

MEETING MINUTES
NEW MEXICO STATE GAME COMMISSION

Hotel Encanto San Rafael Ballroom

705 S. Telshor Blvd.

Las Cruces, NM 88011

Thursday March 01, 2018

9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

A P P E A R A N C E S

Chairman Paul Kienzle

Vice Chairman Bill Montoya

Game Commissioner Thomas Salopek

Game Commissioner Craig Peterson

Game Commissioner Ralph Ramos

Game Commissioner Bob Ricklefs

Game Commissioner Elizabeth Ryan

A B S E N T

None

[Audio in progress-background talk]

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: Good morning.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Roll call.

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: Commissioner Peterson.

COMMISSIONER PETERSON: Here.

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: Commissioner Ramos.

COMMISSIONER RAMOS: Director, Chairman, I just want to thank people here and welcome them for coming out today to our Doña Ana County, Las Cruces, New Mexico. We appreciate having everybody here today and Director, Chairman, I'm present today.

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: Thank you. Commissioner Ryan.

COMMISSIONER RYAN: Here.

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: Commissioner Ricklefs.

COMMISSIONER RICKLEFS: Here.

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: Commissioner Salopek.

COMMISSIONER SALOPEK: Present.

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: Vice Chairman Montoya.

VICE CHAIRMAN MONTOYA: Here.

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: Chairman Kienzle.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Here.

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: Chairman Kienzle, I believe we have a quorum.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: All right. You want to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance, Ralph?

COMMISSIONER RAMOS: Yes, sir.

COMMISSION AND ATTENDEES: I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Can I get a motion to approve the agenda?

COMMISSIONER SALOPEK: So moved.

COMMISSIONER RYAN: Second.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: All in favor?

COMMISSIONERS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Ayes have it. Introduction of guests. You can go first.

GUEST SPEAKER: Good morning Commissioners, Director. My name is Donald Jaramillo. I'm the Deputy Director of the Department of Game and Fish.

GUEST SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, Commissioners my name's Jacob Payne. I'm General Counsel of Game and Fish.

GUEST SPEAKER: Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, members of the public. My name is Jim Comins and I am Assistant Director of (indiscernible) Division Department of Game and Fish.

GUEST SPEAKER: Good morning Mr. Chairman, Commissioners. My name is Paul Varela. I'm the Chief of (Indiscernible).

GUEST SPEAKER: Good morning Mr. Chairman, Commissioners. My name is Jessica Fisher. I'm the Shooting Program Coordinator for the Department of Game and Fish.

GUEST SPEAKER: Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, Director Sandoval, Craig Sanchez, Assistant Chief of Education, Game and Fish.

GUEST SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, the audience. My name is Chris Chadwick, Assistant Director, (indiscernible).

GUEST SPEAKER: Good morning Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, members of the public. I'm Martin Perea. I work in the Information and Education Division. I'm the videographer.

GUEST SPEAKER: Good morning everyone. I'm Dan Williams and I work for Game and Fish.

GUEST SPEAKER: Good morning. I'm Sandra DuCharme. I'm Executive Assistant to the Director.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: We wouldn't be here without you. Thank you.

GUEST SPEAKER: Curtis (Indiscernible), Arizona Water Conservation District

GUEST SPEAKER: Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, members of the public. Stewart Liley, Chief of Wildlife, Game and Fish.

GUEST SPEAKER: (Indiscernible).

GUEST SPEAKER: Good morning Chairman, Commissioners. Mike (Indiscernible), Captain of (Indiscernible).

GUEST SPEAKER: Good morning. I'm Robert Griego, Colonel of fields operations.

GUEST SPEAKER: (Inaudible).

GUEST SPEAKER: Good morning. I'm Herb Atkinson from Roswell representing Safari Club International.

GUEST SPEAKER: Good morning Chairman, Commissioners and Director. My name Colleen Payne. I'm with the (Indiscernible) Foundation and (Indiscernible) Regional Director.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Big winner at the banquet.

COMMISSIONER RYAN: That's right.

GUEST SPEAKER: Good morning Mr. Chairman, Commissioners. I'm Brandon with Albuquerque and I'm here representing Back Country Hunters and Fishing [Phonetic].

GUEST SPEAKER: I'm Brian Bartley [Phonetic] and I'm President of the New Mexico Wild Sheep Foundation.

GUEST SPEAKER: Brent Holmes [Phonetic], I'm (Indiscernible).

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Did you drive here yesterday by any chance?

GUEST SPEAKER: No.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: I met some of your fellow Oregonians yesterday in the elevator and they said they drove through a blizzard on the border between New Mexico and Arizona.

GUEST SPEAKER: (Indiscernible).

[Laughter]

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: That's true. They said though last year it was 90 when they visited Las Cruces. This year it was about freezing, so.

GUEST SPEAKER: Good morning Chairman. (Indiscernible) Biologist, New Mexico Game and Fish.

GUEST SPEAKER: Good morning Chairman and members of the Commission. I'm (Indiscernible). I'm Big Game Program Manager for Department of Game and Fish.

GUEST SPEAKER: Good morning Commissioners, (Indiscernible).

GUEST SPEAKER: I'm Britney (Indiscernible-coughing) Communications Director.

GUEST SPEAKER: Good morning you all. My name is (Indiscernible) here in Las Cruces.

GUEST SPEAKER: Good morning Commissioners. Lance (Indiscernible) with (Indiscernible).

GUEST SPEAKER: Good morning. I'm Mike (Indiscernible).

GUEST SPEAKER: Good morning. (Indiscernible).

GUEST SPEAKER: Hello everybody. My name is Jim Bates [Phonetic]. I am a Las Cruces resident, Co- Chairman of the Southwest Consolidated Sportsmen and Coalition of Sportsmen Organization in town here and I apologize as more of our members have not shown up yet but this is (Indiscernible).

[Laughter]

GUEST SPEAKER: Good morning everyone. Randy Davis, the CS Ranch (Indiscernible) New Mexico.

GUEST SPEAKER: Good morning. Mike Sloane, Chief of (Indiscernible).

GUEST SPEAKER: Taylor (Indiscernible), Taos Fly Shop and the Reel Life Fly Shop in Santa Fe.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: I think we got everybody. Welcome. Good morning. Thank you for coming. Agenda Item Number 6, Approval of Minutes January 11, 2018, regular meeting. Can I get a motion to approve the minutes?

VICE CHAIRMAN MONTOYA: So moved Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER RAMOS: Second.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: All in favor?

COMMISSIONERS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Ayes have it. Agenda Item Number 7, Director's Initiation of Biennial Review of State Listed and Threatened or Endangered Species 17-2-4 NMSA 1978. Your name is not John.

PRESENTER: Mr. Chairman, that is correct. My name is not John but John is actually out in the field doing work for some of our state's tenuous feces [Phonetic] so I said I would take this for him.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Real work.

PRESENTER: That's right.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: All right.

STEWART LILEY: So every biennial by statute we have to review the species listed under the state, the Threatened Endangered Species list. Currently we have 56 listed as endangered and 62

species as threatened. Basically, all we do is review those to see if they should be uplifted from threatened to endangered or down listed from endangered to threatened. Not putting any species on the list or removing any species on the list. That's a different process. So this is just looking to see if they're in the appropriate category of threatened and or endangered. As directed by statute, we need the Commission to open up this review process. It would start a 90-day comment period. You'll see the dates there. We're looking for March 15th through June 13th. We'll come back to the Commission in August to give you updates on the public comments plus the status updates of every species and any recommendations of up listing or down listing and then after that we would have a 14-day comment period based upon our recommendations to the Commission in August and then a final adoption of that in the October meeting is the way that we're planning it. So with that I would take any questions and ask that the Commission open the process for the Biennial Review.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: All right. Can you go back to that? Which mammals are threatened? If you recall?

STEWART LILEY: There's going to be some chipmunk species that are going to be like a Sakura Mountain Chipmunk and Penasco Least Chipmunk, some of the other mammals. So we also take into account any federal listing sometimes and follow suit on what the federal status of that species is. So if it was a federal species that was endangered then down listed to threatened, we would follow suit on that as well.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: So threatened, which species of the six mammals, which ones are endangered? Do you recall the names of those?

STEWART VLILEY: I'm looking at the list real quick. Sorry.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: So filam [Phonetic] and genis [Phonetic], like I want the whole Latin...

STEWART LILEY: So endangered again is some like Jumping Mouse Metevals, Arizona Metevals. Gray Wolf is endangered not at the sub specific level but Canis lupus is at the species level. Arizona Shrew as endangered and then threatened again, some of the bat species are threatened. White-side Jackrabbit which is federally listed as well. So again, it's following suit of some federal listings as well. Some of them is just state.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Are there any of these different categories, anything off the top of your head that might be added to either of these two categories threatened or endangered?

STEWART LILEY: So again, the actual number will not change during this Biennial Review Process. We won't put a specie on the list or take it off. It could just be moving it from endangered to threatened or threatened to endangered. As of right now the biologists are working through that. If there's any new science that's been collected. I don't know of any that where we've recommended for a down listing or an up listing but during the last review period we didn't up list or down list any. We kept status of the same on those species.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Nature moves slowly. Okay. Any questions or comments?

COMMISSIONER RYAN: So your request is just to initiate the review?

STEWART LILEY: Commissioner Ryan, that is correct.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Can I get a motion to that affect, please?

COMMISSIONER RYAN: Move to approve the initiation of the 2018 Biennial Review Process of State Listed and Threatened or Endangered Species.

VICE CHAIRMAN MONTTOYA: Second.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: All in favor?

COMMISSIONERS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Ayes have it. Go forth.

STEWART LILEY: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Agenda Item Number 8, Update on Governor's Special Auction Banquet results.

COMMISSIONER RYAN: He's not Lance.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: He's not Lance.

CRAIG SANCHEZ: Mr. Chairman that is shuffling correct.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Shuffling the deck on me today.

CRAIG SANCHEZ: I'm filling in for Mr. Cherry today. He couldn't be here. Mr. Chairman, members of the Commission, I'm here to present to you today an update on the recent Governor's Special Hunt Auction Banquet and also the Outdoor Adventure Show that ran concurrently recently. Begin with the Annual Mexico Outdoor Adventure Hunting and Fishing Show and I'm pleased to report the event was again very successful. This year more than 5500 people attended the three-day event which was February 16th through February the 18th at the Manual Lujan Building on the fairgrounds Expo, New Mexico. Admission to the show was again free to all licensed anglers and hunters and trappers. Youth under the age of 18 were also free and all other people had to pay \$3.00 for entrance to the event. Attendees were treated to countless exhibits to include industry, hunting industry, fishing industry, outdoor recreation,

nonprofit organizations. What was new to the event this year was the Cabela's sponsored skills based learning event room. It featured demonstrations every 30 minutes. We had our archery range, our pellet gun trailer, our fishing skills casting and ROHV simulator with that event. Next year's event is tentatively scheduled for February 15th through the 17th. In conjunction with the outdoor show we ran the Annual Governor's Special Hunt Auction Banquet which many of you attended. It was held February 17th in the Creative Art Center at Expo, New Mexico on the State Fairgrounds across the street from the Outdoor Adventure Show. Our partner organization was Dallas Safari Club New Mexico and there was more than 350 attendees at the event. The keynote speaker was Matt Dunphy [Phonetic] who delivered a powerful message on the importance of national recruitment retention and reactivation. Also known as R3 Efforts and encouraged everyone to do their part for the future of conservation and to take someone hunting who does not look like you was the message he portrayed. The Governor's Tags and Skulls auctioned off by the Department set record numbers and generated more than \$207,000 for New Mexico valuable wildlife resources. During the auction and banquet the Department gave out three distinguished awards recognizing people for their excellence in wildlife conservation. Our first award was given out to Mr. Warner Glenn who received the Governor's Conservationist Lifetime Achievement Award and for his supporting role assisting the Department with the successful reintroduction of Desert Bighorn Sheep in New Mexico. He's also known for his leadership in the conservation of jaguar. The next award was given to Colleen Payne with the Mule Deer Foundation. She received the Commissioner's Wildlife Conservation Partnership Award for her efforts to establish the first discovering the outdoors in a (Indiscernible) sportsmanship. Also known as the Doe's Program. It's a cutting edge women's hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation retention reactivation R3 Program. Lastly, our own Kevin Holliday

received the Conservation and – or I'm sorry, the Director's Professional of the Year Award. Kevin is the Departments Conservation Aquatic Education Program Manager. He won this award for exemplifying the Department's standards for excellence in wildlife conservation, team work and customer service. In closing, I would like to thank all the countless staff that committed a lot of time hours and to make this event successful and with that, I'll stand for any questions.

COMMISSIONER RYAN: I just want to compliment the Department and all of the employees that worked so hard to put this banquet together. It's a year-long process and it was extremely successful. Every year you top the year before if it's possible and you had a very successful banquet and thank you for all of your hard work. It was a blast too and I'm proud to have attended and enjoyed it so much. Thank you.

VICE CHAIRMAN MONTOYA: One question Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Yes, sir.

VICE CHAIRMAN MONTOYA: I've already heard this before but you might let the public know that \$207,000 as compared to last year was about –how much more than last year?

CRAIG SANCHEZ: Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Montoya, I don't have the exact figure but all the licenses were significantly higher at this year's auction.

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: So Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Montoya if I may? We doubled the revenue from the year before so it was quite a successful event.

VICE CHAIRMAN MONTOYA: And I think that \$207,000 is a net figure. Correct?

CRAIG SANCHEZ: Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Montoya that is correct.

VICE CHAIRMAN MONTTOYA: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER RYAN: I think it's great for the public to know too where that money actually goes and all the great things that that money is actually going to do for our state. So get the info out there.

CRAIG SANCHEZ: Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Ryan we would be happy to do that.

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: And Mr. Chairman I just would add to that. The Department actually uses that money and matches it to the Pittman Robertson Funding. So we're looking at \$800,000 worth of projects going out there on the ground. So for every one dollar that was raised we get three more dollars from the Federal Pittman Robertson Fund.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: That's awesome.

COMMISSIONER RAMOS: Mr. Chairman, also I would like to add that in previous years and Director, please correct me if I'm wrong but we also have currently in place two premium state-wide deer and elk hunts that used to be part of this auction which are now available to the general public to have an opportunity to draw one of these awesome opportunities to hunt in New Mexico.

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: So Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Ramos, those were additional opportunities beyond the Governor's Tags. So you all had the foresight to put those in place but those were not a part of the bundle that's allowed by statute for the Governor Tags. So it's above and beyond.

COMMISSIONER RAMOS: Okay, thank you and I think my point that I want to make on that is that also the general public, not only the lucrative people that bid on these type of tags has an

opportunity to go out and actually hunt with the same type of requirements that are you know, used for these auction tags as well but that evening was a great success. I want to thank all behind the scenes people who put it all together, not only the banquet but also the whole you know, the exhibit hall and everything. A lot of logistical nightmare but great job with working with all the vendors that came out for the show.

CRAIG SANCHEZ: Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Ramos, we appreciate that.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Any other questions or comments? It was a great job. Great event. I look forward to the next one. Nither one of you are Lance. Agenda Item Number 9, Update on Development of Shooting Ranges in New Mexico.

CRAIG SANCHEZ: Mr. Chairman, members of the Commission, again I'm filling in for Lance Cherry. Jessica Fisher, our Shooting Sports Coordinator is here to assist me with this presentation. I come before you today to present to you an update on the Department's status on shooting range development in New Mexico and to share some of the strongest paths to success that we've learned for the future. The donation or purchase of private land has proven to be by far the most efficient path for the Department to develop ranges in New Mexico. Through ownership the Department is able to use the value and expenses incurred through the transfer as matched to access federal grant dollars. Additionally, we have greater control to expedite compliance and avoid potential Department barriers if we own the property ourselves. The Steven M Bush Memorial Shooting Range in Clayton is now our model for how this path can lead to success. Transfer of the property was completed in December of 2017 and is already in the final stages of compliance work. The donated property is eligible for those critical grant dollars. In addition, the donation of the property to the addition – in addition to the donation of the property, the land donor has also offered a significant cash donation to enhance the project.

That cash donation can also be used leverage against federal dollars to even bring more money to the project. Plans for the range are complete and we are now working in putting the project out for bids in anticipation of construction starting at the beginning of the next fiscal year.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Is that a manned range or is that just sort of like the one we've got on line already?

CRAIG SANCHEZ: Mr. Chairman, currently it is unmanned. However, we're working at looking at partnerships through different organizations that may be interested in having some sort of manerage [Phonetic] type scenario.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Great.

CRAIG SANCHEZ: The second successful path is through community partnerships. The Department has been seeking out city or county governments with land who support development of a new range. While this path may not be as expeditious, the advantages of the Departments ability to leverage local funds is matched for grant funds are the long-term and the long-term operation of maintenance of the range make this truly appealing. Already the Department has two strong partners with projects in progress on this front. Clovis was the first to move forward with development of a new shooting complex to be located at their city park. The City of Clovis will be signing the MOU with the Department at their next city council meeting. Additionally, they have already been funding and working on compliance for the project. We anticipate construction starting sometime in the fall. The second committed partner is Grant County.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Is this, this range is just shotgun?

CRAIG SANCHEZ: Mr. Chairman, it has shotgun components. What are we –

JESSICA FISHER: Mr. Chairman, additionally there's an archery range. It's that yellow spot there.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Right. Great.

COMMISSIONER: The Lone Ranger Rifle [Phonetic].

JESSICA FISHER: Correct.

CRAIG SANCHEZ: Mr. Chairman, when you look at that schematic, you know as we start this process, we feel that in the future we can actually have a second phase down the road and maybe develop some other type of shooting bays in addition to what you see here. So consider that like a phase one type of project.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Got to start somewhere.

CRAIG SANCHEZ: The second committed partner is Grant County. In fact, on Monday the Department was notified that the county manager has approved funds to help get the project started. As for future projects, Luna County and Eddy County have both reached out to the Department with hopes of using municipality owned lands for constructing new shooting ranges and just yesterday, the most recent hopeful partner that's come to the table is Guadalupe County has reached out to us and has expressed a high interest in developing a shooting range in their county. So we're really looking forward to meeting with them and seeing what we can develop with that county. The third successful path the Department has identified is range enhancements with the purpose of creating public access to private ranges. Last year the Department completed a comprehensive inventory of all public and private ranges in New Mexico and posted them on the Department's Website. It was an interactive map and was also put up on our mobile app. One thing that stood out is significant numbers of ranges dispersed across the state with untapped

opportunities that could be opened through partnerships with privately held ranges to promote public access. The Department has reached out to the Albuquerque Trap Club to expand public access in exchange for improving opportunities for hunter education and recreational shooting. The project at the Trap Club will add mobile sporting clays and storage to provide wing shooting training opportunities in exchange for significant public access in New Mexico's largest urban population. The Department is also working with the Butterfield Shooting Range in Las Cruces to expand shooting opportunities and increase equipment storage. Finally, I wish to report the Cibola County Shooting Range is back on track with federal, state and local agencies once again working together. The new range near Mulan is in the final stages of the RNPP which will allow the transfer of the property from the BLM to Cibola County. We anticipate mitigation work to be completed in the next few months and the transfer of the property to occur in early fall. We are all eager to move this project forward and get the range built and open to the public. In closing, the Department has found a number of successful paths to developing shooting ranges and look forward to future ground-breaking ceremonies where we can put a gold shovel in each Commissioner's hand and turn over some keys. So with that, I will stand for any questions.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Well you've exceeded my expectations. So good job thinking outside the box. There are private ranges if we can cooperate with people to open those up that's great and it looks like you've got a few of these moving forward on a number of fronts. So maybe we'll get a couple more of these open in 2018. So that's great news. I think it's a—you've got a pretty good mix. You've got archery, shotgun, pistol, rifle, so I think you've got a little bit of something for everyone in a number of communities and that's great. Really great.

COMMISSIONER RYAN: I know there is some interest in some planning by community members for a shooting range in Santa Fe. I was just wondering if you have any update on it. I know it was very preliminary last year.

CRAIG SANCHEZ: Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Ryan, in Santa Fe we have vacated the RMPP Application with the BLM due to the long extensive process and we have really looking, reached out to our supporters in the community and we are currently actively looking for some property that we can acquire to pursue it because Santa Fe is still an important place for us to construct a shooting range. So that is where we are at on that front.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: I know that RMPP Property was sort of a round peg in a square hole a little bit so if there's a better location or a different location that we can do more easily without public rank or I'm in favor of that. So Santa Fe is a big county. There ought to be somewhere that we can put a range that will work. So keep at it. I know in that particular county it's probably not an easy process but keep working on it.

COMMISSIONER RAMOS: Mr. Chairman, Craig Grant County as well as Luna, when are those plans going to be drafted? Are they in place or what's the –

CRAIG SANCHEZ: Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Ramos, Grant County has really come on as really wanting to do this. Just within the last few days their communication with Jessica has been daily almost. Their county manager has committed the money to get the compliance work done, the 25% needed for the match dollars. I anticipate that that is going to actually going to move faster than maybe the Luna County because they've already got some stuff in place and their willing to start spending money.

COMMISSIONER RAMOS: Thank you. Thanks for keeping me in the loop on that.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: It's always nice to hear that people are cooperating whether it's private or public. That's good news and I still believe these shooting ranges are good for the Department, good for the Commission, good for the state. I think they give people a place to go to shoot legally, safely and I hope some or all of them become destination spots over time. So I'm happy with the progress. Yes, sir?

COMMISSIONER RICKLEFS: Just a question. Is the Clayton Range completed as it's shown in your slide?

CRAIG SANCHEZ: Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Ricklefs, it's not completed. The compliance work is nearing completion. Once the compliance work is done then we can go out to bid and start the construction process. What we learned with the (Indiscernible), this range, was that the construction piece goes pretty quick. So we're getting close to that part. So to answer your question, no. It is not constructed yet.

COMMISSIONER RICKLEFS: And the neighbors are going along with it right now?

CRAIG SANCHEZ: Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Ricklefs, we have a very few concerned citizens that we've been communicating with and we'll continue to communicate with. The majority of the committee is very supportive of the project.

COMMISSIONER RICKLEFS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: That's good news. Any other questions or comments?

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: Mr. Chairman, if I may? I would just like to reach out to the audience. This Commission has supported and rightfully so, the passage of the modernization of the Pittman Robertson Act which is now moving through the federal system. I would strongly

encourage members of this community or sportsmen to reach out to your federal congressional membership and support that Modernization Act. What it has in there is actually an allowance for more use of Pittman Robertson to go to the development of shooting ranges and recreational shooting programs. 77% of the money that comes into Pittman Robertson now is made by recreational shooters and so it's an extremely important component. I'm very proud of being a part of the Commission that has moved that forward so aggressively and this would be a wonderful addition to the ability of the Department to actually get things on more done quickly throughout the State of New Mexico. So if there's an opportunity and an interest by those folks sitting out in the audience a support of the Modernization Act would be huge for the Department and for actually any of the states.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: I agree. Any other questions or comments? Great job. If we don't hear from you next meeting, we'll hear from you the one after. Thank you.

CRAIG SANCHEZ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: First correctly identified people, Donald Jaramillo and Paul Varela.

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: So Mr. Chairman, just a personal note. Lance is down and out for health reasons. He soldiered through the event but now he's literally on his back taking some time to get better. So I appreciate all the work that Lance has done and I apologize that he's not here to join us today.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: He needs a wing man.

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: He does.

SPEAKER: We're talking budgets though.

[Laughter]

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Okay. Understood. Mr. Varela.

PAUL VARELA: Mr. Chairman, Agenda Item Number 10 is related to the 2018 Legislative Session. There are two bills currently awaiting action by the governor that are currently affecting the Department. The first is House Bill 2 which is related to our operating budget for 2019 and the other bill is House Bill 306 which is related to capital outlay. House Bill 2, currently the appropriation sits at 39.3 million. This is a decrease of \$726,000 from our FY18 appropriation. The majority of that decrease is the elimination of a transfer from the Trail Safety Fund that we have had to transfer to (Indiscernible) in the previous fiscal years. The next, so Conservation Services was reduced \$407,000. As I just stated, most of that was from the elimination of the transfer from the Trail Safety Fund and they added back in \$93,000. Program support decreased in the other costs category \$307,000 and for Wildlife Depredation and Nuisance Abatement it decreased \$11,000 from other cost categories. Other cost is basically supplies, computers, things like that. The House Bill 2 appropriation does include a transfer to NMR for \$500,000 from the Game Protection Fund. This is a transfer that we have been making in the last previous fiscal years and as I stated, it does not include the transfer from the Trail Safety Fund. Currently, the Trail Safety Fund sits about a little over \$100,000 so we are not able to make that transfer this year. House Bill 2 also includes special appropriations. There are three appropriations for \$500,000 each. The first is related to the Mexican Wolf population and study on the elk population within the Wolf Recovery Area. The second is \$500,000 for the Concrete Flood Irrigation System at Bernardo and the third is \$500,000 for additional boats and OHV's for the Law Enforcement Program. House Bill 306 is the Capital Outlay Appropriation Bill. Currently, we have an appropriation of 12.4 million from various funds throughout the Department. 5.9

million is related to Wildlife Habitat Restoration and Management Projects. 2 million is for Dam Safety Rules Compliance. 4 million is for hatchery renovations and \$500,000 will be appropriated for shooting ranges. One thing to note is the capital appropriations are good for four fiscal years and with that I will stand for any comments or questions.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Dam safety compliance.

COMMISSIONER: I knew you would like that.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: It just drives me bananas. Any questions or comments? Tell me about the wolf appropriation. Who brought that up?

[Laughter]

COMMISSIONER RYAN: Hi, Stewart.

STEWART LILEY: Mr. Chairman, yes, I'll bring that too. So as you know, the Wolf Recovery Plan was finalized in November. A component of that and the component of the 10j Rules for Wolf states that the state departments must determine unacceptable impacts to ungulate populations in order to make management recommendations for wolves. That has to go through the Office of Bureau Management, the federal and it has to show that we have the scientific data to support it. So that special appropriation was to start a large study in the Gila on elk populations and looking at elk survival in relationship not just to wolves but other predators and to see if we have before the population grows large with the wolves, if we have an unacceptable impact we can petition for –

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Is this \$500,000 over four years?

PAUL VARELA: Yes.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: So are going to hire a dedicated person?

STEWART LILEY: Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, so the \$500,000 of the state money, we'll match that to (Indiscernible) to make that two million dollars and so we will do it across both Arizona and New Mexico. Arizona is planning the same study so we can do it at a combined study across. We will hire PhD Students. We'll hire technicians. We're planning on capturing approximately 400 elk across the two states. 400 to 500 elk across the two states. Put GPS collars on it and monitor survival. This will probably be a long-term project. The initial startup cost is getting animals caught and collared so that's what the big –

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Commissioner Ramos, this should make you happy.

COMMISSIONER RAMOS: Absolutely.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Your out, who's eating what?

COMMISSIONER RAMOS: That's right. Data drives need and need drives change. Hopefully, when we get our findings which I could probably predict but I won't go there and then hopefully, we will have a say on what we can do with the Wolf Recovery Plan.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: So this money or this particular study that will be done, that's controlled by the state? By us? I mean we'll cooperate with people but—

STEWART LILEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman. That is correct. It will be led by the state and with our cooperators.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Did the feds detail somebody to work in that study or what's their role on that?

STEWART LILEY: So Mr. Chairman, the biggest role of the feds is to provide us data fromn the wolf population. The wolves, they try to collar about every, an alpha out of every pack and so we'll ask the feds for all that data to help us –

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: So we're doing the ungulate part of it. They're doing the wolf part of it.

STEWART LILEY: Mr. Chairman, that is correct.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Okay. Understood. All right. You're going to get your numbers and see if you're right.

COMMISSIONER RAMOS: You bet.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Any other questions or comments? Let me ask about Dam Safety Compliance. Is that to maintain dams? Is it that same number I see frequently that just makes me, I grit my teeth?

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: So Mr. Chairman, no. It's not necessarily to maintain. It's to get our dams into compliance with the state engineer regulations that were passed. I think now ten years ago. We still have some compliance issues for dams. You all own 11 dams across the state and so this money goes to getting into compliance with those standards.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: I'm super enthusiastic about that. Getting into compliance with the standards I'm not super enthusiastic about, maintaining some of these but okay.

COMMISSIONER RICKLEFS: Along those lines, what is the future plan for Eagle Nest? That's the major one that I understand.

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: So Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Ricklefs, we are looking at what the potential renovation of Eagle Nest will be. I know we've started those initial conversations. There is work that has to be done and as we have and some initial conversations that will be a big lift. It's a bigger lift than what you're seeing on the screen for the other dams but we'll have to figure out what that is but that's in the very near future. We're working to make those assessments and figure out what that will cost for the Department.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: I would also suggest that maybe Eagle Nest is a location to put one of our area offices if we're going to be doing the work. Maybe it's a place we want to look at for an area office. It may be off the beaten path but at least take a look at it because if the work is going to be done and improvements there we might be able to piggyback off of that.

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: Will do Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Okay. Any other questions or comments? Thank you. Any other legislative updates?

PAUL VARELA: Mr. Chairman, no.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: It's pretty quiet this year. So I don't know what that means. Usually quiet is not good but I'm not going to look a gift horse in the mouth. Agenda Item Number 11, Initial Discussion for Potential Rule Changes on the Turkey Rule 19.31.16 NMAC for the 2019-2023 Hunting Seasons.

STEWART LILEY: Mr. Chairman, members of the Commission, as we discussed at the last meeting, this is the year of rule changes for all of our big game species including turkey and water fowl, the non-two big game species. This is the initiation so it's the initial discussion on some proposed changes we might have. We'll come back to it at the next meeting with further

refined changes and then a third meeting to finalize those. So really, a little bit of background data just on harvest. I'm not expecting you to read the slide or table but I just want to point out we average harvest about 2600 birds across the state in the spring and about 550 birds in the fall harvest. So the spring harvest is the predominant harvest of turkeys which is common across the United States with a little bit of added fall harvest. A little bit of the biology of the species. Really those females start breeding right about the first week of April. Peak on [Phonetic] set of incubation so when their laying the eggs and on the nest is about May 10th to 25th which also coincides with gobbling season. So that's where those birds really get at very vocal, the males. It really coincides with incubation of the nest and also right before breeding. Harvest mortality can be additive to turkeys and male harvest can lead to potential declines as long as you keep harvest below 30% which we think we've been doing and we have no recommended changes on our two-bag limit or open counter units because of the way we structure our seasons we protect that breeding segment and really what this graph is. It's a little tough to read but it shows where the peaks of gobbling is for males and so this is for Merriam's Turkeys. You have that big first peak and right after the breeding and then another peak during the incubation. So in this segment right here in that lighter color shade of gray is when hens are on the nest, less susceptible to harvest and disturbance. So what we've tried to do is structure that season as you'll see about mid-April to about the end of May as really when the peak gobbling is but also ensures that females are breed, raised poults and a sustainable population for the future. Real briefly, just a graphic of the different sub species of turkeys within the state. The yellowish-orange is our Merriam Species. Green is probably hybridization or a potential hybridization of Rio Grande's and Merriam's. The pink or excuse me, the purple is where Rio Grande's are. You'll see across of course the Rio Grande, Pecos but also some of the tributaries up by Tutencari and then finally, the Gould's

Turkey which is just in the boot hill. There is hybridization up of domestics and probably Rio's in the Farmington Aztec Area. That's just some escaped birds that caused some hybridization back in the time but for the majority of the state, we are Merriams and a destination for a lot of people across the country to go harvest the Merriam Birds, especially in the spring. Our proposals at this time really are just to adjust the season dates like we do with everyone so we have some Saturday starts. We have to do that to account for that and then we're considering opening some fall units for open for hunting such as 51-52. Currently, they're closed for hunting. We don't think it will have an impact on the population proposing open it. And then also some areas for spring turkey like bluebird, mesa w maham and the hamus small w may but we've done some work and partner shipped with Turkey Federation for some habitat restorations, specifically for roost trees that we think has helped and open that up for season and then also GMU 33 in the southeast to open up to spring over-the-counter turkey season. So with that, I will take any questions.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: When do we see this again?

STEWART LILEY: Mr. Chairman, I believe you will see this at the next meeting.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: And that will be a final?

STEWART LILEY: It'll be the second time and then a final will be I believe in June for this rule.

COMMISSIONER RAMOS: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Yes, sir.

COMMISSIONER RAMOS: I do have a question. I know that Stewart, I was looking at some possible—I know we have the Youth Hunt going on right now. I'd like to see if we could incorporate possible a youth or archery and youth combination or archery only prior to the shot gunning season. You know, maybe a first, second, third hunt type of seasons. You know, in that equation. I don't know if that's possible and I don't know, I don't know what the trend is throughout the Western United States with non-residents and I know currently we have non-residents who can harvest two birds as well and I know that might be legislative or not but I'd like to see where non-residents harvest one bird versus two.

STEWART LILEY: Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Ramos, so again, we structured our hunts to really avoid to make a sustainable population. Our harvest hasn't really changed much in the last ten years. We're averaging about 2500 birds in the spring which we think is sustainable. It's been over-the-counter to residents and non-residents but we haven't really seen much of a fluctuation in that ten years. If you go back to this original graphic here you'll see it stays fairly consistent on that harvest across time and so from a biological speaking, we don't really see that. A limitation would do anything from the population standpoint on either increasing birds or decreasing birds. We think we're well below that 30% threshold on harvest so we can sustain populations. As far as other seasons, yeah. We could definitely look into that and then also, you know the biggest thing is probably staying to where we don't open before approximately, April 10th because that's when the peak of the breeding is and we don't want to disrupt that so we have poults going into the next future from a biological standpoint.

COMMISSIONER RAMOS: Okay and then your goal is to keep the harvest rate below 30%?

STEWART LILEY: 30% of the population correct and we're well below that we think.

Especially a small fall harvest. You know, 500 birds in the fall is less than, way less than even

natural predation or natural mortality would be. So harvest mortality is a very minor component compared to total mortality in birds.

COMMISSIONER RAMOS: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Brandon Winn.

BRANDON WINN: (Inaudible).

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Oh, you're the next one. I'm sorry. Bighorn. Nothing to say about turkeys?

BRANDON WINN: No.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Okay. Very good. Any other questions, comments? We'll see you next month. Don't go anywhere. Agenda Item Number 12, Initial Discussion for Potential Rule Changes on the Migratory Game Bird Rule 19.31.6 NMAC for 2018-2019 Hunting Seasons. Mr. Liley.

STEWART LILEY: Mr. Chairman, members of the Commission, this is a rule you see every year given that we work in concert with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to set Migratory Bird Seasons on an annual basis. Just a quick update. We have to adjust it based on what's published in the Federal Register. The Commission has to follow those regulations that are published in there. We work with the Federal Government, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service to set those frameworks. So we meet multiple times a year to kind of hash out, argue, whatever you want to call it and season dates and bag limits. Across that whole flyway from Canada to Mexico. One of the things that always happens every year is we get what the bag limits and possessions are going to be either liberal or not. It's looking like we're going to go into another liberal season next year

which is good and it looks like we'll get back our two pintail bag limit rather than we were restricted to one last year.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: So this ultimately turns into an action item, right?

STEWART LILEY: It will ultimately turn into an action item after the Federal Register is published in probably April. We'll come back in June and finalize this as an action item.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: So we living in the House Bill 58 world, there's sufficient time for us to do what we need to do to get the job done?

STEWART LILEY: Mr. Chairman, yes. So the structuring in this next graphic here gets at this. We had to adjust kind of how we're proposing this in front of you because of the House Bill and how we would work through any Federal Register changes so we can meet our own obligation to the New Mexico Statutes on Rulemaking. What we really have here and the important thing is what you'll see is we have to give it to the Federal Government by the end of April. Our final kind of projections for what we want to do for our season dates, bag limits, etc. So after the second meeting that we'll have on this topic we will basically ask for us to go to the Federal Government to say this is what our recommendation is. They'll put it on the Federal Register. It should be published on the Federal Register by the end of April, first part of May and then in June the Commission will adopt what those Federal Regulations are.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: So if we get jammed up because one year as I recall we got jammed up because I think the feds did their job late. We can probably handle this on an emergency basis under House Bill 58 and fix it at the next regular. So if we run into a problem and your seeing it develop, let us know so we can deal with this sooner rather than later.

STEWART LILEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman. That is correct. So that's the schedule. I think the way it's planned out and the way it's been scheduling so far we're on track and again, like you said, if it doesn't we could do it through an emergency rule if need be or postpone the finalization to a later date would be probably our recommendation because if we had to change something, postpone the decision from June to the August meeting.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: As I recall, we got it. One year didn't we get it in August? Like at the last minute.

STEWART LILEY: Mr. Chairman, yeah. One year we got it three days before the opening of Dove Season. So the Federal Register finally published at the end of August. Dove Season opened three days later and you guys had to approve that so we could open dove. Now the Federal Register, we've changed that through the flyaway's. We went to the Federal Government and asked that they start the process much earlier. We meet instead of in the summer we meet in the fall now to start the process a year in advance. So that shouldn't happen anymore theoretically.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: And you still have good information starting earlier.

STEWART LILEY: Mr. Chairman, that is correct.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Okay.

STEWART LILEY: So the biggest changes that we would have and as you see from the Federal Government again, like I said, our pintail bag limit was reduced to one everywhere last year. We're looking like pintails went up in numbers in the previous year so we'll be able to increase that bag limit to two. So that's a big win for our hunters here. We're under our allocation of the Rocky Mountain population Sandhill Cranes. That's the main Sandhill Crane population in the

middle Rio Grande. So we've kind of, we'll be able to put those Youth Hunts a little bit later when the birds come in and we could up our harvest on that population. So that's an encouraging thing as well. That population has been growing. Our proposed on our season dates really is no change from last year. It's a start on a Saturday. North Zone in the central Flyaway starting a week or two, ten days before the South Zone running to the end of January in the South Zone and running until January 17th in the North Zone. It's really basically no changes. Liberal seasons, liberal bag limits but with an increase from two pintails to one pintail in the bag. Specific flyaway, really again, no changes. 107 day season, liberal again, 7 daily bag limits. So everything is looking good. We're under our take on Rocky Mountain so we might be able to increase some of the Sandhill Crane Permits again this year once we get our final allocation numbers which should happen in the next month. With that I would take any questions or comments.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Anyone? So when will we see you again next?

STEWART LILEY: Mr. Chairman, at the next meeting.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Next meeting. Okay. Don't go anywhere. Agenda Item Number 13, Subsequent Discussion on Potential Rule Changes on the Bighorn Rule 19.31.17 NMAC for the 2019-2023 Hunting Seasons. I'm just trying to create some drama right, on an otherwise dry topic. That's why Mr. Winn, I've asked him to comment on Number 13 to increase the drama.

MR. WINN: (Inaudible)

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Okay. I've got your card right here.

STEWART LILEY: Mr. Chairman, members of the Commission, so this is the second time that you'll hear this. The next time will be the final rule which is in May. So really what we're

looking at today. This is our hashed out basically recommendation that we're going to post in the rule. We'll post that rule here in the next 15 days or so I think is when we'll submit it to the New Mexico Register for finalization. Again an adoption in May. So today's really the time to speak up if you have any other changes that you don't see in here but right now this is what the Departments proposing. A little bit of background before we get going. This year's harvest was great. Highest record numbers of ram tags across the state, both for desert and Rockies. We do still have one desert hunt going so you'll see we've harvested 26 out of 29. One of those hunts is on the Fra Cristobal in March is when that hunt will occur. We had two unsuccessful Rocky hunters this year. One was actually an unsuccessful. They couldn't retrieve it. They harvested it but it fell off a cliff and they attempted to retrieve it for a long time and one hunter just couldn't make it. He for personal reasons couldn't get out of the field to go harvest. So a great year and I think the biggest and the biggest success in the success of this program is explained by this graphic alone. The Departments worked really hard on both Rocky's and deserts and you'll see here we have increasing populations and continue to increase with Rocky's. That top line. We're basically put Rocky's in all historic range in New Mexico. We're excited about that. They all continue to grow and offer more opportunity. Deserts, there's still some place to put them in other areas. We're expecting eventually that yellow line crosses over that red line and we think we'll get there maybe, maybe not by the rule cycle but in the next eight years we hope to see deserts actually get above Rocky's which would be really exciting for the State of New Mexico.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: You can put that on your resume.

STEWART LILEY: That's right.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: CV.

STEWART LILEY: Well it's partially me. There's a lot of people behind the scenes.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: An asterisk. Team effort.

STEWART LILEY: That's right. Asterisk. We did hold two public meetings. We had 17 people attend those public meetings. Overall, people are in favor of our proposed changes. We did get some comments that we've incorporated into our recommendation and some comments that we'll incorporate into potentially manner and method. So one thing that we discussed at the last meeting, we'll remove Manner and Method from each species rules. So when you guys want to change something in Manner and Method you don't have to open every species rule. It lives in one rule. So that first comment there on tracking a wounded big game with dogs, have it live in Manner and Method. We'll bring that rule to you for initiation in June. We'll carry this comment over to that rule when we bring it to you. So we'll bring it back up then. We have, there is an ask and biologically we can increase some archery (Indiscernible) hunting opportunities. We've done that in multiple populations. I'll get to that here in a second. One of the big things was also on our enhancement tag changes. I'll get to that here too. We agree with the public comment and we went there and then there was just like a little bit of a comment on feeding a bighorn and the opposition for it. Again, that would be in Manner and Method if that was the case but—

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Supplemental or –

STEWART LILEY: Any feeding period of artificial feeding of bighorn was the comment opposed to that, so. Again, like all, all of our rules, we adjust the season dates for a calendar but one of the biggest things that you'll see here is we're proposing increasing the up to numbers. The Bighorn Sheep we do not set a specific number in rule because it changes so potentially drastically but we are proposing an increase to up to 60 Rocky Ram Tags and up to 60 Desert

Tags which is huge for us. It's a significant increase. What that is, is in the Rocky's there's two potential populations during this rule cycle that we may be able to hunt. As it is right now, we wouldn't hunt in the first or probably the second year. Maybe in the third or the fourth. That includes the Hamus Mountains or the Manzano Mountains. Those populations have not been harvested out of it but we may be there by the time this rule cycles over or finished. We are proposing creating hunts in those with dates to be determined because we've done that in the past. We don't know what that's going to look like when we actually go into that harvest but we just want the Commission to allow us to open that season up in case we have harvestable rams. San Francisco River, we're remaining the same at one hunt. Pecos, we're splitting and keeping it at two hunts. We are moving those to 10-day hunts so they at least cover two weekends in there. Wheeler Peak used to be one hunt. We're proposing splitting that to two so we don't have an overcrowding of too many hunters hunting the same rams at the same time. Again, those would be two 10-day hunts, one in September, one in August. Latir with two ram hunts, that's the current. And Rio Grande Gorge where we had one hunt in there, we're proposing splitting that to two ram hunts. That's our fastest growing Rocky herd right now as it is. And then Colibras [phonetic] the same and one of the big things in the Dry Cimarron is keeping that the same. We worked diligently with those private land owners in there in the last few weeks, months. The recommendation is to keep the hunt dates the same and they're both from the private land owners and also from the public. So that's for the Rockies. On the Deserts really our only change is to add a February hunt in the Fra Cristobals to spread out hunters across instead of having multiple hunters on each ram hunt. We're trying to get it to spread out so it's more of a unique opportunity when people do draw that tag. A big change is on the ewe tags. Again we have had success of growing these populations but it also increases our management on the ewe side of

things especially with Rockies since we don't have any unoccupied habitat to take them to so it offers some hunting opportunity. What you'll see here is multiple ewe hunts we are proposing for ewes across all the herds, up to 150 rifle ewe tags. We're proposing two hunts in the Pecos, three different hunts in the Rio Grande Gorge. That population is at about almost 400 sheep right now. So we're trying to prevent movement to domestics is our biggest concern in there. There's domestics to the north in Colorado and domestics to the south in New Mexico. So we're trying to confine it to about 350 animals in the main corridor. Wheeler Peak, two hunts and Latir one. One of the big changes that we also did was create archery ewe hunts across all these Rocky populations. We think the opportunity is there. We had a big demand from some of the hunters so what you'll see there is creation of those archery ewe hunts for Rockies. And then one of the things we are proposing, we do have, two years ago the Commission amended the Big Horn rule to allow for population management. It still states that any ram hunt would be once in a lifetime. If we have a population management hunt for a yearling [phonetic] ram, we wouldn't want to make that a once in a lifetime for a hunter. So really the option would exist if it's going for a trophy ram or an older age class ram, we'd still make it once in a lifetime. But we want the ability, with concurrence of the Director and the Chairman, if it's young rams we're trying to harvest out of a population we don't want to restrict that to once in a lifetime for hunters. And then again, like we said, manner and method moved down [phonetic]. And then the auction hunter and the enhancement program, what we're really trying to do is change the deadlines of when they can declare what unit they're going to hunt in. The units that are declared are then set aside for the one for the raffle hunter, one for the auction hunter. And the rest of the units that are not declared, they can each hunt those. So now that we have a long, a bigger population we're allowing harvest to be spread out across different areas rather than when it was a small

population we really just wanted to concentrate just harvesting that one. And with that, I would take any questions or comments.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: So the limits are going up?

STEWART LILEY: Mr. Chairman, that is correct.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: So [cough] excuse me, does it make sense to give discretion to the Director to adjust those limits downward if you're seeing a population problem over the 4-year period?

STEWART LILEY: Mr. Chairman, that's currently in the rule and we would keep that in the . . .

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Okay.

STEWART LILEY: . . . in the next rule if we saw something like that.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: As long as that's in there, I'm cool with it. Mr. Wynn.

MR. WYNN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Commissioners. And these comments are personal. These are not for Backcountry Hunters and Anglers. And I like the changes here and I just wanted to make a comment. I'm kind of a sheep nut and it's amazing the work that the New Mexican Environment Department – the New Mexico Environment Department, my God, no – they're the opposite. So the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish has done with Big Horn sheep with the biologists and everyone in the Department. It's really an amazing program. It's very much a world class wildlife story. It's fabulous. And also I really like the change with the enhancement hunts to let the auction and raffle hunters, once they pick their specific units that they will basically own for themselves, that they can hunt in other units. I think you'll raise a lot more revenue. And I've, you know, at some of these sheep shows I go to and stuff, I talk to some

of these auction hunters and they are kind of reluctant to go to spend more money in New Mexico because they get restricted to a certain unit. If the ram they are looking for is just not there, so that is really going to be a money maker. It's fantastic the way you worked that out because I know this has been, problems with the auction and raffle hunter when they were able to hunt at the same time, a raffle hunter shooting a ram out from underneath an auction hunter and it was kind of a messy situation. So it's a neat thing you came up with. I really like that. And on the archery hunts, as a bow hunter I would sure like to see an archery ram hunt. As you get more hunts I'd like to see you add that at some point. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: All right. Any other questions or comments from Commissioners?
From the public?

COMMISSIONER: It's going good.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: All right. John [phonetic]. Don't go anywhere. Agenda item number 14, subsequent discussion for potential rule changes on the Javelina rule 19.31.21 NMAC for the 2019-2023 hunting season.

PRESENTER: Mr. Chairman, members of the Commission, this is the second time that you have heard this Javelina rule. So again, if you have any more comments or direction that you'd like to see us go before we finalize the rule which would be a finalization in May posting here in the next month. So this is kind of the Department's recommendation. If you guys see anything different, please let us know at this time. Real quick, harvest. This is the last year's harvest. We harvested approximately 430 Javelinas, 440 Javelina across the State of New Mexico, almost split evenly between the Boothill units and the rest of the state. Public comment is very minimal right now. We've only had two public comments on our proposed changes. One was actually to

move the youth hunt out of the archery hunt. We're not recommending that change. We have 150 youth hunters across the entirety of the state. It gives them a time at really Christmas or Christmas break, that first of January to go hunting. We don't see it as a big conflict so we're not necessarily recommending that. And then the other comment was to lower the cost of the Javelina license which is set by statute, not Commission rules. So there's really nothing at this time that we can do about it until someone carries a bill through statute. Biology real quick. Really in terms of native big game in North America, Javelina has the greatest potential for reproductive potential. They have two potential litters a year. That's really, Javelina harvest is not driving population numbers is what we're getting at, is it's really conditions on the landscape that Javelina populations more so than harvest ever would especially when you're talking 500 Javelina harvested across the entirety of the State of New Mexico on an annual basis. Again, so our typical adjusted season dates for the calendar start is what we're proposing and then no other, we're proposing no other changes to the Javelina rule. We did modify this midcycle to allow those units outside of Boothill to be over-the-counter with caps and that's been working well. We recommend continuing with that. So, with that, I'll take any questions.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Questions or comments? I don't think so. Agenda item 15, subsequent discussion for potential rule changes on the pronghorn antelope rule 19.31.15 NMAC for the 2019-2023 season. At the conclusion of this item, I'm going to ask for a motion to move up public comment. So, Commissioners, keep that in mind. Agenda item number 15.

STEWART LILEY: One second.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Are you not prepared? [Laughter]

STEWART LILEY: Just trying to get all my notes straight.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: I'm only kidding.

STEWART LILEY: Mr. Chairman, members of the Commission, as you are well aware we've really been working on this proposed pronghorn change for almost a year now. We brought it first to the Commission almost a year ago. We've been working through, across the state, discussing this and really developing this proposal. It was built out of a meeting with groups individually, and then going forward all the way to having public meetings, and really building this proposal. So again I think it is important just to stress kind of the biology drives the, our recommendation and why we got to where we are with pronghorn, this proposal in front of you today. And the biggest thing, you know, like a lot of ungulates, female survival and fawn survival really drive the populations. Male survival is, we just have to have a few males to breed the many I guess is the biggest thing. And so really our strategy is a male based, bias, strategy. We don't need to have equal numbers of males and females and when we get that we could have more harvest across the state as where it gets to. Pronghorn are also unique in that they reach sexual maturity faster than any other ungulate in North America. Peak horn size can reach as early as two years old and as late as five years old, really, with average being about three years old reaching peak, unlike elk, maybe 10 or deer at seven. So we have the opportunity to harvest at a little bit higher rate given that. We also switched our survey methods about three years ago and that's shown us that we are being very conservative in our current methods of harvest on this day and we have the ability to offer more hunting opportunity. Really the biggest issues we see with the current system, and the current system is the A-plus that everyone refers to as we are not hunting pronghorn equally across the state. In fact, we are not hunting pronghorn in many areas of the state. This graphic is kind of the extreme example but it is an example of what we see across the state. This is GMU 40. What you see there in in the hatched black is areas in the state

in which pronghorn habitat occurs but no pronghorn hunting occurs. What that is, is landowners not enrolling their property, maybe not wanting to participate in agreements with the Department, not wanting to have public hunters on their property, not wanting to go through working with us particularly, or not meeting minimally qualifying acreage which are those red hatched [phonetic] lines. So what you see there across the state is approximately 265 landowners that do not meet the minimum qualifying acreage that want to participate, have pronghorn on their property but cannot. And then you have the black there that people are saying: Look, I don't want to go in all of the processes that's required for pronghorn to sign up and enroll my property and get going and it's just not worth my time. So we have a lot of areas where we're not harvesting pronghorn across the state and we're concentrating harvest year after year in the same areas and that's that white hatch mark. So you'll see that, a lot of missed opportunities. Some of the other big things that happened there, you know, a landowner's concerns, like I said, about not wanting to have a public hunter, right now the current system, if you enroll in A-plus and you have leased land you must allow public hunters onto your property to hunt including your deeded property. Some landowners, and a lot of landowners, just will not sign up because of that. What our proposal is, it's basically on your private deeded property it's over-the-counter just like we do for deer. You can hunt that. It's not an agreement with the Department. It's you go out there, buy the license, hunt your deeded property. So what we came up with, and this is again a build up from months and many meeting with public land owners, different groups that were interested in it, is coming up with this kind of structure across the state. One of the big things that we did and we looked at and we had public comments from was, originally we were proposing 5-day hunts. We moved that back to three based on concerns that we had. And also we were proposing some hunts into October. The biggest concern was that they would like to see hunts in August.

So we've made that recommendation. What you see in front of you today is a build out from some of those comments and concerns that we had. We are proposing the structure across the state that has an archery hunt that will either start Saturday, August has five or four Saturdays depending on the year. Starting that first Saturday or second in August and running nine days. Then another first rifle hunt, second and third, etc. One of the big changes that we were making, too, is instead of a Saturday start on that third rifle is a mid-week start, a Tuesday through Thursday. A lot of hunters like that. A lot of people say: Look I work on the weekends, for some people it's nice to have the weekend start up but for me it's better to have that midweek start. So that's a new recommended change there. And then some of the, the biggest thing that we're going from-to here is really you're picking where you want to hunt. Right now, if you put in for the northeast from I-25 east and north of I-40, it's one hunt code for rifle. And you get assigned to a place where you go hunt. So it's one hunt code for all that area. We're going from 60 hunt codes to 160 hunt codes. You really select what unit you want to hunt, where you want to hunt and you go hunt any legally accessible public land if you draw that tag. If you're a private landowner or you have family, friends, clients that want to hunt on your private deeded property, you hunt at the same time as the public hunter on your deeded property. You get your license through the Department's website, go to Walmart, etc., and go hunting. There's no agreements. It's not two years in advance before where the hunting season starts that you have to sign an agreement, participate, negotiate every year, etc. One of the biggest changes that since the last time you saw this that we came out of after working with interested groups that had concerns about this proposal was when we have land status where it's very checkerboarded, this is an extreme example of the landowner that would have checkerboard ranches. You can see there, white being deeded, blue being state land and yellow being BLM. It's very checkerboard in there

and posting would be kind of an issue. What we created was this kind of pronghorn unit wide agreement. We would do this on a case-by-case basis with private landowners that have property similar to this status. If they want to enroll in a pronghorn unit wide kind of status we would enroll their leased land, their deeded land, create a ranch, put it on our website saying this is a ranch that's created, give access to public hunters but also allow that private hunter to hunt that leased land. So what it would allow is anyone that drew a tag in that unit would be able to access this like our open gate properties, go onto that deeded and their leased land but that landowner, we would let them hunt the deeded and their leased land at the same time because of that. It would have to be a net benefit for the landowner around this issue. Again you've got one every mile there's either state, public, deeded. And then it would also allow that public hunter access to that private land. So really it would be on a case-by-case basis. It'd have to be somewhere it's really landlocked private land, or public land, excuse me, where we're really getting access to the public hunter onto that landlocked public land but also letting that land owner be able to hunt that as well. If we go into that system, we would negotiate the number of tags for that private landowner on a case-by-case annual basis as well. That was one of the big things that we pulled through as we met with groups, as we met with concerned landowners on that. And that was kind of, we came up with that. And then unitization, as you guys know, we can do that process which is already in rule if we need, want to, if that's what the landowner wants. The other big thing that we did change since the last one I mentioned was moving the hunts from 5-day long hunts to 3-day hunts. That was a big concern that we addressed and moved and then moving those licenses from October, September, all the way into August. That was another big concern that the Department heard from the public and we addressed and moved that forward. Another one was splitting GMU 31, 32 in the southeast are two very large GMUs. Our proposal based upon

working through these groups is to split those GMUs in half. And what we're planning on, on that one—let me get to that real quick—is one of the GMU will split by the Pecos River, have an east and west unit, and the other split by Highway 70 and have a north-south unit. So we can spread out hunter density across the unit is really what the goal of that is. We don't have everyone going to the one area. We did have a tremendous amount of public—in terms of my experience with any rule changes this is the most public engagement we've had from both coming to us and us reaching out. We held four public meetings but we held multiple landowner meetings across the state. We held multiple meetings with interested parties whenever they wanted to come talk to us. And we've had about 110 written comments on this proposal which, unique written comments I would like to stress as some of the other rule we might have a robo-letter that's the same but this is unique. And a lot of the comments and concerns, what we're proposing today have been addressed. So that's what it is. So the majority of people are in support of this program. The ones that had comments or concerns is what the proposal shaped into. So there will be a comment that says, I don't like the 5-day hunt so I'm opposed to it as it is right now with the 5-day. We addressed that and went to 3 days. So they haven't re-submitted a comment but we took that into consideration and that's what the proposal in front of you today is, is taking those concerns forward and coming up to what we find is kind of the middle ground and really majority being in favor of that. So there's a multitude of comments. If you guys have specific questions on what those would be, I'm happy to go over it. But again we took those comments and shaped what the proposal is today based off of that. Real quick, just a summary by area on where we're going on hunts and proposals of what it is we're planning. Our proposal is to increase in the northeast area rifle hunts by 36 percent. In rule today, it says 500 licenses but because of return agreements we're only able to get about 370, 380 licensed hunters out there

and that's the way the system is now. So we're really not increasing much from the rule but we're increasing (indiscernible/cough) more land mass being able to be hunted across the state. So you'll see the different increases by each weapon type in the area. I'll go through this briefly. If you guys have any questions, we can stop. If there's a different, a specific GMU I have that information if you're curious about it as well. The Tres Piedras herd is a small herd that actually lives at high elevation, one of the highest elevation living pronghorn herds in North America. We're actually proposing opening GMU 4. GMU 4 has never been hunted for pronghorn and it's really kind of an interesting hunting pronghorn up in Aspen mixed conifer forest. So it's kind of a unique experience. We are putting back in, from a lot of public comment, we used to have a bow hunt in those GMUs. We did away with it about 10 years ago. We're proposing bringing it back based upon a lot of the public comment. There was a strong desire to have a bow hunt in that unit again. Southeast area, really its main (indiscernible/cough) license numbers is a slight increase you'll see there, in rifles 6 percent and archery 20 percent. But again this increase is going over a lot larger land mass. There's a lot more pronghorn habitat that will, and pronghorn populations, that will be hunted now. And then like I had mentioned before, this split in GMU 31 and 32. Northwest area, a slight increase, 18 percent but really that's 3 licenses. It's a pretty small pronghorn population in that northwest but there is opportunity. We are increasing that to some extent. The southwest area is a slight increase as well based upon the available populations and hunting some more areas that have previously not been hunted. So and with that I will take any questions.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Anybody?

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: I'd like to hear public comment first.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Let's go to the public first. Dave Kennecke. Did I get that right?
Okay.

DAVE KENNECKE: Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, Dave Kennecke, Philmont Scout Ranch up in Cimarron. Just a concern and would ask that the Department perhaps be poised or ready. There is the conserve, the pronghorn conservation recognition program. As we move into this right now, all the deeded properties up there will be taking a step back, if you would, in flexibility of the dates that they're allowed to hunt. And perhaps if the private lands could be allowed to enroll in that even prior to the 2019 or the Department be poised or ready so that if they qualify for that we would have a little bit more flexibility in scheduling the hunt dates as opposed to just being locked into a couple of weekends. From private landowners' standpoint, it gives us a little more opportunity as far as staffing and the quality of hunts available for people that would be paying to come into New Mexico.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Thank you. What do you say about that, Commissioner Ricklefs?

(indiscernible/microphone pickup)

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: What do you say about that, Commissioner Ricklefs?

COMMISSIONER RICKLEFS: It does make sense. I know what he's up against as far as his summer season and later hunt dates. If that flexibility was there, it would be helpful.

STEWART LILEY: Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Ricklefs, and I apologize I didn't mention this. I was trying to get through some of the proposal. So that is a proposal change that we have since you have seen in August. The Department, from Philmont and some of the other large ranches and there received that comments on flexibility on dates. On these private properties that are making a beneficial contribution towards pronghorn conservation we would allow flexibility

on those dates. It's in the rule as we have drafted and proposing. I failed to mention that today and I apologize. But that was a build out from some of the conversations that we had.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: That addresses . . .

STEWART LILEY: That would address his concern when he's making a concerted effort towards pronghorn conservation that's having a net benefit for pronghorn across that area the Department would enter into an agreement with that property to allow flexibility on hunt dates on that property. We put that in the rule and I apologize as I did not mention that during the presentation.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Lance Burnal, not a retired wildlife biologist. [Laughter] A legit wildlife biologist.

SPEAKER: All right.

LANCE BURNAL: You guys see quite a bit and now I finally get to (indiscernible/laughter). I'd just like to read a statement regarding the pronghorn rule from Vermejo Park Ranch:

Mr. Chairman and Game Commissioners, Vermejo Park Ranch would like to acknowledge the New Mexico Game and Fish Department for their hard work and consideration of private landowners, both large and small, when rule development and rule changes occur. From public meetings and public comments, we know that the Department does the best to address everyone's considerations and concerns. Vermejo is very appreciative of the open communication the Department has maintained in this new pronghorn rule development and we are very excited to learn that the Department has included the option of a pronghorn conservation program similar to the deer incentive program in the new rule. We feel that deer incentive plan is a great program and has been a successful program at Vermejo. We only anticipate the new

pronghorn program will be just as successful. Recognizing landowner properties that conduct or maintain substantial habitat improvements on deeded lands that directly and significantly benefit not just pronghorn but all wildlife is a win-win for everyone, especially the wildlife. We are more than willing to work with the Department biologists to get this program up and running for the 2019-20 season. Again, we appreciate the hard work the Department and the Commission do to ensure the conservation of wildlife in New Mexico. Sincerely, Vermejo Park Ranch Management and Natural Resources Department.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: So you're in favor of the rule change?

LANCE BURNHALL: We are.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Okay. Right on. Brandon Wynn, not on behalf of yourself.

BRANDON WYNN: That's correct. I always feel like I'm bending over and like bowing down. Not that I don't feel like I should bow down [laughter]. Mr. Chairman, Commissioners.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Sorry for the people in the back.

BRANDON WYNN: (Indiscernible/laughter) Backcountry Hunters and Anglers and we, first of all, we really appreciate (Indiscernible/microphone problem).

SPEAKER: Coming in loud and clear.

BRANDON WYNN: (Indiscernible/microphone problem) hear me right?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Yeah . . . speaking . . . oh, I am, yeah I am.

BRANDON WYNN: So anyway, we support the proposed rule and Backcountry Hunters and Anglers supports the proposed rule. And also we really appreciate the amount of work that the Department has put into doing this and including us in the process and letting us come in and talk

to the Department on two separate occasions with just a couple of us and the Department. And, you know, you made yourself available to us and we really appreciate that. And I see some of the suggestions we made or concerns we had, addressed in the rule. Everything we had has been addressed. I hope this rule works out for the landowners and the outfitters and also the public. What we really like about it is, if there's antelope, like the map showed, there's so many places where the antelope aren't even getting hunted and the Department has made a great effort to resolve that and put us out in the field. What we also like about it is, you know, there's increased public opportunity and also when the public draws a permit you only have to win one lottery whereas before you had to win two lotteries. You had to draw a permit, so you won that lottery. And then you had to get lucky and get a ranch that was a good antelope hunting ranch. It's so nice. And what's nice about this rule with being able to hunt the entire unit is, it gets public hunters in New Mexico talking to ranchers. Because if I have an antelope permit in my pocket for a game management unit, I can go knock on doors and say, hey, you know, can I hunt on your ranch, can I pay you to hunt on your ranch? There becomes a dialogue which is a healthy thing to have between hunters and the landowners. And some of the systems [phonetic] we had, in the previous system there was no reason for us to talk to each other. So that's a benefit to that. And also, we support the large ranches, what you spoke about, Chief Liley, about the large ranches being able to have flexible dates. That's a reasonable thing to have and they should be able to do that and we support that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: So your organization is in support?

BRANDON WYNN: We are in support. Full support.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Commissioners, any questions or comments?

SPEAKER: (Indiscernible/background noise).

COMMISSIONER: (Indiscernible), go ahead Bill.

COMMISSIONER MONTOYA: Mr. Chairman, I think we've been a long time in getting to this point. And I think it's gratifying to see that we've got quite a bit of support to the proposal that we were worried about because of the public input. And it looks like that worry doesn't exist. So I'm tickled with the direction that this particular agenda item is going. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER: And I agree with Bill where I like where we've gone. This is the third antelope rule I get to vote on. We looked at changes. Stewart [phonetic], you were a part of that six, seven years ago. And something like in this order basically got crammed down our throat from both sides, sportsmen and ranchers. I like this. I never liked the small or the minimum acreage. This eliminates that, how do you get to a common ground. And this is exciting. It gives us opportunity.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Rarely do you get the chance to make so many people happy, Mr. Liley. And it's a feather in your cap.

COMMISSIONER RYAN: The only negative comments that I have throughout this process, and I've attended a lot of the public meetings, are negative comments from public hunters who want to be able to hunt deeded land and can't or from private landowners that don't want the public anywhere near their land. And both concerns are somebody wanting to hunt where they don't have legal access to and then private landowners not want public hunters to access public lands that they do have legal right to access and hunt. And so neither of those negative comments sit very well with me because you should be able to hunt where you are legally entitled to hunt under our constitution. And under, you know, I think that we need to be prosecuting and going

after trespassers very vigorously and hard. And I appreciate the Department reaching out to so many landowners who had concerns about that. But really in my mind trespass is a separate issue than this antelope program that, whose very foundation is about the species itself and how to harvest this and manage this species based on biology. And so I appreciate the Department coming up with policy that focuses on the biology of the animal and letting that dictate where this goes. And so, major props to you, Stewart, in leading your Department, and Director Sandoval, and just everything that, your antelope guys sitting back there, to come up with this really well thought out program. And again the negative comments I've had have only pertained, don't sway me one way or the other on, you know, you need to be able to hunt where you can legally hunt and protect the boundaries that you do have but not boundaries you don't have. So I do want to encourage the Department to continue to engage with landowners that are concerned about trespass but I don't see where that persuades me on this particular antelope rule and I'm in support of it.

COMMISSIONER RAMOS: Mr. Chairman if I could add to that. It kind of builds on that. Stewart, I don't know if you mentioned what the efforts are on the mapping system that we're looking as a Department, you know, to communicate part of that Pocket Ranger and the technology with our Information Services. If you could touch base on that.

STEWART LILEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Ramos. As the Commission is aware, and has been discussed is, you know, we have this unique opportunity with BLM carry maps, right? The Department works with BLM on really getting that. Where is public land in the state, how do you access it. We have points. We work with the State Land Office every single year to develop those access points onto state land. It sits on an app that really lets hunters know, here's where I can legally access public land. So that's a real great opportunity to say, when this rule

comes in, where do I go hunting for pronghorn if I draw GMU 58 for example. We have that mapped out showing where that public land is and where you can go, legally access that land, as Commissioner Ryan discussed. And so we've been working with the State Land Office, the BLM and we update that annually as we get the land status on those. Any of these agreements where we entered in to a specific ranch, like on that pronghorn unit wide, we would put that up on the internet like we do for our open gate properties. So hunters know, look, this is a property that enrolled in this program, that's, they don't (indiscernible) private, draw hunters coming on private deeded land. We have mapped that out, show it and show where those are across the state so hunters have the knowledge and know where that is. So we are working towards that and will continue to encourage. As technology evolves, we'll continue to use it to our benefit in management.

COMMISSIONER RAMOS: Absolutely. And I definitely want to keep my eyes on that one because I think it's going to be a great model, you know, and make it very user friendly for you sportsmen as well as private owners, you know, along those lines. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER RYAN: Just to follow up on one more point, Stewart. On the units as they just for the public that is here and present, educating them on the unitization option for those ranches that are—there's a lot of ranches in the southeast that are checkerboard and so I am sympathetic to some of the issues that are special to the southeast area where I'm from. And isn't it correct that if you, if you work with the Department to go through that unitization process that the landowner and the—actually has control over even where within his ranch boundaries that, where public hunters can access his ranch and basically boundary off certain areas that we don't want any hunter.

STEWART LILEY: Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Ryan, I'll use this graphic as a quick example. This already exists in the rule. We would continue to use this as a process, as a tool, for management of hunts. On these checkerboard ranches, what we could do for example, I'm just going to use this as a graphic, let's say this is a county public road along this north-south divide. What we could do with private landowners and work with them is say this northern half is going to be treated as public land. And we basically say this whole northern half which includes as you can see in there many deeded parcels will be treated as public for the utility of hunting. The Department goes out and actually signs that process. But before we get to that point we bring that to the Commission to ask so we can go forth and do a unitization. What we would then do, let's say, on this southern half we would treat that as all private including some of this leased land in here. So what we look for is the gain for the public hunters as well so they're getting access to deeded land that they didn't have access to or couldn't legally access this because of the checkerboarded status in there and maybe not a county road going through there. So you're getting access to the private deeded property. And then in the southern half on this where it's maybe doesn't, it's interlocked, landlocked public land but we're going to treat this as all private for the purposes of our hunting licenses. That's how that would work. So yes, that system is in place. We encourage landowners that have this checkerboard land status to come work with the Department, work with our local offices to bring forward proposals that would benefit both the public hunter and the private landowner on terms of managing that checkerboard land status.

COMMISSIONER RYAN: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER MONTOYA: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Yes.

COMMISSIONER MONTOYA: Stewart, I think that with that unitization situation it's not only for antelope. It's an agreement to sign for a year-long term and it applies to elk hunting, antelope hunting or whatever on that particular ranch that signed the unit so that unitization agreement, is that correct?

STEWART LILEY: Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Montoya, that is correct. It's for all species. It's for quail, it really is trying to provide public access to landlocked public land but also trying to delineate so we know defined boundaries where you get these really checkerboard land statuses.

COMMISSIONER MONTOYA: That's a good program.

COMMISSIONER RYAN: Have you found that the trespass issue is curtailed in the places that you have been able to work through the unitization process?

STEWART LILEY: Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Ryan, yes. It's really delineated very specifically. It would be something like a county road or a highway that says north of here all the way up is public, south of here is private. It's very—so you're not, where am I on an unmarked. So a lot of this will be one big pasture that's not fenced off so you don't know this fence is that, that fence is added [phonetic]. It would really (indiscernible/sneeze) saying 10 miles to the north is all public, treated as public. Five miles to the south is treated as private. It's very easy to interpret at that point.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Commissioner Ricklefs.

COMMISSIONER RICKLEFS: Yes. I would also like to commend the Department, Stewart, and Director. This system answers most concerns that I heard from ranchers. Each ranch, of course, is a separate situation and it looks like you've given enough flexibility for just about

everyone. I think it's an excellent compromise from what we started with. One concern that I did hear often was unit-wide public land hunters. The rancher was concerned that, well if you've got 15 hunters in this unit all of them are going to be on me at one time. And I don't know how to answer that. I think hunters are not going to do that. But otherwise, I commend you for making it flexible, making it something that I think most landowners can live with and I appreciate it.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Any other questions or comments? All right. We'll see you next month.

STEWART LILEY: Yes, sir.

COMMISSIONER RICKLEFS: Time frame, please, when you're going to publish this?

STEWART LILEY: Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Ricklefs, so after this meeting we'll go through, draft the rule. The rule is basically what we're proposing today. We'll draft that exact thing that we're talking about, post it to the New Mexico Register approximately the middle of March so it's posted by April the first at the very latest for action at the May meeting. And so really this is, what you have in front of you today is what we will post in the rule for changes to be voted on at the May meeting.

COMMISSIONER RICKLEFS: So I would ask the public if there are more comments or changes, so forth, prior to that publication, it is the time to get your comments in.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Get after it.

COMMISSIONER RICKLEFS: Cause once it's published, it's pretty well set. So.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Okay. Can I get a motion to move up public comment to the next agenda item, please?

COMMISSIONER SALOPEK: So moved.

COMMISSIONER RYAN: Second.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: All in favor?

COMMISSIONERS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: The Ayes have it. So we'll take public comment now since we're just about wrapped up except for executive session. Taylor, you're on the mike.

GUEST SPEAKER: Where do I go?

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Right here.

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: Here in the front.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: It's karaoke. [Laughter]

TAYLOR STREIT: Folks, I'm Taylor Streit. I have, well—my son and I have Taos Fly Shop and the Reel Life in Santa Fe. We have about 20 employees and we take a lot of people fishing. And I've been involved in the fishing business for a long time in New Mexico and I have a number of books. And we have a situation, to cut to the chase, on the lower Red River where the otters are eating all the trout and we weren't that—this has been going on for a while. And it was stockers [phonetic] they were mostly eating at first and now there's—the lower Red for those of you that don't know is probably the most important wild trout fishery in the state and that's because it's where the browns in the fall spawn and the rainbows in the winter spawn out of the Rio Grande, the big fish. And what's happened, I think that the stocking has cut down and which

was, you know, we wondered is that a good idea or not. But it seems like the otters have turned to the wild fish and one of my guides was there two days ago, not on a trip, we can't take trips anymore there. This was our number one go-to spot for winter guiding plus the public's number one spot because of the warm water of the hatchery creates a real lush environment. But at any rate, one of my guides was right there by the mouth of La Junta. If you're not familiar with the place, here if anybody can see is here's me with the Rio Grande (indiscernible/beeper). But here's the junction of the Red and the Rio and the area we're talking about is this lower portion of the Red here, can't really tell that well from this map, but it's really the lower five miles or so that we're so concerned about on the Red because this is where the spawning occurs. And there's no spawning fish, zero. It's history.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: So, Mr. Streit, let me interrupt you for a second. Mr. Sloane, what say you? This man knows fish.

TAYLOR STREIT: Yeah, me too.

MIKE SLOANE: Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, it is correct that there are otters in the lower Red River. I do not believe that our stocking has been reduced. We did do a large habitat project in there from above the hatchery to below the hatchery that's probably changed where the fish are and the dynamics in that stretch of river. The data we've collected since 1996 seems to show a stable to increasing fishery in there. We have not gone in since 2016 but we do have a survey planned for fall of 2018 and so that information will help us better understand what Mr. Streit is seeing.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: So in terms of—hold on a second—in terms of that survey, how can Mr. Streit assist you in that, if at all?

MIKE SLOANE: We certainly will welcome him and Mr. Mitchell from Trout Unlimited to come along and observe the surveying. We could share the results with them.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: So I assume you're willing to do that?

TAYLOR STREIT: Well, yes, but I really kind of missed the point of the fish survey because the population is so disseminated now from whatever.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: So you don't want a study?

TAYLOR STREIT: Yeah, yeah, sure, certainly.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: So, we'll do a survey.

SPEAKER: And there's an otter study going on right now.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: The only way to make a decision on this is to get some data from Mr. Sloane. So we'll get that done in fall 2018. When will that data be available?

MIKE SLOANE: Certainly by January of '19 but probably sooner.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Okay. So that's the path forward. Now, if you'd told me six months ago, I would have suggested we do a study six months ago.

TAYLOR STREIT: Uh-huh. Right.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: But one way or another, we're on track to do that. And I don't, certainly with this not being an action item, being a matter of public comment, the Commission's not in a position to, you know, knock down on this and say do something. So it's going to be data driven at the end of the day whether there's a problem or not.

TAYLOR STREIT: Right, right. I have a hard time understanding how the fisheries—in other words like if we have a big fish number or a low fish number how is that going to compute. I don't quite get it.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: So what I would suggest is rather than do this now . . .

TAYLOR STREIT: Uh-huh.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: . . . because I'm going to cut you off in a second, is visit with Mr. Sloane, ask those questions and get the information that you want or help guide this survey or study, to make sure those questions are being answered. So you have the golden opportunity to help guide this if you choose to do it. If you want to wash your hands of it that's fine. But I would recommend cooperate with Mr. Sloane to see if there is a problem, number one. If there is one then we'll try and resolve it.

TAYLOR STREIT: Right. And if I could just add , you know, there were concerns about this five miles of the river and the otters have spread into Colorado up the Chama River. They have hundreds of miles. I mean, the otter folks are quite concerned that we're after all otters. We just, that place is the most important wild trout fishery in this state and we have people walking into both fly shops and they want to go fish and they turn around and walk away when we tell them there's no fishing and they don't buy the license and they don't go. So it's a big deal.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Understood. And I'm not unsympathetic. So the first day I was on this gig back in February 2012, river otters was on the agenda.

TAYLOR STREIT: Yeah, and I was a big proponent myself.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: And so personally I was skeptical so if what you're saying is true, then I should have been skeptical and rightly so. If it's not true and Mr. Sloane's survey or studies shows that there's not a problem then I'm a fool and that's okay. [Laughter]

TAYLOR STREIT: And we've noticed, I might add, we've noticed the fishing in the Rio Grande, you know we guide, you know, a hundred trips so a summer, is really good shape. In other words, the otters have been apparently good for the Rio because they've cleaned out a lot of the crayfish and carp and competing things for the trout so in that case it's been good. But on the Red they seem to be able to corner the trout in tighter confines.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: So, Mr. Sloane, are you able to sort some of those issues out?

MIKE SLOANE: I think that our data will tell us. We look at age, structure, we look at size across the entire population and I think we'll be able to tease that information out.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: You going to go put on a frogman suit and go check it out.

MIKE SLOANE: I don't think so.

SPEAKER: It's shallow.

MIKE SLOANE: Electroshocking is far more effective [laughter].

TAYLOR STREIT: And the otter study, I know the fellow who's doing the otter study. He is very capable, Brian Long [phonetic]. And that's a scat study. So they're going to know, you know, what they're eating. So we're going to know a lot and that's supposedly going to be due like at the end of this year.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: So stay involved. I know Mr. Sloane's email and perhaps his phone is always open. But I'm sure you can even be on site when things are going down. So if you, it's clear to me you've got something to add to this so stay involved.

TAYLOR STREIT: Okay.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: That's important.

TAYLOR STREIT: Thank you all.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Thank you. Jim Bates.

JIM BATES: Mr. Chairman, members of the Commission, my name is Jim Bates. As I said when I introduced myself, I am a co-chairman for the Southwest Consolidated Sportsmen. However, the comments I'm going to make are not representative of a position that they are taking formally. I have a, had a whole pile of stuff here that I was going to try to get through but two minutes obviously is not going to do it. And there were a couple of items that came up while you were discussing other topics that I felt needed to be talked about. First is the Javelina rule, should have got in on that. I thought there was going to be a proposal to change the Javelina rule so that we no longer just allow people to go shoot Javelinas and leave them in the field without taking them out. I think that has only been listed in the proclamation for the last couple of years and that very honestly is a ridiculous regulation. Nobody should be shooting Javelinas in this state and probably some of the other species and not having to take them out of the field. I mean, that's just irresponsible.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Hold on a second.

SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Bates, that's driven by statute so it would actually take legislative action to change it. That is not driven by rules so a bill would have to be introduced in the legislature to change that.

JIM BATES: Okay. Well, we're going to try to do that. We're going to talk to our legislators and try to get that taken care of. But in the meantime, that wasn't in the proclamation that you could leave them in the field up until a couple of years ago and we need to just kind of put that back out where it's not there so people don't think they can just do that. It's like I said, it's irresponsible. Now regarding [Cross talk/indiscernible] some of the regulations on big game hunting in general, one of the things that keeps coming up with sportsmen is the issue of corner hopping. Everybody knows that corner hopping is—

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: I'll give you a little bit more time.

JIM BATES: Okay, thank you. Stepping from public land to public land at an intersection of where you have diagonal private land and diagonal public land. As far as I know that has never been clarified by law and I know people that say it's legal. I know people who say it's illegal. We need to have a clarification on that. And the final thing, if I may, is that I do represent sportsmen in Las Cruces and I interact with sportsmen from around the state and every single public sportsman in this state is concerned about one primary issue and that is the allotment of hunting opportunity in this state. We brought that up time and time and time again and that needs to be addressed. The fact of the matter is anybody in this room can look at the system we have in this state and see that it is not fair to New Mexico resident sportsmen and you need to address that issue. And I thank you for your time.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Thank you. Todd Leahy. Good year for the Red Sox or no?

TODD LEAHY: Hopefully.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Coming up. All right.

TODD LEAHY: Make it work.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: We'll see.

TODD LEAHY: Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, thank you for your time. I just wanted to stand up today and publicly give a shout out to Corporal Tyson Sanders/ We recently organized a youth sheep hunt on Otero Mesa. Corporal Sanders took it upon himself to point out to our young hunter who had never been out before the location of some sheep, aided the young man in the hunt, gave him a great experience. We weren't able to harvest the sheep for him but I just wanted to say thank you to the Department and especially to Corporal Sanders. And one other thing, unrelated. Our members have been screaming at us—somehow we're supposed to doing this—for a shooting range in Farmington. The one that is there is private. The fees have become prohibitive. But if the Department wanted to start looking at a shooting range in Farmington you'd make a lot of northwest New Mexican sportsmen happy.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: So, visit with your membership. If they have ideas, places, we'll go scout them out. We can't, we're the fifth largest state by land mass. It's hard to be everywhere all the time. But we're open to getting that done. We just need to find the right spot. So if they have any ideas, pitch us on it and we'll try to make it happen.

TODD LEAHY: Excellent. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Oh, no, Brandon Wynn again.

BRANDON WYNN: I pass.

[Laughter].

SPEAKER: You sure?

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: I wanted a disposition on numbers and other things. But no?

COMMISSIONER: You don't have any percentages or anything?

BRANDON WYNN: (Indiscernible).

COMMISSIONER: Okay, just checking.

[Laughter]

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: State Representative Nathan Small. How are you, Representative.

REPRESENTATIVE SMALL: I'm well, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER SALOPEK: Morning.

REPRESENTATIVE SMALL: Good morning, Mr. Salopek. Good morning, Commissioners.

My name is Nathan Small. I'm proud to represent House District 36. Briefly, Commissioners, I want to thank you for being down here and also add my voice to the issue of tag allotment. Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, we're slipping back to the 2011 levels when you compare all tags and their allocation between resident and nonresident. Senate Bill 190—I believe it was 196—brought that back up to about 70 percent. The 2016 year, it had slipped back down to somewhere in the neighborhood of 66 or 67 percent. Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, I think as strong supporters of resident hunting opportunity that's something that we as a state can't afford and it's doing a disservice to our citizens. So Mr. Chair, Commissioners and Director Sandoval—who I want to say thank you to for your work in difficult times—I know you're looking into a number of these systems both around antelope and elk. Please keep at the forefront of your mind as a

Commission the absolute fact that we're going backwards when we need to be making progress moving forward and that that tag allocation, that balance needs to be better represented for New Mexico residents.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Hold on one second. So, in terms of that percentage, does that track with our . . .

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: Mr. Chairman, Representative Small, thank you for the question. When it comes to statute, if you review our requirements, under statute it says that for special hunt draws the Department will adhere to a quota. And we do do that. Particularly we have instances where there will be no nonresidents that will apply for a certain hunt code and so we have 100 percent residents. We do not draw anything less than the 84 percent public hunter by hunt code by statute for public draws. The issue becomes when you start adding in the number of licenses that have been issued through the E-Plus and A-Plus system, that is, those authorizations that are then turned over to the landowners that sign up in this system and allocate them as they choose. So the 66 percent that he's referring to is the combination of both special hunt draws that go through the public process and then also the authorizations that are issued to the landowners to distribute as they see fit. So from a public hunter perspective and statutory requirements, I can say with total certainty that the Department is in adherence to statute. We follow that to the letter of the law. We actually have a higher percentage than what's required going to residents. We are at, I believe, this last year we were at 87 percent. But it comes, the difference comes when you start taking into account those authorizations that are purchased by any number of individuals whether resident or nonresident through the E-Plus and A-Plus programs.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: So in order to improve the percentage you're talking about, and I don't want to put you on the spot today, but I think a continuing dialogue with the Department to

visit on that issue because we, I know as a Commission, are sympathetic to New Mexico hunters and want to get a fair allocation of tags. So to the extent possible continue or start the dialogue to get that done because I know this Commission, none of these rules are written in stone except maybe the ones that comes from the legislature which are a little more challenging for us to deal with. But we are flexible if we can, and I think Commissioner Ricklefs earlier used the word compromise, I think this Commission has tried to compromise on a lot of very difficult issues. And so we can try to build consensus for a different allocation or different way to do it. But somebody's got to sit down and talk it out. Public meetings are great for that at least to get it started but a lot of the nuts and bolts goes on at the Department level to get it done. So have your staff or yourself, you know, drive that dialogue and if it's the right thing to do we can get it on an agenda and talk about it further.

REPRESENTATIVE SMALL: Excellent. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm committed to do that and look forward to following up with the excellent staff at the Game Department. Thank you, Chairman. Thank you, Commissioners.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Thank you for coming. Seeing no further comment, we'll go to closed executive session.

COMMISSIONER RAMOS: Mr. Chairman, I move to adjourn into Executive Session closed to the public; pursuant to Section 10-15-1(H)(2) NMSA 1978, to discuss limited personnel matters relating to compliance and discipline; pursuant to Section 10-15-1(H)(8) NMSA 1978, to discuss the property acquisition; and pursuant to Section 10-15-1(H)(7); on matters subject to the attorney-client privilege relating to threatened or pending litigation in which the Commission and/or Department may become a participant as listed in agenda item 16, sub point A, B and C.

COMMISSIONER RICKLEFS: (Indiscernible)

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Roll call.

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: Commissioner Peterson.

COMMISSIONER PETERSON: Here.

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: Commissioner Ramos.

COMMISSIONER RAMOS: Here.

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: Commissioner Ricklefs.

COMMISSIONER RICKLEFS: Yes.

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: Commissioner Ryan.

COMMISSIONER RYAN: Yes.

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: Commissioner Salopek.

COMMISSIONER SALOPEK: Yes.

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: Vice Chairman Montoya.

VICE CHAIRMAN MONTROYA: Yes.

DIRECTOR SANDOVAL: Chairman Kienzle.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: Yes. And for the benefit of the public, there will only be a motion to adjourn when we come back. There will be no further public comment. Thank you.

[Return from Executive Session]

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: This Commission had adjourned into Executive Session closed to the public. During the Executive Session, the Commission discussed only those matters specified in its motion to adjourn and took no action as to any matter. May I get a motion to adjourn?

COMMISSIONER RYAN: So moved.

COMMISSIONER MONTOYA: Second.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: All in favor?

COMMISSIONERS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN KIENZLE: The Ayes have it.

NEW MEXICO STATE GAME COMMISSION

March 1, 2018
Hotel Encanto San Rafael Ballroom
705 S. Telshor Blvd.
Las Cruces, NM 88011
9:00 a.m. –5:00 p.m.

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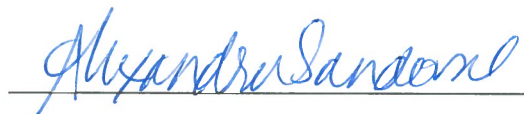
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**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES
NEW MEXICO STATE GAME COMMISSION
MARCH 1, 2018
HOTEL ENCANTO SAN RAFAEL BALLROOM
705 S. TELSHOR BLVD.
LAS CRUCES, NM 88011
9:00 A.M. -5:00 P.M.**



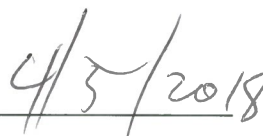
Alexandra Sandoval, Director and Secretary



Date



Paul M. Kienzle III, Chairman
New Mexico State Game Commission



Date

AS/scd