



☒ Executive Committee ☐ District Leadership Council ☐ Annual Meeting

**Wisconsin Conservation Congress
Meeting Minutes**

ORDER OF BUSINESS	04/08/2021	6:30 PM	Zoom
--------------------------	------------	---------	------

I. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

A. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by	Tony Blattler at 6:32 PM
----------------------------	--------------------------

B. ROLL CALL

ATTENDEES	Tony Blattler, Terri Roehrig, Dale Maas, Joe Weiss and Brett Weir.
EXCUSED	
UNEXCUSED	
GUESTS	Kari Lee Zimmermann, Taylor Finger, Brad Egghold, Scott Roepke, Brad Ray and Todd Cook.

C. Agenda approval and repair

DISCUSSION	Tony asked for the ability to vary the agenda based on presenters timeline.
ACTION	Motion by Weir second by Weiss to allow the chair to vary in the order of the agenda. Motion carried.

D. Public comment

DISCUSSION	None
ACTION	No action taken.

II. INFORMATION & ACTION ITEMS

The Executive Committee will review and may take a position on any of the items listed on the Natural Resources Board's April 14, 2021, agenda.

Various

A.

DISCUSSION	
ACTION	See below.
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

1. NRB agenda item F Lake Michigan whitefish harvest Green Bay zone one

Brad Eggold

DISCUSSION	Brad reviewed the proposed emergency board order FH-28-20 (E). The proposed emergency rule will increase the Green Bay (zone one) commercial whitefish quota to 207,603 pounds for the 2021 license year. It will also cap large mesh gill net effort for whitefish in Green Bay at 2,875,304 feet in total if by catch thresholds are reached by June 30, 2021, as recorded by on-board monitoring activities, to limit the potential for increased gill net catch of by catch such as walleye, northern pike and other sport fish. This will also require all commercial whitefish fishers operating in Green Bay that their harvest reports electronically, including information on by catch. Electronic harvest reporting is especially important for monitoring levels of by catch in a timely manner, which is not currently possible with biweekly paper reporting system. Dale questioned if this was a one-year temporary trial? The issue is the sports fisherman do not want additional 200,000 pounds given and if there is a decrease that they are then reduced from 10 to 5 fish even if the 200,000 is taken away from the commercials. Brad said that yes it was a one year test to verify data and it would be reviewed after that.	
ACTION	Motion by Weiss second by Weir to approve the proposal. Motion carried.	
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE	

NRB agenda item E propose rules affecting Chapters NR 20 and 25 related to fish

Brad Ray

2. harvest in Lake Superior.

DISCUSSION	Brad stated the propose permanent rule maintains the revised Cisco and Lake Trout quotas, based on the most recent three-year data collection cycle, that the department implemented in emergency rule FH-12-20 (E). Through the emergency rule and now continued with the permanent rule, the Lake Trout quota in management zone W-12 is reduced to 47,330 Lake Trout (19,000 state portion), with no changes in WI-1. The recreational Lake Trout harvest trigger for season closure in WI-2 is reduced to 9,500 Lake Trout. The Cisco quota will be set at 1,794,000 round weight pounds (split equally between the state and the tribes), representing a decrease to 897,000 round weight pounds for the total state portion. Additionally the Cisco quota contained a sunset clause which has been reviewed and removed based on data collection and model projection	
------------	---	--

	over the past three years. Because the quotas are specifically, a new rule is necessary when updates are needed. Lake Trout and Cisco quota decreases are proposed due to the stable rather than increasing population of Lake Trout and decline in Cisco population. The proposed quotas will help ensure sustainable Lake Superior fisheries into the future. Dale and Joe both commented that the share of the sort Established in rule language. Dale and Joe both commented that appeared that the sport fishing share was shorted 17% and that there has been considerable complaints on this percentage.
ACTION	Motion by Weir second by Roehrig to approve. Motion carried.
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

NRB agenda item G request that the board adopt emergency board order WM-19-20 (E), proposed rules affecting chapter NR 10 related to establishing the 2021 migratory

Taylor Finger

3. bird season framework and regulations.

DISCUSSION	<p>Taylor stated that the department's migratory bird season proposal will be mostly consistent with that from 2020. The major change for the 2021 season framework includes replacing the Mississippi River ducks on with an open water zone which consists of areas 500 feet or greater from the mainland shoreline of Green Bay and Lake Michigan. These rules may modify season dates, bag limits, and other regulations related to migratory birds. These regulations are part of the federal migratory bird season framework. Migratory game bird hunting is regulated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife services in 50 CFR part 20. The U. S. Fish service offers a final season framework the Wisconsin in the spring of 2021. The service needs to be informed of the Natural Resources Board's decisions on these seasons by April 30, 2021. The migratory zone change replacing the Mississippi River zone with the open water zone was approved by the board in April 2020 and will be in place for the first time this year.</p> <p>A series of four public hearings were held virtually in March.</p> <p>This is an annual rule that will be consistent with a federal framework that will be consistent with past policies.</p> <p>Todd Cook chairman of the migratory committee stated that the WCC migratory committee opted</p> <p>(1) for a nine day split for the southern duck zone season. The reason being the Mississippi River zone was eliminated and nine day would allow late-season which they had when the Mississippi zone was in place.</p> <p>(2) the WCC migratory committee also opted for a 3 goose daily bag limit for southern zone Canada goose for exterior season for rule simplification.</p> <p>Dale questioned if this was not one of the same problems that they had in previous years about a survey that was sent out after the committee met? During that issue it also went against the committee's recommendation. Dale questioned whether the department would be better served if this survey was sent out prior to the committee meeting so that not only would the department have the input from the duck hunters but the Congress committee would also have that same information. Once again we have one of our standing committees making a recommendation contrary to the department and it seems like we should be working more together on this to find a compromise.</p>
ACTION	Motion by Weir 2nd by Weiss to support the migratory committee's position and to request that the department review the timing of the survey and share it prior to the WCC migratory committee meeting. 4 votes in favor, Roehrig opposed. Motion carried.
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

4. NRB item J requesting approval of Wisconsin's Sturgeon Management Plan.

Brad Eggold

DISCUSSION	<p>On the updated Sturgeon Management Plan which was worked on for the past two years not only the department but the Sturgeon advisory committee that was comprised of representatives from various Sturgeon interest groups, anglers and the Hydro industry, commercial fishing and other government entities. The plan was also reviewed in draft form and comments were submitted. This updated Sturgeon Management Plan addresses six fundamental management categories and will guide management of Lake Sturgeon and Shovel Nose Sturgeon into the future.</p> <p>They are: population assessment and life history monitoring. Habitat protection and enhancement. Propagation and reintroduction. Regulation, harvest and enforcement. Public outreach and engagement. Emerging threats.</p> <p>It was noted that this management plan does not impact the use of underwater cameras electronics while Sturgeon spearing.</p>
ACTION	Motion by Weiss second by Weir to endorse. Motion carried.

WCC Secretary Meeting Minutes

Form 8300-026E (R 1/18)

Page 3 of 4

PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

5. NRB agenda item K request approval of the 2021-2031 elk management plan.

Scott Roepke

DISCUSSION	<p>Scott stated the elk management plan will serve as a guidance document for statewide elk management from 2021-2031 as an outreach and education publication to better inform and educate the public on elk ecology, history, and management.</p> <p>There are currently 2 wild, free-ranging elk herds in Wisconsin establish through reintroduction efforts. There northern elk herd (formally called the Clam Lake Herd) originated in 1995 as an experimental release conducted by the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. Management of the herd was transferred to the W DNR in 2000 and has been guided by the management plan and environmental and assessment for the Clam Lake elk herd (2000). A 2nd reintroduction effort established the central elk herd (formally called the Black River herd) in 2015 and management is guided by the Black River elk herd management plan and environmental assessment (2001). The Clam Lake and Black River elk management plan amendment (2012) provided updates to the original management plans and has guided management efforts most recently. Significant changes to elk management have occurred since the original approval of these plans including interstate trans-location efforts, establishment of and elk hunting season, and new research efforts/knowledge gained have led to the need for and development of this updated plan.</p> <p>The Wisconsin Elk Management plan, 2021-2031 was developed by members of the W DNR elk advisory committee which includes representation from W DNR staff with various expertise and a diverse team of stakeholder organizations and tribal partners including the Wisconsin Conservation Congress, Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, Rocky Mount and elk foundation, Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC), Ho-chunk nation, University of Wisconsin, US Forest service, and others. This committee met frequently from 2019-2021 to evaluate past management plans, identify previous successes and challenges, and establish management objectives and strategies to guide elk management through the next decade using the best available ecological and social science, public input, and expertise of committee members.</p> <p>Public and partner input was collected through a public awareness and attitude survey of the Wisconsin residents, outreach with interested elk management partners and stakeholder groups, informational " open houses", advisory committee meetings, and through written comments.</p> <p>It is proposed to rename the zones to the Northern Elk Zone and Central Elk Zone. To establish elk hunting units. To require and regulate an exterior zone. Regulate and increased the size of the central elk management zone from 264 mi.² to 367 mi.². Reduce the population goal of the central zone to be between 240 and 360 animals. Maintain a population goal in the northern zone of 1,400 plus or -260 animals. Change the harvest season September through October (60 days). It was reported that the WCC elk committee agreed on the plan.</p>	
ACTION	Motion by Weir 2nd by Roehrig to accept. Motion carried.	
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE	

B. Recovering America's wildlife act

Blattler

DISCUSSION	Tony gave a brief explanation on the Wildlife Act.	
ACTION	Motion by Maas 2nd by Weir to support. Motion carried.	
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE	

Follow-up from the WCC delegates and youth volunteering to staff the OHEC trailers at the

Blattler

C. Wisconsin Dells sports show

DISCUSSION	<p>Tony stated due to the efforts of the WCC volunteers the Friends of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress received a \$3000 check earmarked for the Youth Congress.</p> <p>Dale stated that besides Mark LaBarbera, Harold Drake from Dodge County were there Friday night. Saturday Harold, Mark Dale along with his 2 grandkids, Frank Pratt and his YCC delegate worked Saturday and he wasn't sure who all showed up for the final day. Dale said he would have liked to see more people involved, but given the Covid issue it was a very successful outing the people that were there were very engaged in selling tickets.</p>	
ACTION	Motion by Roehrig 2nd by Weir to send a thank you note to Mark LaBarbera for his efforts in helping support the YCC. Motion carried.	
PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE	

--	--

III. MEMBERS MATTERS

DISCUSSION	<p>Brett nothing.</p> <p>Joe concerned about the issue with the migratory meeting he also had concerns about the review of the resolutions that the executive committee was asked to review.</p> <p>Terri also had issues with the reviews of the resolutions and the sheer volume of them this year compared to last year. Only means that we need to provide a better guidance upfront on the resolutions. She also talked about the spring hearings in the plans for additional Facebook posts to increase public awareness. She also stated that she had given input on the CDAC oversight committee that would be published on Monday.</p> <p>Dale stated that he was concerned about the lack of progress on the Kettle Moraine Fish Hatchery not opening. It is not known when it's going to be open, it is past due for opening and was wondering if anybody else had heard anything on what the problem was. Most contracts that he was involved in required a penalty clause for failure to comply with completion dates and were losing another whole year of fish rearing.</p> <p>He was also concerned with the fact that we are going to be planting the salmon again this year as we did last year not having net pens that were operational. The clubs and organizations that we have cooperated with in the past were not used last year this was is due to the Covid but I would've thought after a year we would've been able to find some mutual ground that we can enhance the process. We are once again going to dump the stock during daylight hours in some of our busiest harbors, becoming food for the pelicans, cormorant and seagulls.</p> <p>The department is in a hurry to get these fish planted because the rainbow trout eggs are ready and they need to clean the raceways and prepare for that hatch at Wild Rose. It is a shame that we don't have better control of what's going on our fisheries.</p> <p>Kari is getting ready for the Monday survey start ,there were 30 to 40 resolutions of the over 200 that were either incomplete or unreadable and will not be put into the survey. Terri said that she would work on a better explanation of the resolution process for next year.</p> <p>There being no further business there was a motion by Maas 2nd by Roehrig to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9 PM.</p>
ACTION	

IV. ADJOURNMENT

MEETING ADJOURNED	9 PM
SUBMITTED BY	Dale C. Maas
DATE	04/18/2021