

Game Mgmt Advisory Council

March 1, 2014

Members in Attendance: Gregg Bafundo, Lee Davis, Dave Duncan, Warren Gimlin, Ken Harris, Dean Holecek, James Horan, John Magart, Terry Mansfield, Rob McCoy, Shawn McCully, Darrell Moore, Mark Pidgeon, Paul Schneider, James Stephenson, BJ Thorniley, Jake Weise, Jan Patricio

WDFW Staff: Chief Crown, Donny Martorello, and Dave Ware

Alternates: Al Martz, Jerry Barron

Welcome and Introductions: Meeting called to order at 9:00 am; the membership list was passed around for updates.

Approval of the June 28, 2013 Minutes: Postponed adoption

Approval of December 14, 2013 Minutes: Bobbie Thorniley moved to adopt the December minutes; approved unanimously.

Meet-n-Greet with Chief Crown: Introduction of Steve Crown, WDFW's new Chief of Enforcement. He mentioned that former Chief Bjork retired after 44 years, but is still actively working on 24-hour monitoring of DWI. Steve was raised in Idaho, his father was a rancher and all of his family were active hunters. Ultimately, Steve became an enforcement officer in Washington.

One of his priorities is to improve the relationship between sportsmen and fishers and hunters. One way to do this is through hiring practices and Chief Crown is committed to hiring the best people possible as officers. The main way to accomplish this is to ensure they are interested and passionate about fish and wildlife, but also good well-rounded people who are knowledgeable of technology. Steve invited GMAC members to view the Enforcement Facebook site through WDFW's web page. Steve has been involved in the hiring of over 45% of the current officers in the agency and it has been a very diverse group of recruits.

Chief Crown supports the Hunter Education program and recruitment of hunters. He discussed the Enforcement omnibus legislative proposal to strengthen penalties and rules to address significant fish and wildlife crimes where current fines do not appear to be sufficient to deter these types of crimes. Laws for dealing with wildlife trafficking are also being strengthened. The Chief expressed concern

about what the legalization of marijuana will mean to illegal growing operations on public lands. He showed a new recruitment video for officers and discussed the dangers that fish and wildlife officers face.

Discussion: Support for Chief Crown's emphasis on fishing and hunting issues rather than traffic stops; some of the new officers seem to be gung ho and view everyone as a violator. The Chief was asked if there are ticket quotas for officers. Chief Crown said there are many measures of performance and, at times, there are expectations including quotas for an individual officer. The new legislative request (Enforcement Omnibus Bill) does not include cougar in the wastage law and it should. Sometimes folks selling licenses give hunters the wrong information, including WDFW staff, does Enforcement work with them to give out better information? -- not very often. Do you prefer objective fact collectors or those who may be emotionally involved? -- prefers those who are calm and those that ensure the safety of all those in a setting and also be able to judge the level of the contact and keep things calm and fluid.

Overview of Proposed 2014-15 Hunting Season Adjustments:

- ❖ Touched on highlights of third year of three year package.
- ❖ Main changes for licensing – small game, special species, deer, elk, persons of disability.
- ❖ Replacement licenses – created several deer combinations at reduced prices.
- ❖ Small game recommendations include – increase possession to three times on migratory birds; move September goose season to weekends; increase bag limit of geese in Pacific County.
- ❖ Special species recommendations include – normal permit adjustments; add hunting on Olympic Peninsula; normal adjustments to bighorn sheep permits; add moose permits for US Air Force school; and change Master Hunter permits to any moose.
- ❖ Deer seasons recommendations include – (see PowerPoint slides).
- ❖ Elk seasons recommendations include – (see PowerPoint slides).
 - Discussed confusion between meeting herd objectives in St. Helens and hoof-rot disease.
 - Discussed how many permits will be issued in the Colockum.
- ❖ Hunters with disabilities recommendations include – (see PowerPoint slides).
 - Petition filed to the Fish and Wildlife Commission asking for delegation of special use permits – ADA Committee.

Discussion:

- Dave discussed the process for violations of special use permits by persons of disability.
- Discussed potential abuse of special use permits for crossbow.
- Discussed GMAC review of pamphlet and timing of when regulations come out.

Antler Point Restrictions to Achieve Population Management Objectives:

- ❖ The Mule Deer Working Group is largely opposed to antler restrictions. However, it depends on the objectives that are trying to be met; it has helped in many areas in Washington.
- ❖ Illegal kill is one of the major reasons that states do not support antler point restrictions.
- ❖ Support for GMU 117 and GMU 121 is because of population issues, the return of buck harvest; hunters are coming back. Would like to see the return of any buck for youth, seniors, and persons with disabilities. Would like to see 4-point continue.
- ❖ Many things often work together to result in population declines.
- ❖ Antler point restrictions are often the lesser of evils. Shortening of seasons or going to permits only would not be supported either.
- ❖ Coyotes and other predators causing lower fawn/calf survival, but this may be the new normal.
- ❖ Discussion concerning going back to any buck because shift of hunters to other units.
- ❖ This is a hot issue. There are trade-offs and there is the need to make an informed decision. Human population impacts and issues generally mean less opportunity.
- ❖ Colorado divides hunters by making them pick one of four seasons.
- ❖ Youth, seniors, persons with disabilities.

Review of Alternative State Point Systems for Drawing Special Permits:

- ❖ Much discussion concerning the drawing system and parts of each system that people like. Some systems combine max point systems with bonus point systems.
- ❖ A motion was made to develop objectives for permit drawings, seconded by Dave Ware. Motion passed with one opposed.

Future Agenda Items for 6/7/14 meeting (Ellensburg, WCA mtg room):

- Review/approve June 2013 meeting minutes.
- Overview of proposed 14-15 hunting season adjustments
- Wolf Population Update
- Hunter Access Program Update – esp. Reservation System
- GMP Update
 - Hunter Recruitment and Retention Committee Update
 - Cougar Management Section
 - How do we deal with predator issues and impacts on prey species
 - Predator/Prey Guidelines
- 2015-17 Three-Year Package—(June meeting)
 - Review of GMU117/121 4-pt restriction