



ACTIONS
N.C. WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSION

July 11, 2013 at 9:00 a.m.
NC Wildlife Resources Commission Headquarters
1751 Varsity Drive
Raleigh, North Carolina

Call to Order – *Commission Chairman* David Hoyle, Jr. called the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. in the Commission Conference Room, 5th floor. Ray White, Hayden Rogers, Dalton Ruffin, and Mark Craig were absent.

Invocation - *Commissioner* Garry Spence gave the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance – *Commissioner* Nat Harris led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mandatory Ethics Inquiry - Chairman Hoyle read the ethics inquiry mandated in North Carolina General Statute 138A-15(e).

Welcome - Chairman Hoyle welcomed Commissioners and guests, including award winners and their guests who were present at the meeting.

Approval of Minutes - the Commission approved the June 20, 2013 Wildlife Resources Commission minutes as presented in **Exhibit A**.

Financial Status Report - the Commission received a financial status report on the Wildlife Operating Fund and the Wildlife Endowment Fund as of May 31, 2013 from Tommy Clark, *Budget Officer*, presented in **Exhibit B**. The Operating Fund balance was \$21,796,453.08. The Endowment Fund balance was \$97,992,191.64.

2013 Thomas L. Quay Wildlife Diversity Award Presentation - *Executive Director* Gordon Myers introduced Mr. Eddie Bridges, the 2013 winner of the Thomas L. Quay Wildlife Diversity Award. Bridges, a former Wildlife Commissioner who served for twelve years, created the North Carolina Wildlife Endowment Fund for the benefit of wildlife conservation across the state. Bridges also founded and is volunteer executive director of the North Carolina Wildlife Habitat Foundation. Under his leadership the Foundation has funded more than \$1 million for wildlife conservation programs and projects such as rebuilding quail populations, enhancing fish habitats and restoring Willow Pond, a public waterfowl viewing site located at Harkers Island. The Commission unanimously adopted a Resolution honoring Eddie Bridges as the recipient of the 2013 Thomas L. Quay Award and thanked him for his contributions over many years to wildlife conservation.

Presentation of the 2012 Shikar-Safari Club International Officer of the Year Award - Colonel Dale Caveny, *Wildlife Enforcement Division Chief*, introduced General Walter Boomer, *United States Marine Corps (retired)* and former member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who presented the 2012 Shikar-Safari Award for International Officer of the Year to Captain Todd Radabaugh. General Boomer noted that Captain Radabaugh exemplifies the Marine Corps values of honor, courage and commitment. In addition to the award Radabaugh was presented with an insurance policy by the Shikar-Safari Club.

Special Presentation - National Fishing and Boating Week Lifetime License Winners – Chairman David Hoyle presented Corey Buchanan of Spruce Pine with a unified lifetime sportsman license, donated by Russell Rhodes of Neuse Sport Shop in Kinston. Buchanan won the grand prize in a state-wide drawing for participants in 39 kids’ “Fish for Fun” events held in celebration of 2013 National Fishing and Boating Week. Jaimee Yankow of Jacksonville won the first prize of a lifetime freshwater fishing license, donated by the North Carolina Chapter of Trout Unlimited. Chairman Hoyle thanked Craig Harper, Vice-President of Neuse Sport Shop, and Ned Jones of N.C. Trout Unlimited, for their continued support of the youth fishing programs state-wide.

Photo Break – Chairman Hoyle announced a short break for photographs to be taken. The meeting reconvened at 9:35 a.m. Chairman Hoyle reminded the assembly that the meeting was being audio-streamed live on the WRC website and will be available for download in the website archives.

Migratory Birds and Waterfowl Committee Meeting Report – *Committee Chairman* Berkley Skinner reported that the Migratory Birds and Waterfowl Committee met on Wednesday July 10. Discussion was held regarding **Exhibits C-3 and C-4**, proposed regulations frameworks for 2013-2014 early hunting seasons on certain migratory game birds and extended falconry season for webless migratory game bird species that will be considered in today’s meeting. Skinner indicated that motions will be brought from the Committee later in this meeting concerning early seasons, extended falconry seasons, and opening of dove season.

Joint Marine Resources/CRFL Committee Report – *Committee Vice Chairman* Joe Barker reported that the Joint Marine Resources/CRFL Committee met by teleconference on June 25, 2013 to discuss the Vandemere Boating Access project in Pamlico County. The acquisition phase of the project will occur over a three-year period.

Committee of the Whole Meeting Report – *Chairman* David Hoyle, Jr. asked *Executive Director* Gordon Myers to give a legislative report. Myers reported that HB 296 passed on July 10. Modest fee increases will allow the WRC to prepare for long-term funding and provide the tools to move the WRC toward self-sufficiency. The agency will have the authority to change its fees. Fees were last increased in 1987. Myers reported that black bear management was part of the Omnibus bill. The agency will be able to adopt rules to provide still hunters with the same opportunities to hunt bears with the aid of unprocessed bait. Purchase of a black bear stamp will identify bear hunters across the state. Myers thanked the Commissioners for their teamwork over the past months in providing accurate information about black bear management and fee increases and noted that it passed 106 to 5. Five counties passed resolutions in support of HB 296. John Litton Clark, *Big Game Committee Chair*, thanked the counties for their support and will work on rulemaking to become effective by the 2014 hunting season.

Agency Spotlight – Overview of the Wildlife Resources Commission Website – the Commission received an overview of the agency website that was redesigned in 2011 by Janice Underwood, *IT Director*. 2.5 million visitors have viewed the website each year since its redesign. Underwood stated that the mobile site was added in 2012. Underwood showed the assembly many of the features of the website, including the ability to purchase licenses on line, noting that 16-17% of licenses are being sold on line with \$4.4 million in revenue. Thirty-one thousand big game harvests have been reported on line. Game lands maps, boating access area locations, staff search tool, vessel registration, and audio webcasts of the Commission meetings are some of the other features of the website.

Inland Fisheries Update – the Commission received an update on the activities of the Inland Fisheries Division from Bob Curry, *Inland Fisheries Division Chief*. Curry announced that a local public hearing will be held on Wednesday, July 17, 2013 to receive comments on proposed administrative changes to inland fishing rules under 15A NCAC 10C .0305. Curry announced that 39 Fish for Fun events were held statewide during National Boating and Fishing Week. He thanked Neuse Sport Shop and North Carolina Trout Unlimited for their donations of lifetime fishing licenses as prizes in the drawings.

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*. Cobb announced that Commissioners have been given CDs that contain wildlife management updates including the status of mourning dove and woodcock populations, distribution of trumpeter swans, and press releases announcing the pine barrens tree frog and marbled salamander as the state amphibians. Dr. Cobb updated the Commission about the Morrow Mountain deer health check. Since the State Park was closed due to damage from a tropical storm, Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study (SCWDS) and N.C. Parks and Recreation worked during the first week in July and took ten adult deer. Full necropsies were conducted to determine herd health and carrying capacity. Reports will be provided to the Commission upon completion.

Proposed 2013-2014 Early Hunting Season Frameworks for Certain Migratory Game Birds- the Commission received frameworks, presented by Dr. Cobb in **Exhibit C-1**, outlining Department of the Interior frameworks for season lengths, shooting hours, bag and possession limits, and outside dates within which States may select seasons for hunting waterfowl and coots between the dates of September 1, 2013 and March 10, 2014.

Public Comments Regarding 2013-2014 Recommendations for Early Season Frameworks - the Commission received a summary from Dr. Cobb in **Exhibit C-2** of public comments by internet regarding the proposed Early Migratory Game Bird Season Frameworks.

Adoption of 2013-2014 Early Season Migratory Game Bird Season Frameworks – the Commission adopted 2013-2014 early seasons, bag limits, and shooting hours for webless migratory game birds and waterfowl seasons beginning prior to October 1, in **Exhibit C-3**:

- Mourning Dove and White-winged Dove - Sept. 2 - Oct.5 **[September 1 is on Sunday]; Nov. 25 - Nov. 30; and Dec. 13 - Jan. 11 [the Commission voted for shooting hours on all migratory birds to be from ½ hour before sunrise until sunset for the entire season, including doves];** daily bag 15
- King and Clapper Rails - Sept. 7 – Sept. 28, Oct. 5 – Nov. 21; daily bag 15
- Sora and Virginia Rails - Sept. 7 – Sept. 28, Oct. 5 - Nov. 21; daily bag 25
- Gallinule and Moorhens - Sept. 7 – Sept. 28, Oct. 5 - Nov. 21; daily bag 15
- Woodcock- Dec. 12 – Jan. 25; daily bag 3
- Common Snipe - Nov. 14 - Feb. 28; daily bag 8
- Canada Goose - Sept. 2 – 30 statewide **[September 1 is on Sunday];** daily bag 15; **[extend shooting hours to ½ hour after sunset; allow use of unplugged guns; allow use of electronic calls- these expanded methods are allowed only west of U.S. 17]**
- September Teal Season - Sept. 7 – 25 (East of U.S. 17 Only); daily bag 6

2013-2014 Extended Falconry Seasons for Webless Migratory Game Bird Species - the Commission adopted the following options for 2013-2014 Extended Falconry Seasons for webless species, presented by Dr. Cobb in **Exhibit C-4**:

- Mourning Doves: Oct. 12 – Nov. 16
- Rails, Gallinule, and Moorhens: Nov. 23 – Dec. 28:
- Woodcock: Nov. 4 – Dec. 7 and Feb. 1 – Feb. 28

The falconry daily bag limit is three permitted migratory game birds, singly or in the aggregate.

Election of Officers – Pursuant to NCGS 143-243, at the first scheduled meeting of the Commission after July 1 of each odd-numbered year the Wildlife Resources Commission shall select from among its membership a chairman and a vice chairman, who shall serve for terms of two years or until their successors are elected and qualified. Chairman David W. Hoyle, Jr. removed his name from consideration as Chairman. The Commission unanimously elected Jim Cogdell to serve as Chairman and John Litton Clark to serve as Vice Chairman.

Comments by the Chairman – *Chairman* David W. Hoyle, Jr. thanked N.C. Trout Unlimited and Neuse Sport Shop for their support of youth fishing. Hoyle recognized *Agency Counsel* Norman Young, who is retiring. Hoyle thanked agency staff and fellow Commissioners for their assistance to him as Chairman.

Comments by the Executive Director – *Executive Director* Gordon Myers expressed his gratitude to Chairman David Hoyle. He noted that Hoyle learned how to connect with sportsmen across the state and was dedicated to matching the requests of constituents with persons who could provide assistance in a timely and effective manner.

Adjournment –The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.