State of Wisconsin
Department of Natural Resources
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Wisconsin Conservation Congress
Fur Harvest Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes

WCC Meeting Minutes

ORDER OF BUSINESS	09/21/2019	9AM	Mead Wildlife Area Visitor Center

I. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

A. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by	Ed Harvey at 9AM

B. ROLL CALL

ATTENDEES	Thomas Avis, Duane Butler, Tom Bartz, Randy Symicek, Scott McAuley, Mike Nicholson, Justin Loehrke, Matt McHugh, Scott Zimmerman, Ed Harvey, Dan Cichantek, Miles Narveson, Wayne Stietz, Kelly Tollefson, Scott Lettman, Larry Meyer, Rick Desotell, Scott Schoenike, YCC Delegate - Avery Lettman, Nate Kroeplin WDNR, Shawn Rossler WDNR, Nathan Roberts WDNR, Curtis Twellmann WDNR
EXCUSED	Sandra Naas, David Louis, Maegan Loka, Richard Clark, Thomas Hanks, Hugh Hatch, Thomas Savage
UNEXCUSED	
GUESTS	Robin Cornell, Miles Narveson, Gerald Houtler, Amber Hunter, Barb Eisenberg, Patricia Hammel, Steven Warren, Lois Lehmann

C. AGENDA APPROVAL/REPAIR

DISCUSSION	Noted challenges of having meeting this late. Sorry about confusion of the call that came yesterday. Glad everyone was able to make the commitment.
ACTION	No action taken

D. REVIEW COMMITTEE MISSION STATEMENT

DISCUSSION	Mission statement read
ACTION	No action taken

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS

DISCUSSION	Chair Harvey noted Mikii (sp?)from Baraboo had called to say they were going to come to comment, but was not in attendance
ACTION	None

II. INFORMATION & ACTION ITEMS

A.

1.

Ban furbearers from being killed by wire noose on a pole (choke pole) 410719	Author Robin Cornell
DISCUSSION	Author noted idea came from watching Nat Geo program where bobcat was killed with catch pole. Doesn't think urban population supports. Committee noted issue with wording as body-grip caught animals are already dead. Discussion revolved around the use of catch poles to release animals unharmed which would deal with footholds. Danger with bobcat without an arm and the carotid artery. Would be tough to enforce and could create citations for accidental death on release. While many on the committee didn't feel like this was widespread, education of the public should be able to address any concerns. Awesome release tool for incidentals and the tool is needed.
ACTION	Dan C motion to reject, second by Duane. Motion carried unanimiously
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

2.

Change the opening day for muskrat season statewide to 6AM	Ed Harvey
DISCUSSION	Mike Widner - Author Not Present. Ed noted similarities in this question with upcoming questions. Kari felt there was enough difference to handle separately. Committee has been getting resolutions on this over the years. Was 9AM and now 6AM. This would be statewide. Some on the committee noted that private is not an issue. We didn't think it was a safety issue when we removed hours. Those that start at 12:01 are done before the duck

	hunters come out. Less conflict. No matter when it opens, some will have challenges with it. Noted again that this movement continues to grow and continues to pass by large margins. At some point we will want to address or likely lose our voice on it.
ACTION	Dan C motion to reject, Scott M second. Motion carried
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

3.

Change the opening time for muskrat season to 6:00 AM	Larry Meyer,Gerald Houtler,Miles Narveson
DISCUSSION	Larry provided some context to why this keeps coming back. Most folks only trap a few weeks at the opener which puts pressure on making sure it works for the most folks. This is why we have opening day on a Saturday. Admits that he does take advantage, but it penalizes kids as it is tough for them to make it out there in the middle of the night and the easy stuff is already set up. Also major safety issue. This goes back to when we eliminated trapping hours. It has passed in all counties that it has been introduced and by good margins. Committee thinks that we probably need to advance something at this point or likely lose our influence on the resolution. Questions arose on the intention of the different resolutions. All authors in attendence agreed that intention was only for opening day and on public land.
ACTION	Rick D motion to advance, second by Wayne. Motion passed.
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

4.

Change the opening time for muskrat season to 6AM on Public lands 230319	Author not present
DISCUSSION	This is same resolution as advanced.
ACTION	Rick D motion to advance, Wayne second. Motion passed unopposed.
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

5.

Change the submersion set	Gerald Houtler
DISCUSSION	Author wanted some clarification on submersion set to ensure set accomplishes what is intended as animal can be in trap longer. Two parts to it. The rules intent and enforcement interpretation. How do you enforce with incidentals. Mink set and you catch a coon so you will lack depth needed. WM noted they are working to clean up the language. Likely not needed as this is being address. Question came up that advancing question might actually slow down the clean up as it doesn't exactly match up perfectly.
ACTION	Dan C motion to advance, Rick D second. Motion failed. Justin L motion to support but not advance, second by Scott Z. Motion carried
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

6.

Designate a large furbearing mammal weight and measurement record	Amber Hunter
DISCUSSION	Amber said she became aware that WI didn't keep records when she caught a record skunk. WI is one of the top producing areas in the world but unless DNR has the program, they can't be certified. Places like Missouri, Iowi, and Indiana have programs.
ACTION	Duane B motion to advance, second by Matt M. Motion carried unanimously.
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

7.

Small Furbearer mammal weight and measurement record to WI	Amber Hunter

DISCUSSION	This is the small mammal resolution to match the large mammal one.
ACTION	Randy S motion to advance, second by Kelly T. Motion carried unanimously
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

8.

End Killing Contests	Barb Eisenberg
DISCUSSION	Author talked about contests not helping with conservation issues and in her opinion was not ethical with lots of animals in short period of time. Other states are advancing same type of legislation and was worthwhile of a statewide vote. Currently the bill is in committee and not likely to come out. This bill would impact all kinds of hunting contests--field trials, big buck contests, etc. Chair noted that similar resolution was given to legislative committee and they didn't advance. Many of these contests do a lot for the local community and are already regulated by the normal regulations. Major coyote contests donate proceeds from coyotes to take kids out hunting. Taking excess coyotes benefit species. This doesn't impact fishing tournaments, but could impact sturgeon boards. Just like fishing, contests are used to promote underutilized resources and to gain new participation. Goal needs to be to increase participation at this point as these folks need licenses too.
ACTION	Duane B motion to reject, second by Matt M. Motion carried unanimously
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

9.

Establish a seasonal hunt of coyotes	Lois Lehmann/Patricia Hammel
DISCUSSION	Author feels this resolution fits with the mission of committee on fair chase. State has trapping season and coyotes can provide value for nest raiding predators. Depredation can increase with larger harvest of coyotes. Would need to harvest 70% to have any biological impact on species. Majority of folks are only hunting during period of the year where they have value. Higher harvest seems to make them healthier. All the coyotes in current CWD study, none have died of mange, etc. Creating a season makes dealing with nuisance more challenging. Right now we have outdoorsman that are talking with public about the value of waiting to harvest if possible. Discussion about impact of wolves. As wolves go up, typically coyotes go down, but it doesnt appear we are seeing this. Research noted 50% mortality on collared coyotes. None due to disease. Folks are not hunting in any number outside of trapping season or we would be hearing from the outdoor community. Until hunting grows more in popularity and folks are going outside of when they carry value, creating a season is likely to drawn significant backlash and likely to decrease the value and public perception of the resource.
ACTION	Scott Z motion to reject, second by Duane B. Motion carried unanimously
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

10.

Extend the late bobcat permit period to Feb 15.	Ed Harvey
DISCUSSION	Ed provided some additional feedback that was provided by author. As it stands today, the northern zone late period takes 10 points to draw. Southern takes 3. Fisher was extended about a week and we had pretty big increase and went over quota. The department has done a nice job of getting wait periods down. While bobcats can breed throughout the year, more likely in Feb. Success rates in late season tend to be pretty high which does help a little with season extension--have less tags available. Most are filled and you have less to start. Fisher has a pretty low success rate so more permits out there that can use the extension.
ACTION	Scott M motion to advance, second by Scott Z. Motion failed. Scott M motion to reject,second by Scott Z. Motion carried.
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

11.

Increase the length of time cable restraints can be utilized.	Robert Hauser
DISCUSSION	Very easy and inexpensive tool to use. Also incidental friendly. Committee discussed amending to include wolves, but decided it wasn't worth including at this point.

ACTION	Mike N motion to advance, second by Scott M. Motion carried unanimously	
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE		DEADLINE

12.

Trappers access to trap navigable waterways within the state of WI		Steven Warren
DISCUSSION	Author noted that he scouts places while duck hunting and fishing. While he is legally allowed in these places for those other activities, but he needs permission from landowners to trap. Discussion about the Public Trust Doctrine and how it is interpreted Also challenges on public/private and where the line is. Can be a tough inforcement issue. Would be good to see if the public supports trappers having same access at other activities.	
ACTION	Scott Z motion to advance, second by Dan C. Motion carried.	
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE		DEADLINE

B. Bobcat,fisher, and otter harvest results & update — Nathan Roberts

DISCUSSION	River otter- 2 zones N/S Quota 2000 statewide and specie is doing well. State Harvest was 1466, 16 Tribal 616 North, 830 South, 155 incidentals 2019 2000 quota. Everyone that applied for permit, received one. Some received two. Fisher consolidate of zones - 2 zones N/S. additional days added as part of legislation. We did go over quota 1044 vs 985 quota. 600 South, 385 North 64 Tribal. 2019 Quota - 300 North, 600 South. Bobcat North/South Zones with Early/Late season for both. Quota in north has gone up recently. 225 in 2016, Last three years at 550. All indicators are healthy and sustainable. Southern was open in 2014 with quota of 50. 2019 will be 500. Will be looking at Catch effort and age struture and collared cats. Added three more this week. Havent been as successful with trappers in Southern area on getting incidental cats. Tribal harvested 34 cats all in North. Cats using about 20 sq mile territory.	
ACTION	None Taken	
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE		DEADLINE

C. Otter Season Framework. — Shawn Rossler

DISCUSSION	Likely the last year trappers will need to apply for otter as we are moving to a 2 bag limit next year. Still will maintain quota on harvest.	
ACTION	No action taken	
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE		DEADLINE

D. Fur Tagging and Registration — Shawn Rossler

DISCUSSION	Department is looking at moving to harvest authorization for fisher and otter and away from pelt tags. Bobcat would still maintain pelt tags to deal with group bagging concerns. Also looking at moving to subsample for carcasses. The small sample group selected to turn in carcass (jaw/repro) would still receive a carcass tag letting them know they needed to turn in the required jaw/carcass. If need 75 female carcasses, then like need to sample 300 to get big enough sample.	
ACTION	No action taken	
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE		DEADLINE

E. DNR Rule Proposals — Shawn Rossler

DISCUSSION	Trapping on beaver dam- fall 2020. Incident coon in beaver traps taking similar path. There is also housekeeping rule for bait/lure in nuisance damage work--not actual rule proposal. Many didn't realize it was not allowed but no reason to prevent use so department cleaning up. Also marten protection area will add Apostle Islands area with marten detected on majority of islands. Will also allow weasel boxes with proper hole size and footholds with 4lbs of pan tension in marten restoration zones.	
ACTION	No action taken	
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE		DEADLINE

F. Trapper Education — Curtis

DISCUSSION	Jim Binder is the new WTA Education Coordinator. They put a running list of all classes on the WTA website. This allows folks to be able to plan better. GoWild has the available classes and where students sign up. They can also fill out the form if they can't find a class that works for them. Another successful year as they graduate about 1000. Even Il that has an online class that takes 45 minutes is only graduating 400. Really want to keep hands on approach as it appears to be working well and not limiting recruitment.	
ACTION	No action taken	
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE		DEADLINE

G. Research Update — Nathan Roberts

DISCUSSION	81 bobcat caught, 75 collared. huge sample size. worked with trappers that incidentally caught them. Department only caught 3-4 animals and rest were incidentals caught by 58 trappers. Annual survivorship needs to be >60% to keep population sustainable. Was at 75%. With the adjusted quota that has been at 68%. In south, 32 bobcat but department has done more trapping. 3 out of 20 traps this past week. Also collared 69 coyotes. Coyotes home range about 9 sq miles vs bobcat of 20 sq miles. Coyote survivorship is about 50%. Would need to see 30% or less to see any impact. All coyote mortality human caused, none for disease. River otter - used to fly and look for tracks. Only thing that determined if they saw tracks was ice thickness so survey lacked confidence. Looking at bridge surveys and that is looking promising. Volunteer based and would be adopt a bridge model. Also looking at beaver/trout control. With anything we spend a lot of money on, we want to make sure we are meeting goal. 30 streams that will be looking at control--one allowing beaver back in and others removing plus some just control streams. Question about how you can account for different fishing variables that come into play with harvest and possibility of beaver dams congregating fish so more likely to be harvested.	
ACTION	No action Taken	
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE		DEADLINE

H. LE Update — Nate Kroeplin

DISCUSSION	Class will be ready mid Oct. Due to part time folks they were able to speed up the process for them. Very few incidents. Major issues included violations on trappers part. One illegal snare and one 220 violation. 800 Tip line for otter should be cleaned up.	
ACTION	No action taken	
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE		DEADLINE

I. Question regarding addition of a badger season — Ed Harvey

DISCUSSION	Fur Harvest Committee advanced a question on badger last year but it was rejected last year by leadership over concerns for what the public response might be in Dane County. Discussion followed on if we should bring this

	back. Trappers are requesting it and the entire state should have an opportunity to provide their input. Every surrounding state has a harvest season and this provides an opportunity to create value for a furbearer in WI.
ACTION	Scott Zimmerman made motion to advance question as written last year, seconded by Scott M. Motion carried unanimously.

PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

III. MEMBERS MATTERS

DISCUSSION	Reviewed challenges of scheduling meeting this late. Group agreed that we should shoot for August 22 next year. Questions about the 3 colony trap resolutions and the status of each. Scott M noted he was taking out a kid with bobcat trapping in South so appreciates any help on locations. Members of committee are encouraged to reach out to District councilors on the badger question.
ACTION	No action Taken

IV. ADJOURNMENT

MEETING ADJOURNED	**2:05PM**
SUBMITTED BY	**Justin Loehrke**
DATE	**09/21/2019**