



MINUTES
December 8, 2022
N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission Meeting
Raleigh, North Carolina

Chairman Monty Crump called the December 8, 2022, N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. in the Commission Room at the agency's headquarters in Raleigh. Crump reminded everyone that the meeting is being audio streamed live and will be available at www.ncwildlife.org.

Commissioner Steve Windham led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Tom Berry gave the invocation.

ROLL CALL

Margo Minkler, *Commission Liaison*, called the roll. David Hoyle, JC Cole, John Stone, Hayden Rogers, and Mike Alford were absent.

COMMISSIONER ATTENDANCE

Monty Crump	Jim Ruffin	John Coley	Ray Clifton
Thomas Fonville	Mark Craig	Kelly Davis	Landon Zimmer
Wes Seegars	Tom Berry	Tom Haislip	
Brad Stanback	Steve Windham	John Alexander	

MANDATORY ETHICS INQUIRY

Chairman Crump advised the Commission of the mandatory ethics inquiry as mandated in NCGS §138A-15.

RECEIVE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION REVIEWS OF 2022 STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTEREST FOR COMMISSIONERS MONTY R. CRUMP, THOMAS L. FONVILLE, KELLY N. DAVIS, STEPHEN L. WINDHAM, MARK R. CRAIG, LANDON ZIMMER, JAMES M. RUFFIN – Pursuant to NCGS §138A-15(c), Margo Minkler, Ethics

Liaison, read into the minutes relevant portions of the evaluations by the N.C. Ethics Commission of the 2022 Statement of Economic Interest for Commissioners Monty R. Crump, Thomas L. Fonville, Kelly N. Davis, Stephen L. Windham, Mark R. Craig, Landon G. Zimmer, James M. Ruffin.

MINUTES

On a motion by John Coley and second by Landon Zimmer, the Commission approved the Minutes of the following meetings:

OCTOBER 20, 2022 MEETING – the Wildlife Resources Commission Minutes of the October 20, 2022 meeting were approved as presented in **EXHIBIT A**.

NOVEMBER 3, 2022 MEETING – the Wildlife Resources Commission Minutes of the November 3, 2022 meeting were approved as presented in **EXHIBIT B**.

Exhibits A & B are incorporated into the official record of this meeting.

ADMINISTRATION

Dr. DP Singla, *Chief Financial Officer*, presented a status report in **EXHIBIT C** on the Wildlife Resources Commission General Fund, Capital Improvement Fund, and the Endowment Fund.

Exhibit C is incorporated into the official record of this meeting.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Lawrence G. Diedrick Small Game Award – Brad Howard, *Wildlife Management Division Chief*, presented the 2022 Lawrence G. Diedrick Small Game Awards to Wake County Wildlife Club and Kathryn Booher.

COMMITTEE MEETING REPORTS

Habitat, Nongame, Endangered Species Committee Report – December 7, 2022 – *Mark Craig Chair*, reported the Committee met on December 7, 2022. Dr. Sara Schweitzer, *Wildlife Management Division Assistant Chief*, provided an overview of Species Conservation Plan process and presented the Conservation Plan for the Bog Turtle. The Committee approved posting the plan on the Commission website for a 30-day public comment period. Once staff receive comments and make any necessary changes, the plan will be brought back to the HNGES Committee for approval and consideration by the entire Commission. Gabriella Graeter, *Wildlife Biologist*, presented an informative overview of conservation and research projects underway for the Bog

Turtle in North Carolina. Commission biologists and partners, including private landowners, are working hard to enhance and restore habitat, protect nests, create safe road underpasses, and take other conservation actions to mitigate the many threats this smallest turtle in North Carolina faces. Rachael Hoch, *Inland Fisheries Division Assistant Chief*, provided an update on the Commission's Programmatic Safe Harbor Agreement and Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances. This landmark agreement was officially executed on November 24, 2022. Ms. Hoch presented an approval process for stocking fish, freshwater mussels, crayfish, and snails into North Carolina waters.

Motion from the Habitat, Nongame and Endangered Species Committee – Approval Process for Stocking Fish, Freshwater Mussels, Crayfish, and Snails into North Carolina Waters – On a motion by Mark Craig and second by Landon Zimmer, the Commission approved the proposed Approval Process for Stocking Fish, Freshwater Mussels, Crayfish, and Snails into North Carolina Waters. (EXHIBIT U)

Boating Safety Committee Report – December 7, 2022 – *John Coley, Chair*, reported The Boating Safety Committee met on December 7, 2022. Betsy Haywood, No Wake Zone Coordinator, reviewed eleven water safety rulemaking exhibits. She presented public comments and requests for final adoptions of six Rules. The Committee endorses final adoption of Rule amendments for New Hanover County, Wilkes County, Northampton and Warren counties, Pamlico County, Montgomery County, and a technical correction to 15A NCAC 10F .0301 General Provisions, to be considered later in today's meeting. Betsy also presented five requests for Notices of Text for permanent rulemaking to be submitted to the Office of Administrative Hearings to begin rulemaking; and reviewed one Fiscal Note. The Committee endorses Notice of Text for Clay County, Mecklenburg and Gaston counties, City of Roxboro, and Perquimans County as presented and endorsed consideration of Humphrey's Ridge Marina and Grill only for Forsyth, Rockingham, and Stokes counties. Additionally, the Committee endorses the fiscal note for Perquimans County.

Education and Communication Committee Report – December 7, 2022 – *Kelly Davis, Chair*, reported the Education and Communication Committee met on Wednesday, December 7, 2022. Staff presented the Wildlife Education Division's Action Plan – the culmination of the 18-month long division examination and reformation that this committee tasked the division within April 2021. Several WRC divisions were involved in the development of the Action Plan. It is being implemented in conjunction with the agency's R3 Plan and will be the guiding document for the preparation of individual division plans such as the Fishing Education and Hunter Education plans. All of these documents do or will set clear, measurable R3 and Relevancy goals and objectives - evaluation will be integral in program planning so that the agency can deliver the best service to the public and resources it serves. The committee also received an update on the WRC hunter education program. We reviewed the impressive new hunter ed manual which includes NC-specific information about hunter ethics, the Landowner Protection Act, trespass, the history of hunting with dogs, and CWD protocols and regulations. We discussed the status of in-person and online classes as well as the ongoing opportunities for teaching hunter education in schools.

Land Acquisitions and Property Committee Report – December 7, 2022 – *Tom Berry, Chair*, reported the Land Acquisition and Property Committee met on December 7, 2022. The Committee reviewed and endorsed two Phase I and five Phase II land acquisition projects. Cumulatively, the Committee reviewed just over 5,000 acres of land acquisition projects that will hopefully result in

conservation ownership. The Committee also reviewed and approved 4 other property matters, including the Denton Trade Concept, the Mattamuskeet Lodge Lease, and two DOT easement requests.

Rules Committee Report – December 7, 2022 – *Wes Seegars, Chair*, reported the Rules Committee met December 7, 2022, and received an update on proposed out of cycle rules for next year. Several rule changes are needed for the new 3rd party license system, including terminology updates to several vessel rules and the addition of electronic reporting options to the big game harvest reporting rule. Updates to special concern species and hunter education rules as part of the periodic review are scheduled for next year, and permanent rules to replace the temporary CWD rules will be introduced to the Commission for action after the season closes. Staff are currently working on CWD rule revisions and a fiscal note with OSBM. Finally, as a reminder, the Commission currently has 50 rules subject to legislative review in the long session.

Committee of the Whole Report – December 7, 2022 – *Monty Crump, Chair*, reported the Committee of the Whole met December 7, 2022. Ashley Pekar, *Regulatory Analyst*, presented permanent rulemaking Notice of Text for Gull Rock Game Land and Rulemaking Adoption for Endangered, Threatened, and Special Concern Species and Prohibited Taking and Manner of Take. Next, Director Ingram reviewed the 2023-2024 Annual Cycle Public Hearing schedule and the 2023 Commission Meeting Schedule. Director Ingram then recognized Sergeant Brandon Lyon as the 2022 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' Wildlife Officer of the Year. Finally, Director Ingram congratulated Missy McGaw on her impactful career as the staff photographer for Wildlife in North Carolina magazine and presented her with a signed Duane Raver print in celebration of her retirement. Lastly, the Committee received a very informative update on Striped Bass including the 2023 Roanoke River harvest season and supplemental stocking and the Amendment 2 to the Estuarine Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan. This plan is meant to be a joint between the WRC and the MFC. However, there was never any attempt to discuss the WRC's concerns. As a result, the Committee unanimously voted to not approve Amendment 2 to the Estuarine Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan that was approved by the Marine Fisheries Committee on November 17, 2022 and send a letter explaining that decision to the MFC chairman.

AGENCY SPOTLIGHT

Our Conservation Legacy – *Dr. David Cobb, Research Director*, gave a 75th anniversary spotlight titled Our Conservation Legacy. The presentation focused on the Commission's legacy, past, present, and future with a particular emphasis on the Wildlife Action Plan and broad conservation missions.

LAND ACQUISITION AND PROPERTY MATTERS

Phase II Land Acquisition – With Chairman Monty Crump and Commissioner Landon Zimmer recused and on a motion by Tom Berry and second by Brad Stanback, the Commission approved the acquisition of the following properties presented by *Ben Solomon, Assistant Chief and Land Acquisition Manager* (**EXHIBITS D-1, D-2, D-3, D-4, D-5, D-6**)

- Corbett Tract – Pender County (**EXHIBIT D-1**)
- Looking Glass Run Tract – Halifax Counties (**EXHIBIT D-2**)
- Panther Branch Tract – Montgomery County (**EXHIBIT D-3**)
- Sanford Depot – Lee County (**EXHIBIT D-4**)
- Grimesland DOT Site – Pitt County (**EXHIBIT D-5**)

EXHIBITS D-1, D-2, D-3, D-4, D-5, D-6 are incorporated into the official record of this meeting.

Other Property Matters – On a motion by John Alexander and second by Jim Ruffin, the Commission approved staff recommendations for other property matters presented in (**EXHIBIT E-1**) by *Ben Solomon*

- Trade Concept – Consider approval of a land trade associated with South Mountains Game Land, Linville River Game Land, and a private landowner (**EXHIBIT E-1**)

On a motion by Kelly Davis and second by Jim Ruffin, the Commission approved staff recommendations for other property matters presented in (**EXHIBIT E-2**) by *Ben Solomon*

- Lease Request – Consider a request for long term lease of the Mattamuskeet Lodge in Hyde County (**EXHIBIT E-2**)

With Commissioner Landon Zimmer recused, and on a motion by Ray Clifton and second by Jim Ruffin, the Commission approved the easement requests of the following presented in (**EXHIBITS E-3, E-4**) by Ben Solomon

- Request for Easements - NC DOT requests a Right of Way Acquisition, Permanent Utility Easement, and Temporary Construction Easement for addition of a median to the adjacent road in Montgomery County (**EXHIBIT E-3**)
- Request for Easements– NC DOT requests a Permanent Drainage Easement for replacement of an old bridge in Columbus County (**EXHIBIT E-4**)

EXHIBITS E-1, E-2, E-3, E-4, are incorporated into the official record of this meeting.

WATER SAFETY RULEMAKING

On a motion by Steve Windham and second by John Alexander, the Commission approved the following water safety rules presented in **EXHIBITS F-2, G-2, H-2, I-2, J-2, K-2** by Betsy Haywood, Water Safety Rules Coordinator

Permanent Rulemaking Adoption – 15A NCAC 10F .0314 New Hanover County – The Commission reviewed public comments (**EXHIBIT F-1**) and adopted proposed amendment to

15A NCAC 10F .0314 to extend the no-wake zone in the navigation channel in a portion of Bradley Creek in Wilmington. **(EXHIBIT F-2)**

Permanent Rulemaking Adoption – 15A NCAC 10F .0361 Wilkes County – The Commission reviewed public comments **(EXHIBIT G-1)** and adopted proposed amendments to 15A NCAC 10F .0361 to extend no-wake zones at Dam Site Park and to incorporate the entire cove where Smithey’s Creek Boat Ramp and ADA Fishing Area and Fort Hamby BAA are located, to incorporate the Safety Zone adjacent to the dam, and to replace vague text language and itemize descriptions and locations of existing no-wake zones and marked swim areas. **(EXHIBIT G-2)**

Permanent Rulemaking Adoption – 15A NCAC 10F .0336 Northampton and Warren Counties – The Commission reviewed public comments **(EXHIBIT H-1)** and adopted a no-wake zone at the Stonehouse Timber Lodge Marina on Lake Gaston in Littleton; and the no-wake zone within 50 yards of the new Odom Boating Access Area on the Roanoke River in Jackson. **(EXHIBIT H-2)**

Permanent Rulemaking Adoption – 15A NCAC 10F .0326 Pamlico County – The Commission reviewed public comments **(EXHIBIT I-1)** and adopted proposed technical changes to 15A NCAC 10F .0326 to correct the descriptions and addresses of four Boating Access Areas in Pamlico County. **(EXHIBIT I-2)**

Permanent Rulemaking Adoption – 15A NCAC 10F .0327 Montgomery County – The Commission reviewed public comments **(EXHIBIT J-1)** and adopted technical correction to 15A NCAC 10F .0327 to add the address of the Old North State Marina on Badin Lake. **(EXHIBIT J-2)**

Permanent Rulemaking Adoption – 15A NCAC 10F .0301 General Provisions – The Commission reviewed public comments **(EXHIBIT K-1)** and adopted technical correction to 15A NCAC 10F .0301 to remove language that limits the size of a Safety Zone where vessel access is denied. **(EXHIBIT K-2)**

EXHIBITS F-1, F-2, G-1, G-2, H-1, H-2, I-1, I-2, J-1, J-2, are incorporated into the official record of this meeting.

On a motion by Wes Seegars and second by John Coley, the Commission approved the following water safety rules presented in **EXHIBITS L, M, N, O, P-1, P-2** by Betsy Haywood

Notice of Text – 15A NCAC 10F .0308 Clay County – The Commission approved publishing Notice of Text in the *NC Register* with an open comment period and public hearing to extend the no-wake zone at the Ho Hum Campground boat ramp; to remove the no wake zone in McCracken Cove for lack of necessity; to incorporate a marked Swim Area at the Clay County Recreational Park; and to incorporate a Restricted Area denoting the existing Jack Rabbit swimming area and no-wake zone. **(EXHIBIT L)**

Notice of Text – 15A NCAC 10F .0316 Forsyth, Rockingham, and Stokes Counties – The Commission approved publishing Notice of Text in the *NC Register* with an open comment period

and public hearing to establish a no-wake zone at Humphrey's Ridge Marina and Grill on Belews Lake in Stokesdale. **(EXHIBIT M)**

Notice of Text – 15A NCAC 10F .0333 Lake Wylie Marine Commission, Mecklenburg County – The Commission approved publishing Notice of Text in the *NC Register* with an open comment period and public hearing to establish a no-wake zone in the waters of Withers Cove on Lake Wylie, in the waters shore to shore in the vicinity of the Mecklenburg 4 Charlotte Fire and Police Department and Shopton Road West Bridge on Route 1116. **(EXHIBIT N)**

Notice of Text – 15A NCAC 10F .0379 City of Roxboro – The Commission approved publishing Notice of Text in the *NC Register* with an open comment period and public hearing to establish a no-wake zone in a narrow channel, shore to shore in the open part of Lake Roxboro. **(EXHIBIT O)**

Notice of Text – 15A NCAC 10F .0355 Perquimans County, Town of Hertford, Perquimans River – The Commission approved publishing Notice of Text in the *NC Register* with an open comment period and public hearing to extend the existing no-wake zone in the Perquimans River to 190 yards northeast of the Perquimans River Bridge, otherwise known as the Hertford S-Bridge, in the navigation channel and to the east and southward to the shoreline of the Town of Hertford and fiscal note for proposed rule. **(EXHIBITS P-1, P-2)**

EXHIBITS L, M, N, O, P-1, P-2, are incorporated into the official record of this meeting.

RULEMAKING

Notice of Text – 15A NCAC 10D .0232 Gull Rock Game Land in Hyde County – On a motion by Jim Ruffin and a second by John Coley, the Commission approved publishing Notice of Text in the *NC Register* with an open comment period and public hearing for 15A NCAC 10D .0232 Gull Rock Game Land in Hyde County presented in **(EXHIBIT Q)** by *Ashley Pekarul, Regulatory Analyst*

EXHIBIT Q is incorporated into the official record of this meeting.

Permanent Rulemaking Adoption – 10I .0103 - .0105 Endangered, Threatened, and Special Concern Species – On a motion by Landon Zimmer and a second by Steve Windham, the Commission reviewed public comments **(EXHIBIT R-1)** and adopted 10I .0103-.0105 Endangered, Threatened, and Special Concern Species, to modify protected animal lists presented in **(EXHIBIT R-2)** by *Ashley Pekarul*

EXHIBITS R-1, R-2 are incorporated into the official record of this meeting.

Permanent Rulemaking Adoption – 15A NCAC 10B .0201 Prohibited Taking and Manner of Take – On a motion by John Alexander and a second by Steve Windham, the Commission reviewed **(EXHIBIT S-1)** public comments and readopted 15A NCAC 10B .0201 Prohibited Taking and Manner of Take to clarify the use of deer excretions presented in **(EXHIBIT S-2)** by *Ashley Pekarul*

EXHIBITS S-1, S-2 are incorporated into the official record of this meeting.

2023 Wildlife Resources Commission Meeting Schedule – On a motion by Ray Clifton and a second by Tom Berry, the Commission approved the proposed 2023 Wildlife Resources Commission meeting schedule presented in (**EXHIBIT T**) by *Cameron Ingram, Executive Director*

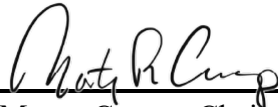
EXHIBIT T is incorporated into the official record of this meeting.

COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN – Chairman Crump reflected on the past year in celebration of the agency’s 75 anniversary and thanked staff for highlighting our conversation achievements.


COMMENTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – Executive Director Cameron Ingram shared with deepest sympathy the passing of former Executive Director Richard “Dick” Hamilton and offered condolences to his family. Next, he reflected on the past 75 years of conservation achievements and the importance of protecting our state’s wild places and preserving outdoors traditions. In closing, he praised staff for their presentations spotlighting the agency’s history during the celebration of 75th Anniversary.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the WRC webinar meeting was adjourned at 10:29 a.m. All exhibits are incorporated into the official record of this meeting by reference and are filed with the minutes.



Monty Crump, Chairman 02/23/2023
Date



Cameron Ingram, Executive Director 02/23/2023
Date