

**MINUTES OF THE CHURCHILL COUNTY
ADVISORY BOARD TO MANAGE WILDLIFE**

**155 N. Taylor St., Fallon, NV 89406
June 21, 2023**

Call to Order:

The regular meeting of the Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife was called to order at 7:00 PM on June 21, 2023.

PRESENT:

Member Peggy A. Hughes
Member Jim Curran
Member Jason Sibley
Member Andrew Howells
Deputy Clerk to the Board Pamela D. Moore
Member Timothy Gubler

ABSENT:

Pledge of Allegiance:

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the board and public.

Public Comment:

Chairwoman Hughes asked if there was any public comment but there was none.

Verification of the Posting of the Agenda:

It was verified by Pamela D. Moore, Deputy Clerk to the Board, that the Agenda for this meeting was posted on the 15th day of June, 2023, between the hours of 2:00 and 4:00 PM at all of the locations listed on the Agenda, in accordance with NRS 241.

Consideration and possible action re: Approval of Agenda as submitted or revised:

Member Jason Sibley made a motion to approve the Agenda as submitted. Member Andrew Howells seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Consideration and possible action re: Approval of Minutes of the meeting held on:

A- March 8, 2023.

The Minutes of the meeting held on March 8, 2023 are presented for the board's consideration and approval.

FISCAL IMPACT: N/A

EXPLANATION OF IMPACT: N/A

FUNDING SOURCE: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: Accept

Member Jason Sibley made a motion to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on March 8, 2023 as presented. Member Jim Curran seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Appointments:

A- Update on Nevada Department of Wildlife's fisheries regulation changes in the future.

The Nevada Department of Wildlife will provide an update on Nevada Department of Wildlife's fisheries regulation changes in the future.

FISCAL IMPACT: N/A

EXPLANATION OF IMPACT: N/A

FUNDING SOURCE: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: None; Informational Only

Kris Urquhart, from the Nevada Department of Wildlife, said there are several changes we want to make for our September meeting. We want to get some feedback from you on some of the proposed regulation changes before we make the final draft language for those. The biggest conversation we would like to have is regarding the possession limit addition, so changing just our limit of fish to a daily limit and a possession limit of fish. That will basically be double the general limits for the region. It doesn't apply to special limits in any waterbody that, for instance, has a zero fish limit. That will remain a zero fish limit. For general waterbodies that don't have any special regulations, this would apply to all of them. It would double the daily general possession limits.

Regarding our small game regulations, like chukar and ducks, this possession limit is basically the same as for fish. It is to help initially with the confusion among a lot of anglers about how many fish they can keep, like when they are camping. We just have a limit of fish, so if they catch their limit, can they fish the next day or not. If they go to a different waterbody, can they continue to fish if they already have their limit of fish? This will help in that respect, as well as make it a little more liberal so people can keep more fish. They can keep their daily limit one day and can go out and catch their limit the next day. Some of the specific situations that will need some clarification may just be like a public notice type thing, so if you are fishing in one waterbody and you catch your daily limit, it will apply to that waterbody. You can go to another waterbody and catch your daily limit there and, as long you remain under your possession limit of 10, you are still legal. Once we get feedback from everybody, we are also going to be bringing this to our law enforcement division and go over this with them too. We want to make sure we are not missing anything or it is interpreted differently than what we are anticipating. Member Curran said did you say that this would only apply to the general fishing limits? Kris Urquhart said it will apply to all the water bodies but it is double the general limits. For a place like Kingston, where you can keep two trout over 16 inches, you can keep your two trout that day and then go back and fish the next day and keep your two trout but your possession is only four but you can go fish somewhere else and catch 5 and keep them and still be under your possession limit of fish for the weekend. If I want to fish in Kingston and catch a couple of fish there each day and then have my daily limit from Kingston, I can go down to North Pond and keep 5 more. The other conversation that has come up so far, I don't know about Washoe County yet, but with Humboldt, Mineral, and Douglas Counties, there was conversation about

when the fish goes from a possessed fish to a preserved fish and it no longer counts towards your possession limit. That same conversation was had about small game. How many ducks can you have in your freezer and at what stage of cooking do they need to be before they no longer count against your possession limit. I don't know if we are going to tackle that issue with our fishing regulations. I would guess we probably won't because we have not wanted to try to define in regulations all the different situations that people have at home in their freezers. There is no way we would be able to identify each one of those. There is no way we are going to get into that stuff. If they are in your freezer, they still count towards your possession limit, legally. That is on our law enforcement to enforce those regulations and they do a good job when necessary. Most people are doing it right and then there is that 5% that are not. That is all the special regulations that I can think of for the waters that I manage anyway. The only one that came up that I don't have an answer for, but I would like to get your input on, is the 25 fish limit for the Lahontan Valley. It is a special regulation regarding the 25 warm water fish downstream from Lahontan. To double the possession limit would be 30, so you can still keep your daily limit and be under the possession limit, however, our intent is for people to be able to catch 2 days' worth of fish and keep them if they want. That would put them over the general regulation of 30 warmwater fish, so they would actually be able to keep 50 if it was double the special regulation for Churchill County. That is the only instance where it doesn't fit, where our special regulations are more lenient than our general regulations. Everywhere else we have a special regulation that is more conservative. Member Curran said Rye Patch is 25 now. Kris Urquhart said Rye Patch is too. Those two situations, I don't know if we want to add into the special regulation that the waterbodies that have a 25 fish limit would also be a special regulation to allow possession of 50 fish or if we want to leave it the way it is and have a special regulation that says 25 fish without an amendment to the possession on it. Once you reduce it to possession, whether it is in camp or you are on the shoreline or it is on your stringer, that is possession. When you get it home, that is still in possession. It is when it becomes a preserved fish, whether it is cooked. Obviously, if it is cooked, it is preserved but if you cook it and then put it back in your freezer, it is still possession. Member Sibley said so you can go to one place and catch your daily limit and then go to another place and catch another daily limit? Kris Urquhart said that is what we are anticipating. That is something we are going to have to discuss with our law enforcement. I brought it up to them briefly and we all thought that was interesting. We will have to get together with everybody and hash that out and see what their interpretation of the law would be and, if we need to amend this and add more specific language, then we will. We like to keep things as simple as possible. There are certain situations that will require some discussion and how we get that information out to the public so they know about the changes. This is just a discussion item for now. You will see this in the future. There are some other changes in Douglas, Humboldt, and Washoe Counties that we can discuss. We can do that now or you can chew on that for a while and then come back to it.

We have an additional urban fishery in Douglas County in Minden, the New Park Pond and we went in and put in some habitat structures and aerators for water inflow and outflow and put some screens on it. It is a pretty nice little pond and is fairly large. We stocked it with bass and bluegill last year and stocked some trout in it this year. Right now, it falls under the general regulations and we would like to include it in our regular urban pond program like we have at Liberty Pond where it is 3 game fish limit. That would fall under the possession limit of the

general regulations. The 10 fish possession limit would apply to that. You could fish there for 3 days and catch all of the fish that you wanted. The other one that has been a topic of discussion was eliminating the season closure for the pine forest waters as well as catnip, so some of those would be open year round instead of having the winter closure on those. Member Curran said that would be a recommendation for the department. Kris Urquhart said that is what we are going to propose. These are up for discussion. There is no biological reason to have those closed in the winter. Most of the discussion has been around access to those, which is why it was originally closed in the winter. We are going to leave that up to the people to figure out if they can get to places they want to go to. If the BLM wants to close the road, that is up to them.

In the meeting we discussed the size restriction on bag limits for Knot Creek and so the limit would go to just 1 trout with no size restrictions. There are electric motors only at Knot Creek instead of the use of gas motors, which has been discussed often. There is another urban pond in Reno, which right now is called Kylie Ranch Pond. It was a private pond that our department negotiated and got access to and we are starting to stock it with bluegill and trout and we are aligning that with our other urban ponds as a 3 game fish limit. Those are the changes we are proposing. What do you guys think? Member Curran said we did have a double possession at times. It was changed because they said they just couldn't afford to give that many fish out. It didn't take long for the biologists to realize that number of fish are going to be taken anyway because I am going to drive to Wild Horse and not eat fish the first night so I can fish the next night. I don't think it has any impact on the resource. That possession limit in your freezer and processed started at Wild Horse because they had portable tanneries set up all along the shore, so you could go out and catch your 5 or 10 fish and can them. They considered that possession. That regulation became enforced. That could happen again if you say the federal law doesn't allow processed to be part of your possession. I see no problem with changing it. Your dealing with only a few waters and it is mainly the trout waters that have a 5 fish limit where it will even impact, affect, or make it better for the fishermen. There are so few limits ever caught anyway, whether it is 30 fish at Lahontan or 50 fish in the valley here. At any time in your career, have you ever checked anybody with 50 fish? Kris Urquhart said, when I was a seasonal, I did one time. There were some people right at the dam that were illegally fishing. You guys have an amazing resource right here because he has been through all this and these are the same things I have discussed with our law enforcement division too. Those exact same situations came up when we were talking about this. You are right, that is the only time I have seen anybody in the valley be able to catch their limit of fish and the local game warden here, it was discussed with him earlier this week some of this and he said he has never checked anybody with a limit of fish in the valley. If they catch that many, they are not keeping that many. It is not for the situation here. If somebody wants to keep 50 bullheads from Harmon, go ahead. Member Curran said it may not be because of the mercury but it sounds like they are encouraging people at Lahontan and Lahontan Valley to take fish to eat, which we all do. Mr. Urquhart said I will have to deal with them. Member Curran said when their big objective is to encourage you planting fish or increasing the fishery. You can tell them they are trying to fish out. In the future, there will be no more mercury. Member Sibley said I think the only one that would be convoluted is you go to one body and get your limit of fish and then go to another body the same day, that is the only part that might get a little confusing. If it is listed as a daily limit and then the same day. Member Curran said I think it is stated in their regulations traveling from one to another and you can't do

it. I think it is in regulation now. Member Sibley said, you think it says you cannot do it. Member Curran said you couldn't go in reverse order. You couldn't go get 8 fish in the creek and then go down to the reservoir with 5 because that would put you over the possession limit. I don't think that is really going to change, just because you are doubling up the fish. Member Sibley said the only thing that I would think is that if somebody does go from one body to another with two limits and then get stopped and are not camping because they are at a small area with no tent or anything, I think law enforcement might have some trouble with that. That is the only thing I can see as being convoluted. Member Curran said that issue has come up with water fowl. Member Sibley said can I go kill a limit at Stillwater and then go to Harmon and shoot another limit? Kris Urquhart said no because it is a state limit and those are federal. Member Howells said, to tie onto that, I also think that changing from where it is a daily limit to a possession limit because, let's say I am camping at Lahontan and I catch my daily limit of fish and then throw them in the cooler and then go back out after lunch and fish again, how do you determine that those were caught in that day or not. Are they in possession once they are on the stringer, so now that doesn't count towards a daily limit? Mr. Urquhart said they will still count towards your daily limit if it was during that day. That is going to be up to law enforcement to determine when you caught those fish and go from there, which is the same thing you can do now, right? Member Curran said if your biggest opposition will be for those people who just really wait for that traditional opener, just like happened at Topaz. Kris Urquhart said when we did Topaz I had about 80% of the people that I talked to on surveys or in person were in favor of opening it year round and 20% were not. I don't know if it will be the same for Knot Creek Reservoir. I would guess it would be less of a percentage of people want it open year round just because of access and the people that go up there. It is a different clientele up in the forest than it is in Topaz. Member Curran said on Fish Nevada a couple weeks ago, there were quite a few people in anticipation waiting for the opening. They were concerned about the roads. You might have a problem one year and then they forget it after that. Member Howells said is Topaz going to be the same thing even though it is split Nevada and California? Kris Urquhart said, at Topaz, we made that change and we did it at the same time as California. They were going through regulation changes and they coincided with ours. I spent about 3 years looking at that because it also had to do with the booming population of small mouth bass in there and we wanted to be able to target those bass in the fall but the season closed September 31st, so from October to December 31st nobody could fish for them. We wanted to take advantage of the bass fishery, as well as evaluate the trout fishery and see if the put, grow, and take management strategy was effective at Topaz and it can be for trout but it had not been for about 10 years. It didn't work for various reasons. That was kind of the reason for making that change at Topaz was to try to take advantage of the small mouth fishery that had just kind of blown up and is still doing very well right now. There are a lot of bass in there. We also want to keep consistent with California's regulation changes. They went through a huge simplification process, which changed a lot of their reservoirs from being closed in the fall to being open. It was kind of a 3-tiered operation that happened there. It is a little bit different situation than what is going on at Knot Creek. I made that note on our conversation regarding the waterbody daily limit versus the daily total limit for all waterbodies. Jim had a good comment about going from one waterbody with a more liberal bag to a more restrictive bag. That is the kind of feedback that we need to hear to be clarified.

B- Consideration and possible action re: Heritage Project Proposals for Fiscal Year 2024.

The Commission will hear recommendations from the committee and may take action to approve up to \$1,540,135.58 for projects submitted for Fiscal Year 2024 funding. Listed below are the proposals and these may be approved by the Commission:

- FY24 Bighorn Sheep and Mountain Goat Restoration and Management (\$110,000).
- FY24 Wildlife-Related Restoration and Seed Purchase (\$150,000).
- Parrado partners Community Park and Ponds Land Acquisition (\$100,000).
- Gilbert Creek Fencing and Habitat Restoration (\$50,000).
- Waking Spring Habitat Restoration (\$65,000).
- FY24 Nevada Spring Protection Project (\$100,000).
- Bald Mountain PJ Thinning (\$100,000).
- FY24 Corta Fire Habitat Improvement Phase II (\$60,000).
- FY24 Wildcat Fire Mule Deer Migration Corridor Bitterbrush Planting (\$82,000).
- FY24 Lake Tahoe Fish Management Structure Phase 1 (\$80,000).
- FY24 Nevada Water Developments (\$50,000).
- Bruneau WMA Habitat Improvement (\$31,000).
- Steptoe Valley Wildlife Management Area Water Enhancements (\$117,277.58).
- FY24 Izzenhood Mountains Habitat Improvement (\$64,000).
- FY24 Area 6 Toe Jam Mountain Mule Deer Corridor Fence Modification (\$70,000).
- Pole Canyon Fence (\$100,000).
- Success Ward Habitat Improvements (\$50,000).
- FY24 MA13 Mule Deer Collaring (\$30,000).
- FY24 Warmwater Fisheries Enhancement (\$130,858).

FISCAL IMPACT: N/A

EXPLANATION OF IMPACT: N/A

FUNDING SOURCE: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: Accept

Member Curran said what is Warmwater Fisheries Enhancement? Kris Urquhart said that is our wiper and catfish annual orders. We did that purchase this year and Lahontan ended up with about 4,000 wipers. We scattered catfish around some of the other ponds. We could not get to North Pond because of the flooding in Mason Valley but we also put a bunch of wipers into Rye Patch. That is where a lot of the money goes is for fish that we don't have a hatchery for in-state.

Chairwoman Hughes asked if there was any public comment but there was none.

Member Andrew Howells made a motion to approve the Heritage Project Proposals as presented. Member Jason Sibley seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

C- Consideration and possible action re: Biennial Small Game Release Plan for Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025.

The Commission will review and may take action to approve the Department's proposed

Biennial Upland Game Release Plan for Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025.

FISCAL IMPACT: N/A

EXPLANATION OF IMPACT: N/A

FUNDING SOURCE: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: Accept

Member Sibley said I know there was a recommendation, or somebody had a petition to have turkey released in Dixie Valley. I don't know what ever came about with that. Someone came here and asked about that and I don't know what ever came about. I was looking here and it doesn't look like it made the cut.

Chairwoman Hughes asked if there was any public comment but there was none.

Member Jim Curran made a motion to approve the Biennial Small Game Release Plan as presented. Member Jason Sibley seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

D- Consideration and possible action re: Duck Stamp Request.

The Commission will review and may take action to approve up to \$100,000 for projects submitted for Fiscal Year 2024 funding from the Duck Stamp Account:

- Ducks Unlimited Wetland Conservation Support (\$35,000).
- Carson Valley Conservation District - Carson River Bank Stabilization (\$20,000).
- Fernley WMA Dam Repair and Wetland Habitat Design Plan (\$35,000).
- Mason Valley WMA Wildlife Seed (\$10,000).

FISCAL IMPACT: N/A

EXPLANATION OF IMPACT: N/A

FUNDING SOURCE: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: Accept

Member Sibley said it mentions all these but then when you read the book it mentions Carson Lake.

Chairwoman Hughes asked if there was any public comment but there was none.

Member Jason Sibley made a motion to approve the Duck Stamp Request as presented. Member Jim Curran seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

E- Consideration and possible action re: Upland Game Bird Stamp Request.

The Commission will review and may take action to approve up to \$330,680 for projects submitted for Fiscal Year 2024 funding from the Upland Game Bird Stamp Account:

- Corta Fire Habitat Improvement North (\$17,250).
- Corta Fire Habitat Improvement South (\$25,000).
- Area 6 Toe Jam Mountain Mule Deer Corridor Fence Modification (\$25,000).

- Bruneau WMA Habitat Improvement (\$15,000).
- Argenta WMA Improvements (\$35,000).
- Eastern WMA Complex Weed Control (\$4,500).
- Greater Sage Grouse Monitoring (\$46,330).
- Bi-State Sage Grouse Coordinator (\$10,000).
- Bi-State Sage Grouse Monitoring (\$30,000).
- Mineral Development Effects on Sage Grouse (\$30,000).
- Mason & Smith Valley CD Walker River Region Noxious Weed and PJ Restoration Treatments (\$20,000).
- Upland Game Translocation and Monitoring (\$62,600).
- Mosquito Valley Range Improvements (\$10,000).

FISCAL IMPACT: N/A

EXPLANATION OF IMPACT: N/A

FUNDING SOURCE: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: Accept

Chairwoman Hughes asked if there was any public comment but there was none.

Member Jason Sibley made a motion to approve the Upland Game Bird Stamp Request as presented. Member Andrew Howells seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

F- Consideration and possible action re: Commission Regulation 22-12, Amendment #1, Upland Game and Furbearer Seasons and Bag Limits 2022-2023.

The Commission will establish and may vote to amend regulations for upland game birds and mammals, as well as furbearers, for the 2023 season. This regulation may also include modifications to the spring wild turkey seasons for 2024.

FISCAL IMPACT: N/A

EXPLANATION OF IMPACT: N/A

FUNDING SOURCE: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: Accept

Chairwoman Hughes asked if there was any public comment but there was none.

Member Jason Sibley made a motion to approve Commission Regulation 22-12 for Upland Game and Furbearer Seasons and Bag Limits as presented. Member Jim Curran seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

G- Consideration and possible action re: Commission Regulation 23-10, Amendment #1, Heritage Tag Vendors 2024.

The Commission will review the Wildlife Heritage Committee's recommendations regarding Heritage Tag Vendor Proposals for 2024 and may take action on the proposals.

FISCAL IMPACT: N/A

EXPLANATION OF IMPACT: N/A

FUNDING SOURCE: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: Accept

Chairwoman Hughes asked if there was any public comment but there was none.

Member Jim Curran made a motion to approve Commission Regulation 23-10 for Heritage Tag Vendors for 2024 as presented. Member Jason Sibley seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Informational Items:

A- Consideration and possible action re: Items listed on the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners' Revised Agenda for June 23 and 24, 2023, which is attached as Exhibit "A".

Should the board want to discuss Items listed on the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners' Revised Agenda for June 23 and 24, 2023, which is attached as Exhibit "A".

FISCAL IMPACT: N/A

EXPLANATION OF IMPACT: N/A

FUNDING SOURCE: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: None; Informational Only

There was no further discussion concerning the state's Agenda.

Consider Future Agenda Items:

Member Sibley would like to continue the discussions regarding animal salvage regulation, specifically in regard to road kill animals. Driving into town about once a week there is a dead deer on the side of the road that just goes to waste. Two weeks ago, that dead deer may have hit my truck specifically and I was pretty frustrated that I could not actually take the deer home because it had done quite a bit of damage to my truck and it would have made me feel a little bit better if I got meat out of it. It just seems like a lot of our resources are going to waste in regards to that. I would strongly encourage, I don't know who we would petition or if this conversation starts that ball rolling, but I really think we should start looking at whether or not we can implement a salvage regulation. Chairwoman Hughes said we have discussed this before. There were just too many restrictions on it but we can ask again about it for some kind of action. Kris Urquhart said you can put it in your recommendation for future agenda items for discussion. That is how they will know that you want to talk about it. Their next meeting is here in Fallon in August. There are other states with things in place, so that may be a way to start the conversation.

Public Comment:

Chairwoman Hughes asked if there was any public comment but there was none.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Approved: 
Peggy Hughes, Chair

Approved: 
Jim Curran, Vice-Chair

Approved: 
Jason Sibley, Member

Approved: 
Andrew Howells, Member

ATTEST:
Linda Rothery, Clerk/Treasurer


Renae Pahiölke, Deputy Clerk