

**NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION**  
**Quarterly Meeting**  
**April 23, 2017 – North Bend State Park**  
**M I N U T E S**

The quarterly meeting of the Natural Resources Commission was held on Sunday, April 23, 2017 at North Bend State Park, Cairo, West Virginia. The following individuals attended:

**NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSIONERS**

Jeffrey S. Bowers  
David M. Milne  
Kenneth R. Wilson  
Peter L. Cuffaro  
Byron K. Chambers  
Thomas O. Dotson  
Gregory K. Burnette

**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE**

Delegate Bill Hamilton, Chairman, Natural Resources Committee – District 45

**DIVISION OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

Stephen S. McDaniel, Director (Presiding), South Charleston, WV  
Lysti Looney, Director's Office (Recording Secretary), South Charleston, WV  
Emily Fleming, Director's Office, South Charleston, WV  
Paul Johansen, Wildlife Resources, South Charleston, WV  
Jerry Jenkins, Law Enforcement, South Charleston, WV  
Bret Preston, Wildlife Resources, South Charleston, WV  
Zack Brown, Wildlife Resources, South Charleston, WV  
Chris Ryan, Wildlife Resources, WV University, Morgantown, WV  
Scott Warner, Wildlife Resources, South Charleston, WV

Gary Foster, Wildlife Resources, South Charleston/Elkins, WV  
Keith Krantz, Wildlife Resources, Elkins, WV  
Jim Crum, Wildlife Resources, Elkins, WV  
Colin Carpenter, Wildlife Resources, Beckley, WV  
Allen Phillips, Law Enforcement, Parkersburg, WV  
Ian Sweet, Law Enforcement, Parkersburg, WV  
Scott Morrison, Wildlife Resources, Parkersburg, WV  
Chris O'Bara, Wildlife Resources, South Charleston, WV  
Steve Rauch, Wildlife Resources, Farmington, WV  
Mike Peters, Wildlife Resources, Farmington, WV

### **ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

Larry Lawson, Belle, WV  
Justin Hettick, West Virginia Bowhunters Association, Morgantown, WV  
Cory Boothe, Quinwood, WV  
Scott Wilson, National Wild Turkey Federation, Clarksburg, WV  
Frank Hughes, Elizabeth, WV  
Ed McMinn, West Virginia Bowhunters Association, South Charleston, W V  
Jeremy Preston, Mountaineer Quality Deer Management Association, Fairmont,  
WV  
John Pingley, West Virginia Trappers Association, Riverton, WV  
Don Radcliff, West Virginia Bear Hunters Association, Elkview, WV  
Brad Toler, Baileysville Sportsmen Club, Clear Fork, WV  
Steve Basnett  
Emily Basnett  
Amy Hettick, Morgantown, WV  
Deloris Dotson, Lewisburg, WV  
Sherry Moore, Little Hocking, OH  
Eric Moore, Lowell, OH

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Director Stephen McDaniel called the meeting to order at approximately 1:00 p.m. Director McDaniel introduced himself, welcomed everyone to the meeting, and asked the commissioners to introduce themselves and state the county in which they reside.

Director McDaniel presented Certificate of Award for outstanding work to Jim Moore, President of Chapter 9 West Virginia Muskies, Inc. DNR would like to thank Jim for his years of service directed at musky management in West Virginia and for his leadership in building an effective and positive relationship with our agency to further efforts for musky fishing and conservation.

Director McDaniel introduced Steve Jones, Superintendent of North Bend State Park.

Director McDaniel introduced Delegate Bill Hamilton, Chairman of Natural Resources Committee, District 45

### **RATIFICATION OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Bowers made a **MOTION** to approve the minutes of the February 12, 2017 meeting of the Natural Resources Commission as submitted. Commissioner Wilson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

John Pingley, West Virginia Trappers Association, was elected in September as president. He thanked the DNR for the close working relationship between the DNR and WVTA.

Don Radcliff, West Virginia Bear Hunters Association, stated in 1969, it is estimated there were five hundred (500) bears in West Virginia. Black bear sanctuary was formed and now it is estimated there are fifteen thousand (15,000) black bears in the state. He and the WVBHA are against the commercialization of bear hunting. Understands there is a bear problem in the elk area and asked that DNR gives the WVBHA time and they will lower the bear population in the area.

Ed McMinn, commended DNR staff on the Archery in the Schools Tournament. Pleased that the Sunday hunting bill passed and is statewide but would have liked to have seen WMAs included. Mr. McMinn stated that he is pleased the Law Enforcement NRPO's pay raise was passed in the Legislature; however, would also like to see wildlife biologists receive raise. He is pleased that the Department of Agriculture has strengthened some rules regarding cervid transportation being brought in West Virginia areas with CWD.

(Attachment A). Ed stated that approximately 72% of hunters are opposed to antler restrictions.

Corey Boothe, stated no one wants Legislature setting seasons, but we need to work together. We need to focus on today's consumer – need to look at APR's. Commissioner Burnette thanked Mr. Boothe for his work on the Sunday Hunting legislation.

Frank Hughes, stated it seems every year we are hearing the antlerless deer harvest is down – need to modify regulations to increase antlerless harvest. Feels there should be a limit of two bucks per year and a restriction on spike bucks.

Brad Toler, Baileysville Sportsmen's Club, stated he wants to continue the no gun season in the four southern counties (Logan, McDowell, Mingo and Wyoming). Feels the trapping season should be extended on coyote, there are too many. Stated Morris Creek catch & release is too dangerous for DNR to stock - the Baileysville Sportsmen's Club has stocked for years and will continue to do so as well as maintain and conduct cleanups. Would like for Director McDaniel and Jim Hedrick to come and see what they have done.

Justin Hettick, President, West Virginia Bowhunters Association, thanked Chris Ryan and Colin Carpenter for the bear den visit - very educational. Feels DNR is leaving money on the table by not selling performance points on elk, feels this could pay for the elk. Mr. Hettick stated the association is leaving it up to individual members for their stance on the better buck movement. The association has always relied on the DNR biologist 's recommendations. Justin stated that the WVBA is in favor of archery-only regulations in southern four counties. Does not want Legislature setting rules and seasons.

Jeremy Preston, President, Mountaineer Quality Deer Management Association (MQDMA), feels there should be a limit on bucks or APRs for better bucks. MQDMA does appreciate and supports DNR efforts. Stated there is a volunteer day at the Snake Hill WMA - planning to rehabilitate fruit tree orchards. The association wants deer regulation proposals that they can back and support. West Virginia hunters harvest more bucks than does and that ratio needs to change.

Amy Hettick, participated in the Becoming an Outdoors Woman event which was very organized and educational. There was a very diverse group of women that attended the event. Suggested associations offer scholarships for women to attend this event.

## **SUMMARY of the 2017 SECTIONAL MEETINGS**

Keith Krantz, reviewed the results of the twelve sectional meetings which were held on March 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> across the state. (Attachment B)

### **2017 PROPOSED STATE PARK DEER HUNTS**

Gary Foster explained the controlled hunts for the fall Of 2017 at four state park facilities. Blennerhassett Island will hold a hunt on September 25<sup>th</sup> and October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Pipestem State Park, October 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>. Cacapon State Park, November 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> and North Bend State Park, November 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>. Applicants may go to the Electronic Licensing System (ELS) to complete an application. There are some no shows and applicants can come on the day of the hunt to fill a no-show position. DNR would need a legislative rule to make change to charge a non-applicable fee. Discussing the possibility of package deals at the parks on camping or lodging. There were approximately 23 deer harvested on state parks in 2016 and approximately 56 in 2015.

### **APPROVE 2017 BIG GAME HUNTING REGULATIONS**

Gary Foster reviewed the 2017 proposed Antlerless Deer Season regulations. (Attachment C - Tab 1)

Commissioner Dotson made a **MOTION** to approve the 2017 Big Game Hunting regulations as submitted. Commissioner Burnette seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Gary Foster announced that Michael Peters has been promoted to small game and game bird biologist.

Chris Ryan reviewed the 2017 Proposed Black Bear Season regulations – he also stated Colin Carpenter is working on a new bear management plan. Chris stated that West Virginia ranks in the top five for bear harvest in the United States. Chris stated there is going to be a phone survey on black bear once all approvals have been completed (Attachment C - Tab 3)

Commissioner Bowers made a **MOTION** to approve the 2017 Black Bear Season regulations as submitted. Commissioner Milne seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Gary Foster reviewed the 2017 proposed Antlerless Deer Season regulations on Public

Lands. (Attachment C – Tab 2)

Commissioner Bowers made a **MOTION** to approve the Antlerless Deer Season (public lands) regulations as submitted. Commissioner Wilson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

### **2017 – 2018 Proposed Big Game Regulations**

Chris Ryan reviewed the proposed 2017 – 2018 Big Game Hunting Regulations. Stated the counties listed in bold are counties which have changes. (Attachment C -Tab 4)

Commissioner Milne made a **MOTION** to approve the 2017 – 2018 Big Game Regulations as submitted. Commissioner Burnette seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

### **2018-2019 Hunting and Trapping Regulations**

Chris Ryan reviewed the proposed 2018-2019 Hunting and Trapping Season regulations. (Attachment C - Tab 5)

### **PROPOSED 2018 FISHING REGULATIONS**

Bret Preston reviewed the proposed 2018 fishing regulations, which will be voted on at the July 2017 commissioner meeting. (Attachment D)

Director McDaniel stated HB473 (permitting collection and sale of naturally shed deer antlers) bill passed legislation this past session and is for deer sheds and does not include elk sheds. Director would like to collect elk sheds and auction off to generate money for elk program.

Director McDaniel thanked everyone for their support and help on the Sunday Hunting bill SB345 (allowing certain hunting and trapping on private lands on Sundays) that passed in the legislature this session.

Director McDaniel stated West Virginia is a diverse State and has asked Commissioner Milne and Commissioner Cuffaro to work with wildlife resources and law enforcement staff to see if they can streamline the regulations.

Commissioner Dotson discussed the deer hunting regulations in Illinois (limited gun season and \$350 deer tag) and stated that a lot of thought has to go into deer

management decisions.

**NEXT MEETING DATE AND PLACE**

July 23, 2017, Cacapon Resort State Park, Berkeley Springs, WV

**ADJOURN**

Commissioner Bowers made a **MOTION** to adjourn. Commissioner Milne seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:20 p.m.