

**New Mexico State Game Commission New Mexico**  
**Department of Game and Fish**  
**Virtual Meeting**  
**Jan. 15, 2021**

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 1: Meeting Called to Order** 09:02:02 a.m. (00:00:06)

Called to order by Chairwoman Salazar Hickey

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 2: Roll Call** 09:03:43 a.m. (00:01:41)

All present: Chairwoman Salazar Hickey, Vice-chairwoman Salazar-Henry, Commissioner Bates, Commissioner Cramer, Commissioner Lopez, Commissioner Soules and Commissioner Vesbach.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 3: Approval of Agenda (Action Item)** 09:05:24 a.m. (00:01:41)

**Motion:** Move to approve the agenda with two changes, first the addition of a second General Comments session to be added after agenda item 5 and second to move agenda item 6 Executive Session to the end of the Commission meeting.

**Motion by:** Vice-chairwoman Salazar-Henry

**Seconded by:** Commissioner Bates

**Approved:** Roll call vote – Approved Unanimously: Chairwoman Salazar Hickey, Vice-chairwoman Salazar-Henry, Commissioner Bates, Commissioner Cramer, Commissioner Lopez, Commissioner Soules and Commissioner Vesbach.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 4: Election of Chair and Vice-Chair (Action Item)** 09:10:56 a.m. (00:05:32)

**Motion:** Move to nominate Sharon Salazar Hickey for Chairwoman of the State Game Commission.

**Motion by:** Commissioner Cramer

**Seconded by:** Commissioner Lopez

**Approved:** Roll call vote – Approved Unanimously: Chairwoman Salazar Hickey, Vice-chairwoman Salazar-Henry, Commissioner Bates, Commissioner Cramer, Commissioner Lopez, Commissioner Soules and Commissioner Vesbach.

**Motion:** Move for nominate Jeremy Vesbach as vice-chairman of the State Game Commission.

**Motion by:** Vice-chairwoman Salazar-Henry

**Seconded by:** Commissioner Bates

**Approved:** Roll call vote – Approved Unanimously: Chairwoman Salazar Hickey, Vice-chairwoman Salazar-Henry, Commissioner Bates, Commissioner Cramer, Commissioner Lopez, Commissioner Soules and Commissioner Vesbach.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 5: Approval of the 2021-2023 State Land Office Easement (Action Item)**

09:14:25 a.m. (00:12:28)

**Motion:** Move to approve and sign the lease agreement that has been finalized by the State Land Office submitted to the Department of Game and Fish and the New Mexico State Game Commission.

**Motion by:** Commissioner Lopez

**Seconded by:** Commissioner Salazar-Henry

**Approved:** Roll call vote – Approved Unanimously: Chairwoman Salazar Hickey, Vice-chairman

Vesbach, Commissioner Bates, Commissioner Cramer, Commissioner Lopez, Commissioner Salazar-Henry and Commissioner Soules.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 5.B.: General Comment (additional agenda item)** 09:25:52 a.m. (00:23:55)

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 7: Consent Agenda (Action Items A-D)** 09:37:47 a.m. (00:35:51)

- A. Approval of Minutes of Dec. 3, 2020, Virtual meeting**
- B. Approval of License Revocations**
- C. Approval of Weapons4Warriors as a non-profit to receive donated licenses**
- D. Approval of Least Shrew Recovery Plan**

**Motion:** Move to approve the consent agenda as written.

**Motion by:** Vice-chairman Vesbach

**Seconded by:** Commissioner Cramer

**Approved:** Roll call vote – Approved Unanimously: Chairwoman Salazar Hickey, Vice-chairman Vesbach, Commissioner Bates, Commissioner Cramer, Commissioner Lopez, Commissioner Salazar-Henry and Commissioner Soules.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 8: Director's Report (Discussion Item)** 09:40:52 a.m. (00:38:56)

- As always, our staff has been very busy, since the last meeting:
  - The hunting rules and information booklet is online, and as of Jan. 14, there were over 6,000 unique downloads. In order to save a little bit of money and as we are getting more and more interested in online activities, printing will be reduced this year.
  - The big game draw application period opened Jan. 13.
  - At the start of the bow hunt in the Sandia Mountains, conservation officers partnered with Backcountry Hunters and Anglers to educate outdoor users about hunting and wildlife. Nearly 1,200 contacts were made, mostly positive.
  - The Department held a youth pheasant hunt. 36 youth participate in the COVID safe hunt.
  - Participated in a Search and Rescue event in the Guadalupe Mountains.
  - Among the many cases filed and being prosecuted, is a case consisting of three felony fraud charges on a former outfitter who committed fraud on three separate groups of hunters.
  - Annual deer surveys were completed across the state. Biologists did experience some weather and mechanical issues, so a couple more areas need to be flown.
  - Annual waterfowl surveys were flown across the state as part of nationwide survey efforts.
  - Marquez Wildlife Management Area road improvements were completed.
  - Bids were accepted to build a refugia pond on the River Ranch Wildlife Management Area for conservation of the Chihuahua Chub. Construction will begin in the next several months, with completion expected before the end of the fiscal year. The pond represents another step in the recovery process for this fish. We are getting closer and closer to being able to petition for delisting the species.
  - Fishing at Eagle Nest Lake is outstanding this winter. A lot of happy anglers up there this year.
  - Upgrades were completed to our software system to help in protecting against cybersecurity threats.
  - All divisions continue to plan for spring and summer operations, from surveys to hunts to closing out the fiscal year.
  - The Department is gearing up for field season and the legislative session.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 9: Committee Reports (Discussion Item)** 09:55:26 a.m. (00:53:29)

## **A. Finance**

The finance committee met with the Department on Dec. 14. The primary discussion was on the Game and Fish Bond Act and the potential to issue up to two-million-dollar of bonds for infrastructure needs. It was an educational opportunity that included presentations from outside agencies.

The next committee meeting is next Tuesday to discuss license fee structure and possible future adjustments to license fees. The last fee increase was in 2006.

## **B. Hunt Structure**

The Commission and Department remains two years ahead of big game rule proposals and adoptions. The committee does not have any active proposals, but they are currently in the information gathering stage. They hope to look into ways to improve resident opportunities for the two species that tend to be below others, antelope and elk.

Additionally the committee is gathering information about the Elk Private Land Use System – This is a deep informational dive into the program, at this time, they are not considering any proposal. This subcommittee is looking at how to get better information out to the public on the elk licensing system. The committee is looking at how we can create more easily digestible information that is more readily available to the public. The Commission continues to get a lot of questions about elk and the EPLUS system.

## **C. Customer Feedback**

A summary of the survey was compiled and submitted.

### **AGENDA ITEM NO. 10: Annual Adoption of the Open Meetings Act Resolution (Action Item)**

10:07:27 AM (01:05:31)

Attorney General representative Valerie Joe presented the Open Meetings Act Resolution to the State Game Commission.

**Motion:** Move to adopt the Open Meetings Act Resolution as presented.

**Motion by:** Vice-chairman Vesbach

**Seconded by:** Commissioner Cramer

**Approved:** Roll call vote – Approved Unanimously: Chairwoman Salazar Hickey, Vice-chairman Vesbach, Commissioner Bates, Commissioner Cramer, Commissioner Lopez, Commissioner Salazar-Henry and Commissioner Soules.

### **AGENDA ITEM NO. 11: Rule Making Hearing on Repealing and Replacing the Public Land User Stamp (Sikes Act) Rule, 19.34.6 NMAC (Action Item, C)** 10:18:20 AM (01:16:23)

#### **A. Rule Hearing Comments**

The Department presented final proposed changes to the Habitat Stamp Program rule (19.34.6 NMAC) based on public comment and coordination with federal partners from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the United States Forest Service (USFS). Proposed changes included a reauthorization of the rule for an additional ten years, creating a single Citizen Advisory Committees (CAC), increasing the stamp price from \$5 to \$10 and allowing for future increases to be adjusted according to the Consumer Price Index, requiring that at least 50% of the HSP funds over a five year period be spent on projects that benefit fish, and the removal of redundancies in the planning process.

#### **B. Discussion**

### **C. Action**

**Motion:** To repeal and replace 19.34.6 NMAC, as presented by the Department and allow the Department to make minor corrections to comply with filing this rule with State Records and Archives.

**Motion by:** Vice-chairman Vesbach

**Seconded by:** Commissioner Salazar-Henry

**Approved:** Roll call vote – Approve: Chairwoman Salazar Hickey, Vice-chairman Vesbach, Commissioner Bates, Commissioner Lopez, Commissioner Salazar-Henry and Commissioner Soules. Disapprove: Commissioner Cramer. Motion passes.

## **AGENDA ITEM NO. 12: Rule Making Hearing on Amending the Importation of Live non-Domestic Animals, Birds and Fish Rule, 19.35.7 (Action Item, C)** 10:53:57 AM (01:52:00)

### **A. Rule Hearing Comments**

The Department presented final rule changes to the Importation of Live Non-Domestic Animals, Birds and Fish Rule (19.35.7 NMAC). Final changes included:

- Removing the requirement for Game Commission review for any permit application for the importation of carnivores into New Mexico.
- Removing the requirement for fish hatchery renovation or depopulation upon a positive finding of Bacterial Kidney Disease.
- Clarifying language for whirling disease testing at different fish ages

### **B. Discussion**

### **C. Action**

**Motion:** To adopt the proposed changes to 19.35.7 NMAC, as presented by the Department, with an effective date of Feb. 9, 2021, and allow the Department to make minor corrections to comply with filing this rule with State Records and Archives.

**Motion by:** Vice-chairman Vesbach

**Seconded by:** Commissioner Salazar-Henry

**Failed:** Roll call vote – **Approve:** Vice-chairman Vesbach, Commissioner Salazar-Henry and Commissioner Soules. **Disapprove:** Chairwoman Salazar Hickey, Commissioner Bates, Commissioner Cramer and Commissioner Lopez.

**Motion:** To reconsider

**Motion by:** Commissioner Lopez

**Seconded by:** Commissioner Cramer

**Approved:** Roll call vote – Approved Unanimously: Chairwoman Salazar Hickey, Vice-chairman Vesbach, Commissioner Bates, Commissioner Cramer, Commissioner Lopez, Commissioner Salazar-Henry and Commissioner Soules.

**Motion:** To adopt the proposed changes to 19.35.7 NMAC, as presented by the Department, with an effective date of Feb. 9, 2021, and allow the Department to make minor corrections to comply with filing this rule with State Records and Archives.

**Motion by:** Vice-chairman Vesbach

**Seconded by:** Commissioner Salazar-Henry

**Approved:** Roll call vote – **Approve:** Chairwoman Salazar Hickey, Vice-chairman Vesbach, Commissioner Salazar-Henry and Commissioner Soules. **Disapprove:** Commissioner Bates, Commissioner Cramer. Abstain: Commissioner Lopez.

## **AGENDA ITEM NO. 13: Presentation of Department's Fiscal Year 2020 Statement and Audit**

**Report (Action Item)** 12:10:33 PM (03:08:37)

A financial audit of the Department for the fiscal year 2020 was conducted by Clifton Larson Allen LLP. The Department's Financial Statement received the highest possible opinion of "unmodified."

**Motion:** To approve the Department's audit report for the fiscal year 2020.

**Motion by:** Vice-chairman Vesbach

**Seconded by:** Commissioner Bates

**Approved:** Roll call vote – Approved Unanimously: Chairwoman Salazar Hickey, Vice-chairman Vesbach, Commissioner Bates, Commissioner Cramer, Commissioner Lopez, Commissioner Salazar-Henry and Commissioner Soules.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 14: Citizen Advisory Committee (Action Item)** 12:28:39 PM (03:26:43)

The Commission discussed and appointed members to a new Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) for the Habitat Stamp program from a list provided by the Department. The CAC is comprised of nine members, seven of which follow the district and representation requirements as defined in 17-1-2 NMSA 1978, and two members appointed at large.

**Motion:** To appoint Christina Mann (three-year term limit), James Cain (five-year term limit), Colleen Payne (five-year term limit), Ray Trejo (three-year term limit), Laura Naranjo (three-year team limit), Nick Streit (three-year team limit), Dave Heft (three-year team limit), Art Vollmer (five-year term limit) and John Pearch (five-year term limit) to the Citizen Advisory Committee.

**Motion by:** Vice-chairman Vesbach

**Seconded by:** Commissioner Soules

**Approved:** Roll call vote – Approved Unanimously: Chairwoman Salazar Hickey, vice-chairman Vesbach, Commissioner Bates, Commissioner Cramer, Commissioner Lopez, Commissioner Salazar-Henry and Commissioner Soules.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 15: General Public Comments** 12:59:37 PM (03:57:40)

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 16: Future Meeting Dates and Locations (Discussion Item)** 01:06:17 PM (04:04:20)

The State Game Commission discussed and established the following meeting schedule for the 2021 calendar year and January of 2022.

- Apr. 2, 2021 (Friday) – Virtual
- May 21, 2021 (Friday) – Virtual
- Aug. 12, 2021 (Thursday) – Virtual
- Oct. 15, 2021 (Friday) – TBD
- November/December – TBD
- January 14, 2022 (Friday) - TBD

These dates were selected to ensure timely filing and publication pursuant to the State Rules Act.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 6: Closed Executive Session** 01:11:11 PM (04:09:14)

**Motion:** Motion: The State Game Commission voted to adjourn into Executive Session closed to the public; pursuant to 10-15-1(H)(2) NMSA 1978, to discuss limited personnel matters relating to complaints and discipline; pursuant to Section 10-15-1(H)(8) NMSA 1978, to discuss property acquisition; and pursuant to Section 10-15-1(H)(7) NMSA 1978, to discuss matters subject to attorney-client privilege relating to threatened or pending litigation.

**Motion by:** Commissioner Salazar-Henry

**Seconded by:** Vice-chairman Vesbach

**Approved:** Roll call vote – Approved Unanimously: Chairwoman Salazar Hickey, Vice-chairman Vesbach, Commissioner Bates, Commissioner Cramer, Commissioner Lopez, Commissioner Salazar-Henry and Commissioner Soules.

**Return from Executive Session** 01:13:53 PM (04:11:57)

**Motion:** Move to allow the Department to procure conservation easements along the Rio Abajo property in Valencia county.

**Motion by:** Commissioner Salazar-Henry

**Seconded by:** Commissioner Bates

**Approved:** Roll call vote – Approved Unanimously: Chairwoman Salazar Hickey, Vice-chairman Vesbach, Commissioner Bates, Commissioner Cramer, Commissioner Lopez, Commissioner Salazar-Henry and Commissioner Soules.

**Motion:** Move to authorize the Department to negotiate the purchase of property in Catron county and authorize the Chairwoman to sign documents necessary to consummate that purchase.

**Motion by:** Commissioner Bates

**Seconded by:** Commissioner Salazar-Henry

**Approved:** Roll call vote – Approved Unanimously: Chairwoman Salazar Hickey, Vice-chairman Vesbach, Commissioner Bates, Commissioner Cramer, Commissioner Lopez, Commissioner Salazar-Henry and Commissioner Soules.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 16: Adjourn (Action Item)** 01:17:13 PM (04:15:16)

**Motion:** Move to adjourn.

**Motion by:** Commissioner Cramer

**Seconded by:** Commissioner Vesbach

**Approved:** Roll call vote – Approved Unanimously: Chairwoman Salazar Hickey, Vice-chairwoman Salazar-Henry, Commissioner Bates, Commissioner Cramer, Commissioner Lopez, Commissioner Soules and Commissioner Vesbach.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES  
NEW MEXICO STATE GAME COMMISSION

January 15, 2021

VIRTUAL MEETING LOCATION  
<http://www.wildlife.state.nm.us/commission/webcast/>

**Michael B. Sloane** Digitally signed by Michael B. Sloane  
Date: 2021.05.18 16:13:12 -06'00'

---

Michael B. Sloane

---

Date

*Sharon Salazar Hickey*

---

05/18/2021

---

Sharon Salazar Hickey, Chair

---

Date

New Mexico State Game Commission