year, it will be held Feb. 6th-8th. Lee Fahrney is the event organizer for the Congress and is in need of a few volunteers. The WCC Wall of Fame will be present at the event. The Wall of Fame has had some improvements over the past year. Mike Reiter donated a large display of skulls. Larry Bonde made boxes for all the displays, and wardens have donated numerous mounts. As a result of the new boxes, we anticipate less damage to the specimens. Each district should bring raffle items to the annual meeting for our raffle which gives us monies to pay for hospitality rooms, booths at expos, and such other expenses which we incur throughout the year. The next newsletter will be going out in Feb. We hope all county chairs turn in their reports on conservation organizations in their counties so as our newsletter can be sent to them. This serves more than one purpose. It tells them what we are doing, upcoming events and also asks them to nominate either their club or people from their club to receive awards from the congress like the educator of the year etc. Around 3,000 copies of this issue will be sent out. We will have a few 75th anniversary

items for sale at the convention, pins, coins and some clothing items. The planning committee decided that we should have a commemorative coin vs. a belt buckle for the 75th. We would like some donations of money, food and such for the hospitality room at the convention. The speaker for the annual convention will be Ken Salway (author of the book, 'The Last River Rat') He will talk for 30-40 minutes. Mark Schultz made a motion to have Ken Salway as the convention speaker 2nd by Al Phelan. Motion passed.

Chr. Harvey acknowledged Dave Clausen from the NRB was present.

The mission statements of the individual committees were discussed. Most statements were very well written and well versed explain the mission and purpose of the Committee. Motion by Mike Riggle to accept mission statements as presented. 2nd by Arold Ninneman. Motion passed.

Larry Bonde gave a report on the Stewardship Advisory Committee where he represents the WCC. Right now hunter access to private lands is the number one problem. There are 29 people on this committee representing all facets of the outdoor interest groups. While most stewardship properties are open for hunting, fishing and trapping, some properties that are purchased with Stewardship Grants are not always open to all nature based activities. There are occasionally disagreements about the intent and permitted uses for the property. In most instances, where there are arguments, most properties have user problems not safety problems.

Rich Kirchmeyer gave a report on the Learn-to-Bear-Hunt tag that the WCC is being offered this year. Motion by Frank Reith to accept the tag from the DNR. 2nd by Al Shook. Motion carried.

A proposed code of procedure change was discussed. Resolution # 190408 dealing with requirement that any resolution that passes by a 2/3 vote in any one county automatically goes on the following spring questionnaire.

Comments:

Dave Puhl - Will the committee still have to write up the question for the spring hearing.
Yes

Mark Noll - The resolution must be practical and have subjective matter. Would it be necessary to have a 2/3 vote state wide. No

Dale Maas - We expect the committees to do their jobs, also take faith in our committees.

Dick Koerner - So, a 2/3 vote by any county allows the resolution to go to spring hearing. This means a committee doesn't have to deal with it. Committee must write question for spring hearing so in a way they must discuss it.

Larrie Hazen - Authors will still have a chance to address the committee to tell their reasons for the resolution, so the committee will know exactly why they wrote the resolution.

Arold Ninneman - People from his county want resolutions from his county to go to the spring hearings.

Roger Sabota - We definitely don't want to go the route a legislators went last year and by pass the people.

Al Shook - Encourages study committees to be more thorough and not to take some questions off because of personal beliefs, especially if it originates from your area.

Joe Weiss - doesn't support the resolution because it by passes what a committee is supposed to do.

Mike Riggle - Wants committees to be responsive to the resolutions and what the author has to say.

Dave Puhl Motion to reject. Dale Maas 2nd. Motion carried.

Ron Roettger gave a report on the awards committee. He needs nominations for the Educator of the Year, so far he doesn't have any. We need to make sure every delegate at the district meetings checks to verify his/her years of membership on the congress. This will be the last chance for delegates to assure they have the years right for any future longevity awards. We will be awarding a certificate for 10 - 15 years, beyond that, service pins will be awarded.

Tony Grabski, Secretary of the Ad-hoc CWD committee gave a report on the DNR's CWD 10-year plan. He explained some of the things the Congress's CWD committee recommended:

#1 Elimination of the sharp shooters

#2 Eliminate the Jan. 1st to March 31st land owner season

#3 Just a 9 day season, no Oct. hunt, Dec hunt, or Holiday hunt

#4 Definitely will not accept the departments 10 year plan as written.

The committee was disappointed in the response time it took DATCP to act on contaminated deer farms. Their response was they did the best they could with the resources available, actually better than some other states. The CWD plan is scheduled to go to the NRB in Feb for approval.

Tom Hauge gave an update on the departments CWD plan and would like the congress to approve the plan.

Questions/ Comments:

Ken Risley - I'm worried about the movement of the transportation of infected deer being transported north.

Dale Maas - Where are we going in the future? What control efforts are being done and which are working best? Who is responsible for enforcing infractions? Who needs more tools or power to control the spread of CWD?

Al Brown - The image of the department using sharpshooters is not good especially when they use bait this doesn't seem ethical to some people. There should be no transporting of carcasses out of the CWD zone.

Rob Bohmann - Use of sharpshooters is a big problem. Season structures are becoming more acceptable to some people.

Tom Hauge - The plan itself doesn't prescribe seasons. The Department would like to minimize where CWD is now and in the future. We would like to keep sharpshooters as part of the plan. This plan does tell people where we want to be in the future.

Dick Koerner - What is going to be done with deer farms that collect urine for making scents. Some of these farms may have contaminated deer. This could definitely have a chance of spreading CWD.

Tom Hauge - This possibly could be a concern but DATCP thinks the industry will demand that every thing is free of contamination. The department is going to ask that all such facilities have to be CWD tested.

Mark Schultz - These cervid farms are the biggest threat to us, they have the greatest possibility of transferring the disease to the wild herd or other captive herds.

Mike Riggle - Farms are strictly regulated. Every 16 months they have to be tested. All animals that are shot or die must be tested.

Al Phelan - made a motion that the congress's big game committee must have a chance to look at this plan more closely and approve of or disapprove of it as a whole or parts so the congress can take a position on the plan. 2nd by Roger Sabota. Motion passed.

Motion by Rob Bohmann to delay the presentation of the DNR's 10-year CWD plan until the June NRB meeting so the congress can develop a position on the plan once the final 2008 deer season harvest numbers are in. 2nd by Ken Risley. Motion carried.

Dinner Break

DNR Sec. Matt Frank made comments to the Ex. council. Some of the main topics were:

Great Lakes Compact

CWD Plan/Baiting/Feeding

Bear- new population data raising the estimated bear population

Wolves- The disappointment of having them relisted as endangered by a federal judge

Chequamegon-Nicollet National Forest Road closures

Questions/Comments:

Dale Maas -Wind generators, the speed in which they are taking over the landscape is a concern

John Edelblute - WI should look into nuclear power plants

Dick Koerner - Rosendale dairy. How is the department going to deal with a 8,300 dairy herd and its waste products?

Tony Grabski - CWD 10 year plan

Chief Warden Randy Stark provided the DNR Law Enforcement (LE) update. There was an eight member warden recruit class in 2008. There will be no recruit class for 2009, but hopefully for 2010. There will be a number of openings in the warden force as possibly 20-24 more wardens will be retiring in the next 2 years. The violators compact was signed and there are 31 states signed onto it so far. The wardens are trying to keep all deer farms in compliance with state fencing laws. There are currently about 620 game farms in the state, 505 are whitetail operations. In 2008 there were 58 escape events which involved 168 animals, of which 110 animals were recovered. That is only a 65% recovery rate. LE has increased its water guard patrol to try and help the stop the spread of aquatic invasive species. DNR staff have taught hunter education instructors in the Hmong and Spanish speaking communities firearm safety so the can teach their own people. 27,245 people graduated from hunter ed. programs in 2008. 966 youths and 957

mentors participated in LTH programs in 2008. The gun deer seasons were pretty much normal. People complained of less deer. Fewer young hunters. Lots of bears sighted. There were only 9 accidents reported with 1 being a fatality, that equates to 1.4 accidents per 100,000 hunters. Nine felons were arrested in the field, 8 intoxicated, and 4 hunter harassments. Urban sprawl is really putting pressure on where hunters used to hunt or can't hunt now. The use of laptop computers has really helped wardens with enforcing the regulations. 9 wolves were shot, 5 with collars that were found and another 4 that had collars that have not been found. Rifle use did increase in SE Wisc. in the old shotgun only area. 7 townships enacted shotgun only ordinances.

Questions/Comments:

Scott McAully - Many people are fraudulently using EAB qualifications (multiple reg. of an antlerless deer) Some reg. stations just give you a tag and you apply your own tag.

Stark - Make sure you are reporting those instances so we can follow up on them.

Dale Maas - It seems very hard for some DA's to get convictions and also Judges to enforce penalties.

Dale Maas made a motion that the WCC start an awards program rewarding DAs who do an extraordinary job bring violators to court and getting them prosecuted when dealing with conservation issues.

2nd Mark Schultz. Motion carried.

Tom Hauge talked about wildlife issues within the department. Right now they are having staffing and funding problems. There will be local DMU meetings held throughout the state later this winter. The department will be doing a waterfowl management program review and participating in a nest research project this spring. There now are 7 new turkey zones for the 2009 spring hunt. They are going to do some studies on sharptail grouse and prairie chickens. Habitat and populations are on the decline, and they may be transplanting some birds from other states. The farm bill does not help keep lands in CRP. The state has lost 70,000 plus acres previously enlisted in CRP in the last 9 months. They will definitely be watching and monitoring infectious diseases such as CWD, TB, and West Nile Virus. Their plan to continue educating people, promoting and participating in the youth expo, LTH programs, NASP, and the state fair. The state is very happy with the bear study and the new estimated bear population. The elk herd is growing and we are still looking at being able to hold an elk hunt in the near future. The deer harvest was down but we don't think the hunt was a disaster. We will be helping to monitor and protect state endangered species such as the whooping cranes. We will also continue to help promote former endangered species such as the osprey and trumpeter swam – real wildlife success stories. Pine Marten transplanting took place this past year and it looks like this went off good.

Questions/comments:

Dale Maas - As more stewardship dollars are spent on properties how is the Department going to manage these properties mainly for hunter access and such.

Hauge - usually we don't have much of a problem managing these new properties if we involve local interested groups.

Mike Staggs gave a briefing on the fisheries program. There were \$1.4 million in license sales last year bringing in around \$2.75 billion into the state. The Wild Rose Hatchery is coming along good, the cold water portion is done, and some remodeling of buildings has been completed. Completed an access point in LaCrosse county, trout habitat project on the tomorrow river, and helped fix Lake Delton. The fisheries program has lost a few key personal, and they are going to lose more because of retirements.

Scott Loomans DNR Wildlife questions for spring hearing:

- 1) Definition of open waterfowl hunting; concealment with vegetation.
- 2) Extend fall turkey season; Monday after gun deer season until Dec 31st.
- 3&4) Bobcat seasons proposal; 3 new zones, 24 hour call-in reg., closure of season when quota is met
- 5) Define legal firearm types for hunting; firearm types include compressed air or gun powder as part of description.
- 6) Left-over turkey permits; removes the first come first serve requirement.
- 7) Register wild turkey; by telephone
- 8&9) Disabled turkey hunt holders; use of electronic calls, hunt from vehicle
- 10) Hunt turkeys with dogs; state wide fall season
- 11) Sharp-tailed grouse; register harvest by mail
- 12, 13, 14, and 15) Wildlife regs. (Mead Wildlife) closure of hours 1:00P.M. 16 days. No water fowl hunting prior to season, increase size of Townline Res./Berkhahn Flow.

Local questions

- 1) Stock hen pheasants; Sand creek fisheries area
- 2) Rifle use in Dunn co.
- 3) Rifle use Shawano co.
- 4) Fire arm use in Potawatomi State Park.
- 5) Fire arm use in Whitefish Dunes state park.
- 6) Rifles use in Hartman Creek state park
- 7) Wildcat Mt. state Park; antlerless only season with occasional buck season
- 8) Brunet Island state park; no late season archery season
- 9) Cadiz Spring state park; eliminate state park season, allow normal hunting seasons
- 10) Nelson-Trevino river; eliminate closed area to hunting.
- 11) Dike 17; reduce size and allow trapping and firearm deer
- 12) Vernon Marsh; reduce size of refuge.
- 13) Lake mills Wildlife area; 1:00p.m. closure for waterfowl hunting.

Mike Staggs DNR fisheries Questions:

- 1) Background checks; volunteer angler ed. inst.
- 2) Minnows/VHS; rules regarding harvest and possession.
- 3) Remote controlled devises; remote controlled boats for fishing
- 4) Crayfish harvest: fishing or small game lisc. req.

5&6) Fishing rules dealing with flowages, sloughs, etc.; define the boundaries of the Wisc. river.

7) Early trout; eliminate barbless hook.

8) St Croix Nat. River mussel harvest; no harvest and no dead shells

9) Beaver Dam lake Barron co.; 18 in. size 3 daily bag (walleye).

10) Long Lake Vilas co.; 18 in. size 3 daily limit (walleye).

11) Dead Pike lake Vilas co.; 18 in. size 3 daily limit (walleye)

Local Fisheries Questions

12) Bearskull, Owl, Fisher, Upper Clam and Lower Clam, and upper and lower Springstead lakes; 15 in. size for walleye. (Ashland/Iron co.)

13) Trout fishing; no alternate year opener for Nympha, Overby, Little Star, and Beaver Lakes (Bayfield Co.)

14) 26 Lake; no size, 5 daily bag. (Burnett co.)

15) Silver lake; 32 min. size, 1 daily bag. northern pike (Manitowoc co.)

16) Burrows lake; 18 in. size 1 daily bag limit. Bass (Oneida co.)

17) Wisconsin river; walleye regs. change below St. Regis dam. (Oneida co)

18) Big Round lake; 18 in min size 3 daily bag walleye (Polk co.)

19) Manley Creek; 9 in max size, 5 daily bag, trout (Sauk co.)

20) Big Sand lake; min. size to 50 in. musky (Vilas Co.)

21) Kentuck lake; min. size to 50 in. musky (Vilas co.)

22) Long lake; min. size to 50 in. musky (Vilas co.)

23) North /South Twin lakes; no size limit, no fish 14-18 in., 1 over 18 in., daily bag of 3 (Vilas Co.)

24) Long lake; extend open season for trout. (Waushara co.)

Conservation Congress advisory questions:

1) Buck fawn ID; ID buck fawns in deer reg. Motion to accept by Bohmann 2nd by Maas Motion carried

2) Private land deer hunt (antlerless only) Motion to accept by Maas 2nd by Shook Motion carried

3) No EAB, no Oct hunt, no Dec. hunt. A motion was made to eliminate Dec. from the question. Motion 2nd. Motion carried. Motion to accept without December by Sabota 2nd by Hazen Motion carried

4) Muzzle loader seasons; 10 day start Dec. 22nd. or 16 hunt start Sat. before Christmas Motion to accept by Weiss 2nd by Shook Motion carried

5) EAB; Mgt. unit only 2 years EAB then 1 year without Motion to accept by Maas 2nd Ninneman Motion carried

6) Deer reg. info; change to add more info on sex/age of deer Motion to accept by Bohmann 2nd by Weiss Motion carried

7) Express deer pop. by sq. mile. Rejected Does public know what deer range is, would then include municipalities/lakes, state statute says by the sq. mile of deer range Motion to reject by Shook 2nd by Sabota Motion carried.

8) Archery hunting during gun deer season (archery lisc) Motion to accept by Weiss 2nd by Puhl Motion carried.

- 9) Allow magnifying scopes on muzzle loaders Motion to accept by Maas 2nd by Rogers Motion carried. (Noll Against)
- 10) CWD zone ; no WDACP permits for antlered Motion to accept by Rogers 2nd by Bohmann Motion carried (Noll & Brown against)
- 11) Remove wood chucks from protected species list; allow harvest with lisc. Motion to accept by Sabota 2nd by Rogeres Motion carried
- 12) Issue multiple deer back tags. Rejected to many opportunities to let others use tags Motion to reject by Puhl 2nd by Maas Motion carried.
- 13) Turkey hunt with use of dogs; restrict how dogs are kept and what you can hunt or not hunt Motion to accept by Koerner 2nd by Maas Motion carried
- 14) Unfunded mandates; DNR demanding testing and purification processing Rejected for the most part contamination levels are low no testing needed. Motion to reject by Koerner 2nd by Maas Motion carried
- 15) Tree stands on state lands; allow stand as long as being actively hunted Motion to accept by Koerner 2nd by Hazen Motion carried
- 16) \$3 bobcat application fee; used for studies Motion to accept 2nd by Kirchmeyer Motion carried
- 17) Coyote season; allow coyote hunting in wolf mgt. zone 1 in deer gun season. Motion to accept by Weis 2nd by Kirchmeyer Motion carried
- 18) Extend weasel trap check to at least every 4 days; hole less than 2 in. pan or trigger no closer than 4in Must be in a enclosed in box. Motion to accept by Puhl 2nd by Ninneman Motion carried
- 19) Bob cat baiting prior to season; use of bait/lure prior to season opener Motion to accept by Puhl 2nd by Ninneman Motion carried
- 20) Yellow perch fishing; close grids 1901,1902, and 2002 to commercial fishing Motion to accept by Koerner 2nd by Shook Motion carried.
- 21) Over 65 use of ATV on state lands; \$5 fee 65 yr. and older to use ATV on state lands on established vehicle trails. Motion to accept with wording changed by Smith 2nd by Risley Motion carried
- 22) Sturgeon spearing; allow 12-13 year old to spear Motion to accept by Shook 2nd by Edelblute Motion carried
- 23) Wildlife hearings; no hunt/fish reg. can pass legis. without public hearings and DNR input. Motion to accept by Weiss 2nd by Reith Motion carried
- 24) Free ice fishing weekend. Motion to accept by Shook 2nd by Edelblute Motion carried
- 25) Youth hunts; allow 16-17 year olds into youth hunts. Motion to accept by Bohmann 2nd by Ninneman Motion carried
- 26) Under 12 hunting; allow under 12 to hunt if passed hunter ed. at beginning of season. Motion to accept by Shook 2nd by Hazen Motion carried
- 27) Tainter lake (Dunn Co) Walleye change size and bag limit. Rejected Motion to reject by Reith 2nd by Weis motion carried (No discussion)
- 28) Pheasant chicks; where pheasants can be released. Motion to accept by Reith 2nd by Shook Motion carried
- 29) Turkey stamp; create upland game stamp so more species can receive funding for habitat improvements. (Mike Rogers disagreed) Motion to accept by Reith 2nd by Shook Motion carried (Rogers rejected)

- 30) Allow Atlatl for small game hunting. Motion to accept by Phelan 2nd by Noll Motion carried
- 31) 54 in. size limit on musky; Lake Michigan north of Waldo Boulevard, Manitowoc, Sturgeon Bay, and the waters of Green bay proper, the Fox river upstream to DePere dam. Motion to accept by Weis 2nd by Sabota Motion carried
- 32) Green Bay northern pike; catch and release for northern pike for the 30-40 in range, daily bag of 5, 1 over 40 in. Motion to accept by Weiss 2nd by Reith Motion carried
- 33) Remove the size limit on Bass in Burnett Co. Motion to accept by Reith 2nd by Shook Motion carried
- 34) Chippewa flowage crappie; daily bag of 2 from Dec. 1st- first sat. in March. Motion to accept by Weiss 2nd by Reith Motion carried
- 35) Large mouth/smallmouth Bass; separate management and regulations for these species. Motion to accept by Weiss 2nd by Sabota Motion carried
- 36) Size limit for bass(Washburn co.) nom size limit on bass for 5 years. Motion to accept by Puhl 2nd Shook Motion carried
- 37) Walleye in Petenwell/Catle Rock flowage; reduce daily bag limit to 3. Motion to accept by Weiss 2nd by Reith Motion carried
- 38) EAB alternative; shorten buck harvest opportunities and lengthen antlerless opportunities we would still use EAB qualifications. Motion to accept by Noll 2nd by Sabota Motion carried

Member Matters:

Rob asked what could be done about the questions that passed spring hearings last year but were not included in the departments questions this year because they were rejected by the department for some reason or other. The questions were about the ability to change the buck only tag for youth to an either or permit, the ability to use archery equipment during the gun deer season while using a firearms license, and the ability to quarter a deer before removing it from the field. Al Phelan made a motion to ask that the NRB request that the DNR reconsider questions 46, 47 and 50 from the 2008 spring questionnaire.(previously. discussed proposals above) 2nd Rob Bohmann. Motion passed.

Motion by Mike Rogers to ask the NRB that the DNR reconsider the colony trap question (#56 2008 Spring hearing) 2nd Larry Hazen Motion passed.

Mike Rogers made a motion to adjourn, 2nd by Dave Puhl. Motion passed.
Meeting adjourned 11:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Rich Kirchmeyer Sec.