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Mr. Wayne Lowry, President
The Alberta Fish and Game Association
6924 – 104 Street NW
Edmonton, AB T6H 2L7

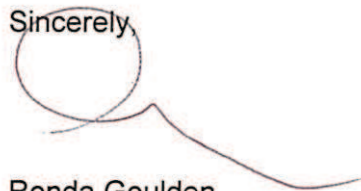
Dear Mr. Lowry:

Thank you for forwarding the resolutions passed by members of the Alberta Fish and Game Association at your 2016 annual conference. The Honourable Shannon Phillips, Minister of Environment and Parks, asked that I provide the association with a detailed response from the department.

Environment and Parks' Policy and Planning Division staff reviewed the resolutions and provided responses to each one in the enclosed document as requested. Should you have any questions regarding the responses on wildlife resolutions, please contact Mr. Matt Besko, our Director of Wildlife Management Policy, at 780-974-2641 in Edmonton, or at matt.besko@gov.ab.ca. For questions on fisheries resolutions, please call Mr. David Park, Director of Fisheries Management Policy, at 780-427-8347 in Edmonton, or at dave.park@gov.ab.ca.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our feedback to your association on these important matters. Department staff look forward to continuing our discussions on these resolutions and other matters of concern to the association.

Sincerely,



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Ronda Goulden
Assistant Deputy Minister

Enclosure

cc: Honourable Shannon Phillips, Minister of Environment and Parks
Dave Park, Environment and Parks
Matt Besko, Environment and Parks

**ALBERTA FISH AND GAME ASSOCIATION
2016 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
RESPONSES TO RESOLUTIONS PASSED**

FISHERIES RESOLUTION NUMBER F-1-2016

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Fish and Game Association request that Alberta Environment and Parks require each Canadian resident from outside of Alberta and Non-resident from outside of Canada to purchase an additional \$20.00 daily licence to fish in the ES1 and ES2 units flowing waters.

RESPONSE:

For the 2017/18 licensing season, a new licence pricing regime will be implemented that will involve higher licence pricing for non-Albertan anglers, which is in greater alignment with other Canadian jurisdictions. This will be done in a way that will not create additional administrative and compliance related burdens associated to the assignment of specific licences for certain watersheds. Additional revenue generated from the sale of these licences will be directed to the Alberta Conservation Association in support of its programs.

FISHERIES RESOLUTION NUMBER F-2-2016

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Fish and Game Association request that Alberta Environment and Parks allow harvest of rainbow trout in all flowing waters of ES1.

RESPONSE: Discussions are taking place to find ways to reduce the risk to westslope cutthroat trout due to species misidentification by anglers and provide opportunities for low-risk, targeted rainbow trout harvest. Management initiatives will be implemented in order to achieve upcoming fisheries management objectives. Consultation with a broader range of stakeholders will be required in order to assess and implement options for changes to the angling regulations applied to flowing waters in ES1.

FISHERIES RESOLUTION NUMBER F-3-2016

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Fish and Game Association request that Alberta Environment and Parks increase the catch and keep limit for walleye in the provincial lakes that have a high concentration of walleye.

RESPONSE: Angling regulations are set in order to achieve fisheries management objectives, based on the current status of a fish population and the desired state of the fishery. Fisheries management objectives will be consulted and set to provide a diversity of fishing opportunities for anglers at a regional and provincial scale. Broad changes to walleye retention limits do not reflect the diversity in fisheries management objectives and are not supported; however, fisheries for which the objective is to optimize the quantity of walleye kept on a sustainable basis will have regulations which align with this objective. Consultation with a broader range of stakeholders will be required in order to assess and implement options for changes to fisheries management objectives and angling regulations at specific waters.

FISHERIES RESOLUTION NUMBER F-4-2016

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Fish and Game Association request that the Government of Alberta develop a plan endorsed by the public that increases the recreational use of Alberta's underutilized fish resources.

RESPONSE: Alberta does not limit the sale of angling licences generally or on specific waters, and consequently does not restrict the recreational use of this province's fishery resources. There are no plans to apply any such limitations. Alberta's fisheries resources experience a level of use which is much greater than elsewhere in Canada, and which is increasing. Variations in level of use are primarily a consequence of accessibility and amenities, such as campgrounds and boat launches. Such variations contribute to providing a diversity of recreational experiences available to Albertans, which is desired. A plan to increase accessibility and amenities is not currently being considered. Regardless, consultation with a broader range of stakeholders will be required in order to assess and implement options for changes to fisheries management objectives, angling regulations and other management actions.

FISHERIES RESOLUTION NUMBER F-5-2016

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Fish and Game Association request that the Government of Alberta develop a plan endorsed by the public that increases the availability of tiger trout and splake to the list of fish species permitted for stocking of private fish ponds.

RESPONSE: Tiger trout culture and stocking is still in an evaluation phase in Alberta and there is no intent to make tiger trout available for private fish pond stocking. There is no intent to initiate a splake stocking program; however, the interest in this hybrid will be communicated to the provincial fish culture manager. Alberta Environment and Parks does not support the stocking or transfer of public fish resources into private water bodies.

FISHERIES RESOLUTION NUMBER F-6-2016 and FISHERIES RESOLUTION NUMBER F-7-2016

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Fish and Game Association request that the Alberta Government develop and adopt a policy that conforms to no net loss of fish habitat for Alberta. and

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Fish and Game Association request that the Alberta Government develop fish habitat protection and compensation legislation for Alberta.

RESPONSE: The federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, through the federal *Fisheries Act* and associated regulations, is the authority for any authorizations for serious harm to fish habitat in Alberta. The federal *Fisheries Act* requires fisheries management objectives be explicitly considered in decisions. Under the federal legislation, to protect fish habitat, efforts should be made to avoid, mitigate or offset harm. Although not the direct authority for fish habitat, Alberta Environment and Parks is working to build a science-based approach to including habitat considerations in the fisheries management review and regulation cycle. Integration of habitat into Alberta Environment and Park's review and regulation cycle and associated fisheries management objectives will assist the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to better connect their habitat decisions in the context of our allocation and use of fisheries resources in Alberta. The Fish Conservation and Management Strategy for Alberta (available here: <http://esrd.alberta.ca/fish-wildlife/fisheries-management/fish-conservation-management-strategy.aspx>) outlines strategic direction for fish habitat protection. Priorities for fish habitat work are informed by fisheries management objectives. Alberta is also participating in the review of the federal *Fisheries Act* to provide feedback on the restoration of lost protection measures and incorporation of modern safeguards with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

FISHERIES RESOLUTION NUMBER F-8-2016

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Fish and Game association request that Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) and the Alberta Conservation Association (ACA) increase fish habitat by installing and managing winter aeration of numerous lakes that are at risk of winter fish kills.

RESPONSE: Alberta Environment and Parks will continue to work with the Alberta Conservation Association to evaluate, plan and implement aeration projects to improve overwinter fish survival in situations where the attainment of fisheries management objectives would be supported by such action, in a cost-effective manner. Consultation with a broader range of stakeholders will be required in order to assess and implement options for changes to management actions in alignment with fisheries management objectives.

FISHERIES RESOLUTION NUMBER F-11-2016

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Fish and Game Association request that Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) and the Alberta Conservation Association (ACA) revise fish program priorities to emphasize the protection, enhancement and development of fish habitat.

RESPONSE: Improved tools are being developed and incorporated into fisheries management objectives to provide clear direction for decision-makers working with the public and industry in order to better protect and enhance fish habitat. For 2016-17, program priorities have shifted to place increased manpower resources on this work. It is expected that this focus will be maintained into 2017-18, in order to complete the planned changes.

WILDLIFE RESOLUTION NUMBER W-4-2016

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Fish and Game Association request Alberta Environment and Parks change the regulations to allow residents to designate one eligible resident youth (12 to 17 years of age) as a partner on their Resident Elk license.

RESPONSE: Allowing resident partner licences for elk is under consideration by Alberta Environment and Parks in the ongoing development of the Allocation Policy. The consideration of this change takes into account the potential increase in opportunity to be shared amongst recreational hunters, as well as the efficiency of handling a large ungulate following harvest. The Alberta Fish and Game Association is involved with the task team assigned to advise the development of the Allocation Policy.

WILDLIFE RESOLUTION NUMBER W-8-2016

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Fish and Game Association request that Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) increase resident waterfowl hunting opportunity by restricting the number of days, or the timing of the hunting season, or other means, that an outfitter may operate and in so doing, reduce the conflict and competition for receiving access to hunt on private lands.

RESPONSE: Alberta Environment and Parks has specific regulations that can be enacted to temper competition between waterfowl outfitters and recreational hunters within specific Wildlife Management Units. Prior to this occurring, the department will need to complete an assessment that the regulation change will have the desired effect and improve access to fields by recreational hunters. Alberta Environment and Parks is discussing with Alberta Professional Outfitters Society and Alberta Fish and Game Association methods of determining how to measure outfitter specific impact in problem areas and we will identify these problem areas within the province.

WILDLIFE RESOLUTION NUMBER W-9-2016

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Fish and Game Association request that Alberta Environment and Parks eliminate the requirement for Non-Resident (Canadians) to apply with a resident Albertan in the Limited Entry draws that they are eligible for. Instead, they must include the WIN number of their Hunter Host on their application.

RESPONSE: Allowing non-residents to apply on Special Licence draw applications is under consideration by Alberta Environment and Parks in the ongoing development of the Allocation Policy. The issue is broader in scope than the application process, and will be considered in terms of priority of resident hunters over non-residents, and the means by which hunting opportunities for species allocated via Special Licence can be most efficiently managed, especially in regions where hunting interest is high. The Alberta Fish and Game Association is part of this process via the task team assigned to discuss the Allocation Policy.

WILDLIFE RESOLUTION NUMBER W-11-2016

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Fish and Game Association request that Alberta Environment and Parks change the Antlered Elk Special License in the WMU200 Super Unit (WMU 200, 202, 203, 232, 234) from Antlered Elk to an Either Sex Special License.

RESPONSE: Alberta Environment and Parks is currently developing the species management plan for elk in Alberta. Within this document, a provincial level assessment of elk population status, harvest and social considerations will be discussed, and management objectives will be developed regionally to meet these provincial goals. This will help guide decisions such as these to assist in the application of antlered, antlerless or general designations for Wildlife Management Units. In the short term, regional staff will discuss this issue and consider it in terms of variables such as elk abundance and distribution, depredation, and hunter opportunity. It will go to consultation with the public, including the Alberta Fish and Game Association, as proposals are developed.

WILDLIFE RESOLUTION NUMBER W-17-2016

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Fish and Game Association request Alberta Environment and Parks create a Partner Licence for Antlered and Antlerless Elk Licences the same as that which is now available for Moose Special Licences.

RESPONSE: Allowing resident partner licences for elk is under consideration by Alberta Environment and Parks in the ongoing development of the Allocation Policy. The consideration of this change takes into account the potential increase in opportunity to be shared amongst recreational hunters, as well as the efficiency of handling a large ungulate following harvest. The Alberta Fish and Game Association is involved with the task team assigned to advise the development of the Allocation Policy.

ENVIRONMENT RESOLUTION NUMBER E-1-2016

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Fish and Game Association request that the Alberta Government or agencies implement a requirement with the granting of surface rights disposition beyond an established tolerable limit, that the area of any boreal forest lands must be replaced by reclamation of an area 2-5 times the area cleared.

RESPONSE: Environment and Parks has been working with stakeholders, including the Alberta Association for Conservation Offset, to develop the Conservation Offset Framework (Framework). The Framework provides overarching guidance to ensure consistency when developing conservation offsets. The Framework release is pending government approval.

Environment and Parks continues to assess how conservation offset can be used to address environmental issues, further development of conservation offset program will be guided by the Conservation Offset Framework. The Framework is currently being tested through:

- An early action process in which the department reviews external conservation efforts to test implementation considerations for offset approaches; and
- supporting the implementation of Alberta's Wetland Policy.

ENVIRONMENT RESOLUTION NUMBER E-2-2016

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Fish and Game Association request that the Alberta Government develop and adopt a policy that confirms no peatland drainage will be permitted in Alberta unless adequate compensation (wetland policy) replaces these wetlands.

RESPONSE: The Government of Alberta released the Alberta Wetland Policy in September of 2013. The policy is applicable to all wetland classes in the province, including mineral wetlands (marsh, swamp, shallow open waters) and peatlands (bogs and fens). The Alberta Wetland Policy was implemented in the province's White (settled) Area on June 1, 2015; Green Area (northern boreal forest, eastern slopes) will follow on June 1, 2016. Under the Alberta Wetland Policy, any authorized development activity leading to the permanent loss of wetland area (including peatlands) is subject to a replacement ("compensation") requirement. Non-permanent development activities (those subject to a reclamation requirement) will be held to the highest standards, ensuring that the wetland (including peatlands) is returned to a previous state at the end of project life.

ENVIRONMENT RESOLUTION NUMBER E-3-2016

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Fish and Game Association request the Alberta Government develop and adopt a policy that requires sedimentation incidents in public watercourses, lakes and wetlands be reported publicly to ensure government transparency.

RESPONSE: Environment and Parks is currently working on a number of key initiatives relating to integrated water and watershed management in the province. Amongst these are a new policy for lake watershed management and an updated approach to sand and gravel development on flood plains. Although the department currently exercises a fairly robust approach to the management and reporting of environmental incidents, particularly as they relate to aquatic habitats, these policy initiatives will provide opportunity to examine potential refinement of existing mechanisms (for example, reporting of sedimentation events), if needed.

ENVIRONMENT RESOLUTION NUMBER E-4-2016

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Alberta Fish and Game Association request the Alberta Government increase the monitoring and enforcement effort on sedimentation incidents that affect public watercourses, lakes and wetlands.

RESPONSE: Environment and Parks currently manages an extensive network of water quality monitoring stations for major rivers and lakes throughout the province. During spills and other significant environmental events, these stations are frequently used to assess impacts on surface water quality. As indicated above, Environment and Parks is undertaking intensive work on the development of policy direction relating to integrated water and watershed management in the province. At the same time, the department is working to further develop and solidify its environmental monitoring capacity and mandate through the establishment of a Monitoring and Science Division. Collectively, these various initiatives are expected to support some level of re-evaluation, relative to how environmental incidents are managed and monitored.