



ACTIONS

N.C. WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSION

May 12, 2010 at 9:00 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) and asked any Commissioner who has a conflict of interest or appearance of any conflict of interest in matters before the Commission to notify the Chair. None were cited.

Minutes – the Commission approved the March 3, 2010 Wildlife Resources Commission minutes as presented in **Exhibit A**.

Financial Status Report – the Commission received a financial status report as of March 31, 2010 for the Wildlife Operating Fund, which has a balance of \$22,204,434.57, and the Wildlife Endowment Fund, which has a balance of \$74,000,833.04, from Tommy Clark, *Budget Officer*, presented in **Exhibit B**.

Property Acquisition – the Commission adopted staff recommendation presented in **Exhibit C** by Dr. David Cobb, *Wildlife Management Division Chief*, to work with the State Property Office for the acquisition of the Ludford Tract in Tyrrell County as a potential game land acquisition.

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Conditional Easement Request, Macon County – the Commission adopted staff recommendation, presented in **Exhibit D**, to work with the State Property Office for approval of a conditional easement request across a portion of the Needmore Game Land in Macon County, to provide a right of way to privately owned property. WRC approved of the conditional easement with the following restrictions:

- the easement should be restricted to 15 feet and allow a legal right of way for the existing road with no allowance for widening of the current path way
- no additional request of utilities right of way should be allowed with this easement request
- no disturbance of the existing road banks is allowed without WRC approval
- all road maintenance (gravel application, downed tree removal) is the responsibility of the Bathrick family and should include periodic gravel application
- the easement is for the current existing home and other structures on the two-acre lot only
- access for any additional housing constructed on adjoining properties must be provided by other rights of way and access to any homes or lots on these properties will not be allowed across this granted easement

Land Acquisitions Staff Update – the Commission received a regular staff update from Dr. Cobb on the status of land acquisitions, presented in **Exhibit E**.

September 2010 Schedule for State-Wide Hunting, Trapping, and Fishing Public Hearings – the Commission adopted the schedule (**Exhibit F**) for the state-wide public hearings to be held in September 2010, on rule proposals for the 2011-2012 Hunting, Trapping and Fishing seasons. Meeting time for all public hearings is 7:00 p.m. Location changes are in bold italics:

DATE	DISTRICT	CITY	LOCATION
Sept. 7, 2010 (Tuesday)	4	Dublin	Bladen Community College
Sept. 8, 2010 (Wednesday)	5	Graham	<i>Civil Courts Building, Second Floor Courtroom</i>
Sept. 9, 2010 (Thursday)	6	Norwood	South Stanly High School
Sept. 14, 2010 (Tuesday)	8	Morganton	Municipal Auditorium
Sept. 15, 2010 (Wednesday)	9	<i>Clyde</i>	<i>Haywood Community College</i>
Sept. 16, 2010 (Thursday)	7	<i>Wilkesboro</i>	<i>The Walker Center, Wilkes Community College</i>
Sept. 21, 2010 (Tuesday)	1	Edenton	Swain Auditorium
Sept. 22, 2010 (Wednesday)	2	New Bern	Courthouse
Sept. 23, 2010 (Thursday)	3	Rocky Mount	Nash Community College

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Inland Fisheries Activity Update – the Commission received an update about the activities of the Inland Fisheries Division from Bob Curry, *Inland Fisheries Division Chief*. Curry directed the Commissioners to handouts and news releases at their places. During National Fishing and Boating Week, June 5-13, the WRC will partner with the U.S. Forest Service and several vendors to provide 48 fishing events and prizes for kids across the state. The John E. Pechmann Fishing Education Center has been recognized by the American Fisheries Society Fisheries Administrators Section with an award in the category of Aquatic Education. Curry mentioned the legislative effort to complete the transfer of the McKinney Lake Fish Hatchery to the WRC.

Spotlight- WISe Program – the Commission received an update from Lindsay Jenkins, *Landscape Designer and WISe Program Coordinator, Engineering Services*, about genetically native plant production and horticulture classes at the Dan River Prison Work Farm. Jenkins stated that the program promotes rehabilitation of inmates through education and job skill training. Thirty-three species of native plants are grown at the Prison and are sold to public entities at wholesale for stream restoration projects, enhancement and stabilization of wildlife habitats, and low maintenance landscaping in the three regions of North Carolina. The WISe Program is receipt supported with no cost to the taxpayer.

Boating Access Area, Beaufort County – the Commission approved the staff recommendation, presented in **Exhibit G** by Erik Christofferson, *Engineering Services Division Chief*, to partner with Beaufort County to develop a boating access area on Blounts Creek, to be known as Cotton Patch Landing.

Engineering Services Construction Activity Update – the Commission received an update from Erik Christofferson on the Boating Program construction schedule; and maintenance, renovations and design completions on many boating access areas over the past winter.

Big Game Committee Report – David Hoyle, Jr., *Big Game Committee Chairman*, reported that 89 constituents, Commissioners, and staff attended the Big Game Committee meeting, where John Bowers of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources presented a program about Georgia's management of hunting with dogs. Hoyle stated that the committee may be able to bring hunters from Georgia to a future committee meeting to offer their perspectives on the success of that program.

Migratory Birds, Waterfowl Committee Report – Maughan Hull, *Waterfowl Committee Chairman*, reported that the committee discussed the Atlantic Flyway Council meeting in Wilmington, July 19-23, which will be hosted by the Wildlife Resources Commission. Commissioners and partners will be called upon to raise funds to cover the cost of the reception, for which state funds cannot be used. The Committee discussed the Flyway Council's structure for the bag limit on pintails. Staff was directed to brainstorm ways to gather input on the Northeastern Canada Goose hunt, noting that since the hunt is no longer a permit hunt the questionnaires are not being returned. Tundra swan permit applications were discussed. Ten percent of the applications for the hunts are from non-residents, generating approximately \$27,000 in revenue. The Committee will study other states' swan application permit fees as they look at the possibility of increasing North Carolina's permit fees.

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Cold Water Fisheries Committee Report – Chuck Bennett, *Committee Vice Chairman*, reported that the Committee discussed legislative pressure to expand the Mountain Heritage Trout Program, noting the expense of the program. *Legislative Liaison* Sarah Clapp and *Director* Gordon Myers have been asked to investigate and report back to the committee in July. The committee received reports on fish production and habitat conservation and technical guidance.

Warm Water Fisheries Committee Report – Ray White, *Committee Chairman*, reported that Jimmy Johnson presented a program about the Coastal Habitat Protection Plan (CHPP). The plan has been in effect for five years. Commissioners Ray White and Bobby Purcell represent the WRC at the CHPP meetings. White recommends inviting Jimmy Johnson to present a spotlight to educate the entire Commission about the CHPP long term goals for enhancement of coastal fisheries. The Commission approved a motion from the Warm Water Fisheries Committee to give that committee authority to work directly with CHPP in approving recommendations and to report back to the WRC. The Warm Water Fisheries Committee discussed anadromous fish including striped bass catch in the Roanoke River, shad populations in the Neuse and Tar Rivers, and reported that the moratorium on catch of river herring has not resulted in an increase in that population. White reported that the committee discussed rule proposals relating to coastal sea trout, black bass, and prohibition of possession of two invasive species.

Joint Coastal Recreational Fishing License Committee Update – Ray White, *Chairman*, reported that a conference call was held on April 23, 2010 among Joe Barker, Maughan Hull, Ray White, and staff from the Division of Marine Fisheries. Recommendations were given for construction of reef barges, the Chowan River pier, and Snows Cut Boating Access Area. White noted the receipt of more than \$14 million in grant monies to fund some projects.

Comments by Executive Director – Gordon Myers, *Executive Director*, thanked Dr. David Cobb and Commissioner Dave Hoyle for inviting John Bowers to speak about management of hunting with hounds in Georgia. Myers announced that the draft Environmental Impact Survey has been submitted pertaining to the use of off-road vehicles at Cape Hatteras. Myers stated that the issue is contentious, as attempts are being made to maintain sustainable wildlife resources at the Cape Hatteras National Seashore while balancing that requirement with the fishing and tourism so important to the area. Myers announced that all of the rules approved by the WRC in March were approved by the Rules Review Commission. Effective date of these rules, and the publishing date of the Regulations Digest, will be August 1, 2010. The one month delay may allow rules delayed by review during this short legislative session to be published in the Digest. Myers thanked Rulemaking Coordinator Norman Young and Kate Pipkin, Kent Nelson, and Betsy Foard for their assistance with rulemaking. Director Myers reminded the assembly that the General Assembly short session begins today, May 12, 2010, and the focus of the session will be the state budget shortfall. Governor Perdue has recommended that 7 percent of the Wildlife Resources Commission's allotment from the state sales tax (\$1.5 million) go to the General Fund instead. This represents 2 percent of the overall budget of the WRC. Myers and Sarah Clapp, *Legislative Liaison*, are working with the General Assembly on budget issues and delayed rules.

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Legislative Day Update - Sarah Clapp, *Legislative Liaison*, announced that the agency will participate in a Legislative Day on May 26. Each Division will present educational exhibits and displays, and staff and Commissioners are encouraged to attend. Clapp announced that the Sportsmen's Caucus will meet at 7:30 am, with Director Gordon Myers and Division of Marine Fisheries Director Louis Daniel as speakers.

Conservation Education Update – Mallory Martin, *Chief Deputy Director*, updated the Commission on two half-day workshops presented to the entire staff of the Conservation Education Division by the Management Assistance Team of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. The workshop focused on Division values, its purpose and mission, with a goal of revising the Conservation Education Division Strategic Plan to better relate to stakeholders and constituents. Martin introduced and welcomed the new *Conservation Education Division Chief*, Will Sutton, who will begin work on Monday, May 17. Sutton has extensive experience and education in journalism, marketing and education.

Comments by the Chairman – Chairman Windham stressed to the Commissioners the importance of their attendance at the Legislative Day on May 26. He asked the Commissioners to please let Sarah Clapp know by Friday if they will be able to attend. Windham noted the absence today, due to family illness, of Commissioner Martin Lewis, and of Commissioner Doug Parsons, who is legal counsel in a murder trial. Chairman Windham congratulated Commissioner Mitch St. Clair on his upcoming marriage.

Recognition of Colonel Kenneth Everhart – *Executive Director* Gordon Myers and *Chairman* Steve Windham noted with great appreciation the 28 years of service of Colonel Kenneth Everhart. Everhart, who will retire on July 1, 2010, received a standing ovation from the assembly.

Adjournment- Chairman Windham adjourned the meeting at 10:40 am.