



## ACTIONS

### N.C. WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSION

August 26, 2009, 9 a.m.

Wildlife Resources Commission Headquarters  
Raleigh, North Carolina

**Meeting** - *Commission Chairman* Steve Windham called the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. in the Commission Room at Wildlife Resources Commission Headquarters, Raleigh, NC.

**Mandatory Ethics Inquiry** - Chairman Windham read the ethics inquiry mandated in North Carolina General Statute 138A-15(e).

**Minutes** – the Commission approved the July 8, 2009 Wildlife Resources Commission minutes as presented in **Exhibit A**.

**Notices of Commissioner Reappointments** – Chairman Windham received into the minutes **Exhibit B** - H.B. 764, the 2009 notice of reappointments by *Speaker* Joe Hackney of John L. Clark, Durwood S. Laughinghouse, Mitch St. Clair, Sr., and Charles W. Bennett for terms expiring on June 30, 2011; and reappointments by *President Pro Tempore* Marc Basnight of Dell Murphy, Maughan Hull, Eugene Price, and Bobby Purcell for terms expiring on June 30, 2011.

**Special Presentation to Commissioner Martin Lewis** – on behalf of the organizers of the Scott Hogshed Youth Conservation Day events, *Commissioner* Dell Murphy presented a 2009 Sportsman Award to *Commissioner* Martin Lewis for his assistance with promoting conservation activities and opportunities for young people.

**Special Presentation to Former Chairman Wes Seegars** - on behalf of the Wildlife Resources Commission, Chairman Windham introduced a resolution honoring Wes Seegars for his three years of service as Chairman of the Wildlife Resources Commission. He presented Seegars with a plaque and gavel.

**Memorandum of Agreement** – Chairman Windham and *Executive Director* Gordon Myers introduced a Memorandum of Agreement between the Wildlife Resources Commission and the N.C. Department of Transportation, which is directed toward creating additional water access areas at bridges throughout the state. Both agencies will benefit from cooperation in permitting, establishing right of ways, and creating access areas without additional financial encumbrances to NCDOT. Using public lands for multiple purposes to provide angling opportunities and public boating access benefits all sportsmen and women. Terry Gibson, *State Highway Administrator*, told the assembly that NCDOT has enjoyed working on the agreement and he looks forward to ongoing cooperation between agencies to provide additional water access areas at bridges.

**Financial Status Report** – the Commission received a financial status report on the Wildlife Operating Fund and the Wildlife Endowment Fund as of June 30, 2009, from Tommy Clark, *Budget Officer*, presented in **Exhibit D**. The Operating Fund balance is \$19,866,967.31. The Endowment Fund balance is \$69,110,864.20. Clark then presented a financial status report on the annual interest allocation for the Endowment Fund as of June 30, 2009, presented in **Exhibit E**. The Commission approved the allocation of \$3,087,585.05 to the Sportsmen Funds. The Commission approved \$174,205.01 to be allocated to the Magazine Fund, which represents 100 percent of the interest derived from sales of lifetime magazine subscriptions.

**Inland Fisheries Update-** the Commission received an update from Bob Curry, *Inland Fisheries Division Chief*, about activities of the Inland Fisheries Division. National Hunting and Fishing Day is September 26. There will be state-wide family oriented events, including the Wildlife Expo at the John E. Pechmann Fishing Education Center. Curry announced that the Pechmann Center has won two national awards. The Trout Economic Impact Study, recently completed, shows an economic impact to the state of \$174 million. Curry stated that better efforts will be made to promote the delayed trout harvest program nationally. The draft proposed changes to 2010-2011 fishing rules include 37 fishing proposals. Thirty-four project proposals have been received for consideration, using \$3.7 million in Coastal Recreational Fishing License (CRFL) funds. Curry announced that Martin Lewis, *Cold Water Fisheries Committee Chairman*, will hold a committee meeting on the Tuesday before the October 7 WRC meeting.

**Coastal Habitat Protection Plan (CHPP) Annual Report Presentation** – the Commission received the CHPP Annual Report from Jimmy Johnson, *Eastern Regional Field Officer, DENR Office of Conservation and Community Affairs*. Johnson stated that the WRC became a partner in the Coastal Habitat Protection Plan in 2008. Commissioners Bobby Purcell and Ray White serve on the CHPP steering committee. By statute an annual report must be presented and the five year plan must be approved by the participating agencies. Chairman Windham thanked Johnson for the presentation and announced that the Commission will review the document and hold a teleconference meeting to approve the CHPP Annual Report as required.

**Boating Access Area Land Lease Renewals** – the Commission voted to approve the following Boating Access Area land leases, presented in **Exhibit F** by Erik Christofferson, *Engineering Services Division Chief*:

- Oak Island Boating Access Area – Brunswick County
- Holleman's Crossing Boating Access Area – Wake County
- Cross Point Landing/Dam Site Boating Access Area – Chatham County

**Boating Access Area Request, Person County** - the Commission voted to initiate a long term lease agreement with Person County and to provide the design, permitting and construction of a boating access area on Hyco Lake Afterbay, at a cost of \$90,000, presented by Erik Christofferson in **Exhibit G**.

**Hunter Education Update** – the Commission received an update on the activities of the Hunter Education Program from Captain Chris Huebner, *Hunting and Boating Safety Coordinator*. Huebner reported that North Carolina continues to increase the number of hunters certified, with more than 19,000 student certifications in the past year. The National Archery in the Schools Program is successful. Nine Skills Tournaments were held across the state in the past year, with 207 schools participating. North Carolina again won the National Competition sponsored by the NRA. Huebner said that in the past 24 years North Carolina has won 15 times. Executive Director Myers noted that he received a letter from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, commending Captain Huebner for his exemplary service administering the Hunter Education Program.

**Property Acquisition, Dare County** - the Commission approved staff recommendation presented in **Exhibit H** by Dr. David Cobb, *Wildlife Management Division Chief*, to accept the donation of the Futrell Tract in Dare County for inclusion into the Wildlife Conservation Area Program and to forward to the State Property Office.

**Archery – Only Area Request, Chatham County** - the Commission voted to post an archery-only area on a portion of Jordan Game Land in Chatham County, presented in **Exhibit I**.

**Cooperative Agreement Renewal, Burke County** - the Commission renewed a cooperative agreement with Duke Power Company for the Johns River Waterfowl Refuge in Burke County, which will allow continuation of a joint project with Ducks Unlimited (**Exhibit J**).

**Land Acquisitions Update** - the Commission received a report on the status of land acquisition projects in **Exhibit K** from Dr. David Cobb.

**Hunting Heritage Program Update** - the Commission received an update from Dr. Cobb about the Hunting Heritage Program. Cobb said that the Hunting Heritage Program is an agency effort with contributions from every division. The program impacts thousands of sportsmen and women.

**Field Trial Schedule** - the Commission approved the 2009-2010 North Carolina Field Trial Association Running Schedule, presented in **Exhibit L**.

**2010 Hunting, Trapping and Fishing Public Hearing Schedule Adoption** - the Commission adopted the proposed schedule for the 2010 Hunting, Trapping and Fishing Public Hearings as presented in **Exhibit M** by Dr. Cobb. Dr. Cobb noted that the District 7 meeting place has been moved to the Walker Center at Wilkes Community College to accommodate the large number of attendees. There will not be an administrative hearing in Raleigh. Discussion will continue concerning reducing administrative costs and staff time and travel expenses for the district meetings.

**Resolution for Delegation of Proclamation Authority** – the Commission adopted a resolution (**Exhibit N**) to delegate proclamation authority to the Executive Director for establishing certain season elements for migratory game birds that are congruent with federal regulations. Proclamation authority is given to the Executive Director as well to allow the use of unplugged shotguns or electronic calls for hunting migratory game birds to establish conformity with applicable federal law.

**2009-2010 Waterfowl Seasons-** the Commission received summaries, presented by Dr. Cobb in **Exhibits O-1, O-2, O-3, and O-4**, of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service frameworks for hunting seasons for waterfowl and certain migratory game birds, and summaries of internet comments about waterfowl seasons. The Commission approved the 2009-2010 options for bag limits, shooting hours, and season dates for waterfowl seasons occurring after October 1, presented in **Exhibit O-5**:

**Note: Possession limits are twice the daily bag for all seasons unless otherwise noted.**

**BAG LIMIT: DAILY BAG LIMITS:** (note: items underlined represent changes from last year)

a) Conventional bag: 6 ducks with no more than 4 scoters, 4 mallards with no more than 2 hen mallards, 3 wood ducks, 2 redheads, 2 scaup, 1 black or mottled duck (season closed until December 1), 1 canvasback, 1 pintail, or 1 fulvous tree duck. The season on harlequin ducks is closed. (Possession limits are twice the daily bag unless otherwise noted.)

**b) Other bag limits:**

- 15 light geese, no possession limit
- 2 brant
- 15 coots
- Canada geese and White-fronted geese (in aggregate)
  - September (Statewide): 15
  - Resident Zone (regular season – after September 30<sup>th</sup>): 5
  - SJBP Zone (regular season – after September 30<sup>th</sup>): 5
  - NE Hunt Zone (regular season – after September 30<sup>th</sup>): 1/ with special permit
- 5 mergansers (2 hooded mergansers)
- 7 sea ducks (**In special sea duck area only**). In other areas, sea ducks are part of the regular duck bag limit. No more than 4 scoters per day may be taken in either season.

***GENERAL DUCK SEASON (includes coots)***

**Season Length:** 60 hunting days; plus 1 Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day

**Season Dates:** October 7-10  
 November 14 – December 5  
 December 19 – January 30  
 (Black duck and mottled duck season closed until Dec. 1.)

**Youth Waterfowl Day:** February 6, 2010 (youth must be age 15 or younger)  
 Species includes ducks, geese, mergansers, coots and tundra swans.  
 The youth must have a valid permit to harvest a Canada goose (NE Hunt Zone only) or a tundra swan.

***SPECIAL SEA DUCK SEASON (IN SPECIAL SEA DUCK AREAS ONLY)***

**Season Length:** 105 hunting days

**Season Dates:** October 1 – January 30

***CANADA GOOSE SEASON(S)***

**RESIDENT (RP) ZONE**

**Season Length:** 75 days

**Season Dates:** October 7 – October 17  
 November 14 – December 5  
 December 19 – February 6

**Bag Limit:** 5 geese per day

**SOUTHERN JAMES BAY (SJB) ZONE (Gaddy Goose Refuge closed after Sept. 30)**

**Season Length:** 69 days

**Season Dates:** October 7 – November 7  
 November 14 - December 31

**Bag Limit:** 5 geese per day

**NORTHEAST HUNT UNIT**

**Season Length:** 7 days

**Season Dates:** January 23 – January 30

**Bag Limit:** 1 goose per day (with valid permit)  
unlimited permits available – tagging not required

***LIGHT GOOSE, ATLANTIC BRANT & TUNDRA SWAN SEASONS*****LIGHT GOOSE (includes snow, blue and Ross' geese):****Season Length:** 107 Days**Season Dates:** October 17 – October 24  
November 14 – March 10**Bag Limit:** 15 birds daily (no possession limit)**Expanded hunting methods:** allow use of electronic calls and unplugged guns from February 8 – March 10**ATLANTIC BRANT:****Season Length:** 50 Days**Season Dates:** November 21 - December 5  
December 19 - January 30**Bag Limit:** 2 birds daily**TUNDRA SWAN:****Season Length:** 67 Days**Season Dates:** November 14 - January 30**Bag Limit:** One per season (with valid permit)***EXTENDED FALCONRY (ducks and coots only):*****Season Length:** 104 total hawking days (includes 60 days of gun season)**Season Dates:** Oct. 12 – Nov. 7  
Feb. 1 – February 20**Bag Limit:** 3 migratory game birds daily

**Captive Cervid Herd Certification Program Proposal** – the Commission voted to take to public hearings revisions to 15A NCAC 10B.0101, 10H.0301 and 10H.0302 and establishment of 10H.0304, which are proposed to develop a captive cervid herd certification program (**Exhibit P**).

**Big Game Committee Report** - the Commission received a report from David Hoyle, Jr., *Chairman*. The committee heard a captive cervid herd management proposal, discussed deer management, and asked staff to review suggestions for possible legislative changes to bear hunting- with dogs or still hunting. Staff was asked to give consideration to a prohibition against hunting bear with bait; adding three days to the season for still hunters only with the use of bait; and adding three days only for still hunters without bait but with no dog hunting competition during that time.

**Committee of the Whole Report** – the Commission received a report from Chairman Steve Windham. Windham announced that committee assignments were made during the meeting of the Committee of the Whole. He congratulated Martin Lewis for his efforts with Youth Conservation Days. He thanked former Chairman Wes Seegars for his efforts and congratulated Commissioners on their reappointments.

**Comments by the Executive Director** – Executive Director Gordon Myers gave an update on the legislative session which just ended. Myers noted the budget reduction planning that began in 2008 in anticipation of the decrease in sales tax transfers and recession. He announced that the agency faces a \$4 million reduction in funding which will grow to a \$4.7 million the following year. Concurrently the agency faces additional outlays for the Beaver Management Assistance Program and increases in retirement and insurance expenditures. The budget reduction plan, which is an inter-divisional effort, will be finalized in the next two weeks. Myers stated that a detailed report will be sent to the Commissioners.

**Adjournment**- the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Windham at 11:05 a.m.