



ACTIONS

N.C. WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSION

October 13, 2010 at 9:00 a.m.

NC Wildlife Resources Commission Headquarters
1751 Varsity Drive
Raleigh, North Carolina

Call to Order - *Commission Chairman* Steve Windham called the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. in the Commission Conference Room, 5th floor.

Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation - *Commissioner* Joe Barker led the Pledge of Allegiance. *Commissioner* John Litton Clark gave the invocation.

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

Welcome - Chairman Windham welcomed Commissioners and guests.

Minutes - the Commission approved the August 25, 2010 Wildlife Resources Commission minutes as presented in **Exhibit A**.

Financial Status Report - the Commission received a financial status report on the Wildlife Operating Fund and the Wildlife Endowment Fund as of August 31, 2010, from Tommy Clark, *Budget Officer*, presented in **Exhibit B**. The Operating Fund balance is \$19,386,528.91. The Endowment Fund balance is \$76,810,391.91.

Conservation Education Update – the Commission received an update on the state-wide activities held on National Hunting and Fishing Day, September 25, 2010 from Will Sutton, *Conservation Education Division Chief*. More than 70 volunteers helped with this year’s activities, which were enjoyed by more than 2700 people, many of them youth.

Special Recognition – Wake County Wildlife Club – Will Sutton presented a plaque to Barry Bowling, *President of the Wake County Wildlife Club*, in recognition of the club's efforts and contributions to National Hunting and Fishing Day. The Wake County Wildlife Club has partnered with the NCWRC for many years in youth conservation activities. This year the club gave three Lifetime Licenses and three subscriptions to *Wildlife in North Carolina* magazine.

Wildlife Management Update – the Commission received an update about the activities of the Division of Wildlife Management from Dr. David Cobb, *Wildlife Management Division Chief*. Dr. Cobb provided Commissioners with packets including information about county fox seasons, 1987-2010 raccoon field trial report, and information from the Climate Change workshop and Wildlife Action Plan.

Land Acquisition Update - the Commission received a regular update presented by Dr. Cobb in **Exhibit C** on the status of land acquisitions.

Summary of Public Comments from State-Wide Public Hearings – the Commission received a summary of public comments on proposed changes to hunting and trapping regulations received from state-wide District public hearings held in September, and from the WRC internet portal and from correspondence, from Dr. Cobb in **Exhibit D**. Based on the public's unfavorable response to proposal H4, regarding motorized vehicular access between 6 am and 9 pm only on "limited access roads" on game lands, text will be modified for consideration by the Commission in November. H4 will be modified to show open hours from June 1 – September 1 as 5 am until 10 pm.

Inland Fisheries Update – the Commission received an update on the activities of the Inland Fisheries Division, including state-wide Hunting and Fishing Day activities on September 25, 2010, from Bob Curry, *Inland Fisheries Division Chief*. Curry mentioned fish stocking and fish kills caused by the summer heat, drought, and increased fish handling. The stocking will be completed now that the weather is cooler. In sampling on the Roanoke River, staff discovered several large Atlantic sturgeon. Three of the sturgeon were implanted with radio tags. In cooperation with NC State University, North Carolina and several other states will track the movement of the sturgeon up and down the Atlantic coast. Curry announced that staff is reviewing 26 proposals for projects to be funded from \$5.5 million in Coastal Recreational Fishing License funds.

Property Acquisition – Warren County – the Commission approved the acquisition of 96 acres adjacent to the Shocco Creek Game Land in Warren County for inclusion into the Game Land or Wildlife Conservation Area programs, presented in **Exhibit E** by Bob Curry.

Summary of Public Comments from State-Wide Public Hearings – the Commission received a summary of public comments from Bob Curry in **Exhibit F**, on proposed changes to inland fishing regulations received from state-wide District public hearings held in September, from the WRC internet portal and from correspondence. Curry reported that Proposal F7 received some objections. As a result of three petitions against the proposed downstream boundary of Delayed-Harvest Trout Waters on the Tuckasegee River in Jackson County, the downstream boundary will be moved 275 yards upstream from the US 23-441 Bridge, to a point above the former location of the Dillsboro Dam. Signage will be placed on both sides of the river, clearly showing the boundary line. Curry stated that the property development name in Proposal F10 was incorrect in the original submission under the Administrative Procedure Act, and will be corrected for consideration at the November meeting.

No Wake Zone, Mayo Lake – Person County – the Commission adopted an amendment to 15A NCAC 10F .0348, presented in **Exhibit G** by Erik Christofferson, *Engineering Services Division Chief*, for a no wake zone in a channel on Mayo Reservoir in Person County, beginning north of the Triple Springs Boating Access Area southward to an area below the Mayo Park ADA Fishing Pier. Person County will purchase, place and maintain the markers.

No Wake Zone, High Rock Lake – Rowan County – the Commission adopted an amendment to 15A NCAC 10F .0329, presented in **Exhibit H** by Erik Christofferson, for a no wake zone at the Rowan Shrine Club dock in Salisbury in Rowan County.

No Wake Zone, Hydeland Canal – Hyde County – the Commission adopted an amendment to 15A NCAC 10F .0329, presented by Erik Christofferson in **Exhibit I**, to establish a no wake zone within the waters of Hydeland Canal from the Hydeland Canal Access Area to the end of SR 1122 in Hyde County.

Enforcement Division Spotlight – the Commission received an update about the activities of the Hunter Education Program from Stacy Kempf, *Hunter Education Specialist*. Kempf reported that 772 active volunteer Hunting Education instructors work state-wide as mentors for hunting, and have contributed 24,215 hours toward hunter safety education and instruction. The instructors receive certification from the WRC in a twelve-hour course. In addition to the basic Hunter Education programs offered, these volunteers also coach team competitions and teach advanced courses in wing shooting and archery, among others.

Special Recognition of Hunter Education Instructors – Twelve Hunter Education instructors who have contributed more than 1000 hours each as volunteers were recognized for their service by Captain Chris Huebner, *Division of Enforcement*. Huebner presented the following instructors with awards: Terry Boyce; John Hall; Ernest Darden; James Edwards; Karol Koval; Walter Wilson; Cody Reed; Charles Kearns; Gary Steeley; Link Grass; Bruce Sweezy; and George Pullman.

2011 Wildlife Resources Commission Meeting Schedule and Commission Calendar – the Commission tabled consideration of the 2011 Meeting Schedule until the November meeting. Betsy Foard, *Executive Officer*, provided Commissioners with the template of the Commission Calendar that is built each year around the regulatory cycle. Commissioners were asked to consider the recent changes in the regulatory cycle and rulemaking deadlines as they decide upon best dates for 2011 Commission meetings.

Big Game Committee Meeting Report - Chairman David Hoyle, Jr. reported that Reggie Dickey, of the Georgia Wildlife Federation, spoke at the Big Game Committee on October 12 about Georgia's dog deer hunting rules and regulations from the hunter's perspective. Dickey's remarks were followed by a question and answer period. The Committee reconvened in the afternoon. Bear baiting issues were discussed. Staff was directed to study the issues surrounding bear baiting for the next two years. Hoyle thanked Dr. David Cobb for his efforts in bringing Mr. Dickey to speak and announced that the Big Game Committee will meet again in November. Chairman Steve Windham thanked Dave Hoyle for his efforts as chairman of the Big Game Committee and commended him for inviting all constituent groups and points of view into the process of discussing and making recommendations on polarizing issues.

Committee of the Whole Meeting Report - Chairman Steve Windham announced that the Committee of the Whole met on October 12. The committee received an update on the development of a new agency website. The Commissioners are pleased with the proposed appearance, structure and navigation. Chairman Windham requested that the developers create a highly visible icon on the home page, clearly showing how to purchase a license.

The Committee of the Whole reviewed comments from the state-wide public hearings. Proposals H4 and F7 are being modified for consideration at the November meeting.

The Commission voted to move the November meeting to Thursday, November 4, with committee meetings on Wednesday, November 3. The schedule adjustment was made in response to conflicting commitments by some on Election Day, November 2.

Commissioner Mitch St. Clair announced that he and Commissioners Joe Barker and Dell Murphy; and Bob Curry, *Inland Fisheries Division Chief*, met to discuss alternatives for committee meeting locations, and to discuss holding Commission meetings on days other than Wednesdays. Based on a survey of the Commissioners, the Commission voted to hold future Commission meetings on Thursdays and committee meetings on Wednesdays. Bob Curry was charged with investigating and reporting to the Commission on the possibility of holding some committee meetings electronically as a cost-saving and time-saving measure.

Comments by Executive Director - Gordon Myers, *Executive Director*, thanked Dr. David Cobb and Big Game Chairman Dave Hoyle for the presentation by Reggie Dickey on October 12, noting that Dickey brought additional insight about issues surrounding hunting with dogs.

Myers thanked True Parallel and the website redesign committee for their ongoing efforts in redesigning the website, noting the importance of producing a customer focused model.

The nine District public hearings went well and several rules proposals are being modified as a result of public input.

Myers noted that North Carolina's budget shortfall of three billion dollars has resulted in the Governor's request for the agency to provide proposed recurring budget reductions of 5, 10, and 15 percent to the Governor's office by October 29, 2010. Myers noted the challenges of making these cuts while still supporting mission-critical programs. Myers has instituted a "Beneficial Suggestion Program", whereby employees may receive paid leave for submission of ideas for reducing costs and improving efficiency.

Myers closed by announcing that *Chief Deputy Director* Mallory Martin, who was selected for a prestigious fellowship at the National Conservation Leadership Institute, is attending a leadership program in Shepherdstown, West Virginia.

Comments by Chairman - Chairman Windham reminded everyone that the next Commission meeting has been moved to Thursday, November 4, 2010. He announced that Commissioner Doug Parsons was excused from the meeting today due to his required attendance as Counsel at a sentencing hearing.

Adjournment - the meeting was adjourned at 10:20 a.m.