

MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, & PARKS

Wednesday, May 20, 2015

2 p.m.

Gulf Coast Research Lab/Cedar Point – Ocean Springs, MS



MINUTES OF THE MEETING

PRESENT: Chairman Bryan Jones, Commissioners Charles Rigdon, William “Billy” Deviney, Clay Wagner, and Bill F. Cossar

Among the MDWFP staff attending were: Dr. Sam Polles, Executive Director; Robert Cook, Executive Deputy Director; Larry Castle, Michael Bolden, Jennifer Head, Chad Dacus, Larry Pugh, Col. Steve Adcock, Ed Penny, and counsel, Doug Mann and Drew Malone, Special Assistant Attorneys General.

Chairman Jones gaveled the meeting to order and welcomed Senate WFP Chairman Philip Moran and House WFP Chairman Scott Bounds.

OPENING PRAYER

Robert Cook, Executive Deputy Director, opened the meeting with a prayer.

MINUTES

ACTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Cossar to correct the next Commission meeting location in the April 22, 2015 minutes. The minutes currently read McHenry Shooting Range in Perkinston as the location and should read Gulf Coast Research Lab in Ocean Springs. Commissioner Wagner seconded the motion and the minutes of April 22, 2015 were unanimously approved as corrected.

TODAY'S AGENDA

ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Wagner and seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, today's agenda was unanimously approved as presented.

LICENSE SALES REPORT

License Sales Report

Michael Bolden, Director of Administrative Services, presented the License Sales Report for the month of April, 2015.

His report included the following cumulative sales (comparing April, 2015 to April, 2014):

- Resident License sales slightly down by less than 1%. Resident Sportsman License down by less than 1%. All Game down by 6%. Annual Shooting Range permits up \$22,000. WMA permits up by \$7,000.
- Non-resident Licenses down slightly by .2% with Louisiana purchasing over 68% of our non-resident licenses. DMR sales up by 2.75% or \$19,000. Lifetime licenses down by 8%.
- Total MDWFP license sales are down by less than 1%. Total MDWFP and DMR licenses down by less than 1%.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No comments.

WILDLIFE

Chad Dacus, Wildlife Bureau Director, presented the following FINAL rules. No changes were made to the WMA rules or the Small Game Hunting rules.

FINAL 40 MS Admin Code Part 2, Chapter 1

- **Rule 1.1 – 1.43 – All WMAs**

No changes.

FINAL 40 MS Admin Code Part 2, Chapter 2

- **Rule 2.2 – White-tailed Deer Seasons and Bag Limits**

A typo was corrected on the Hill Zone and Delta Zone season calendar to show November 22 instead of November 21.

FINAL 40 MS Admin Code Part 2, Chapter 4

- **Rule 4.1 – Small Game Hunting and Seasons and Bag Limits**

No changes.

ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Cossar and seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the FINAL rules above as presented.

FISHERIES**PROPOSED 40 MS Administrative Code Part 3, Chapter 1 – General Fisheries Rules**

Larry Pugh, Fisheries Bureau Director, presented the following PROPOSED rule recommendations:

• Rule 1.3 – Regulations Regarding Sportfishing

1. Clarifying language on areas closed to sport fishing gear on Ross Barnett Reservoir to agree with Pearl River Valley Water Supply District language.
2. Added language already in Rule 3.1, Commercial Fishing, for clarification regarding use of bait.
3. Clarified language regarding crawfish traps.

• Rule 1.4 – Statewide Creel Limits

1. Changes to make regulations uniform across all of the Flood Control Reservoir lakes (Arkabutla, Enid, Sardis, and Grenada Lakes). The proposed rule consists of making the minimum length crappie that anglers can keep 12 inches, setting the daily creel limit to 15 fish per angler, and limiting the number of poles an angler can use to three. In addition, boats with three or more anglers will be able to keep 40 crappie per boat. Daily creel limits in the FCRs' spillways, including Sardis Lower Lake, will be reduced to 15 fish per angler.
2. On Eagle Lake, the proposed crappie rule will impose an 11-inch minimum length limit and reduce the daily creel limit to 30 fish per angler. The proposed rule change will be contingent upon Louisiana adopting the same regulation, and will be effective October 1, 2015.
3. Allow harvest of 1 walleye/day at Davis Lake (US Forest Service request).
4. Added tributaries of Tenn-Tom Waterway to clarify crappie length limit regulations.
5. Added Lake Lamar Bruce black bass length and creel regulations.
6. Added Charlie Capps WMA fishing regs.
7. Removed Horn Lake crappie regulations (no longer accessible to public).
8. Black Bass recommendations: remove (7) bass per day on Sardis, Enid, Grenada, and Arkabutla and make statewide limit (10/day); increase slot limit at Lake Jeff Davis from 16-20 inches to 18-24 inches, with one fish over 24 inches; and lower bag limit at Trace State Park from 30/day to 10/day.

ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, the Commission voted unanimously to approve PROPOSED Fisheries Rules 1.3 and 1.4 as presented.

PARKS

Jennifer Head, Director of Parks, presented the following TEMPORARY and PROPOSED rule.

TEMPORARY AND PROPOSED 40 MS Administrative Code Part 6, Chapter 1:

•Rule 1.1 – State Park Fees

This corrects an error where column headings were transposed on Single and Double Occupancy rates for Villa Night Packages, and other typographical errors.

ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Cossar and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, the Commission voted unanimously to approve TEMPORARY and PROPOSED Rule 1.1 as corrected.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Citation Report

Col. Steve Adcock, Chief of Law Enforcement, briefed the Commission on citations issued statewide between April 17, 2015 and May 14, 2015. The top violation continues to be No License and Trespassing second. McHenry Shooting Range surpassed Turcotte for the first time due to a 4-H South State Tournament with 1,227 customers compared to 870 at Turcotte. Over 600 kids participated in the one day 4-H event and over 2,300 spectators were present. Kids participated in archery, shotgun, 22 handgun, 22 rifle, air rifle, and muzzleloader competitions.

MDWFP Fallen Officer Memorial

MDWFP Fallen Officer Memorial took place at the Jackson headquarters on Thursday, May 14, at 10 a.m. to honor and remember those Conservation Officers who made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. Keynote speakers for the service included the Honorable Senator Giles Ward, President Pro Tempore, and the Honorable Scott Bounds, Chairman of the House Committee on Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks.

OTHER BUSINESS

Museum of Natural Science Report

Robert Cook, Deputy Executive Director, reported that a performance audit was conducted on the Museum of Natural Science Foundation at the request of the Executive Director. The audit reported that nothing was shown to be a breach of law or a public integrity issue for staff or the Foundation. We are currently drafting an agreement which will outline the roles of both parties in line with the audit recommendations. This agreement will be brought before the Commission when finalized.

J.P. Coleman Report

MDWFP management received an inquiry from Rep. Chuck Espy concerning J. P. Coleman State Park. Two investigators were sent to review this concern. A report was provided which was shared with Rep. Espy. A personnel issue was acknowledged and everything within the scope of MDWFP's responsibility to its employees and the general public has been done.

Land

Sunflower County

- Art Kennard, Director of Real Estate Services, informed the Commission that the appraisals came back on the 37.66 acres in Sunflower County slightly more than the asking price.

ACTION: Commissioner Rigdon made a motion to authorize the Executive Director to make an offer of the asking price of \$2,625/acre to buy this property. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Deviney and the Commission voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Montgomery County

- As directed previously by the Commission, staff contacted the owner of the Montgomery County land to discuss the appraisals. The owners were not interested in selling at the appraised price and discussions on this tract have ended. Staff will invoice them for the costs of the appraisals.

Property adjacent to McHenry Shooting Range

- Mr. Kennard informed the Commission that a property adjacent to the McHenry Shooting Range was available for purchase. The property would provide an additional buffer for the facility from the surrounding neighbors and opportunity for expansion.

ACTION: Commissioner Wagner made a motion to obtain appraisals of this property. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cossar and unanimously approved by the Commission.

Rosedale Hunting Club Property

- Mr. Kennard and Doug Mann, Special Assistant Attorney General, informed the Commission of discussions which took place with the owners of the Rosedale Hunting Club property. Staff was satisfied that the owners would be able to secure all outstanding interests should the appraisals come back at a reasonable price.

ACTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Cossar to authorize staff to obtain appraisals for this property. The motion carried unanimously.

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Survey

Ed Penny, Director of Conservation Programs, reviewed the results of a comprehensive survey that had been conducted on behalf of the agency, statewide, to determine what issues were important to Mississippians in relation to conservation and how it should be funded. The results showed that conservation is important to Mississippians, and several funding mechanisms were acceptable to the public. More study is needed.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Wednesday, June 10, 2015 at 2:30 p.m. at the Jackson Office, 1505 Eastover Drive.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Items ordinarily presented for Executive Session, were discussed in Open Session during "Other Business."

ADJOURNMENT

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



Bryan Jones, CHAIRMAN



Date



Charles Rigdon, VICE CHAIRMAN



Date