

EXHIBIT A

August 26, 2021



MINUTES

July 29, 2021

N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission Meeting Raleigh, North Carolina

Chairman David Hoyle called the July 29, 2021 N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. in the Commission Room at the agency's headquarters in Raleigh. Hoyle reminded everyone that the meeting is being audio streamed live and will be available at www.ncwildlife.org. He requested that everyone silence cell phones. Commissioners Nat Harris, Jim Cogdell, and Wes Seegars were absent.

Commissioner Steve Windham led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Jim Ruffin gave the invocation.

MANDATORY ETHICS INQUIRY

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

COMMISSIONER ATTENDANCE

David Hoyle, Jr.
Mike Johnson
Monty Crump
Brad Stanback
Tom Berry
Richard Edwards
Mark Craig
Steve Windham

Kelly Davis
John Coley
John Stone
Tommy Fonville
Jim Ruffin
Ray Clifton
Hayden Rogers
Landon Zimmer

VISITORS

Spenser Hodges – Neuse Sport Shop	Richard Cadwallader
Bobby Cox – Neuseway Nature Center	Kinsley Cadwallader
Ned Jones – NC Trout Unlimited	Skyler Cadwallader
Stacy Sereno – NC Farm Bureau	Giana Cadwallader

MINUTES OF JUNE 9, 2021 MEETING

On a motion by John Coley and second by Tom Berry, the Minutes of the June 9, 2021 meeting were approved as presented in **Exhibit A**.

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

RECOGNITION OF 2021 NATIONAL FISHING AND BOATING WEEK LICENSE WINNERS

Ms. Skyler Cadwallader, of Jacksonville, was presented with a Lifetime Freshwater Fishing License donated by the NC Council of Trout Unlimited, represented by Mr. Ned Jones. The Commission also announced that Ms. Natalie Moon, of Goldsboro, had won a Lifetime Sportsman License donated by Russell Rhodes of Neuse Sport Shop in Kinston and represented by Mr. Spenser Hodges. Both winners were drawn from youth participants at fishing events held during the 2021 National Fishing and Boating Week.

A short break was taken for photographs.

ADMINISTRATION

Dr. DP Singla, *Chief Financial Officer*, presented a status report in **Exhibit B** on the Wildlife Operating Fund and Capital Improvement Fund.

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

COMMITTEE MEETING REPORTS

Fisheries Committee Report – July 28, 2021 – Tommy Fonville, *Chair*, reported the Fisheries Committee met on July 28, 2021. Inland Fisheries Division Chief Christian Waters provided a summary of proposed fishing rule changes for the 2022-2023 annual rule-making cycle. There are five proposals addressing Public Mountain Trout Waters classifications and boundaries and one regarding the Hybrid Striped Bass size limit at Lake Norman. Christian shared an update on the ongoing design and permitting efforts for the Setzer State Fish Hatchery renovation project. Staff continue to work effectively with U.S. Forest Service on the required environmental review and special use permitting. The project timeline based on State Construction Office guidance has project construction occurring in 2023 and 2024. Christian reported on the 2021 harvest of Striped Bass in the Roanoke River which was followed by an

informative discussion. In the Roanoke River Management Area, an estimated 7,794 fish were harvested totaling 27,546 pounds which exceeded the allocated quota of 12,804 pounds. Staff are developing and will share at the next Fisheries Committee meeting options, including reducing the daily creel limit and the length of the season, to ensure harvest in 2022 is more aligned with the allocated quota.

Elk and Alligator Committee Report – July 28, 2021– Steve Windham, *Chair*, reported the Elk and Alligator Committee met on July 28, 2021. Staff met to discuss the fiscal analysis of estimated cost for the pilot Alligator Management Assistance Program idea. Staff estimated a five-year cost of \$149,540 per property enrolled and after much discussion the Committee decided not to move forward with the Alligator Management Assistance Program concept at this time.

Small Game and Wild Turkey Committee Meeting Report – July 28, 2021 – John Stone, *Chair*, reported the Small Game and Wild Turkey Committee met on July 28, 2021. The Committee met to discuss and review a few topics. First topic being the opportunity to provide for a spring grey squirrel season. The season is biologically appropriate in May and would provide an excellent opportunity to provide more access to this largely untapped abundant resource. The Committee voted to endorse this idea and instructed staff to move forward with the season in this year’s rules package. Next, a rule proposal regarding raccoons and one regarding tagging of furbearers was unanimous consent to move forward in the process. The benefits and drawbacks of establishing a small game focused game land within the state were also explored. The committee endorsed the idea of having small game focused areas on the game lands or perhaps an entire game land that was focused specifically on early successional habitat management with small game hunting opportunities prioritized. Staff will return in several months with ideas of current game lands on potential new game lands. Lastly, staff provided a brief update on the Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease, now detected in a domestic rabbit population in Georgia. This disease is moving east and has now been found in a neighboring state. NCDA has adopted a temporary rule to prohibit importation of domestic rabbits from RHDV-2 infected states. More information is available on this topic in the Wildlife Division Update.

Land Acquisitions and Property Committee Report – July 28, 2021 – Tom Berry, *Chair*, reported the Land Acquisitions and Property Committee met on July 28, 2021. The Committee received a presentation from Will Casola from North Carolina State University describing the results from a research project titled Determining Use, Economic Impacts, and Value of Game Lands in North Carolina. The Committee also reviewed and endorsed five Phase I and three Phase II land acquisitions. The Committee also heard five Other Property Matters and endorsed three of them. Recommendations were made from the Committee for the remaining two items, Perrigo Easement Request and Sandy Mush Game Land Renaming Request. Perrigo Easement Request, the Committee recommends a “before and after” appraisal be contracted by the State Property Office, be paid for by the landowner, and that the value be returned to the Committee for further discussion. Sandy Mush Game Land Renaming Request, the Committee recommended that the name remain Sandy Mush Game Land but that the significant contributions of Mr. Forrest Jarrett and Mr. Gene Hartman to establish the Sandy Mush Game Land be acknowledged by placing an informational kiosk located on the game land as well as in a story in Wildlife in North Carolina magazine. Lastly, the Committee reviewed and discussed potential changes to the game land management, boating access area, and public fishing area rules to be considered for presentation at the statewide public hearings in January.

Big Game Committee Report– July 28, 2021 – John Coley, *Chair*, reported the Big Game Committee met on July 28, 2021. The Big Game Committee received information regarding one deer proposal related to the western muzzle loading season either sex days and a black bear proposal related to the establishment on permit only bear hunts on 3 bear sanctuaries in the Mountain Bear Management Unit. Brad Howard presented several deer proposals brought forward by staff but are not currently planning to move forward. One of the proposals is intended to address the deer population issues in the northeastern part of the state where population trends continue to decline. The other proposals addressed western deer seasons and the potential to open opportunity in that region due to the continued increasing trends for deer on private lands. Staff recommend significant discussion and potential public interaction on these ideas throughout the next year. Lastly, Dr. Jon Shaw gave a review of the upcoming deer study that will begin in August. The project under contract with North Carolina State and graduate students have been hired and will be next month. Deer trapping is scheduled to start after the upcoming deer season.

Committee of the Whole Report – July 28, 2021– David Hoyle, Jr., *Chair*, reported the Committee met on July 28, 2021. The committee reviewed potential rule proposals for the 2022-2023 season, Notice of Text for technical changes to Hunting and Trapping and Inland Fishing Regulations, and public comments of proposed rules for Endangered and Threatened Species, Inland Fishing Regulations, and no wake zones on High Rock Lake and Badin Lake. The Committee received an update on the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act (RAWA) from Habitat Conservation Division Chief Shannon Deaton. Shannon reported that S. 2372, the Senate’s version of RAWA was introduced last week joining HR. 2773, the House version of RAWA which was introduced April 22nd. Director Ingram suggested the Commission update their 2019 resolution of support. The Committee agreed and asked Director Ingram to prepare a draft resolution for consideration.

Motion from Committee of the Whole - Director Ingram presented the updated RAWA resolution, and on a motion by Steve Windham and a second by John Coley, the commission approved the RAWA resolution.

AGENCY SPOTLIGHT – Engaging North Carolina’s Trout Anglers and Other Stakeholders to Help Conserve Eastern Hellbenders

Lori Williams, Wildlife Biologist in the Wildlife Management Division, presented a spotlight on the NCWRC’s engagement of citizen scientists, particularly trout anglers, in Eastern Hellbender outreach efforts for over a decade. These efforts include in-person interaction with the public and conservation messaging through a variety of print and digital media. Goals are to increase public awareness about hellbenders, to dispel common misconceptions about the species, and to ask anglers, recreationists, and landowners to report their hellbender observations and encounters. Through 2017, staff received over 200 verified hellbender reports representing 56 individual streams (including seven that were previously unknown for hellbenders), greatly contributing to our knowledge of species distribution in western NC. The resource overlap of trout and hellbenders, both with the same habitat requirements of clean, cool, well-oxygenated mountain streams with abundant rock cover, provides a great opportunity to utilize trout anglers to provide critical information on hellbender distribution and can serve as an example of opportunities to engage hunters and anglers in citizen science efforts.

LAND AND WATER ACCESS DIVISION

Land Acquisitions and Property Matters

Phase II Land Acquisitions – On a motion by Tom Berry and second by Mike Johnson, the Commission adopted the staff recommendations presented by Brian McRae, *Land and Water Access Division Chief*, in **Exhibits D-1, D-2, and D-3**.

- Hawkins Tract – Caldwell County (D-1)
- Handy Tract – Alleghany County (D-2)
- Three Top Tract – Ashe County (D-3)

Other Property Matters – on a motion by Tom Berry and second by Tommy Fonville, the Commission approved staff recommendations for other property matters – *Brian McRae (Exhibits E-1 and E-2)*:

- Texas Plantation House and Lot – Consider donating the house and 1.28-acre lot a Texas Plantation Game Land to Tyrrell County to refurbish, repurpose and maintain the house and property (E-1).
- Lake Rim Easement Request – Consider conveyance of a Temporary Construction Easement and Permanent Utility Easement to Fayetteville Public Works Commission near Lake Rim in Cumberland County (E-2).

On a motion by Tom Berry and second by Mike Johnson, the Commission tabled a permanent right-of-way easement request at Needmore Game Land to a private property owner until a before and after appraisal is performed and the potential easement value is brought back to the Land Acquisition and Property Committee for further discussion, presented by *Brian McRae*, in **(Exhibit E-3)**:

- Perrigo Easement Request – Consider conveyance of a permanent right-of-way easement at Needmore Game Land to a private property owner (E-3).

On a motion by Brad Stanback and second by Hayden Rogers, the Commission voted in favor of placing an informational kiosk located on the Sandy Mush Game Land as well as a story in Wildlife in North Carolina magazine detailing significant contributions of Mr. Forrest Jarrett and Mr. Gene Hartman in lieu of renaming the Sandy Mush Game Lands after them, presented by *Brian McRae*, in **(Exhibit E-4)**:

- Renaming of Sandy Mush Game Land – Consider a request by Representative Tim Moffitt to rename Sandy Mush Game Land to the Jarrett-Hartman Game Land (E-4).

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

RULEMAKING

Rulemaking Notice of Text – 15A NCAC 10B – Hunting and Trapping– On a motion by Monty Crump and second by John Coley the Commission approved publishing Notice of Text in the *NC Register* with a public hearing and open comment period, for proposed technical changes and re Adoption of rules presented by *Brad Howard, Wildlife Management Division Chief (Exhibit F)*

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

Rulemaking Notice of Text – 15A NCAC 10C – Inland Fishing Regulations – On a motion by Tommy Fonville and second by Monty Crump, the Commission approved publishing Notice of Text in the *NC Register* with a public hearing and open comment period, for proposed technical changes and readoption of rules presented by *Christian Waters, Inland Fisheries Division Chief* – **(Exhibit G)**

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

Adoption – 15A NCAC 10I – Endangered and Threatened Species –The Commission reviewed public comments **(EXHIBIT H-1)** and, on a motion by Hayden Rogers and second by Landon Zimmer, adopted amendments to 15A NCAC **(EXHIBIT H-2)** presented by *Todd Ewing, Aquatic Wildlife Diversity Program Manager*

Exhibits H-1 and H-2 are incorporated into the official record of this meeting.

Adoption – 15A NCAC 10C – Inland Fishing Regulations – The Commission reviewed public comments **(EXHIBIT H-1)** and, on a motion by Mike Johnson and second by Kelly Davis, adopted rules for Game Fish, Primary Nursery Areas, and Anadromous Fish Spawning Area **(EXHIBIT I-2)** presented by *Christian Waters*

Exhibits I-1 and I-2 are incorporated into the official record of this meeting.

WATER SAFETY RULEMAKING

The Commission reviewed public comments **(EXHIBITS J-1, K-1, and L-1)** and, on a motion by Ray Clifton and second by Mike Johnson, voted on final adoption of **EXHIBITS J-2, K-2, and L-2** presented by *Carrie Ruhlman, Rulemaking Coordinator*:

Adoption – 15A NCAC 10F .0329 – Rowan County –the Commission adopted an extension of the no-wake zone at Tamarac Shores Marina on High Rock Lake **(EXHIBIT J-2)**

Adoption – 15A NCAC 10F .0317 – Stanly County – the Commission adopted an extension of the no-wake zone within 50 yards of the railroad trestle on Badin Lake **(EXHIBIT K-2)**

Adoption – 15A NCAC 10F .0327 – Montgomery County – the Commission adopted an extension of the no-wake zone within 50 yards of the Old North State Marina fuel dock **(EXHIBIT L-2)**

EXHIBITS J-1, J-2, K-1, K-2, L-1, and L-2 are incorporated into the official record of this meeting.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Vote for Vice Chairman

On a motion by John Coley and a second by Steve Windham, the Commission elected Commissioner Tommy Fonville as Vice Chairman for a term of two years or until successor is elected and qualified pursuant to NCGS §143-243.

Vote for Chairman

On a motion by Steve Windham and a second by Kelly Davis, the Commission elected Commissioner Monty Crump as Chairman for a term of two years or until successor is elected and qualified pursuant to NCGS §143-243.

COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN


Chairman Hoyle presented Mike Johnson and Richard Edwards a plaque honoring their years of dedication to and protection of the public trust resource as a commissioner. He congratulated newly elected Chairman Crump and Vice Chairman Fonville. Lastly, Hoyle expressed his appreciation to his family, the board, and staff for their support the last two years as he served as Chairman.

COMMENTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Executive Director Ingram thanked Mike Johnson and Richard Edwards for their service and explained they will both be missed on the board. With Covid-19 restrictions lifted, he expressed how important it was to be able to open the meetings back up for public attendance and shared his appreciation for their involvement. He thanked staff and commissioners for their work on the committee meetings and presentations. Lastly, he congratulated newly elected Chairman Crump and Vice Chairman Fonville and stated he is looking forward to working with them both.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the WRC meeting was adjourned at 10:33 a.m.
All exhibits are incorporated into the official record of this meeting by reference and are filed with the minutes.



Monty Crump, Chairman
August 26, 2021
Date



Cameron Ingram, Executive Director
August 26, 2021
Date