

**Prickly Pear Sportsmen's Association**  
**Association Meeting Minutes**  
**East Helena VFW**  
**January 14, 2020**

Board Members:

Chairman of the Board: Jason Swant

Assoc. President: Neil Horne

Assoc. President-Elect: Rick Yearry -exc

Assoc. Treasurer: Annette Rinehart

Assoc. Secretary: Sherri Lionberger

Website Mgr: Vacant

Range Mtnce Officer: New officer Kevin Horn

Director: Larry Cole

Director: Cory Olson

Director: Scott Swingley -exc

Director: Kerry Bartlett

Directors: George Schiller

Director Keaton Santos -exc

Quenton Kujala, with the FWP wildlife division spoke to us about CWD. It is caused by preons which are a mutated protein. It kills by generating holes in the brain, causing animals to waste away. Highest concentration of the preon is in spinal cord and brain; you cannot move carcasses of harvested animals in CWD designated areas. Transmission is through contact such as saliva, body fluid, or even possibly left on the soil. CWD attacks all cervids. The preons are very tolerant in the environment and difficult to destroy, so eradication is not a viable solution. It was first found in Montana on an elk game farm near Phillipsburg in the mid 1990's. FWP started to look for CWD to show up again via vectors from nearby states and provinces in 2017. It was then found south of Billings in an area they were looking at harvested game in fall of 2017. It has continued from there.

In April 2019 in Libby they were getting calls about sickly looking deer in urban area – they were positive. These were the first finding of sick looking animals. Libby has the higher rate of infection at this point. This was interesting in that it isn't near the vectors from neighboring states/provinces. There are a number of people feeding deer in town, and it could enhance transmission. Because Libby was an outlier, FWP decided to allow people to test their own kills with samples they collect and send in. Through that hunter network, they found a moose in NW area, an elk (didn't get the location), and a WT deer in SW area.

Management response isn't to eradicate the disease as that is impossible – so it is to keep the disease as low prevalence as possible. Over a long period of time, it can drive the populations down. For some reason deer are more susceptible, and older bucks also seem to be more at risk.

Human health is a huge question; however, there is no definitive evidence that it can be transmitted to humans by eating the meat. However, it is in the same family of disease as things like Crutchfield Jakob disease, mad cow disease, etc. CDC does warn not to eat the meat of an infected animal, but we know it is happening in other states.

**Questions:** can we mitigate when taking care of a kill? Yes – good protection measures when handling harvested animals will help.

CWD areas are identified and some people will elect not to hunt there. So how do you keep the population under check with hunting in those areas. Other states have not recognized a decline in hunters in CWD areas.

How long does it take to get the test results and can you test in the field. No to a field test yet although they are working on it. Colorado State Lab is a national hub for testing – takes about 14 days. To get a sample the FWP website has a video – lymph nodes below the ear is where you collect the sample. What is the estimated timeline from when they contract the disease to showing signs – 18 months and it is always fatal.

What happens to predators that consume these animals? Good question, but not recognized as a primary vector of transmission. Since the disease is only known in cervids, predators aren't impacted.

Meeting start: 7:20 pm Meeting end: 7:42 pm

Roll call: (see above)

There were 15 members of the Association present in addition to 8 Board members, for a total of 23 present.

**Minutes from September 10 meeting** were read:

Motion to accept minutes as read: George Schiller, Annette Rinehart 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed.

**Treasurer's report:** beginning balance was December 1, 2020.

Beginning balance:	\$66,447.31
Deposits:	\$9,845.00
Expenses:	\$14,208.84
Skid steer loan:	\$28,119.25
Ending balance:	\$33,964.22

Neil said the bill came in from Helena S&G for the work they did on the parking lot and it was way lower than anticipated. Neil questioned them, and they gave us a break of \$9500 on the bill. It was very much appreciated. Motion to accept treasurer's report: George, Corey 2<sup>nd</sup>, motion passed.

**Officers' reports:**

**Neil** – the heating for the conex where skid steer is parked is completed. It has propane heat with a direct vent and there is no condensation.

**Director Reports:**

**Larry** – because there are folks here that don't normally attend meetings Larry explained the special use permit for the 9 acres where we operate. The permit is up for renewal this year for another 20 years. The FS has run into a workload problem, but they anticipate re-issuing the permit by end of April. We are asking the survey crew to add our improvements into our permit and hopefully will be done this next summer.

A letter was written to the congressional delegation asking for help in a land exchange for the property, but we only heard back from Tester. There is a potential new authority available that we might purchase the land in the next 2-5 years. The CD's we have were put in place some time ago to potentially purchase the land.

**Annette** – membership was 1640 in 2019 which was a decline of 89 from 2018. Guest passes were 562 in 2018 and went up by 40 in 2019. Last year we gave out two \$500 scholarships to seniors. The due date for this year's scholarship application is April 1.

**Old Business:** Christmas party: George – good party! We spent about same money as 2018 for door prizes – around \$840 and received about \$1500 in value. Sportsmans Warehouse gave us roughly \$2000 worth of goods. Capital Sports gave us a rifle and several hundred in goods. George spent roughly \$240

at Bob Wards and received roughly \$600 in value. Murdochs also donated some. Dinner was good, turnout was good and Jason did well as MC.

Question was asked if the new indoor range is having an impact on membership. We don't know if our downfall of 89 members is due to that or not. Jason did talk with folks at the indoor range and they are very open to working together in partnership. Membership is \$250/year there.

**New Business:** Next meeting is April 7 and elections will be held then.

Motion to adjourn Annette, seconded by George .

Respectfully submitted by

Sherri Lionberger - secretary