



Special Telecommunication Commission Meeting

*Monday, July 29, 2019
1:00 p.m.*

**1505 Eastover Drive
Jackson, MS 39211**

MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, & PARKS

Monday, July 29, 2019

1 p.m.

1505 Eastover Drive, Jackson, MS

MINUTES OF SPECIAL TELECONFERENCE MEETING

PRESENT VIA TELEPHONE: Chairman Scott Coopwood, Commissioners Robert Taylor, Clay Wagner, Bill F. Cossar, and Billy Mounger.

Among the MDWFP staff attending were: Dr. Sam Polles, Executive Director; Robert Cook, Deputy Executive Director; Michael Bolden, Jennifer Head, Russ Walsh, and Doug Mann, Special Assistant Attorney General.

Noted for the Record: Attached to these minutes are copies of the Special Teleconference Meeting Notices, which were posted three hours prior to the meeting on the doors of the MDWFP office building located at 1505 Eastover Drive, Jackson, MS, and on the MDWFP website and the Mississippi Open Meetings website, as per the provisions of the Mississippi Open Meetings Act.

Having determined that a quorum was present, the Chairman opened the meeting.

Chairman Coopwood requested this Special Meeting of the Commission for the purpose of discussing the agency's relationship with the Mississippi Wildlife Federation, a natural resource conservation non-governmental organization. More specifically, the Chairman wished to discuss the pending Wildlife Extravaganza, sponsored by the Federation, and the Commission's position on the backwater flooding in the Yazoo and Sunflower River drainages, in light of the Commission's support for an initiative to reinstate the building of the Yazoo Backwater Pump Project. In 2008, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) effectively vetoed the Yazoo Backwater Pump Project by finding that the pumps would result in a loss of critical wetlands and loss of habitat for wild animals. Historically, the Mississippi Wildlife Federation has also opposed the Yazoo Backwater Pump Project, for reasons similar to those expressed by the EPA.

Commissioner Taylor stated that there were three reasons for this meeting today; one, for clarification of the Commission's stand on the pumps; two, the negative comment by the Mississippi Wildlife Federation in its "Yazoo Pumps Rider" stating that the pumps would drain and damage up to 200,000 acres of ecologically rich wetlands in the Mississippi Delta; and three, social media commentary from this past weekend, that the Mississippi Wildlife Federation is blocking participation in the Wildlife Extravaganza this weekend to a young woman who is a victim of the Delta flooding and is promoting resurrecting the Yazoo Backwater Pump Project.

Executive Director Polles stated that MDWFP has played a major part in the Federation's "Mississippi Wildlife Extravaganza" event since it was first established. MDWFP has always provided staff members

to help set up, answer questions, sell licenses, staff a large booth, and provide "sweat" equity. The implications of this controversy are serious, since the public often thinks the "Wildlife Extravaganza" is an MDWFP event, and it is not. MDWFP also helps with six more Federation events in addition to the "Wildlife Extravaganza." Dr. Polles emphasized that a decision needs to be made today whether the MDWFP needs to distance itself from the Federation at this time or not, in order to notify the Wildlife Federation should the Commission vote to withdraw from the Extravaganza event to be held four days from today.

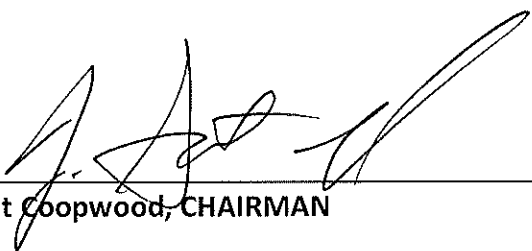
Discussion followed.

ACTION: Commissioner Bill Cossar made a motion to specify that the MDWFP is an agency of the State of Mississippi and not part of the Mississippi Wildlife Federation, and because of differences on sensitive issues, MDWFP should withdraw from participating in the "Mississippi Wildlife Extravaganza," and all future Federation events, until further notice. Commissioner Taylor seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the Commission.

Executive Director stated that a Press Release will be prepared today to reflect the actions of the Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

ACTION: There being no further business before the Commission, Chairman Coopwood gaveled the meeting into adjournment.



Scott Coopwood, CHAIRMAN

8/21/19

Date



Robert Taylor, VICE CHAIRMAN

8/21/2019

Date

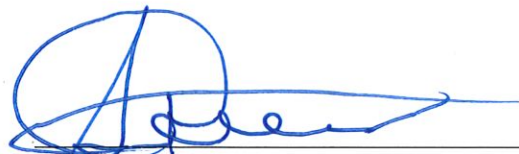
PUBLIC NOTICE

Special Meeting of the Mississippi Commission on Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks

PURSUANT TO MISSISSIPPI CODE ANNOTATED §25-41-5 and §25-41-13, the Mississippi Commission on Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks hereby issues this notice to the public of a special meeting to be held on **Monday, July 29, 2019**, in Jackson, Mississippi, at **1:00 P.M.** This special meeting is an informational and business meeting for the purpose of discussing the Commission's position on, and public policy related to, backwater flooding in the Yazoo and Sunflower River drainages, as well as interactions and relationships with natural resource conservation non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The meeting will be held, via teleconference, in the Commission Meeting Room of the Department's offices at 1505 Eastover Drive, Jackson, MS 39211. The meeting is open to the public and the Commissioners will be attending electronically from remote locations.

This the **29th** day of **July, 2019**.



Sam Polles, Executive Director
Mississippi Department of Wildlife,
Fisheries and Parks



Notices

NOTICE DETAILS

NOTICE DETAILS

State Agency: Department of Wildlife Fisheries and Parks

Public Body: Department of Wildlife Fisheries and Parks

Title: Commission on Wildlife Fisheries and Parks

Subject: Special MDWFP Teleconference Meeting

Date and Time: 7/26/2019 1:00:00 PM

Description:

The Commission will decide position and public policy on backwater flooding in Yazoo and Sunflower River drainages and relationships with natural resource conservation nongovernmental organizations.

MEETING LOCATION

1505 Eastover Drive
Jackson MS 39211

Map this!

CONTACT INFORMATION

Sharon Peltin
6014322009
sharon.peltin@wfp.ms.gov

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Special Teleconference Commission Meeting

Monday, July 29, 2019

Time: 1:00 p.m.

Location: 1505 Eastover Drive, Jackson, MS 39211

County: Hinds

For more information please contact Sharon Polzin at 6014322009 or by email at sharon.polzin@wfp.ms.gov.

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