

## **National Gun Dog Grounds Committee, Recommendations to the Board of Directors, Fall 2017**

**Recommendation.** The committee recommends to the Board of Directors the following:

1. Move the location of both the Open and Amateur National Gun Dog Championships to The Blue Mountain Wildlife Management Area, Booneville, Arkansas.
2. Run the event annually in conjunction with the National All Age Championships and Derby Invitationals in November and early December.
3. Run the Amateur National Gun Dog Championship as a horseback-handled one-hour stake (the stake is currently a one-hour walking stake).

**Methodology and Rationale.** The committee worked from the conclusions from last year's committee work – i.e., that the Gun Dog Nationals needed to be run on neutral grounds and should be centrally located (see committee report, 2016).

Committee members developed a list of common attributes which they considered important to grounds selection (Appendix 1). Potential venues were then evaluated based upon those attributes and the list was narrowed to 12 potential sites:

- Blue Mountain WMA, Booneville, AR
- Conway, AR
- Richardson Ranch, Cheyenne, WY
- Bechtel Ranch, Eureka, KS
- Christian Hills Camp/Huntington Ranch, Eureka, KS
- Private Ranch near Marysville, MO
- Pony Express, Cameron, MO
- Ted Turner Ranch Property, Medicine Lodge, KS
- Whetstone WMA, Williamsburg, MO
- Pyramid SP, Cutler, IL
- Fort Robinson SP, Crawford, NE
- Fort Robinson WMA, Mayflower, AR

After email exchanges and online discussion, the committee voted on and selected Blue Mountain WMA, Booneville, AR as its recommendation. Bechtel Ranch, Eureka, KS, received the next highest number of votes.

The committee concluded that the Gun Dog Nationals should be held in the fall and that it should be held in conjunction with the All Age Nationals. The committee believes that this would achieve efficiency in time and travel for participants and result in a higher number of entries for all events. For those individuals that attend both events, the committee believes this would result in a substantial savings of time and money. While this may create scheduling conflicts with some existing regional trials and championships, it is believed that these can be rescheduled around the national events.

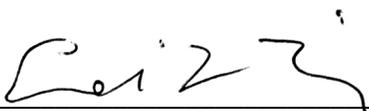
An analysis of costs to ABC to run the event in Booneville versus Ionia shows that costs in both locations are essentially the same (\$10/day more expensive at Booneville than Ionia, but if you add in the additional camping revenue ABC receives for Booneville, it is pretty much a wash). The committee believes that costs, therefore, are not useful in making a decision between the two.

**Horseback versus walking stake for the National Amateur Gun Dog Championship.** The ABC statistician provided the committee with 5 year (2012-2016) entry and qualifying data for Amateur Gun Dog stakes run across the country. From a strategic perspective, the alarming metric was the ratio of dogs qualified for the NAGD Championship vs. actual starters. Between 2012 and 2016, the NAGD stake drew, on average, less than 30% of the qualified dogs. As a point of reference, the AAA stake drew over 60% of qualified dogs in same timeframe. The handling type for all dogs qualifying for the NAGD in regional AGD stakes over the 5 year period is illustrated below.



Based on the data provided, the committee believes the ABC and the National Amateur Gun Dog stake would be well served in moving to a horseback stake based on the following:

1. Aging handler population
2. Current handling type (walking) is inconsistent with the way the majority of dogs qualify.
3. Consistency with the way the majority of dogs are handled in the National Open Gun Dog Championship.

Respectfully submitted by:  \_\_\_\_\_  
Ed Tillson, Committee Chair

Date submitted: 11/1/2016 \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 1.**

### **Data sheet used to evaluate potential grounds for Gun Dog Nationals**

Data provided by (name):

**Grounds (name):**

**Location City, ST):**

**Google Map distance from Lebanon, KS:**

**Are any other Brittany Regional Trials Held there (Y/N)?:**

**Nearest town(s) with commercial establishments (name/distance):**

**Amenities in that town (accommodations, vet, farrier, hospital, stores, restaurants):**

**Closest commercial airport (name/distance):**

**Number of courses available (number, single, single out&back, continuous, etc.)**

**Nature of courses (vegetative structure, tree line, prairie, sage brush, rocky outcrops, etc):**

**Club House or Meeting Room available: (Y/N), size:**

**Facilities/accommodations for horses (stables, corrals, stakeout space):**

**Facilities/accommodations for dogs:**

**Camping facilities available and nature of those facilities (electrical, water, full hookups, etc):**

**Assessment of long-term ability of use by ABC:**

**Date(s) of likely availability:**

**Any negative aspects (cacti, tornado, frequent flooding, rattlesnakes, speargrass, foxtail, adjacent highway, etc.):**

**Estimated cost to ABC for 2 week event:**

**Estimated cost to participants for 2 week event:**

**Dog wagon available?**