

CGNRAC Meeting Minutes – 18 April 2012

Location: Conference Room, Conservation Branch, Bldg 5888

Roll Call: Sec'y Burt Davis – Quorum declared

Officers Present

Chairman – COL House

1st VP – Tommy Garnett

2nd VP – Tom Siter

Secretary – Burt Davis

MSU's Represented

11th EN BN

75th Ranger Regt

14th CSH

AMU

194th AR BDE

DENTAC

197th IN BDE

HQ MCOE

198th IN BDE

MEDDAC/MACH

199th IN BDE

NCOA

316th CAV BDE

USAARMS

3rd BDE, 3rd ID

MSU's Not Represented

13th CSSB

RTB

192 IN BDE

WHINSEC

Staff/Directorates Represented

Biologist Conservation Branch – Brent Widener

DES, Law Enforcement Div – Robert Boggess

MWR – Cliff Hughes

G-3, MCOE, Range Control – Eddie Gamble

Visitors

James LeGrand, DAC

James Neville, NV

Opening Remarks – COL House

- Will re-engage units not in attendance.
- Consider removing for non-participation.

New Business

Issue: Expand QDM – MAJ Payne

- Council has voted to consider expansion of QDM area.
- Conducted mission analysis.
- Presents 3 COA's
- COA 1
 - o Leaves program as established. No changes.
 - o 26,000 Acres, 17,044 huntable.
 - o Current QDM area.
 - o North of Buena Vista Road, East of Upatoi Creek.
 - o 29 compartments.
 - o Harvest 11/12 - 56. 22 bucks, 32 does.
- COA 2
 - o Expand current area West to Lorraine Road.
 - o Additional acreage - 10,633, 8,746 huntable.
 - o 12 compartments.
 - o Harvest 11/12 – 56. 24 bucks, 32 does.
- COA 3
 - o All area North of Buena Vista Road
 - o Additional acreage – 18,738, 18,538 huntable.
 - o 37 compartments.
 - o Harvest 11/12 – 188, 71 bucks, 117 does.
- Discussion
 - Statistical data. 11/12 harvest 486 bucks with 226 6 points or under.
 - COA 2 would be hard to enforce with Lorraine Rd traffic from both sides.
 - Brent Widener – Recommends COA1 or 3.
 - COL Maddison – Prefers COA 3.
 - COL House – Already have 4 one side QDM statewide. Only talking about adding 1 deer to program. Suggest if current program changed not be re-looked until 2017.
 - Unknown – Recommends all or none.
 - MAJ Bolar – Unit generally supportive. Like to see doe limit increased.
 - MAJ House – Less than 5 people harvest max limit.
 - CPT Lessman – Suggest requiring doe harvest before eligible for buck in QDM.
 - Burt Davis – Would be hard to enforce.
 - COL House – Some suggested child/handicap/wounded warrior exclusions in QDM areas. Whether shot by those or other hunter bottom line is deer is still dead.
 - o **Vote taken – Which COA preferred. COA 1 - 0, COA 2 - 0, COA 3 – 13**
- **Result of vote – COA 3 is approved by Council. QDM will be expanded to include all areas North of Buena Vista Road.**

- Brent Widener - Requires no additional staffing action. QDM has already been approved by staffing action. Requires education of hunters and marking of areas.

Issue – Draft Charter – COL House

- Remaining issues to be resolved in draft
 - o Voting representation
 - By unit size?
 - By number soldiers represented?
 - By MSC or MSU?
 - MSC implies O-6 level command. Example; HQMCOE commanded by O-3 but represents 1,000+ soldiers.
 - By size/soldiers would put NCOA in and take out WHINSEC.
- Will contact WHINSEC regarding non-participation/desire to remain on Council.
- Recommends adding Warrior Training Center.
- Charter/list not been updated since 2003.
- LTC Shattuck – Suggests adding catch all phrase ‘additional units as deemed necessary’.
- COL House will change language to read ‘MSU’.

Issue – 2nd Vice President – Tommy Garnett

- 2nd VP seat unfilled many years.
- Current Charter designates position as AC Enlisted
- Draft Charter changes position to retiree. Either AC or DAC.
- Advantage; Provides representation of retired community on Council.
- Provide input but have no voting authority.
- Appointed/chosen by Chairman and approved by Council.
- Introduced CSM (Retired) Tom Siter.
- **Vote taken – Approved. Tom Siter will serve as 2nd VP.**

Issue – Exclusion Areas – COL House

- Recommendation has been made to remap existing exclusion areas around heavy gun ranges to include only ‘range proper’.
- Would provide additional available acreage to recreational footprint.
- Determined proposal out of the box at this time.
 - o Would require total revamp of training map.
 - o Requires TRADOC approval of new map.
 - o Requires both training and hunting map revision.
 - o Requires changing SDZ map.
 - o More involved than originally thought. Not feasible at this time.
- Issue tabled at this time.

Issue – Trap/Skeet Range Update – Cliff Hughes

- Delayed. Stuck in mud over erosion control plan.
- Delayed 1 ½ month.
- Opening delayed. Currently projecting late fall.
- Have begun purchasing equipment.

- Current membership of Rifle and Pistol Range an issue. JAG working issue of civilian members from off post.
- May initially at least only allow authorized DOD users.
- COL House – AMU will co-sponsor zero day. Possibly facilitate.
- COL House – Recommends keeping CSM Moore in loop on progress.

Issue – Standardization of Ft Benning Regulation between AL/GA – COL House

- CSM Byers previously expressed concern regarding confusion between Ft Benning, GA, AL regulations. Too complicated. Requested Ft Benning reg be a 'one stop' reg covering all issues.
- Brent Widener – Coordinating with AL/GA to allow separate harvest data for Ft Benning. GA approves. Waiting to hear from AL. If implemented Ft Benning harvest would not be reported on State license. Would be step forward in standardization. No possibility of allowing extra doe harvest.
- LTC Shattuck – Encourage max doe harvest? Does this really simplify reg.?
- CSM Byers – His intent was that nothing in reg should say 'refer to respective state reg'.

Issue – Harvest Card – COL House

- Questioned – Does everybody support use of Harvest Card?
- Officer Boggess – Thinks good idea. Would help enforcement personnel.
- Would be used for enforcement purpose only. No intent to collect at end of year as in past. No suspensions for not turning in. TELTRACK would remain primary source of collecting data.
- Supports separate/different reporting requirements on state license.
- If separate reporting requirements can be approved would mean animals harvested on Ft Benning would not be counted on state license. Could kill 12 deer on Ft Benning in GA and additional 12 more off post.

Issue – Question Harvesting Too Many Does – Cliff Hughes

- Concerned encouraging doe harvest might deplete total population.
- Brent Widener – If killed 1,000/year would affect population. 500/year would not. Currently not close to limit.

Issue – Burn Plan – Brent Widener

- Presented FY 11/12 burn plan.
- Certain areas require burning annually.
- Sometimes hard to accomplish due to weather/training/etc.
- Burn plan is attached as part of briefing slides.

Issue - Law Enforcement – Officer Boggess

- Main problem currently hunting in closed compartments, unplugged shotguns and loaded weapons.

Issue - Range Operations – COL House

- Currently working overtime issue to provide additional funds for Range Ops to fund weekends to maintain gates.

- Looking good at this point.

Issue - Command Group – COL House for CSM Moore

- CSM Moore not present. Conflict.
- CSM Moore steadfastly working weapons policy issues.
- Optimistic may maintain some of existing policy but looks like may have to concede to hard cases.

Issue - Open House – COL House/Cliff Hughes

- First Open House planning session 25 April
- Need volunteers to help plan/execute.
- Contact Brittany Beedle, Outdoor Rec to be put on distro list.
- Cliff Hughes – Not sure date of Open House.

Issue - June Meeting – COL House

- Conflict with originally scheduled date for next meeting.
- **Next meeting date changed to 13 June.**

Issue - Closing Remarks – COL House

- General comments
- Appreciation for attendance.

Meeting Adjourned

*****COL House' meeting notes follow*****

1. Had 13 of the 17 voting members present; I will re-engage those units who did not have representatives present, and will ask they participate. If they fail to show, we will consider removing them from the voting Council.

2. Mr Brent Widener briefed the progress on the falconry issue and will continue to work w/ LAAF and will include language in MCOE 200-3 revision for 2012.

3. MAJ Jathan Payne, 1-29 IN, provided a detailed brief on expanding the Quality Deer Management Program on Fort Benning. The brief included three COAs: 1. Do not change current land allocation. 2. Expand to Lorraine Road in the west. 3. Expand to include everything north of Buena Vista Road. After a healthy discussion, two votes were taken- 1. To expand QDMP on Benning w/ unanimous vote 13/13 reps in favor. 2. Selecting COA 3 w/ unanimous vote 13/13 reps in favor. Expansion will now included approx 31% of the huntable land mass of Ft Benning in QDM. Harvest in this expand area only accounted for approximately 25% of the total deer harvest last year. Council also decided NOT to review/change the QDMP for five years unless directed by the Ft Benning leadership- CoS or CG. CPT Bob Boggess from DES

supports COA3 as it makes enforcement easier.

4. Draft charter was discussed and Council agreed to include NCOA and WTC as voting reps. Council agreed to look at unit representation as the metric and not specifically at size. Draft charter will be amended to include these two units as well as language that allows the Council to adjust membership without re-staffing document for CoS signature.

5. CSM (Ret) Tom Siter was nominated and approved to serve as the 2d VP of the Council. It's a non-voting position representing retirees. Vote was unanimous in support of this nomination.

6. Exclusion area adjustment effort was discussed and complexity described to Council membership. It will require a long term effort which will not be completed before this deer season. COL H and Mr Widener will work this with the DPTMS/Rg Ops team in the coming months.

7. Mr Cliff Hughes gave a quick update on the Skeet Range and highlighted that although equipment is arriving on schedule, the construction is still delayed and will not likely be complete until late Fall. Impacts- Ft Benning will rely on AMU to host the pre-deer season zero ranges as we have in the past. Units continue to express concern about Soldiers not being allowed to zero firearms for a nominal daily fee.

8. MCOE Regulation standardization effort missed the mark somewhat. Mr Brent Windener will continue to look at MCOE 200-3 to make it easier to understand while managing differences between GA and AL. Will look to remove language that says; "see GA/AL regulation." Still much work to do in this effort. Goal is to complete before 2012-13 publication.

9. Mr Widener discussed an on-going discussion with GA and AL DNR to allow Fort Benning to record deer and turkey harvest on a Fort benning "Harvest Card." The harvest card would be issued by Fort Benning and would serve as the single document authorizing deer/turkey harvest. Hunters would still require the appropriate state license but would record Ft Benning animals on the Ft Benning Harvest Card and NOT their GA/AL license. Harvest card may require hunters to renew the access pass to receive this card which would expire annually....probably in the Jun-Jul time frame. CPT Bob Boggess from DES supports the harvest card idea.

10. Mr Brent Widener provided maps of the 2011 and 2012 burn plan so members can share with units. He will provide the 2013 plan will complete later this summer/fall.

11. CSM Moore was not able to make the meeting, so COL H discussed current Weapons Policy status. Council continues to be concerned that we don't over react to events and require overly strict regulations on weapons storage and transport. Hard cases and locks have resurfaced in recent discussions after working groups determined that this would involve unnecessary financial

burden on Soldiers and will also like increase citations for violations.

12. CPT Boggess mentioned that he continues to write citations for turkey hunters with no plugs in their guns and hunters traveling with loaded weapons in their vehicles. It's important that we continue to educate newly arrived Soldiers on our regulations.

13. Ms Brittany Beadle is look for volunteers to help with this year's Hunting/Fishing Open House. Need 4-5 committee members to help plan the event and will look for unit support to help set up the event in late August. Ms Beadle is CCd. Please contact her and help. First coordination meeting is scheduled for next week.

14. Council members were asked to encourage Soldiers to include email and cell phone numbers when they purchase their Ft Benning access pass. This information will only be used to contact hunters during urgent situations such as land allocation mistakes.

15. Next CGNRAC meeting scheduled for 13 June, 1700 hours. Burt Davis will make sure Council member get the electrons for everything briefed yesterday!