

MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON WILDLIFE, FISHERIES & PARKS
1505 Eastover Drive, Jackson, MS
Friday, October 22, 2010, 8:30 a.m.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

PRESENT: Commissioner Charles Rigdon; Commissioner Jerry Munro; Commissioner Bryan Jones; Commissioner Billy Deviney and Commissioner John C Stanley IV.

Among the MDWFP Staff attending were: Executive Director, Dr. Sam Polles; Deputy Director Robert Cook; Deputy Administrator, Don Brazil; Budget Director, Rickie Felder; Director of Technical Programs, Larry Castle; Chief of Fisheries, Ron Garavelli; Acting Chief of Wildlife, Ron Seiss; Parks Director, Ramie Ford; Attorney, Doug Mann; and Administrative Assistant, Sally Sutherland.

WELCOME

Chairman Rigdon welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the following guests: Representative Larry Baker; Dan Hughes and Rob Olsen of Delta Waterfowl; Craig Hilman of Ducks Unlimited; Dr. Bryan Davis from Mississippi State University; and Mr. Brad Underwood from the North East Mississippi Hog Hunters Association.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Munro and seconded by Commissioner Jones, the September 22, 2010 Minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

TODAY'S AGENDA

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Munro and seconded by Commissioner Stanley, the October 22, 2010 Agenda was unanimously approved as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Brad Underwood representing the North East Mississippi Hog Hunters Association stated that their association questions why the regulation was changed that allows only the month of February to hunt hogs with dogs at Canal Section WMA. They heard it was changed because the bow hunters were complaining. He understands the bow hunters and just wants to work with all groups. Mr. Underwood further stated that all the private land they hunt adjoins a Wildlife Management Area and when the dogs cross onto the WMA lands they are not allowed to pursue them.

Chairman Rigdon asked Chief Larry Castle to explain why the regulation was changed. Chief Castle said the regulation was changed to make all WMA Regulations uniform. Before the change, the rules were complicated and not clear about hog hunting with dogs, when to pursue dogs crossing onto WMA land, etc. The staff recommended to the Commission to standardize the hog hunting regulations for clarity. Further, Chief Castle said the Canal Section WMA does not allow deer hunting with dogs because of the linear shape of the WMA (the long part of it is adjacent to private land). This is why the rules were changed to allow the use of dogs while

hunting hogs during February on Canal WMA. Further, Chief Castle said that during the public comment period at last month's Commission meeting, staff agreed to further research for the Commission expanding hog hunting during the summer months. The results of the research could adjust the regulations for next year as far as expanding hog hunting during the winter period with dogs to provide additional opportunity. Finally, Mr. Castle stated that the change in the regulation was not due to complaints from archery hunters but because we wanted uniformity for all WMA Regulations.

Brad Underwood suggested changing the regulations to allow hog hunting at night because that would not affect the bow hunters. Mr. Castle said that he has talked with several concerned hunters and asked them if night hunting would be something they would like to consider; the response he got was they would not be interested in night hunting.

Commissioner Stanley stated that Mr. Underwood needs to make sure the staff understands your specific requests because the Commission is open to consider any reasonable request for next year.

Mr. Castle reminded Mr. Underwood the objective with hunting hogs is to get rid of all wild hogs and not to protect the sows. Mr. Underwood said he has no problem killing the sows because he hunts for food.

Dr. Polles asked if there were already a permit in place that could be revised to allow hog hunting at night. If there is, then a change to the permit would be easier than waiting until next year to change the Regulations. Chief Castle stated that he would see if the existing permit can be expanded for night hunting.

LICENSE SALES REPORT

Mr. Rickie Felder presented the License Sales Report for the month of September 2010. He stated that overall resident sales are down 9%. The nonresident archery primitive weapons sales are up 13%. The net effect of all the nonresident license sales is up 3%. The total overall MDWFP sales, not including the Department of Marine Resources, is down 4%. Louisiana sales are up 8%.

FISHERIES

Chief Ron Garavelli presented the following public notices for approval:

Public Notice F-3808 (Lake Lamar Bruce) (FINAL)

Chief Garavelli stated that F-3808 regards the closing of Lake Lamar Bruce. The water is already down 12 feet and the anglers are just now not being able to launch boats. We will be closing the lake as soon as it is drained and all the fish are gone. Dr. Polles stated we need approval to breach the lake. Chief Garavelli said all the soil needed to build the dam will come from the area so there will be no cost involved for dirt. Dr. Polles said we will advise the Commission if the decision is made to breach the dam.

Public Notice F2-1405 (Aquatic Organisms) (INTENT)

Chief Garavelli stated that F2-1405 is an intent version of the public notice to try and control the snake head and swamp eel species from being brought in to public waters. He said the major source of these species is the aquarium trade. Just recently in the last year, the state of Arkansas spent over 1 million dollars trying to prevent the snake head species from entering their state. This notice also includes other species such as Tilapia.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Munro, both Public Notice F-3808 and Public Notice F2-1405 were unanimously approved individually and separately.

WILDLIFE

Acting Chief Ron Seiss presented the following Public Notice for approval:

Public Notice W15-3444(S)- Choctaw WMA (Final)

Seiss stated W15-3444(S) is the final version of the supplement that includes the Choctaw WMA Youth Hunt. It is just a point of clarification.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Munro and seconded by Commissioner Stanley, Public Notice W15-3444(S) was unanimously approved as presented.

Seiss provided a binder with updated information regarding the Wildlife Bureau. The information includes a five-year strategic plan by each program within Wildlife. Program narratives give background and history on what each program does and accomplishes.

One program Seiss highlighted was the Forest Management Program, a fairly new program which first started developing about a year and half ago to make forest management a priority primarily with our WMAs. Since this program started, we have inventoried five (5) WMAs totaling over 32,000 acres and have harvested timber on over 1000 acres with another 450 marked for processing.

DUCK STAMP FUNDING

Mr. Ed Penny introduced Houston Havens, MDWFP Waterfowl Program Biologist who is based in Grenada and advised that Houston handles a lot of our private lands work in the Delta. Presentations from the following were given:

- ☐ Delta Waterfowl – Rob Olsen, President
- ☐ Ducks Unlimited – Craig Hilburn
- ☐ Mississippi State University – Dr. Bryan Davis

Mr. Penny handed out to the Commissioners the staff's recommendation for Duck Stamp funding. Mr. Penny advised that staff also recommends the following projects: (1) MS Partners Program- private land owners; (2) waterfowl management on WMAs; (3) area waterfowl

surveys; (4) WMA survey and design for Howard Miller; and (5) MS Flyway dues as well as banding.

An update on Charlie Capps WMA was given by Mr. Penny. He stated staff is finished with the restoration project to convert this former state fishing lake to a WMA for hunting and fishing. The work done includes putting in small levees within the lake bed, water control structures to allow water management in the lake bed, soil management, food plots, etc. Within the lake bed, trees will be planted in the next couple of months. Ducks Unlimited was responsible for the project management which included the survey, construction management and design. Mr. Penny suggested that the Commission plan a date to tour the area. There will be fishing, crops and waterfowl hunting on this WMA. We are scheduled to plant 50 acres of trees this winter.

PARKS

Parks Director, Ramie Ford presented the following awards:

Mississippi Recreational and Parks Association (MRPA) Award Winners: Sherry Hazelwood; Will Busby; Bill Brekeen; and Barbara Caldwell.

OTHER BUSINESS

Special Requests for Exempt Licenses:

Chaz Savoy has muscular dystrophy and is strapped in a wheel chair. He shoots using an air hose and is requesting a special exempt license.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Deviney, the special exempt license request for Chaz Savoy was unanimously approved as presented.

In addition to the above, a list of disabled individuals over the age of sixteen (16) years, who will be participating in a special "Without Limits Hunt" taking place in Lowndes County November 11, 12, and 13, was presented for approval. (See list attached to the end of Minutes.)

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Deviney, the special exempt license requests for the listed persons (attached) was unanimously approved as presented.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon motion made by Commissioner Munro and seconded by Commissioner Jones, the Commission voted unanimously to close the meeting to determine the need for an Executive Session. It was determined that discussions were needed regarding transactions in land; and budget line items. Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Stanley, the Commission voted unanimously to enter Executive Session.

Don Brazil updated the Commission on the purchase of property in Sunflower County. Several other tracts have been identified around the larger block that should now be pursued.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Munro and seconded by Commissioner Deviney, the Commission authorized the Executive Director to contact the surrounding land owners in Sunflower County to possibly purchase their land. This includes obtaining appraisals. The motion was unanimously approved as presented.

There being no further business for Executive Session:

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Munro and seconded by Commissioner Stanley, the Commission voted unanimously to come out of Executive Session.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Friday, November 19, 2010 @ 8:30 a.m.
Location: Jackson Office

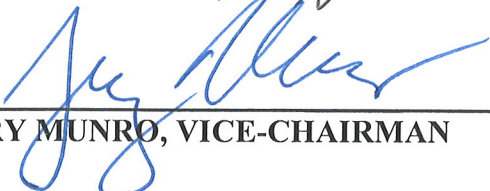
ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Chairman Rigdon gaveled the meeting into adjournment.



CHARLES RIGDON, CHAIRMAN

11-19-10
Date



JERRY MUNRO, VICE-CHAIRMAN

11-19-10
Date

WITHOUT LIMITS HUNT

(OVER 16 YEARS OLD)

Lowdnes County

November 11, 12, 13

1. Lacey Long
2. Keri Byrd
3. Alex Prier
4. Andy Gunner
5. John Cato
6. Christopher Wrench
7. Kevin Braddock