



Game Commission Report

Nov. 1, 2010

Game Commission postpones antelope decision

The New Mexico State Game Commission postponed a decision on the controversial A-PLUS system at its Ruidoso meeting last week. The commission will take up the issue again Thursday, Dec. 9, in Clovis.

The A-PLUS system is the main reason that New Mexico has one of the lowest percentages of antelope hunting opportunity going to residents of any western state.

Few sportsmen attended the Thursday meeting, but **New Mexico Wildlife Federation delivered petitions and letters signed by over 6,000 New Mexico sportsmen like you asking for substantial improvement to the lopsided allocation of hunting licenses.** NMWF asked commissioners to reject the only option presented to the commission because it did little to improve resident hunting opportunity and also took two important steps backward from the status quo.

The option presented on Thursday would have changed antelope hunting for the worse in two ways:

First, the proposal would have changed all transferable "landowner" authorizations from ranch-only licenses to unit-wide licenses after the first hunt day, creating a new monetary incentive for landowners without good hunting opportunity to enroll in the A-PLUS program: The valuable unit-wide licenses could be used on any public land after the first day of the hunt.

Second, the proposal would have changed trespass rules for antelope so that antelope hunters could be cited as poachers for accidentally crossing an unmarked, unfenced boundary—and would have also created a confusing and inconsistent system of determining whether access roads are public or private.

[Click here to read the whole story.](#)

Bear and Cougar Limits Increased

The commission also voted on Thursday to substantially increase harvest limits for bear and cougar from previous levels. The commission changed bear harvest limits little from the department's proposal, changing only the Sandia and Manzano populations from a goal of reduction of the population to a stabilization of the population. The commission also voted in favor of the experimental spring bear hunt in the Valle Vidal, but ordered the department to study the impacts to cub and calf survival.

Cougar harvest limits were decreased from 996 to 742 by the department the day before the meeting, roughly splitting the difference between the current level of 490. Commission Chairman Jim McClintic said he asked department staff to make the downward revisions, in violation of the commission's public notice policy, to address public comment they had gotten. It was not made clear nor did any commissioner ask why the changes were not made in time to meet the 30-day-notice policy. Department Director Tod Stevenson said the number (almost exactly halfway between the current and originally proposed harvest levels) was set using science as the basis.

Read more in the Albuquerque Journal: www.abqjournal.com/news/state/2902182124newsstate10-29-10.htm (You may have to watch a brief advertisement.)

Temporary Trapping Ban Passed for Gila

The commission approved a ban on trapping in the Gila region to coordinate with an executive order made by Governor Richardson. The ban will be in place for six months while the department conducts a study on ways in which trapping could be conducted to minimize impacts to Mexican Gray Wolves. The department clarified that the temporary ban does not apply to coyote trapping, or any trapping on private land.

Pass it on

If you appreciate receiving these reports from the State Game Commission meetings, please share this newsletter with a friend and ask them to get involved by joining our Sportsman's Alert network. New Mexico sportsmen need to stay involved to ensure our hunting and fishing traditions continue. **And please make a contribution to NMWF.** With sportsmen like you, we can continue to make a difference. [Click here to donate now.](#)

About the New Mexico Wildlife Federation

Founded in 1914 by sportsman and conservation pioneer Aldo Leopold, the New Mexico Wildlife Federation is New Mexico's first and most effective conservation advocate. We are dedicated to protecting New Mexico's wildlife, habitat and outdoor way of life. We spearheaded permanent protection of our hunting and fishing rights in the Valle Vidal, and stopped cold the previous sell-off of your public lands. We believe that the best way to get things done is to build consensus with common goals.

Our key priorities are: Opportunity Habitat Youth

[NMWF Website](#) | [Donate Now](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [About Us](#)

New Mexico Wildlife Federation | 121 Cardenas Drive N.E. | Albuquerque NM | 87108