

Manitoba Chapter, The Wildlife Society – Conservation Affairs Committee

Meeting April 5 2017, MB Hydro Building, 820 Taylor Avenue, Winnipeg

Attendance

2 co-chairs
6 members

Regrets

2 members

1. Approved Agenda
2. Approved Minutes of last meeting
3. Update from new co-chairs, welcoming of new members, review the CAC Terms of Reference.
4. Update on any other action items from previous meetings:
 - a. Fisheries letters:
 - i. Response to our fisheries letter, positive sign.
 - ii. Speaker at Wildlife Federation meeting with past weekend was great. Western regional fisheries biologist.
 - iii. Keep an eye on the fisheries review situation.
 - b. Surface water management legislation (Bill 5):
 - i. Regulations are important (class 3-5 wetlands). Climate change is on radar with federal government. About a month ago, Greg Bruce had meeting with Jonathan Scarth (Exec. Sec. to Premier?) said they were going to do incentives instead of legislation. DUC has produced scenario planning (eg. Status quo vs. incentives vs. regulations vs. carbon taxation to draining). Carbon tax is not as good as regulations, but may be offered forward as suggestion. Was shown that regulation was the best way forward but will be hosting meetings in the future and try to push that. Carbon tax does generate revenue (estimation 10 yrs = \$40 million revenue).
 - ii. We can support where and when needed, member will let us know.
 - c. Freedom Road Proposal:
 - i. Co-chair thought it was light for the EA. Not much for us to comment on.
 - ii. March 15 was end of round 1 of consultations
 - iii. Road runs near Falcon Lake to Shoal Lake 40 (passes through parts of Whiteshell)
 - d. MMTP Transmission Line:
 - i. Public hearing in May in Winnipeg (2 members abstaining)
 - ii. Line runs from Dorsey to Minnesota border and EA has been filed with CEC now
 - iii. Construction slated as early as this winter
 - e. New project ideas:

- i. UM student project ideas- looking for relevant, real research that would be productive
 - 1. Collared elk data for GIS student
 - 2. Trichinosis in black bear, brainworm in urban white-tailed deer and snails/slugs
 - 3. Feral swine prevalence
 - 4. Deer feeding impact on urban forests and regeneration
 - 5. **ACTION: Supply more project ideas to co-chair**
- f. Whitewater Lake Drainage:
 - i. No progress on this. Member will ask about it from Bruce Gray (Acting DM)
- g. Urban wildlife feeding (sub-committee):
 - i. What is our target? All wildlife or just deer. Baiting is restricted in Manitoba.
 - ii. Human safety and annoyance also wildlife safety
 - iii. New retention ponds in the plans for the city, major problem.
 - iv. Wildlife feeding at the park is a major issue.
 - v. TWS has a position statement "Baiting and Supplemental Feeding of Game Wildlife Species"
 - vi. Elongated hoof syndrome in cervids- related to supplemental feeding?
 - vii. **ACTION: Sub-committee should continue to work on the wildlife feeding issue**
- h. Birtle Transmission Project:
 - i. Now in 2nd round of consultation, ending in July? Not at EA stage yet.
 - ii. CAC members to take over this (2 members abstaining)
 - iii. Line from Birtle to Saskatchewan
 - iv. **ACTION: Member to follow up and continue researching.**
 - v. **ACTION: Co-chair to provide information forwarded by President to member.**
- i. Wapusk NP:
 - i. Last week came out for comment. Member reviewed briefly- more engagement for First Nations, increased access opportunities, more research, no details.
 - ii. **ACTION: Member to continue to look into the Wapusk NP plan.**
- j. Moose management:
 - i. A follow up to the letter we wrote in 2015.
 - ii. Has there been policy or management changes?
 - iii. More survey results showing decrease in population or remain low and have not rebounded.
 - iv. Is it time to revisit?
 - v. With hunting closures, populations have not recovered (increase 2%). Some areas have still not been closed and have open hunting seasons with unsustainable moose populations.

- vi. C-chair suggests moving forward with a follow up with this government to check in to see how they have dealt with the 9 recommendations we suggested in November 2015.
- vii. Should we align with the MWF or other chapters or governments to make public comments?
- viii. **ACTION: C-chair draft response letter maybe with Saskatchewan, Minnesota, or other organizations like MWF by April 30.**

5. New items

- a. Climate and Green Plan:
 - i. Sent in letter last week, no response yet.
 - ii. Survey online had issues since people could fill it out infinite times.
- b. Baiting owls:
 - i. Is baiting to band owls different as for baiting for photography
 - ii. Government ethics approval for research?
 - iii. Maybe we need to make a generalized comment to feeding wildlife that covers all of this that expresses the dangers to wildlife. In general, do not feed wildlife but recognizing that there is a gradient of severity.
 - iv. **ACTION: Sub-committee to pursue this with wildlife feeding letter by May 15. A by-law for the city?**
- c. Pellet feeding and CWD:
 - i. Contaminated facility is possible i.e. Winkler.
 - ii. Prion virulence differs depending on host and host route.
 - iii. Policies are not in place to protect the spread of prions. They can be taken up by a number of plants. Risk is very high to the province.
 - iv. What is our role in this issue? A letter on CWD and importation of pellets. Legislation is being developed to support the movement rather than restrict it, dangerous transmission.
 - v. CAC can help advocate with MWF on this topic. Member is drafting personal letter for MLAs and Minister Cox. He will share with the CAC but it will not go further than the committee.
 - vi. **ACTION: Member to send his letter to the CAC and remain with the CAC. To keep us informed. Member to keep ears open within the vet community.**
- d. Delisting mule deer:
 - i. Mule deer may be prone to CWD. Do we know a lot about their population in Manitoba? May pursue but not right now.
- e. Feral cats in Winnipeg:
 - i. Catch neuter release program press release
 - ii. Manage feral cat colonies

- iii. Position statement from parent society- maybe join together with others to pursue this. Co-chair has reached out to other conservation focused organizations. Nature MB and Bird Studies Canada did respond.
 - iv. **ACTION: Member to circulate “Incidental Mortality” document**
 - v. **ACTION: Co-chair to draft a letter (May 15) to encourage humane society/city of Winnipeg to not allow releases and feral cat colonies. Get policy statement and circulate original article. Work with member and come up with productive solutions.**
6. **ACTION: Co-chair to send out minutes after meeting**
7. Next meeting – June 7, 7 pm