



ACTIONS

N.C. WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSION

March 5, 2015 at 9:00 am

NC Wildlife Resources Commission Headquarters

1751 Varsity Drive

Raleigh, North Carolina

Call to Order –*Commission Chairman* Jim Cogdell called the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. in the Commission Conference Room, 5th floor. He announced that the meeting was being recorded as a public record, with live audio streaming at www.ncwildlife.org. He requested that cell phones be turned off. Commissioners Wes Seegars, Joe Budd, Michell Hicks, and Richard Edwards were absent.

Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation - *Commissioner* John Coley led the Pledge of Allegiance. *Commissioner* Garry Spence gave the invocation.

Welcome and Mandatory Ethics Inquiry – Chairman Cogdell welcomed the guests present, including members of the Lake Wylie Marine Commission, Hal Atkinson of the Boone and Crockett Club, Dr. Tom Ray, Dr. Karen Beck, and Ed Mays of NC Handicapped Sportsmen. He read the ethics inquiry mandated in North Carolina General Statute 138A-15(e).

Minutes - the Commission approved the January 31, 2015 Wildlife Resources Commission minutes as presented in **Exhibit A**.

State Ethics Commission Review of 2014 Statements of Economic Interests – the Commission was read relevant portions of the evaluations by the N.C. Ethics Commission of the 2014 Statements of Economic Interests for Thomas Fonville, John T. Coley, IV, and James Cogdell. The evaluations in their entirety are incorporated by reference into the minutes of the meeting.

Financial Status Report - the Commission received a financial status report on the Wildlife Operating Fund and the Wildlife Endowment Fund as of January 31, 2015 by Cecilia Edgar, *Budget Director*, presented in **Exhibit C**. The Operating Fund balance is \$17,545,812.20. The Endowment Fund balance is \$117,603,833.78. Expendable interest is \$20,692,745.52.

Migratory Birds, Waterfowl Committee Report – John Coley, *Chairman*, reported that the Migratory Birds, Waterfowl Committee met on March 4, 2015. The committee received a report from Doug Howell about the Light Goose Conservation Order. The Light Goose Conservation Order is a management tool established in 2008 by the USFWS. Howell discussed implementing a season after the existing light goose hunt season to help control the population of light geese, which are considered to be overabundant. The Committee instructed staff to form a team to implement the Light Goose Conservation Order season, with a recommendation to provide free permits to licensed hunters.

Small Game Committee Report – Garry Spence, *Chairman*, reported that the Small Game Committee met on March 4, 2015. 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 committee recommends continuation of the award.

Mark Jones, *Wildlife Biologist*, provided an update on programs that benefit small game and habitats. Jones stated that the economics of forestry, farming and livestock management practices have reduced habitats suitable for quail, rabbits, and other small animals.

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 all species utilize.

Fisheries Committee Report – Joe Barker, *Committee Vice Chair*, reported that the Fisheries Committee met on March 4, 2015. Bob Curry, *Inland Fisheries Division Chief*, provided an overview of the ongoing work developing a statewide Aquatic Nuisance Species Management Plan. The plan is a collaborative effort across multiple state agencies and will be presented to the Governor for signature.

Chris Wood, *District 8 Fishery Biologist*, provided an update on the walleye fishery at Lake James after the introduction of invasive river herring. Staff will continue to evaluate stocking efforts to return the fishery to historic levels.

Amanda Bushon, *District 9 Fishery Biologist*, provided an update on the introduction of invasive blueback herring in Lake Apalachia and potential management options. Staff began stocking brown and rainbow trout into the system to take advantage of the blueback herring. Brown trout are doing exceptionally well. The project will be featured in *Wildlife in North Carolina* magazine.

Corey Oakley, *Piedmont Research Coordinator*, provided an update on the status of invasive tilapia in Lake Hyco. The Commission is working with NCSU on a research project to determine the extent of interactions between tilapia and other sport fish. Staff has identified the possibility to create a freshwater red drum fishery in the lake. Staff will continue to explore this option, including public meetings over the next year.

Chad Thomas, *Regional Fishery Supervisor*, provided an update on Roanoke River striped bass management. Thomas reminded the committee that the Total Allowable Landings decreased to 68,750 pounds this year. Given the harvest trends over the last few years, there should be no impact to anglers, but the season could be shortened or extended by proclamation. Thomas also provided an overview of the river herring fishery on the coast which has collapsed. A complete harvest moratorium has been in effect since 2008. Staff will continue to monitor the status of river herring, but the populations are still unable to sustain harvest.

Chief Deputy Director Mallory Martin provided an update on the Mattamuskeet Collaboration Team established by Director Myers and *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Region 4 Director* Cindy Dohner. The team met in Raleigh on February 10-12, 2015 and discussed management topics. Agency legal counsel is examining opportunities for lake level management. Director Myers updated Commissioners on an effort to secure additional funding to create a business plan for the Lake Mattamuskeet Lodge which will be included in future Mattamuskeet Collaboration Team meetings.

Land Use and Access Committee Report –Tom Berry, *Land Use and Access Committee Chair*, reported that the LUAC met on March 4, 2015. Isaac Harrold, *Lands Program Manager*, presented four Phase I properties for consideration by the committee. The LUAC will recommend approval by the entire Commission for staff to work with State Property and funding partners to develop acquisition plans for:

- Deviney 2014 Tract – Rutherford County
- DOT River Bend Tract – Caswell County
- Graves Addition Tract – Caswell County
- Shelton Tract – Buncombe County

The committee received an update about an easement request by a private landowner across the Second Creek Game Land in Rowan County for purposes of providing access to private property.

Erik Christofferson, *Engineering and Lands Management Division Chief*, gave an update on shooting ranges across the state. While two years ago there was one shooting range at Cold Mountain, now there are four operational ranges with nine more in project development.

Christofferson updated the committee on the proposed Linville Tract Shooting Range. Public comments have been received at public meetings and by mail with a great deal of reaction to the proposed site, including from the Foothills Conservancy and the seller of the property. Christofferson stated that the agency has conducted sound testing which is negative for significant impacts. The agency has checked with original funding sources for the Linville Tract and there is no opposition based on their funding requirements. Christofferson continues to gather data and will present the proposal to the entire Commission at the May 21 meeting.

Due to time constraints the discussion of estimated versus actual stewardship expenditures for land acquisition projects was postponed.

Chairman Tom Berry remarked that several tracts for elk in the mountains are being considered for purchase by conservation partners.

Habitat, Nongame and Endangered Species Committee Report – Mark Craig, *Chair*, reported that the Habitat, Nongame and Endangered Species Committee met on March 4, 2015. Shannon Deaton, *Habitat Conservation Program Manager*, presented information to committee members for voting for the recipient of the Thomas L. Quay Wildlife Diversity Award.

Shannon Deaton presented an update on membership of the Nongame Wildlife Advisory Committee (NWAC), reminding the HNGES Committee that the Commission approved a resolution for the NWAC last October. The HNGES Committee approved staff's recommendation to add three years to the terms of current NWAC members.

Chris Moorman, PhD – *N.C. State University*, presented a report on a recent alligator project conducted by N.C. State University. Dr. Moorman reported that the alligator was listed in 1967 as federally endangered due to habitat loss and hunting. The alligator was delisted in 1987; however, it still is threatened. Moorman reported that North Carolina is at the northernmost limit of the alligator's range with cooler temperatures and slower growth rates. The last survey was conducted thirty years ago by the WRC and NCSU. The recent survey revealed that while alligators are plentiful in the southeastern part of the state, any harvest of adult alligators is not sustainable. Long-term monitoring will be conducted to determine information about N.C. alligator growth rates, hatchling success and sex ratio.

Committee of the Whole Report – Jim Cogdell, *Chairman*, reported that the Committee of the Whole met on March 4, 2015. Cindy Carr, *Wildlife Action Plan Coordinator*, gave an update about revisions to the Wildlife Action Plan. The Wildlife Action Plan (WAP) is a blueprint to inform and guide about nongame wildlife. Staff uses the WAP as a guide for seeking State Wildlife Grants to be used for priority species and habitats. Conservation partners use the WAP as a source of information to identify greatest needs in North Carolina. The WAP has no regulatory authority. It provides recommendations only and does not mandate action. Carr stated that an Executive Summary of the Wildlife Action Plan revision will be presented to the committee on May 20, 2015.

The Committee received an update about revisions to the Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Response Plan from Dr. Maria Palamar, *Veterinarian*. Dr. Palamar explained that the CWD Response Plan is flexible. Revisions to the plan are made based on science with input from staff and the public. The WRC continues preventative measures to keep CWD out of the state through increasing public awareness, regulatory actions, and monitoring and surveillance of free-ranging deer. The CWD Response Plan will provide short-term guidance if CWD appears. It will provide response to unconfirmed positives and confirmed positives in free-ranging deer and in captive cervids.

Executive Director Gordon Myers reported that the WRC has aligned rulemaking with new laws regarding deer farming in North Carolina. The agency is working with deer farmers with the objective of protecting white-tail deer and elk as public trust resources, prohibiting the importation of CWD by susceptible species, and prohibiting high fence hunting. Myers stated that a bill will be drafted to transfer oversight of the captive cervid program within the pens to the Department of Agriculture. Concerns remain, including law enforcement, a CWD Plan with the Department of Agriculture and a herd certification oversight plan.

The committee received a report on behalf of the North Carolina Wildlife Federation from Dr. Bob Brown, former Dean of Natural Resources at NCSU. Dr. Brown stated that the NCWF disagrees with the transfer of captive deer farming to the Department of Agriculture since it has resulted in problems in other states. The NCWF disagrees with issuance of new permits for deer pens until the current lawsuit is settled. Dr. Brown stated that the NCWF does want to collaborate and compromise with the WRC and deer farmers.

The Committee received reviews of comments from public hearings and overviews of proposed wildlife management rules from Dr. David Cobb; proposed inland fisheries rules from Bob Curry; game land management rules from Isaac Harrold; and water safety rules from Erica Garner.

Director Myers introduced Ashton Gordon, *Legislative Liaison*.

Agency Spotlight – the Commission received an update by Jenny Harris, *Marketing Director*, about the initiative on aligning the agency brand. Harris mentioned many examples of confusion in the agency’s visual branding, including outdated letterhead, conflicting and unapproved Wildlife diamond logos, different uniforms, and unapproved brands and pages within social media. Harris introduced the new Wildlife diamond logo and letterhead. Trailer wrap designs will be standardized. A design team will work with social media for uniformity of brand. Harris stated that she is working with outside focus groups to get feedback and will produce an agency-wide marking plan that will be presented to the Commission.

Fisheries, Education and Outreach Update – the Commission received an update about the activities of the Fisheries Division from Bob Curry, *Inland Fisheries Division Chief*. Curry reminded the Commission that hatchery supported trout waters closed on February 28 and will reopen on April 4. He stated that the striped bass season on the Roanoke River opened on March 1, with a reduction in allowable landings to 68,750 pounds this year. Curry announced that turkey hunting seminars are being conducted state-wide. The Becoming an Outdoor Woman skills workshop will be held April 17-19. Youth Hunter Skills tournaments are being held throughout the state, with winning teams advancing to the state championship tournament on April 25.

Adoption of 2015-2016 Fishing Regulation Proposals – the Commission received in **Exhibit C** a summary of comments concerning the proposed changes to inland fishing regulations received from state-wide public hearings held in January 2015 and from the WRC internet portal and correspondence. Curry announced that one letter was received from Bryson City, requesting to be added as Mountain Heritage Trout City.

The Commission adopted the following changes in the 2015-2016 fishing regulations pending approval by the Rules Review Commission and codification in the North Carolina Administrative Code, presented in **Exhibit D**:

- F1) Reformat the structure of 15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters
- F2) Designate approximately 3.6 miles of Lovills Creek in Surry County from the U.S. 52 Business bridge to the Ararat River as Public Mountain Trout Waters and classify as Hatchery Supported Trout Waters.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters
- F3) Designate approximately 2.2 miles of the Tuckasegee River in Swain County from the U.S. 19 bridge to the Slope Street bridge as Public Mountain Trout Waters and classify as Delayed Harvest Trout Waters.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters

- F4) Designate approximately 0.6 mile of the Cane River in Yancey County from Blackberry Ridge Road to the downstream boundary of Cane River County Park as Public Mountain Trout Waters and classify as Delayed Harvest Trout Waters.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters
- F5) Designate 6.0 miles of streams on Pond Mountain Game Land in Ashe County as Public Mountain Trout Waters and classify as Wild Trout Waters.
15A NCAC 10D .0104 Fishing on Game Lands
- F6) Clarify the boundaries of Delayed Harvest Trout Waters on South Fork New River at Todd Island Park in Ashe County. The designated reach will be from the upstream end of Todd Island to the S.R. 1351 bridge.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters
- F7) Modify the boundaries of Hatchery Supported Trout Waters on Stecoah Creek in Graham County, allowing 1.8 miles on game land to default to Wild Trout Waters. The designated reach will be from the upper Nantahala Game Land boundary to Lake Fontana.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters
- F8) Modify the upper boundary of Delayed Harvest Trout Waters on Little River in Alleghany County, removing approximately 1.0 mile of Public Mountain Trout Waters. The designated reach will be from the S.R. 1133 bridge to 275 yards downstream of the intersection of S.R. 1128 and S.R. 1129.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters
- F9) Modify the boundaries of Hatchery Supported Trout Waters on Big Laurel Creek in Ashe County, removing approximately 7.0 miles of Public Mountain Trout Waters. The designated reach will be from the S.R. 1315 bridge to the confluence with the North Fork New River.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters
- F10) Modify the boundaries of Hatchery Supported Trout Waters on Beaver Creek in Ashe County, removing approximately 2.0 miles of Public Mountain Trout Waters. The designated reach will be from N.C. 221 to the South Fork New River.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters
- F11) Modify the boundaries of Hatchery Supported Trout Waters on Old Fields Creek in Ashe County, removing approximately 2.0 miles of Public Mountain Trout Waters. The designated reach will be from N.C. 221 to the South Fork New River.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters
- F12) Modify the upper boundary of Hatchery Supported Trout Waters on Valley River in Cherokee County, removing 3.1 miles of Public Mountain Trout Waters and allowing 0.5 mile on Nantahala Game Land to default to Wild Trout Waters. The designated reach will be from S.R. 1359 to the U.S. 19 Business bridge in Murphy.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters

- F13) Modify the upper boundary of Hatchery Supported Trout Waters on Tusquitee Creek in Clay County, removing 3.2 miles of Public Mountain Trout Waters and allowing 0.7 mile on Nantahala Game Land to default to Wild Trout Waters. The designated reach will be from Compass Creek to the lower S.R. 1300 bridge.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters
- F14) Modify the upper boundary of Hatchery Supported Trout Waters on Tulula Creek in Graham County, removing 3.1 miles of Public Mountain Trout Waters and allowing 1.0 mile on Nantahala Game Land to default to Wild Trout Waters. The designated reach will be from S.R. 1201 to the lower bridge on S.R. 1275.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters
- F15) Modify the upper boundary of Hatchery Supported Trout Waters on Tuckasegee River in Jackson County, removing 1.0 mile of Public Mountain Trout Waters. The designated reach will be from John Brown Branch to the downstream N.C. 107 bridge.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters
- F16) Modify the boundaries of Hatchery Supported Trout Waters on Scott Creek in Jackson County, removing 3.5 miles of Public Mountain Trout Waters. The designated reach will be from Dark Ridge Creek to the Tuckasegee River.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters
- F17) Modify the boundaries of Hatchery Supported Trout Waters on Savannah Creek in Jackson County, removing 1.0 mile of Public Mountain Trout Waters and allowing 0.4 mile on Nantahala Game Land to default to Wild Trout Waters. The designated reach will be from downstream of S.R. 1300 bridge to Cagle Branch.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters
- F18) Modify the upper boundary of Hatchery Supported Trout Waters on Nantahala River in Macon County, removing 2.4 miles of Public Mountain Trout Waters. The designated reach will be from Dicks Creek to Whiteoak Creek.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters
- F19) Modify the boundaries of Hatchery Supported Trout Waters on Meadow Fork in Madison County, removing 3.0 miles of Public Mountain Trout Waters and allowing 0.2 mile on Pisgah Game Land to default to Wild Trout Waters. The designated reach will be from S.R. 1165 to Spring Creek.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters
- F20) Modify the boundaries of Hatchery Supported Trout Waters on Middle Fork French Broad River in Transylvania County, removing 1.0 mile of Public Mountain Trout Waters. The designated reach will be from the upstream U.S. 178 bridge to the French Broad River.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters
- F21) Modify the boundaries of Hatchery Supported Trout Waters on Meat Camp Creek in Watauga County, removing 1.9 miles of Public Mountain Trout Waters. The designated reach will be from the S.R. 1340 bridge at S.R. 1384 intersection to N.C. 194.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters

- F22) Modify the boundaries of Hatchery Supported Trout Waters on Stony Fork in Watauga County, removing 2.4 miles of Public Mountain Trout Waters. The designated reach will be from the S.R. 1500 bridge at S.R. 1505 intersection to the Wilkes County line.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters
- F23) Modify the upper boundary of Hatchery Supported Trout Waters on Broad River in Henderson County, removing 0.1 mile from Public Mountain Trout Waters. The designated reach will be from the end of S.R. 1611 to the Rutherford County line.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters
- F24) Modify the boundaries of Hatchery Supported Trout Waters on Laurel Creek in Watauga County, removing 3.5 miles of Public Mountain Trout Waters. The designated reach will be from the S.R. 1123 bridge at S.R. 1157 intersection to the Watauga River.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters
- F25) Remove a 0.8 mile section of the unnamed tributary of Three Top Creek on Three Top Mountain Game Land in Ashe County from Public Mountain Trout Waters.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters
- F26) Remove 2.5 miles of Jones Creek in Avery County from Public Mountain Trout Waters.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters
- F27) Allow night fishing in Wild Trout Waters (including Catch and Release/Artificial Flies Only Trout Waters, Catch and Release/Artificial Lures Only Trout Waters, and Wild Trout/ Natural Bait Waters) and Public Mountain Trout Waters on game lands.
15A NCAC 10C .0205 Public Mountain Trout Waters 15A NCAC 10D .0104 Fishing on Game Lands
- F28) Allow the harvest of trout in undesignated waters from March 1 until 7 a.m. on the first Saturday in April.
15A NCAC 10C .0316 Trout
- F29) Reformat the structure of 15A NCAC 10C .0316(e) Trout.
15A NCAC 10C .0316 Trout
- F30) Remove the 8-inch minimum size limit and the 20-fish daily creel limit for crappie on the South Yadkin River downstream of Cooleemee Dam, Yadkin River downstream from Idols Dam, High Rock Lake, and Tuckertown Lake.
15A NCAC 10C .0306 Crappie
- F31) Modify the general statewide regulation for Striped Bass and its hybrids by increasing the minimum size limit from 16 inches to 20 inches and reducing the daily creel limit from eight fish in aggregate allowing two fish to be retained less than 16 inches to four fish with no exception. Reservoirs affected include High Rock Lake, Tuckertown Lake, Badin Lake, Lake Tillery, Blewett Falls Reservoir, Hiwassee Reservoir, and W. Kerr Scott Reservoir.
15A NCAC 10C .0314 Striped Bass

- F32) Establish an exception to the general statewide regulation for Striped Bass and its hybrids in Arrowhead Lake (Anson Co.), High Rock Pond (Caswell Co.), Moss Lake, Mountain Island Reservoir, Oak Hollow Lake, Lake Thom-A-Lex, Lake Townsend, and Salem Lake by decreasing the daily creel limit from eight fish in aggregate allowing two fish to be retained less than 16 inches to four fish with no exception. The minimum size limit will remain 16 inches.
15A NCAC 10C .0314 Striped Bass
- F33) Clarify that American Eel less than nine inches cannot be taken or possessed, regardless of origin, while boating on or fishing in any inland fishing waters.
15A NCAC 10C .0401 Manner of Taking Nongame Fishes: Purchase and Sale
15A NCAC 10C .0402 Taking Nongame Fishes for Bait or Personal Consumption
- F34) Clarify the definitions of set-hooks, jug-hooks, and trotlines. A set-hook is a fishing device consisting of a single line having no more than three hooks that is attached at one end only to a stationary object. A jug-hook is a fishing device consisting of a single line having no more than three hooks that is attached at one end only to a float. A trotline is a fishing device consisting of a horizontal common line having multiple hooks attached. The proposed change will also clarify that set-hooks, jug-hooks, and trotlines without bait or not labeled properly may be removed from the water by wildlife enforcement officers.
15A NCAC 10C .0206 Trotlines, Jug Hooks, and Set Hooks
- F35) Add bow nets to the list of equipment that can be used to take nongame fish for bait or personal consumption in inland fishing waters with an inland fishing license.
15A NCAC 10C .0402 Taking Nongame Fishes for Bait or Personal Consumption
- F36) Clarify in 15A NCAC 10C .0407 that the Neuse River is not located in Granville County.
15A NCAC 10C .0407 Permitted Special Devices and Open Seasons

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 announced that John Stanton presented the Wildlife Resources Commission with an award by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the Wood Duck Plan. Benjy Strope, *Corporate CURE Biologist*, received the Natural Resource Enhancement Award for his work with corporate CURE.

Adoption of 2015-2016 Wildlife Management Regulation Proposals – Dr. Cobb presented **Exhibit E**, a summary of public comments concerning the proposed changes to wildlife management regulations received from state-wide public hearings held in January 2015 and from the WRC internet portal and correspondence.

The Commission adopted changes in wildlife management regulations for 2015-2016 presented in **Exhibit F**, subject to approval by the Rules Review Commission and codification in the North Carolina Administrative Code:

- H1) Create a Youth Deer Hunting Day to coincide with National Hunting and Fishing Day, the fourth Saturday in September. On this day, youth under the age of 16 would be able to use all legal weapons to hunt deer of either-sex on both private lands and game lands. Except as otherwise required, youth do not need an accompanying adult. Adults can hunt with or without a youth on this day, but are restricted to the legal weapon for the open season in that area. All hunters would be required to wear blaze orange on this day.
15A NCAC 10B .0202 Deer (White-tailed)
- H2) Extend the gun deer season in Cleveland, Polk and Rutherford Counties until January 1. Currently this season closes on the 5th Saturday after Thanksgiving.
15A NCAC 10B .0203 Deer (White-tailed)
- H3) Clarify that bait legal for taking bears is a grain, fruit, nut, vegetable, or other material harvested from a plant crop that is not modified from its raw components. Also clarify that bears shall not be taken with the use or aid of any processed food product, extracts of processed food products, or any legal bait that has been modified by extracts or other substances.
15A NCAC 10B .0202 Bear
- H4) Eliminate the Gaddy Goose Refuge goose zone and season in Anson County and return this area to the Southern James Bay Hunt Zone for goose hunting.
15A NCAC 10B .0105 Migratory game birds
- H5) Allow the shooting of crippled waterfowl from a motorboat under power in those areas described, delineated, and designated as a special sea duck areas.
15A NCAC 10B .0105 Migratory game birds
- H6) Increase the number of days that the public has to tag bobcat, otters and foxes from up to 10 days after the close of the applicable season to up to 30 days. Establish a time frame of 23 days after the close of the season for the Commission to mail tags to sportsmen.
15A NCAC 10B .0404 Trappers and hunters
- H7) Allow hunters to use electronic calls to take feral swine.
15A NCAC 10B .0223 Feral swine

Phase I Land Acquisitions – the Commission approved requests for agency staff to begin working with the State Property Office and funding partners to develop acquisition plans for the following properties presented in **Exhibits G-1, G-2, G-3, G-4:**

- Deviney 2014 Tract – Rutherford County
- DOT River Bend Tract – Caswell County
- Graves Addition Tract – Caswell County
- Shelton Tract – Buncombe County

Easement Request, Rowan County – the Commission approved an easement request presented in **Exhibit H**, from the owner of property adjacent to Second Creek Game Land in Rowan County for purposes of providing access to the private property, with the following conditions:

- WRC bears no associated expense
- the easement serves no commercial purpose
- the easement becomes null and void if the subject property is ever subdivided
- the easement includes a damage liability clause and restrictions as necessary to prevent interference with operation, maintenance and/or public use of state property.

Summary of Public Comments Pertaining to Proposed Changes in Game Land Regulations- the Commission received a summary of public comments received from statewide district public hearings held in January 2015 and from the WRC internet and correspondence, pertaining to proposed changes to game land regulations. (**EXHIBIT I**)

2015-2016 Game Land Regulation Proposals - the Commission adopted proposed changes in game land management regulations presented in **Exhibit J**. Regulations adopted are subject to approval by the Rules Review Commission and codification in the NC Administrative Code.

- G1) Define target shooting as “the discharge of a firearm for purposes other than hunting, trapping or self-defense”.
- Adopt amendments to the following rule:*
15A NCAC 10D .0102 General regulations regarding use
- G2) Prohibit the use of dogs for taking deer on those portions of game lands posted as “Restricted Deer Hunting Zones”, except as may be otherwise authorized by permit.
- Adopt amendments to the following rule:*
15A NCAC 10D .0102 General regulations regarding use
- G3) Prohibit target shooting on the following game lands, with the exception of designated shooting ranges:
- 1 Angola Bay Game Land (Duplin and Pender counties)
 - 2 Cape Fear River Game Land (New Hanover and Pender counties)
 - 3 R. Wayne Bailey-Caswell (Caswell County)
 - 4 Holly Shelter Game Land (Pender County)
 - 5 Nicholson Creek Game Land (Hoke County)
 - 6 Rockfish Creek Game Land (Hoke County)
 - 7 Sampson County Game Land (Sampson County)
 - 8 Sandhills Game Land (Hoke, Moore, Richmond and Scotland counties)
 - 9 Stones Creek Game Land (Onslow County)
- Adopt amendments to the following rule:*
15A NCAC 10D .0103 Hunting on game lands

- G4) Prohibit target shooting on the following game lands:
10 Buckridge Game Land (Tyrrell County)
11 Buxton Woods Game Land (Dare County)
Adopt amendments to the following rule:
15A NCAC 10D .0103 Hunting on game lands
- G5) Prohibit horseback riding on Harris Game Land (Chatham, Harnett and Wake counties).
Adopt amendments to the following rule:
15A NCAC 10D .0103 Hunting on game lands
- G6) Modify the current rule pertaining to horseback riding on Jordan Game Land (Chatham, Durham, Orange and Wake counties) such that riders, other than youth under 16 years of age, are required to possess a Game Land License or other license which includes the game lands privilege to ride horses on posted equestrian trails that lie entirely within the game land boundary.
Adopt amendments to the following rule:
15A NCAC 10D .0103 Hunting on game lands
- G7) Regulate the use of horses on Pee Dee River Game Land (Anson, Montgomery, Richmond, and Stanly counties) by allowing equestrian use the months of June, July, August and Sundays the remainder of the year, except during the open turkey and deer seasons, on roads which are open and maintained for vehicular traffic.
Adopt amendments to the following rule:
15A NCAC 10D .0103 Hunting on game lands
- G8) Expand the opportunity for horseback riding on Pond Mountain Game Land in Ashe County, which is currently May 16 through August 31, to also include Sundays throughout the months of September and October.
Adopt amendments to the following rule:
15A NCAC 10D .0103 Hunting on game lands
- G9) Amend rules regarding the use of horses on R. Wayne Bailey-Caswell Game Land (Caswell County) and Thurmond Chatham Game Land (Alleghany and Wilkes counties) to exempt youth under 16 years of age from the requirement to obtain a Game Land License or other license containing the game land privilege.
Adopt amendments to the following rule:
15A NCAC 10D .0103 Hunting on game lands
- G10) Designate Lewis Millpond on Uwharrie Game Land in Montgomery County as a managed waterfowl impoundment and limit waterfowl hunting to three days per week, holidays and opening and closing days.
Adopt amendments to the following rule:
15A NCAC 10D .0103 Hunting on game lands
- G11) Change the opening day of the Deer Archery Season from the Monday on or nearest September 10 to the Saturday on or nearest September 10 on Buffalo Cove Game Land (Caldwell and Wilkes counties) and South Mountains Game Land (Burke, Cleveland, McDowell and Rutherford counties).
Adopt amendments to the following rule:
15A NCAC 10D .0103 Hunting on game lands

- G12) Clarify that only people using wildlife to train or run dogs need a hunting license.
Adopt amendments to the following rule:
15A NCAC 10B .0114 Dog training and field trials
- G13) Require only active participants in field trials to possess a hunting license (and game land license for field trials taking place on game lands). For commission-sanctioned field trials, the license may be from the participant's state of residence. For all other field trials, the license must be a N.C. hunting license. Define active field trial participant as a person who handles dogs or uses firearms at a field trial.
Adopt amendments to the following rules:
15A NCAC 10B .0114 Dog training and field trials
15A NCAC 10D .0102 General regulations regarding use
- G14) Clarify that only judges of commission-sanctioned field trials are exempted from the requirement to possess a hunting license, that judges of other types of field trials must have a N.C. hunting license.
Adopt amendments to the following rules:
15A NCAC 10B .0114 Dog training and field trials
15A NCAC 10D .0102 General regulations regarding use

Adoption of Permanent Rulemaking – No Wake Zone, Currituck County - the Commission adopted a no wake zone requested by Currituck County at the Waterview Shores Subdivision in Grandy. (**Exhibit K**)

Public Hearing Comments on Temporary Rulemaking for No Wake Zones, Lake Wylie – the Commission received in **Exhibit L-1** comments from a public hearing held February 19, 2015 in Charlotte, concerning proposed temporary rulemaking requested by the Lake Wylie Marine Commission for no wake zones on Lake Wylie in Gaston and Mecklenburg counties. Joe Stowe, *Executive Director of the Lake Wylie Marine Commission*, addressed the Commission and stated that extreme congestion around Sadler Island resulted in this request to mitigate hazards to boater safety.

Adoption of Temporary Rulemaking for Lake Wylie – the Commission adopted temporary rulemaking for no wake zones around Sadler Island on Lake Wylie in Gaston and Mecklenburg counties, presented in **Exhibit L-2**.

Fiscal Note – Proposed Permanent Rulemaking for No Wake Zones on Lake Wylie – the Commission adopted the fiscal note required for permanent rulemaking for no wake zones on Lake Wylie. The Lake Wylie Marine Commission is responsible for marking and maintaining the no wake zones after adoption. (**Exhibit M-1**)

Approval of Notice of Text for Permanent Rulemaking for No Wake Zones on Lake Wylie – the Commission approved **Exhibit M-2** for publication of Notice of Text in the *N.C. Register* with a public hearing and open comment period for two permanent no wake zones requested by the Lake Wylie Marine Commission, as required by the Administrative Procedure Act.

Comments by the Chairman – *Chairman* Jim Cogdell thanked Commissioners for their hours of dedication and attendance at state-wide public hearings preceding today’s vote on rules proposals. He reminded the assembly that the next meeting of the Wildlife Resources Commission will be on May 21, 2015. He asked the Commissioners to understand and adhere to the meeting attendance requirements of Wildlife Resources Commissioners.

Comments by the Executive Director - *Executive Director* Gordon Myers thanked agency and partners for their many hours of work on the management of captive cervids. He stated that the Governor’s budget will be presented today and that the agency has worked with the Governor’s Office toward a targeted 2 percent reduction. He reminded Commissioners that there will be a meeting with legislators on Monday, March 9 to discuss possible legislative changes to preserve outdoor heritage in North Carolina. Discussion will include removal of barriers to the enjoyment of the outdoors, reduction of liability for landowners to provide access, and schedules and notification about prescribed burns, among other topics.

Adjournment - the meeting was adjourned at 10:40 a.m.