

## NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD

### MINUTES

The Natural Resources Board met via teleconference at 8:30 a.m. on Friday, February 10, 2006, in Room 774B of the State Natural Resources Building (GEF 2), Madison, for action on Item 1.

Gerald O'Brien (Stevens Point)	Dan Poulson (Palmyra)
Herb Behnke (Shawano)	Steve Willett (Phillips)
Chris Thomas (Stevens Point)	John Welter (Eau Claire)

Absent –Jonathan Ela

#### **Order of Business**

1. Reconsideration in response to the February 8, 2006 action of the legislative committees regarding the adoption of Board Order WM-29-05, revisions to NR 10 pertaining to deer hunting season and regulations.

Tom Hauge, Director, Wildlife Management Bureau stated to recap for everyone, this rule grew out efforts by all of Wisconsin's major deer hunting organizations to address concerns with the current deer hunting seasons and deer tagging procedures. The department worked with these groups to assemble a rule that met their concerns, kept herd control as a priority, and keep a timeline that would put the rule in place for the 2006 seasons. The NRB adopted the rule and forwarded it to the legislature in December.

After receiving a first legislative request for modification, the Board did agree to modify the rule to address concerns over timing of the youth deer hunt weekend and limit the geographic scope of the December antlerless deer hunt to only those deer units needing herd control seasons. This latter adjustment was made to minimize conflict between snowmobiling interests and deer seasons. The respective assembly and senate natural resources committees of the legislature met on Wednesday and took executive action to resubmit their previous requests to the department requesting that the 2006 deer season rule be further modified. During his executive session, Chairman Gunderson made it very clear that the legislature has the final decision on the rule and that the input from the stakeholders is advisory to their decision.

Our recommendation to the NRB is that no further modification be made to the rule. The legislative requests are exactly the same as before and consequently our analysis has not changed. We believe their requests create significant complexity to deer hunting seasons and reduce the hunter capability to manage the deer herd.

I also must inform the NRB the practical reality of the legislature's request for reconsideration is that the clock will run out for implementing this rule in 2006. We have pushed out licensing contractors to the limit in making and ground testing the complex computer programming changes needed for this year. They need to be working on this right now.

Mr. Welter asked about the choices the Board has. One would be to stand firm and then it's up to legislative committees to consider rule proposal we sent over to be suspended. Then there is no option, but to go back to the existing 2005 rule that would put in place T zones, earn-a-buck, an October hunt and a December hunt.

Mr. Andryk, DNR Attorney stated that is correct, but how long the rule is suspended over at the legislature depends on a number of factors. The committees would object to the rule in response to the Department not making further changes that they asked for. Then it goes to the Joint Committee for Review of Administrative Rules (JCRAR) and they would have to vote to uphold the legislature's action or not. They could also send the rule back for further modifications as well. At this point and time, it looks like the rule is held up in legislative review and it won't get done for 2006.

Mr. Welter asked about the license time crunch and people buying patron's license are going to expect to know what deer options are available to them.

Mr. Hauge stated that is why this request for reconsideration that we can't be implemented in 2006.

Mr. O'Brien asked if the 2005 regulations include Earn a Buck. (EAB)

Mr. Hauge stated we didn't have EAB in 2005. We will be bringing recommendations to the March NRB meeting regarding any unit by unit herd control seasons and earn a buck regulations.

Mr. Willett asked what the legislature wants.

Mr. Hauge stated that they want to move the December hunt up one week to have most deer hunting done so that the snowmobile trails can be open and maintained.

**Mr. Behnke MOVED, seconded by Mr. Poulson to make no further modifications in response to the February 8, 2006 action of the legislative committees regarding the adoption of Board Order WM-29-05, revisions to NR 10 pertaining to deer hunting season and regulations. The motion carried unanimously by a roll call vote. Mr. Ela was absent.**

\*\*\* The meeting adjourned at 8:45 a.m.\*\*\*