APPEARANCES

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MR. PUTNAM:
We'll call the meeting to order and start off with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE RECITED

MR. PUTNAM:
We'll start off with a reminder to please turn off your cell phones or put them on silent. We'll have the roll call by the Secretary.

MR. LAYTON:
President Putnam?

MR. PUTNAM:
Present.

MR. LAYTON:
Vice President Hoover?

MR. HOOVER:
Present.

MR. LAYTON:
Commissioner Delaney?

MR. DELANEY:
Present.

MR. LAYTON:
Commissioner Weaner?

MR. WEANER:
Present.

MR. LAYTON:
Commissioner Schlemmer is absent.

Commissioner Fox?

MR. FOX:
Here and present.

MR. LAYTON:
Commissioner Daley?

MR. DALEY:
Present.

MR. LAYTON:
Commissioner Layton is present.

MR. PUTNAM:
Thank you. Can we have the approval of the minutes of the previous meeting?

MR. WEANER:
Mr. President, do you want to turn on your microphone, please?

MR. PUTNAM:
Thank you. Can we have the approval of the Commission meeting held April 10th, 2015?

MR. DELANEY:
So moved.

MR. WEANER:
Second.
MR. PUTNAM:

Having been properly moved and seconded, do we have a vote? All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

AYES RESPOND

MR. PUTNAM:

Opposed? Motion carries. I'll turn it over to the Bureau of Wildlife Management for proposed Rule Making.

ATTORNEY BECHTEL:

The first item today comes from the Bureau of Wildlife Management's proposed Rule Making to amend 58 Pa Code, Section 135.104. The controlled goose hunting program on the Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area provides opportunities for hunters to harvest Canada geese during the regular goose hunting season. Each year, a number of hunters are selected to hunt from blinds through a public drawing. Hunters may subsequently enter into a drawing on later days for unclaimed blinds where they may take additional geese but remain within the one goose per day daily bag limit.

Hunter success rates have been declining on the controlled goose hunting area due in part to declining resident goose populations, fewer migrant
geese and higher harvest rates on geese in areas surrounding Middle Creek. To increase hunter success and resident goose populations, the September season daily limits and season daily bag limits have been reduced. The September season hunting is closed on State Game Land 46. To help increase hunter success rates and the Canada goose populations on Middle Creek, it is being proposed to limit the take on the controlled goose hunting area to one Canada goose per person per season. The text of the amendment is shown on page two of your agenda.

MR. WEANER:
So moved.

MR. PUTNAM:
You heard the commentary. Do we have a motion, do we have a second?

MR. LAYTON:
Second.

MR. PUTNAM:
Discussion? John, do you have anything else you'd want to add to that, to the discussion we just got?

MR. DUNN:
Just that we will be meeting with our partners in the coming year, what happens to the
success rate with this change? We may be proposing some other changes due to this.

MR. PUTNAM:
Okay. Any additional comments or discussion? Mr. Secretary?

MR. LAYTON:
We have a motion on the floor that's been properly seconded. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

AYES RESPOND

MR. LAYTON:
Opposed?

NO RESPONSE

MR. LAYTON:
Motion carries.

ATTORNEY BECHTEL:
The next item concerns proposed Rule Making to amend 58 Pa Code Section 133.21 relating to classification of mammals to reflect the current status of the population of mammals in this Commonwealth and to update scientific nomenclature. The first amendment pertains to the Delmarva fox squirrel. This is one of three subspecies of fox squirrels listed in Pennsylvania. The species was considered present historically in only a very limited
portion of southeastern Pennsylvania, and a reintroduction attempt in 1989 occurred with no documented survival past one year. Suitable habitat for the species within its historic range is nonexistent, and no documented individuals have been recorded in the 25 years since the reintroduction effort was undertaken. The mammal technical committee, a scientific advisory committee of the Pennsylvania Biological Survey, has voted to consider it as state extirpated, and to remove it from the list of state endangered mammals. Across the species core range in coastal portions of Delaware, Maryland and Virginia, it is considered stable and proposed to be removed from federal list of endangered species.

The second amendment updates the common name of the eastern woodrat in Pennsylvania to the Allegheny woodrat. Based upon genetic and morphological evidence, the eastern woodrat has been split into two species; the eastern and the Allegheny woodrat. The Allegheny woodrat inhabits Pennsylvania and is currently listed as threatened. The text of these changes is shown on pages three and four of your agenda.

MR. PUTNAM:
Do we have a motion?
MR. DALEY:
So moved.

MR. WEANNER:
Second.

MR. PUTNAM:
Mr. Secretary? Oh no, discussion? No discussion. Mr. Secretary?

MR. LAYTON:
We have a motion on the floor that's been properly seconded, and all those in favor signify by saying aye.

AYES RESPOND

MR. LAYTON:
Opposed? Motion carries.

ATTORNEY BECHTEL:
The next item concerns proposed Rule Making to amend 58 Pa Code Section 147.673. The Commission is statutorily tasked with managing the Commonwealth's white-tailed deer herds on behalf of all its citizens. To accomplish this task, the Commission allocates antlerless deer licenses across the state amongst its various wildlife management units to utilize hunter harvest as the primary management tool of white-tailed deer. These allocations are adjusted each year to allow the deer
herd to grow, stabilize or decrease, and are based on the best available science and in consideration of the broad and disparate interests of the Commonwealth's various stakeholders. However, this system primarily focused on addressing deer management at the landscape level.

In 2003, the Deer Management Assistance Program, or DMAP, was first established to provide both public and private landowners with an additional tool for the management of local white-tail deer herds on lands where excessive deer numbers have compromised the landowners' land uses and other interests. DMAP was specifically designed as a strategic tool to deal with localized land issues, not larger landscape problems. However, a growing voice of hunters have recently raised concerns that DMAP may be excessively impacting local white-tail deer herds, especially on state-owned lands, as evidenced by a lack of deer sightings. Regulatory changes allow the Commission to closely monitor and make necessary changes when alignment of local deer management goals using DMAP are not in alignment with the agency's mandate to effectively manage the deer in a responsible and appropriate manner.

The Commission is proposing to amend
Section 147.673, relating to eligibility and application for DMAP, to allow the Commission to assess DMAP coupon allocations for political subdivision or government agency applicants at individual and distinct DMAP units to be less than 15,000 acres each and also assess DMAP coupons to these applicants based upon current conditions relative to goals and objectives outlined in the approved management plan.

By limiting the extent of DMAP units on public lands to less than 15,000 acres each, political subdivision or government agency landowner applicants will be asked to narrow the focus of their DMAP applications to areas in greater need of this tool in an effort to manage deer populations at a more distinct local level. Furthermore, political subdivision or government agency landowner applicants will be issued DMAP coupons in such numbers that are consistent with current conditions relative to goals and objectives outlined in an approved management plan and without a guaranteed minimum allocation. The proposed amendments better allow the Commission to manage the white-tail deer herd to best meet landowner needs, hunter desires and citizen's interests. The text of these changes is shown on pages six and seven.
of your agenda.

MR. PUTNAM:
Do I have a motion?

MR. HOOVER:
So moved.

MR. PUTNAM:
Second?

MR. WEANER:
Second.

MR. PUTNAM:
Discussion? Actually, I'll provide a little additional commentary to this. This is a proposed rule. This is not going to be final until our next meeting, so we have plenty of time to continue the discussion, make additional comments. It is part of our ongoing effort to address the issues of hot spots and cold spots. This is an extremely valuable tool to address hot spots. However, many of the cold spots that have been identified are also being, as far as we can tell, targeted with DMAP. That's the issue we're really trying to address here. So I invite additional comments from the Commissioners. Commissioner Daley?

MR. DALEY:
I think that was well put, because, you
know, we have gotten some comments through what we got yesterday. They had more time to look at it. Again, there is some opposition to the 15,000 acres. I agree that, you know, let's continue the dialogue and do this at the next meeting.

**MR. PUTNAM:**

Thank you. Any additional comments? Commissioner Layton?

**MR. LAYTON:**

Do you want me to call roll, or do you want me to comment?

**MR. PUTNAM:**

No, I thought you were commenting when you turned around.

**MR. LAYTON:**

I can comment. We talked to some of our partners yesterday after the meeting, and we are going to have conversation with them, and you know, we've agreed to go out into the field and kind of do some tours of some of the lands that are actually being affected by this proposed change. And so, you know, as we go through those discussions and those meetings, I think we'll be able to if need be, tweak this, to make it fit into everybody's needs.

**MR. PUTNAM:**
Thank you. Any additional comments?

Mr. Secretary?

MR. LAYTON:

We have a motion that's been properly seconded. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

AYES RESPOND

MR. LAYTON:

Opposed? Motion carries.

ATTORNEY BECHTEL:

The next item for the Commission comes from the Bureau of Wildlife Protection. It concerns proposed Rule Making to amend 58 Pa Code Section 131.8. Notwithstanding the Bald Eagle's delisting on March 15th, 2014, its populations and the populations of its smaller cousin, the Golden Eagle, necessitate further protection from unlawful takings in the form of increased replacement costs.

The Commission is proposing to amend Section 131.8 to increase replacement costs for Bald and Golden Eagles from $200 to $2,500. The text of this change is shown on pages eight and nine of your agenda.

MR. PUTNAM:

Motion?

MR. DELANEY:
So moved.

MR. PUTNAM:
Second?

MR. WEANER:
Second.

MR. PUTNAM:
Discussion? Mr. Secretary?

MR. LAYTON:
We have a motion on the floor that's been properly seconded. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

AYES RESPOND

MR. LAYTON:
Opposed? Motion carries.

ATTORNEY BECHTEL:
And the next item is also proposed Rule Making to amend 58 Pa Code Sections 143.182, 143.185 and 147.804. Since the successful implementation of the Mentored Youth Hunting Program in the fall of 2006, the Commission has been striving to improve upon the successes of this mentor-based program. Sporting organizations and many other interested groups have continued to encourage the Commission to expand mentored youth hunting opportunities within this Commonwealth to additional species, including the
 cottontail rabbit and mourning dove. Importantly, the
mourning dove is defined as a migratory bird species
and therefore requires the acquisition of a Migratory
Game Bird License to facilitate the Harvest
Information Program, or HIP. HIP is a national
coopeativesate and federal program designed to
improve the information collected regarding the
harvest of migratory game birds.

The Commission is proposing to amend
sections 143.182, 143.185 and 147.804 to add
cottontail rabbit and mourning dove to the list of
species that mentored youth are eligible to hunt and
also require that mentored youth obtain a Migratory
Game Bird License prior to hunting mourning dove. The
text of this change is shown on pages 10 and 11 of
your agenda.

MR. PUTNAM:
Motion?

MR. HOOVER:
So moved.

MR. PUTNAM:
Second?

MR. FOX:
Second.

MR. PUTNAM:
Discussion?

MR. DELANEY:

Yes, Mr. President.

MR. PUTNAM:

Commissioner Delaney?

MR. DELANEY:

I believe that this is a perfect example of why we do it, and ask this Board of Commissioners to expand our mentored youth hunting program to include the rabbit hunters. The Pennsylvania Gun Dog Beagle Association came here to testify often in the last few years that have asked for this. I will be supporting it, and I will say four years ago, when we implemented the coyote to our youth hunting program, it went over very, very well with Pennsylvania Fox and Coyote Hunter's Association, so we know it can be done. So I would encourage my fellow Commissioners to have this for your consideration, and I think for the future of the agency to continue our small game hunting improvements.

MR. PUTNAM:

Thank you. Any additional comments? Mr. Secretary?

MR. LAYTON:

We have a motion on the floor that's
been properly seconded. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

AYES RESPOND

MR. LAYTON:
Opposed? Motion carried.

ATTORNEY BECHTEL:
The next items come from the Bureau of Wildlife Habitat and Management. They concern two acquisitions. The first is Contract Number L-3682, State Game Land Number 323 in Centre County. Joshua and Vivian First are offering for sale three tracts totally 230.9 more or less acres in Howard Township, Centre County, adjacent to State Game Land Number 323. As shown on Exhibit RED 1 on page 13 of your agenda.

(Commission Exhibit RED 1 marked for identification.)

ATTORNEY BECHTEL:
The tracts also adjoin United States Government property to the North known as the Foster Joseph Sayers Dam property, which is managed by the Commission under an agreement with the United States Army Corps of Engineers. The option price is $325,000 lump sum to be paid with escrowed funds from prior land exchange on State Game Land Number 176 with the Pennsylvania State University and will require review
and approval from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This transaction is contingent upon transfer or easements currently held by Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources on the property to the Commission for no consideration. The three tracts are located in an area known as the Lower Bald Eagle Valley Region of Centre County and are forested with a mix of pole stage northern hardwoods creating early successional forest habitat. Access to this property is through State Game Land Number 323, as well as administrative access from two rights-of-way which can lead to Township Route 663, also known as Old Route 220.

The second acquisition is Contract Number L-3683, State Game Land Number 88 in Perry County. The Sarah W. Fritz Estate is offering for sale three tracts totaling 63.5 more or less acres in Saville Township, Perry County, adjacent to State Game Lands Number 88, as shown on Exhibit RED 2 on page 14 of your agenda.

(Commission Exhibit RED 2 marked for identification.)

ATTORNEY BECHTEL:
The option price is $150,000 to be paid from the Game Fund. The tracts are comprised of a
mostly mature stand of oak/hickory forest. The
terrain is primarily steep and rocky. Two of the
tracts, one being 34.5 more or less acres, and the
other being 2.4 more or less acres, fill an indenture
into State Game Land Number 88, and provide access
from State Route 74. The 2.4 more or less acre parcel
will grant key access into a portion of State Game
Land Number 88, located at a manageable lower
elevation on the south side of Tuscarora Mountain.
The third tract, 26.6 more or less acres, partially
fills in another indenture and is accessed from the
existing State Game Lands Number 88.

MR. PUTNAM:
Motion?

MR. DELANEY:
So moved.

MR. PUTNAM:
Second?

MR. WEANER:
Second.

MR. PUTNAM:
Discussion?

MR. DELANEY:
Mr. President?

MR. PUTNAM:
Commissioner Delaney?

MR. DELANEY:

I think that as we consider the vote for this, I just want offer just a short editorial under discussion. If the Board was to pass this, if my math is correct, I believe that this will put us at or over 1.5 million acres of State Game Lands in the Commonwealth. I think the vote is somewhat historic in what this agency has come to and got to, and I just think this morning talking to our customers out here need to know that we are at 1.5 million acres of State Game Lands.

MR. PUTNAM:

Thank you. The 1.5 million is a number that we're counting on and the official count will be when the land sales are consummated, and we will have an appropriate celebration at that time, but this is a monumental occasion to get us up to 1.5 million acres. Any additional discussion? Mr. Secretary?

MR. LAYTON:

We have a motion that's been properly seconded. All those in favor signify by saying aye. AYES RESPOND

MR. LAYTON:

Opposed? Motions carried.
ATTORNEY BECHTEL:

The next item concerns an exchange, Contract Number L-3684, State Game Land Number 91 in Luzerne County. Transcontinental Gas Pipeline, TRANSCO, is offering an easement totaling 4.29 acres upon, over and through and across land owned by TRANSCO in Buck Township, Luzerne County, adjacent to State Game Land Number 91, as shown on Exhibit RED 3, on page 16 of your agenda.

(Commission Exhibit RED 3 marked for identification.)

ATTORNEY BECHTEL:

The easement is an exchange for a right-of-way license that TRANSCO requested in order to construct, operate and maintain a new 42-inch natural gas pipeline across a portion of State Game Land 91 in Buck Township, Luzerne County. TRANSCO has agreed to convey this 4.29 acre easement to the Commission in lieu of habitat, surface and marketable damages associated with the license. The easement offered by TRANSCO will connect a limited access portion of State Game Land Number 91 with State Route 115, providing much-needed access for future habitat management, as well as improved access for hunters and trappers. The easement will allow for locating, opening,
constructing, repairing, maintaining and using a road up to 30 feet in width and a parking area of up to 2.56 acres.

Motorized vehicle use of the road by the Commission and those doing work for the Commission will not be limited. Use of the road by the general public will be limited to foot travel, non-motorized vehicles or motorized wheelchairs and other mobility support devices authorized under law. The Commission will be responsible for the construction and maintenance of the road and parking area. Any marketable timber cut within the easement will become the property of the Commission.

In addition to the easement, the Commission's standard annual License fee will continue to be paid by TRANSCO, so long as the License remains active. The License will authorize 424 linear feet of 42 inch natural gas pipeline within the new 30-foot wide right-of-way, as shown on Exhibit RED 4 on page 17 of your agenda.

(Commission Exhibit RED 4 marked for identification.)

ATTORNEY BECHTEL:
The new right-of-way will occupy 0.28 acres of State Game Land Number 91, and will be
located immediately adjacent to an existing 100-foot right-of-way that TRANSCO acquired from previous landowners in the Commission's chain of title. TRANSCO will use and reclaim an additional 0.27 acre of Game Lands outside of this right-of-way during construction of the pipeline. As a condition of the License, TRANSCO will also construct 130 more or less feet of improved access road across all pipelines within both right-of-ways to facilitate heavy hauling by the Commission during future timber management activities on State Game Lands Number 91.

MR. PUTNAM:

Do I have a motion?

MR. WEANER:

So moved.

MR. PUTNAM:

Second?

MR. FOX:

Second.

MR. PUTNAM:

Discussion? I’ll offer a commentary on this is a --- every one of our acquisitions and exchanges greatly benefit the sportsmen of Pennsylvania by providing additional access to our game lands. It seems like everyone that I look at
here has significant, not just more access, but significant access to areas. We own a lot of property, but a lot of our property has been landlocked and hard to get to. But as long as I have the floor, I have to introduce Director Sussenbach. This is his first official meeting as a Director of Wildlife Habitat management, so welcome aboard, Pete. And now, Mr. Secretary?

MR. LAYTON:

We have motion that’s been properly seconded. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

AYES RESPOND

MR. LAYTON:

Opposed? Motion carried.

ATTORNEY BECHTEL:

The next item concerns a restricted surface use oil and gas cooperative agreement or land exchange on Tract 025A-15, State Game Land Number 25, in Elk County. Seneca Resources Corporation, or Seneca, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania requested the Commission offer its oil and gas rights under a portion of State Game Land Number 25 for oil and gas development. The proposed tract, containing approximately 2,106.73 acres, is located in Jones Township, Elk County, as shown on Exhibit OGM 1, on
page 19 of your agenda.

(Commission Exhibit OGM 1 marked for identification.)

ATTORNEY BECHTEL:

Seneca owns the oil/gas rights under all of State Game Land Number 25, with the exception of the 2,106.73 acres and has initiated unconventional gas well exploration, drilling, production and transportation activities on State Game Land Number 25 and on the adjoining Elk State Forest lands. Seneca is the only company that has the ability to unitize and effectively develop the Commission’s oil and gas reserves under the proposed tract by horizontal drilling. PGC staff has negotiated the proposed terms of the agreement with Seneca in an effort to prudently develop the Commission’s oil/gas reserve, as well as to simultaneously minimize the surface use and protect the wildlife resources and recreational use of State Game Land Number 25.

The terms of the agreement are a five-year paid up Surface Use Oil and Gas Agreement, a $1,350 per acre net oil and gas bonus payment, a total bonus of $2,844,085 and 15 percent royalty for all oil/gas and other liquids or condensates produced and sold from the proposed tract. The bonus payment shall
be deposited into the Game Fund. As additional bonus
consideration, Seneca will transfer a 290-acre tract
of land adjoining State Game Land Number 62 in Hamlin
Township, McKean County to the Commission and will
also surrender the remaining eight years of a ten-year
timber reservation on a 184-acre tract of land
previously conveyed to the Commission also located in
Hamlin Township, McKean County, as shown on Exhibit
OGM 2, on page 20 of your agenda.

(Commission Exhibit OGM 2 marked for
identification).

ATTORNEY BECHTEL:
Both the 290-acre tract and the 184-acre
reservation are northern hardwood forest habitat in
the small sawtimber and pole timber size classes with
good potential for habitat improvement. High
elevation wetlands also exist on the tracts.

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

MR. PUTNAM:
Do I have a motion?
MR. HOOVER:
So moved.

MR. PUTNAM:
Second?

MR. FOX:
Second.

MR. PUTNAM:
Discussion? Mr. Secretary?

MR. LAYTON:
We have a motion that’s been properly seconded. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

AYES RESPOND

MR. LAYTON:
Opposed? Motion is carried.

ATTORNEY BECHTEL:
The last item before the Commission today is from the Executive Office. It concerns the proposed strategic plan. The 2015-2020 Strategic Plan is presented to the Board of Commissioners for approval. The strategic plan was developed in a collaborative approach with a focus on developing SMART goals; goals which are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely. By no means does this document represent all of the inner workings of the Pennsylvania Game Commission. Instead, the
document outlines goals and challenges the Agency will focus on during the next five years to continue to improve the Agency’s effectiveness.

This strategic plan was developed through an interactive strategic planning process which sought input from all six regions, all six bureaus and the Board of Commissioners. In addition, this document was sent out for public review and comment. In total, five core goals were identified in the strategic plan: first, put wildlife first; second, improve wildlife habitat; third, follow sound business practices; fourth, serve the Pennsylvania public; and fifth, improve support for hunting and trapping.

MR. PUTNAM:
Do I have a motion to accept the strategic plan?

MR. DELANEY:
So moved.

MR. PUTNAM:
Second?

MR. WEANER:
Second.

MR. PUTNAM:
Discussion?
MR. Delaney:

Yes, Mr. President. Unfortunately, the public that are welcome to speak today didn't have a chance to see Director Hough's presentation as to the strategic plan. And one thing I can hope you took away from this was how many times he said we, when he presented it yesterday, which meant it included the Board of Commissioners, his staff, regional staff and it was an all in on this, so I appreciate Matt's work on this, and all the times he said we yesterday to develop this.

Secondly, if there are any sportsman across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania that want to know what's going to happen to the Pennsylvania Game Commission in the next five years, I challenge you to take a look at this plan if the Board passes it today. I think it's an excellent plan, very professionally done by our staff. We had much discussion about this yesterday. But I just wanted to ensure the public that there was a broad discussion on this yesterday on exactly what was included in the plan.

MR. PUTNAM:

This plan will be available on our website for the public that's watching, they can go take a look at it. I would like to congratulate the
staff on getting this done on time, under budget. This is a pretty monumental achievement for them. And we had kind of a late start. We went through transitional with the Executive Director, so we weren't working on this thing for the last five years. We really got a late start doing it and it really, really was a big effort, so thanks to everybody that was involved in putting this together. Additional commentary? Commissioner Hoover.

MR. HOOVER:

I just wanted to point out, I think we'd be remiss if we didn't congratulate Deputy Director Burhans for all of his work that he put in. He stepped into the role and in the very beginning of this thing when he got into the job and took it over, and I think he ran with it and did a pretty good job on it as well, so congratulations to all staff and everyone that was involved.

MR. PUTNAM:

Thank you. Mr. Secretary?

MR. LAYTON:

We have a motion on the floor. It's been properly seconded. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

AYES RESPOND
MR. LAYTON:
Opposed? Motion carried.

MR. PUTNAM:
And now we're going to new business. We have several items to discuss. One will be our quail program. Commissioner Layton is present as the Chairman of our Quail Committee, and he'd like to give a little, brief update.

MR. LAYTON:
Yeah, there's been an update to report on as far as the Quail Management Plan, recently members of the Game Commission staff met with members of Fort Indiantown Gap about the possibility of partnering with them to establish any quail populations on their property. Not only does the habitat there exceed the expectations that we need to establish quail populations, but one of the highlights is that they have a biologist on staff that's excited about working with us to make this happen.

So currently the PGC staff is networking with our out of state partners with this project, to try to find quail that can be trapped and transferred, and we certainly, not only the members of the committee, but the members of the Board of Commissioners want to thank Matt and the senior staff
that made this happen and went into Indiantown Gap. And we're looking forward to seeing what we can do with the quail populations and seeing if we can establish populations at Indiantown Gap and hopefully expanding that program into other areas that we can find with a habitat that meets our needs.

So if anybody else has any comments on that, either/or Bryan or Rich, I know you guys were out in front on this, and we certainly appreciate all your efforts that you made. Thank you very much. I think even, one more thing, from the time that --- I can remember the day in Delmont where we kind of brought this issue to the forefront. Commissioner Delaney brought it up. We have made huge achievements in getting the quail plan taken care of. And without the executive staff and senior staff, it wouldn't happen, so we thank you for that.

MR. PUTNAM:

Thank you. We often read in the paper about what the Commissioners are thinking and oftentimes we are asked for what we think, so I think we're going to have a couple of resolutions and then some commentary on some of the items that are before us. There's a lot of legislation out there that will affect the Commission. Some of this we will comment
on, some we won't comment on, but one of them is the resolution to support early retirement. I don't know if you want to call it early retirement, but Commissioner Layton does have a resolution regarding the retirement bills that are out there that will affect our field officers.

MR. LAYTON:
Yeah, just briefly, we would encourage the legislators to include our WCOs in the definition of law enforcement officers with regard to early retirement legislation. We believe that our conservation officers deserve the same benefits that are currently being offered to other law enforcement officers in the Commonwealth, including those conservation officers currently working with Fish and Boat Commission. So we'd just like to put that out there for our WCOs.

MR. PUTNAM:
Okay. Do we want to vote on that as a resolution? I'll ask Commissioner Weaner, our Parliamentarian.

MR. WEANER:
I think our intent's pretty clear. I don't see any opposition to it. I think it stands on its own merits.
MR. PUTNAM:

Okay. We don't need to vote on it. We had a recent reunion of the Pennsylvania Game Commission. I was going to ask --- I'm asking Director Hough to give some comments on that.

MR. HOUGH:

Thanks, Dave. 2015 marks the 120th year of the Pennsylvania Game Commission, and probably about six or seven months ago, Chad Eylder, out of the Bureau of Wildlife Protection, came to me with the idea of having a Game Commission reunion to celebrate our 120th year. And Chad and I had a long discussion and we decided that Chad would put a committee together, Chad would lead the committee.

The committee was made up of individuals from all the regions and all the bureaus, and the week of June 5th, we had a reunion in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, which was very nice. We had about 215 individuals, including Commissioners, retired employees and current employees attend. Spent the entire weekend there. Had a great time. Keynote speaker was Mr. Pete Duncan. For those of you who don't remember Pete, Pete was the Secretary of at that time, DER, Department of Environmental Resources, and later the Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Game
Commission. So Pete came back and was our keynote speaker. Did a fantastic job, provided a great message. It was a really good weekend, and I'd just like to thank Chad and the committee for putting that together because they did an excellent job. So I would just like to thank everyone for that. Thank you.

MR. PUTNAM:

Thank you, Matt. There was another event two weekends ago, I guess it was, called the YHEC, and Charlie Fox has been very involved in that, and I'm asking Charlie to give us a report on that.

MR. FOX:

For those of you that are not familiar with the term YHEC, it's the Youth Hunter Education Challenge. It's the NRA's oldest program. It's been around since 1985. The goal is to produce safe, knowledgeable, ethical hunters. The requirements to participate, the participant must have taken our HTE class. It's divided into two categories. We have the junior category, that is 12 to 14. We have a senior category that is 15 to 18. They also compete in teams and they compete as individuals. It's organized around two regional shoots and the state shoot in Pennsylvania. The regional shoot in Western
Pennsylvania had 60-some participants there. We had an Eastern shoot where we had 150 participants. And then last week, we had our state shoot, which had 197 participants. Now participants compete in six events. They compete in four shooting events; .22, muzzleloader, shotgun and archery. But they also take a hunter responsibility exam and then also do wildlife identification. Once they have competed at our state-level shoot, they are eligible to compete at the national shoot.

Our competitors come from all corners of the state. 197 participants from Fayette, Greensburg, Pine Grove, Troy, Branch Valley, so it's pretty broad across the state. Once they move on from here, they will compete at the nationals. So right now, it looks like Pennsylvania will have somewhere between 30 and 40 able to compete at the national event. It's held in New Mexico at the NRA Whittington Center; the largest shooting facility in the world. I'm looking forward to going out there during the last full week in July.

One of the unique things about it is that Whittington goes back and forth with the national shoot, and next year, we will be in Mansfield, Pennsylvania. I've been there before, but they came
here since 1999, and back and forth between New Mexico and Mansfield. It's a week-long event, and it's usually the last week in July. If you have an interest, I'd like to see you. I would certainly consider that you would either attend or volunteer at that event. The NRA provides you with meals, lodging. You come to the Sportsman Club, the host.

Looking for youth activity, it's a tremendous youth activity; much more time-consuming than some of the others, because teams prepare. In some cases, it's like they prepare as early as March. I can see them sometimes two and three times a week. But I encourage you, if you're interested in the program, look at the website. I'll give the website, www.payhec.org. And that will take you to links to other YHEC programs. There are other YHEC programs in about 40 states. Roughly 16, maybe 15 of them will be representing us at the national championships. If you have any questions, I will be happy to answer them.

MR. PUTNAM:

Thank you, Charlie. That's really a very good event. Is it always held at the Scotia Range?

MR. FOX:

It has been for the last 18 years.
MR. PUTNAM:

So the event's held at the Game Commission's Scotia Range there in Centre County. One other topic on legislation that's pretty active out there is the use of semi-automatic rifles. Pennsylvania is one of the last two states that doesn't allow some form of hunting with automatic rifles. Commissioner Weaner said he's proud to be one of the last two states to not allow semi-automatic rifles. And we do place a lot of weight on tradition. We have kept some traditions far longer than other states, so, in some ways, we're very progressive. In other ways, we maintain our traditions.

It appears to us that some form of this legislation will pass. There's a lot of support for it, and there's various bills that provide for caliber restrictions, magazine restrictions, restrictions on species that are hunted out there. The preferred course of action would be to, from our standpoint, would be for the Commission to be given authority to regulate the use of semi-automatic rifles as opposed to some specific legislation that specifies one or two species and we would want to expand it in the future, would need legislative approval to do it. So people have asked for our comments on it, and our support is
on a bill that just simply gives the authority to the
Commission to regulate it. And I will ask any other
Commissioners that would like to comment on that to
speak up. So I guess I'm representing the other
Commissioners when I say that.

The next working group meeting will be
August 10th, 2015. And the September Commission
Meeting will be held September 28th and 29th, 2015, in
the Homewood Suites by Hilton, in DuBois,
Pennsylvania. The President of the Commission usually
takes the meeting to their district at the fall
meeting, and that's where we're going to be going for
this one.

Under new business, I believe we're
requested to release the Osprey Management Plan to the
public. We had a presentation yesterday on the Osprey
Management Plan and at this time, I'll ask for a
resolution to release our Osprey Management Plan ---
or motion to release the Osprey Management Plan for
public comment.

MR. WEANER:
So moved.

MR. PUTNAM:
Second?

MR. FOX:
Second.

MR. PUTNAM:
Discussion? Mr. Secretary?

MR. LAYTON:
We have a motion on the floor that's been properly seconded. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

AYES RESPOND

MR. LAYTON:
Opposed?

OPPOSED RESPOND

MR. LAYTON:
The motion carried.

MR. PUTNAM:
Motion carries with one no vote.

Commissioner Brian Hoover.

Okay. We have a couple other items here. Commissioner Delaney has served his full eight years as a Commissioner, and this will be his last official meeting unless he is not replaced. And so we're going to give the floor to Commissioner Delaney.

MR. DELANEY:
Very good. I have just a few prepared notes here. April 17, 2007 was the date that I became a Pennsylvania Game Commissioner. Was that a long
time ago, or the blink of an eye?, I asked myself that question recently. I have attended 442 official meetings to date, as Commissioner, not including most social encounters with sportsmen, stakeholders and members of the legislature. I mention these meetings not to talk about me but ask that you respect the time (these) commissioners pout into their positions with no salary.

I have a lot to be thankful for. Very few people have had the privilege to serve as a Game Commissioner. I have always strived to put our wild resources first with our sportsmen across the state a very close second. I have also been blessed to serve with so many excellent Commissioners; 14 of them. In addition, the Pennsylvania Commission, to me, is the model wildlife agency with some of the most dedicated people that I've ever met. While I'm grateful for the excellent staff we have in the Executive Office presently, I must also extend my heartfelt thanks to the men and women of the Northeast Regional Office under the direction of Director Dan Figured.

In 2006, Game Commissioner Greg Isabella encouraged me to apply for the position of Game Commissioner and was that process was rigorous. Almost a year of meetings with several other advisory
council members, Janet here, and others, but it was an extremely rigorous, rigorous process. I certainly need to thank some folks who offered me this special opportunity. And the first one I'd like to thank is former Governor Ed Rendell for nominating me to the position. Then there's Senator Ray Musto, who's deceased, and Senator Lisa Baker who led the charge for my nomination in the State Senate the afforded me a nomination of 49-0My family—my Dad never hunted, yet he offered me counsel often keeping me focused as my Mother did. My wife Valerie's here today. She should be nominated for sainthood for the last eight years, through some very difficult years when I was Secretary, Vice President and then President. While she is not a hunter, she can certainly tell you what is on sportsmen's minds after listening to thousands of discussions.

Did I have an agenda when I started as a Pennsylvania Game Commissioner? The answer is yes, I certainly did. But there's one thing I learned, that one Commissioner can't make a difference. You have to have five votes to make anything happen. I've had some very good teachers over the last eight years, and I had a lot of success with my voting record. What did I strive for? Number one, to make our hunting
heritage stronger. Number two, to find a balance between the science of wildlife management and the sportsmen and stakeholders we serve. Try taking the state with nearly 13 million people, 930,000 hunters and 480 species of birds and mammals and find balance. It's extremely difficult.

The third most important issue that was really important to me was to speak on behalf of the small game hunters across the state and to do everything I could to bring that segment of the sporting public to the table. I think we've done some really great things for our small game hunters in the last eight years and I'm thankful to the Board of Commissioners, and our executive staff for supporting those efforts.

To the sportsmen across the state, and more importantly, Northeastern Pennsylvania, I say thank you for the excellent dialog we've had over the last eight years. It's been a good ride. I have no regrets, only positive things to say about the Pennsylvania Game Commission's future. I hope the new Commissioner from Northeastern Pennsylvania will be as blessed as I have been for these past eight years. Hopefully this fall I will be back to using my vacation days from my real job as Fire Chief and get
out there hunting pheasants and grouse with my birddog Hunter. My sincere thanks to all of you.

MR. PUTNAM:

Thank you, Jay. Since I'm the President, I always get to have another word.

I want to recognize Jay, as well. He has been a very strong Commissioner, and I think he's been a straight arrow his entire time here. He's represented our sportsmen and in any private discussions as well as public discussions, Jay is always the same guy. What you see here, what you see in our working group meetings, Jay is always out there arguing for the sportsman. He's been the champion of small game hunting.

As recently as our last meeting, we had some people came in as a group of about four or five people testified about rabbit season, and wanting to know why we end it in the middle of February instead of the end of February. They gave some pretty convincing testimony, we discussed it with staff. I mean Jay took the message, carried it, and we had discussions with staff, bring it back the next day, we vote on it, and now the season runs 'til the end of February. That's one accomplishment of Jay's, but Jay has many and that's an example of how he heard a
sportsman, he championed the issue and got it through the system in 24 hours, or something like that.

So anyhow, I'm going to miss you, Jay. But the one thing is Jay does have, the Commissioners of the Game Commission can serve up to six months beyond their expiration date, so there's a possibility that we could see Jay at a future meeting. So thank you very much, Jay. Additional comments from the Commissioners?

**MR. DELANEY:**

David, there's one thing I should bring up about Commissioner Schlemmer not being here yesterday. Aside from my parting notes, he had an excused absence for not being here. One check presentation received yesterday from the NRA at the town hall for $25,000, Commissioner Schlemmer really facilitated that almost two years to get that money that was designated for a shooting range in Southwestern Pennsylvania. He has an excused absence for not being here, but I'm sure he would have loved to have been here for that check presentation yesterday.

**MR. PUTNAM:**

Thank you, Jay. Jay, we'll take a photo down here after our next item.
Okay, the final item that I have on my list is John Dunn. John is retiring. John and I started out at the Jerry Wentz biologist bootcamp. When was that? Thirty (30) years ago. We planted trees on Game Lands 30 at a time when the deer population was so high that it was totally useless. I advocated for putting the trees out in the manger instead, they would get more out of it. And I've known John throughout his career. I respect John. I always hate to see him in a coat and tie though. I'd rather see John out in his hip boots working in the field. We get into this field and sometimes we go a little higher than what we should. We got into it to wrestle beavers and deer and bear, and then we get up to the point where we're like John, sitting there with a coat and tie on. But John's going to now retire and has some plans. John, do you want to say a few words? Tell us what your plans are and where you're going hunting.

MR. DUNN:

Thanks for those kind words, Dave. I've worked for the Commission for over three decades, and I got to work with some really great people. And that includes not just Agency employees, but also our partners, folks like you heard yesterday, partners,
the National Wild Turkey Federation, Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever. They all help us work towards getting our work done. And I can't say enough too about the professionalism, dedication, cooperation of Game Commission employees. And in particular, I want to mention biologists throughout the Agency. We have some of the best biologists, best scientists recognized nationally across the country, and I hope the Board will continue to seek your counsel. I know you have some often difficult wildlife management decisions to make, but I think if you seek their counsel, they can help you along the way. So I just wish you all the best in the future and continued success in years ahead.

MR. PUTNAM:
Okay, John, stay there, stay there a second. Is there any other Commissioners want to add anything?

MR. DELANEY:
Well I think we should say Calvin DuBrock was the Director of wildlife Management and we haven't even missed a beat in probably one of the busiest bureaus in the Game Commission, and when he left, all the responsibilities he had, John just kind of picked up. And I don't think he skipped a beat in
the last year. So John, I appreciate that. You know, I mean, when Cal left, there was a huge void there, and I think you filled that void very admirably in the last year.

MR. HOUGH:
I'd just like to thank John. Cal retired a year ago in July, and I had the opportunity to ask John to step into his place as Acting Bureau Director until a replacement was named.

MR. Dunn:
Yeah, you said two months.

MR. HOUGH:
Just so everyone knows, he wasn't like jumping up and down wanting to do this. He did realize that it would make him take his hip boots off and put a tie on, I guess. So he's had some problems with that. But I do say John, you did an excellent job, and I really do want to thank you, and this is coming from the heart, for doing a great job. You stepped into a very tough position. You did an excellent job and I do appreciate it, so I just wanted to thank you, John. We do have a print for you, by the way, so please step up to the podium.

MR. PUTNAM:
Jay, you may as well come down and get
yours as well.

PRINT PRESENTATION

MR. PUTNAM:

Do the Commissioners have any additional items they want to bring up? We're getting to the bitter end of this meeting? Hearing no further comments we'll adjourn the meeting.

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MEETING CONCLUDED AT 9:24 A.M.

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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing Meeting was reported by me on 6/30/15 and that I, Jacob S. Rae, read this transcript, and that I attest that this transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceeding.

___________________________
Jacob S. Rae,
Court Reporter