

PENNSYLVANIA GAME COMMISSION

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IN RE: QUARTERLY MEETING

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BEFORE: BRIAN H. HOOVER, PRESIDENT
Timothy S. Layton, Vice-President
Charles E. Fox, Secretary
Robert W. Schlemmer, Commissioner
Jim R. Daley, Commissioner
David J. Putnam, Commissioner
R. Matthew Hough, Executive Director
Bryan Burhans, Deputy Executive Director
Richard Palmer, Deputy Executive Director
Jason A. Raup, Esquire, Commission Counsel

HEARING: Tuesday, April 5, 2016
8:31 a.m.

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

Reporter: Corey Elizabeth Summers

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ALSO PRESENT:

IAN GREGG

RANDY SHOUP

PETE SUSSENBACH

KEITH HARBAUGH

CREIGH MARTSON

I N D E X

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P R O C E E D I N G S

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PRESIDENT HOOVER:

Call the meeting of the Pennsylvania Game Commission to order, April 5th, 2016. Pledge of Allegiance, please.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE RECITED

PRESIDENT HOOVER:

Mr. Secretary, would you call the roll?

SECRETARY FOX:

Hold on. Commissioner Hoover?

PRESIDENT HOOVER:

Present.

SECRETARY FOX:

Commissioner Layton?

COMMISSIONER LAYTON:

Present.

SECRETARY FOX:

1 Commissioner Weaner? I believe we're
2 missing him. He's in the hospital.

3 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

4 Yes. At this point Commissioner Weaner
5 is excused. He is taking care of some health issues.

6 SECRETARY FOX:

7 Commissioner Putman?

8 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM:

9 Present.

10 SECRETARY FOX:

11 Commissioner Schlemmer?

12 COMMISSIONER SCHLEMMER:

13 Present.

14 SECRETARY FOX:

15 Commissioner Daley?

16 COMMISSIONER DALEY:

17 Present.

18 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

19 At this time I'll call for a motion to
20 approve the minutes of the previous meeting held
21 February 2nd, 2016.

22 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM:

23 So moved.

24 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

25 And I need a second.

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SECRETARY FOX:

Second. All in favor signify by saying aye.

ALL RESPOND AYE

SECRETARY FOX:

Opposed?

PRESIDENT HOOVER:

That motion carries.

ATTORNEY RAUP:

At this time, we'll move into the first matter up for Commission consideration. This matter comes from the Bureau of Wildlife Management. It concerns the Adopted Rule Making to amend 58 Pa. Code 139.4 for the 2016-2017 seasons and bag limits.

To effectively manage the wildlife resources and provide hunting and trapping opportunities in this Commonwealth during the upcoming license year, the Commission is proposing to amend 139.4 relating to seasons and bag limits for the license year, to provide updated seasons and bag limits for the 2016-2017 license year. The 2016-17 seasons and bag limits have been amended to reflect currently available scientific data, population and harvest records, field surveys and professional staff observations, as well as recommendations received from

1 staff, organized sporting groups, and members of the
2 agricultural community and others interest in the
3 management of the wildlife resources of this
4 Commonwealth.

5 Proposed changes to small game seasons
6 include making youth and regular seasons for squirrels
7 and rabbits concurrent to simplify regulations and
8 expand rabbit hunting opportunity; and making snowshoe
9 hare season dates consistent with statewide --- excuse
10 me, consistent statewide to simplify regulations,
11 facilitate species monitoring programs, and reflect
12 the fact the harvest mortality is not a major driver
13 of population trends for this species.

14 In regards to wild turkey seasons, in
15 accordance with the Wild Turkey Management Plan
16 guidelines, the Commission is recommending fall turkey
17 season reductions in four WMUs that have exhibited
18 declining trends in turkey population indices.
19 Specifically, seasons would decrease from two weeks
20 plus three days to one week plus three days in WMUs 1A
21 and 2A; and from one week plus three days to one week
22 in WMU 1B; and from three weeks plus three days to two
23 weeks plus three days in WMU 4C.

24 The only change proposed for black bear
25 seasons is the addition of a four-day extended

1 firearms season (concurrent with the Wednesday to
2 Saturday of the first week of firearms deer season) in
3 WMU 1B. This season is intended to prevent further
4 expansion of bears into the western portion of this
5 WMU where potential for bear-human conflicts is high.

6 Concerning furbearer seasons, the
7 Commission is proposing to increase the length of the
8 fisher trapping season from the current 6 days to 12
9 days in the 13 WMUs with open fisher seasons. The
10 text of this amendment is found on pages three through
11 ten of your agenda.

12 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

13 At this point we'll accept a motion to
14 approve the proposed dates for seasons and bag limits.

15 COMMISSIONER DALEY:

16 So moved.

17 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

18 Can I get a second?

19 COMMISSIONER LAYTON:

20 Second.

21 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

22 What we're going to do now is we'll go
23 through these seasons and bag limits page by page.
24 Are there any discussions on page three? Page four?
25 Page five? Page six? Page seven? Page eight? Page

1 nine?

2 COMMISSIONER LAYTON:

3 Mr. President, I move that the section
4 on fishers be amended to include wildlife management
5 area 3B.

6 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM:

7 Second.

8 SECRETARY FOX:

9 All those in favor signify by saying
10 aye.

11 COMMISSIONER LAYTON:

12 Well, let's have a discussion. Let's
13 have Ian talk about that for a second.

14 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

15 Yes.

16 MR. GREGG:

17 This is simply to actually correct my
18 error from the January agenda. WMU 3B was included in
19 the past fisher season, and it was intended to be
20 included also in 2016-'17 and that was simply my
21 oversight of not including it in the January agenda,
22 so this will fix that error.

23 SECRETARY FOX:

24 Vote on the amendment? All those in
25 favor signify by saying aye?

1 ALL RESPOND AYE

2 SECRETARY FOX:

3 Opposed? Carried.

4 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

5 Are there any other discussions on page
6 nine?

7 COMMISSIONER LAYTON:

8 Mr. President, can we have him address
9 the river otter season as well, please?

10 MR. GREGG:

11 Yes. There's another proposed
12 amendment, I believe, it's listed on page 9b, which
13 would move the 2017 river otter season from February
14 20 to 22 to February 18-25. What was approved in
15 January was sort of a placeholder because the season
16 wasn't going to take place until February. It's the
17 first season in 50-plus years and we didn't know what
18 to expect.

19 It went well. We ended up extending it
20 one day at a time to the full length of the possible
21 season. We still ended up with about half of the
22 harvest, so we thought it was sort of the maximum
23 quota. That worked okay, but by simply making the
24 season a week long right from the start now, we can
25 simplify a lot of the communications. Trappers will

1 know in advance exactly how long the season is, and we
2 don't have to have biologists and bureaus and regions
3 checking the numbers every night to make a decision to
4 yes or no on extending the season. So this will just
5 simplify those regulations.

6 COMMISSIONER LAYTON:

7 Mr. President, I'd like to make a
8 motion that we amend the river otter season to be from
9 February 18, 2017 through February 25, 2017 and strike
10 or until its harvest quota is reached.

11 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

12 Do we have a second on the amendment
13 motion?

14 SECRETARY FOX:

15 Second. All those in favor signify by
16 saying aye?

17 ALL RESPOND AYE

18 SECRETARY FOX:

19 Opposed? Motion carries.

20 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

21 Any discussion on page ten? Page 11?
22 According to the point of order we need to return back
23 to take a vote on the overall package as amended.
24 Then at that point we will accept a motion to accept
25 the seasons and bag limits as amended.

1 COMMISSIONER LAYTON:

2 So moved.

3 SECRETARY FOX:

4 All those in favor signify by
5 saying aye.

6 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

7 We need a second.

8 SECRETARY FOX:

9 I'm sorry. I thought I had a second.
10 Second?

11 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM:

12 Second.

13 SECRETARY FOX:

14 All those in favor signify by saying
15 aye.

16 ALL RESPOND AYE

17 SECRETARY FOX:

18 Those opposed? Motion carries.

19 ATTORNEY RAUP:

20 The next item up for consideration
21 concerns the adopted rule making to amend 58 Pa. Code
22 139.17 to update the Wildlife Management Unit system.
23 A uniform system of wildlife management units was
24 implemented in 2003 to replace the system of multiple
25 species-specific management units. The primary

1 objective of this new wildlife management unit system
2 was to develop and implement wildlife management
3 decisions on a system of more homogenous units based
4 on physiographic land cover use, human population
5 density and land ownership. Wildlife management unit
6 boundaries were defined in using readily recognizable
7 features on the landscape rather than hard to identify
8 political boundaries.

9 In 2008, the Commission conducted a
10 five-year evaluation of the structure of the wildlife
11 management unit system which resulted in the
12 development and implementation of four WMU map
13 revisions. The Commission has again conducted an
14 evaluation of the structure of the wildlife management
15 unit system and has developed the following WMU map
16 revision. Expand 5D in the northeast corner to
17 provide a more logical boundary. This proposed change
18 represents a 24,826-acre increase in the size of WMU
19 5D and the area proposed is shown in magenta on the
20 attached map. The text of this amendment can be found
21 on pages 11 through 13 of your agenda.

22 SECRETARY FOX:

23 We need a motion to accept that.

24 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

25 I'm going to go through it the same as

1 we just did. We need a motion to accept the proposed
2 amendment.

3 COMMISSIONER LAYTON:

4 So moved.

5 COMMISSIONER DALEY:

6 Second.

7 SECRETARY FOX:

8 All those in favor signify aye.

9 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

10 Whoa, whoa. We need discussion. Okay.
11 We're going to have some discussion on this. After
12 reviewing the revision that was presented to us, we
13 did hear from the public and we did hear from the
14 field staff. And instead of doing this piecemeal over
15 the next couple of years, we decided to go ahead and
16 just fix this entire unit. I know we made a change
17 last year. With this floor amendment we are now adding
18 a section of the unit that will extend up I-476 and
19 across Ridge Road north of the Perkiomen Creek. I
20 believe it's the Perkiomen. Is it the Brandywine
21 Creek? --- It's not the Brandywine Creek, the
22 Perkiomen I'm not sure of the creek itself. So it's
23 going to run across the Tohickon Creek on the eastern
24 side and then north along 611 to Ridge Road. It picks
25 up another 27,022.7 acres that we're moving out of 5C

1 and into 5D, thus, making the boundary clear for
2 future reference. I'll take a motion on the amended.

3 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM:

4 So moved.

5 ATTORNEY RAUP:

6 Correct. And just as a point of order,
7 would this amendment be including a replacement of
8 pages 12 and 13 with the documents that are in front
9 of the Board?

10 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

11 That's correct.

12 Okay. I need a second on the motion to
13 amend.

14 COMMISSIONER SCHLEMMER:

15 Second.

16 SECRETARY FOX:

17 With a motion and a second, all those
18 in favor signify by saying aye.

19 ALL RESPOND AYE

20 SECRETARY FOX:

21 Opposed? Motion carries.

22 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

23 So now we'll call for a motion to
24 approve the amended page 11 for the changes of the
25 boundaries in 5D and 5C.

1 COMMISSIONER LAYTON:

2 So moved.

3 ATTORNEY RAUP:

4 Mr. President, I believe we already
5 have a motion and second.

6 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

7 So we just need to call the vote?

8 ATTORNEY RAUP:

9 Correct.

10 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

11 So we can call the vote. We just want
12 a vote on the original proposal as amended.

13 SECRETARY FOX:

14 As amended?

15 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

16 Yes.

17 SECRETARY FOX:

18 Have a motion on the floor and we have
19 a second. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

20 ALL RESPOND AYE

21 SECRETARY FOX:

22 Oppose? Motion carries.

23 ATTORNEY RAUP:

24 The next item up for consideration
25 concerns the approval of the Release of Nationwide

1 Waterfowl Hunter Survey Information. In cooperation
2 with the National Flyway Council and Association and
3 of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, the Pennsylvania Game
4 Commission will be participating in a nationwide
5 waterfowl hunter survey. The U.S. Fishing Wildlife
6 Service requested permission to release contact
7 information for the Pennsylvania waterfowl hunters
8 previously provided by the Commission as part of the
9 HIP program for use in the nationwide waterfowl hunter
10 survey. The Commission has been actively involved in
11 the development of the survey and determined that it
12 will help future waterfowl harvest and habitat
13 management efforts in the Atlantic Flyway.

14 Their survey will be conducted by the
15 University of Minnesota having a sample of waterfowl
16 hunters derived in part from the 2015 HIP program.
17 The Board of Commissioners of the Commission has
18 authorized the release of the name and address
19 information for a portion of the Commonwealth's HIP-
20 certified hunters to the University of Minnesota.
21 Specifically, contact information for a random sample
22 of up to 3,000 resident, HIP-certified hunters drawn
23 proportionally from those who reported that they
24 hunted for ducks and/or geese during the 2014 hunting
25 season.

1 This item was previously approved by
2 notational vote, and therefore no further Board action
3 is necessary.

4 The next item up for consideration
5 concerns the Proposed Rule Making to amend 58 Pa. Code
6 133.5. The Commission is proposing to amend 133.5 to
7 reclassify porcupines as furbearers, and also permit
8 porcupines to be hunted with a hunting license or
9 hunted and trapped with a furtakers license. The text
10 of this amendment can be found on page 15 of your
11 agenda.

12 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

13 Can we have a motion?

14 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM:

15 So moved.

16 SECRETARY FOX:

17 Second?

18 COMMISSIONER SCHLEMMER:

19 Second.

20 SECRETARY FOX:

21 All those in favor signify ---.

22 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM:

23 I'd like a discussion

24 SECRETARY FOX:

25 Discussion?

1 ATTORNEY RAUP:

2 Any discussion on the amendment?

3 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM:

4 I'd like to have some discussion on
5 this issue. We had some commentary yesterday from the
6 Mammal Technical Committee regarding this issue.
7 There's some concern about reclassifying porcupines as
8 furbearers. I guess I would like to make it clear that
9 this regulation authorizes hunting and trapping of
10 porcupines, but at least in the coming year there will
11 be no trapping season. We have not specified the
12 season. And I know we're putting some burden on Dr.
13 Lavallo here, but the Commissioners have a very high
14 trust in Dr. Lavallo. I don't think we've ever argued
15 with a single recommendation he has made.

16 If, in the coming year, he doesn't feel
17 comfortable recommending a trapping season through the
18 system, a trapping season doesn't need to take place.

19 We're authorizing a trapping season. We're not
20 mandating a trapping season. The Commissioners are
21 not mandating a management level for porcupines.
22 We're providing tools out there to manage them, so
23 we're putting the burden on Dr. Lavallo's shoulder to
24 get us through this.

25 But it's an important point because

1 even though we're authorizing for trapping, there will
2 not be trapping in this current year because we're not
3 provided a season. Next year will be dependent upon
4 the recommendation of the Bureau of Wildlife
5 Management.

6 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

7 Is there any other discussion? Mr.
8 Secretary, call the vote.

9 SECRETARY FOX:

10 A motion has been made and seconded.
11 All those in favor signify by saying aye.

12 ALL RESPOND AYE

13 SECRETARY FOX:

14 Opposed? Motion carries.

15 ATTORNEY RAUP:

16 The next item up for the Board's
17 consideration is from the Bureau of Wildlife
18 Protection. This proposal concerns the adopted rule
19 making to amend 58 Pa. Code 141.4 for the 2016-'17
20 hunting hours.

21 To effectively manage the wildlife
22 resources of this Commonwealth, the Game Commission
23 proposed at its February 2nd, 2016 meeting to amend
24 Section 141.4, Appendix G, to replace the current
25 hunting hours table and migratory bird hunting hours

1 table to accurately reflect the dates and hours of
2 legal hunting for the '16-'17 hunting/trapping license
3 year. The text of this amendment can be found on
4 pages 16 through 19 of your agenda.

5 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

6 Motion to approve?

7 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM:

8 So moved.

9 SECRETARY FOX:

10 Second?

11 COMMISSIONER SCHLEMMER:

12 Second.

13 SECRETARY FOX:

14 All those in favor signify by saying
15 aye?

16 ALL RESPOND AYE

17 SECRETARY FOX:

18 Is there any discussion on that? There
19 being no discussion, all in favor signify by saying
20 aye?

21 ALL RESPOND AYE

22 SECRETARY FOX:

23 Opposed?

24 ATTORNEY RAUP:

25 The next item up for the Board's

1 consideration concerns the adopted rule making to
2 amend 58 Pa. Code 131.6. To effectively manage the
3 wildlife resources of this Commonwealth, the Game
4 Commission proposed at its February 2nd, 2016, meeting
5 to amend 131.6 to redirect the extent and manner in
6 which it authorizes wildlife conservation officers to
7 engage in the administration of police powers. The
8 text of this amendment can be found on page 21 of your
9 agenda.

10 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

11 Can we have a motion?

12 COMMISSIONER LAYTON:

13 So moved.

14 SECRETARY FOX:

15 Second?

16 COMMISSIONER SCHLEMMER:

17 Second.

18 SECRETARY FOX:

19 Discussion?

20 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM:

21 Yeah. Mr. President, maybe we can get
22 an explanation as to why the police got involved?

23 MR. SHOUP:

24 Yes, sir. It's important to note that
25 these adjustments and regulations don't expand any

1 authority that our officers currently have. Our
2 officers' authority to enforce laws other than the
3 Game and Wildlife Code come from Section 901, which is
4 statutory language. We have had some circumstances
5 where the language in 131.6 was found to be
6 restrictive to the point where district attorneys did
7 not feel comfortable allowing officers to prosecute
8 certain violations outside the Game and Wildlife Code,
9 even though those violations were detected during Game
10 Commission operations. So the addressing of this
11 language basically provides our officers the
12 opportunity to do those prosecutions other than Game
13 Law without necessarily having to turn that
14 prosecution over to another agency, which in most
15 cases don't want to deal with those violations that
16 we've discovered.

17 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

18 Any other questions or discussion? Mr.
19 Secretary, call the vote.

20 SECRETARY FOX:

21 The motion on the floor has been
22 seconded. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

23 ALL RESPOND AYE

24 SECRETARY FOX:

25 Opposed? The motion carries.

1 ATTORNEY RAUP:

2 The next item up for the Board's
3 consideration concerns the adopted rule making to
4 amend 58 Pa. Code Section 141.18. To effectively
5 manage the wildlife resources of this Commonwealth,
6 the Game Commission proposed at its February 2nd, 2016
7 meeting to amend 141.18 to add both handheld
8 rangefinders and those contained within a scope or
9 archery sight to the list of approved devices that may
10 be used to hunt or take wildlife. The text of this
11 amendment can be found on page 23 of your agenda.

12 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

13 We need a motion.

14 COMMISSIOINER PUTNAM:

15 So moved.

16 SECRETARY FOX:

17 Second?

18 COMMISSIONER LAYTON:

19 Second.

20 SECRETARY FOX:

21 Discussion?

22 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM:

23 Mr. President?

24 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

25 Yes?

1 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM:

2 I'd like to ask Randy we're talking
3 about electronic sights. What about the use of night
4 vision scopes? There was a recent case in the news
5 about a lady who shot a coyote who was in a contest
6 and the sight that she was using was determined to be
7 an illegal sight. How did that sight that she used
8 compare to what we're talking about there?

9 MR. SHOUP:

10 I think, if I recall that particular
11 case, I believe that that was a night vision scope
12 that was mounted on a crossbow, and this particular
13 language does not authorize the use of night vision
14 scopes. This strictly is a rangefinder scope, which
15 as far as the agency has always allowed the use of
16 handheld electronic rangefinders, even though they
17 were not added to the list of approved electronic
18 devices. The widespread use of those items, the
19 acceptance of those handheld electronics devices,
20 rangefinders, kind of led over into the scope ground
21 with the technology changes that exist regularly in
22 the hunting world. So in order to clarify the fact
23 that the agency accepts electronic rangefinders, both
24 handheld and scope mounted, that's the purpose of this
25 regulatory change.

1 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM:

2 So we're not authorizing the electronic
3 night vision devices and we're not authorizing any
4 devices that project a beam like a red dot, like a
5 laser?

6 MR. SHOUP:

7 Correct. That is correct. Those will
8 continue to be prohibited.

9 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM:

10 Are there any others in those
11 categories other than night vision devices or red
12 laser sights that were not permitted? I know that we,
13 by the rule, prohibited everything that we don't
14 permit?

15 MR. SHOUP:

16 Correct. The general prohibition is
17 found in 131.6 on Electronic Devices. And in 141.18,
18 the section we're dealing with here, is the list of
19 approved devices. That list of approved devices
20 currently includes manually operated firearms that use
21 an electronic impulse to detonate the firing of the
22 power charge, electronic sound amplification devices
23 for hearing purposes, e-collars and radios, beeper
24 collars for dogs, for being able to recover and trap
25 your dog, and what is commonly referred to Lumenok or

1 a device that's on the end of a crossbow bolt or an
2 arrow that illuminates when the arrow is launched.

3 And also, as you can see here on page
4 23, the electronic crow decoy as used for harvesting
5 crows are allowable. And now we have handheld and
6 scope rangefinders. That's the inclusive list.

7 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM:

8 Thank you.

9 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

10 Any other questions? Mr. Secretary,
11 call the vote.

12 SECRETARY FOX:

13 We have a motion and a second. All
14 those in favor signify by saying aye.

15 ALL RESPOND AYE

16 SECRETARY FOX:

17 Opposed? Motion carries.

18 ATTORNEY RAUP:

19 The next item up for the Board's
20 consideration concerns the Adopted Rule Making to
21 amend 58 Pa. Code Section 141.41. To effectively
22 manage the wildlife resources of this Commonwealth,
23 the Commission proposed at its February 2nd, 2016
24 meeting to amend 141.41 to prohibit the possession of
25 an expired, revoked, suspended or invalid hunting

1 license or big game harvest tag while engaged in
2 hunting or trapping activities or while in the fields,
3 forests or on the waters or highways within or
4 bordering the Commonwealth. The text of this
5 amendment can be found on page 25 of your agenda.

6 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

7 Motion?

8 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM:

9 So moved.

10 SECRETARY FOX:

11 Second?

12 COMMISSIONER LAYTON:

13 Second.

14 SECRETARY FOX:

15 Discussion?

16 COMMISSIONER LAYTON:

17 Mr. President, I would like to make a
18 motion to amend page 25 of the replacement page that
19 we've been provided that --- strike the last portion
20 of the last sentence, the portion that says or while
21 in the fields, forests or on the waters or highways
22 within or bordering the Commonwealth. And I'd like to
23 make that in the form of a motion.

24 SECRETARY FOX:

25 Second?

1 COMMISSIONER DALEY:

2 Second.

3 SECRETARY FOX:

4 A motion has been made for an
5 amendment. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

6 ALL RESPOND AYE

7 SECRETARY FOX:

8 Opposed?

9 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

10 I'd like to have a little discussion.

11 Mr. Raup, could you explain?

12 ATTORNEY RAUP:

13 Yes. This particular amendment comes
14 as a result of not necessarily a request, but as a
15 result of a motion that was identified by the Attorney
16 General's Office. As the Board is aware, the
17 Pennsylvania Game Commission submits its regulations
18 for approval to the Attorney General's Office pursuant
19 to statutory law. And that review process uncovered
20 some concerns with the Attorney General's Office with
21 the extent of this language.

22 As you're aware, this language was
23 drafted from language that was already found and
24 contained within Section 2323 of the Game Code.
25 However, based upon the Attorney General's concerns,

1 the Commission staff determined that this language
2 could be removed to satisfy their concern without
3 affecting the underlying purpose of the proposal as it
4 was identified by the Board. So in order to alleviate
5 their concern and their tolling memo, we struck this
6 language in this floor amendment that is now subject
7 to your review under this floor amendment.

8 As Commissioner Layton has identified,
9 the language being removed is the language bracketed
10 on floor amendment page 25, the green page in front of
11 you, which removes "or while in the fields, forests or
12 on the waters or highways within or bordering the
13 Commonwealth." That text will be removed from the
14 proposal on this final adoption.

15 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

16 Thank you. Any discussion?

17 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM:

18 Mr. President, I'd like to have a
19 little discussion. We received quite a few comments
20 on this subject and we have had some discussion here
21 yesterday and some testimony from people who came and
22 addressed this issue. There are two things. One is
23 we have people are not only violating the law by
24 carrying extra tags and they're planning on killing
25 extra deer. Then we also have people like me that

1 sometimes forget that we actually have all of their
2 licenses for the last five years in their pocket,
3 someplace or other.

4 Our officers surely can use their
5 discretion and sort out people like me from people
6 that have a clear intent to violate the law, and we do
7 issue two warnings for every citation now. So this
8 will probably and surely be the first year or two
9 increase some of our warnings. But there's an issue
10 here that goes with this -that is hunters carrying
11 tags for family members. If a kid is old enough to go
12 shoot a deer, he should be old enough to carry his own
13 tag. And we are finding people out there and citing
14 people who are carrying other's tags they're out
15 hunting and they have a pocketful of tags that go
16 beyond the tags that they're allowed to possess.

17 So this is an issue that we're going to
18 address, and we're truly counting on officer
19 discretion to keep people like me out of jail and
20 really get the true violators, because this is an area
21 that forever has been an issue there's always been
22 violators who are carrying other people's tags,
23 erasing their tags. When you pull their tag out, it's
24 all funny and erased all over it. So we know it's a
25 law enforcement issue, and that's why we're supporting

1 it.

2 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

3 Is there any other discussion on this
4 amendment?

5 SECRETARY FOX:

6 We have a motion on the floor, made and
7 seconded. All of those in favor signify by saying
8 aye.

9 ALL RESPOND AYE

10 SECRETARY FOX:

11 Opposed?

12 ATTORNEY RAUP:

13 The next item up for the Board's
14 consideration concerns Adopted Rule Making to amend 58
15 Pa. Code Section 143.50. To effectively manage the
16 wildlife resources of this Commonwealth, the
17 Commission proposed at its February 2nd, 2016 meeting
18 to amend Section 143.50 to allow nonresidents to
19 submit applications for antlerless deer licenses on
20 the third Monday in July one week after resident
21 applications. The text of this amendment can be found
22 on page 27 of your agenda.

23 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

24 Do we have a motion?

25 PRESIDENT LAYTON:

1 So moved.

2 SECRETARY FOX:

3 Second?

4 COMMISSIONER DALEY:

5 Second.

6 SECRETARY FOX:

7 Discussion?

8 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM:

9 Mr. President, this is one of those
10 issues that we have been addressing probably eternally
11 for a couple years. And the concern from our
12 out-of-state hunters was that by the time the third
13 week came up they didn't even have a chance for
14 antlerless applications.

15 So we thought that there should be a
16 change. Originally, the proposal was to allow them to
17 apply at the same time as we allowed our residents to
18 apply for an antlerless tag. We received some
19 comments from our partners, and we came up with an
20 amendment to that proposal to allow them to begin on
21 week two. It seemed that our partners agreed with us.

22 It seemed to be something that makes sense as we look
23 at the sale of the antlerless tags, it's not going to
24 harm any of the residents of Pennsylvania. There
25 hasn't been --- correct me if I'm wrong, we didn't

1 have a unit sell out on week one of the antlerless
2 sale.

3 So we just think that this gives our
4 out-of-state hunters who we believe the majority of
5 them are former Pennsylvania residents coming home to
6 hunt with their family anyway, just gives them the
7 opportunity to apply for a tag if they're going to be
8 here during the antlerless season. It puts them on a
9 more fair playing field.

10 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

11 Is there any other discussion? Mr.
12 Secretary?

13 SECRETARY FOX:

14 We have a motion on the floor. It's
15 been moved and seconded. All those in favor signify
16 by saying aye.

17 ALL RESPOND AYE

18 SECRETARY FOX:

19 Opposed? Motion carries.

20 ATTORNEY RAUP:

21 The next item up for the Board's
22 consideration concerns the Proposed Rule Making to
23 amend 58 Pa. Code Section 135.41. The Commission has
24 observed a dramatic, if not explosive, increase in the
25 popularity and use of unmanned aerial devices commonly

1 referred to as drones all across the Commonwealth
2 during the past year. This increase has unfortunately
3 resulted in unintended uses on lands designated as
4 State game lands that compromise the purposes for
5 which these lands were acquired. These activities
6 range from the degradation of the natural and scenic
7 values of these lands up to actual wildlife
8 disturbance and harassment activities.

9 The Commission is also concerned that
10 the use of these devices on State game lands may
11 expand to interference with lawful hunting and
12 trapping activities in the future. The Commission is
13 proposing to amend Section 135.41 to prohibit the
14 operation of drones on or over lands or waters
15 designated as State game lands. The text of this
16 amendment can be found on page 28 of your agenda.

17 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

18 Mr. Secretary?

19 SECRETARY FOX:

20 Can I have motion?

21 COMMISSIONER SCHLEMMER:

22 Motion.

23 SECRETARY FOX:

24 Second?

25 COMMISSIONER LAYTON:

1 Second.

2 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

3 Any discussion on the motion? Mr.
4 Secretary, call the vote.

5 SECRETARY FOX:

6 There's a motion on the floor. It's
7 been seconded. All those in favor signify by saying
8 aye.

9 ALL RESPOND AYE

10 SECRETARY FOX:

11 Opposed? Motion carries.

12 ATTORNEY RAUP:

13 The next item up for the Board's
14 consideration concerns the Proposed Rule Making to
15 Amend 58 Pa. Code Section 147.322. Section 103 of the
16 Game and Wildlife Code mandates that the Commission
17 utilize hunting and trapping as a primary method of
18 effecting necessary management of game, furbearer and
19 wildlife populations. The Commission is proposing to
20 amend 147.322 to provide greater emphasis on the
21 importance on the use of public hunting as a
22 prerequisite condition in the deer control permit
23 application and approval process. The text of this
24 amendment can be found on pages 29 and 30 of your
25 agenda.

1 SECRETARY FOX:

2 Can we have a motion on the floor?

3 COMMISSIONER LAYTON:

4 So moved.

5 SECRETARY FOX:

6 Second?

7 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

8 Second.

9 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

10 Discussion?

11 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

12 I'd like to explain a little bit about
13 what we've done here. In the original application for
14 control permit, there was no requirement to utilize
15 hunters first or to come up with a program to utilize
16 hunters before you go to a cull permit and we would
17 issue the cull permit typically upon request. What
18 we've done today, or what we're going to do today, is
19 require that a program of hunting be placed in advance
20 of any use of a cull permit.

21 In other words, when a municipality or
22 a privately owned facility comes to the Game
23 Commission asking for a cull permit, we're going to
24 ask them to present a plan that has to be approved by
25 the Game Commission, and it'll actually set up and

1 utilize hunters prior to our approving any cull
2 permits. Is there any other discussion? Mr.
3 Secretary?

4 SECRETARY FOX:

5 We have a motion on the floor and a
6 second. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

7 ALL RESPOND AYE

8 SECRETARY FOX:

9 Opposed? Motion carries.

10 ATTORNEY RAUP:

11 The next item up for the Board's
12 consideration concerns the Proposed Rule Making to
13 amend 58 Pa. Code Section 135.103. Last year, the
14 Commission held a trial run of a veterans with
15 disabilities hunt on the Pymatuning Wildlife
16 Management Area. The Commission has determined that
17 holding this one hunt during the regular open season
18 in the future will further improve these sportsmen's
19 opportunity to hunt waterfowl at both of the
20 Commissions' special wildlife management unit areas.

21 The Commission has received significant
22 support and future commitment from organized sporting
23 organizations and unaffiliated sportsmen volunteers to
24 enhance the quality and success of this unique hunting
25 opportunity. The Commission is proposing to amend

1 Section 135.103 to permit the Director to designate
2 one shooting day at the Middle Creek and Pymatuning
3 Wildlife Management Areas as a veterans with
4 disabilities only day. The text of this proposal can
5 be found on page 31 of your agenda.

6 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

7 Do we have a motion?

8 COMMISSIONER LAYTON:

9 Motion to accept.

10 SECRETARY FOX:

11 Second?

12 COMMISSIONER SCHLEMMER:

13 Second.

14 SECRETARY FOX:

15 Discussion?

16 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

17 Is there any discussion on the motion?

18 COMMISSIONER DALEY:

19 Mr. President, I just think it was
20 great that the northwest region started it last year
21 and we're going to expand it this year. And I'm
22 hoping that we do have some media here, that they
23 would publicize that for the veterans, you know we can
24 use help to ensure the turnout is in good numbers.

25 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

1 It was a success last year. Can you
2 get us some information on it?

3 MR. HARBAUGH:

4 Last year was the inaugural. And then
5 we didn't get the turnout that we would have liked to
6 have had, but we didn't fill the blinds. So as far as
7 what happened with the hunters, we hooked them up
8 local waterfowl hunters. They did the decoys. If the
9 veterans wanted them to, they did the calling. They
10 had dogs available. They were there to tell the guys
11 whether they were within range or not within range.
12 Some of the veterans were wheelchair bound and some of
13 the folks were not.

14 This year the proposal is that they are
15 allowed to take three of their friends with them which
16 I think will further enhance the hunt for those
17 people. I just think it's a good way for us to give
18 these guys some respite from their problems for a day
19 by having a joyful hunt for them.

20 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

21 Thank you. Any other questions or
22 comments? Mr. Secretary?

23 SECRETARY FOX:

24 A motion on the floor. We have a
25 second. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

1 ALL RESPOND AYE

2 SECRETARY FOX:

3 Opposed?

4 ATTORNEY RAUP:

5 The next item up for the Board's
6 consideration come from Bureau of Wildlife Habitat
7 Management and in concerns Contract Number L-3694,
8 relating to State Game Land Number 313, Tioga County.
9 Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy is offering for
10 sale six plus or minus acres in Delmar Township, Tioga
11 County adjoining State Game Land Number 313 as shown
12 in Exhibit RED 1 on page 33 of your agenda. The
13 option price is \$400 per acre to be paid with funds
14 from the Game Fund. This tract is mostly a
15 palustrine, emergent wetland with a minimal shrub-
16 scrub component.

17 State Game Land Number 313, also known
18 as "The Muck", occurs in the Marsh Creek drainage of
19 the Pine Creek watershed and is a designated as an
20 Important Bird Area. The Muck is home to several bird
21 species listed in the Wildlife Action Plan,
22 specifically a breeding location for American Bittern,
23 Least Bittern, Virginia Rail, Sora, Marsh and Wilson's
24 Snipe.

25 An existing oil and gas lease is

1 excepted and reserved for as long as said lease, or
2 any extension, modification or amendment, remains in
3 full force and effect. Upon expiration, said lease
4 will cease and determine. A covenant restriction
5 shall run with this parcel to ensure the property
6 shall be administered in accordance with the state
7 laws concerning the conservation of fish and wildlife.
8 Access is from existing State Game Land Number 313.

9 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

10 Is there a motion?

11 COMMISSIONER SCHLEMMER:

12 So moved.

13 SECRETARY FOX:

14 Second?

15 COMMISSIONER LAYTON:

16 Second.

17 SECRETARY FOX:

18 All those in favor signify by saying
19 aye.

20 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

21 Is there any discussion on the motion?

22 Being none, Mr. Secretary?

23 SECRETARY FOX:

24 We have a motion. We have a second.

25 All those in favor signify by saying aye.

1 ALL RESPOND AYE

2 SECRETARY FOX:

3 Opposed? Motion carries.

4 ATTORNEY RAUP:

5 Next item up for the Board's
6 consideration concerns Tract Number L-3695, relating
7 to State Game Land Number 313 in Tioga County.
8 Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy is offering for
9 sale two tracts of land totaling 21.42 plus or minus
10 acres in the Delmar Township, Tioga County, which are
11 an indenture into State Game Land 313 as show in
12 Exhibit RED 2 on page 35 of your agenda.

13 They option price is \$26,000 lump sum
14 to be paid with funds from the Game Fund. Although
15 both parcels contain a small upland component with
16 mixed northern hardwoods, the remaining approximate 20
17 acres contain palustrine, emergent wetlands. State
18 Game Land Number 313 also known as "The Muck", occurs
19 in the Marsh Creek drainage areas of the Pine Creek
20 watershed and is designated as an Important Bird Area.

21
22 The Muck is home to several bird
23 species listed in the Wildlife Action Plan,
24 specifically a breeding location for American Bittern,
25 Last Bittern, Virginia Rail, Sora, Marsh Wren and

1 Wilson's Snipe. A covenant and restriction shall run
2 with these lands to ensure that the property shall be
3 administered in accordance with the state laws
4 governing conservation of fish and wildlife. Access
5 is from State Route 287 via a private right-of-way
6 known as the Cattail Lane.

7 MR. SUSSENBACH:

8 Mr. President, if I may add just a few
9 comments?

10 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

11 Absolutely.

12 MR. SUSSENBACH:

13 So looking at the strategic language of
14 notices that not only of this acquisition but the one
15 previous and the one following this meets specifically
16 what our goals of the strategic plan are. I know in
17 the past there've been some comments as to the fee
18 that we're paying for this, but as this was an
19 indenture under Section 75 of the Game and Wildlife
20 Code we can pay for fair market value for properties
21 that are considered indentures and that's why we've
22 reached out and attempted to stitch up these
23 indentures to firm up our boundary line.

24 And just to ensure that we're not going
25 to have further encroachment or safety zone issues, it

1 is a heavily hunted area for water fowl. And
2 obviously if this property, or the previous property,
3 were to be developed it would cause more safety zone
4 issues and purchase of the palustrine wetlands would
5 preclude having dramatic impacts to the portion of the
6 swamp there.

7 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

8 Thank you. Mr. Secretary?

9 SECRETARY FOX:

10 Do we have a motion on that?

11 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM:

12 So moved.

13 SECRETARY FOX:

14 Second?

15 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

16 Seconded.

17 SECRETARY FOX:

18 All in favor signify by saying aye.

19 ALL RESPOND AYE

20 SECRETARY FOX:

21 Oppose?

22 ATTORNEY RAUP:

23 Next item up for the Board's

24 consideration concerns Contract Number L-3696,

25 relating to State Game Land Number 88, Perry County.

1 Lowell D. Cassell and Joann E. Cassell are offering
2 for sale 28 plus or minus acres in Saville Township,
3 Perry County, which is an indenture into State Game
4 Land Number 88 as shown on Exhibit RED 3, page 37 of
5 your agenda. The option price is \$23,000 lump sum to
6 be paid with funds from the Game Fund. The tract is
7 wooded with a dry oak forest and the terrain in
8 primarily steep and rocky. Access is provided from
9 existing State Game Land Number 88.

10 COMMISSIONER LAYTON:

11 Motion to accept.

12 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM:

13 Seconded.

14 SECRETARY FOX:

15 All those in favor signify ---
16 discussion?

17 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

18 Any discussion on this motion?

19 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM:

20 Anything to add, Director?

21 MR. SUSSENBACH:

22 No. Just very briefly, just another
23 one of those great acquisitions. I mean, you can see
24 the indenture ties almost completely across the game
25 lands to that other indenture we got on the north

1 slope. Any time we can firm up our boundaries here,
2 it just makes management of those properties so much
3 easier, whether we want to put a new road across,
4 maybe if you want to use prescribed fire, timber sale
5 activity, those types of indentures are extremely
6 detrimental to managing our game lands. Anytime we
7 can go out to them, come to some reasonable settlement
8 on those properties, I think it behooves us to
9 continue with that.

10 COMMISSIONER DALEY:

11 I would say that in this case
12 especially, if you're a hunter, walking around the
13 contour, you'd have to now go around the entire
14 indenture to get to the next side. This is a perfect
15 acquisition to fill that in.

16 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

17 Any other discussion? Mr. Secretary?

18 SECRETARY FOX:

19 We have a motion. We have a second.

20 All those in favor signify by saying aye.

21 ALL RESPOND AYE

22 SECRETARY FOX:

23 Opposed?

24 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

25 We'll move into other new business.

1 Mr. Raup has a piece of business for us.

2 ATTORNEY RAUP:

3 Yes. The next item up for the Board's
4 consideration concerns a legal settlement involving
5 State Game Land Number 42 in St. Clair Township,
6 Westmoreland County. I believe a supplement has been
7 provided to the Board for their review that contains
8 an exhibit. And I will read from that supplement for
9 your review. High Ridge Water Authority is the
10 current owner of a three acre more or less interior to
11 State Game Land 42 in St. Clair Township, Westmoreland
12 County as shown in the attached Exhibit A. Access and
13 ownership is in dispute with the Commission.

14 The authority wishes to dispose of the
15 property and has agreed to transfer the property to
16 the Commission for \$25,000 lump sum. This will
17 eliminate a longstanding interior as well as any
18 dispute over ownership and access rights for
19 waterlines or equipment or vehicles to the property.

20 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

21 Mr. Secretary?

22 SECRETARY FOX:

23 Do we have a motion?

24 COMMISSIONER SCHLEMMER:

25 Motion.

1 SECRETARY FOX:

2 Second?

3 COMMISSIONER LAYTON:

4 Second.

5 SECRETARY FOX:

6 Discussion?

7 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

8 Any discussion on the motion? Mr.
9 Secretary?

10 SECRETARY FOX:

11 We have a second and no discussion.

12 All those in favor signify by saying aye.

13 ALL RESPOND AYE

14 SECRETARY FOX:

15 Opposed?

16 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

17 I will point out that the next Working
18 Group meeting date will be June 6th at 8:00 a.m. The
19 next Commission meeting dates are July 11th and 12th,
20 and both of those start at 8:30 a.m. At this time
21 we'll move to the Elk and Antlerless Allocations.

22 On the Antlerless Allocation side, all
23 of the information spreadsheets were sent to the
24 Commissioners in advance of this meeting to allow them
25 the opportunity to submit their requests for

1 allocations to the Secretary, which have been done.
2 And then we forwarded those to Director Wayne Laroche,
3 who would have them for presentation today which will
4 make this meeting move a lot faster than it has in the
5 past. So we will deal with Antlerless Allocations at
6 this point. Mr. Secretary?

7 SECRETARY FOX:

8 Do we have a motion to accept those?

9 COMMISSIONER LAYTON:

10 So moved.

11 SECRETARY FOX:

12 Second?

13 COMMISSIONER DALEY:

14 Second.

15 SECRETARY FOX:

16 Discussion?

17 COMMISSIONER LAYTON:

18 Mr. President, I would just like to say
19 that the process that we went through this year was
20 probably as smooth as it's ever been. Our hats go off
21 to Director Laroche for all the time and effort that
22 he put in to come up with these numbers and actually
23 getting together with not only the Deer Committee at
24 one point, but the other commissioners to explain how
25 we got these numbers, where we got these numbers, why

1 we need to be at these numbers. And through those
2 discussions, we've come up with some minor adjustments
3 that we all can agree upon for once in this process.

4 So again, to the staff of Wildlife
5 Management to Director Laroche, to the members of the
6 Deer Committee, thank you for making this probably the
7 easiest process that we've gone through as far as
8 allocation.

9 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

10 I would also like to point out that as
11 you look at the chart, there is a big difference in 5C
12 and 5D in the allocations requested. The recommended
13 allocations for 5C was 90,000. During today's meeting
14 we did move a large section of 5C into 5D, which
15 allowed us to reduce the allocation as to where we
16 were last year at 70,000. We remained the same at
17 70,000 last year in 5C, but we increased the
18 allocations in 5D to 30,000 which should eliminate a
19 lot of the issues that we ran into last year.

20 I do want to point out at this point
21 that we recommend that anyone applying for allocations
22 this year do so during the first week so that the
23 complaints of I didn't get mine are eliminated this
24 year. We did get those complaints last year because
25 people in the past in 5C and 5D and I believe in 2B,

1 where there were allocations left throughout the
2 entire season, that didn't occur this year. The
3 allocations were basically taken up in the first week
4 that they went over the counter and were gone. So in
5 attempt to eliminate that, I'm asking everyone to make
6 sure that they deal with that upfront this year, you
7 know, get your applications in first and secure your
8 allocations during the first week.

9 The yellow line to the right is the
10 allocations that we approved, that we are approving
11 today, and they pretty much mirror what was approved
12 for the 2015-16 season as well, with the minor
13 changes.

14 So at that point, Mr. Secretary, ---
15 any other discussion?

16 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM:

17 I always have something to say. I
18 would support this process. I do have some
19 reservations. There are a few things I want to point
20 out. One is 3A. Representative Godshall was here
21 yesterday and testified about the lack of deer in 3A,
22 which I personally don't agree with, but the staff has
23 recommended that we increase the deer population in
24 Unit 3A. And I know that we're criticized for only
25 wanting to kill every deer, but this is a case where

1 we're recommending a reduction of 4,000 licenses in 3A
2 which is a relatively small unit on the northern
3 border.

4 In 2G, the recommended allocation here
5 is 1,000 less than what it was last year, and I think
6 about 4,000 less than what the staff recommended the
7 state population. That will result in a further
8 increase in the deer population in 2G. And my
9 observations and our data support that the population
10 has grown substantially in 2G over the last four or
11 five years. This is going to be a further increase to
12 the population. There is the point, and I've been
13 talking to our field staff out there, where we're
14 going to get overpopulated sometime in the future if
15 we allow the increases to continue, we're going to get
16 to a point where we're going to have to have a sharp
17 cutback.

18 So we've got to look at revising that
19 process. The deer program is up for review. We're
20 going to be working on revising that very soon. We'll
21 be getting input from all of our stakeholders as we
22 did last time, and one of the concerns is going to be
23 starting this deer program at a time when the
24 population came down, the habitat recovered, we've
25 allowed the deer to recover, and we're still looking

1 for the magic number. And if we had the magic number,
2 it would be pretty easy for us to just go forward and
3 say to our biologists just get the deer herds to the
4 magic number and we're all going to be happy. We're
5 working towards that, and I think --- I really feel we
6 made a lot of progress of getting there. We're
7 looking at the habitat impact and we're not seeing
8 many of them turn red. We have a couple units that if
9 we had the map up there, that are red, and the local
10 deer impacts are unacceptable. And I believe we're
11 going to have others. The Commission has been working
12 with the staff to look at those if those areas have
13 turned red and let's move them toward green; we have
14 26 units at least. We don't need to study all 26
15 units. But we have about three or four that are
16 problem units. I think 3D is one of our problem units
17 where we really need to look at that and see why, with
18 everything we've done there, we still have very low
19 deer numbers overall in that unit.

20 So anyhow, overall I feel very good for
21 in that we made good progress. We allowed the herd to
22 come back. We have to be very careful about not
23 letting the herd come back too far where we get into
24 too many deer where we go back to the cycles of the
25 old days, so that's all I have to say.

1 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

2 Thank you, Commissioner Putnam. Any
3 other comments?

4 COMMISSIONER DALEY:

5 Yeah. I'd like to say that, you know,
6 as much as I agree with Dave that you need that magic
7 number, there is no magic number. The magic number is
8 going to depend on the habitat of each one of the
9 WMUs. So the magic number in 2G is not going to be
10 the same as 1A or 1B. And if you look at those
11 particular units like 1A or 1B where we have antler
12 restrictions of four per side to get a buck, it is
13 because we've got really good food there. So right
14 now we're in the 34 deer per square mile range but
15 there's other parts of the state that they won't be
16 able to handle that. So when we go to look for this
17 magic number, the magic number is going to depend on
18 where you are.

19 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

20 Thank you. Any other discussion? Mr.
21 Secretary, would you call the vote?

22 SECRETARY FOX:

23 There's a motion on the floor. We have
24 a second. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

25 ALL RESPOND AYE

1 SECRETARY FOX:

2 Oppose? Motion carries.

3 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

4 All right. We'll move onto Elk

5 Allocations. Mr. Secretary?

6 SECRETARY FOX:

7 Do we have a motion?

8 COMMISSIONER LAYTON:

9 Motion to accept.

10 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM:

11 Second.

12 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

13 Any discussion on the motion?

14 COMMISSIONER LAYTON:

15 Yes. Mr. President, do you have the
16 changes from last year to this? Can you go over those
17 before we vote because we have more allocations this
18 year.

19 MR. GREGG:

20 It's slightly more overall, that's
21 correct. I think rather than --- well, would you like
22 me to read down through each individual one just to
23 try to summarize a little bit?

24 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

25 Okay.

1 MR. GREGG:

2 Okay. All right. So the units that
3 changed in terms of bull tags, Hunt Zone 2 went from
4 two to three; 3, 4 are the same; Zone 5 goes from
5 three to four; 6 and 7 are the same; Zone 8 goes from
6 one to two; 9 is the same; 10 goes from two to three;
7 and 11, 12 and 13 are all the same. That's the bull
8 tag allocations.

9 For cow tags, Zone 2 goes from 19 to
10 22; Zone 3 actually decreases from six to four; 4 and
11 5 are the same; Zone 6 goes from five to six; Zone 7
12 is the same; Zone 8 goes from five to eight; Zone 9
13 goes from five to seven; Zone 10 goes down from 11 to
14 seven; and Zones 11 and 12 are the same; and Zone 13
15 goes from three to four. So when you add all those
16 up, the bull tags go from 21 in 2015 to 25 recommended
17 for 2016. And cow tags go from 95 approved in 2015 to
18 99 recommended in 2016. Grand total goes from 116
19 tags in 2015 to 124 in 2016.

20 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

21 Thank you. What I'd like to point out
22 is that we, the Commission, is serious about its elk
23 population. It is hopefully expanding. We're trying
24 to get the herd to expand and have it to go north and
25 that would be the best scenario for us. It is an

1 economic driver for the area and we will always keep
2 that in our mind when we're making decision on the elk
3 population. Is there any other discussion?

4 COMMISSIONER PUTNAM:

5 Mr. President, I think this is a
6 success story. I'll point out that the staff in the
7 northcentral region is very serious about working with
8 the population up there. We've had some issues with
9 elk causing damage in Dents Valley . We went in and
10 addressed it. It's a true success story and to follow
11 through, we had a problem. We went in. We addressed
12 it and we addressed numerous ways including harassment
13 of the elk, trying to saw the antlers off the elk
14 which we thought would be a cure all, but that turned
15 out to be a cure-all for only a short time and the elk
16 came back. But the staff has really worked with the
17 people up there. And we see these numbers, and we
18 only take a couple of minutes to go through them and
19 approve them, but there's a tremendous amount of work
20 that's gone into every one of those units, talking
21 about where they have issues,- an elk problem, trying
22 to balance the value of the elk with the type of
23 damage they can cause. I know we look around the elk
24 visitor's center there, there's a very distinct browse
25 line which in wildlife is a no-no as you have your

1 population that high. We made some adjustments in
2 sizing that hunt zone around them to shrink that
3 somewhat to allow them more pressure on those animals
4 to try to keep that herd from getting too far out of
5 control.

6 We also have had expansion by the elk.
7 We had previous efforts when we tracked elk, moved
8 them and they didn't stay where we put them. Now, on
9 their own, the elk have moved over to the Kettle Creek
10 Valley which there is a substantial population over
11 there now. I think it's about 40 animals that went
12 over there and we're expecting that's going to
13 represent a major expansion out in that direction.

14 I know the people, directors included,
15 when I met with people up in Lock Haven who are
16 concerned about economic development. Well, if they
17 can get that herd to Lock Haven if that herd will
18 expand in that area, it will be a significant tourist
19 attraction. And frankly, I think some of them thought
20 it was the maximum as far as the elk viewers that they
21 can tolerate. And we sure see a lot of businesses
22 that have sprung up in that area that are all based on
23 elk. So I think we got quite a success story here.
24 The fact that these numbers are going up, the herd is
25 going up, are all good indicators.

1 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

2 Is there any other discussion? Mr.
3 Secretary, call the vote.

4 SECRETARY FOX:

5 We have a motion on the floor. We have
6 a second. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

7 ALL RESPOND AYE

8 SECRETARY FOX:

9 Opposed?

10 PRESIDENT HOOVER:

11 Is there any other new business to
12 bring before the Commission? Does anyone else have
13 any other new business? Seeing none, there will be a
14 news conference immediately following and we will
15 adjourn. Thank you.

16 * * * * *

17 MEETING CONCLUDED AT 9:34 A.M.

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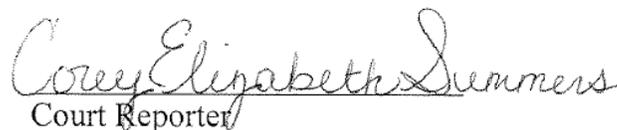
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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing proceedings, held before President Hoover was reported by me on 4/5/16 and that I, Corey Elizabeth Summers, read this transcript, and that I attest that this transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceeding.


Court Reporter

Corey Elizabeth Summers

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