

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:
CHAIRWOMAN AND COMMISSIONER TIFFANY EAST
COMMISSIONER DAVID MCNINCH
COMMISSIONER MARIO WALTHER
PUBLIC REP. PAUL YOUNG

STAFF TO THE COMMITTEE:
ALEJANDRA MEDINA
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DRAFT MINUTES
NEVADA BOARD OF WILDLIFE COMMISSIONERS
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
Friday, May 5

Call To Order, Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call of Committee Members – Committee Chairwoman Tiffany East

Called to order at 8:08am.

Members Present: Tiffany East, Dave McNinch, Mario Walther, Paul Young
Public Present: Jana Wright, Gene Greene, Ted McEvain, Gerald Lent, Kevin Kjer.
Staff Present: Program Officer Alejandra Medina, Deputy Director Mike Scott, Executive Assistant Meghan Beyer, Administrative Assistant Cameron Tull

Approval of Agenda – Committee Chairwoman East – For Possible Action

The Committee will review the agenda and may take action to approve the agenda. The Committee may remove items from the agenda, continue items for consideration or take items out of order at any time.

There were no questions or comments on the agenda.

No public comment.

COMMISSIONER MCNINCH MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVE YOUNG SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED 4-0.

***Approval of Minutes – Committee Chairwoman East – For Possible Action**

The Committee may approve the draft minutes from the April 6, 2023, Committee meeting.

There were no questions or comments on the minutes.

No public comment.

COMMISSIONER WALTHER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM APRIL 6, 2023. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVE YOUNG SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED 4-0.

Staff and Member Announcements – Informational

The Committee will hear any announcements regarding the legislative process or Committee information. There will be no action taken.

There were no announcements.

***Review of Bill/Bill Draft Request (BDR) Tracking List – Program Officer Alejandra Medina – For Possible Action**

The Committee will review the Department's bill/BDR tracking list and may take action to add or emphasize bills/BDRs to be recommended to the Commission. The Committee may discuss positions on certain bills/bill draft requests to be brought to the Commission.

Senate Bill 334

SB 334 passed the Senate Floor. The bill is straightforward and revises the definition of renewable energy for the purposes of provisions governing the portfolio standard. There is no position on this bill.

Senate Bill 176

SB 176 passed through Senate Natural Resources and has an exemption to be referred to Senate Finance. The bill creates an account for purchasing and retiring water rights. There was an amendment proposed by the nature conservancy which addresses administration and is attached. There is currently no position on the bill.

Assembly Bill 102

AB 102 failed to pass through the first Committee Deadline and will be moved down to "No Longer Tracking" after this meeting. The bill prohibits organizing and sponsoring contests and tournaments which animals are taken for prize. An Amendment was submitted by Assemblyman Watts which adds additional species - badger, crow, raccoon, ring-tailed cat. The Commission was neutral on the bill.

Senate Bill 311

SB 311 passed through Senate Natural Resources and has an exemption as it has been referred to Senate Finance. This bill would require the Commission to establish a program for anyone to transfer a tag to a junior. There was a conceptual amendment offered during the hearing that would change the language to say, "resident junior hunter". The Commission voted to support with a requirement for in-person firearm safety or hunter education.

Senate Bill 141.

SB 141 failed to pass through the first Committee deadline and will be moved down to "No Longer Tracking" after this meeting. The bill would eliminate carrying a physical license or permit to hunt fish or trap. The Commission decided to Oppose the bill as written.

Assembly Bill 387

AB 387 passed through the Assembly. The bill asks the State Engineer to consider the best available science when rendering decisions on ground and surface water. A clarifying amendment was offered by Assemblyman Watts. There has been no position taken on the bill.

Assembly Bill 221

AB 221 passed the Assembly Natural Resources Committee and has an exemption granted as it has been referred to Ways and Means. The bill provides NDOW the authority to manage invertebrates as designated by the SGCN list in the Wildlife Action Plan. The bill was amended to strike the word "terrestrial". The Commission supports this bill.

Assembly Bill 112

AB 112 has an exemption granted as it has been referred to Ways and Means. This bill creates a fund to support wildlife crossings to be administered by the Nevada Department of Transportation. This bill will now be sent to the Committee on Ways and Means. The Commission supports this bill.

Assembly Bill 70

AB 70 passed through the Assembly. The bill revises the use of the \$3 predator fee. There was a conceptual amendment proposed to let the user designate the use of the fee. The Commission has voted to oppose the bill.

Committee Chairwoman East explained that the amendment would allow applicants the choice of whether to support lethal removal of predators or habitat work. She would support this bill after the amendments. Public Representative Young agreed and believed this bill has been thoroughly worked through.

Commissioner McNinch originally wanted to remain neutral on the bill and was unsure where he stood at the moment. After the Heritage Committee Meeting, he saw new importance of habitat work but was unsure if this was the approach he was hoping for.

Commissioner Walther agreed with Representative Young's comments but said he was ultimately concerned with what buckets of funding would be available to the Department since the funding is unknown.

Deputy Director Mike Scott explained that the predator fee brings in about \$1M and about \$800,000 goes towards lethal removal with the 80 percent mandate. He explained that the fund might change dramatically with this legislation. Deputy Director Scott and Commissioner Walther discussed the matching of those funds and the use of Pittman-Robertson dollars.

No public comment.

The Committee decided to table the discussion until the Commission Meeting.

Senate Bill 88

SB 88 has passed through the Senate. This bill would require a study to be done on state agencies and boards to include the Wildlife Commission. The Commission decided not take a position on the bill.

Senate Bill 90

SB 90 has passed through the Senate. The amendment provides that the designation complies with the Wild and Free Roaming Horses and Burro's Act. The Commission has voted to oppose the bill.

Senate Bill 338

SB 338 passed the Senate Floor. The bill defines "utility vehicle" and provides a speed limit of 45mph on highways. There is no position on this bill.

Senate Bill 312

SB 312 failed to pass through the first Committee deadline and will be moved down to "No Longer Tracking" after this meeting. The bill authorizes a person to take the carcass and skull with antlers attached or shed antlers of a big game mammal for personal use. The Commission voted to support the bill with some conceptual amendments.

Senate Bill 421

SB 421 failed to pass through the first Committee deadline and will be moved down to "No Longer Tracking" after this meeting. The bill provided tax abatements for certain renewable energy facilities and provides a definition for "microgrids". There was no position on the bill.

Assembly Bill 349

AB 349 has an exemption granted as it has been referred to Ways and Means. The bill establishes the Nevada Wildlife Conservation Fund Program. This program provides an account to accept tax exempt donations to be used for the preservation, protection, and management of wildlife. A board would be created to help manage the use of the funds, similar to the way the Dream Tag Board operates. An amendment was offered that would remove two members appointed by legislators. The Commission voted to support the bill.

Committee Chairwoman East questioned whether the bill should have Commission oversight. She explained that there are people who may want to support this but would not necessarily want to be connected to a hook and bullet club. She wondered if the Commission should submit a proposed amendment.

Commissioner McNinch agreed and spoke with Ms. Nappe who clarified that her priority is to get the bill across the finish line. He knows the intent of the bill is to engage more broadly.

No public comment.

COMMITTEE CHAIRWOMAN EAST MOVED TO REVISE A PLATFORM TO INCLUDE MORE INTEREST GROUPS ON THE ADVISORY BOARD AND THAT IT IS NOT UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE COMMISSION BUT REPORTS TO THE COMMISSION. COMMISSIONER MCNINCH SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED 4-0.

Senate Bill 224

SB 224 failed to pass through the first Committee deadline and will be moved down to "No Longer Tracking" after this meeting. The bill revised the membership of the Wildlife Commission adding one member for the guiding industry and one County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife Member. The Commission opposed this bill.

Senate Joint Resolution 2

SJR 2 passed through the Senate. This bill changes the name of the Sheldon Wildlife Refuge to the E.R. Sans National Wildlife Refuge. There is currently no position on this bill.

Senate Bill 294

SB 294 passed through the Senate. The bill requires the safe storage of firearms in all circumstances. There is currently no position on this bill but the Committee may choose to discuss the bill at greater length today.

Committee Chairwoman East explained that after having time to review the bill, she no longer had concerns. There was no further discussion on SB 294.

Senate Bill 367

SB367 has an exemption granted as it has been referred to Senate Finance. The bill prohibits certain people with drug related offenses from carrying or possessing a firearm. There is currently no position on this bill.

Assembly Bill 355

AB 355 passed through the Assembly. The bill prohibits a person under 21 from using a semiautomatic shotgun or semiautomatic centerfire rifle. The bill was heard in a joint meeting of the Assembly Committee on Judiciary and Senate Committee on Judiciary. The Commission opposes this bill.

Committee Chairwoman East explained that she continues to oppose this bill as it has not changed.

Senate Bill 87

SB 87 passed through the Senate. The bill provides an opportunity to appoint persons to classified positions under certain circumstances. The Commission supports this bill.

Assembly Bill 361

AB 361 passed through the Assembly. The bill requires IFC approval for the acceptance of federal grants. IFC may give provisional approval upon application to the grant. There is currently no position taken on the bill.

Senate Bill 269

SB 269 passed through the Senate. The bill prohibits a person from restraining a dog during any time in which a heat advisory has been issued. An amendment was offered that also added "extreme cold weather events." The bill had a work session on April 4th and was passed as amended. The Committee decided to watch this bill but may choose to discuss more today.

An exemption for hunting and training was asked for and granted. Public Representative Young read the amendment language from NELIS. Commissioner Walther asked to continue tracking the legislation to ensure that the exemption for hunting and training would remain.

No public comment.

COMMISSIONER MCNINCH MOVED TO REMAIN NEUTRAL IF EXEMPTIONS FOR HUNTING AND TRAINING EXIST. COMMISSIONER WALTHER SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED 4-0.

Management Analyst Kailey Musso was able to join the meeting at a later time and clarified that the exemptions for hunting and training would remain in place.

Future Committee Meetings – Committee Chairwoman East – For Possible Action

The Committee will discuss potential agenda items for future committee meetings. The Committee may schedule its next meeting and may choose to recommend an April meeting date or timeframe for the Board of Wildlife Commissioners related to legislative matters if needed.

A future committee meeting will be scheduled, if needed.

Public Comment Period

Persons wishing to comment are invited to raise their virtual hands in the virtual meeting forum during the appropriate time; each person offering public comment during this period will be limited to not more than 3 minutes. No action can be taken by the Committee at this time; any item requiring Committee action may be scheduled on a future Committee agenda.

No public comment.

The meeting adjourned at 8:58am.

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