

Habitat, Nongame and Endangered Species Committee



Meeting Summary

**January 16, 2013, 1:00 pm
Centennial Campus, Raleigh**

Meeting Attendees:

Commissioners:

Durwood Laughinghouse, Chair		Mark Craig, Vice-Chair	
Dalton Ruffin	Hayden Rogers	Jim Cogdell	David Hoyle
Ray White	Joe Barker	Garry Spence	Richard Edwards
Ray Clifton	Dell Murphy	John Clark	Tom Berry

Staff:

Gordon Myers	Mallory Martin	David Cobb	Todd Ewing
Perry Sumner	Chris Dillon	Jeff Hall	Scott Anderson
Chris Goudreau	Dale Caveny	David Sawyer	Evin Stanford
Brooke Massa	Brad Gunn	Cindy Carr	Kate Pipkin
Jodie Owen	David Butts	Brad Howard	Shannon Deaton
Bob Curry			

Guests:

Steve Williams – NCSU
Jaime Collazo – NCSU Coop Unit
Tom Kwak – NCSU Coop. Unit
Ken Bridle – NWAC
Alvin Braswell - NWAC

Commissioner Durwood Laughinghouse called the meeting to order at 1:17 pm.

Elk Project status report

Dr. Cobb provided a brief update on the agency's research and field efforts to assist landowners with fence kits. NPS and WRC staffs are communicating effectively and collaborating to address issues.

Update on the Habitat Suitability Analysis for Elk

Steve Williams from NCSU presented modeling information from a study funded by the WRC titled: Elk Habitat Suitability Index Map for North Carolina. The purpose of the study is to develop a model using GIS special layers that helps managers assess habitat suitability for elk in NC which can then be used to guide management decisions. Steve's presentation served as the

final report for the project. Commissioners discussed the possible need for human dimensions assessments. Dr. Cobb recommended doing a feasibility study which would help give researchers and managers a better idea of where the elk population could thrive in the state. Staff will provide more information regarding the feasibility study at the next HNGES committee meeting.

Historical perspective of nongame species conservation

Staff provided an overview of the Commission's nongame program, including historical information regarding the NC Endangered Species Act, animal listing process, and statutory obligations of the WRC Commission. Committee members received staff recommendations for next steps:

- Further define a conservation plan "concept" for the 2010 state listing proposals;
- Develop conservation plans for 2010 species status proposals; begin the process with the fish taxa;
- Develop a revised state listing process that is
 - Consistent with NC statute;
 - Objective, repeatable, and reliable; and
 - Developed by a staff committee.

Staff will provide more information regarding the conservation plan concept at the next HNGES committee meeting.

Update on augmentation of Cape Fear Shiners

The Commission approved the draft augmentation plan at the August 2012 Commission meeting and authorized staff to implement the outreach plan. Staff conducted a public input meeting on January 10, 2013; this meeting did not reveal any additional information that required changes, edits, or updates to the augmentation plan as proposed in August.

Action Item: HNGES committee unanimously approved staff recommendation to implement the draft augmentation plan as approved by the full WRC Commission at its August 30, 2012 Commission meeting. HNGES members further passed a motion to recommend to the full Commission that the draft plan be approved as the final plan and that staff proceed with implementing the plan.

Wildlife Diversity Program Updates

- ***NC Wildlife Action Plan revision:*** presentation delayed until the next HNGES meeting.
- ***SEAFWA's Wildlife Diversity meeting*** – staff provided an update on the status of a mega petition (371 species) proposed for new federal listings and the multi-state effort to better inform USFWS's conclusions.
- ***Teaming with Wildlife Annual Fly-in:*** Meeting scheduled for March 5-6, 2013 in Washington, DC.
- ***New Tax preparer's website*** – Please share this website with tax preparers
www.ncwildlife.org/taxpreparers

Committee meeting adjourned at 3:17 pm.