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**“GREEN SHEET”**

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**Meeting:** January 7-8, 2011, Commission Meeting in Olympia

**Agenda Item #4:** Advisory Committee to the Commission for Persons with Disabilities – Briefing

**Staff Contact:** Brenda Kane, Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Program Manager, Human Resources

**Presenter:** Bill Vincent, Chair, Commission’s Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities

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**Background:**

In 2001, the Legislature passed Engrossed Substitute House Bill 1655 directing the Fish and Wildlife Commission to appoint seven volunteers with disabilities to serve on an advisory committee as a pilot program. Following the 2004 Commission recommendation that the committees be continued, the Legislature extended the program and made it permanent in 2009. The Commission has provided regular reports to the Legislature, which are required at least once every four years. Reports have been completed twice (December 2004 and 2007), and the next report is due on December 1, 2011.

The Commission’s Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities generally represents the interests of disabled hunters and fishers on matters such as special hunts, modified sporting equipment, access to public lands, and hunting and fishing opportunities for persons with disabilities.

The Advisory Committee works closely with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife’s Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Committee, which is chaired by Brenda Kane, the Department’s ADA Coordinator, and consists of one representative from each program and region with alternates assigned by the lead committee member. Also included on the ADA Committee are members from the Recreation and Conservation Office, the Department of Natural Resources, and the Parks and Recreation Commission.

The Advisory Committee differs in composition from the Department’s ADA committee, because state employees from natural resource agencies serve on the Department’s. The Commission Advisory Committee is comprised of constituents from each region who have disabilities. Working closely with the Department’s ADA Committee, the Advisory Committee Chair has presented items of interest to the Fish and Wildlife Commission that eventually led to rule-making decisions beneficial to the state’s disabled hunters’ and fishers’ community.

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**Policy issue(s) you are bringing to the Commission for consideration:**

Committee statute: RCW 77.04.150, Disabled hunters and fishers – Advisory committee – Composition – Terms – Pilot project – Report to the legislature.

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**Public involvement process used and what you learned:**

The Commission appointed the two most recent members in early 2010. Previously, appointments were made in 2005, 2006, and 2007 and 2008.

The Committee has met quarterly since 2001, and has been holding its meetings via conference call since July 2010. The Committee's effectiveness and high level of participation are due in large part to the hard work of its Chairperson, guidance and dedication of Department staff and collaboration with the Department's ADA Committee.

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**Action requested (identify the specific Commission decisions you are seeking):**

None at this time. The Commission will consider approving the next report next Fall for submitting to the Legislature by the December 1, 2011, due date.

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**Draft motion language:**

N/A

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**Justification for Commission action:**

RCW 77.04.150, Disabled hunters and fishers – Advisory committee – Composition – Terms – Pilot project – Report to the legislature.

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**RCW 77.04.150****Hunters and fishers with disabilities — Advisory committee — Composition — Terms — Pilot project — Report to the legislature.**

(1) The commission must appoint an advisory committee to generally represent the interests of hunters and fishers with disabilities on matters including, but not limited to, special hunts, modified sporting equipment, access to public land, and hunting and fishing opportunities. The advisory committee is composed of seven members, each being an individual with a disability. The advisory committee members must represent the entire state. The members must be appointed so that each of the six department administrative regions, as they existed on January 1, 2007, are represented with one resident on the advisory committee. One additional member must be appointed at large. The chair of the advisory committee must be a member of the advisory committee and shall be selected by the members of the advisory committee.

(2) For the purposes of this section, an individual with a disability includes but is not limited to:

(a) An individual with a permanent disability who is not ambulatory over natural terrain without a prosthesis or assistive device;

(b) An individual with a permanent disability who is unable to walk without the use of assistance from a brace, cane, crutch, wheelchair, scooter, walker, or other assistive device;

(c) An individual who has a cardiac condition to the extent that the individual's functional limitations are severe;

(d) An individual who is restricted by lung disease to the extent that the individual's functional limitations are severe;

(e) An individual who is totally blind or visually impaired; or

(f) An individual with a permanent disability with upper or lower extremity impairments who does not have the use of one or both upper or lower extremities.

(3) The members of the advisory committee are appointed for a four-year term. If a vacancy occurs on the advisory committee prior to the expiration of a term, the commission must appoint a replacement within sixty days to complete the term.

(4) The advisory committee must meet at least semiannually, and may meet at other times as requested by a majority of the advisory committee members for any express purpose that directly relates to the duties set forth in subsection (1) of this section. A majority of members currently serving on the advisory committee constitutes a quorum. The department must provide staff support for all official advisory committee meetings.

(5) Each member of the advisory committee shall serve without compensation but may be reimbursed for travel expenses as authorized in RCW [43.03.050](#) and [43.03.060](#).

(6) The members of the advisory committee, or individuals acting on their behalf, are immune from civil liability for official acts performed in the course of their duties.

(7) Beginning December 1, 2011, and again at least once every four years, the commission shall present a report to the appropriate legislative committees detailing the effectiveness of the advisory committee including, but not limited to, the participation levels, general interest, quality of advice, and recommendations as to the advisory committee's continuance or modification.

[2008 c 294 § 1; 2005 c 149 § 1; 2001 c 312 § 1.]

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RCW language retrieved from the Internet 12/22/2010 at:  
<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=77.04.150>