

BEFORE THE  
PENNSYLVANIA GAME COMMISSION

\* \* \* \* \*

BEFORE: Stanley I. Knick, Jr., President  
Michael F. Mitrick, Vice President  
Kristen Schnepf-Giger, Secretary  
Scott H. Foradora, Commissioner  
Charlie E. Fox, Commissioner  
Dennis R. Fredericks, Commissioner  
Timothy S. Layton, Commissioner

HEARING: Saturday, April 10, 2021  
10:18 a.m.

LOCATION: Webinar Videoconference

Reporter: Kelly Gallick

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ALSO PRESENT:

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MATTHEW SCHNUPP, DIRECTOR, BUREAU OF WILDLIFE

MANAGEMENT

JASON L. DECOSKEY, DIRECTOR, BUREAU OF WILDLIFE

PROTECTION

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P R O C E E D I N G S

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ATTORNEY BECHTEL: The Board's formal agenda begins with the Call to Order by the President.

PRESIDENT KNICK: I'd like to bring to Order this April 10th, 2021 Game Commission Meeting. Madam Secretary, will you call roll, please?

COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER:  
Commissioner Knick?

PRESIDENT KNICK: Yes.

COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER:  
Commissioner Mitrick? Commissioner Mitrick, are you present? Commissioner Schnepf-Giger, present.

Commissioner Foradora?

COMMISSIONER FORADORA: Here.

COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER:  
Commissioner Fox?

COMMISSIONER FOX: Here.

COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER:  
Commissioner Fredericks?

COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Here.

COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER:

1 Commissioner Layton?

2 COMMISSIONER LAYTON: Here.

3 COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER:

4 Commissioner Mitrick?

5 MS. NEELY MITCHEL: He may be having  
6 trouble with the audio. I do see that he is in  
7 attendance.

8 PRESIDENT KNICK: Do we have a quorum?

9 ATTORNEY BECHTEL: There is a quorum  
10 present, if you want to continue with approval of the  
11 minutes.

12 PRESIDENT KNICK: At this time, I'd  
13 like to get a motion to approve the January 23rd,  
14 2021 minutes?

15 COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: So moved.

16 PRESIDENT KNICK: Do I have a second?

17 COMMISSIONER LAYTON: Second.

18 PRESIDENT KNICK: Second?

19 Madam Secretary, would you please call  
20 roll?

21 COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER:

22 Commissioner Knick?

23 PRESIDENT KNICK: Yes.

24 COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER:

25 Commissioner Mitrick?



1 certain permits similarly sold through the PALS  
2 Systems, such as mentored permits, bobcat permits,  
3 range permits, et cetera.

4 The text is shown on pages three and  
5 four of your agenda.

6 PRESIDENT KNICK: Do I have a motion?

7 COMMISSIONER FORADORA: So moved.

8 PRESIDENT KNICK: Second?

9 COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Second.

10 PRESIDENT KNICK: Madam Secretary, -

11 ATTORNEY BECHTEL: Commissioner, -

12 PRESIDENT KNICK: - would you call?

13 Yes, go ahead.

14 ATTORNEY BECHTEL: Commissioners, if I  
15 may interrupt. There is a floor amendment that has  
16 been proposed by staff for page four regarding  
17 internet license sales.

18 If the Commission desires to introduce  
19 that, wants to have a motion and second, Mr. Raup  
20 could discuss what the purpose of that is, if that  
21 would be all right?

22 COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: So moved.

23 PRESIDENT KNICK: Do we have a second?

24 COMMISSIONER FOX: Second.

25 PRESIDENT KNICK: Madam Secretary,



1 will you call the role?

2 ATTORNEY RAUP: I thought I was -?

3 ATTORNEY BECHTEL: Mr. Raup was going  
4 to explain that.

5 PRESIDENT KNICK: All right.

6 ATTORNEY RAUP: Thank you, Mr.  
7 Bechtel.

8 This amendment - and I'll go ahead and  
9 display it on the screen here, is in addition of the  
10 highlighted text. And it is the result of comments  
11 received on this proposal that update with this  
12 additional provision that is necessary to be included  
13 in this rulemaking to avoid this section falling out  
14 of harmony with each other.

15 Future form and legality approval of  
16 this rulemaking is contingent upon the preferred  
17 proffered for amendment, the text that is highlighted  
18 in yellow on your screen.

19 I'm happy to answer any questions that  
20 the Board may have.

21 But quite honestly, this additional  
22 text is only to harmonize the existing proposal with  
23 the existing text found in 143.11 so that those  
24 sections match each other in operation.

25 PRESIDENT KNICK: Any other comments

1 on the amendment?

2 Do we have a motion on the amendment?

3 ATTORNEY BECHTEL: We do, sir.

4 PRESIDENT KNICK: All right.

5 Madam Secretary, would you call for a  
6 vote?

7 COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: All in  
8 favor?

9 ALL RESPOND AYE

10 COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: Opposed?

11 NO RESPONSE

12 ATTORNEY BECHTEL: Thank you.

13 So with the amendment, we would have  
14 comments and vote then on the actual adopted  
15 rulemaking itself that has been moved and seconded.

16 COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: All in  
17 favor?

18 ALL RESPOND AYE

19 COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: Opposed?

20 NO RESPONSE

21 ATTORNEY BECHTEL: The next item

22 before the Commission is to amend -

23 PRESIDENT KNICK: Brad -

24 ATTORNEY BECHTEL: - back on page five

25 of -

1                   PRESIDENT KNICK: - pardon me, Brad.

2                   ATTORNEY BECHTEL: - of your agenda.

3                   Yes.

4                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Brad?

5                   ATTORNEY BECHTEL: Yes, sir.

6                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Commissioner Mitrick  
7 is on the phone. And he can hear us.

8                   COMMISSIONER MITRICK: I can hear you.  
9 I'm on. I'm alive.

10                   ATTORNEY BECHTEL: All right.

11                   The next item is on page five of your  
12 agenda. This is to amend 58 Pa. Code, Sections  
13 143.45 and 143.52 relating to completing and  
14 submitting applications and procedure for unlimited  
15 antlerless licenses to authorize unlimited over-the-  
16 counter sales of antlerless licenses in any open or  
17 unexhausted wildlife management unit, on the second  
18 Monday in September until these quotas are exhausted,  
19 the text as shown on page six of your agenda.

20                   COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Move to  
21 accept.

22                   COMMISSIONER LAYTON: Second.

23                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Madam Secretary,  
24 will you call the vote, please, - or any comments,  
25 please?

1                   COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: This is  
2 Commissioner Schnepf-Giger.

3                   I'd like to make a motion to amend  
4 this. And I understand that there has been a floor  
5 amendment prepared.

6                   COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Second the  
7 motion to the floor amendment.

8                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Recall for the vote,  
9 Madam Secretary.

10                   COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: All in  
11 favor?

12 ALL RESPOND AYE

13                   COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: Opposed?  
14 NO RESPONSE

15                   ATTORNEY BECHTEL: With the acceptance  
16 of the amendment, we would then be ready to have  
17 comment and vote on the item in the agenda.

18                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Any motion?

19                   COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Commissioner  
20 Fredericks, I move to accept.

21                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Is there a second?  
22 All right.

23 Call for a vote, Madam Secretary.

24                   COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: All in  
25 favor?

1 ALL RESPOND AYE

2 COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: Opposed?

3 NO RESPONSE

4 ATTORNEY BECHTEL: Moving on in the  
5 agenda to page seven of your agenda. This item comes  
6 from the Bureau of Wildlife Management. It concerns  
7 proposed rulemaking to amend 58 Pa. Code, Section  
8 141.62.

9 Beaver and otter trappers are  
10 currently limited to using no more than five traps or  
11 snares. And no more than two devices may be body  
12 gripping traps, in any Wildlife Management Unit  
13 during an open otter trapping season.

14 This regulation was originally  
15 developed to minimize the chance of a trapper  
16 exceeding the season bag limit of one otter in a day.

17 The limitation on the number of beaver  
18 traps extends for five additional consecutive days  
19 after the close of the otter season. The five-day  
20 extension was put in place to allow for an otter  
21 trapping season extension if warranted.

22 No otter trapping seasons have been  
23 extended since the first season was established  
24 during 2015. Longer trapping seasons rather than a  
25 year-specific season extensions will be proposed by

1 the Commission in areas where more otters can be  
2 trapped sustainably.

3                   The Commission is proposing to amend  
4 Section 141.62 relating to beaver and otter trapping  
5 to eliminate the restriction on the number of traps  
6 that beaver trappers can set during the five-day  
7 period after the closure of the otter trapping  
8 seasons.

9                   The text of this proposal is shown on  
10 pages seven and eight of your agenda.

11                   PRESIDENT FREDERICKS: Move to accept.

12                   COMMISSIONER FORADORA: Second.

13                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Any comments?

14                   No comments heard.

15                   Madam Secretary, would you call for a  
16 vote?

17                   COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: All in  
18 favor?

19 ALL RESPOND AYE

20                   COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: Opposed?

21 NO RESPONSE

22                   ATTORNEY BECHTEL: Thank you.

23                   And moving to page nine of the agenda.  
24 This concerns adopted rulemaking to amend 58 Pa.  
25 Code, Section 139.4 relating to seasons and bag

1 limits for the license year, to provide updated  
2 seasons and bag limits for the 2021 through 2022  
3 license year.

4                   The 2021 through 2022 seasons and bag  
5 limits have been amended to reflect current available  
6 scientific data, population and harvest records,  
7 field surveys and professional staff observations, as  
8 well as recommendations received from staff,  
9 organized sporting groups, members of the  
10 agricultural community and others interested in the  
11 management of the wildlife resources of this  
12 Commonwealth, the text is shown on pages 10 through  
13 19 of your agenda.

14                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Do I have a motion?

15                   COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: I believe  
16 there's a floor amendment for page 17 -.

17                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Not yet.

18                   ATTORNEY BECHTEL: Not yet.

19                   COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Oh, not yet?

20                   Okay.

21                   Any comment?

22                   COMMISSIONER LAYTON: No, we need to  
23 make a motion.

24                   COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: So moved.

25                   ATTORNEY BECHTEL: Yeah, for - for the

1 benefit of - thank you.

2 COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: So moved.

3 PRESIDENT KNICK: Second?

4 COMMISSIONER FORADORA: Second.

5 PRESIDENT KNICK: All right.

6 Any comments?

7 COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: I believe  
8 there's a floor amendment for pages 17 and 18.

9 PRESIDENT KNICK: Can we go - can we  
10 go over them page-by-page?

11 Any comments on page 10? Any comments  
12 on page 11? Any comments on page 12? Any comments  
13 on page 13? Any comments on page 14? Any comments  
14 on page 15? Any comments on page 16? How about any  
15 comments on page 17?

16 DR. SCHNUPP: Mr. President, this is  
17 Matthew Schnupp, our Director of Wildlife Management  
18 Bureau.

19 We do have a floor amendment on page  
20 17. The amendment adds Saturday, November 27th and  
21 November - Sunday, November 28th to the 2021 season.  
22 bear season with no changes to the end dates.

23 This change applies to the four WMUs,  
24 where the extended season runs until December 11th.  
25 And the 12 WMUs, where the extended season runs until



1 December the 4th.

2                   The intent of this is to make the  
3 season more consistent with its historic structure,  
4 simplify regulations and provide additional  
5 opportunity -.

6                   COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Move to  
7 accept the floor Amendment for page 17?

8                   COMMISSIONER FORADORA: Second that.

9                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Do we have any  
10 discussion? All in favor?

11 ALL RESPOND AYE

12                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Opposed?

13 NO RESPONSE

14                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Page 18?

15                   DR. SCHNUPP: Mr. President, this is  
16 Matthew again.

17                   So, we have another one on this page  
18 as well. The amendment corrects a formatting error  
19 in the preliminary approval seasons.

20                   So the hunting for the four species is  
21 allowed day or night during their open season, except  
22 during the overlap with firearms deer season, when  
23 they may be hunted only at night.

24                   On the January agenda, the season  
25 dates were inadvertently formatted in a way that

1 would have closed night hunting for these furbearers  
2 during the firearm season.

3           The floor amendment will correct the  
4 error to achieve the original intent, so no change to  
5 the season structure for these furbearers, except for  
6 opening three Sundays, November 14th, 21 and 28 to  
7 hunting. Hunting would continue to be allowed day or  
8 night for most of the season and only at night during  
9 the overlap with firearm season, firearm deer.

10           COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Motion to  
11 accept the Floor amendment on page 18?

12           COMMISSIONER LAYTON: I'll second that  
13 motion.

14           PRESIDENT KNICK: Do we have a roll  
15 call on that motion, Madam Secretary?

16           COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: All in  
17 favor?

18 ALL RESPOND AYE

19           COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: Opposed?

20 NO RESPONSE

21           PRESIDENT KNICK: Page 19? Can we  
22 call for a vote, Madam Secretary, on Season -

23           COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: All in  
24 favor on seasons and bags through page 19?

25 AYES RESPOND

1                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Opposed.

2                   COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: Opposed.

3                   PRESIDENT KNICK: I'll go along with  
4 all except the concurrent doe season. I have to go  
5 against that one. So it's a no.

6                   Motion passed.

7                   ATTORNEY BECHTEL: Thank you.

8                   The next item for your agenda appears  
9 on page 20. It is to amend 58 Pa. Code, Section  
10 147.673 relating to eligibility and application for  
11 DMAP to make July 1st the deadline for DMAP  
12 applications.

13                   The text is shown on page 21 of your  
14 agenda.

15                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Motion?

16                   COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Motion to  
17 accept.

18                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Second?

19                   COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: Second.

20                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Any discussion?

21                   Madam Secretary, would you call for  
22 the vote?

23                   COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: All in  
24 favor?

25 ALL RESPOND AYE

1                   COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: Opposed?

2 NO RESPONSE

3                   ATTORNEY BECHTEL: Moving onto page 22  
4 of your agenda. The next item is to amend 58 Pa.  
5 Code, Section 141.45 relating to turkey, to eliminate  
6 the use of rifles during the fall turkey season. The  
7 text is shown on page 23 of your agenda.

8                   COMMISSIONER FORADORA: I'll make the  
9 motion.

10                   COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Second.

11                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Any discussion?

12                   COMMISSIONER LAYTON: Mr. President,  
13 if I could?

14                   This is Commissioner Layton.

15                   We had a - this has been decision that  
16 has been most difficult for me. After talking to  
17 several hunters, I realize that we're taking away  
18 almost a culture from some of these people that -  
19 that are rifle hunters in the fall turkey season.

20                   However, I do kind of take some  
21 comfort in talking to one of the hunters who said to  
22 me, basically if you take rifles away from us, we're  
23 still going to be able to kill turkeys.

24                   So without eliminating this season and  
25 providing them the opportunity to hunt with shotguns,

1 at least for now, until we can see what the data  
2 actually spells out as far as what the kill is with  
3 rifles in the - in the fall turkey season, I have to  
4 go along with this and support it.

5                   We had some other options. I know  
6 Commissioner Schnepf-Giger had come up with some  
7 ideas that we kind of ran through our legal  
8 department. And they weren't - we weren't able to do  
9 anything with them right now, because they were just  
10 kind of too big of a change.

11                   So, as of now, with - either - if our  
12 options are either to eliminate the season or to  
13 allow people to go out and hunt with shotguns, I have  
14 to go along with the opportunity to hunt and just  
15 make this tough decision to eliminate rifles during  
16 that fall season.

17                   Thank you.

18                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Commissioner Mitrick  
19 -.

20                   COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER:  
21 Commission Layton, can I proceed?

22                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Thank you,  
23 Commission Layton.

24                   COMMISSIONER MITRICK: This is  
25 Commission Mitrick.

1                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Any other comments?

2                   COMMISSIONER MITRICK: I'd like to say  
3 something. I think a lot of the people, a lot of our  
4 hunters felt that we were doing this to for safety  
5 purposes, so that people wouldn't be shot with  
6 rifles. But the truth of the matter is, this is  
7 strictly to help improve the population of the  
8 turkeys. It was not ever discussed because of a  
9 safety issue with the rifles.

10                   COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: This is  
11 Commissioner Schnepf-Giger.

12                   I'd also like to add in there, that  
13 the main objective that we're looking at is reducing  
14 hen harvest in the fall. At a time when hen harvest  
15 is an additive mortality to a species that is  
16 declining across a lot of the Commonwealth.

17                   So this decision, while it doesn't sit  
18 well with every Pennsylvania hunter and can be argued  
19 that we took some opportunity away from folks who  
20 truly value their tradition of fall turkey hunting.

21                   The larger grand scheme of things is  
22 that we're able to keep the fall season open. And  
23 offer rifle hunters an alternative implement, such as  
24 a shotgun to still pursue the game that they would  
25 like to pursue within the resource, and what it will

1 sustain and what it will allow hunters here in the  
2 Commonwealth.

3 COMMISSIONER MITRICK: This is  
4 Commissioner Mitrick again. I want to say one other  
5 thing.

6 Some people feel that this is going to  
7 be a permanent elimination of rifles during the fall  
8 turkey season. That's not necessarily true. The  
9 Board fully intends on reviewing this and seeing what  
10 the data shows after two or three years, and we'll  
11 look at this hard again.

12 Thank you.

13 PRESIDENT KNICK: Any other comments?  
14 Madam Secretary, can you call for a  
15 vote, please?

16 COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: All in  
17 favor?

18 ALL RESPOND AYE

19 COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: Opposed?

20 NO RESPONSE

21 ATTORNEY BECHTEL: Thank you.

22 The next item comes from the Bureau of  
23 Wildlife Protection. And it appears on page 24 of  
24 your agenda.

25 It concerns proposed rulemaking to

1 amend 58 Pa. Code, Sections 131.2 and 141.1. Section  
2 141.1 relating to special regulations areas currently  
3 provides a general restriction prohibiting the use of  
4 single projectile firearms in possession of single  
5 projectile ammunition while hunting game or wildlife  
6 within areas designated as special regulations areas.

7           The section thereafter provides a  
8 multitude of exceptions for various firearms and  
9 their associated ammunition. These firearm and  
10 ammunition restrictions are intended to address  
11 safety-related concerns in the predominantly urban  
12 and developed areas of the Commonwealth. This  
13 general firearm restriction serves as an effective  
14 ban on the use of firearms that utilize straight-  
15 walled cartridges.

16           The Commission is determined that  
17 these firearms afford no greater risk of safety in  
18 the special regulation areas, than concurrently  
19 exempted shotguns and muzzle-loading firearms. The  
20 Commission has also determined that a reorganization  
21 of Section 141.1 is necessary to address its unwieldy  
22 and confusing structure.

23           The Commission is proposing to amend  
24 Sections 131.2 and 141.1 to define and authorize the  
25 use of firearms that utilize straight-walled



1 cartridges within most areas designated as special  
2 regulation areas. And also reorganize Section 141.1  
3 to provide a clear and more seamless construction  
4 within the section itself. And with related arms and  
5 ammunition provisions.

6 The text is shown on pages 23 through  
7 - 24 through 27 of your agenda.

8 COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Motion to  
9 accept.

10 COMMISSIONER MITRICK: Second.

11 PRESIDENT KNICK: Do we have any  
12 discussion?

13 COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: This is  
14 Commissioner Fredericks.

15 I'd like to greatly thank our Bureau  
16 of Law Enforcement folks. I know they spent a lot of  
17 time of these, weeding their way through all these  
18 regulations. Resulted in improved opportunity, and  
19 recreational use, and firearms for our hunters and  
20 simplified, dramatically simplified our regulations  
21 for special regulations there.

22 So, a shout out to our Bureau of Law  
23 Enforcement and Jason DeCoskey for working their way  
24 through this. Good job.

25 PRESIDENT KNICK: All right. Thank

1 you, Commissioner Fredericks.

2 Madam Secretary, would you call a  
3 vote, please?

4 COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: All in  
5 favor?

6 ALL RESPOND AYE

7 COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: Opposed?

8 NO RESPONSE

9 ATTORNEY BECHTEL: And moving onto  
10 page 28 of your agenda. There is a proposal to amend  
11 58 Pa. Code, Section 147.804.

12 Since the mentored hunting program's  
13 initial inception in 2006, the program has gradually  
14 grown and expanded to allow the hunting of many  
15 additional species of game and wildlife.

16 With each progressive expansion of  
17 species eligibility, the mentored hunting program has  
18 come into closer alignment to the Commission's  
19 traditional hunting license structures.

20 The Commission is now proposing to  
21 amend Section 147.804 relating to general, to expand  
22 species eligibility for the mentored hunting program  
23 to include participation in waterfowl, bear, and  
24 expanded spring or special turkey seasons.

25 Existing regulatory structures will

1 authorize mentored youth over seven years of age at  
2 the time of application, and mentored adults to make  
3 application for bear licenses and special wild turkey  
4 licenses as a direct applicant.

5                   Mentored youth under the age of seven  
6 years of age at the time of application will be  
7 authorized to receive the harvest tags from bear and  
8 special wild turkey licenses by transfer from a  
9 mentor in a similar fashion to other big game harvest  
10 tags.

11                   The text is shown on pages 28 and 29  
12 of your agenda.

13                   COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Motion to  
14 accept.

15                   COMMISSIONER MITRICK: Second.

16                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Do we have any  
17 discussion?

18                   Madam Secretary, will you call a vote,  
19 please?

20                   COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: All in  
21 favor?

22 ALL RESPOND AYE

23                   COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: Opposed?

24 NO RESPONSE

25                   ATTORNEY BECHTEL: And on page 30 of

1 your agenda, there is adopted rulemaking to amend 58  
2 Pa. Code, Section 141.4 to replace the current  
3 hunting hours table and migratory bird hunting hours  
4 table to accurately reflect the dates and hours of  
5 legal hunting for the 2021 through 2022  
6 hunting/trapping license year.

7 The text is shown on pages 31 through  
8 33 of your agenda.

9 PRESIDENTV KNICK: Motion?

10 COMMISSIONER LAYTON: Motion to  
11 accept.

12 COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Second.

13 PRESIDENT KNICK: Do we have any  
14 discussion?

15 None heard. Madam Secretary, will you  
16 call a vote?

17 COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: All in  
18 favor?

19 ALL RESPOND AYE

20 COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: Opposed?

21 NO RESPONSE

22 ATTORNEY BECHTEL: Moving to page 34  
23 of your agenda. There's a proposal to amend Sections  
24 143.203, 143.203a and 143.206 relating to random  
25 drawing elk licenses, special elk conservation

1 license, elk auction license, and validity of elk  
2 licenses and to add Sections 139.18 and 143.23 - 203b  
3 relating to elk management area, and hunt zones and  
4 special license fundraiser elk license, to define the  
5 elk management area and elk hunt zones, better  
6 delineate and describe the three available elk  
7 licenses, and lastly, close all elk hunting in any  
8 elk hunt zone that does not receive an allocation for  
9 a given hunting license year.

10 The text is shown on pages 35 through  
11 38 of your agenda.

12 PRESIDENT KNICK: Do we have a motion?

13 COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Motion to  
14 accept.

15 COMMISSIONER FORADORA: Second.

16 PRESIDENT KNICK: Any discussion?

17 With none heard, Madam Secretary, will  
18 you call a vote?

19 COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: All in  
20 favor?

21 ALL RESPOND AYE

22 COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: Opposed?

23 NO RESPONSE

24 ATTORNEY BECHTEL: With that, we'll  
25 move to the Bureau of Wildlife Habitat Management on

1 page 40 of your agenda.

2                   This concerns real estate and an  
3 acquisition. Contract Number L3779, State Game Land  
4 Number 148 in Lawrence County. Joseph A. Schweikert  
5 and Bonnie L. Schweikert are offering 12 plus or  
6 minus acres of land in Shenango Township, Lawrence  
7 County, adjoining property donated from the Estate of  
8 Mary Joan Pavlich and approved by the Board of Game  
9 Commissioners at the January 29th, 2019 Commission  
10 Meeting.

11                   This is shown on Exhibit RED 1 on page  
12 41 of your agenda.

13                   The option price is \$30,000 lump sum  
14 to be paid with funds from the Game Commission's  
15 Restricted Account, other cost sharing funds. Access  
16 is from Denny Drive, T-429 and from Cochran Hill  
17 Road, which is an abandoned township road.

18                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Do we have a motion?

19                   COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Motion to  
20 accept.

21                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Do we have a second?

22                   COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: Second.

23                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Any discussion?

24                   Madam Secretary, will you call a vote,  
25 please?

1                   COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: All in  
2 favor?

3 ALL RESPOND AYE

4                   COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: Opposed?  
5 NO RESPONSE

6                   ATTORNEY BECHTEL: Moving to page 42  
7 of your agenda is Contract Number L3780, State Game  
8 Land Number 141 in Carbon County.

9                   Mary Ann Kruslicky is offering 6.38  
10 plus or minus acres of land in Nesquehoning Borough,  
11 Carbon County, an interior in State Game Land Number  
12 141, as shown on Exhibit RED 2, on page 43 of your  
13 agenda.

14                   The option price is \$30,000 lump sum  
15 to be paid with funds from the Game Fund. The parcel  
16 is located within an existing State Game Land. And  
17 therefore, the Commission may exceed \$400 per acre,  
18 under Section 705(b) of the Game and Wildlife Code.

19                   Access is from SR 93 or Hunter Street.

20                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Do we have a motion?

21                   COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Motion to  
22 accept.

23                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Second? Do we have  
24 a second?

25                   COMMISSIONER MITRICK: Second.





1                   PRESIDENT KNICK: Is there a second?  
2 Any discussion?

3                   Madam Secretary, will you call a vote,  
4 please?

5                   COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: All in  
6 favor?

7 ALL RESPOND AYE

8                   COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: Opposed?  
9 NO RESPONSE

10                  ATTORNEY BECHTEL: And Commissioners,  
11 that completes the formal written part of the agenda.  
12 We would move to other New Business.

13                  I just want to remind the  
14 Commissioners, that the antlerless allocations in the  
15 elk allocations are traditionally part of this  
16 meeting that will be voted upon under new business  
17 during this meeting.

18                  COMMISSIONER LAYTON: So Mr.  
19 President, this is Commissioner Layton.

20                  So I would like to make a motion that  
21 we accept the antlerless allocations for white tail  
22 deer as they were presented by the staff.

23                  COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Second.

24                  PRESIDENT KNICK: Any discussions?

25                  Madam Secretary, would you call for a

1 vote?

2 COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: All in  
3 favor?

4 ALL RESPOND AYE

5 COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: Opposed?  
6 NO RESPONSE

7 COMMISSIONER LAYTON: Mr. President,  
8 again this is Commissioner Layton. I would like to  
9 offer a motion that we accept the elk allocations as  
10 they were presented by staff.

11 COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Second.

12 PRESIDENT KNICK: Do we have a second?

13 All right. Okay.

14 Any discussion?

15 Hearing none. Madam Secretary, would  
16 you call a vote?

17 COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: All in  
18 favor?

19 AYES RESPOND

20 COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: Opposed.  
21 NO RESPONSE

22 COMMISSIONER LAYTON: Mr. President,  
23 Commissioner Layton one more time. I would like to  
24 call on Dr. Matthew Schnupp, who is the Director of  
25 Wildlife Management. And I would for him to talk to

1 us just for a minute or two about and to give us an  
2 update on CWD in the state.

3 Dr. Schnupp.

4 DR. SCHNUPP: Yes. Thanks,  
5 Commissioner Layton. This is Matthew.

6 So we had a busy year, as you well  
7 know. We have our Response Plan Implementation. We  
8 have had a lot of successes this past year. We've  
9 been able to roll out our visualization dashboard  
10 where folks can view the data. Our turnaround time  
11 went down to days rather than weeks, for samples  
12 submitted by hunters. Got great collaboration with  
13 Department of Agriculture. We've done some great new  
14 research with our CWD detection dogs.

15 Our optimization of surveillance and  
16 management tools through the Wildlife Futures Program  
17 has really taken off. And then our outreach, our  
18 collaboration with the National Deer Alliance has  
19 been a great product-driven relationship.

20 Our new Marketing Bureau has done a  
21 great job working with them to put out some region  
22 meetings that we hope to get out in front of folks  
23 this next month. And basically let them know how we  
24 did.

25 Let me, you know, follow-up and make

1 sure that they know how we've done as an agency and -  
2 and how much we appreciate the support that the  
3 hunters and - and the general public have given us  
4 during this process. So that's the good.

5                   And I think there is a lot of good.  
6 And I'm really proud to be part of all that good  
7 stuff. But there's also, unfortunately, some pretty  
8 dire issues at hand as well.

9                   So we were one of the states that were  
10 able to maintain surveillance during this past year.

11                  So we collected over 12,000 samples with the support  
12 of Agency Staff and the hunters.

13                   And unfortunately, out of those 12,000  
14 samples, 218 were positive, that's up. But really,  
15 where that focus comes down to is in our established  
16 area, which everybody knows that initial area that  
17 has - that has basically become the Blair, Bedford,  
18 Huntingdon and Fulton County area.

19 And unfortunately, last year in that established  
20 area, we had a sampling prevalence of about 7.6  
21 percent. So still high. Concerning, obviously.

22                   We've done a lot of try to manage  
23 that, as I just mentioned. But unfortunately, we  
24 jumped up to 13.8 percent this year. And that was a  
25 real punch in the stomach, to be honest with you.

1 And - and is a real grim reality check, that we have  
2 to continue to work together to manage CWD.

3                   We see some - from other states, that  
4 these - these numbers will continue to rise without  
5 some direct management. And so, we ask the hunters,  
6 the general public and the support of Agency Staff to  
7 continue and - and so that we can - we can manage  
8 this disease and make sure that the Agency is doing  
9 everything we can to fight it.

10                   So, thanks for bringing this up,  
11 Commissioner Layton. And happy to take any questions  
12 on that further or answer anything.

13                   COMMISSIONER LAYTON: Thank you,  
14 Matthew. I would like to just make a statement, if I  
15 may.

16                   Today, more than ever we must realize  
17 as hunters and outdoor enthusiasts, that working  
18 together is crucial for the future of wildlife  
19 conservation here in Pennsylvania. The PGC has asked  
20 for help from sportsmen across the state for their  
21 help in managing CWD, which has become a larger  
22 problem every year. Conservation is a big word. And  
23 it's crucial that we all work together as one using  
24 the best science on a statewide level.

25                   As we look back at 2020, the CWD

1 incident rate increased once again, in the  
2 established zone. Without PGC and hunters uniting  
3 efforts to combat this disease, the future and  
4 increase of CWD is imminent.

5           The Commissioners and the Agency face  
6 a tremendous amount of resistance when it comes to  
7 CWD. In fact, almost half of the states are battling  
8 CWD. We need to show the whole country what being a  
9 Pennsylvanian hunter is all about.

10           Our Agency has been a leader in  
11 wildlife conservation efforts since its inception 125  
12 years ago. We need your help more now than ever to  
13 unite, and battle this disease together and cooperate  
14 to protect the future of our incredible wild white  
15 tailed deer herd.

16           I want to thank you for your support  
17 and thank you for being a Pennsylvania hunter. Thank  
18 you, Mr. President.

19           PRESIDENT KNICK: Thank you,  
20 Commissioner Layton.

21           Do we have any other comments?

22           At this time, I would like to  
23 recognize Commissioner Fox, Charlie Fox. This will  
24 be his last meeting. Thank you, Charlie, for  
25 supporting this Game Commission and for all you've

1 done for it. And it has been a pleasure to meet and  
2 serve with you.

3 COMMISSIONER FOX: And thank you. It  
4 has been an honor and a privilege for me to represent  
5 the sportsmen of Pennsylvania. And I thank you for  
6 your cooperation, and all of the Board and the  
7 Agency.

8 COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: And Charlie,  
9 this is -

10 PRESIDENT KNICK: Any comments?

11 COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Charlie,  
12 this is Commissioner Fredericks. I'd like to thank  
13 you for your service to conservation throughout your  
14 lifetime. As much as we appreciate your service on  
15 the Commission for the last eight years, we all know  
16 that your commitment to sound conservation has been a  
17 lifetime passion of yours. And I want to thank you  
18 and congratulate you. And be well.

19 COMMISSIONER FORADORA: This is  
20 Commissioner Foradora. Thank you, Charlie for your  
21 service. And I echo Commissioner Fredericks'  
22 comments.

23 Thank you, Charlie.

24 COMMISSIONER MITRICK: Commissioner  
25 Mitrick. And Charlie, I just want to say you'll be

1 missed. And thank you so, so much for all you've  
2 done for the Commission, and for the state of  
3 Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania hunters.

4 COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: This is  
5 Commissioner Schnepf-Giger. I enjoyed working with  
6 you, and picking your brain many of times and gaining  
7 knowledge from your wisdom.

8 So, I thank you for the mentor that  
9 you have become to me. And look forward to  
10 continuing our friendship even after you've completed  
11 your term here on the Board. Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER LAYTON: Charlie, it's  
13 Commissioner Layton. So you know, there's not enough  
14 time to say everything that needs to be said about  
15 your service to the Commission.

16 But one of the things I just want to  
17 bring out is, your love for the youth population in  
18 Pennsylvania and all that you've done for youth  
19 hunting, that is truly the future of the Pennsylvania  
20 Game Commission.

21 And I just want to thank you for your  
22 support. And nobody has any idea how much time you  
23 spend with the youth. And I just want to thank you  
24 for all the time that you've dedicated to them and  
25 conservation in Pennsylvania.



1 Thanks, my friend.

2 PRESIDENT KNICK: With that said, the  
3 next Commissioner meeting will be July 23rd and 24th  
4 here in Harrisburg. And that will conclude this  
5 Pennsylvania Game Commission meeting.

6 Motion to adjourn?

7 COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: So moved.

8 COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: Second.

9 PRESIDENT KNICK: Second? Madam  
10 Secretary?

11 COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: All in  
12 favor?

13 ALL RESPOND AYE

14 COMMISSIONER SCHNEPP-GIGER: Opposed?

15 NO RESPONSE

16 PRESIDENT KNICK: Thank you.

17 MS. NEELY MITCHEL: And that concludes  
18 the meeting today. Again, this session has been  
19 recorded. And we expect it to be uploaded to the Game  
20 Commission's YouTube channel early next week.

21 On behalf of the Board, the Executive  
22 Office and the rest of the staff at the Game  
23 Commission, we'd like to thank you for taking time  
24 out of your weekend to join us. And we hope you're  
25 able to get outside and enjoy some of Pennsylvania's

1 great outdoors.

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VIDEOCONFERENCE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 11:02 A.M.

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## CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing proceeding was reported by me on 4/10/2021 and that I, Kelly Gallick, read this transcript, and that I attest that this transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceeding. This notarial act involved the use of communication technology.

Dated the 7<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2021



Kelly Gallick,  
Court Reporter

Court Reporter