

DISABLED ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN – STVENS POINT  
DECEMBER 14, 2012

Members present: Tom Zimmer, John Martinson, John Kocourek, Jim Rutledge, Werner Burkat, Dale Petkovsek, Alternate Kris Engel, and John Mitchell (by phone)

Members absent: Steve Johnson and Joe Greene (attempted to phone in, but was not able)

Guests: Kevin Wallenfang – DNR Wildlife Management, Scott Roepke – DNR Wildlife Management, Jeff Pagels - Challenge the Outdoors, Inc., Keith Pamperin - Chairman of Challenge the Outdoors, Inc.

Others: Dale Petkovsek's friend/attendant Kristi, Tyler Strelow – DNR Law Enforcement DAC liaison, Dan Olson – DNR Facilities and Lands, Julie Amakobe – DNR Facilities and Lands acting DAC liaison

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Tom Zimmer at approximately 9:30 am. Since there were a lot of new faces present, we went around the room and did a meet and greet.

First, Chairman Zimmer asked for an agenda repair. Kevin Wallenfang will be talking first about the Disabled Deer Hunts and streamlining the associated paperwork.

Kevin explained that the DNR wants to streamline the application process. DNR wants the application to be electronic (on-line). But note that one can still apply via a hard copy. The landowners will be listed on a database and one can do a renewal form only from this site. This process will have an automatic download of applicants to a spreadsheet and the spreadsheet will be given to the appropriate Wildlife Managers. This new process proposes to eliminate the Wildlife Biologist/Manager and Warden signatures. This new process will also get rid of the hard and fast deadlines and will be more flexible. For example, the June 1<sup>st</sup> deadline for landowners will remain on the form, but the deadline will not be in the law/administrative rules. Last year there were 500 hunters that signed up with 75,000 acres identified for disabled hunting. Likewise, the September 1<sup>st</sup> deadline for the disabled hunters to sign up won't be enforced. In addition, the participate limits per acre criteria will be eliminated in rule change. These housekeeping rule changes are scheduled for 2014.

Please NOTE: the online application is now live on DNR's website.

Kevin explained that during the youth hunts (mentored hunts) that approximately 4,000 deer are shot with a guesstimate of 10-20,000 youth participants for 2 days on public lands. The Legislature has said no October hunts except for disabled and youth hunts. Sometimes the hunts overlap and sometimes they don't depending on which Saturday each hunt falls on.

The number of disabled permits issued in 2012 were:

Class A permits	1,293
Class B (temporary)	
Shoot from vehicle	1,077
Crossbow	1,779
Trolling	102
Combination (shoot vehicle, trolling)	192
Class C permits	30
Crossbow	2,520
Trolling	<u>21</u>
<b>Total Issued in 2012</b>	<b>7,014</b>

The disabled hunts run for a 9 day season beginning the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday in October.

**Jim made a motion to accept recommendations from Wildlife Management to make it more flexible for special gun deer hunt participants by eliminating the landowners' signatures, wildlife biologists' and wardens' signatures, no deadline dates set in rule, no minimum acreage, and no participant limits per acre. Dale Petkovsek seconded the motion. All were in favor.**

The removal of the restriction of one special hunt per person rule was also brought up during this discussion. The Council voted on it and the result was 4 votes to eliminate the rule and 3 votes to keep it. The Sponsor will need to be more restrictive if this change gets implemented. Kevin indicated that he will draft up the rule change.

Next on the agenda was the Matthew Denis letter that was sent to Chairman Zimmer. Mr. Denis proposed having the disabled deer season concurrent with the youth deer season on all lands open to hunting, public and private for a 9 day season. Allowable participants would be hunters with a Class A or Class C disabled permit. The rules would closely mirror those of the youth hunt except that participants would also include those individuals with Class A and Class C permits.

Tom started the discussion. Kevin advised that the timing is not good right now to ask for a 9 day season to be opened up to all private and public lands along with the youth hunt. It is better to wait on this due to the negative attitude towards the October hunts. Kevin advised that the disabled hunters may lose what they currently have in place. Kevin indicated that this change will likely need a state statutory change and definitely will need to be part of the Spring Hearings. With the Legislature eliminating the October hunts this would be very controversial. Mr. Pamperin also agreed that the discussion on this topic should wait.

Next on the agenda was the DAC Awards discussion. First the Council looked at the Past/President Chairperson Award. All members present were in favor of Werner receiving this award. Outstanding Service Awards will go to Carl Mesman and Kelly Frawley. The Outstanding Property Award and External Relations Outstanding Service Awards were mentioned. There was some discussion and clarification on how the DAC gives out all the

awards. This agenda item was tabled and it was determined that written nominations are required for **all** categories. Please get your written nominations to Chairman Zimmer by February 28<sup>th</sup>.

It was determined that Julie needs to do the renewal letters for 3 members of the DAC and get them to the Secretary's Office.

Dan Olson, Chief of Facilities Management, updated the Council on the Accessibility Coordinator's vacancy and when Andy's position might be filled.

Next on the agenda was the topic of keeping tree stands up for longer than one day on public (DNR owned and managed) lands. This topic is going to be part of the Spring Hearings and could be in effect during 2014. The proposed language says that portable stands can be put up 7 days before and taken down 7 days after the hunting season. Kevin is to get Julie the notes on this item.

In addition, Kevin mentioned the current requirement for able bodied hunters need to be 50% concealed when using duck blinds, etc. A new rule has been drafted so that this restriction is not required by disabled hunters. Kevin will get Julie information/notes on this item as well.

Next, the Council went over last meeting's minutes from August 17, 2012 meeting held in Steven Point. There was a clarification in the minutes regarding Accessible Shooting Ranges. Jim said that he had mentioned the need for disability access for shooting ranges statewide. He also mentioned that the DAC toured the McMiller Range several years ago and that the DNR was making it more accessible.

**Jim made a motion to accept the minutes with the minor clarification and Dale Petkovsek seconded the motion. All were in favor.**

Next the council looked at the next meeting date. April 5<sup>th</sup> was suggested. **This has since been changed to APRIL 12<sup>TH</sup>.**

The next item discussed on the agenda was the Bear Tag Transfer to Class A Hunters. Jeff Pagels and Keith Pamperin, of Challenge the Outdoors, a non-profit, took the lead on this item. But first someone asked the question regarding the use of a crossbow to take rough fish. Jeff Pagels gave some history of the crossbow and the taking of rough fish. He had gotten an administrative code change to allow this to happen. Now back to the bear tag transfer.

A person with preference points died and wanted to give his tag to a disabled person. The current rule allows for the transfer of a bear tag to a youth 10-17 years of age. Jeff and Keith want to change the rule to allow someone to give a bear tag to a disabled person with a Class A permit. The only objection from DNR is how about adding a Class C permit holder? There was a lot of discussion on the definition of disabled. At one point the DAC had defined disabled as Class A, long-term Class B, Class C, and Class D permit holders and the terminally ill. John Martinson and Tom said why not open it up to anyone who could receive the Bear Tag transfer and John added that DNR could raise the fee to \$20.00. Kevin provided some data. Recently

there were 104,000 applying for bear permits with 640 youth transfers. Minimum wait times to draw a permit are currently 3-9 years depending on the zone.

The Council voted and 5 members voted for transfer to the disabled, 2 members voted for the transfer to anyone, and 1 member voted that no transfers occur at all. The majority of DAC members are in favor of allowing the transfer of a bear tag to a disabled person. Someone from the DAC needs to touch base with the Conservation Congress--Mike Rogers or Rob Bohman. Mike Rogers' phone number is 608-963-7105. Currently there are several other tags that can be transferred to youth. These tags include: bear, bobcat, and otter. Wolf or elk can also be transferred to a youth or an adult.

Next, the DAC discussed the topic of hunting in state parks. The DAC is encouraged to submit any feedback to the Department regarding the new rules that will allow all hunters access to most state parks. This new rule will put more hunters in the woods at the same time that could impact the disabled spring turkey hunts in some parks. Emergency rules are being drafted to allow hunting for all in state parks, so in order to amend these rules to recognize the disabled hunters' access (turkey hunting); someone will need to talk to Tim Andryk of DNR. Kevin Wallenfang asked that the DAC members to get hands on information from the Natural Resources Board and comment on this recommendation. Now State Parks are set to be open for hunting until they are closed for the season.

Hunting in State Parks will be open from November 15-December 15 (or the Sunday nearest January 6<sup>th</sup> if bow hunting is allowed). Hunting will not be allowed surrounding heavily used recreational trails. The department will be proposing a new rule to prohibit the discharge of firearms, bows, crossbows or air guns from or across all public trails designated on published DNR property maps. NOTE: This rule is not yet in effect. The department will be working on an emergency rule to accomplish this NRB request.

Keith Pamperin of Challenge the Outdoors is having a charity shooting--sporting clay event at J&H Hunting Club in Navarino on April 6, 2013. This is a private 5 stand clay shoot, but is not accessible. The owners want to put in a gravel pathway and are looking for funding. Federal regulations state that Pitman-Roberts funds can only fund facilities that are open to the public and this facility is open to the public. The DAC generally supports improving accessibility at all facilities. The funding will help pay for events throughout the year.

Next item on the agenda is the members' updates. Jim Rutledge said that it was an unofficial site visit, but he took a tour on the Snake Trail Range, a public shooting range in Iron County, a couple of miles south of Mercer. This facility was to be getting a grant from the NRA for accessibility and other upgrades.

Kristen, John K., Werner, John M., and Dale did not have any member updates.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00.