

DAC MEETING MINUTES
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2008
SCHMEEKLE RESERVE VISITOR CENTER
STEVENS POINT

DAC members in attendance: Werner Burkat, Tom Zimmer, Jim Rutledge, Dave Stinson, John Mitchell, Dave Lato and alternate Dale Petkovsek.

DAC members absent: Steve Johnson, Joe Greene, and John Kocourek.

Others in attendance: Jerry Schick, Terry Towns, Bob Cleveland, Kevin Ammons, Tiffany Martin, Butch Seaman, Andy Janicki, Kelly Frawley, Carl Mesman, and Julie Amakobe

Chairman Burkat called the meeting to order at approximately 10:05 a.m.

First item to address was the agenda. Chairman Burkat asked that the letter he had written regarding the special hunts be added to the agenda after the awards ceremony.

Jim Rutledge made a motion to accept amended agenda. Dale Petkovsek seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Next item addressed was the review of the minutes from September 19, 2008, held at Buckhorn State Park. Tom Zimmer indicated that on page 6, 4th paragraph, the first sentence should be amended for clarification and should read “Johnson addressed the DAC with regard to allowing *a person to participate in* more than one special hunt per year”. Tom also mentioned that on page 6, 5th paragraph, the word “exposed” should be changed to “vulnerable” and thus the sentence should read “In this situation even though the heart and lungs are *vulnerable* he was denied a Class A permit”.

Dale Petkovsek made a motion to accept the amended minutes. Jim Rutledge seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Next item on the agenda was buck tags for disabled hunts and regular gun deer season. Tiffany Martin and Butch Seaman representing Badger Mining Corporation came to speak about this issue. Badger Mining Corporation (BMC) has special hunts on their properties in Fairwater, Taylor, and St. Marie. The BMC started sponsoring the October disabled hunts in 2001. They were inquiring if it would be possible for a disabled hunter to use a buck tag during the disabled gun deer hunts and also during the regular gun deer hunts in November. They wish to have separate buck tags for October and November. Carl Mesman indicates that this would require a legislative (statutory) change and this change would take at least 3-5 years to pass. Carl also points out that there will likely be resistance from the bow hunters and gun hunters alike. Carl also let everyone know that there is a different Natural Resources Committee now and that they may be more receptive since both houses are democratic. Ms. Martin and Mr. Seaman were advised to

find a legislator to introduce the bill, but before that they should talk to Keith Warmke of the DNR Wildlife Management program to see what his opinion is. Also talk first to Wisconsin Bowhunters' Association; they are most likely to be resistant. The Conservation Congress was also suggested and any deer organization. It was suggested that they stress it is "good for the disabled and that the impact is miniscule". It is the perception that will be difficult to overcome. Another avenue to pursue would be an administrative code change to the existing Ag Damage permit to allow the harvest of a buck under the Ag Tag. This would restrict the area, but would have a faster approval process. DNR's Wildlife Manager(s) will need to approve the permit, how many, when, etc. and the Federal Agricultural staff (AFIS) will need to administer the permit. The code change would look something like "...will allow/authorize the harvest of bucks by disabled hunters on an Ag. Tag..." The crossbow hunters may oppose this since they can't get extra buck tags. One could do the Ft. McCoy federal disabled hunt and this would allow for an extra buck tag.

The next agenda item was also brought forth by BMC and this was the spring turkey hunt exception. The spring turkey hunt exception would be to use the tag a second time and could they open it up to go "any season" (5-day period). This would be an administrative code change. This change would allow disabled hunters to participate in more than 1 hunt –both gun deer and turkey. Currently there are 50 permits per unit for disabled hunts. This is going to the spring hearing and the change would allow for 1,000 tags for the entire state for the disabled turkey hunters.

Dave Stinson commented that he was the first person in 7 years to ask for a disabled turkey tag at the Janesville Service Center. He stressed that the DNR needs to get this information out to the public. It was noted that the special spring turkey hunts are described on the web and in the pamphlets. Werner usually goes out to various hunting organizations and lets them know about the special hunts, etc.

Dave Stinson also brought up the issue that when the extra turkey tags went on sale over the counter in March 2008, that the leftover disabled tags were not specified. Persons with disabilities and the appropriate disabled permits could not get leftover disabled tags, only general public tags. Carl Mesman said this is a question for Tom Van Haren policy advisor in the Bureau of Law Enforcement. There could be ALIS (computer) issues involved. Also, how can DNR guarantee the disabled permits (leftover) will be used on private land with no other hunting? This will take an administrative code change to make the extra tags designated "disabled" and "regular" (open to public). Language change could use the time period. Need to track 1,000 disabled permits through ALIS. Carl will sit down with Tom Van Halen and see what can be done logistically. He will also contact Chuck Horn who is the turkey representative for the Conservation Congress.

Next the Council discussed allowing for more than one special hunt per year. It was noted that there should not be a big opposition to this rule change. Some reasons given for the proposed change are as follows:

Put in for a hunt and there is a "crop change".

One is unsuccessful and he/she wants to hunt another area.

There is a deer limit or other restriction per hunt. Jim Rutledge mentioned that the DAC is on record as approving this change. Two major questions arose during the discussion. How many sponsored hunts do we currently have? How many of these hunts are filled up? Andy suggested that all of the sponsors on the list be asked if there are any vacancies for their hunts. Julie is to find the meeting minutes where DAC approved this administrative change and give them to Jim.

Next, Carl Mesman gave an update on the Hartman Creek State Park special hunt. Carl showed some pictures. Three hunters participated and unfortunately there were no deer harvested.

Next on the agenda was the DAC Award presentation. Chairman Burkat read the nomination for former DNR Secretary George Meyer. George was presented the 2007 Outstanding Service Award which he gratefully accepted the award and gave a nice speech thanking the DAC for all the work they do.

The next item to be discussed by the DAC was Werner's letter. Werner read his letter out loud to get a discussion started. The letter Werner wrote concerned allowing persons who did not have the traditional special hunt permits (Class A, long term Class B –shoot from vehicle or Class C permits) to be allowed to participate in the disabled hunts if it were necessary to have the need for a vehicle to transport special equipment, etc. For example a long term Class B – crossbow or regular crossbow permit holder that wanted to participate in the special hunts using a gun, but could not utilize the gun without additional assistance. Carl indicated that Class B's are the most difficult to determine. Does the Council want to remove "mobility" out of the special hunt requirement and allow all disabled permit holders to participate? The special hunts would then include long term B crossbow, trolling, and regular crossbow permit holders.

Other discussions commenced. Carl Mesman pointed out that Class B permit holders are not always the same. A person can sometimes travel a long distance and sometimes only short distances. Jim Rutledge mentioned that the October hunts do have merit by having the ambulatory requirement because it is easier for those persons with ambulatory problems to get around in early October than late November. Dale Petkovsek wanted to look at it on a case by case basis. If a Legislator gets involved, he/she will ask the DAC for a position on this.

Dave Stinson made a motion that the DAC table this issue until the next meeting in order to gather more information. Andy Janicki will survey the sponsors of the special hunts to find out how full the hunts are and other pertinent information. Jim Rutledge seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Tom Zimmer volunteered to follow up with the gentleman that came to the last meeting and talked on behalf of the young boy who has deformed arms and wanted to participate in the gun deer special hunts. Tom will explain how this can be done without opening up a can of worms.

Next, the DAC discussed an e-mail Carl had received regarding a person who was not legally blind, but has poor eyesight. This person wanted a crossbow permit, but couldn't get a Class B cross bow permit because his/her upper torso is ok. The crossbow was easier to use than a traditional bow because of his poor eyesight. It was concluded that since the person did not have any upper torso disabilities, that DNR could not issue the crossbow permit.

The next topic on the agenda was the potential new Class D permit for the developmentally disabled. Carl pointed out that the cognitively (developmentally) disabled can not currently participate in the special gun deer hunts. He had received news that nine cognitively disabled hunters were participating in this event and had to tell them to stop. He suggested an alternative to the special gun deer hunts which would be to have these groups participate in "learn to hunt" events. It was asked how they can do this. They can hunt in a regular hunt and should have an assistant. They must first pass hunter safety. Carl also indicated that creating a new permit (for example a Class D permit) would take a statutory change. On the other hand, with the "learn to hunt" program there is no age limit and the hunts can be held anytime like the one held at Hartman Creek. An applicant could say they need to take the "learn to hunt" program over and over again. The "learn to hunt" program is restricted to 2 days.

Jim Rutledge made a motion to table this issue until next meeting due to the fact that the two people who wanted this agenda item, Steve Johnson and Joe Greene, were absent. Tom Zimmer seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Next item on the agenda was the Council name change proposal. The proposed change would be "Disabled Advisory Council" to "Disability Advisory Council". Andy felt disabled council had the connotation that the Council itself was disabled somehow not necessarily its members. Andy said it was a fairly simple procedure. He needs to write a memo to the Secretary's office. This is needed because the name of the council is in the DAC charter. Tom Zimmer was in agreement with Andy. Steve Johnson was not present to defend his proposed name change. Steve's proposal was a much longer name. Andy felt that the Council should leave it as DAC so the acronym is the same.

Jim Rutledge made a motion to accept Andy Janicki's Council name change. John Mitchell seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Next on the agenda was the DAC updates.

Dave Stinson - Dave let the Council know that he has moved to Janesville for the winter. He will still be involved with Fishing has no Boundaries event in Hayward that will be held on the 3rd Friday, Saturday, and Sunday in May.

Jim Rutledge - Jim said they he is going to pick up his deer head in Montana at the Beaver Creek Rendezvous. He also said the special hunt which he sponsors had 5 participating hunters, but no deer were harvested because it was too warm.

Dale Petkovsek - Dave's special gun deer hunt had 66 participating hunters and 96 deer were harvested.

Andy Janicki - Andy told the Council that he is working on a new brochure with all of DNR's accessible outdoor recreation. He is also working on the motorized vehicle on state land permit/form. Andy informed the council that he is trying to get more accessible kayaks at DNR facilities like the one at Devil's Lake.

Carl Mesman - Nothing to report.

David Lato - Dave let the Council know that he was successful and got a buck this year. He also was an assistant at one of the special hunts.

John Mitchell - John informed the Council that the Adaptive Sportsmen will be hosting an indoors 3-d archery event during March in Union Grove. In addition, there will be a turkey hunt at Badger Army Ammo Plant. Blackhawk is open and allows crossbows anytime. Lastly, there will be a pheasant hunt in April in Kenosha County.

Tom Zimmer - Nothing to report.

The next meeting will be held on April 3, 2009, at the DNR Service Center located in the state office building in La Crosse.

Dave Stinson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jim Rutledge seconded the motion and all were in favor.