



*Land Use and Access Committee Meeting Summary
April 15, 2014, 9:30 am
NCWRC, 5th Floor Commission Room*

Meeting Attendees

• **Committee Members:**

Tom Berry, Chair
Joe Barker
Dell Murphy (by telephone)

John Coley, Vice Chair
Tommy Fonville

• **Staff:**

Mallory Martin
Betsy Haywood
Russell Wong
Chris Dillon
Shannon Deaton

George Norris
Isaac Harrold
Gordon Myers
Mark Hamlett

• **Guest:**

David Keeley, State Property Office

Tom Berry, *Land Use and Access Chairman*, called the meeting to order at 9:35 am.

RHODES POND REMEDIATION ALTERNATIVES

Mark Hamlett, *Design Service Section Chief*, gave an update on the history of Rhodes Pond, a 461-acre pond in Cumberland County that is fed by the Black River. In 2004 the pond was owned by NCDOT and was used for wetland mitigation. Dam Safety found deficiencies with the control structure of the dam and NCDOT did not wish to repair it. WRC determined that the lake was an excellent resource and DOT agreed to work with WRC to help us repair the dam. In 2008 NCDOT provided \$150,000 for repairs and the dam was reclassified from high hazard to intermediate hazard. Too much rain in the summer of 2013 overtopped the dam, resulting in Dam Safety determining that the dam was again a high hazard and that a failure might impact the US – 301 bridge. Dam Safety instructed WRC to drain the lake and to hire a consultant. Schnabel Engineering in Greensboro has been hired.

Options discussed: Dam Safety will allow us to design for a 100 year storm event, which will help with the cost of repairing the dam.

- Option to raise the top of the dam about two feet. Demolish the spillway and replace with labyrinth spillway. We would need easements to accomplish this. Estimated cost- \$1.5 - 2.5 million
- Option to level the top of dam. Place articulated concrete block the entire length of dam. This would allow small storm waters to overtop the dam and would require special approval. Estimated cost \$3.5 – 5 million
- Option for permanent breach of the dam. Would require stream bank restoration

ACQUISITIONS DISCUSSION

Isaac Harrold, *Lands Program Manager*, presented an overview of four Phase I properties in **Exhibits I-1, I-2, I-3, and I-4** with a recommendation to be presented to the entire Commission:

- Browns Island Tract 1, Carteret County (I-1) - donation
- Silvers Tract, Haywood County (I-2) – of interest for elk management
- Sassafras Tract, Scotland County (I-3) – Army Compatible Use Buffer Program; of interest for red-cockaded woodpecker
- Mitchell River Olinger Tract, Surry County (I-4) – delayed harvest trout waters; would permanently preserve public access

The Committee will recommend that the Commission give approval for staff to work with State Property and funding partners to develop acquisition plans.

Harrold then presented three Phase II properties in **Exhibits J-1, J-2, and J-3** with a recommendation to be presented to the entire Commission on February 27, 2014:

- Sherrill Tract, Ashe County (J-1)
- Birkhead Tract, Randolph County (J-2)
- Harrison Tract, Martin County (J-3)

The Committee will recommend that the Commission give final approval for the acquisitions of these properties.

PROPERTY MATTERS

Easement Request, Scotland County – Harrold provided an overview of an easement request by Janice Robertson, property owner adjacent to the Sandhills Game Land, for the purpose of providing access to private property. The Committee will recommend approval of the easement request.

GAME LAND MANAGEMENT PLANS

Isaac Harrold provided a status update for Game Land Management Plans being developed for seven game lands. More than 300 stakeholders have attended meetings to provide input about management and uses of individual game lands. A complete draft is being prepared for presentation to the Commission. Harrold said that staff has initiated Round 2, gathering information for additional game lands.

BLADEN LAKES GAME LAND UPDATE

Discussion was held about a rule proposal for a portion of Bladen Lakes Game Land that was tabled for further research by the Commission at the November 7, 2013 WRC meeting. John Litton Clark provided an update about the safety issues and property rights issues associated with a portion of the Bladen Lakes Game Land that is close to a school, with an inadequate safety zone that is being ignored by some hunters. Someone has removed the safety zone signs near the school. As a result of further investigation and input from enforcement, the committee recommends designating approximately 1500 acres of the game land as still hunting only but not with center fire rifles. Executive Director Gordon Myers explained that since the original rule proposal was tabled in November, it did not go to public hearings. Therefore, Myers recommended adding consideration of temporary rulemaking for the Bladen Lakes Game Land, with a local public hearing, to the agenda at the February 27, 2014 meeting (**Exhibit Q**). He further recommended that the general regulations regarding use be amended to allow the Wildlife Resources Commission to establish still hunting by signage. The temporary rule could be adopted at the May meeting. The Land Use and Access Committee voted to endorse adding the exhibit for the Bladen Lakes Game Land and will recommend adoption by the entire Commission.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, Chairman Tom Berry adjourned the committee meeting at 11:50 am.