**TWS Manitoba Chapter Conservation Affairs Committee Meeting Agenda**

*Date: October 23, 2019*

*Location: Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre*

*Present: 7 members*

*Regrets: 3 members*

1. Discussion on minutes from July 2019 meeting

Minutes approved.

Action: Committee member to remove names and post on website

Action Items:

* ~~Action – Committee member to post agenda from September 2018 meeting on website~~
* ~~Action: Committee member to send out 2018 student topics to group for updating~~
* Action: Committee member to brainstorm ideas on replacement member for Lake Winnipeg Walleye Working Group
* ~~Action: Committee member to draft inquiry email on Online 2018/19 Moose Survey Results from TWS MB to Wildlife and Fisheries Branch Director~~
* Action: Committee member to send out information on North American Model of Wildlife Conservation
* Action: Committee member to check with Canadian Section on response to neonicotinoid pesticide letter

1. Agenda additions/approval

Agenda approved

1. Overview of CAC activities since last meeting
   1. Inquiry on status of Five-year Report on Wildlife (2012 - 2017) and 2019 Big Game Aerial Survey Summary
      1. No response to date

Five-year reports are usually released late, however this one is later than normal according to committee members. Committee member may discuss with Wildlife and Fisheries Branch Director at upcoming personal meeting.

Aerial survey results posted on website recently. Committee to review and discuss at later date if needed.

* 1. Topics for Wildlife Management Courses
     1. Completed, posted, and circulated

1. Ongoing Topics
   1. New Department and Minister announced
      1. *“Blaine Pedersen (MLA for Midland) will be the minister of the new Department of Agriculture and Resource Development, an expanded department focused on agriculture and natural resources, including watershed districts, GROW programming, forestry, mining, fish and wildlife management.”*
      2. *“Updated mandate letters will be provided to cabinet during the next legislative session.”*
      3. Anticipated new Minister and brainstormed topics of conversation (subject to change with new Department and mandates):
         * Shared management – fisheries and moose
         * Water Rights Regulation – final version released?
         * CWD – if CDN/MB letters not moved forward by then

Former department of Sustainable Development split into Department of Agriculture and Resource Development and Department of Conservation and Climate. Lots of unknowns on how this department change will impact wildlife and policy in the province.

Desire from both MB executive and CAC to meet with new Minister. Idea to send ‘welcome’ letter proposing meeting and listing discussion topics important to the Chapter. Potentially attached recent CWD letter that was sent to federal government, emphasizing the risks to both wildlife and agriculture. Potentially send similar letter to new Minister of Conservation and Climate.

Will find out more about reorganization and government priorities when new mandate letters are released in mid-November. To review and draft letters after.

Action: Committee member to update President on CAC’s recommended course of action.

* 1. Water Rights Regulation - final version released

Early meetings between conservation organizations and department were not very positive, however revised regulation did address several issues brought to their attention. Resulting regulation is better than expected, acknowledging the need for government to compromise due to agricultural needs. Implementation will determine the real effectiveness of regulation.

Action: Committee member to share updates on final regulation

* 1. Bill 29 – Shared Management and Safe Hunting

Not many updates. “Safe Hunting” is mentioned in 100 day plan that was released after the election, and likely to be included in new mandate letters.

* 1. Lake Winnipeg Walleye Working Group

Committee member not present at meeting for updates. Manitoba Wildlife Federation has not requested replacement member from TWS MB for group to date.

* 1. Lake Winnipeg Measures to Enhance Sustainability

Province moving forward with proposed changes for winter and spring 2020. No concerns. Move to tabled section.

* 1. Black Bear Rehab Centre
     1. Letter re-sent, to Director of Wildlife and Fisheries. Still awaiting response

Committee member may discuss with Director at upcoming personal meeting.

* 1. Moose management in province

Some answers to status of moose may be revealed in 2019 aerial survey reports recently posted on website.

Discussion on lack of public facing provincial moose management plan. Something to potentially mention at future meeting with new Minister.

* 1. Federal Indigenous Guardian Program

Committee member not present to discuss program observed in Grand Rapids. Appears to be positive program. To monitor going forward.

* 1. Changes to Crown Land Sale Process in Manitoba (from 100 Day Action Plan following election)
     1. Enact the auction system for Agriculture Crown Lands and hold the first auction;
     2. Introduce *The Crown Lands Dispositions Act*;
     3. Identify an inventory of land and property owned by the department that is no longer usable or required by government for the delivery of public services

Not sure what these changes mean yet, but something to monitor closely. Could have major impacts to preservation of wildlife habitat within province. Committee member noted that this may specifically have impacts on managing endangered species habitat in federal recovery plans. Chapter should comment if there are going to widespread sales of Crown land. Committee member has dealt with similar issues in Saskatchewan in recent years.

* 1. Landowner conflicts with species at risk and challenges of the Endangered Species and Ecosytems Act in southern Manitoba

Farmers and Municipalities uniting in southern Manitoba to advocate that the Act should not apply on private lands. Stemmed by cultivation of native tall grass prairie and endangered orchids that resulted in an enforcement warning and eventually charges laid against an Amish colony in the Stuartburn area. To monitor and comment on if necessary.

1. Canadian Section CAC Update
   1. Next meeting October 29, 2019

Not much activity throughout summer. Committee member to update at next meeting.

1. Tabled items - Issues on hold, waiting for the appropriate moment to make MB Chapter TWS position policy known.
   1. Pellet feeding and CWD; Owl baiting; City of Winnipeg “Shape Winnipeg for Tomorrow”; Feral cats; Wildlife feeding; Neonics and effect on wildlife; White-nose syndrome in Manitoba; Qamanirjuaq/Beverly caribou survey; Neonicotinoid pesticides

Action: Add Lake Winnipeg Fisheries for next meeting.

1. Next Meeting Date/Adjourn

Tentative meeting date: January 9, 2020. Assiniboine Park Zoo. 7:00 pm.