

DAC MEETING MINUTES
FRIDAY, APRIL 3, 2009
WISCONSIN DNR WEST CENTRAL REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS
LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN

DAC members in attendance: Chair Werner Burkat, John Kocourek Tom Zimmer, Jim Rutledge, David Lato, Steve Johnson and Dale Petkovsek.

DAC members absent: David Stinson, John Mitchell and Joe Greene

Others in attendance: Kimberly Currie, Andy Janicki, Carl Mesman, and Kelly Frawley

Chairman Burkat called the meeting to order at approximately 10:10 a.m.

Rutledge motioned to accept the agenda. Steve Johnson seconded with all in favor.

Next item addressed was the review of the minutes from December 11, 2008, held in Stevens Point. Lato commented that the minutes should reflect Dale's hunt versus "Dave's" hunt.

Rutledge motion to accept the amended minutes. Zimmer seconded with all in favor.

Free Access to State Parks with NPS Golden Access Pass

Business Management and Section Chief Kimberly Currie stated that the America the Beautiful Access Pass has replaced the NPS Golden Access Pass. She then presented a fiscal analysis of implementing such a program. The analysis showed a significant loss of revenue to the Parks Bureau along with initial start up costs.

John Kocourek commented that if accepting the America the Beautiful Pass is the right thing to do than we should do it. Obviously, it will create work.

Werner Burkat commented he does not understand why retraining of staff is necessary should a customer present the America the Beautiful Pass.

Currie commented that we would likely reprint a pass. Werner commented why not just honor the America the Beautiful Pass? Kimberly commented that we do not receive additional federal funds should we honor this pass.

Kocourek commented that the parks should be able to grant access by stating we honor the America the Beautiful Access Pass.

Currie commented that the current statute requires a Wisconsin issued sticker for access to the parks. Currie commented there are alternatives available to provide access through a sticker.

Lato commented that a straight acceptance of the America the Beautiful Pass in real terms could result in a loss of over \$400,000 by not receiving revenue for passes from persons purchasing alternative access passes.

Currie commented fees are set by statute. Any change will require an amendment to statute.

Rutledge commented that the disabled population expects some cost.

Johnson asked for the number of senior passes sold. Currie estimated revenue at \$40,000 annually.

Kocourek responded that the DAC should review alternatives and the impact and provide an appropriate recommendation to the legislature.

Lato asked if we receive a number of requests from disabled populations requesting relief. Currie stated that she has not received any requests at her level.

The general consensus of the DAC is that a reasonable alternative in sound fiscal times may have been to have cost reflect to that of a senior pass. In difficult times, and with any additional concerns being expressed, the request does not seem warranted at this time.

Currie commented that legislation has passed for disabled veterans to receive a pass to state parks. Currie commented that the card is issued based on permanent or temporary disability. Documentation is required from the County's veterans affairs officer. Currie offered a copy of the application and a sample copy of the pass for review by the DAC. Applications can be received on-line or at the state park. If requested at a state park an application is given to the applicant and a courtesy pass is offered for the day.

Currie commented that some municipalities with room tax have sent requests for tax on cabins for disabled populations. Kimberly commented that a legal opinion states that the municipalities cannot tax state property. The issue is moot.

Deer Baiting Exception for People with Disabilities

Janicki commented that concern has been expressed over baiting due to chronic waste disease and other related issues. Andy read (get letter from Andy).

Zimmer commented that this was debated by the DAC at an earlier meeting in Fitchburg.

Johnson asked if this issue would appear before the conservation congress. Locally a number of comments were received and debate ensued regarding baiting in general and baiting for disabled hunters.

Zimmer commented it is a topic that warrants the opinion of the Council.

Lato questioned the status of proposals requesting the elimination of baiting statewide. Mesman commented that legislatively he believes it is a tough sell and difficult to find a sponsor.

Johnson recommends reviewing past meeting minutes and focusing discussion on whether this is a CWD or baiting issue.

Mesman commented that the big game committee for the conservation congress should be asked if an exemption should be made in a county that does not currently allow baiting. This would be an avenue to receive another committee's input.

Zimmer expressed interest in hearing what the Council's position is on this matter. All were in favor if a proposed statewide ban were to go in effect without an exception for the disabled - except for Zimmer.

Long-Term Class B Hunters to Participate

The long-term Class B question is on the spring fish and game hearings. Mesman commented that there are two separate meetings – the DNR meetings and the Conservation Congress meetings.

Rutledge commented that this is an issue that will require a legislator to draft and sponsor the issue.

Mesman will be meeting with folks representing the cognitively disabled to review potential legislation that may allow cognitively disabled to participate in the disabled hunt. Mesman stated the department surveyed nationwide and found that anything created may be considered a model nationwide.

The matter will be placed on the next meeting of the DAC after Mesman has had his meeting and a report is prepared defining the issues.

Mesman received a request from an individual with an Achilles injury the use of a crossbow. Mesman commented that he informed the gentleman that the use of a crossbow is an issue for those with upper extremity issues. The DAC commented that they believe the candidate would not qualify for the exception.

Disabled Hunt Sponsor Survey Results

Rutledge stated the addition of hunters should be up to the sponsors.

Kocourek commented the numbers reflect the hunts and not the hunters.

Zimmer commented if hunts are 70% full why do 69% of participants respond they should be able to participate in more than one disabled hunt?

Lato stated that the restriction of hunt size and participants may be based on resources available for a specific hunt.

Rutledge stated sponsor can define when, where and how. The landowner defines area. Disabled hunt allows at a maximum of two hunters per 40 acres.

Petkovsek commented that we should determine whether the number of hunts and hunters are increasing or decreasing. If the disabled hunt is continuing to grow the numbers should reflect such.

Chair Burkat commented that with advances of adaptive equipment the number should increase. Participation should be gauged over the last ten years.

Chair Burkat stated categorization should be based on size of hunts and area hunted. With 20+ hunters it is likely that they did not turn anyone away.

Rutledge questioned what DAC member and DNR staff are looking for in a survey from the disabled hunt? Rutledge is not sure if the survey methodology results in reliable information. It was decided that Janicki would further decipher the results and present them at the next meeting,

Vehicles on State Lands Form

Janicki met with Brigit Brown, State Trails Coordinator, to review the manual code for motorized vehicle use. Janicki toured wildlife areas, state forests, parks, etc... and interviewed staff for changes regarding use. Janicki is looking to provide a separate application for those wishing to get outside for passive recreation purpose.

State natural areas were off limits for motorized vehicles. As now proposed, motorized access to State Natural Areas (SNAs) for the disabled population would be allowed should the property manager deem a request appropriate. Most property managers restrict use to trails or service roads.

Chair Burkat asked if property managers have the ability to be restrictive.

Janicki commented that the intent is to keep the request as a property-based decision. An appeal process is available for the permit process should an individual be denied a request.

Chair Burkat questioned where the appeal is filed.

Mesman commented that the appeal would likely go through the manager's supervisor and up through the Department quite possibly to the Department's Secretary. Mesman commented that the funding source is also a condition that may place restrictions on motorized use (ex. Ice Age Trail).

Rutledge questioned the distinction between a motorized vehicle and a motorized wheel chair.

Chair Burkat indicated that the use is determined based on general distinction on whether the chair can be used in a home.

Members Updates

Zimmer: No update.

Lato: No update.

Rutledge commented the DAC should discuss accessibility at the Yellowstone shooting range. Getting a manual chair up to certain parts of the range can be difficult.

Janicki commented three more parks will get adaptive kayaks: Perrot, Mirror Lake and Buckhorn. Chair Burkat asked who maintained. Janicki commented that park personnel or the park concessionaire maintains. At Perrot the friends group is purchasing and making it part of the concession group. Johnson asked if the boats are at a reduced rate. Janicki indicated that the Minnesota vendor gets it the kayak at cost and fabricates it at cost.

Mesman commented the UTV program ends in September. A report must be to legislature by January 1st.

Johnson commented that 500 people attended the NASA meeting. NASA had over 80 rifles for raffle. NASA is looking to sponsor a kayak. NASA group is working with Dave Vetrano on accessible fishing piers. A couple of big golf outings are scheduled at the end of August/September to pursue an adaptive golf cart.

Petkovsek commented that he was allowed to go on a bear den trip. DNR staff tranquilized a sow and weighed the cubs. Petkovsek could not go in den but DNR staff brought out a cub to his vehicle. In mid-March a European style-pheasant shoot was held for 40 hunters. The hunters took down over 400 pheasants.

Kocourek: No update.

Chair Burkat commented that the 3rd annual disabled fishing for youth is scheduled for June 5th. The group sponsoring the event is looking for a sponsor to provide rods and

reels. Last year they group had 100 participants. Health and transportation issues can limit the number of participants.

Next meeting is scheduled for 10 a.m., Friday, July 10, 2009 at the Northeast Region Headquarters, 2984 Shawano Avenue, Green Bay, Wisconsin (Phone: 920-662-5100).

Lato motion to adjourn. Rutledge seconded and all were in favor.