

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
Quarterly Meeting
July 17, 2016
M I N U T E S

The quarterly meeting of the Natural Resources Commission was held on Sunday, July 17, 2016 at Canaan Valley Resort State Park, Davis, West Virginia. The following individuals attended:

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSIONERS

Jeffrey S. Bowers
David M. Milne
Kenneth R. Wilson
Byron Chambers
Peter Cuffaro
Gregory Burnette
Thomas Dotson, was not in attendance

LEGISLATORS

Chairman Bill Hamilton, House Natural Resources Committee

DIVISION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Robert A. Fala, Director (Presiding)
Lysti Looney, Director's Office (Recording Secretary)
Emily Fleming, Director's Office, South Charleston
Scott Warner, Wildlife Resources, South Charleston
Jerry Jenkins, Law Enforcement, South Charleston
Bret Preston, Wildlife Resources, South Charleston
Chris Ryan, Wildlife Resources, South Charleston
Gary Foster, Wildlife Resources, Elkins/South Charleston
Keith Krantz, Wildlife Resources, Elkins
Jim Crum, Wildlife Resources, Elkins
Ryan Schafer, Law Enforcement, Webster County

David Wellman, Wildlife Resources, Farmington
Dustin Smith, Wildlife Resources, Farmington
Cliff Brown, Wildlife Resources, Elkins
David James, Law Enforcement, French Creek
Bob Waybright, Law Enforcement, Farmington
Stan Beafore, Parks & Recreations, Davis
Mike Peters, Wildlife Resources, Farmington
Scott Carr, Wildlife Resources, Farmington
Mike Willenbarg, Law Enforcement, Franklin
Jim Fregonara, Wildlife Resources, Elkins
Josh Prickett, Law Enforcement
Chris Fitzwater, Law Enforcement
Ian Sweet, Law Enforcement
Kevin Raymond, Law Enforcement
Doug Benson, Law Enforcement, French Creek
Steve Antolini, Law Enforcement, Farmington

ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Cully McCurdy, National Wildlife Turkey Federation
Amy Heltick, West Virginia Bowhunters Association
Larry Lawson
Ed McMinn, West Virginia Bowhunters Association
Jerod Harman, West Virginia Wildlife Federation
Tracy Bowser, West Virginia Wildlife Federation
Dick Uchic

CALL TO ORDER

Director Robert Fala called the meeting to order at approximately 1:00 p.m. Director Fala welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked the commissioners to introduce themselves and to state the county in which they reside. In addition, he requested the DNR staff and the public introduce themselves. Director Fala introduced and thanked Chairman Bill Hamilton for attending.

Colonel Jerry Jenkins presented LIFESAVING AWARD to the following officers:

- Officer Ryan M. Schafer, rescued boater from Elk River in Webster County.

- Officers Tanner Collins and Kevin Raymond rescued older man that had fallen in New Creek Lake, Grant County.
- Officers Ian Sweet and Christopher Fitzwater rescued two females from the boat in which they were occupying, which had overturned and was in the path of a coal barge.

Bret Preston, Assistant Chief of Fisheries Management, presented an Award of Appreciation to A & O Railroad and Carter Roag/Beech Mountain Railroad for efforts and contributions toward WV's trout stocking program. Bret also presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Jerod Harmon for his efforts in securing funding and developing the Stonewall Jackson Lake Vandalia Angler Access Trail.

RATIFICATION OF MINUTES

Commissioner Bowers made a **MOTION** to approve the minutes of the May 1, 2016 meeting of the Natural Resources Commission as submitted. Commissioner Wilson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Cully McCurdy, National Wild Turkey Federation Inc., stated that the NWTF has donated \$264,662.14 in support of habitat enhancement, \$325,117 for land purchases and numerous donations for other projects. Cully presented Director Fala with a donation check for \$50,000 to assist with the purchase of the Wapiti Woods LLC land acquisition project which will be incorporated into the Earl Ray Tomblin Wildlife Management Area.

Amy Hettick, Regional Representative for the West Virginia Bowhunters Association, spoke on the recent devastating floods that struck our state last month. The outpouring of support has been remarkable and stands as a testament to the hospitality and generosity of our friends and neighbors. In conversation with Gary Foster and Jeff McCrady, she was informed that the Wallback WMA suffered more than \$10,000 in damages from the flooding. The WVBA authorized Amy to purchase a new chest freezer and chainsaw for the Wallback WMA and will be discussing the specific equipment requirements with Jeff McCrady, with plans to purchase and deliver the items to the WMA in the coming weeks.

Dick Uchic, resident of Tucker County, spoke on the trout stocking at the Splash Dam in Thomas. He stated that it seems that all the trout are stocked from the ramp above the dam and that he would like to see trout stocked in the gradient water below the dam as

well.

Ed McMinn, welcomed Paul Johansen back from medical leave, and thanked the Natural Resources Police officers for their work and dedication. He also stated that the four southern counties (Logan, McDowell, Mingo and Wyoming Counties) should remain bow hunting only.

APPROVAL OF THE 2017-2018 Hunting and Trapping Regulations

Gary Foster thanked the West Virginia Bowhunters Association and the State Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation for their support and financial assistance. Gary reviewed the proposed 2017-2018 Hunting and Trapping Regulations (**Attachment A**). Commissioner Burnette asked about the Bobcat study in which Gary stated that the DNR has two students currently working on the bobcat project and that the fieldwork has been completed. Commissioner Wilson made a **MOTION** to approve regulations as submitted. Commissioner Bowers seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE 2017 FISHING REGULATIONS

Bret Preston reviewed the proposed 2017 fishing regulations (**Attachment B**). Commissioner Wilson made a **MOTION** to approve as submitted. Commissioner Milne seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

NEW WILDLIFE LICENSE PLATE PRESENTATION

Scott Warner introduced the two new vanity vehicle license plates (Brook Trout and the Eastern Blue Bird). Scott commented that the Division of Motor Vehicles was supportive in the process of the new license plates.

Commissioner Wilson made a **MOTION** that the Commission would like to recognize the Natural Resources Police Officers for their rescue and recovery efforts and their dedication during the recent floods. Commissioner Bowers seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Chambers thanked Colonel Jerry Jenkins and his officers for a job well done.

NEXT MEETING DATE AND PLACE

Director Fala stated the next commission meeting will be held on October 23, 2016 at the Chief Logan Lodge and Conference Center in Logan, WV.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Milne made a **MOTION** to adjourn. Commissioner Bowers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:00 p.m.