

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
Quarterly Meeting
Cacapon Resort State Park
July 23, 2017

M I N U T E S

The quarterly meeting of the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) was held on Sunday, July 23, 2017 at Cacapon Resort State Park, Berkeley Springs, West Virginia. The following individuals attended:

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSIONERS

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

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
Scott Warner, Wildlife Resources, South Charleston, WV
Gary Foster, Wildlife Resources, South Charleston/Elkins, WV
Keith Krantz, Wildlife Resources, Elkins, WV
Mike Peters, Wildlife Resources, Farmington, WV
Mark Scott, Wildlife Resources, Beckley, WV
Kieran O'Malley, Wildlife Resources, Elkins, WV

Bradley Robertson, Law Enforcement, Morgan County, WV
Mike Sibole, Law Enforcement, Berkeley County, WV
Kevin Oxenrider, Wildlife Resources, Romney, WV

ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Larry Lawson, Belle, WV
Bradley Noll, Excelsin Hunt Club, Hedgesville, WV
Justin Hettick, West Virginia Bowhunters Association, Morgantown, WV
Dave Truban, Morgantown, WV
Jerod Harman, West Virginia Wildlife Federation, West Virginia Bass Nation,
Buckhannon WV
Dana Brown, Bass Nation of West Virginia, Buckhannon, WV
Brenda Brown, Bass Nation of West Virginia, Buckhannon, WV
Lin Dunham, Cacapon State Park Foundation, Berkeley Springs, WV
Jay Dellinger, Hedgesville, WV

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 a Certificate of Appreciation to Dana Brown, in recognition of his efforts and contributions to West Virginia's youth through high school bass fishing teams. Mr. Brown is the Youth Director for the West Virginia BASS Nation. In that role, the youth tournament program has more than 40 school teams with more than 500 youth anglers participating. Mr. Brown also serves as Vice President for the West Virginia Wildlife Federation.

RATIFICATION OF MINUTES

Commissioner Wilson made a **MOTION** to approve the minutes of the April 23, 2017 meeting of the NRC as submitted. Commissioner Milne seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Larry Lawson, stated he has been attending the NRC meetings for a long time; the last

time a meeting was held at Cacapon SP was in 1980.

Brad Noll, thanked the NRC for coming to the eastern panhandle. He is pleased with the work Jim Hedrick, Fisheries Biologist has done as it relates to the fishery in the eastern panhandle. Mr. Noll stated he would like to see Sleepy Creek Wildlife Management Area shooting range reopened.

Justin Hettick, President, West Virginia Bowhunters Association, stated that the association is hosting a pig roast in cooperation with the WV Sportsman Caucus and would like to invite the commissioners, sportsman groups and DNR staff to attend. This will be a meet and greet event and will provide a good opportunity to visit and fellowship. The pig roast will be on September 17, 2017, at Coonskin Park, in Charleston.

Jarod Harman, President, WV Wildlife Federation and Conservation Director for WV Bass Nation announced that the National Hunting and Fishing Day Event will be held at Stonewall Jackson State Park on September 23 and 24, 2017. WV Bass Nation membership continues to grow, especially with youth. The size of boat access ramps/parking lots has been an issue at some tournament events.

Dana Brown, Youth Director, West Virginia BASS Nation stated there were 229 high school kids involved in youth club tournaments this past year. The youth fishing program continues to grow with 10 new schools showing interest in program this summer. Mr. Brown says that one of the challenges he is facing is that he cannot visit all the schools and is asking for volunteers, as well as boat captains and boats.

Lyn Dunnon, Cacapon State Park Foundation, appreciates Superintendent Scott Fortney, and Assistant Superintendent Kelly Smith, for their support on the park. Looking forward to the expansions at Cacapon but does not want to see this park privatized like other parks. The foundation has added a 50' x 24' education building to the Nature Center. Mr. Dunnon mentioned that trout are stocked in the middle of the week, kids cannot fish until weekends, and that all the fish are gone by the weekend - would like to see stocking on the weekends or later in the week.

REPORT ON REGULATION UPDATE

Director McDaniel asked Commissioner Milne and Commissioner Cuffaro, to serve on a committee to review and offer recommendations to revise the West Virginia Hunting and Trapping Regulations Summary. The committee met in Farmington and concluded

that overall the regulations are in general simplified as much as possible. Recommendations included: 1) positioning the license costs and hunting license requirements on opposite pages; 2) modifying the font colors on maps and tables to see if it would improve readability; 3) eliminating the split counties for the antlerless deer season regulations (Steve Rauch referred to Deer Committee for consideration); and 4) simplify wording. The committee also discussed allowing advertisements, which would reduce the cost of printing the regulations, as well as having a Q & A page, which might not be cost effective. The committee feels one problem is that people when purchasing license online do not receive a copy of the regulations and subsequently do not read the regulations. Commission Milne said they would be having another meeting to discuss more issues. Commissioner Burnette recommended that online license buyers check a box stating that they agree to read the hunting regulations as part of their online license purchase.

Gary Foster stated that there are a couple of errors in the 2017-2018 Hunting and Trapping Regulations and a news release will be issued to make hunters aware of the errors.

APPROVAL OF THE 2018-2019 HUNTING AND TRAPPING REGULATIONS

Mike Peters reviewed the proposed small game hunting and trapping regulations for 2018-2019. Commissioner Milne made a **MOTION** to approve as submitted. Commission Wilson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Attachment A

APPROVAL OF THE 2018 FISHING REGULATIONS

Mark Scott reviewed the proposed regulations. Commissioner Bowers made a **MOTION** to approve as submitted. Commissioner Brunette seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Attachment B

AGENCY COMMENTS

Paul Johansen discussed the Blue-Ribbon Panel on sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources. The bipartisan Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish & Wildlife Resources will recommend funding solutions and Congressional policy options that mutually benefit America's industries, agencies and our shared fish, wildlife and economic heritage. Paul Johansen stated he has prepared to present to the Commissioners a Draft Resolution – West Virginia Natural Resources Commission

Supporting recommendations of the Blue-Ribbon panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources. Scott Warner explained this would be significant to our agency and that funding for Wildlife Diversity programs has always been a problem. The funds are proposed to come from 10% of the oil and gas royalties generated on federal lands, which would account for approximately 1.3 billion dollars nationwide to support fish and wildlife services. If approved, the majority of their funding would support programs being administered by DNR Wildlife Diversity Program; however, funding would also support habitat work and stream restoration efforts. There are currently 20 states that have committed to this resolution. DNR feels that with this resolution we are informing Capitol Hill that WVDNR is in support of this initiative. If the NRC agrees with this resolution, an original will be prepared and each commissioner will sign. Commissioner Wilson made a **MOTION** to support the resolution. Commissioner Bowers seconded the motion. Motion passed. Commissioner Cuffaro and Commissioner Dotson abstained due to the fact they were participating via phone and had not seen the draft resolution. Attachment C & D

Director McDaniel provided an agency update. Renovations and upgrades for Cacapon Resort State Park are moving forward. Bonds will be sold in October 2017 and once sold the project will be put out for bid, with groundbreaking expected to occur in the spring of 2018. Director McDaniel stated a round table meeting was held at Stonewall Resort State Park with DNR staff and sportsmen's groups discussing challenges that DNR and the hunting and fishing community are facing. The lack of public lands and the need to have mentors for our youth were two issues discussed at the meeting. A second meeting will be held in the southern part of the state in the fall of 2017.

NEXT MEETING DATE AND PLACE

October 22, 2017, Chief Logan Lodge and Conference Center, Logan, WV.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Milne made a **MOTION** to adjourn. Commissioner Bowers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:10 p.m.

Proposed Opening and Closing Dates for the 2018-2019 Hunting and Trapping Seasons		
Species	Opening & Closing Dates	Comments/Changes
Squirrel	Sept. 8, 2018 - Feb. 28, 2019	
Squirrel (Youth)	Sept. 1, 2018	
Raccoon (Hunting)	Oct. 13, 2018 - Feb. 28, 2019	
Raccoon (Trapping)	Nov. 3, 2018 - Feb. 28, 2019	
Ruffed Grouse	Oct. 13, 2018 - Feb. 28, 2019	
Quail	Nov. 3, 2018 - Jan. 5, 2019	
Rabbit	Nov. 3, 2018 - Feb. 28, 2019	
Snowshoe Hare	Nov. 3, 2018 - Feb. 28, 2019	
Ring-necked Pheasant (Statewide) (Hillcrest WMA)	Nov. 3, 2018 - Jan. 5, 2019 Nov. 10, 2018 - Dec. 1, 2018	
Fox (Hunting & Trapping) (Hunting at night with artificial light)	Nov. 3, 2018 - Feb. 28, 2019 Jan. 1, 2019 - Feb. 28, 2019	
Bobcat (Hunting & Trapping)	Nov. 3, 2018 - Feb. 28, 2019	
Mink/Muskrat (Trapping)	Nov. 3, 2018 - Feb. 28, 2019	
Fisher (Trapping)	Nov. 3, 2018 - Jan. 31, 2019	
Beaver (Trapping)	Nov. 3, 2018 - Mar. 31, 2019	
Otter (Trapping)	Nov. 3, 2018 - Feb. 28, 2019	
Crow (Hunting)	Oct. 1, 2018 - Nov. 17, 2018 Jan. 1, 2019 - Mar. 2, 2019	
Skunk/Opossum/Coyote/Weasel/ Woodchuck/English Sparrow/European Starling/Pigeon (Hunting)	Continuous Open Season	
Coyote (Hunting at night with artificial light)	Jan. 1, 2019 - July 31, 2019	
Skunk/Opossum/Coyote/Weasel (Trapping)	Nov. 3, 2018 - Feb. 28, 2019	
Elk, Song & Insectivorous Birds, Hawks, Owls, Falcons & Eagles	No Open Season	

WE BELIEVE

That collaboration—not regulation—is the best path toward securing a future where fish and wildlife and natural resource-based enterprise thrive.

Industries, businesses and landowners nationwide are facing ever-mounting pressures from new and potential land use regulations that impact their capacities to provide a growing

world with food, fiber, energy and other essential commodities.

At the same time, the number of species petitioned for federal endangered species listing has increased by more than 1,000% over the last five years. Thousands of additional species could be listed in the coming years—leading to more expensive recovery attempts; reduced access; increased regulation and compliance costs; and further polarization of business, energy, conservation and environmental interests.

It costs taxpayers millions of dollars each year to try to save a single species. That price tag does not even include the significant financial and regulatory consequences for natural resource-dependent businesses or the resulting economic impacts.

The key is to keep species off the list altogether. State Wildlife Action Plans are the blueprints state fish and wildlife agencies have developed to conserve the 12,000 species that are at risk of federal endangered species listing. Yet, Congress has repeatedly cut the primary source of funding to implement these congressionally mandated plans—the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program.



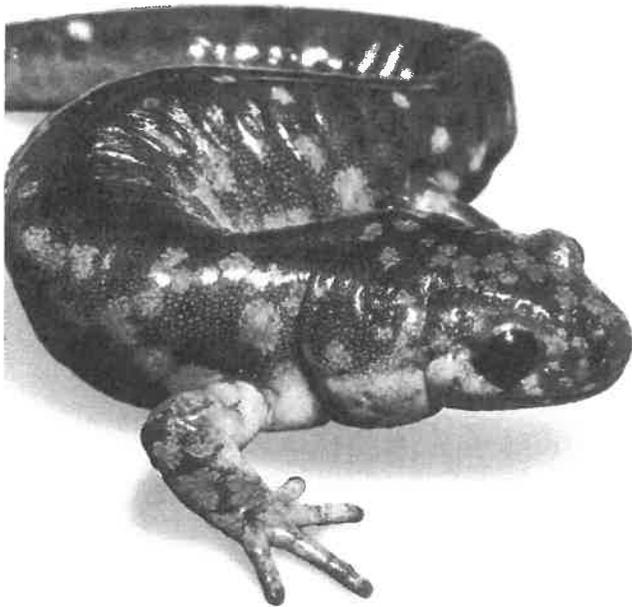
LARRY KRUCHENBERG © AFWA 2010

The number of species petitioned for federal endangered species listing has increased by more than 1,000% over the last five years and thousands of additional species could be listed in the coming years.

JESSE LEE WARD PHOTO



WE BELIEVE That it's time to launch the *Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish & Wildlife Resources.*



We need action now to sustainably fund conservation of the full array of fish and wildlife to maintain balance between natural resource diversity and economic development.

The 50 state fish and wildlife agencies, through its Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies, are inviting 20 visionary leaders representing the outdoor recreation retail and manufacturing sector, the energy industry, conservation organizations and sportsmen's groups to chart a course toward a resource-full future.

The bipartisan Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish & Wildlife Resources will recommend funding solutions and Congressional policy options that mutually benefit America's industries, agencies and our shared fish, wildlife and economic heritage.

WE BELIEVE

That by working together, we can advance a solution for funding a 21st century model of conservation.

In the 1930s, the times were as economically bleak as the country had ever known, and the bounty of wildlife that once graced the landscape was rapidly dwindling. The need for wildlife restoration was urgent; but funding was scarce.

The hunting and shooting sports industries united with state fish and wildlife interests and agencies to advance a national funding solution to restore hundreds of imperiled game species such as elk, deer, wild turkeys and waterfowl by creating the bold integrated system supporting what we now call the "North American Model of Conservation". The sport fishing and boating industries followed suit to establish a similar funding model for restoring depleted striped bass, trout and other important game fish.

This historic collaboration between private industry, hunters and anglers, and state fish and wildlife agencies is unparalleled in the world. And, it is this remarkable partnership that forms the backbone of today's \$260 billion wildlife-related recreation market force.

Now is the time to revive this kind of innovation through partnership. Urgent work remains to safeguard the 95% of all species that are neither hunted nor fished, and the stakes are high for all of us.



Members of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish & Wildlife Resources will use their insight, ingenuity and personal passion for the outdoors to move forward a 21st century system of funding conservation that will generate both a rich conservation legacy and a vibrant economic future.

It is time to create certainty for both industry and conservation by building systems of conservation and not wasting our precious resources of time and energy haggling over project by project mitigation.

It's time for new visions, it is time for the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources. For more information about the Blue Ribbon Commission on Sustaining America's Diverse Wildlife Resources, contact Ron Regan, Executive Director for the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies, at rregan@fishwildlife.org or call 202/838-3474.



Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
1100 First Street, NE, Suite 825
Washington, DC 20002
202/838-3474 • www.fishwildlife.org

The Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies – the organization that represents North America's fish and wildlife agencies—promotes sound resource management and conservation, and has been speaking on important fish and wildlife issues since 1902.