

# 3-16-16 RAP Meeting Brown County Sportsmen's Club

RAP Present: John Johnson, Bob Tiff, Rick Hentges, Bob Olson, Neil Bien, Taylor Anderson, Dick Pearson

GFP Staff Present: Scott Lindgren, Mike Klosowski, Chris Goldade, Keith Fisk, Jacquie Ermer, Mark Ermer, Todd Kaufman, Nick Markl, Bob Curtis

*Note Taker: Mike Klosowski*

- **Lindgren** opened meeting with talk on what everyone has been up to...general discussion on activities
- **Lindgren** visited about new office complex. Lindgren presented 5 locations that the GFP are looking at
  - Also mentioned the Watertown gun range and Klosowski gave an update on progress of the project
  - **Lindgren** gave a brief overview of the potential locations of a new office
  - Talked about site location #1 and some of the items we could do with this location
  - Explained issues with building 10 miles out of town
    - Public has to drive 10 miles
    - Staff have concern with cost/time it takes to drive out of town
  - **John Johnson** – thought site #3 would provide better public access
    - Lindgren explained department rationale for different locations
- **Lindgren** visited about Habitat workshops
  - Brief overview and success of workshops
  - Perfect storm right now for conservation programs (CRP)
  - General discussion on high prices for CRP and WRP payments
- **Bob Tiff** explained WRP he signed up for allows haying 1/3 every three years
  - **Lindgren** visited about possibilities of a habitat stamp. Hepler visited with PF back in January. Just a concept at this point. **Lindgren** mentioned we had to stop CREP program due to insufficient amount of funding. Would have cost one million dollars/year to finish program to 100,000 acre goal
- **Rick Hentges** – Grant county winter was great and easy on wildlife.
  - Pheasant season was poor. Very few snow goose opportunities this spring.
  - Big Stone Lake had a huge amount of anglers fishing perch.
  - Milbank has a youth shotgun program- high school has a trap league program...26 students have signed up with this time.
  - Local gun club has been struggling to get participants; hopefully this helps
- **Dick Pearson** – great winter for wildlife.
  - Has seen an increase in pheasants.
  - Observing more young deer and thinks population could be increasing.
  - Last season was good hunting; visited about his snow goose hunt
  - Seeing an increase in long distance rifle shooters- group is looking for an area to shoot
  - Fishing was good and Bitter was loaded with people
  - **Dick Pearson** mentioned ice fishing sleeper shacks changing the sport- more people are using them
- **Taylor Anderson** – Lots of hard sided shacks fishing all night; concern on killing fish pulling from deep water
  - Didn't see as many coyotes this year.
  - Snow goose migration was poor in Groton area; saw more west to the river.
  - Great winter for wildlife.
- **Neil Bien** – not many pheasants; sure seems like spring around him; great winter around him as well...didn't have to feed cattle until January 16.
  - Snow goose migration was poor

- Fishing was slower this year except for northern pike (“Big ones”)
- Fall waterfowl season was short due to weather pushing ducks out as soon as they arrived
- **Bob Tiff** – great winter; deer numbers are high with great quality bucks (“top ten season”); SW Spink County
  - Pheasant numbers were spotty; Nonresidents were disappointed with hunting. Brood numbers earlier were good – not sure where birds went, didn’t see as many pheasants on his property.
  - Ice fishing was spotty...Cottonwood was slow.
  - Spring fishing is good, caught his limit of walleye in 35 minutes on Cottonwood.
  - Thanked GFP for having the habitat meeting. Landowners were happy they came and plan on doing some projects.
  - **Bob Curtis** and WDM/WL staff gave thoughts on coyote numbers.
  - **Dick Pearson** mentioned coyote numbers are low as he sees very few during his hunting ventures.
- **Bob Olson** – lots of ice fishing this year. Success was marginal at best. Did some perch fishing in North Dakota...good fishing there.
  - Snow goose migration has been slow.
  - Some guys are starting to open water fish now.
- **John Johnson** – see good numbers of smaller deer.
  - Great winter for wildlife
  - Has a number of road kills around his place that have not been touched by coyotes – unusual
  - Knows of a couple farmers in severe financial trouble due to paying too much money for land or rent.
  - **John** thinks CRP is going to take off. Has observed more CRP in his area.
- **Bob Tiff** – Questioned if GFP received any complaints from nonresident hunters
- **Lindgren** – thought harvest will be up and didn’t hear much for complaints
- **Bob Olson** wondered if pen raised birds are included on GFP harvest surveys.
- **Jacque Ermer** – explained surveys and whether pen raised birds are reported on GFP harvest surveys
  - **Lindgren** advised yes
- **Keith Fisk & Jacque Ermer** gave presentation on Canada Goose management
  - **John Johnson** asked to explain how they determine goose numbers overall.
    - **Fisk & J Ermer** explained how USFWS counts/determines the goose population
- **Richard Hentges** asked why we decided on the population goal previously of 90,000 since we never were at the population range.
  - **Fisk** explained staff reasoning
- **Bob Olson** wondered if birds that were killed in August would now be killed during September season
  - Staff and RAP members thought harvest and participation would increase in September; many factors play a role in this season i.e. weather and available wheat fields.
- **Dick Pearson** wondered what would happen if the goose population falls within the management goal?
  - **J Ermer** explained options and discussed the harvest matrix.
- General conversation on pros and cons of goose kill permits- have become a popular tool for staff to use
- **Lindgren** advised of Day County trespass case where SA Smeins is prosecuting anglers for walking on ice that was frozen to the bottom of the slough- this is a departure to previous thought
- **Todd Kaufman** gave presentation on mercury in lakes
  - General discussion on area lakes with mercury advisory on them.

- Discussion on how many fish you would have to eat before it could cause problems- Kaufman advised numerous
- Did **not** get to the update on the deer study, deer management plan and 2015 deer season from Jacquie.
- **Mark Ermer** gave presentation on fish regulations changes
  - General questions on health of some lakes
  - **Taylor Anderson** asked questions on whether or not we would restore minimum size restrictions or a partial restriction- Ermer advised not likely.
  - **Taylor** asked a question on fish loss from catching them in deep water- some research has suggested fish will survive in cooler water
- **Lindgren** visited on HB 1075 Nonresident Waterfowl licenses.
  - Bill introduced allows 1500 3-day licenses from Pierre to be valid in 6 more counties on public or private lands.
  - Bill will significantly increase nonresident hunters in Edmunds and McPherson counties.

**Topics/Ideas for next meeting:**

- Update on deer study and recommendations for 2016
- Deer management plan/stakeholder's meetings
- Watertown office complex update