



**Small Game Committee
Meeting Summary – March 4, 2015
Commission Room, Raleigh NC**

Small Game Committee Chair Garry Spence called the meeting to order 9:25 am on March 4, 2015.

Attendees

Committee Members

Garry Spence, Chairman
Tommy Fonville

Richard Edwards
Brian White

Commissioners

Tom Berry
Ray Clifton

Joe Barker
John Coley

Staff

Gordon Myers
Betsy Haywood
Jon Evans
Chris Kreh
David Cobb
David Sawyer
Allen Boynton
Timothy Hardy
Jeremy Harrill
Jodie Owen

Mallory Martin
Ryan Myers
Todd Kennedy
Brandon Sherrill
Brad Howard
Doug Howell
Mark Jones
Donnie Barefoot
Isaac Harrold

Guests

Fred Harris – NCWF
Ned Jones – NC Trout Unlimited
Bill Holman – The Conservation Fund

Lawrence G. Diedrick Small Game Award

Dr. David Cobb, *Wildlife Management Division Chief*, gave the history of the Larry Diedrick Small Game Award and a short biography of Larry Diedrick. The Larry Diedrick Small Game award is awarded in two categories – individual and organization. Nominations are accepted from March until May 1. Nominations are sent to the Small Game Committee by June 15 and presentation is made at the October WRC meeting. The committee recommends continuation of the award.

Programs to Benefit Small Game and Habitats – Available to Private Landowners

Mark Jones, *Wildlife Biologist*, provided an update on programs that benefit small game and habitats that are available to private landowners. Jones stated that the economics of forestry, farming and livestock management practices have reduced habitats suitable for quail, rabbits, and other small animals. Jones stated that technical guidance is provided free of charge to landowners to encourage early successional habitat such as native grasses, weeds, briars and forested lands. The WRC has a cooperative relationship with the Forest Service to provide advice on forest stewardship. The Wildlife Conservation Lands Program reduces property tax for lands that are managed for priority habitat and wildlife. WCLP enrollment requires that a landowner own 20 contiguous acres but no more than 100 acres per county may be enrolled.

Brandon Sherrill, *Mammalogist*, and David Sawyer, *Surveys and Research Program Coordinator*, reported on small game research projects. A Mountain Region Rabbit Head survey is being conducted in the mountains in an effort to determine differences between the eastern cottontail rabbit and the Appalachian cottontail rabbit. Another study is the Deer Hunter Observation Survey. Still hunters record all species that they encounter while hunting with an emphasis on fox squirrels. The Avid Rabbit Hunter Survey is ongoing.

Chris Kreh, *Upland Game Bird Biologist*, reported that 250 quail heads from the coastal region are being studied to look for a parasitic eye worm that is thought to threaten the quail population. Working with NCSU, the WRC is conducting the Southeastern Focal Area Quail Study. Transmitters have been placed on 110 quail to track nests, hatchlings, and mortality rate of quail. The WRC has three full-time biologists working with Farm Bill programs and the USDA. The agency is engaged at the state and federal levels in Farm Bill programs for conservation of wildlife resources.

Brad Howard, *Private Lands Coordinator*, reviewed the CURE Program over the past decade. CURE is a habitat program that benefits all species. A presentation will follow at a later meeting for a strategic approach for small game species under the CURE Program.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 am.