

The following document is a compilation of written comments submitted by members of the public who did not speak during the April 5, 2024, meeting of the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Natural Resources. These comments are posted individually on the Legislature's website for this meeting and can be found on the Committee's [meeting page](#).

Wildlife Boards in Western States: Mission, Duties, Appointment Criteria, and Membership

Overview: This resource provides a summary of the mission, duties, appointment criteria, and membership for state wildlife agencies in the Western United States. Some of these provisions have been copied verbatim as they appear in statute, while some were summarized or abridged for clarity and brevity. Follow the links provided to review the exact wording of statutes.

Arizona

Board Title: Arizona Game and Fish Commission

Statutes: [ARS 17-201](#) and [ARS 17-202](#) (Appointment), [ARS 17-231](#) (Duties)

Mission / Duties:

- Duties include adoption of rules, establishing programs for game management, providing public information on wildlife, overseeing fund expenditures, holding hearings, and participating in Arizona-Mexico border issues related to wildlife.

Appointment:

- The Governor selects commissioners from a list of candidates prepared by the Arizona Game and Fish Commission Recommendation Board (CRB). The CRB consists of two people from sportsman organizations, one person from an organization focused on a single game species, one organization focused on cattle and ranching, and one organization focused on nongame species.
- The AZ Game and Fish Commission must not consist of more than three members from the same political party, and no two members may be residents of the same county. Members shall be well informed on the subject of wildlife and requirements for its conservation.

Membership:

<https://www.azgfd.com/about-arizona-game-fish/commission-public-information/about-the-commission/meet-the-commission/>

California

Board Title: California Game and Fish Commission

Statute: [FGC 101-500](#)

Mission / Duties:

- Duties: Regulate taking of wildlife (not for commercial purposes) with consideration for populations, habitat, food supplies, the welfare of individual animals, and other pertinent facts and testimony.

Appointment:

- Legislative intent (no appointment criteria): The members of the commission are expected to make complex public policy and biological decisions on behalf of the people of California, with due consideration for: (1) The degree to which the appointee will enhance the diversity of background and geographic representation of the commission. (2) The appointee's demonstrated interest and background in, and familiarity with, wildlife and natural resources management programs at the state or federal level. (3) The appointee's previous experience in public policy decisionmaking, including government processes involving public participation. (4) The

appointee's commitment to prepare for and attend meetings and subcommittee meetings of the commission and to comply with all applicable state conflict-of-interest laws. (5) The extent of the appointee's exposure to and experience with the basic science underpinning the management of living natural resources. (6) The appointee's diversity of knowledge of natural resource issues and related scientific disciplines, including, but not limited to, outdoor recreation.

Membership: <https://fgc.ca.gov/About/Members>

Colorado

Board Title: Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission

Statute: [33-9-101](#)

Mission / Duties:

- Mission: To perpetuate the wildlife resources of the state, to provide a quality state parks system, and to provide enjoyable and sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities that educate and inspire current and future generations to serve as active stewards of Colorado's natural resources.
- Duties: Adopt or revise any rules, designate a commission member with wildlife knowledge to serve as a representative to the state board of the great outdoors Colorado trust fund, designate a commission member with parks and outdoor recreation knowledge to serve as a representative to the state board of the great outdoors Colorado trust fund, promulgate rules to increase or decrease a park fee or charge

Membership: <https://cpw.state.co.us/aboutus/Pages/CommissionMembers.aspx>

Appointment:

- The commission consists of thirteen members, as follows: (a) Two members who are ex officio non voting members, as follows: (I) The executive director; and (II) The commissioner of the department of agriculture; (b) Eleven voting members who are appointed by the governor with the consent of the senate: (I) Three members who are sports persons who can demonstrate a reasonable knowledge of wildlife issues and who have obtained a hunting or fishing license for at least each of the three years prior to their appointments. One must be an outfitter. (II) Three members who are actively involved in production agriculture as owners or lessees of the agricultural property and owners or partial owners of the commodities produced on the land and who can demonstrate a reasonable knowledge of wildlife issues; (III) Three members who can demonstrate that they regularly engage in outdoor recreation and utilize parks resources. One member appointed under this subparagraph shall represent a nonprofit organization that supports and promotes the conservation and enhancement of Colorado's wildlife and habitat; recognizes and promotes primarily non consumptive wildlife use; and has expertise in wildlife issues, wildlife habitat, or wildlife management; and (IV) Two members appointed from the public at-large.
- The governor shall make appointments that ensure that a reasonable balance of the following areas of knowledge and experience, as they relate to parks and wildlife, are represented: Outdoor business, service as a current or former local elected official, youth outdoor education, wildlife biology or science, energy, conservation, beneficial uses of water, land conservation and conservation easements, and diversified trails interests and activities.
- Of the voting members appointed to the commission, there shall not be a difference of more than one person between those members affiliated with any major political party and voting members shall be appointed to the commission in a manner that ensures balanced geographical representation of diverse areas of the state. At least four voting members shall be appointed from west of the continental divide.

Idaho

Board Title: Idaho Fish and Game Commission

Statute: [36-102](#) (Mission and appointment criteria) [36-103](#) (Duties)

Mission / Duties:

- Mission: The supervision, management and control of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game.
- Duties (summarized): (a) Preserve, protect, perpetuate, and manage wildlife of the state and allowing for capture or taking of wildlife only in a manner that will preserve, protect, and perpetuate such wildlife, and provide for the citizens of this state through continued supplies of such wildlife for hunting, fishing and trapping.(b) It shall be the authority, power and duty of the fish and game commission to administer and carry out the policy of the state in accordance with the provisions of the Idaho fish and game code. The commission is not authorized to change such policy but only to administer it.

Appointment:

- The commission shall consist of seven members, to be appointed by the governor made solely upon consideration of the welfare and best interests of fish and game in the state of Idaho, and no person shall be appointed a member of said commission unless he shall be well informed upon, and interested in, the subject of wildlife conservation and restoration. The state of Idaho is divided into seven regions and each of the enumerated regions shall, at all times, be represented by one member of the commission, appointed from said region by the governor.

Membership: <https://idfg.idaho.gov/d7/about/commission/members>

Montana

Board Title: Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission

Statute: [87-1-301](#)

Mission / Duties: (summarized)

- Duties: The commission: (1) shall set the policies for the protection, preservation, management, and propagation of wildlife (2) may adopt rules regarding the use and type of archery equipment that may be employed for hunting and fishing purposes, taking into account applicable standards as technical innovations in archery equipment change. (3) may adopt rules regarding the establishment of special licenses or permits, seasons, conditions, programs, or other provisions that the commission considers appropriate to promote or enhance hunting by Montana's youth and persons with disabilities. (4) may adopt rules regarding nonresident big game combination licenses to (5) may adopt rules related to nonresident mountain lion harvest and use of hounds (6) may not regulate the use or possession of firearms, firearm accessories, or ammunition, including the chemical elements of ammunition used for hunting. (7) the commission does not oversee department activities related to the administration of state parks, primitive parks, state recreational areas, public camping grounds, state historic sites, state monuments, and other heritage and recreational resources, land, and water

Appointment:

- The commission consists of seven members. At least one member must be experienced in the breeding and management of domestic livestock. The governor shall appoint one member for each of the seven administrative regions of the department of fish, wildlife, and parks. Appointments must be made without regard to political affiliation and must be made solely for the wise management of fish, wildlife, and related recreational resources of this state. A person may not be appointed to the commission unless the person is informed or interested and experienced in the subject of fish, wildlife, and recreation and the requirements for the conservation and protection of fish, wildlife, and recreational resources.

Membership: <https://fwp.mt.gov/aboutfwp/commission/members>

New Mexico

Board Title: New Mexico State Game Commission

Statute: [17-1-1](#)

Mission / Duties:

- Mission: It is the purpose of this act and the policy of the state of New Mexico to provide an adequate and flexible system for the protection of the game and fish of New Mexico and for their use and development for public recreation and food supply, and to provide for their propagation, planting, protection, regulation and conservation to the extent necessary to provide and maintain an adequate supply of game and fish within the state of New Mexico.

Appointment:

- Seven members, not more than four of whom shall be of the same political party at the time of their appointment. The members of the commission shall be appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate. The term of office for each member of the commission shall be four years. At the time of making the first appointments, the governor shall designate the commissioners' terms as being one, two, three or four years so that the term of no more than two commissioners shall expire each year. In making appointments to the state game commission, one member shall be appointed from each of five districts. The remaining two members shall be appointed at-large. At least one member of the commission shall manage and operate a farm or ranch that contains at least two species of wildlife on that part which is deeded land. At least one member shall have a demonstrated history of involvement in wildlife and habitat protection issues and whose activities or occupation are not in conflict with wildlife and habitat advocacy.

Membership: <https://www.wildlife.state.nm.us/commission/meet-the-commissioners/>

Nevada

Board Title: Board of Wildlife Commissioners

Statute: [NRS 501.171](#) (appointment) and [NRS 501.181](#) (duties)

Mission / Duties: (summarized)

- Duties: (1) Establish broad policies for the protection, propagation, restoration, transplanting, introduction and management of wildlife in this State; promotion of safety; uniformity of laws; (2) Guide the Department in its administration and enforcement of the provisions of this title and of [chapter 488](#); (3) Establish policies for areas of interest including: game management, predatory wildlife management, acquisitions, access issues, nonresident hunters, wildlife translocation, inter-agency coordination, license

revocations; (4) Establish regulations necessary to carry out hunting limits and seasons, tags, game management unit creation, and license numbers; (5) Establish public comment periods for decisions impacting public land; (6) Adopt regulations governing water permits and payments; (7) Designate areas where big game mammals are of special concern for alternative livestock; (8) Adopt regulations governing the trapping of fur-bearing mammals in a residential area of a county whose population is 100,000 or more; (9) Adopt regulations prescribing the circumstances under which a person may retrieve a wounded big game mammal; (10) Consider the recommendations of the Department, the county advisory boards to manage wildlife and other persons who present their views at an open meeting of the Commission.

Appointment:

- (1) County advisory boards submit written nominations for appointments to the Commission upon the request of the Governor and may submit nominations at any other time. (2) After consideration of the written nominations, the Governor shall appoint to the Commission: (a) One member who is actively engaged in and possesses experience and expertise in advocating issues relating to conservation; (b) One member who is actively engaged in farming; (c) One member who is actively engaged in ranching; (d) One member who represents the interests of the general public; and (e) Five members who during at least 3 of the 4 years immediately preceding their appointment held a resident license to fish or hunt, or both, in Nevada. (3) No member may have been convicted of certain felonies or misdemeanors (see statute for details. (4) Not more than three members may be from the same county whose population is 700,000 or more, not more than two members may be from the same county whose population is 100,000 or more but less than 700,000, and not more than one member may be from the same county whose population is less than 100,000. (5) The Commission shall annually select a Chair and a Vice Chair from among its members. A person shall not serve more than two consecutive terms as Chair.

Membership:

<https://www.ndow.org/contacts/?search=&team=commission&division=commission>

Oregon

Wildlife:

Board Title: Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission

Statute: [ORS 496.090](#) [ORS 496.138](#) [ORS 496.012](#)

Mission / Duties:

- **Mission:** All members of the commission shall represent the public interest of the state and make decisions affecting the wildlife resources of the state for the benefit of those resources. Consistent with the requirements of this subsection, the commission shall provide for the productive and sustainable utilization of wildlife resources for all groups of users.
- **Duties:** (1) The Commission shall implement the policies and programs of this state for the management of wildlife. These policies and programs shall consider the uses of public and private lands and utilize voluntary partnerships with private and public landowners to protect and enhance wildlife habitat and effectively manage wildlife. (2) The Commission shall adopt such rules and standards as it considers necessary and proper to implement the policy and objectives of the wildlife policy (3) The Commission shall cause a public hearing to be held on any proposed

rule or standard prior to its adoption. The hearing may be before the commission, any designated member thereof or any person designated by and acting for the commission. (4) Before submitting an agency request budget or information to the Governor, the commission shall hold a public hearing on proposals for planned expenditures and enhancement packages that the commission intends to recommend to the Governor for inclusion in the Governor's budget.

- It is the policy of the State of Oregon that wildlife shall be managed to prevent serious depletion of any indigenous species and to provide the optimum recreational and aesthetic benefits for present and future generations of the citizens of this state. In furtherance of this policy, the State Fish and Wildlife Commission shall represent the public interest of the State of Oregon and implement the following coequal goals of wildlife management: (1) To maintain all species of wildlife at optimum levels. (2) To develop and manage the lands and waters of this state in a manner that will enhance the production and public enjoyment of wildlife. (3) To permit an orderly and equitable utilization of available wildlife. (4) To develop and maintain public access to the lands and waters of the state and the wildlife resources thereon. (5) To regulate wildlife populations and the public enjoyment of wildlife in a manner that is compatible with primary uses of the lands and waters of the state. (6) To provide optimum recreational benefits. (7) To make decisions that affect wildlife resources of the state for the benefit of the wildlife resources and to make decisions that allow for the best social, economic and recreational utilization of wildlife resources by all user groups.

Membership: <https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/members.asp>

Appointment:

- One member of the commission shall be appointed from each of the congressional districts of this state, one member from that portion of the state lying west of the Cascade Mountains and one member from that portion of the state lying east of the Cascade Mountains. All members of the commission shall have a general knowledge of fish and wildlife issues and an understanding of the operation and functions of public policy boards and commissions. In making appointments to the commission, the Governor shall consider appointing members who possess natural resource backgrounds such as backgrounds in commercial fishing, recreational fishing, hunting, agriculture, forestry and conservation.

Texas

Board Title: Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission

Statute: [Parks and Wildlife Code Title 2 Chapter 11 Subchapter A](#)

Mission / Duties: No formal mission.

- **Mission:** It is the statutory responsibility of the Commission and TPWD to protect, conserve, manage, and interpret the state's natural and cultural resources, and to aid in minimizing adverse impacts on these resources.
- **Duties:** The Commission's chief responsibility is the adoption of policies and rules to carry out all programs of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD). The Commission approves the annual operating budget and the biennial appropriations request for submission to the Legislature, sets TPWD policy as required by statute, and appoints an Executive Director charged with the implementation of the daily administration and operations of TPWD.

Appointment:

- (a) The commission consists of nine members appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of two thirds of the members of the senate present and voting. (b) If the senate is not in session, the governor shall appoint the members and issue commissions to them as provided by

law, and their appointment shall be submitted to the next session of the senate for its advice and consent in the manner that appointments to fill vacancies under the constitution are submitted to the senate. (c) Commission members must be members of the general public and meet the conflict of interest qualifications provided by Section 11.0121. (d) In making appointments under this section, the governor shall attempt to include persons with expertise in diverse fields, including fields such as historic preservation, conservation, and outdoor recreation.

Membership: <https://tpwd.texas.gov/about/commission>

Utah

Board Title: Utah Wildlife Board

Statute: [UAC 23-14](#)

Mission / Duties:

- (a). The Wildlife Board shall establish the policies best designed to accomplish the purposes and fulfill the intent of all laws pertaining to wildlife and the preservation, protection, conservation, perpetuation, introduction, and management of wildlife.

Appointment:

- 23-14-2. (2) (a) The members of the board shall have expertise or experience in at least one of the following areas: (i) wildlife management or biology; (ii) habitat management, including range or aquatic; (iii) business, including knowledge of private land issues; and (iv) economics, including knowledge of recreational wildlife uses. (b) Each of the areas of expertise shall be represented by at least one member of the Wildlife Board.
- (3) (a) The governor shall select each board member from a list of nominees submitted by the nominating committee (1) There is created a Wildlife Board Nominating Committee which shall consist of 11 members. (2) The governor shall appoint members to the nominating committee as follows: (a) three members shall be appointed from a list of at least two nominees per position submitted by the agriculture industry; (b) three members shall be appointed from a list of at least two nominees per position submitted by sportsmen groups; (c) two members shall be appointed from a list of at least two nominees per position submitted by non consumptive wildlife interests; (d) one member shall be appointed from a list of at least two nominees submitted by federal land management agencies; (e) one local elected official shall be appointed from a list of at least two nominees submitted by the Utah Association of Counties; and (f) one range management specialist shall be appointed from a list of at least two nominees submitted jointly by the Utah Chapter, Society of Range Management and the Utah Chapter, The Wildlife Society.

Membership: <https://wildlife.utah.gov/board-members.html>

Washington

Board Title: Fish and Wildlife Commission

Statute: Mission / Duties: [RCW 77.04.012](#) Appointment Process: [RCW 77.04.030](#) Appointment Criteria: [RCW 77.04.040](#)

Mission / Duties:

- **Mission:** The commission, director, and the department shall preserve, protect, perpetuate, and manage the wildlife and food fish, game fish, and shellfish in state waters and offshore waters. **Duties:** The commission may authorize the taking of wildlife, food fish, game fish, and shellfish only at times or places, or in manners or quantities, as in the judgment of the commission does not impair the supply of these resources. The commission shall attempt to maximize the public

recreational game fishing and hunting opportunities of all citizens, including juvenile, disabled, and senior citizens.

- Duties: (1) In establishing policies to preserve, protect, and perpetuate wildlife, fish, and wildlife and fish habitat, the commission shall meet annually with the governor to: (a) Review and prescribe basic goals and objectives related to those policies; and (b) Review the performance of the department in implementing fish and wildlife policies. The commission shall maximize fishing, hunting, and outdoor recreational opportunities compatible with healthy and diverse fish and wildlife populations. (2) The commission shall establish hunting, trapping, and fishing seasons and prescribe the time, place, manner, and methods that may be used to harvest or enjoy game fish and wildlife. (3) The commission shall establish provisions regulating food fish and shellfish (4) The commission shall have final approval authority for tribal, interstate, international, and any other department agreements relating to fish and wildlife. (5) The commission shall adopt rules to implement the state's fish and wildlife laws. (6) The commission shall have final approval authority for the department's budget proposals. (7) The commission shall select its own staff and shall appoint the director of the department. The director and commission staff shall serve at the pleasure of the commission.

Appointment:

- The fish and wildlife commission consists of nine registered voters of the state. Three members shall be residents of that portion of the state lying east of the summit of the Cascade mountains, and three shall be residents of that portion of the state lying west of the summit of the Cascade mountains. Three additional members shall be appointed at large. No two members may be residents of the same county.
- Persons eligible for appointment as members of the commission shall have general knowledge of the habits and distribution of fish and wildlife and shall not hold another state, county, or municipal elective or appointive office. In making these appointments, the governor shall seek to maintain a balance reflecting all aspects of fish and wildlife, including representation recommended by organized groups representing sportfishers, commercial fishers, hunters, private landowners, and environmentalists.

Membership: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/about/commission/members>

Wyoming

Board Title: Wyoming Game and Fish Commission

Statute: [Title 23](#) - 23-1-201 (commission appointment) 23-1-302 (Powers and duties)

Mission / Duties:

- Duties: (a) The commission is directed and empowered: (i) To fix season and bag limits, open, shorten or close seasons including providing for season extensions for hunters with disabilities as established by commission rules and regulation, on any species or sex of wildlife for any type of legal weapon, except predatory animals, predacious birds, protected animals, and protected birds, in any specified locality of Wyoming, and to give notice thereof; (ii) To establish zones and areas in which trophy game animals may be taken as game animals with a license or, with the exception of gray wolves, in the same manner as predatory animals without a license, giving proper regard to the livestock and game industries in those particular areas; (iii) To acquire lands and waters in the name of Wyoming by purchase, lease, agreement, gift or devise, not including powers of eminent domain (iv) To acquire easements and construct suitable access roads
- Note: Wyoming exhaustively lists all of the commissions specific powers and duties. Review 23-1-302. Powers and duties (vi through xxxiii) for more details.

Appointment:

- (a) The Wyoming game and fish commission is continued in existence. (b) The commission shall be composed of eight members including the governor as an ex officio member. Not more than seventy-five percent (75%) of the appointed commissioners shall be of the same political party, and all appointed commissioners shall have a general knowledge of wildlife and wildlife propagation, management, and control. (c) Commencing in 1973, a commissioner shall be appointed from each appointment district pursuant to W.S. 9-1-218. (d) Commissioners shall be appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate for a term of six (6) years to commence March 1, except the first term for two (2) appointees shall be two (2) years and for two (2) appointees shall be four (4) years as designated by the governor prior to submission to the senate. Terms of current appointees are ratified and continued in existence until terms of new appointees under this section become effective. The governor shall fill any vacancy as provided in W.S. 28-12-101. (e) Each commissioner shall execute and file the oath of office as prescribed by the Wyoming constitution with the secretary of state.

Membership: <https://wgfd.wyo.gov/About-Us/Game-and-Fish-Commission/Meet-the-Commissioners>

Review processes for state natural resource agencies and boards

States use a variety of processes to review their state natural resource agencies and boards. These reviews typically focus on whether agencies or boards are adhering to their regulatory requirements, mission, and the public interest while maintaining financial soundness and avoiding duplicativeness with other agencies. Review processes used by western states (AZ, CA, CO, ID, MT, NM, NV, OR, TX, UT, WA, WY) include:

- Sunset review laws
- Requirements for periodic self-reporting by agencies and boards
- Performance audits by the executive branch (Auditor General or Sec. of State)
- Performance evaluations by an independent legislative office
- Statements of legislative intent regarding agencies or boards
- Maintaining inventories of board and commission information

Sunset review laws: Sunset review laws are requirements for government agencies or programs to dissolve (or “sunset”) by a specified date unless they are reviewed. Generally, a report on the program or agency’s performance must be completed by an independent entity or the agency itself prior to the sunset date. A legislative committee then recommends the program or agency for continuation, alteration, or sunset. Sunset laws typically fall into four categories:

- **Comprehensive reviews:** For comprehensive reviews, all state agencies undergo sunset review on a preset schedule. [Arizona](#) and [Nevada](#) sunset laws fall into this category. In both states, a legislative committee leads the sunset review process.
- **Regulatory reviews:** For regulatory reviews, only licensing and regulatory boards are subject to sunset. [Colorado](#) and [Idaho](#) sunset laws fall into this category. In Colorado, the General Assembly sets sunset dates for all functions, entities, and regulations within Colorado agencies, including whether an agency’s board or commission represents the public interest and encourages public participation.
- **Selective reviews:** For selective reviews, only pre-selected agencies undergo a sunset review, typically determined at the time when sunset laws are passed. Sunset laws in [California](#), [Texas](#), and [Utah](#) fall into this category.
- **Discretionary reviews:** For discretionary reviews, the legislature may choose which agencies or statutes undergo a sunset review. Sunset laws in [Montana](#), [Oregon](#), [Washington](#), and [Wyoming](#) fall into this category. In Montana, the governor submits a list of agencies and programs for review to the legislative audit committee. In Oregon, the Legislative Council may review a rule adopted by an agency, although not an agency or board itself. Wyoming repealed its sunset laws in 1988, but it still uses a discretionary program evaluation process (see below for more details).

Requirements for periodic self reporting by agencies and boards: Several states require agencies to self-evaluate their performance. Some states require all agencies to undergo these self-evaluations, while others only require this of selected agencies.

- **Self-reporting required by all agencies:** [Arizona](#) requires all agencies to review their rules once every five years, and offers an opportunity for public feedback on rules which the agency must respond to. [Oregon](#) also requires every state agency to establish and report annually on a set of key performance measures which are approved by the Oregon Legislature.
- **Self reporting required by selected agencies:** [California](#) does not have a self-reporting requirement for all agencies, although the California Fish and Game Commission requires the Department of Fish and Wildlife to regularly review and report on its adherence to [Commission Policy](#) which includes a code of conduct and implementation of diversity, equity, and inclusion. [Washington](#) requires the Director of Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to report biennially to the legislature on the agency's budget, projects, and relevant litigation and court decisions, including a status of the state's wildlife resources and their recreational, commercial, and tribal utilization.

Performance audits by the executive branch: In several states, agencies and boards are audited by an entity within the executive branch such as the Auditor General or Secretary of State. In addition to financial auditing, which typically occurs annually, performance audits can be initiated when other issues have arisen with an agency. Both [Arizona](#) and [California](#) have a Legislative Audit Committee that can request performance audits of agencies or boards by the Auditor General. In [Oregon](#), the Secretary of State has an Audits Division that serves as the auditor of government entities and programs. In addition to financial audits, the Division can also initiate audits when the head of an agency leaves their position or when complaints are received via a Government Accountability Hotline.

Performance evaluations by an independent legislative office: Several states including [Idaho](#), [Montana](#), [New Mexico](#), and [Wyoming](#) use an independent legislative office to conduct performance evaluations for agencies and boards. Typically, a legislative committee votes on which programs or entities to audit, although Montana allows audits to be initiated by statute, a tip from a Legislative Audit Hotline, or any state legislator. New Mexico also allows staff of the Legislative Finance Committee to initiate audits when they have identified a policy issue that needs attention due to a program's cost or impact on public safety.

Statements of legislative intent regarding agencies or boards: [California](#) has two legislative intent declarations related to boards and commissions: 1) It is the policy of the State of California that the composition of state boards and commissions shall be broadly reflective of the general public including ethnic minorities and women; and 2) In making appointments to state boards and commissions, the Governor and every other appointing authority shall be responsible for nominating a variety of persons of different backgrounds, abilities, interests, and opinions in compliance with the policy expressed in this article. It is not the intent of the Legislature that formulas or specific ratios be utilized in complying with this article.

Maintaining an inventory of board and commission information: New Mexico SJM 46 (Enacted 1995) expressed the legislature's concern over the proliferation of boards and commissions in the executive branch. The Legislative Council Service now maintains an [inventory](#) of boards and commissions including statutory reference, organization status, whether

the board is policy or advisory, its rulemaking authority, any federal mandates, whether senate confirmation is required, sunset requirements, and funding sources.

Recent reviews of natural resource regulatory agencies and boards in the West (not exhaustive):

- Arizona:
 - A 2013 [performance audit](#) of the Arizona Game and Fish Commission, Department, and Director resulted in recommendations to improve processes for employee travel and awards, hunting and fishing license administration, and IT systems.
 - The most recent [self-evaluation](#) for the Arizona Game and Fish Commission was conducted in 2019. No written public criticism was submitted regarding the Commission's rules of practice. Most criticism focused on other aspects of Commission policy including licensing processes and hunting methods.
 - The most recent [sunset review](#) of the Arizona Oil and Gas Conservation Committee was conducted in 2005. No major issues were identified. The agency has since been consolidated under the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality.
- California:
 - A [performance evaluation](#) of California Department of Fish and Wildlife conducted in 2019 found that the agency had failed to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act by not responding to numerous consultation requests.
- Colorado:
 - The most recent [sunset review](#) of the Coal Mine Board of Examiners was conducted in 2019 and identified two governance issues: a lack of diversity in company representation on the Board (two out of four members were from the same company) and a lack of analysis to determine appropriate pass-rates for the Board's licensing and certification programs.
 - The Habitat Stamp Program Committee, which makes decisions about expenditures to protect habitat using revenue from a hunting and fishing license fee approved in 2009, underwent a [sunset review](#) in 2012. No issues were identified and it was recommended for continuation.
- Idaho:
 - The most recent [performance evaluation](#) of the Idaho Department of Game and Fish was conducted in 2001. It identified issues with how the Department communicates about how public comments are interpreted and incorporated into decision-making.
- Montana:
 - A [performance audit](#) of Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks Enforcement Division was conducted in August 2023 and found issues with internal agency culture wherein wardens are encouraged to take on general crime enforcement duties and spend less time on fish and wildlife protection, creating dissatisfaction and trust issues between wardens and FWP headquarters. An article summarizing the report can be [found here](#).
- Nevada:

- The most recent [sunset review](#) for the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners in Nevada occurred in 2012, and the committee recommended that the legislature review the structure and composition of the Board during the next legislative session.
- New Mexico:
 - The most recent [performance evaluation](#) of the New Mexico Game and Fish Department determined that new performance measures were needed by the Department, including better tracking of the number of species that have been down-listed from the state and federal threatened and endangered species lists.
 - Although they weren't identified in a formal review process, recent [issues](#) with the state game commission have been identified including resignations and the governor removing members over stream access issues.
 - Multiple bills were recently introduced to reform the state Game Commission including [HB 183](#) (2023) and [HB 184](#) (2023).
- Oregon:
 - Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's annual [self-evaluations](#) are based on legislature-established key performance measures. These include a set of 15 best practices for the Fish and Wildlife Commission, including appropriate involvement in policy making, alignment of policy proposals with agency mission, commissioner attendance of training sessions, and involvement in key ODFW communications. The Commission typically self-reports favorably on all best practices.
 - The Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI) was [audited](#) in 2015, after issues with cash flow and federal grant management were identified. The Department is now tracking its expenditures in accordance with state policy.
- Texas:
 - The most recent [sunset review](#) of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality found several issues related to the Commission's transparency, enforcement, and discrimination against non-english speakers. This finding resulted in a unanimously [approved bill](#) in 2023 to increase fines for industry permitting non-compliance and increase the duration of public comment periods.
- Utah
 - The most recent [performance audit](#) of the Board of Oil, Gas, and Mining was completed in 2019, identifying several issues including violations and noncompliance not being resolved in a timely manner, lack of oversight to prevent environmental hazards, and a lack of enforcement leading to increased public risk. The audit resulted in the Board and Agency creating an action plan to begin remedying issues.
 - The most recent [sunset review](#) for the Utah Wildlife Resource Advisory Committees and Wildlife Board was initiated in 2022. Both entities were recommended for continuation.
- Washington:
 - Most Washington natural resource regulatory agencies are not subject to sunset review. However, [Washington SB 5187](#) (Enacted, 2023) appropriates \$300,000 for a review of the state wildlife agency's governance and funding structure as it

relates to their trustee duties to protect fish and wildlife for present and future generations.

- Wyoming:
 - Wyoming conducted a [review](#) of all boards and commissions in 2011 to identify both gaps and duplicativeness in board and commission governance. No issues were identified with natural resource regulatory boards or commissions.

More resources:

- [Sunset Legislation in the States: Balancing the Legislature and the Executive](#) (Mercatus Center)
- Biden administered a [rule in 2021](#) requiring federal agencies to review themselves in order to ensure democratic accountability in agency rulemaking.

Wildlife Boards and Commissions: Recent Legislation and Existing Statutes**Recent Legislation:**

- **Illinois** [S.B. 3908](#) (Enacted, 2022): Removes the regulatory role of the Department of Natural Resources advisory board and amends the board's mandate to include biodiversity protection and promotion of a conservation-literate population.
- **Maryland** [HB 188](#) / [SB 320](#) (Enacted, 2023): Requires the addition of two new members to the Wildlife Advisory Commission with expertise in wildlife science.
- **Washington** [SB 5187](#) (Enacted, 2023): Appropriates \$300,000 for a review of the state wildlife agency's governance structure as it relates to the agency's public trustee duties.
- **New Mexico** [HB 184](#) (Passed but vetoed, 2023): Allocates new Game Commission seats to an agriculture representative, a conservationist, a license holder, and a scientist, all appointed by the Legislature, and prohibits their dismissal without cause.
- **New Hampshire** [SB 542](#) (Introduced, 2024): Enables the Native American affairs commission to nominate persons to be considered for the fish and game commission.
- **Michigan** [HB 4856](#) (Introduced, 2023): Adds members to the state wildlife commission with expertise in wildlife conservation and enhancement or non consumptive wildlife use.
- **Mississippi** [SB 2290](#) (Introduced, 2024): Requires at least two commissioners to hold a wildlife science degree or related experience.
- **Vermont** [S 258](#) (Introduced, 2024): Transfers rule making authority from the Fish and Wildlife Board to the Department of Fish and Wildlife and requires the Board to serve in an advisory capacity.

Existing Statutes:

- Board purpose:
 - Authority: While most state wildlife commissions create regulations, some only serve in an advisory capacity to the state wildlife agency (DE, IL, MD, ME, ND, OH, and WV), and a few have no commission (MN, NY, CT, and RI).
 - Duties: Most boards set hunting/fishing regulations, approve budgets, establish partnerships with NGOs, and hold hearings on wildlife law violations.
- Appointment criteria:
 - Professional background: A few commissions require members to be "knowledgeable" (Virginia [20.9-100](#)) or have a "college degree or work experience" (Hawaii [171-4](#)) in wildlife conservation, or include people who represent "nonconsumptive uses of wildlife" (Colorado [2020-33](#))
 - Legislature involvement: Most states require confirmation by the legislature. Some states split appointments between the governor and legislature (TN, NC)
- Transparency:
 - Reporting: A few states require reporting on board activities. Ohio requires the board to "Report to the governor from time to time on the results of its investigations concerning wildlife resources" (Ohio [1531.03](#))

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Interim Natural Resources](#)
Subject: Committee on Natural Resources , Board of Wildlife Commissioners
Date: Thursday, April 4, 2024 3:36:38 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to any and all changes in the composition of the Board of Wildlife Commissioners. I feel we ALL should have a voice in OUR natural resources.

Thank you.

Art Daniels

[REDACTED] Las Vegas Nv [REDACTED]

To whom it may concern,

I'm writing this letter in support of keeping the wildlife board composition the same as it currently is. The make up of the board reflects the demographic of people who take interest in being a active part of wildlife/habitat management.

There is no exclusion to other groups, lack of representation due to lack of engagement is a totally different scenario than lack of representation due to oppression. As a state citizen who is included in both the recreational, and professional realm of wildlife and outdoor recreation management it is extremely frustrating to see the general population gain management traction via who can protest the loudest instead of who has the most experience on subjects that they're willfully mislead on by unscrupulous "enviromental" groups, why should individuals who have "no skin in the game" and no real world wildilfe management experience have the power to make decisions on topics they're uneducated on? The group who ultimately pays the price for these decisions is the wildlife.

Please vote not by emotion, but by proven success and common sense, our wildlife deserves it.

Becky Dwire.

To whom it may concern,

I'm writing this letter in support of keeping the Nevada wildlife commission as it is. The current members on the board have done an excellent job. In fact we've had multiple new species of wildlife choose to call Nevada home relatively recently. I think it would be in the best interest of Nevada's wildlife to keep it the way it is. As an avid sportsman and wildlife lover, I feel that changing the board members it will bring in unqualified board members who base their decisions on emotionally driven interests and not science or conservation based goals. It has been said that the committee is unfairly biased and caters towards the sportsman and hunters interest instead of the animal rights groups but as it stands the current board has Nevada's wildlife in the best interest.

As the old saying goes if it's not broken, don't fix it.

Respectfully

Cleave Dwire

April 3, 2024

Sent via email

Dear Chairwoman Pazina and members of the Interim Natural Resources Committee,

My name is Tiffany East, and I proudly served as the Commission's first chairwoman and commissioner on the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners (BWC). Regrettably, I am unable to attend the meeting scheduled for Friday, April 5th. However, I wish to contribute my insights for inclusion in the meeting minutes.

My tenure on the Board was a privilege and an honor to serve my state. I was appointed by Governor Sandoval, reappointed by Governor Sisolak and served under Governor Lombardo in my six years on the wildlife commission. Very few understand the substantial dedication and time commitment required of Commissioners. Each commissioner brings to the BWC a wide variety of unique perspectives, expertise and experiences.

Allow me to offer some background. More than likely you know that nearly 98 percent of the Nevada Department of Wildlife's budget is sourced from sportsman licensing (hunting and fishing), outdoor and sportsmen's organizations, and federal acts, grants and programs. The Department receives minimal state funding. More than 150,000 Nevadans hold hunting and/or fishing licenses and boating registrations, constituting one of the largest and most diverse groups in our state. During the COVID era, we witnessed significant license and interest growth, particularly among Latinos and women.

You'll likely hear from various groups asserting that the BWC fails to regard their voices. These sectors are advocating for a more diverse management approach for the state's resources. They will be asking for a seat at the table. As a former chairwoman, I take offense to that remark. I can attest that seldom, if ever, have these parties sat through two days of wildlife commission and committee meetings, offered consistent volunteer assistance or support during challenging or controversial decisions that would have been representative of their interests. Examples include: regulations limiting trail cameras and shed hunting for the benefit of birthing wildlife and habitat; denying the use of air rifles for big game hunts; supporting numerous Heritage habitat projects totaling millions of dollars; species relocations or transfers; and sportsmen license revocations (yes, we police our own revoking licenses for sportsmen or guides who break the law). I could go on but you get the idea. These decisions can be difficult and weigh heavily on commissioners requiring an understanding of both risks and rewards. While we may occasionally get it wrong, more often than not, our decisions are sound. Many struggle to grasp the complexity of our decisions based on data and biology, not emotion.

For more than 80 years, sportsmen have been fueling wildlife restoration supporting funding mechanisms, managing wildlife populations through hunting and spearheading habitat projects. Widely regarded as some of the early conservationists, sportsmen have been and continue to be the active stewards of the land. If sportsmen and women are removed from this mix, it will be detrimental to the 895 species of wildlife who depend on us to manage populations for carrying capacity, forage and predator control.

You may not be aware of this, but your meeting coincides with the 42nd annual Nevada Bighorns Unlimited banquet, where more than 2,400 sportsmen and women will gather to raise millions of dollars for Nevada's wildlife and habitat conservation. This particular NGO is very generous supporting initiatives such as new helicopters, habitat projects and guzzlers. This event stands as the nation's largest conservation fundraiser and the money raised will support projects on the ground right here in our beautiful state.

Before reaching any conclusions on the path forward, I urge each of you to delve deeper into the intricacies of wildlife management in our state and the diverse array of issues overseen by the Commission. We are fortunate to have dedicated and knowledgeable staff, commissioners, NGOs, and sportsmen who are deeply committed to conservation efforts. Talk to them. Take a field trip with them. Watch their meetings and then decide if this is the best path forward.

I'm happy to answer any questions and can be reached at 775-250-8092 or tiffany@tiffanyeastpr.com

Warm regards,

Tiffany East
Past Chairwoman and Commissioner Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Interim Natural Resources](#)
Subject: Public Comment On Wildlife Commission Meeting Agenda Items 11, 12 and 13
Date: Friday, April 5, 2024 12:14:41 PM

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Dear Members of the Nevada Commission to Manage Wildlife,

My name is Brett Jefferson. I am a resident of Las Vegas and previously have lived in Boulder City, Elko and Sparks. I have been an active sportsman in the state since a young man and actively engaged in wildlife conservation for the last three decades. I have served on the Board of Directors for Wild Sheep Foundation, Nevada Bighorns Unlimited - Reno, and the Fraternity of the Desert Bighorn. I am a past recipient of the NDOW Wayne E. Kirch Conservationist of the Year.

Wildlife experienced a decline during the 19th Century due to human settlement over wildlife water sources, unregulated hunting and the introduction of diseases from livestock. This is not a statement in opposition to ranching and grazing because they are some of the best conservationists and habitats managers on the landscape; however it did unintentionally occur.

A correction occurred in the 20th Century where modern wildlife management principles began to take hold across the country and North America Model of Wildlife Conservation (NAMWC) began its long run of success in wildlife recovery of such iconic species as wild turkey, elk, antelope and wild sheep.

The success of wildlife recovery in the United States has set the baseline for other countries around the world. The key tenants of the NAMWC is the active involvement of sporting group Non-Government Organizations (NGO) all working collaboratively under the leadership of experienced and knowledgeable State wildlife management professionals, all influencing wildlife and the habitat required for species populations to be enhanced and prosper.

No single NGO can claim sole responsibility for the success of the application of the NAMWC and the success would not be possible without the strong partnerships with State and National wildlife focused agencies. However, the one common denominator to this success is the involvement of sportsman, through volunteering and dollars spent via donations, ammunition purchases, hunting and fishing licenses, tag permit fees and fundraising efforts of sportsman NGO's. All these sportsman investments fund habitat, conservation, augmentation and translocation projects that directly result in wildlife population enhancement.

So who is it that serves as the governing body interface between State wildlife managers and sportsman and the public? It is the Wildlife Commission. Our Nevada Wildlife Commission has a very long history of success and leadership with proven positive results in facilitating the recovery and reintroduction of wildlife in the Silver State. The idea that the member representatives of such a successful commission should be tinkered with by groups with no history or vested interest in the decades long multifaceted wildlife conservation programs is unfounded and detrimental to the continued success of wildlife management within the State of Nevada.

I and all the sportsman NGO's that have worked tirelessly and enthusiastically volunteering and donating to wildlife conservation firmly reject these proposals to change the representation on our Wildlife Commission.

I submit the letter to be read into the record on the agenda items named.

Sincerely,

Brett K. Jefferson, PLS, WRS

Nevada ~ Arizona ~ California

[REDACTED]

Las Vegas, NV [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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UNLIMITED**



**P.O. Box 21393
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**(775) 400-1172
nevadabighornsunlimited.org**

Joint Interim Standing Committee on Natural Resources

We are writing this letter in support of maintaining the Nevada Wildlife Commission in its current representative composition. Our wildlife commissioners have the difficult and sometimes controversial job of helping to enhance our wildlife and supporting a plan for their long term health and diversity. These individuals need to have our state's best interests in mind. We do not need to integrate ideas into our state that are backed by large, well-funded multinational organizations who are largely disconnected from our wildlife and native habitat.

As Nevadans we are fortunate to enjoy the healthy diversity of wildlife in our state. We all play a critical role in preserving this precious resource. It is our responsibility to become stewards of our natural resources. Sportsmen contribute to the wildlife conservation and habitat protections that allow us to continue that legacy. Nevada sportsmen and women understand what conservation means to our wildlife population. Sportsmen and women in Nevada contribute financially as well as hard working volunteers' hours that focus on conservation of wildlife in our state.

The voices that wish to change the representation on this commission seek to erode and destroy the wildlife in our state. They may 'claim' that their intentions are just and well-intended. The push to change the commission makeup is not one rooted in trying to benefit wildlife for the overall public's benefits. The push is simply a small group of individuals who are largely disconnected with our state's wildlife that disagree with hunting and fishing, and therefore the number of seats on the commission. Changing the representation of this commission will undoubtedly negatively affect our wildlife and healthy habitat for generations to come.

Numerous species of wildlife in our state need the protection of our state residents who understand the intricacies of population dynamics and how to best support our wildlife. Neighboring states across the west have made similar efforts to diminish sportsmen representation have seen only negative impacts to habitat and wildlife. This was all done seemingly to completely remove sportsman from the decision-making process. Sportsmen and women are demonized by anti-hunting groups who disagree with responsible hunting and harvest practices.

Our wildlife commission needs individuals who understand what this means. We need to manage our wildlife throughout the state to ensure healthy ecological diversity. This includes numerous strategies including habitat restoration, conservation projects, predator monitoring and control as well as harvesting individuals through responsible hunting practices.

Nevada Bighorns Unlimited
~ Sportsmen working for the future of Nevada's wildlife ~

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**P.O. Box 21393
Reno, Nevada 89515-1393**

**(775) 400-1172
nevadabighornsunlimited.org**

Nevada Bighorns Unlimited (NBU) is a non-governmental organization (NGO). Our mission is to enhance Nevada's wildlife resources for sportsmen as well as outdoor and wildlife enthusiasts. Our organization has over 3,000 members who not only reside in Nevada, but also across the west and even nationwide. We fund numerous projects that support healthy wildlife and habitat across the state of Nevada. NBU has facilitated millions of dollars in habitat and wildlife restoration over the last 45 years. We utilize hundreds of thousands of sportsman's dollars annually to enhance wildlife and habitat in Nevada. We are proud of the job that we do and intend to support our state organizations with maintaining healthy wildlife populations.

NBU is the largest conservation organization in the state of Nevada. We were not invited into this conversation and discussion. It is concerning that when topics like this are being considered it appears as though the committee is only seeking input from one side of the discussion. We would appreciate a broader discussion with opinions from all sides of the matter at hand.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Evan A. McQuirk, DVM
President, Nevada Bighorns Unlimited

Nevada Bighorns Unlimited
~ Sportsmen working for the future of Nevada's wildlife ~

From: Michelle mercer
To: [Interim Natural Resources](#)
Subject: Wildlife committee
Date: Thursday, April 4, 2024 8:14:47 PM

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keep sportsman on the wildlife committee, who better to know what is for the good of wildlife. The knowledge that is brought to the table from experienced sportsman is very important to the well being of wildlife.

Thank you
Michelle Mercer

[REDACTED]

Las Vegas, NV [REDACTED]
Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Interim Natural Resources](#)
Subject: Need for reform of Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners
Date: Friday, April 5, 2024 3:39:32 PM

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Dear Chair Pazina, committee members

Thank you for conducting today's meeting on two important natural resources commissions. The meeting was very efficiently run with interesting presentations.

I'm particularly interested in the wildlife commission having attending its meetings for over 40 years. It is wildly out of balance regarding the demographics of our state's population in several ways and needs a close look.

Today, what you heard from NDOW, the wildlife commission and sportsmen's advocacy groups were the highlights. You heard nothing of the dark side.

For example, Larry Johnson presented an inspiring slide show and video of NDOW's successes with ungulates, particularly bighorn sheep. His video of the release of multiple ram in simultaneous fashion was inspiring.

What neither he, the department or the commission told you was that over the past 20 years, 250 mountain lions have been deliberately killed in furtherance of that goal. These animals were not attacking domestic livestock or personal property. They were simply living in areas where bighorn sheep exist or were planned to be located.

Similarly, over the past 20 years, 12,000 coyotes have been deliberately killed, specifically to enhance mule deer populations (utterly unsuccessfully); approximately 50,000 ravens have been poisoned during the same time frame to benefit sage grouse, done so as to not require livestock grazers to change their habits or change land use options.

Over that 20 years, the wildlife commission spent over \$6 million to accomplish that carnage.

One of the presenters suggested that some of what passes for current wildlife management in Nevada closely resembles the 1930s. What I've mentioned above is a classic example.

Hunters are not up on current science, by and large. Often those who show up for commission meetings and beg for more killing of mountain lions, coyotes and ravens are simply operating on old-fashioned mythology that came from Dad and/or Granddad.

There is no resemblance to what current science has to say about nonsensical killing as mentioned.

So, please consider taking a close look at whether the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners suits the composition of the state as it now stands, or whether it is time for some modernization of the commission.

Regards

Don Molde

[REDACTED]

Reno, Nevada

[REDACTED]

Joint Interim Standing Committee on Natural Resources

Grant Sawyer State Office Building, Room 4401

555 East Washington Avenue

Las Vegas, Nevada

Re: Agenda Item XII (Discussion on the Composition of the Board of Wildlife Commissioners)

Dear Committee Members,

I recommend that we maintain the current composition of the Board of Wildlife Commissioners. The immense majority of the Nevada Department of Wildlife's (NDOW) funding comes from sportsmen and women through license and tag sales as well as Pittman Robertson funds. NDOW manages approximately 900 species of wildlife throughout the state. Only a small handful are consumptively used, and sportsmen dollars are paying for all wildlife. Sportsmen representation on the Board is of paramount importance for all of Nevada's wildlife. I believe it is crucial to maintain adequate representation of sportsmen and women on this State Board. Reducing their representation can have negative consequences, as we have seen in other states.

Thank you,

Tyler Nall

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

To: Senator Julie Pazina, Chair and
Members of the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Natural Resources
<https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/Legislator/A/Senate/82nd2023/12>

From: Tina Nappe, a former Wildlife Commissioner representing conservation

Subject: Review of the State Board of Wildlife Commissioners - Please be cautious

At issue for some conservation organizations is opposition to the coyote hunt, the bear hunt, and trapping. In particular opposition to the Coyote Calling Contests.

I hope this body will approach Wildlife Commission changes with caution. Over the years a number of changes in Commission structure have been made, but have not dropped the basic model recognizing that NDOW, in the absence of sufficient general funds, is basically financially supported by the opportunity to hunt, fish, and trap. In addition to a willingness to fund the agency with licenses, tags, administrative costs, sportsmen have established special accounts which they underwrite to support wildlife. These same organizations have their own accounts with many of the proceeds being invested in wildlife preservation projects. To my knowledge most conservation organizations listed on the agenda, do not invest in habitat protection or otherwise support wildlife on the ground. They do not provide funds that flow through the Legislature subject to or supporting the state's wildlife program.

Under this and previous wildlife commissions, since 1973 Nevada has had a small nongame program, partly funded with general funds and special federal funds. The nongame program also benefits from traditional sportsmen's funds particularly where EA and EIS reviews, acquisitions, are made. When I first became involved in NDOW in the 1960's the entire focus was on game species (partly because little was known about them). When the Nevada Legislature passed the nation's first rare and endangered state legislation in 1969, nothing was implemented until the first general funds became available in 1973.

Today the Commission and the Department have through various additional funding sources, including some new ones that sportsmen have funded themselves, expanded wildlife management to more of the 790 species that call Nevada home either full-time or temporarily. These funds, forms of self-taxation, other than federal funds, are the highest state level investment in habitat improvement and include critical lands acquisition. Further these funds flow through the state and become state investments for management of Nevada wildlife. I am not aware of any of the conservation organizations lined up to speak at this hearing can be counted on, via legislation, to contribute to this state fund.

While the number of license holder continues to drop as a percentage of the population, an additional factor, sometimes overlooked, is that hunting, fishing, and trapping are based on the variety of huntable species, the seasons, and geographic distribution. As the state population grows, public lands become more crowded with various uses, climate impacts of fire and weeds, water availability and other factors occur the numbers of wildlife may be impacted and reduced along with hunting, fishing, trapping which currently underwrites the state's wildlife budget.

I belong to a number of excellent conservation organizations who do good work. I do not agree with all sportsmen's positions and find the coyote calling contest particularly repugnant. A statement to that effect from the committee wouldn't hurt.

This Natural Resource meeting is a good place to address how the wildlife budget can be supplemented. Will the organizations testifying today, for instance, submit a bill to this committee offering to contribute so much per year for the next ten years?

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Interim Natural Resources](#)
Subject: April 5 mtg agenda Joint Interim Standing Committee on Natural Resources
Date: Thursday, April 4, 2024 3:06:31 PM
Attachments: [REDACTED]

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I'm writing in reference to meeting agenda item XII.

Discussion on the Composition of the Board of Wildlife Commissioners and the Commission on Mineral Resources
Representatives from the Center for Biological Diversity
Representatives from the Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada

I realize the majority of the states population are non-consumptive users (non-hunters and non-fishermen).

These non-consumptive users want a majority representation on the Board of Wildlife Commissioners.

I strongly disagree with changing the current makeup of the commission.

The Commission by statutory scheme requires it to have:

five (5) "sportsmen," i.e. hunters, fishermen or trappers who have purchased a license in three of the past four years,
one rancher,
one farmer,
one conservationist,
and one member of the public.

This current make up is primarily comprised of those that have the most knowledge of the subject of wildlife. These folks not only spend the most time in the field observing the impact to wildlife populations they also spend the most money to protect wildlife and habitat through licenses, travel around the state, and taxes that fund conservation _Pittman Robertson for example. Their wildlife management decisions are experience based, science based (listening to NDOW biologists) and first hand in the field observation based. Having attended County Advisory Board meetings for the past 12 years I have seen and heard the "general public" emotion based arguments for managing wildlife. Feral horses, feral cats, trapping, coyote hunts, the black bear hunt and most recently the scheduled moose hunt. The non-consumptive user is flat out against hunting. They use emotion rather than science to manage animal populations. The feral horse fiasco is a prime example of emotion based management. These animals are generally in poor condition and the habitat is in decline due to the over abundance of these large grazers on the landscape.

I ask a question:

Does the general public dominate the medical industry and regulatory boards?

Does the general public dominate the airline industry and the aviation boards?

Does the general public dominate the gaming industry and the NV gaming board?

Common sense (and public safety) dictates those with the most knowledge on a subject or

industry should be the ones making decisions on how to manage that industry.

Thank you

Concerned citizen, general public member and avid outdoorsman.

Brian Patterson

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Interim Natural Resources](#)
Subject: Comment for April 5 session
Date: Friday, April 5, 2024 10:26:39 AM

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I am a member of the Sierra Club and Citizens' Climate Lobby, a supporter of other environmental organizations, and a former science teacher with a degree in biological science. I recognize the human and economic importance of outdoor recreation in Nevada, and I fully enjoy the natural beauty of our state. However, the impacts on our wildlife and ecosystems must be considered. It is scientifically well-documented that healthy ecosystems depend on a finite balance between predator and prey species, as well as the plants and invertebrates within that system. Human activities have disrupted many NV ecosystems and climate change is causing further disruption and the potential extirpation of some species that may currently be considered threatened such as the desert tortoise. Potentially disruptive impacts in addition to outdoor recreation include continuing housing development sprawl and large solar arrays affecting habitat loss which is often forcing wildlife to either adapt if possible, become a threatened species, or even possibly go extinct. Wildlife being forced to relocate could be the reason behind the recent sightings of gray wolves and moose in NV. Other negative impacts are wildlife killing contests, and movements to extirpate predator species such as coyotes, mountain lions, bears, and now with their recent appearance in NV, gray wolves. All this being said, I am expressing my strong disapproval of wildlife killing contests, "canned" or trophy hunts, as well as the hunting of the small moose population that has recently been discovered in NV. I am also advocating for careful and cautious planning for renewable energy development, including large solar arrays and transmission lines which will also have huge impacts on NV ecosystems.

Thank you.
Rita Ransom
Las Vegas
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Interim Natural Resources](#); [REDACTED]
Subject: Committee on Natural Resources , Board of Wildlife Commissioners
Date: Thursday, April 4, 2024 2:37:11 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to any changes in the composition of the Board of Wildlife Commissioners.

Steve Smith

[REDACTED] Las Vegas, NV [REDACTED]

Respectfully submitted to Joint Interim Standing Committee on Natural Resources

Friday April 5, 2014

From:

Trish Swain

Sparks, NV

Greetings. I am Trish Swain, a resident of Washoe County. I strongly believe that a study of Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners (NBWC) should happen. Such a study will benefit our state and its precious wildlife. I hope the study helps to align the goals and values of our Department of Tourism with those of the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners. (NBWC)

Travel Nevada's Destination Development Demonstration promotes authenticity, evolution, and sustainability of destinations. Authenticity of experience has long been a value for the Department of Tourism. Are they coordinating their efforts with NBWC? What is the most advantageous way to attract tourists and promote what is singular and authentic about Nevada? Could NBWC adopt these values?

Forty years ago when I first came here from the East Coast, the contrast was overwhelming. Here there were vast stretches of landscape where one could experience solitude and leave the noise and clutter of civilization behind. One could immerse oneself in nature. I marvelled that the only sound I could hear was my own heartbeat. For me, that defines an authentic experience. If any wildlife appeared, that was the best part of the experience. For instance, I remember the delight of meeting a badger alongside the road, peering out from its burrow; golden eagles perched on telephone poles; herds of antelope – creatures I had only read about. For any city dwellers these are memorable experiences, and I can assure you tourists and most ordinary people want to see animals alive, to be shot only with cameras.

I've also spent many hours attending NBWC meetings where the primary value appears to be protection and promotion of hunting and trapping. And yet our Department of Wildlife promotes so many other approaches to experiencing nature. From my life experience, I believe these other approaches educate and benefit many more people: from tourists to everyday citizens. For instance, NDOW's Urban Wildlife program brought an excellent presentation on co-existing with coyotes to our neighborhood thereby dispelling myths and fears. Likewise I've heard presentations from the Wildlife Diversity Division which truly carries out NBWC's mandate to protect and preserve Nevada's diverse wildlife heritage.

Through the proposed study, could there be a way for Department of Tourism and NBWC to align their goals and values, to emphasize the unique, genuine, authentic immersion in nature one can have here and not to emphasize hunting or trapping?

Thank you for this opportunity to share my thoughts with you.

From: Jelindo Tiberti II [REDACTED] >
Sent: Thursday, April 4, 2024 2:44 PM
To: Pazina, Julie Ann Senator <Julie.Pazina@sen.state.nv.us>; Anderson, Natha Assemblywoman <Natha.Anderson@asm.state.nv.us>; Goicoechea, Pete Senator <Pete.Goicoechea@sen.state.nv.us>; Scheible, Melanie Senator <Melanie.Scheible@sen.state.nv.us>; Bilbray-Axelrod, Shannon Assemblywoman <Shannon.BilbrayAxelrod@asm.state.nv.us>; Delong, Rich Assemblyman <Rich.Delong@asm.state.nv.us>; Gurr, Bert Assemblyman <Bert.Gurr@asm.state.nv.us>; La Rue Hatch, Selena Assemblywoman <Selena.La.Rue.Hatch@asm.state.nv.us>
Cc: Angelo Tiberti [REDACTED]; Clint Bentley [REDACTED]; Patrick Cummings [REDACTED]; Matthew Blackburn [REDACTED]; Pat Pinjuv [REDACTED]
Subject: 4.5.2024 Meeting Agenda Item XII

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

Committee Members,

In reference to agenda item XII, the Board of Wildlife Commission does an excellent job with the protection, conservation and enhancement of all Nevada native wildlife. They are a science based board to determine wildlife management. One of the tools in wildlife management is hunting, this tool across the United States has brought back most of the big game species across the landscape. To now make this unique style of management a political, non-science based issue will certainly have a poor outcome. I encourage you to keep the Commission as is.

[REDACTED]

Jelindo Tiberti II

[REDACTED]

Las Vegas, NV [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From:
To: [Interim Natural Resources](#)
Subject: Comments in support of the Nevada Division of Minerals
Date: Wednesday, April 3, 2024 12:01:49 PM

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From the beginning, Nevada mining has been a high-tech STEM industry. Mining continues to require a highly-skilled workforce, including many with a background in science, technology, engineering, and math. These mining jobs pay exceedingly well in comparison to other industries, especially in the rural areas in which most are based.

The mining industry in Nevada produces more than twenty minerals and metals that are in use every day, in every aspect of our lives. Nevada is home to the only operating lithium mine in North America, and more lithium deposits can and will be mined in other Nevada localities. As new technologies are created and current ones improve, the demand for minerals will continue to increase, especially during the expected energy transition. Nevada is lucky to have an abundant mineral endowment and has been and will be able to supply many, if not most, of the minerals required in the future.

The Nevada Division of Minerals (NDOM) is tasked with encouraging and assisting in the exploration and production of minerals in Nevada, as well as maintaining a record of all Nevada mining operations and their annual production. The NDOM collects and disseminates information that is beneficial to the minerals industry and to all Nevada citizens. Without the efforts of the NDOM, the Nevada mineral exploration and mining industries, as well as the public, would have difficulty finding accurate mineral- and mining-related information. Continuing to fund the NDOM is in the best interest of all Nevadans and, in fact, all US citizens.

We all rely on minerals; support of the Nevada mining industry and the NDOM is crucial.

Lynne Volpi

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Interim Natural Resources](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Committee on natural resources, Board of Wildlife Commissioner, reference Senate Bill 88
Date: Thursday, April 4, 2024 6:22:31 PM

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to any change in the composition of the Board of Wildlife Commissioners.

It has been shown that when sportsman make decisions reference wildlife and there habitat the wildlife prosper and the habitat is greatly improved.

Mike Wills

[REDACTED]



Nevada Mineral Exploration Coalition

The “Voice” of Nevada Exploration

Submitted Electronically to:
NRInterim@lcb.state.nv.us

April 5, 2024

Joint Interim Standing Committee on Natural Resources
Nevada State Legislature

Re: NMEC Support for the Nevada Division of Minerals

Dear Senators and Assemblymembers :

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the importance of the Nevada Division of Minerals to the mineral exploration community and all users of Nevada Public Lands. One of our members commented during the public comment period of today’s meeting and we wish to add our comments to his.

The Nevada Division of Minerals (NDOM) is an integral part of Nevada’s successful mining practices. The focus of NDOM is to direct wise and sustainable mining throughout the state while implementing state regulation in the most balanced manner possible. NDOM does this through a number of programs meant to provide information, oversight and public safety.

NDOM is funded with no contribution by Nevada taxpayers. Explorers and miners pay for it through claim fees, permit fees, and disturbance fees. It is not a regulator, but NDOM does introduce to the legislature new regulation on exploration and mining when that is appropriate. For example, new regulation on exploration for and development of dissolved mineral resources in 2019.

NDOM produces some of the most comprehensive and user-friendly information on land use, exploration, mines. The Open data section of the website draws a wealth of data from multiple sources: from the Division itself, and also from BLM and other state and federal sources. It synthesizes and presents the data in innovative ways, of use to anyone wishing to use public lands.

Exploration geologists, landmen, land managers and attorneys utilize the data that NDOM produces on a regular and frequent basis. This information helps us to decide when, where and how to stake mining claims. The NDOM staff have done a remarkable job providing this information for anyone, whether involved with mining, ranching, recreation, or other land use. For some of us at NMEC, we use the resources provided by NDOM every day.

NDOM is also intimately involved in the permitting process for resource development in Nevada. The staff frequently meets together with the potential developers to educate, foster cooperation, and ensure that regulatory compliance is upheld. NDOM is highly effective in coordinating and interfacing with federal regulatory agencies and with the resource developer.

NDOM does a great job with its Abandoned Mines Land program. It works with mines which were abandoned years ago – long before the current cooperative efforts for effective mined land reclamation by industry and regulators. NDOM has consistently mitigated abandoned mines that pose safety hazards to the public.

In closing, we wish to say that the Nevada Division of Minerals and its parent authority, the Commission on Mineral Resources, fulfill their Legislature-assigned mission magnificently. And that mission is a vital, positive one for the State of Nevada

Respectfully,

Elizabeth Zbinden
Vice-President, Nevada Mineral Exploration Coalition

Deborah Goetz
Director, Nevada Mineral Exploration Coalition