Wisconsin Conservation Congress  
Big Game Study Committee  
Meeting Minutes

ORDER OF BUSINESS  
March 23, 2013  
9 AM  
Mead Wildlife Area Visitor Center

I. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS  
A. CALL TO ORDER  
MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY  
Co- Chairman Mark Noll called meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

B. ROLL CALL  
ATTENDEES  
Alan Horvath, Alan Gerber, David Hraychuck, Roger Sabota, Mike Riggle, Tony Janecek – Secretary, Arold Ninneman, Jerry Aulik, Mark Noll – Co Chairman, Pearl Holmstadt, William Yingst, Stan Brownell, Marlin Laidlaw, Allen Jacobson, Larry Gohlke, Doug Seidl, David Pagel, Larry Bonde, Larrie Hazen, Joe Caputo, Al Phelan – Co Chairman, Martin Haas, Kevin Wallenfang – WDNR Liaison, Dave Zebro - WDNR Liaison, Kevin Mickelberg – WDNR Liaison

EXCUSED  
Jerry Merryfield, James Morning, Wright Allen, Terri Roehrig, Charlie Brown

UNEXCUSED  
None

GUESTS  
Eric Lobner District Wildlife Supervisor & SD Deer Trustee Coordinator, Jared Duquette WDNR Deer Leader

C. AGENDA APPROVAL/REPAIR  
DISCUSSION  
Eric Lobner Deer Trustee presentation move to action item #5 following Elk Program overview

D. REVIEW COMMITTEE MISSION STATEMENT  
DISCUSSION  
"The Mission of the Big Game Committee of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress is to represent the citizens of Wisconsin by blending the social and biological concerns of hunters, citizens and the Department of Natural Resources to provide successful management of Wisconsin’s big game animals addresses the interests of all parties."

ACTION  
Chairman Noll asked & received no changes to the mission statement.

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS  
DISCUSSION  
None

ACTION  
None

II. INFORMATION & UPDATES  
A. DEPARTMENT INFORMATION ITEMS & UPDATE  
1. 2012 DEER SEASON REVIEW – KEVIN WALLENFANG  
DISCUSSION  
Kevin stated the 2012 buck harvest was up 10% & antlerless harvest up 3%. He noted the North numbers were down & the South numbers were up  
Archery harvest totals were 45,988 bucks, 47,243 antlerless & 1036 unknown for a total of 94,267. The
North was down & the other areas of the state were up.

Gun harvest totals were 119,469 bucks, 152,587 antlerless & 1991 unknow for a total of 274,047. Gun buck in the North were down but other areas in the state were up.

Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD) was a problem in the Southern part of the state with somewhere up to several thousands deer died from this disease. Kevin noted the disease is dependent on drought. Conditions with mud flat areas were perfect for disease breeding areas.

CWD had 6 new positives outside the CWD Management Zone. He stated ½ the counties in the state now have a CWD baiting band due to positives in the area. He noted baiting band is a legislative matter.

Deer Donation Program in 2012 was 3055 deer donated (137,500 pounds) up from 500 in 2011. Top counties were 1. Buffalo, 2. Dane & 3. Pierce.

Disable Hunting Season had 93 sponsors (99 in 2011), 75,392 acres & a minimum of 437 hunters.

2. 2012 DEER SEASON REVIEW (LE PERSPECTIVE) - KEVIN MICKELBERG / DAVE ZEBRO

Dave Zebro was introduced noting he was replacing Mark Burmesch & would be giving his LE perspective from the North.

Kevin Mickleberg passed out a Law Enforcement Season Overview handout. He highlighted the following items:

- 7 incidents in the year
- doing less drives has helped to reduce accident incidents
- mentor hunting paying good dividends
- arrest same as last year (baiting #1)
- hunter attitude was good
- gun case law being used by hunters & did see an increase in loaded firearms in cases
- increase in buildings shot (a Sheriff Department issue)
- Kevin noted that the use of rifle has shown to be less dangerous than shotguns in that shotguns usually are shot multiple times much like swing shooting at birds & with rifles with scopes normally shot less.
- technology of smart phones being used for checking hunting hours app while in stand along with taking pictures in the field, texting, etc. It was suggested that a DNR app be established for walleye regulations on ceded lakes. Larry Bonde noted the WCC needs to reach young through smart phones

Kevin noted there are presently 40 DNR vacancies & there is a recent hire class of 18 warden. He also noted Chief warden Randy Stark will retire in October 2013.

Mike Riggle stated the DNR needs to establish an enhancement penalty for illegally shooting trophy deer.

3. ELK PROGRAM OVERVIEW - KEVIN WALLENFANG

Kevin stated there were 25 elk put in Wisconsin in 1995 (Clam Lake) & since that introduction they learned the following:

- genetic richness will decline
- elk cling to best habitat
- predators impact
- existing elk will struggle

Amendment to the elk plan:
• assist in dispersal
• supplemental increase needed
• boundary / goal modifications
• predator impacts
• tribal

Need DNR Board Approval:
• to allow increase in elk
• expand Clam Lake elk range
• modify boundary & goals
• increase bringing in elk from 35 to 75

He noted they want 200 elk at Clam Lake & to establish a Black River population at a minimum of 75 elk.

Kevin noted they would like to bring in elk from Kentucky at approximately 50 per year. The DNR had 5 public meetings, 155 participants & 95% support of their elk plans. They also had internet surveys with 86% overall support, 83% local support & 2600 participants for their elk plans. Public concerns were health, access, other priorities, predators, costs & crop damage.

Kevin stated the new elk area in Black River Falls will not close roads in this new elk area because of the elk. As for an elk hunting season Kevin said the estimated 2013 elk population model was 175 with 200 needed for a hunt, therefore no elk hunt will be held this fall.

4. IMPLEMENTATION OF DEER TRUSTEE REPORT (DTR) – ERIC LOBNER

Eric passed out a handout from the first DTR meeting on March 9, 2013. He said there were 62 DTR recommendations with action teams established to shape these recommendations for implementation.

Eric briefly discussed DMAP (Deer Management Assistant Program) in that it may provide extra permits but is not mini hunts.

Additional handouts were passed out of the DTR implementation process, a get involved info card & a copy of the Deer Trustee Implementation Survey. Next DTR Meeting is April 6, 2013 in Stevens Point to establish ground rules, prioritize items & review background.

The following are meetings & agenda.

DISCUSSION
• April 27th & May 18th - review survey results & develop action items
• June 8th - mid process check-in
• June 29th - action item development
• July 20th - wrap up & report out
• July 20th to August 26th - Rule Development Process
  > tribal consultation
  > rule writing
• September 24th & 25th - NRB meeting
• Late October 2013
  > formal public hearing
  > tribal consultation
• December 10th & 11th - NRB Meeting
  > review public comments
5. **DEER RESEARCH PROJECT STATUS - JARED DUQUETTE**

**DISCUSSION**

Jared discussed updates to buck mortality & fawn survival, 2013 captures and the future of the deer research in the two study areas in the North (near Winter) & in the South East (near Clintonville). The research teams were using 50 X 50 drop nets, clover traps & box traps instead of helicopters which did not work out. In the North 111 bucks were radio collared & in the South East 103 bucks were captured.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fawn Survival Study</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northern Forest</td>
<td>Eastern Farmland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 radio collared</td>
<td>94 radio collared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38% survival</td>
<td>63% survival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63% predators</td>
<td>40% predators</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2013 Winter Captures</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 adult bucks</td>
<td>32 adult bucks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39 button bucks</td>
<td>46 button bucks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95 does</td>
<td>55 does</td>
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</tbody>
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**Future Of Research**
- buck mortality – 2 more years
- fawn survival for 2013 is funded, future ????

6. **PROPOSED 2013 DEER SEASON STRUCTURE - KEVIN WALLENFANG**

**DISCUSSION**

Key themes for 2013
- listening
- conservative quotas in the North
- herd growth in forest regions
- herd reduction in farmland
- realistic permit numbers
- growing concern in the South with lots of deer

2013 Winter Severity Index is mild to moderate. Kevin did note that if this winter continues to drag on it could have an effect especially in the north.

Kevin said he did not have a Preliminary 2013 Deer Season Map at this time. He said in most aspects it will be like 2012 with no October hunt, 4 day December statewide antlerless hunt, etc.

III. **MEMBERS MATTERS**

**DISCUSSION**

Al Gerber – spring hearing booklet choices never include stay the same
Allen Jacobson – said people live with season structure in his unit
Joe Caputo – talked about his concern with wolves
Larry Bonde – said thanks for those who attended public deer meetings
Roger Sabota – talked about non resident fees
Tony Janecek – said, per Kroll Report, deer range needs to be updated on a timely bases to establish proper season structure based on current deer per square mile
Martin Haas – has seen a different DNR management
Jerry Aulik – said since 1999 wolves have wipe out his deer finding 9 wolf kills this year in his corn field, he said will not plant corn again & the wolves are devastating the deer herd in Langlade County
Arold Ninneman – concern major land owners control everything, would like to see where, when & how we hunt
Stan Brownnell – encouraged by hunters attitudes
Larry Gohlke – wants 7 day cooling off period before running dogs
Marlin Laidlaw – said he still had a few Buck & Bear books available for schools
Al Horvath – found 6 wolf kills in one day , deer are important in the North & asked why sportsman are
the ones that pay for wolf damage
Larry Hazen – DNR has no provision for status quo on spring questionnaire
Al Phelan – more people satisfied the department is listening to them, also additional antlerless permits were clarified in the Kroll survey

IV. ADJOURNMENT

| MEETING ADJOURNED | 3 PM |
| SUBMITTED BY      | Tony Janecek |
| PDATE             | March 30, 2013 |