COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
PENNSYLVANIA GAME COMMISSION
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QUARTERLY MEETING
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BEFORE: ROBERT W. SCHLEMMER, President
David J. Putnam, Vice President
Brian H. Hoover, Secretary
James J. Delaney, Commissioner
Ronald A. Weaner, Commissioner
Ralph A. Martone, Commissioner
Charles E. Fox, Commissioner
Timothy S. Layton, Commissioner
R. Matthew Hough, Executive Director

HEARING: Tuesday, April 8, 2014
8:31 a.m.

LOCATION: Pennsylvania Game Commission
2001 Elmerton Avenue
Harrisburg, PA 17110

WITNESSES: Calvin DuBrook, Rich Palmer, Michael
DiMatteo, Matt Lovallo

Reporter: Rhonda K. Thorpe
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APPEARANCES

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CHAIR:

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I’d like to call the meeting to order. Stand for the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE RECITED

CHAIR:

Secretary, call the roll, please?

SECRETARY HOOVER:

President Schlemmer?

CHAIR:

Present.

SECRETARY HOOVER:

Vice President Putnam?

VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:

Present.

SECRETARY HOOVER:

James Delaney?

COMMISSIONER DELANEY:

Present.

SECRETARY HOOVER:

Commissioner Weaner?

COMMISSIONER WEANER:

Present.
SECRETARY HOOVER:
Commissioner Martone?

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
Present.

SECRETARY HOOVER:
Commissioner Fox?

COMMISSIONER FOX:
Present.

SECRETARY HOOVER:
Commissioner Layton?

COMMISSIONER LAYTON:
Present.

SECRETARY HOOVER:
Thank you. Everyone is present.

CHAIR:
Thank you. Is there a motion for approval of minutes of January 28th?

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
So moved.

COMMISSIONER FOX:
Second.

CHAIR:
Properly moved and seconded. Mr. Secretary?

SECRETARY HOOVER:
The motion is rendered. All those in favor, vote by saying aye.

ALL AYES

SECRETARY HOOVER:
All those opposed? The motion carries unanimously.

CHAIR:
Go ahead, Mr. Palmer.

ATTORNEY RAUP:
Thank you, Mr. President. The first item to come before the Commission today comes from the Bureau of Wildlife Management. It concerns the adoption of proposed amendments to Section 139.4. To effectively manage the wildlife resources of this Commonwealth, the Game Commission proposed at its January 28th, 2014 meeting to amend Section 139.4, relating to seasons and bag limits for the license year, to provide updated seasons and bag limits for the 2014-2015 hunting and trapping license year. The text of these amendments are given on pages three through ten of your agenda.

CHAIR:
Do I hear a motion?

SECRETARY HOOVER:
So moved.
COMMISSIONER WEANER:
Seconded.

CHAIR:
Duly moved and seconded. Discussion?

All right. I’m suggesting we just go a page at a time.

ATTORNEY RAUP:
Page three provides seasons and bag limits with respect —- at least, as indicated on page three, the start of squirrel season, ruffed grouse, rabbit and ring-necked pheasants.

CHAIR:
Comments or discussion?

ATTORNEY RAUP:
Page four, you’ll find seasons and bag limits for ring-necked pheasants, bobwhite quail, hares.

CHAIR:
Comments?

ATTORNEY RAUP:
On page five, you’ll find seasons and bag limits for porcupines, wild turkey.

CHAIR:
Comments?

ATTORNEY RAUP:
On page six, you’ll find references to migratory game bird seasons, as well as crows, starlings, and falconry seasons for small game.

CHAIR:
Comments?

COMMISSIONER WEANER:
Mr. President?

CHAIR:
Mr. Weaner?

COMMISSIONER WEANER:
I move to amend by inserting this green handout that we have here that’s a replacement for page six.

COMMISSIONER DELANEY:
I’ll second that motion.

CHAIR:
Properly moved and seconded. Mr. Secretary?

SECRETARY HOOVER:
Mr. President, it’s seconded.

COMMISSIONER WEANER:
Mr. President, I’ve got it here. The replacement page six adds the Eurasian collared dove to the migratory game bird list. And it states that the season will be concurrent with mourning dove
season.

And this will count in the aggregated daily limit for mourning doves. The reason for this is, the Eurasian collared dove is starting to appear in greater numbers here in Pennsylvania.

They’re relatively indistinguishable from a mourning dove, from a hunter’s perspective. They’re not going to know whether they’ve got one until after you’ve got the bird in hand, probably. And so, it makes sense our staff has recommended it to us. And we just included it in the daily limit. Therefore, that’s that reason for the amendment.

CHAIR:

Thank you. Any further discussion? Mr. Secretary?

SECRETARY HOOVER:

There’s a motion on the floor. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

ALL AYES

SECRETARY HOOVER:

Opposed? No? The motion carries.

ATTORNEY RAUP:

Page seven, we will see the start of the seasons and bag limits for white-tailed deer.

CHAIR:
Comments?

COMMISSIONER LAYTON:
Yeah, Mr. President, I would like to propose an amendment to page seven. So I’m going to move 4A. And I can move it from concurrent to split.

CHAIR:
So again, it’ll be 4A, concurrent split? Do I hear a second?

SECRETARY HOOVER:
Second.

CHAIR:
Mr. Secretary?

SECRETARY HOOVER:
I’d also like to amend that motion to add 4C to the motion, to move 4C to --- from concurrent to split.

CHAIR:
4C? Do I hear a second on that?

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
Seconded.

CHAIR:
Second.

COMMISSIONER WEANER:
May I have a word, Mr. President?

CHAIR:
Mr. Weaner.

COMMISSIONER WEANER:
Are we amending the amendment, or what are we doing here? We had an amendment on the floor. And is there another amendment, or an amendment to his amendment?

SECRETARY HOOVER:
I moved to him to add both, to add to it.

CHAIR:
That’s an add-on.

COMMISSIONER WEANER:
Thank you.

CHAIR:
Mr. Secretary?

SECRETARY HOOVER:
There’s a motion on the floor. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

ALL AYES

SECRETARY HOOVER:
Opposed? The motion carries.

ATTORNEY RAUP:
On page eight, you’ll see a continuation ---.

COMMISSIONER WEANER:
May I have a word, Mr. President?

CHAIR:

Yes?

COMMISSIONER WEANER:

If his amendment amended his amendment, we now have an amended amendment. And it must be voted on.

CHAIR:

Okay. We’ll take the vote. We’ll take a second vote on that. Mr. Secretary?

SECRETARY HOOVER:

The question was, is there a second amendment. We will vote on the second amendment. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

ALL AYES

SECRETARY HOOVER:

Opposed? Unanimously carried.

ATTORNEY RAUP:

Then, on page eight, you will see the final seasons and bag limits for white tailed deer. You’ll also see seasons and bag limits for bear.

CHAIR:

Comments?

ATTORNEY RAUP:

On page 9, you will see seasons and bag
limits for elk, as well as our fur taking and trapping season for various animals.

CHAIR:
Comments?

ATTORNEY RAUP:
On page ten, you will see a continuation of our fur bearer hunting and tracking seasons for coyotes, possums, raccoons, bobcat. Our final section.

CHAIR:
Any comments? Mr. Secretary?

SECRETARY HOOVER:
There’s a motion on the floor to set the seasons and the bag limits as approved. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

ALL AYES

SECRETARY HOOVER:
Opposed? The motion carries.

ATTORNEY RAUP:
The next item to come before the Commission concerns the option of proposed amendments to Section 141.47. To effectively manage the wildlife resources of this Commonwealth, the Game Commission proposed at its January 28th, 2014 meeting to amend Section 141.47 to eliminate the 555 corridor safety
zone. The text of this amendment is shown on page 12 on your agenda.

COMMISSIONER WEANER:
So moved.

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
Seconded.

CHAIR:
Discussion?

COMMISSIONER DELANEY:
Yes, Mr. President. I would ask Director DuBrock to just offer some commentary, basically, on why we’re going to vote to support this or not support it. There’s got to be some history, I think. The supporters will need to hear about before we make a rebuttal.

DIRECTOR DUBROCK:
In January, when we proposed this, the commentary directed that this corridor was established when there was problems with road hunting and killing of highly visible elk from public property and in public places close to 555. Or the 555 corridor. In consultation with the region and their officers there, they feel that this designated safety zone, the issues surrounding that have been a risk is no longer there and that their corridor is no longer needed, and a
removal rollout harvests down animals that desperately need to be harvested in the area.

And so, we spoke both for the recommendation for the region as well as the Bureau that this safety zone.

COMMISSIONER DELANEY:
Thank you for your commentary.

CHAIR:
Further discussion? Mr. Secretary?

SECRETARY HOOVER:
There’s a motion on the floor. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

ALL AYES

SECRETARY HOOVER:
Opposed? The motion carries.

ATTORNEY RAUP:
The next item coming before the Commission is a proposed ruling to amend 58 Pa. Code Section 133.6. Native to Europe and Asia, the Eurasian collared doves were first introduced to the Bahamas in the 1970s, made their way to Florida by the 1980s, and then rapidly colonized most of North America.

The first PA collared dove sighting occurred in 1996, with the first PA breeding

Studies on the interactions between collared doves and other species have not yet showed a negative impact on populations of native birds, including mourning doves. Though, this information is preliminary and based --- largely based on species interactions in milder climates where competition for feeding and nesting resources may not be as strong.

As an introduced invasive species, Eurasian collared doves are not protected under the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act. However, they are not designated as a game bird in Pennsylvania and must be classified as a game bird in order to create a hunting season concurrent with mourning doves.

Since Eurasian collared doves are difficult to distinguish from mourning doves in the field, a hunter inadvertently taking a collared dove would be in violation of state law. Conversely, designating collared doves as exotic species with year round take could lead to mistaken mourning dove kills.

This situation would be remedied by classifying Eurasian collared doves as a game bird,
with hunting seasons concurrent with morning doves and part of a aggregate daily bag and possession limits. We believe this can be best accomplished by listing Eurasian collared-dove as a game bird and counting their take as part of the aggregate dove bag.

The proposed classification listing can be accomplished by amending 58 Pa. Code Section 133.6 as outlined below. The text of this amendment is shown page 13 of your agenda, commentary.

CHAIR:

Motion?

COMMISSIONER WEANER:

So moved.

CHAIR:

Second?

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:

Second.

CHAIR:

Properly moved and seconded.

Discussion?

COMMISSIONER WEANER:

Mr. President?

CHAIR:

Mr. Weaner?

COMMISSIONER WEANER:
On the surface this, maybe, appears --- it may appear something like, didn’t we just do that? And we had to amend the section of the seasons and bag limits and do this both to accomplish this proposal. So we’re not doing it any differently than we probably just did. It’s just --- this makes it all legal. So therefore, everything’s in here.

CHAIR:
Thank you, Commissioner. Further discussion? Mr. Secretary?

SECRETARY HOOVER:
There’s a motion on the floor. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

ALL AYES

SECRETARY HOOVER:
Opposed? The motion carries unanimously.

ATTORNEY RAUP:
The next item to come before the Commission comes from the Bureau of Wildlife Protection concerning the adoption of proposed amendments to Sections 131.2, 141.43, 141.44, 141.45, and 141.47.

To effectively manage the wildlife resources of this Commonwealth, the Game Commission
proposed at its January 28th, 2014 meeting to amend Sections 131.2, 141.43, 141.44, 141.45 and 141.47 to lengthen the broadhead length limitation from 3 inches to 3.25 inches. The text of these amendments is shown on pages 15 through 17 of your agenda.

CHAIR:
Do I hear a motion?

COMMISSIONER LAYTON:
So moved.

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
Seconded.

CHAIR:
Properly moved and seconded. Is there discussion? Commissioner Martone?

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
Yeah. I’d like to point out that this was in response to almost just one single traditional archer’s request. And you can see how many sections it applies to and the depth of the request. It shows that we have been responsive to requests.

We did listen to this. I think Commissioner Delaney brought it up originally. It had took a little while to get through the system. But again, it shows that we’re paying attention. I just wanted to point that out. Thank you.
CHAIR:

Thank you, Commissioner. Further discussion? Mr. Secretary?

SECRETARY HOOVER:

There’s a motion on the floor, duly seconded. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

ALL AYES

SECRETARY HOOVER:

Opposed? The motion carries unanimously.

ATTORNEY RAUP:

So the next item that comes before the Commission concerns the adoption of a proposed amendment to Chapter 147, Subchapter X. To effectively manage the wildlife resources of this Commonwealth, the Game Commission proposed at its January 28th, 2014 meeting to amend Chapter 147, Subchapter X, relating to the mentored youth hunting program, to create and implement a Mentored Adult Hunting Program in Pennsylvania.

This program will maintain the mentor-based structure of the Mentored Youth Hunting Program, but will have different species allowances, costs, and safety features. Adult participants will now be able to apply for and receive the Mentored Adult Hunting
Permit through the PALS licensing system at any time that Commissioners 
Excuse me, the Commission’s issuing 
agent locations across the Commonwealth prior to participating in the program. Permit application will require participants to supply the required identification information and pay a fee of $19 for residents and $100 for non-residents, plus any applicable transactional and issuing agent fees. The text of these amendments is shown on pages 19 through 22 of your agenda.

CHAIR:
Do I hear a motion, gentlemen?

COMMISSIONER LAYTON:
So moved.

COMMISSIONER DELANEY:
Second.

CHAIR:
Properly moved and seconded.

Discussion? Hearing none. Mr. Secretary?

SECRETARY HOOVER:
There’s a motion on the floor, and duly seconded. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

ALL AYES

SECRETARY HOOVER:
ATTORNEY RAUP:

The next item to come before the Commission concerns the adoption of proposed amendments to Sections 141.4. To effectively manage the wildlife resources of this Commonwealth, the Pennsylvania Game Commission proposed at its January 28th, 2014 meeting to amend Section 141.4, relating to hunting hours, to replace the current hunting hours table and migratory bird hunting hours table to accurately reflect the dates and hours of legal hunting for the 2014-2015 hunting license year. The text of these amendments is shown on pages 24 through 26 of your agenda.

CHAIR:

Do I hear a motion for a hunting hours table?

COMMISSIONER WEANER:

So moved.

CHAIR:

Commissioner Weaner?

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:

Seconded.

CHAIR:

Properly moved and seconded. Mr.
Secretary?

SECRETARY HOOVER:

What about discussion?

CHAIR:

Any discussion on that file? I know some of us use that for a file there, and I think it’s time ---. Mr. Secretary?

SECRETARY HOOVER:

The motion on the floor is duly seconded. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

ALL AYES

SECRETARY HOOVER:

Opposed? The motion carries.

ATTORNEY RAUP:

The next item to come before the Commission concerns adoption of proposed amendments to Section 141.62. To effectively manage the wildlife resources of this Commonwealth, the Game Commission proposed at its January 28th, 2014 meeting to amend Section 141.62, relating to beaver trapping, to expand the trap authorization to 10 inches in height to 12 inches in width, and additionally require a single offset trigger positioned in parallel not more than 1 and a half inches from either vertical section of the trap.
CHAIR:
Do I hear a motion?

COMMISSIONER WEANER:
So moved.

CHAIR:
Second?

COMMISSIONER LAYTON:
Seconded.

CHAIR:
There’ll be some discussion on this, gentlemen. Commissioner Martone?

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
President Schlemmer, I’d like to propose an amendment on page 28 Section 3, where it says, set body gripping traps larger than 10 inches in height by 12 inches in width. I’d like to place a period after the word width and strike the remaining clause that designates the position for an offset trigger.

COMMISSIONER WEANER:
Seconded.

CHAIR:
Discussion? Commissioner Putnam?

VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:
I thought we had to have a discussion on that. Do we have a trap that we can demonstrate what
we’re talking about here? Oh, we have that.

CHAIR:
You brought it. Bring it up.

MR. LOVALLO:
You want it up at the table?

CHAIR:
Yes.

VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:
Take that safety device off and get it up here.

MR. LOVALLO:
Did you want it up at the table?

CHAIR:
Actually, why don’t you do it right there, in front of the committee.

MR. LOVALLO:
Okay.

CHAIR:
Do it like that.

MR. LOVALLO:
Would you like comments from me?

CHAIR:
Yes.

MR. LOVALLO:
Okay.
CHAIR:
I believe, yes.

VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:
We want you to tell us about this.

MR. LOVALLO:
Well, I think the regulation as originally drafted has two components. One deals with the actual size of the trap. When the original regulation was drafted, most standard beaver traps, standard 330 sized traps, were 10 by 10 inches. They were square. Over the years, due to various manufacturers on the market, they’ve changed a little bit. And most of the commonly used traps are actually 11 inches wide by 9 inches in height. So the trap window, in terms of the square inches, is still the same. It’s just, the configuration has changed. The other area or component in the regulation deals with the offsetting of a trigger.

That is, the center triggering device can be moved anywhere across the trap jaw. This regulation, as originally written, would require that it be set to the side, within an inch and a half of the side of the trap. And that gives you the measure of selectivity. For example, in New York State, in
areas where they have ongoing otter restoration
efforts, they have that in regulation. It’s not
statewide. It’s only in areas where they’re seeking
to protect every otter they can in the restoration
effort.

Studies have shown that if you put this
trigger to the side, many otter will make it through
the trap without firing it. But what we’ve also seen
is that many small beaver can make it through the trap
without firing it, as well. So it’s really selective
towards the size of the animal, more so than the
species of animal encountering the trap. And so,
that’s an issue in terms of the effectiveness or
efficiency of the trap for beaver trappers,
particularly in recent situations where they’re trying
to take every beaver within a column.

The other issue where this becomes an
issue of concern is that it alters the strike location
of the trap on the animal itself. Studies of trap
modeling in Canada have demonstrated that, in this
situation, the animal will actually go through the
trap further, resulting in a strike location further
along the back of a beaver or an otter.

And that’s less efficient in terms of
dispatching the animal. The desired strike location
is right behind the neck in the first couple of vertebrae. And so, those are two issues that weigh on whether we would want to go with that type of offsetting.

Behind all of that is the fact that, despite expanding and increasing otter populations, we really haven’t seen a significant increase in terms of the number of incidental otters taken by beaver trappers each year. It ranges between 30 and 40 a year across the Commonwealth. I think that we haven’t seen that increase too largely due to the fact that we have regulations in place that limit the placement of these traps on dams or lodges, where otters are likely to encounter them and be caught.

I think that regulation alone, restricting the distance a trap can be set within those features, does more to protect otters in the state than this type of trigger configuration that’s before us.

VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:

So would you hold that over the trap so we can see it now? We had a comment today that it was difficult, because of the design of the hump on the edge of the trap, to get that within one and a half inches of the outside edge.
MR. LOVALLO:
Well, it would be in its entirety. It’d be close, yeah. Yeah.

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
And that’s what we’re talking about, closeness.

MR. LOVALLO:
Yeah.

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
The other thing is, a beaver trapper that is worried about otters can still offset?

MR. LOVALLO:
That’s right.

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
If we eliminate that clause, he still has the ability to make that choice?

MR. LOVALLO:
That’s right. And we encourage that in our digest. We have a picture of that and a recommendation that, if you’re likely to encounter an otter, to do that. And as well, we know that many beaver trappers who trap beaver in areas of the state with restrictive bag limits where they can take relatively few beaver, they’re using this method to take the larger beaver as a selectivity measure.
So it is being used. Whether we go down the road of regulation, this is up to you guys.

VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:
Now one more question, then, would be, if we implement that today and next year we have an otter season, you’re not going to want to use that trigger configuration if you’re targeting otters?

MR. LOVALLO:
You would not use that trigger configuration for targeting otters.

VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:
You would have to provide ---.

MR. LOVALLO:
That would be correct.

VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:
So are you recommending to me the flexibility to put the trigger wherever they want to?

MR. LOVALLO:
Yeah. I think in terms of the efficiency of beaver trappers, that would be our recommendation based only on that. But I understand the intent. And I think expanding the trap window to make all the 330 designs consistent with our regulation is certainly a beneficial move. And we thank Wildlife Protection for addressing that.
VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:

Thank you. That’s all I have.

CHAIR:

Further discussion?

COMMISSIONER DELANEY:

Mr. President? Just a couple of comments here. Unfortunately, for those that are viewing this through the Live stream today, they missed a really good discussion yesterday with the President of the Pennsylvania Trapper’s Association.

Quite frankly, personally, I haven’t been happy, how this policy has been proposed to us. We see language here. And then, we hear our staff tell us, well, maybe we weren’t right with how we set this up. But with that said, we heard from Brian Mohn yesterday from the Pennsylvania Trapper’s Association. He had said to us, new trappers still are unaware of this policy change that we’re proposing here.

I guess I understand. And Commissioner Martone, I think, brought to the Board’s attention to the Board with regard to the trigger mechanism. And I support that. And I understand that, that we need to remove that from this.

But I’m still concerned --- and the President of the Trapper’s Association said yesterday,
most of them still are unaware of this. This had caught them off guard a bit. So I think there’s a whole lot more trappers out there that --- they may want to weigh in on this.

With that said, there’s two things I’d like to see it accomplish. Number one, let the trappers keep trapping the beavers that want to trap the beavers and dispatch them appropriately. But secondly, if the Board is looking to have a river otter season, which is possibly next year, to make sure we don’t make a cumbersome policy today that we have to reverse next year. So that’s my commentary prior to the vote.

CHAIR:

Further discussion? Hearing none, we’ll vote on the amendment. Mr. Secretary?

SECRETARY HOOVER:

There’s a motion on the floor and duly seconded to remove the second portion of the sentence reading body gripping traps larger than 10 in height by 12 inches in width. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

ALL AYES

SECRETARY HOOVER:

Opposed? The motion carries
unanimously.

CHAIR:

Mr. Secretary, now we’ll vote on the original.

SECRETARY HOOVER:

The original motion is the same motion. So we’ll amend it as a mandate. So we have a motion and second and the amendment. So all those in favor, signify by saying aye.

ALL AYES

SECRETARY HOOVER:

Opposed? The motion carries unanimously.

ATTORNEY RAUP:

The next item to come before the Commission concerns the adoption of proposed amendments to Sections 141 and the creation of Sections 147.681 through 147.687.

To effectively manage the wildlife resource of this Commonwealth, the Game Commission proposed at the January 28th, 2014 meeting to amend Section 141 and create Sections 147.681 through 147.687 relating to special regulations areas, purpose, permit eligibility and use, operation, records and reports, suspension of baiting sites,
violations, and sunset clause, to implement a deer a
deer attractant permit to authorize limited baiting
activities on private properties in the southeast
special regulations area. The text of the amendment
is shown on pages 30 through 30 in your agenda.

CHAIR:
Is there a motion on the floor?

COMMISSIONER LAYTON:
So moved.

CHAIR:
Second?

SECRETARY HOOVER:
Seconded.

CHAIR:
So moved and seconded. Any discussion?

Commissioner Hoover?

SECRETARY HOOVER:
I just want to point out that one of the
reasons that we proceeded with this regulation is to
enhance the opportunity for the hunters hunting in the
special regulations area, where it’s very difficult to
get deer into range and into the properties where you
have actual permission to hunt.

Portions of this regulation also have to
deal with feeding and the position of --- and
positioning and use of bait. And hopefully, we will get everybody to understand that this is a good regulation. And if utilizing bait in the proper method will enhance their success rate in a very crowded area. And I appreciate everyone’s support.

CHAIR:

Further discussion? Commissioner Martone?

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:

I want to point out one thing in this. Well, make a comment. This applies only to the southeast special regulation area. The other thing is, Director Palmer, if you would explain? How does this apply to other species besides deer? Is there --- there would be concerns or cautions for hunters as far as other species?

DIRECTOR PALMER:

Yes. Mr. Martone, the statutory authorization, the original statutory authorization utilize bait in the southeast region applies only to deer. No other species are accepted. So the prohibition on baiting, which is within the statute, still applies to all other species.

So those areas that are baited, if there’s an overlap with the seasons, other species
would be prohibited to be hunted there.

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
Thank you.

CHAIR:
Further discussion? Mr. Secretary?

SECRETARY HOOVER:
The motion on the floor has been duly seconded. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.


SECRETARY HOOVER:
Opposed? The motion carries.

CHAIR:
Thank you.

ATTORNEY RAUP:
The next item to come before the Commission comes from the Bureau of Wildlife Habitat Management. It concerns the authorization of a restricted surface oil and gas cooperative agreement on Tract 164A-14 on State Game Land Number 164 in Butler County.

XTO Energy of Fort Worth, Texas requested the Commission offer its oil and gas rights under State Game Land Number 164 for non-surface use development. The proposed tract, containing approximately 455.97 acres, is located in Donegal
Township, Butler County, as shown on Exhibit OGM 1 on page 35.

XTO has a strong privately owned oil and gas lease position surrounding State Game Land Number 164, has initiated an unconventional well drilling and development programs in the vicinity of the proposed tract, and has the ability to unitize and develop the Commission’s oil and gas reserve by horizontal drilling with no surface use or disturbance to the Game Land.

The Staff has negotiated the proposed terms with the --- of the agreement with XTO in an effort to safeguard the prudent development of the Commission’s oil and gas reserve and simultaneously protect the wildlife resources and recreational use of State Game Land 164.

The terms of the agreement are a five year paid up non-surface use oil and gas agreement, a $2,000 per acre bonus, and a 20 percent royalty for all oil and gas and other liquids or condensates produced and sold from the proposed tract.

The approximately $911,940 bonus may be deposited into either the Game Fund or an interest-bearing escrow account to be used for the future purchase of wildlife habitats, lands, or other uses
incidental to hunting, fur taking, and wildlife resource management.

Future rentals and royalties owed to the Commission shall be directly deposited into the Game Fund. Oil and gas development will be regulated by the Commonwealth’s oil and gas regulations and the Commission’s Restricted Surface Use Oil and Gas Cooperative Agreement.

CHAIR:

Thank you, Commissioner. Is there a motion?

COMMISSIONER WEANER:

So moved.

CHAIR:

Second?

SECRETARY HOOVER:

Seconded.

CHAIR:

Discussion? Questions? Commissioner Putnam?

VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:

Michael, does this involve any on-site disturbance?

MR. DIMATTEO:

There will be no disturbances to the
Game Land property. That’s the purpose of the adjoining property and property distance, who are already permitted.

VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:
Okay. And while we have you there, could you recap for us our drillers program? How many wells do we have? And how many acres of surface? You’ve been very aggressive in keeping the --- all the drilling activities off our properties if that’s possible?

MR. DIMATTEO:
It’s in accordance, in 2010, I believe, the Board of Commissioners directed us to minimize surface disturbance. The surface began by using non-surface use drilling. Right now, through the whole Marcellus shale, we’ve got about 625 acres of surface for our Marcellus well path, both on State Land and owned leases and private deep well leases across the interested property line. I believe there’s about 300 wells on Game Lands property right now.

VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:
Of those, how many of them are ones that we negotiated and how many are on the property where we did not own the gas rights?

MR. DIMATTEO:
I think there's about 75 wells that are on the Game Commission's property, on our gas leases that we have. And I can solidify that this afternoon, when I go check our database. I don't want to give you fat books. And I don't know the exact number off the top of my head.

VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:
It's pretty close?

MR. DIMATTEO:
It's pretty close.

VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:
Thank you.

CHAIR:
Further discussion? Hearing none, Mr. Secretary?

SECRETARY HOOVER:
There is a motion on the floor that is duly seconded. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

ALL AYES

SECRETARY HOOVER:
Opposed? The motion carries unanimously.

ATTORNEY RAUP:
The next item to come before the
Commission concerns the authorization of a Restricted Surface Oil and Gas Cooperative Agreement Amendment on Tract 35A-13, State Game Land Number 35, Susquehanna County.

Southwestern Energy Production Company of Houston, Texas has requested to amend an existing Commission approved Restricted Surface Use Oil and Gas Cooperative Agreement for Tract 35A-13 in Great Bend and New Milford Townships, Susquehanna County.

The proposed amendment consists of adding an additional 1821.8 acres in Great Bend, Jackson, and Oakland Townships, Susquehanna County, for non-surface use, as shown on Exhibit OGM 2 on page 37.

SWN has a strong privately owned oil and gas lease position surrounding the proposed amendment area, has initiated an unconventional well drilling and development program in the vicinity of the proposed tract, and has the ability to unitize and develop the Commission’s oil and gas reserve with no surface use or disturbance.

The terms of the amendment are consistent with the existing agreement, approved by the Commission on June 2013. SWN has agreed to pay the Commission a bonus of $3,000 per acre and a 20
percent royal for all oil and gas and other liquids or
concentrates produced and sold from the proposed
tract.

The $2,483,145.60 bonus may be deposited
into either the Game Fund or an interest-bearing
escrow account to be used for future purchase of
wildlife habitat, lands or other uses incidental to
hunting, fur taking and wildlife resource management.

Future rentals and royalties owed to the
Commission shall be directly deposited into the Game
Fund. Oil and gas development will be regulated by
the Commonwealth’s oil and gas regulations and the
Commission’s Restricted Surface Use Oil and Gas
Cooperative Agreement.

CHAIR:
Do I hear a motion?

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
So moved.

CHAIR:
Commissioner Martone?

COMMISSIONER WEANER:
Seconded.

CHAIR:
Mr. Weaner? Discussion? Hearing none,
Mr. Secretary?
SECRETARY HOOVER:
There’s a motion on the floor that’s been duly seconded. All those in favor signify by saying aye.
ALL AYES
SECRETARY HOOVER:
Opposed? The motion carries.
CHAIR:
Moving to the final page here on Page 38, I would like to move that we accept the Bobcat Management Plan and the other management plan.
COMMISSIONER WEANER:
So moved.
CHAIR:
Second on that?
COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
Second.
CHAIR:
Discussion? Mr. Putnam?
VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:
Okay. I always have a few words to say. I think we have two plans here that we’re voting on the final document. Both of them are excellent plans. And they’re available to anybody that would like to see them on our website.
I would encourage anybody that is interested to take a look at them. And I think overall, we’ve got a very minimal record of developing wildlife planning in the State of Pennsylvania.

CHAIR:
Mr. Secretary?

SECRETARY HOOVER:
There’s a motion on the floor that’s been duly seconded. All those in favor, signify by saying aye?

ALL AYES

SECRETARY HOOVER:
Opposed? The motion carries.

CHAIR:
The next item of business is elk allocation. And I believe it’s 108, 27 bulls, the remaining cows. And I’d like to make a motion to accept the elk allocation.

VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:
Mr. President, I move that we accept the elk allocation that’s been recommended to us by our staff.

CHAIR:
Second?

COMMISSIONER WEANER:
Second.

VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:
You make the move.

OFF RECORD DISCUSSION

CHAIR:
Discussion?

VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:
Mr. President? Again, for people watching on our live broadcast, there’s not a lot of discussion here. But there is plenty of information on our website as how we arrived at these allocations. Some of these allocations were based on complaints that we received from local residents in the elk area. The staff has redrawn some of the elk boundaries to accommodate harvesting more elk in the target areas. Again, all the information is available on our website. And there’s a discussion on our prior broadcast about what we would need and our discussion yesterday.

CHAIR:
Thank you. Okay. Mr. Secretary?

SECRETARY HOOVER:
There’s a motion on the floor. It was duly seconded. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.
ALL AYES

SECRETARY HOOVER:
Opposed? The motion carries unanimously.

CHAIR:
The next item of business is the antlerless deer allocations, how we’re going to handle this, this year. The Secretary will call out the unit. And the Commissioner who is responsible for the areas will insert his recommendations. So at this time, I would turn it over to Secretary Hoover.

SECRETARY HOOVER:
So we’re going to go down every WMU. I will ask the Commissioner to register their number of allocations of does I’ll record this. And in the end, we will vote on the entire unit. Unit 1-A Commissioner Martone?

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
On the Wildlife Management Unit 1-A, last year, we issued 49,000. There was a recommendation this year for 52,000. However, I believe that area is a forested habitat, and regeneration is good enough to support a slight increase in the deer herd.

So I’m proposing in this unit, which is
a 12 day concurrent season, I’m proposing a number of
47,000.

SECRETARY HOOVER:
1-B, Mr. Martone. Commissioner Martone?

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
Thank you. Again, last year’s number
was 31,000. The recommendation was 32,000. And we’re
hearing a lot of interest in this area. And I’m going
to ask for 30,000 in this unit, which is 12 day
concurrent.

SECRETARY HOOVER:
Commissioner Schlemmer, 2-A?

CHAIR:
2-A, recommendation of 54. I’m getting
a lot of comments from boots on the ground that would
like to see a herd increase in this area. I’m
recommending 46,000.

SECRETARY HOOVER:
Commissioner Schlemmer, 2-B.

CHAIR:
We’re going to hold pretty close to last
year on 2-B’s special regs area. I’m recommending
60,000.

SECRETARY HOOVER:
2-C is Commissioner Schlemmer and
Commissioner Layton.

CHAIR:
I’ll yield to Commissioner Layton.

COMMISSIONER LAYTON:
Mr. President, last year, there was a 43,000 permits issue. The recommendation for this year is 50,000. However, the WCOs that I’ve talked to in that area have expressed some concern about the size of the deer herd. So I’m going to recommend 38,000 for this year’s applications.

CHAIR:
I’ll concur on that.

SECRETARY HOOVER:
On 2-D is Commissioner Schlemmer and Commissioner Martone.

CHAIR:
I’m recommending in that particular area 59,000. Commissioner Martone?

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
I’d like to negotiate that. The last year was 61,000. This is one of the WMUs that’s the fastest-growing deer herd. There are a lot of deer beyond the landscape there. The recommendation was 69,000. I would ask you to consider staying with last year’s 61,000.
CHAIR: 65. 

COMMISSIONER MARTONE: For last year’s 61,000. 

CHAIR: What’s that? 

COMMISSIONER MARTONE: 61,000’s last year. 

CHAIR: 61,000? For this year? 

COMMISSIONER MARTONE: You were at 59. 

CHAIR: Then I’ll go for 65. 

COMMISSIONER MARTONE: We’re about there. I’m game. 

CHAIR: I’ll go with your recommendation. 

COMMISSIONER MARTONE: 61? Thank you. I appreciate your cooperation. 

SECRETARY HOOVER: 2-E, Commissioner Layton and Commissioner Putnam. Mr. Putnam, that’s you. 

VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:
Last year’s allocation was 22,000. The current recommendation is 23,000. My recommendation is 21,000.

COMMISSIONER LAYTON:
I concur.

SECRETARY HOOVER:
2-F, Commissioner Martone and Commissioner Putnam?

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
2-F is a seven day split season. Last year, we had 29,000. There’s a recommendation of 30,000. I did here from quite a few people including Senator Scarnati to that herd from a lot of its constituents. And I’m going to recommend 27,000 into that.

VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:
I concur with that.

SECRETARY HOOVER:
2-G, Commissioner Putnam?

VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:
2-G, the elephant in the closet. Actually, it’s the elephant in the room. 2-G was our largest --- or still is one of our largest wildlife management units. We took out, a year ago, about 1,000 square miles of 2-G, which I think, in my
opinion, we’ve gone that far in the habitat of 2-G. We allocated 28,000 last year. The staff recommendation this year is 24,000, which is significant in that it’s 4,000 less than last year, which would indicate that the staff could accept a rise in the population, a modest rise in the population of 2-G.

We get a lot of comments about 2-G, mostly from Allegheny County in the southwest part of the state. I get some comments from 2-G from local people. And we have comments from our PGC comment line.

In the last three months, we received a comment from McKean County that said the deer were too low, a single comment. We received several other in that range. Cameron County had comments regarding --- I guess it was three comments that came in regarding Cameron County.

We’re not getting a lot of comments from the local people who say we need more deer in 2-G. I’m born and raised in 2-G. I’m quite familiar with 2-G. I have a camp there. And I will tell you, there’s parts of 2-G that don’t have a lot of deer. There’s other parts of 2-G that are doing very well.

So with all that being said, the
recommendation is 24,000. My recommendation is 22,000. We have one other Commissioner, Mr. Vacca (phonetic), that does part of that.

SECRETARY HOOVER:
2-H, Commissioner Putnam.

VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:
Okay. 2-H, that’s here. Yeah. 2-H is about a mile to two square miles. It has a lot of active forest management going on in there. It also has a lot of D map, as does 2-G. And so, any reduction 2-G or 2-H --- and 2-F, also --- we have a --- that’s our most active D map program in the state.

And my philosophy with these is that any cuts in the unit allocation hopefully are our cooperators can make up with that with the D map program. So 2-H, the recommendation for 2-H, which has a relatively low population compared to the surrounding units, is 5,500.

SECRETARY HOOVER:
Commissioner Putnam and Commissioner Fox, 3-A.

COMMISSIONER FOX:
3-A is an area that area above the New York State border. I think we’re looking at 18,000.

VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:
Yeah. I’ll concur with that. And in last year, 3-A had an allocation of 23,000 permits. Staff recommended a decrease in the number of permits, which means the staff is recommending an increase in the deer population in 3-A. And they recommended a decrease of 4,000 permits. And Mr. Fox’s recommendation’s a decrease of 5,000 permits. So I concur with that.

SECRETARY HOOVER:
3-D, Commissioner Fox and Commissioner Delaney.

COMMISSIONER DELANEY:
On my end, I’m going to recommend 33,000 compared to last year’s allocation of 39,000. WMU 3-B, it probably has the second best forest health in the entire state. The deer health is good. The deer per square mile has dropped by four deer per square mile from the previous year.

Our fawn to doe ratio is the same. With my recommendation, it will certainly increase the herd slightly. Of four WMUs that I had over eastern Pennsylvania, this is one that I received most complaints about.

And it’s a very diverse WMU. Commissioner Fox’s area is quite different than the
area of 3-D that I serve. It’s mostly State Game Land and public lands.

SECRETARY HOOVER:

3-C, Commissioner Delaney and Commissioner Fox.

COMMISSIONER DELANEY:

WMU 3-C we’ve had some issues with, as far as the deer population goes. But we can go back to my allocation recommendation to start with. 32,000 is going to be the recommendation against last year’s allocation of 35,000.

But with that said, in 2013, the deer population was 67,720. It drops from 2013 to 2014 by 8,795 animals. So it went from 67,720 to 58,925 in one year. So that’s a population drop. The harvest increase in 2011 --- we harvested 9,943 antlerless animals.

In 2012, we harvested 10,508 antlerless deer. And in 2013, we harvested 12,383 deer. So in 2012 and 2013, we increased the deer harvest by 2,175 animals. So based on the population drop, we decreased the tags by 2,000. And --- I’m sorry, from 33,000 to 32,000. That’s my recommendation.

SECRETARY HOOVER:

On 3-D; correct?
COMMISSIONER DELANEY:
No, that was in 3-C.

SECRETARY HOOVER:
That was in 3-C? So okay. 3-D, Delaney and Hoover.

COMMISSIONER DELANEY:
3-D, I’d say, is the most difficult WMU in the entire state from my perspective as a commissioner. The recommendation for 3-D is going to be 25,000 antlerless allocations. 2013, the Board approved 32,000.

The post-hunt deer per square mile is just about the lowest in the state, at 13.9 deer per square mile. That’s the second lowest in the state. Our staff proposed a significant increase to me, that 3-D, having the second lowest deer per square mile in the state.

I’ve had to look at some other options for there. And actually, the deer per square mile went from 13.8 down to 12.9. So I think we’re going in the wrong direction with that. The antlerless success rate was 15.63, the lowest in the state. It took 32,000 antlerless tags to harvest 5,000 animals. Our antlered harvest continued to go down in 2011. It was 4,509 antlered deer. In 2013, it went from
4,509 to 3,446. That’s a drop of 1,063 antlered deer.  
The population trend continues to drop.  
The population in 2011 was 30,250. In 2014, it 
dropped to 25,127. So it dropped 5,123 deer. With 
all that said, regeneration is still doing okay. It 
went from --- in the last ten years, it went from 56 
percent to 61 percent.  
So when I look to draw on a number or an 
allocation number for a WMU, all these factors 
contributed to it, along with the customer base from 
that area. So that’s my recommendation to WMU 3-D, 
25,000.  
I didn’t want to add one thing to WMU 
3-D. We asked our staff to give us an idea of how to 
D map WMU 3-D. When we did the allocations for last 
year and we dropped them, one of the suggestions from 
me and the rest of the Board was if someone at WMU 3-D 
thought the population was getting too high, that they 
would certainly use D map. But what I say is, why 
would anyone want to use D map in WMU 3-D with the 
second lowest deer per square mile in the entire 
state?  
In addition to that, I had thought maybe 
DCNR would want to use D map, on which they’d force 
them to WMU 3-D. They thought the allocations were
too high. They didn’t take us up on that offer. So I think 3-D is an anomaly. I think it’s difficult. I think if you look at all the numbers presented, it’s a tough WMU to handle.

And on the positive side, at least we are seeing some regeneration in that WMU, a single positive side.

SECRETARY HOOVER:
I concur. 4-A, Commissioner Layton?

COMMISSIONER LAYTON:
I have to respectfully disagree with Mr. Delaney. I believe 4-A’s the most problematic WMU in the state. WMU 4-A is --- has one of our most active disease management area. For those of you that know that disease management area is basically where I am. Earlier on, I made a motion to change the season from a 12 day season to a 7 day season, simply because the areas surrounding 4-A are all 7 day seasons. And I think this makes it easier for our officers to control that hunt in this area.

Having said that, I’m still concerned that we’ve had five positive cases of CWD in 4-A. And the most recent one was announced at our last meeting here. So having said that, I want to stick with the numbers that staff has recommended for that area.
And even though we’ve dropped from a 12 day to a 7 day season, it will allow for the herd to increase a little bit. It’s one of those areas that I think we need to be aware of, we need to keep an eye on. And we need to control that depending on what happens with those disease management areas. So I’m going to recommend an allocation of 28,000.

CHAIR:
4-B, Commissioner Weaner and Commissioner Layton.

COMMISSIONER WEANER:
4-B --- it’s just one of the years that the herd didn’t increase again. And the last year, we had 24,000 as a recommendation. It jumped the whole way to 31,000. So I would like to moderate that a little bit and go with 26,000.

COMMISSIONER LAYTON:
I concur with that.

SECRETARY HOOVER:
4-C is split four ways, Commissioner Hoover, Commissioner Weaner, Commissioner Delaney, and Commissioner Fox. I am --- that one of the WMUs that reduce from the 12 day concurrent to the 7 day. And staff’s proposing 25,000 tags for that location.

Having talked to many a sportsman’s club
in that area after having a hunting camp in the area myself, the original requested allocation was 37,000. Last year, it was a 12 day season with 27,000. Well, yeah, they’re gushing about 12 percent in the number of deer taken last year.

So when we reduced from 35,000 recommended to 27,000, I’d like to see that herd come up a little bit more. So 25,000. 4-B, Commissioner Putnam, Commissioner Fox, Commissioner Layton, Commissioner Weaner.

VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:

I would like to say that I disagree with the two previous commissioners who’ve spoken. Because I think that’s one of the most difficult units in the state. And I say that because we have some of the best limestone soils, which, if you read Aldo Leopold’s, he has a chapter in his book. He has a chapter, They Grow in the Soil. And so we have some areas that are very productive for all species of wildlife that’s living here.

We also have some of the poor soils in that unit. And when we looked at --- is there a way to pull them out? The valleys are long, skinny, narrow valleys. And their ridges are long, skinny, narrow ridges.
There’s no realistic way that we could regulate the deer in the valley and the deer on the ridges. So I would say that may be one of the most difficult units. And it’s a problem no matter what scan we go off of. Whether we use Township levels, whether we use County level data, it doesn’t matter. That unit is just so strung out with the long skinny valleys and the long skinny ridges that we’re going to have ---.

We’re always going to have some issues in there. The deer in the state forest lands, we have dry oak, a relatively poor habitat. Historically, it was a good habitat. But it was cut down to all brush. But it’s not all brush now. And it’s not looking like it’s going to go back to brush anytime in the near future.

So the unit allocation is going to be somewhat of a compromise between those two different habitat types that we’re currently managing. We won’t be right in any one part of that unit. And again, I would encourage D map or other programs that we have to reduce agricultural damage in the better soils. So my recommendation is --- last year, we issued 35,000 permits for that unit.

The recommendation this year is 37,000.
My recommendation is 33,000. And we have three other commission that can weigh in on that.

COMMISSIONER WEANER:
I concur.

COMMISSIONER LAYTON:
I concur.

COMMISSIONER DELANEY:
And I guess I would ask, do you concur that that’s the most difficult unit?

COMMISSIONER LAYTON:
No, I disagree with that.

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
I disagree with that also.

SECRETARY HOOVER:
4-E is Commissioner Fox, Commissioner Hoover, Commissioner Delaney and Commissioner Weaner. Commissioner Fox?

COMMISSIONER FOX:
We’re going with 21,000. We’re going with staff. I would agree.

COMMISSIONER WEANER:
Yeah. I’m going to stay with that.

SECRETARY HOOVER:
5-A, Commissioner Weaner.

COMMISSIONER WEANER:
In 5-A, we’ve had 18,000 permits for a couple of years. And they’re recommending to us 26,000. And we don’t have complaints. So I already do have the area of 6,000. The forest regeneration is good. And I’m going to hold this one at 19,000.

SECRETARY HOOVER:

5-B is Commissioner Weaner and Commissioner Hoover.

COMMISSIONER WEANER:

With 5-B, we’ve had 50,000 for quite a number of years. We had no complaints down there. There’s not enough deer. We have a lot of vehicles in that area. The Commission or the staff is recommending that we stay at 50,000. I believe we concur and recommend that we stay at 50,000.

SECRETARY HOOVER:

I would request a reduction, if possible. Did you have ---? We do get some complaints out of 5-B. I think I got a small portion here, a small portion of 5-B. But I do know that we could get --- we did have quite a few complaints out of 5-B. And know that the staff has come down to our issue permit level of last year.

I think we’ve seen a reduction in the number of the deer in the area. We saw a 3 percent
increase in the harvest last year, in the --- during
the 12 day season. But we’re showing deer per square
mile in ’13. It’s 28.5. It’s reduced down to 24.1
per square mile in 2014. And I understand this trend
will probably take over a longer period of time. But
I’d like to give it the opportunity to bring up a
little bit, anyway.

COMMISSIONER WEANER:

49.

SECRETARY HOOVER:

Thank you, sir. It works. 5-C is a ---
it’s my WMU. And it has some very diverse habitat in
it. And one of the problems that we have seen in 5-C,
we’re trying to control that, like changing some of
the seasons around so that we didn’t have ---.

After the Christmas, we didn’t have the
rifle season. We used to have the archery and longbow
season on there, in an attempt to try to get some of
the herd to move on the lower side. It’s a diverse
environment down there.

And so we get a herd of deer to manage
in there. And we split 5-C up to try to remove the
outer county, the upper county there. I’m going to
reduce the unit. Last year, the recommendation was
108,000 and reduced to 103.
This year’s recommendation is 105, and I’m going to reduce that to 95,000, in hopes that we can stir some people to come back down to the special regulations areas and some of the lower counties that are urban environments, try to get somebody to move up there. It takes some of the pressure off of the mountain deer that we have in Lehigh and Northampton County on I-95.

And 5-D, again, is my WMU. And that is strictly an urban environment down there. Staff had recommended 18,000. We used 18,000 last year. And I would remain at 18,000 this year. Again, looking for some urban deer management plan, where we can focus tag on some of the environments in an attempt to help. And I know we passed the baiting regulations in here. That will certainly lend a hand for the guys that are hunting down in these smaller communities that have a deer problem. It will help further contain those deer a lot better. That is the last of them.

COMMISSIONER WEANER:
Mr. President, I move that we accept this list of proposals.

COMMISSIONER DELANEY:
Second.
CHAIR:
Properly moved and seconded.
Discussion?

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
Commissioner President?

CHAIR:
Commissioner Martone?

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
Commissioner Layton, I want to give you a chance to look back in 4-A. I don’t want to catch you off guard. But during this commentary —— which was an excellent commentary, and I agree with it all —— you mentioned in there that you were going with the recommendation.

You’ve been switched from the 12 day concurrent to a split season 5-7. You mentioned you were going with their recommendation, which I have at 36,000. And yet, you made the recommendation at 28,000. I wanted to see if that was correct, if that was what you had intended.

COMMISSIONER LAYTON:
Yeah. On the numbers I have, the recommendation’s 28.

COMMISSIONER DELANEY:
This ---?
COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
Well, that’s in the fall, basically.

COMMISSIONER LAYTON:
Yeah, no. That’s --- yeah. I wanted to stay with that number anyway. Because I do want to --- there’s been concerns about herds out there.

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
Well, you could --- you’re definitely going to make a difference. I mean, you’ve got to ---.

COMMISSIONER LAYTON:
Well, you know, we’ll look at it again next year.

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
Okay.

COMMISSIONER LAYTON:
So it is a concern. And that’s why I respectfully disagreed with that being the least of the trouble spots, because there were many sleepless nights that I spent looking over this. In conversation with some of my fellow commissioners to try to figure out what we wanted to do there.

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
I’m sorry. I didn’t want to interrupt.

But Director DuBrock, would you have a comment on
DIRECTOR DUBROCK:

This is my last dance on this allocation. I think what the Commissioners are about to do creates many sleepless nights for me, as well. But that said, I would like to focus on 4-A specifically. We noted that the population is relatively stable.

But we’re noticing more severe problems in the area. An allocation of 28,000 will allow that population to grow substantially. We believe the allocation recommendation was much higher than that. In fact, going from to a 12 day season to a split season the recommendation of 36,000 would move to 42,000, rather than 28,000.

And so, this is an area where I think the public’s asked the Board, asked the senate, are you serious about controlling or enforcing the deer? Are you serious about managing the impact through at least in the harvest?

And particularly, if we don’t pass an allocation at least stabilizing the population, it doesn’t allow it to grow. I think it’s apparent, based on our system, that we’re going to continue to --- this is our keep impulse of this.
We kept chronic wasting disease in a larger area of origin. So I would really ask Commissioner Layton and the Board to rethink an allocation of 28,000. I could comment individually. I will tell Commissioner Hoover that I live in 5-B and I don’t think we need any more deer than we have currently. But I don’t have a problem with the 49,000. I could comment individually for a long time.

COMMISSIONER LAYTON:
That’s fine.

DIRECTOR DUBROCK:
A particular concern is 4-A.

COMMISSIONER LAYTON:
Well, 4-A is a concern. And then, I addressed that. And I think that some of the things that we have discussed moving forward would be to —— those disease management areas are defined specifically as the WMUs are.

There are roads that define that area of disease management areas. And what I hope to do moving ahead, even as far as now, is being able to issue tags for, specifically, the disease management areas. But that wasn’t an option. You know, I didn’t do this overnight.

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
And I --- if there wasn’t a CWD in the unit, I wouldn’t have any concerns. But again, a unit with CWD and new growing cases --- I just had to double check and make sure you ---. Because you had said recommendation.

And then, you went with a different number. I just wanted to double check. But I --- again, my concern is the CWD at this point.

COMMISSIONER LAYTON:

Well, I mean, and I agree with you. But if this is going to be an issue, perhaps, maybe we need to take a break and think about it. But I am, again, just wanting an overhead consideration. It was something that I have stressed about. I made calls to a lot of my fellow commissioners in different places.

SECRETARY HOOVER:

Let me point out on that that I think we had one actual CWD case this year. I think they’ve put on two. I think we had two come in this year. That’s a 20 percent increase. It’s super.

COMMISSIONER DELANEY:

Mr. President, could I make a comment, too? You know, Commissioner Weaner said, really eloquently last year when CWD was in his area. And he said, hunting is still going to go on this fall, you
know?

We want to go out. We want our sportsmen to enjoy hunting this fall. But perhaps it may be coming up that, whatever our next sports would be, we ought to take a look at these disease management areas that have specialized zones, to harvest additional deer inside the disease management area.

I think there’s a lot of other things that we can look at, too, to help fix this. The CWD is here. I think our staff has dealt with it admirably. But I think that there’s definitely more work to be done inside these disease management committees.

CHAIR:
Mr. Layton, are you sticking with that.

COMMISSIONER LAYTON:
Yeah. I was staying with that.

COMMISSIONER WEANER:
Mr. President, also before we consider this, I just did a quick calculation of many of these numbers have been in the air. But the numbers that we came up with total 14 percent less than was recommended to us by our staff.

And it’s approximately 7 percent less
than the number of licenses issued last year. Just for a breakdown. Again, that’s a quick calculated number.

CHAIR:
Any further discussion? Commissioner Putnam?

VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:
I have some standing input in the discussion here. We received comments yesterday, after --- during our meeting. The QDMA association, they came in by email after our meeting had already started. But I wanted to make a couple comments on this, and then my own commentary. But Pennsylvania is one of only six states in the US to harvest more than 300,000 whitetails annually. In 2012 Pennsylvania harvested 2.9 antlered bucks per square mile.

This was higher than the average for the southeast, which is 1.7. The northeast, 8.0. The Midwestern states, 1.2 bucks per square mile. In fact, three states shot more bucks per square mile than Pennsylvania.

In 2012, for the fourth year in a row, at least half of Pennsylvania’s antlered buck harvest was 2.5 years of age or older. And I would contrast that with the number of comments that we’re getting
that people want to go back shooting --- the good old
days, when you shot the scrubby little spikes and
basket 8 points.

In 2012, Pennsylvania hunters shot 5
percent more antlered bucks than in 2011. In 2011, they shot 4 percent more bucks than during 2010. And in 2010, they shot 13 percent more bucks than 2009.

There are a lot of good things about our deer program.

Our deer program is one of the best in the country. We have naysayers who keep telling us our numbers are not good. I personally asked every one of them who tells me that, show me where those numbers are not right.

We’ve had some head-to-head meetings. I’ve emailed all our methodologies to statisticians. And I get nothing. Not even a simple common fact on where our numbers are wrong. We get a few who will say, there’s no way you can be killing 300,000 deer in Pennsylvania annually.

It’s just --- it’s impossible. It can’t work. Well, then, show me where it doesn’t work.

Show me which Wildlife Management Unit we need to take care of. Take a small one. Take 2-H. Go through our numbers. Call the people on the phone. Do your own surveys. Nobody does that. They just sit back there
and say, your numbers can’t be right. Some of the
discussion we’re having today is a result of all of
this --- you can’t be right. You can’t be right.
It’s impossible to be killing those number --- killing
that many deer. We are killing that many deer.

Recently, I drove to Florida, 1,200
miles. When I left Pennsylvania, all the way to
Florida, I never saw a single roadkill deer. I didn’t
see any of the typical smears that we see on our
roads. And driving back, I saw a single deer in
Virginia laying on the side of the road dead. I get
to Pennsylvania, you all know what I saw. You know
what I saw in Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania has a lot of deer. We have
issues with deer in our urban areas that we’re
struggling to address. And so, some of this 300,000
--- I will surely be the first one to say, our
forested areas, our solid old forests don’t have the
deer that they used have.

And they will not, no matter whether
there’s a Game Commission or no Game Commission. We
can only support so many deer. There’s only so much
food out there. We have a lot of other issues that
we’re dealing with, this hot spot and cold spot issue.

How do we address that? Well, frankly,
some of what we’re doing on the average --- we’ve had some discussion about 2-D, where we had a really good habitat and then a poor habitat.

Is it making smaller management units? Is that the answer? Do we get out of the township level? We have township level there. I’ve got it right here. But it’s impossible for us to make any kind of reasonable management at the township level.

And even if we did, we would still not be accurate all over that township. Because we’re going to have townships that have farmland on one side and forest on the other. If we manage down to the individual farm level, we’re going to have the alfalfa field on one side.

And we’re going to have the forest on the other side. Even at the individual farm level, we’re still not going to be right all over the farm. So our management units are somewhat of a compromise between large contiguous units that have similar characteristics across all of them.

And where we split through county lines, or we’re splitting whatever, we’re trying to keep the habitats similar. If we only had one type of habitat that was all the same, this unit issue would be moot. We could just manage for one number statewide.
So it’s a struggle to get these units just right. And we --- our staff has done a very good job. Now, we can have people argue about --- oh, and we’re arguing among ourselves about it.

Our deer program is one of the best in the country. Maybe the best in the country. We know more about our deer than any other state. Our studies are vast compared to those studies. We have other states that run check stations. West Virginia does check stations. That’s where somebody drives up by a pickup truck, goes into a gas station and says, check me off for two deer, and leaves. They don’t check the deer. They’re not aging and weighing them.

We’re handling more deer ---. Our biologists and our foresters and our field staff put their hands on more deer than any other state. Nobody else touches as many deer as what we do. And yet, we still get, oh, your numbers are no good.

Well, they are not precise. And you’ve heard people --- and I saw Brett picking over there a few times, when we’re talking about 26.2 deer per square mile. We don’t have 22.6 deer per square mile in any unit. We’ve got a range of numbers of it. In some parts of the unit, we might have that. But when we’re talking these numbers, we’re looking at trends.
So our numbers are not --- our numbers are very good. They don’t have the precision that we’ve were implying here today, killing 342.7 deer per whatever. But again, our numbers are very good. No one has refuted them. They’re published in the scientific literature.

We have our naysayers. I’m not seeing them publish anything in scientific literature. And I’m going to tell you, as a biologist, if somebody can come up with a way to prove that our system is wrong, they’ll be quick to publish it. Because that’s way scientists are. You know, if I can prove I’m smarter than you are, I’m going to do it. And nobody’s doing it. Nobody statewide is doing it. We have other issues. Chronic wasting disease, Lyme disease ---.

We’re getting lots of --- no, I won’t say that. We’re getting letters and comments. We’ve got people testifying here about the impact of Lyme disease. The group up here is the one that has to think about --- are we going to raise the deer number to make somebody in this side of the state happy?

Or are we going to raise it up to this side of the state, where we’re going to cause these people to have more exposure to Lyme disease? We talked about the disease management units. That CWD
is --- it’s here.

And it’s going to grow. And it’s going to be statewide one of these days. That’s a density dependent thing. The more chances they have, the more bullets the fire out across the landscape with these young bucks dispersing, the more chance we have of CWD spreading across the state.

Should we try and reduce the numbers in those units? I think we’d be wise to reduce them, at least in the deer management units. And I don’t --- and I’ll ask right now, if this is going to be business, for the staff to see if we can issue permits specific to our DMAs, our defined DMAs.

If we can, let’s see if we can do it yet this year. The Commissioners still have time to discuss that that day. And if we afford more permits into those DMAs, I think that we would all be in favor of something like that. I think that’s about all I had for this round of comments. Until somebody else may set me off again.

CHAIR:

Thank you, David. Further discussion?

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:

Mr. President?

CHAIR:
COMMISSIONER MARTONE:

And I’d like to coattail on what Commissioner Putnam said. You know, it’s obvious we did not follow our staff’s recommendations. To me, that does not mean that we did not believe in our staff’s number.

I certainly believe in the numbers they produce. I think they do an excellent job of providing us with pure science in deer management. It’s our job to blend that with a little bit more of the social or political end of it.

And that’s where our differences come in. It is not an indictment of the Deer Management Team, the Deer Management Program. I still think it’s the best. And I agree with Commissioner Putnam that it is the best in the country, and I stand behind that.

Our job is to blend those numbers with the hunters to keep the young hunters in the game. And looking at the social aspect. But in no way, to me, does the difference in the recommendation and our numbers say that they were wrong.

I believe they were right, scientifically. We just have a different job of
reporting to them. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER DELANEY:
I have an additional end under new business.

SECRETARY HOOVER:
I don’t think we voted. We didn’t vote ---.

CHAIR:
Mr. Delaney, we have a motion on our floor.

SECRETARY HOOVER:
I do want to point out that, other than the special regulations areas, we are now at 6 concurrent WMUs and 14 non-concurrent WMUs. And it seems to be a trend and a wish from the people that we go to a separate procedure.

And we’ve seen that in some of the comments that we got this year over the 3 day doe season. And I guess it would be my request to the staff just to look at what we would do if we took everything but the special regulations areas to make everything equal across the state into a non-concurrent situation, where we would have all of our units other than the three special regulations areas, 5-C, 5-D and 2-B placed under that 7 day as
just a request to see what we would do to move in that
direction, if you so choose to do so.

CHAIR:

Commissioner Weaner?

COMMISSIONER WEANER:

Mr. President, I’ll disagree with the
last comment here. A lot of our cooperators, people
up in the northwest that have spoken to us about the
inter-Department deer management ---. I’ll repeat
information we got, again, just yesterday from QDMA.

They’re all telling us and our staff are
all telling us to go to the 12 day per season. I’m
still a strong proponent of that. I’m not at all
interested in going to 7 days statewide. I’ll never,
ever, ever consider going to the 3 day doe season.

And if we could just abandon all this?
I think this is a move in the wrong direction. We
talked about --- we wanted to offer opportunity to our
hunters. And that was the argument that was used, one
of the arguments that was used when we went to
concurrent seasons.

It’s a valid argument. Well, it’s a
valid argument, some people used to say, why did they
retract that and go back to the less days for various
reasons? My personal feeling is, we need to be
looking at more than 12 days concurrent statewide, rather than the other way around.

SECRETARY HOOVER:
I’d just like to --. Of course, you’re going to see that there are disagreements on the Board. Not all of us agree on any one particular direction to take. Dave, you see, there was some discussion on the 3 day season.

And it generated a lot of discussion out there in the field. The 7 day season was --- and it had been through the entire central portion of the state. Almost WMU from the northeast to the southwest is now in the 7-day non-concurrent season.

The benefit of doing that statewide would be to put --- it would be an economic and a social decision. The social decision is that we now have an opening day. We would then have an opening day for doe season on a Saturday where everyone, including their children, could get out there.

And we’d have the most people in the field and the most deer on the ground, on the landscape, that have the opportunity to take a doe. The second part of that is the economic decision. And that part is if you put more people into the field, you put more people into the restaurants and the
sporting goods stores and the hotels on a given weekend, as a second opening day.

That’s just a thought. And it’s my thought. And like you see, there’s going to be commissioners that don’t agree with it. There’s going to be commissioners that do agree with it. It’s something we’re putting out there.

We’d like to hear from our people. I mean, on the sporting goods, the state of Pennsylvania does not mean that this effects. We want to know what they feel. Do they think this is a good idea? Do they not? I think it’s a good idea. That being said. That’s all I have.

CHAIR:

Any other comments? Mr. Martone?

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:

This is off that subject, a new topic.

CHAIR:

We can bring it up on our new business, then.

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:

But Commissioner Putnam mentioned --- and I want to mention it for WMU 2-F, that we did reduce the allocations in 2-F, that there’s a lot of major landowners, including Ken in here, the
cooperative up there.

And I would encourage them to use D map, control deer on their property. I think that’s a valuable tool. And what we do here can be supplemented by what they do there. So I would encourage those groups up in there in 2-F to look at this number and then decide what they want to do with D mapping and reevaluate their D map program.

CHAIR:

Thank you. Mr. Secretary, there is a motion on the floor.

SECRETARY HOOVER:

There’s a motion on the floor that’s been duly seconded. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

ALL AYES

SECRETARY HOOVER:

Opposed? The motion carries unanimously.

CHAIR:

Thank you very much. Gentlemen, moving on, we’ve covered a lot of this, so ---. But we’re moving onto other new business. And I call on Commissioner Delaney to talk about that.

COMMISSIONER DELANEY:
Thank you, Mr. President. I wrote down just a couple of thoughts here. And I’d like just to read it so that I get it right and proper. Executive Director Hough and the Wildlife Management Staff --- in my seven years as a commissioner, I have heard the concerns of many sportsmen across the state in regards to the predator effects on the white tailed deer.

Several times over the last several years, we have had some short discussions on the subject. But now, there is a credible wildlife biologist, Kip Adams from QDMA, that has wrote an article, Fawning Time Equals Lunchtime for Predators. Kip’s article will have the data to support predator impact on deer fawns. He also mentions that forest health is good in WMA 3-A, as well as the deer health. He also mentions they see antlerless adult deer, but do not see any fawns.

Now, I fully understand that PGC’s own study sponsored by Pennsylvania Game Commission discusses some extremely high percentages of deer fawn mortality caused by predation. This study was done in 2000-2001.

I’ve also read that many biologists that realistic fawn predation number is about 20 percent by bears, coyotes, bobcats --- and bobcats, among other
predators. But the 2001 study shows predation numbers much higher.

The study I mentioned speaks about the predation of deer fawns, but the agency deer team thinks that the number is just not high enough to hurt deer herds. Many think differently. These last 15 years, the coyote population has exploded from 1,000 in 1987 to over 18,000 in 2013.

The bear population has grown to over 18,000 animals. I would recommend the agency staff to discuss this issue at the next working group meeting and prepare study information in preparation for a new fawn study in Pennsylvania.

A lot of predator population dynamics has changed since the last study was done statewide, including a number of habitats. I do believe there is strong support from the Board members to move this issue to vote at the next Board meeting. And agency staff feels that this is warranted and necessary.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

CHAIR:

Thank you, Commissioner. Commissioner Martone?

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:

I’m not quite as official as
Commissioner Delaney. But I have three small items under new business. One is I would like to ask the Bureau of Wildlife Management to study and report back to the Board on the feasibility of concurrent archery deer and archery bear season, to overlap those by a week.

They’d either decide to add a week to bear season and have a two week archery season that falls within the archery deer. Or just move that archery bear season by a week, that I hope ---. I think there’s a big recreational value.

And we’ve shown that we have plenty of bear out there to offer our archers. Another item, I would like the Bureau of Information and Education to look into incorporating a lesson on Lyme disease into our hunter trapper education course. And the third item I would like to encourage Executive Director Hough to continue and advance the Game Commission’s partnership with the Hunters Sharing Harvest Program.

I think these doe tags we just issued, there is a great opportunity to provide this excellent source of venison to food banks and the needy and the hungry there in Pennsylvania. And our sportsmen have risen to the occasion year after year since the early 1900 --- 1990s, when the Hunters Sharing Harvest
Program was implemented. And I would like to see the Game Commission take a bigger role in that program. And I would encourage Executive Director Hough to investigate that. Thank you.

CHAIR:
Commissioner Putnam, you had some discussion about D mapping reporting?

VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:
I’ve got a whole book here

CHAIR:
All right.

VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:
Okay, I’m up. The first thing I’d like to do is comment on the predator study. People believe that we don’t consider predators. And I know there’s a famous quote that someone called our office. And they said we don’t care about coyotes.

The truth is, we do care about all mortality. All mortality is summed up in how many deer are still alive. So whether it was predators, whether it was pneumonia, starvation, road kills ---. It is really all summed up in our numbers. So to say that we don’t care about predators is not accurate. We do care about predators. We just don’t have a specific predator factor in our calculations.
The other thing about predators are, we controlled the deer herd by the number of allocations. And what we’re doing is, we’re allocating to harvest a certain number of antlerless deer after everybody else has taken their shot at it, and after the coyotes and the bears have taken the fawns.

But I do think there’s an issue with predation, in that a large number of fawns coming out of the population reduces the resiliency of the deer herd to rebound after a large harvest, after any kind of event. And so, I do think it’s important for us to have a little better handle on the predation than what we have right now.

I’m also just almost always interested in things. So I think it would be extremely interesting to all of us to redo the 2001 predator study. And there’s a lot of new technology that’s out there since the last time that predator study was done. I would like to see the --- a little throw camera on some of our predators out there, so we could see just what we got.

We’re tagging a lot of bears right now. And I don’t know what the cost would be to put a camera on that bear as opposed to just a radio collar or a GPS collar. But that’s just one suggestion that
we might want to consider as we develop plans for new predator studies.

Regarding Lyme education, I surely support Commissioner Martone’s additional education on Lyme disease. I think it might even be prudent to put something in our book, in our digest, to further advise our hunters out there. Lyme disease is a real problem. And again, even when we set our allocations. We keep Lyme disease in the back of our mind.

The bear archery --- our bear population surely can stand some more harvest. I would support that, as well as ownership in the harvest.

Okay. We received a lot of comments. Sometimes we receive a chain letter, and sometimes we receive large petitions. We also receive individual comments that are very meaningful. I mean, I would emphasize that anyone who wants to comment to us, they're more than welcome to --- well, we're more than willing to hear your comments. The Commissioners respond to a lot of them individually. We don’t respond to all of them, and especially when 500 that are exactly the same. We don’t respond to those that much.

One of the comments we received at our last meeting with regard to the use of electronic
calls for various wildlife species, including turkey, deer, predators, whatever. We had a request to consider that. And I’m going to request that staff prepare recommendations for our next working group on what types of wildlife --- what type of electronic calling might be suitable, so that we might change our regulations.

We do support fair chase. That’s the basic preface of most of the hunting regulations in Pennsylvania. So that will be a major part of any consideration, is, does this violate the fair chase? Waterfowl are not permitted by federal regulations, except for snow geese, I guess.

So I’m going to ask the staff to prepare a discussion for our next working group regarding the use of electronic calls for various wildlife. This is also a notice to the --- if anyone wants to provide comments before or after that working group meeting, this will be something we’ll discuss for a while. So be advised that we will be discussing the increased use of electronic calls in Pennsylvania.

Another thing that we get a lot of comments on is our reporting here. And I know that Brett’s over there quiver again. And our reporting rate --- we get so many people telling us, you can’t
know what you’re doing. You only have 33 percent reporting. The scientific answer to that is, it doesn’t matter what the reporting rate is as long as we know what it is.

And we do have a fair --- we have a reporting rate than anyone else, because we handle so many deer. When we handle more than 35,000 deer --- and I’m not sure of the exact number. Calvin, if you could tell me how many we handle?

**DIRECTOR DUBROCK:**

It’s between 25 and 26,000.

**VICE PRESIDENT PUTNAM:**

26,000 deer --- we’ve got a very big sample size. So we have a pretty good handle --- I would say a very good handle --- on the reporting rate. Nobody is happy with the reporting rate. And as Commissioner Martone said, there’s also --- there’s a scientific side.

There’s a social side, political side to this, to these issues. And the social and political side has --- it’s bearing on the Commissioners to increase the reporting rate. So we’ve had some discussion on about it.

And I’ve asked some staff to prepare for our next working group meeting all the alternatives we
can do for increasing reporting rates. One of the
biggest problems with reporting rates is our current
postcard system, which I think is in the statute.
It’s a ten day reporting rate statute.

So we can’t change --- the Commissioners
cannot change the ten day reporting rate without going
to the Legislature to change that. Before we go to
the Legislature to change that, I think we have to
have our own discussions about what we would like to
do. And if we want to propose regulations, we can
have that discussion. We would like the public to
comment on that as well. But I think we’re going to
need to set a goal that we can maybe come up with at
the next meeting.

If we can increase the reporting rate to
50 percent, then we would not have to go to
Legislation. If we can’t, then we’re going to have to
talk about it. You know, the threat currently, if we
don’t --- I mean, we’re not prosecuting any people for
non-reporting, because all they have to do is sign an
affidavit that they mailed in their card. And that’ll
remove the chance of prosecuting.

Now, we talked about the concurrent
versus non-concurrent. Mr. Hoover talked about that.
I think we hear many claims, including from my good
friend Commissioner Hoover, that there will be an economic impact from this aspect of what we do, a positive impact, a negative impact.

And I believe it’s time for us to look at that, have the staff look at that, whether we’re going to have --- I’m getting an off the floor here. Yeah, I want to look at the social and economic impacts from a professional standpoint, as opposed to someone from Allegheny County telling me that what we do with the deer program is going to influence small businesses in Potter County.

We had a deer hearing up in Potter Counter sponsored by the legislature. And there were --- seven or eight people testified at that meeting about the economic impacts on the deer program in Potter County. But none of them were from Potter County. And nobody that testified was even from the north central, regarding the economic impacts on the deer program on the north central.

We’re throwing a lot of numbers around. I think I’d like to see some more --- some of our own surveys to talk about those kinds of things. With reporting rate, I guess I would include a discussion of the D map in that discussion, the D map reporting rates as well. We had mandatory for D map in the
early days, back when the D map program was mandatory. But we --- again, we couldn’t enforce it, because we’re using the mail-in postcards.

And then, the last thing --- well, maybe not the last thing. But towards the bottom of the list is, can we come up with a D map --- no, DMA permits this year? Would it be possible for us to use an existing program, whether we want to call it red tag, D map, whatever. But would the DMA permit that would be issued through the PALS system apply to those --- to our disease management areas? If we can’t do it, I guess we shouldn’t talking about doing it in a future year. But that’ll make me feel much better about some of our --- those southern units, 4-A, where we have the --- where we have chronic wasting disease.

It’s going to allow us to react much more quickly when we identify chronic wasting disease in the area. That would be a good point at some point not too far in the future when we’ve got it on a statewide issue than a focused area. If we could come up with that as an alternative to trying to lower the entire unit, focusing more on the units that are we going to need the help, I think we --- that was what I would recommend.

CHAIR:
Thank you, Commissioner Putnam.

COMMISSIONER DELANEY:

Could I have just one quick follow-up to the harvest reporting? In my experience, no one saw --- or maybe a few saw the discussion yesterday with Director DuBrock saying 70 percent of our sportsmen do not send their harvest report card. And that’s insulting to me, as a sportsman.

We talked about harvest reporting at our last working group meeting. And we said we wanted to take some action this meeting. And now we’re saying, well, let’s talk about it at the next working group meeting. Let’s get serious about this and try to get something done, whether it’s the 24 hour reporting or whatever. But we had the discussion at our working group meeting. Director DuBrock brought out the numbers I gave yesterday.

Now we’re saying, well, let’s do something definitive at our next working group meeting to be prepared with what direction. Do we have to the legislature to change this? I mean, the Legislature is a big part of telling us, what you guys are doing is not working. So let’s take some action on this, finally. Instead of talking about it, let’s do something about it. All right.
CHAIR:

Secretary?

SECRETARY HOOVER:

I have two things under new business.  I’d like to --- again, we’ve been giving the staff a lot of work to do for the next year, to get a head start on what we want to look for the following --- for next year’s hunting season.

I’m seriously looking at realigning 5-C and 5-D. We’ve had discussions about that in the past. And for the for it to work, to even work, we either split 5-C or do a complete realignment of the two, so we get it closer to where it needs to be.

And I’d also like to propose, for the 2015 season, and have the staff do some work and let me know if it’s a viable solution or not, or propose a new tag to be utilized in conjunction with the urban deer management plan we’ve been working on, whereby the sportsmen in the special regulations area would be allowed to purchase a specific tag where the special regulations were urbanized.

Not necessarily special regulations, but for our urban environments where it would come to two doe and a single buck, a single any buck. Because when we get into the urban environments, where we
have, literally, houses sitting next to each other on a 50 by 100 foot lot, the environment is not where we want to see a large deer population where the sportsmen would be able to purchase at tag specific to that environment, which would include two buck, two doe, and any buck. We’re not looking to grow some monster bucks in the middle of Chester or some of the surrounding communities. And that would also be allowed to be used in conjunction with the regular archery ---.

Not regular archery, but regular buck tags that they would purchase statewide. This tag would be focused, again, similar to it being a name tag, your management, would be focused on an area in an urban environment where we would be trying to remove as many deer as we possibly can. That’s just something I’d like to put out there for next year, that we can get a look at it, see what it will do, and if it’s even a possibility.

CHAIR:

Commissioner, before we proceed, I’d like to throw something out here. Possibly, you just mentioned to me that prosecution doesn’t necessarily work on the reporting. And maybe increased incentive, by possibly having giveaway, raffle, what have you,
for people who send in their reports; okay?

Just to include a thought that was handed down to me here. So you might want to consider that. All right. Moving on, in regard to something that’s previously happened in the past several weeks, there have been letters received by all the Commissioners.

I would like to say, on behalf of this Board, that we have done everything above Board and with counsel. And we’re not going to dwell into personnel matters here. But on behalf of the Board, I would like Commissioner Hoover to make a statement.

SECRETARY HOOVER:

On behalf of the Board, I would like to begin by making this statement. Last year, the Board began steps with Carl Roe regarding whether he should continue as the Executive Director of the PGC.

While we all respect Mr. Carl Roe and appreciate the work that he did for the PGC, we questioned whether he was the right individual to lead this agency forward. At Mr. Roe’s request, the Board entered into an agreement with him whereby he would receive a payment in exchange for not filing any potential claims he could have regarding the termination of his employment.
The Board also took into account a variety of other factors and acted in what it believed to be the best interest of the PGC. The Board also directed the PGC Chief Counsel to treat the agreement as any other contract and submit it to the Attorney General’s office and the Governor’s Office of the Chief Counsel for review.

It was during this process that the Governor’s office notified us that they would not process the agreement for payment. We have since notified the Governor’s office and Mr. Roe that the PGC will take no further step toward finalizing the agreement.

We regret the attention that this matter received, as it --- and has distracted from the public appreciation of the unmatched work done by the PGC for the betterment of the state’s wildlife population and its sportsmen and women. And it is to the mission we stand committed.

CHAIR:

Thank you, Mr. Secretary. We’ll have no further comment as a Board on this subject. Moving on here, we’ll be having --- any more new business at all? I’m sorry. Okay. Moving along, we’ll have a working group on the 19th of May.
And I would like to have a motion to accept June 9 and 10 of 2014, September 22 and 23 of 2014, and January 25, 26 and 27 of 2015 for our upcoming meetings. Do I hear a motion to accept?

COMMISSIONER WEANER:
So moved.

CHAIR:
Second?

COMMISSIONER MARTONE:
Seconded.

CHAIR:
Mr. Secretary?

SECRETARY HOOVER:
There’s a motion on the floor that has been duly seconded. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

ALL AYES

SECRETARY HOOVER:
Those opposed? That motion carries.

CHAIR:
That concludes this meeting. And I thank you, everybody. In 15 minutes, we will have a press conference in the cafeteria. Thank you all for attending.

* * * * * * *
MEETING CONCLUDED AT 10:15 P.M.

CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing proceedings, hearing held before President Schlemmer was reported by me on 4/8/2014 and that I Rhonda K. Thorpe read this transcript and that I attest that this transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceeding.

[Signature]

Court Reporter