

MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, & PARKS

Wednesday, May 16, 2012 @ 1:00 p.m.

MDWFP Main Office, 1505 Eastover Drive, Jackson, MS



MINUTES OF THE MEETING

PRESENT: Chairman William “Billy” Deviney, Commissioners Charles Rigdon, Bryan Jones, Jerry Munro, and John C Stanley IV

Among the MDWFP staff attending were: Dr. Sam Polles, Executive Director; Mr. Robert Cook, Deputy Director; Ramie Ford; Larry Castle; Rickie Felder; Noel Hughes; Michael Bolden; Ed Penny; Chad Dacus; Jim Walker; Donnie Tate; Sharon Polzin; and Doug Mann, Special Assistant Attorney General.

WELCOME

Chairman Deviney welcomed everyone to the meeting and acknowledged special guests Senator Giles Ward, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks, and Representative Scott Bounds, Chairman of the House Committee on Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks. Deputy Director Robert Cook opened the meeting with prayer.

MINUTES

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Munro and seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, the Minutes of the April 18, 2012 meeting were unanimously approved as presented.

TODAY’S AGENDA

Upon motion made by Commissioner Munro and seconded by Commissioner Jones, today’s agenda was approved as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The following individuals made public comments:

1. Mr. Ted Foster, representing the Mississippi Hunting Dog Association: Mr. Foster wished to address the Commission concerning the hunter situation around Homochitto National Forest. The regulations passed last year require all dog deer hunters (both Homochitto National Forest and private land) to obtain a permit to hunt deer with dogs. While the permit is free, the permit number must be placed on the dog’s collar. The dogs must remain on permitted land,



which means if the dogs get onto private land, the dog owner can and will be issued a citation. This regulation was established due to Louisiana hunters bringing their dogs onto private property and leaving them there until the end of the year with no identification tags on them. Additionally dogs have been known to chase deer off private land into the Homochitto National Forest and cause violations. Mr. Foster's point was that the good hunters are being penalized along with the bad ones trying to get one particular group.

Mr. Foster attended ten or twelve cases in court last week in Franklin County. The Judge ruled that if the dog is turned loose on private property and ends up on National Forest land, these cases are dismissed; but if the landowners could prove the dog was released on their property and the dog ended up on National Forest property, then the dog owner could be found guilty. His concern was that a dog is going to go where a dog is going to go whether it is private or National Forest land in pursuit of a deer. Mr. Foster did not feel like there was any way a hunter could prevent where the dog would end up. He encouraged the Commission to look into this matter. He was afraid that the current laws would cause many more problems than in the past.

No questions were presented to Mr. Foster.

2. Mark Morrison, Attorney at Law: Mr. Morrison had a comment for the Commission concerning the hunting dog cases coming before the court system. He stated that the court had a second round of trials on April 19, 2012. Thankfully most cases were resolved. He advised the Commission that July 16 would be the next court date and currently he had two appeals in his office on the Franklin County proceedings. Mr. Morrison requested to speak with Chad Dacus about a possible solution following the meeting.

Chad Dacus, Assistant Wildlife Bureau Director, informed the Commission that he held two public meetings; one in September to inform the public about what was to happen with regulation changes and to answer questions, and another one in February to comment on actions taken. A meeting also took place in March to discuss some problems individuals were experiencing. Mr. Dacus further reported that private landowners overall were pleased this year with the new regulations. Forest Service said the number of complaints had gone down and they were pleased as well. Mr. Dacus stated that his office would like to recommend no changes at this time and would like another whole year to evaluate the situation before a recommendation is made to the Commission.

Chairman Deviney commented that he knew there had been a lot of conflict between the private landowners and the dog hunters. Hopefully we are heading in the right direction to solve it. By looking at our License Sales Report you can see the Louisiana license sales are down by half, which may be a result of the conflict in this area around Homochitto National Forest. Chairman Deviney thanked Mr. Dacus for his report.

LICENSE SALES REPORT

Mr. Michael Bolden, Director of Administrative Services, presented the License Sales Report for the month of April 2012. He reported that overall license sales were up 1% or \$133,403.97 from last year. Some highlights of his report are noted below.



Resident licenses overall had an increase of 2% or \$122,773.50.

Apprentice Sportsman License	up 69%
Resident All Game Hunt/Fish License	up 4%
Resident Exempt < 16	up 181%
Senior Exempt	up 25%

Non-resident licenses overall are down 1% or -\$102,397.00 which is a concern. This may be caused by what is going on in Homochitto National Forest with the Louisiana hunters.

In Other license sales, the Alligator licenses continue to go up 65% or \$14,050.00.

It is always good to see people not only helping with our license sales but our Wildlife Foundation donations, which are up by 9% or \$2,378.47.

Marine Resources also had an increase of 7% or \$47,490.00. Sales of Lifetime licenses continue to increase with a total of \$498,615 which is a 34% increase over last year.

Chairman Deviney thanked Mr. Bolden for his report.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Reinstatement Requests

Col. Steve Adcock, Law Enforcement Bureau Chief, recommended the reinstatement of hunting privileges for the following. All have met the requirements, paid their fines, and completed the hunting course.

- Carson Holt, West, MS
He was arrested and charged with spotlighting and killing a doe.
- Rickey Roebuck, Pope, MS
He was arrested for spotlighting only. No deer was killed.
- Quinlan Eubanks, Mount Olive, MS
This was his first offense for spotlighting a deer.
- Winfred Bowen, Pontotoc, MS
This was his first offense for spotlighting. He was unsuccessful in killing a buck.
- Charles Pope, Morton, MS
He was charged with spotlighting and killing a deer.

The Commissioners questioned the amount each paid in fines. The men answered that their costs to be reinstated ranged from \$2,000 to \$5,000. Chairman Deviney reminded the men that if our state did not have rules and regulations that we would not have wildlife. He hoped that these men knew the seriousness of what they did and encouraged them to tell their friends about the consequences of spotlighting.



Commissioner Jones made a suggestion to Col. Adcock to run a consumer ad, like the DUI ads, informing the public that a deer spotlighting violation could run \$5,000. Col. Adcock responded that a similar ad recently was run several times this past year concerning this subject.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Munro, the request to reinstate hunting privileges to all of the above mentioned men was unanimously approved as presented.

Citation Report

Col. Steve Adcock distributed the March 2012 Citation report to the Commission for information and review. He noted that there were 754 citations issued statewide in November, 2011. The largest number of violations was for “no license – resident”. Col. Adcock advised the Commission that the fine for “no license – resident” is \$100 plus an average of \$100 court costs, if the person shows proof of purchasing a license to the court. If they did not purchase a license before appearing before the court, the fine is \$500 plus court costs.

Fallen Officers’ Memorial Service

Col. Adcock invited everyone to attend the Memorial and Dedication Services honoring the Fallen Officers of the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks on Thursday, May 17, 2012, at 9:00 a.m. at the Jackson Office. Governor Phil Bryant will be present to address our families and formally dedicate a monument. First Lady Deborah Bryant will join Governor Bryant in laying a wreath at the monument. Plaques will be presented to the families of the fallen officers. Major Jerry Carter has worked very hard to make this a special day in recognition of these brave officers who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Additional comments were made concerning the role our MDWFP Law Enforcement officers played last week in the recovery of the two Bain sisters who had been abducted and their mother and sister killed which was above and beyond the call of duty. The officers recently had refresher training in these procedures which aided in their search and rescue skills. The Commissioners requested to hear the story of the recovery before or after the Memorial Service tomorrow.

Public Notice of FINAL LE6-3779 Nuisance Animals

Col. Adcock advised the Commissioners that there were no changes from the Intent version.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Chairman Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Munro, the above mention Public Notice Final LE6-3779 Nuisance Animals was unanimously approved as presented.



FISHERIES

Fisheries Bureau 2011 Awards

Mr. Larry Pugh, Fisheries Bureau Assistant Director, had the honor of presenting awards to the following employees who made outstanding contributions in their line of work for 2011:

Garry Lucas	Biologist of the Year
Jonathan Lucas	Support Employee of the Year
Gary Berteau	Lake Manager of the Year

Chairman Deviney thanked each recipient as they accepted their award.

Public Notice of FINAL F7-2999 Commercial Fishing

Mr. Ron Garavelli, Fisheries Bureau Director, informed the Commission that there were no changes from the Intent version.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Munro and seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, the above mention Public Notice Final F7-2999 Commercial Fishing was unanimously approved as presented.

Public Notice of INTENT F-3818 Boat Limit on Crappie for FCRs

Mr. Garavelli presented Public Notice of Intent F-3818 which included a daily boat creel limit of 50 crappie (each larger than 12 inches) per boat on the four North Mississippi Flood Control Reservoirs (Arkabutla, Sardis, Enid and Grenada Lakes). The new regulations established a daily boat limit for boats with three or more licensed or exempt anglers. He stated that party barges could have six or seven people fishing and a trolling boat could catch 3 -10 times as many fish as a pole. With the extreme low water this year, the crappie are very vulnerable.

Crappie catch rates have been at an all time high on these lakes due to a large 2009 year class, but most of these crappie were just under 12 inches this spring. Influenced by an unusually warm, dry winter significant portions of keepers were harvested before the spring spawn. The Department of Fisheries hopes to make these fish last until they spawn next year. Crappie anglers and our biologists are concerned the 2009 year class will be harvested as soon as they reach 12 inches. Recent studies show the class of 2009 crappie has exceptional growth rates. Most of the 2009 year class should reach legal size in 2-4 months. The intent of this new regulation is to slow the harvest of this important resource during the 2012 fall and winter seasons. The survivors of the 2009 year class will contribute to the 2013 spawn and harvest. Hopefully, water levels next year will be higher and the crappie will not be as vulnerable to harvest.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Stanley, the above mentioned Public Notice Intent F-3818 was unanimously approved as presented.



WILDLIFE

Wildlife Public Notices of FINAL

Chad Dacus, Assistant Wildlife Bureau Director, presented the following Public Notices FINAL. Minor changes were made to W17-3434, W1-3812, & W17-3473, as noted below in italics.

- Public Notice of FINAL W1-3814 WMA Facilities Rental
- Public Notice of FINAL W7-3758 Public Waters Alligator Hunting Seasons
- Public Notice of FINAL W4-3799 Private Lands Alligator Hunting Seasons
- Public Notice of FINAL W17-3434 2012-2013 White-tailed Deer Hunting Seasons and Bag Limits
Penalty wording changed for hunting with dog violations. No change in regulation.
- Public Notice of FINAL W6-3776 2012-2013 Wild Turkey Seasons and Bag Limit
- Public Notice of FINAL W17-3433 2012-2013 Small Game Hunting and Trapping Seasons and Bag Limits
- Public Notice of FINAL WMA Regulations (MULTIPLES)

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|----|-----------------|---|
| 1 | <u>W1-3812</u> | <u>USFS</u>
<i>Penalty wording changed for hunting with dog violations. No change in regulation.</i> |
| 2 | <u>W2-3804</u> | <u>Charlie Capps</u> |
| 3 | <u>W5-3788</u> | <u>Howard Miller</u> |
| 4 | <u>W5-3789</u> | <u>Theodore Mars</u> |
| 5 | <u>W6-3775</u> | <u>Sky Lake</u> |
| 6 | <u>W8-3736</u> | <u>Charles Ray Nix</u> |
| 7 | <u>W9-3700</u> | <u>Yockanookany</u> |
| 8 | <u>W10-3688</u> | <u>Graham Lake</u> |
| 9 | <u>W11-3694</u> | <u>Muscadine</u> |
| 10 | <u>W12-3549</u> | <u>Tuscumbia</u> |
| 11 | <u>W15-3464</u> | <u>Sardis Waterfowl</u> |
| 12 | <u>W15-3504</u> | <u>Nanah Waiya</u> |
| 13 | <u>W15-3514</u> | <u>Black Prairie</u> |
| 14 | <u>W15-3515</u> | <u>Hell Creek</u> |
| 15 | <u>W15-3517</u> | <u>Trim Cane</u> |
| 16 | <u>W16-3467</u> | <u>Sunflower</u> |



- 17 W16-3469 Twin Oaks
- 18 W17-3440 Canal Section
- 19 W17-3445 Copiah County
- 20 W17-3446 Divide Section
- 21 W17-3450 Lake George
- 22 W17-3452 Leroy Percy
- 23 W17-3454 Mahannah
- 24 W17-3455 Malmaison
- 25 W17-3456 Marion County
- 26 W17-3457 Okatibbee
- 27 W17-3458 O'Keefe
- 28 W17-3461 Pearl River
- 29 W17-3465 Shipland
- 30 W17-3466 Stoneville
- 31 W17-3471 Ward Bayou
- 32 W17-3473 Natchez SP
Forgot to change the wording from turkey to squirrel and needed to add regulation adopted which states: "Only shotguns may be used during the youth squirrel hunt."
- 33 W18-3459 Old River
- 34 W18-3460 Pascagoula River

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Stanley and seconded by Commissioner Munro, the forty (40) abovementioned Public Notices FINAL were unanimously approved as presented.

PARKS

Public Notice of FINAL P-001 (Fees)

Ramie Ford, Director of State Parks, presented Public Notice of FINAL P-001. No changes were made from the Intent.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Munro and seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, the Public Notice FINAL listed above was unanimously approved as presented.



2011 MISSISSIPPI WILDLIFE FEDERATION AWARDS

Rick Dillard, President of the Mississippi Wildlife Federation, brought forward the following individuals who had made a significant contribution to preserving and protecting Mississippi's precious natural resources and presented them with an award.

Master Sergeant John McFerrin	Conservation Officer of the Year
John Gruchy	Wildlife Conservationist of the Year
Garry Lucas	Fisheries Conservationist of the Year

The Commissioners and staff applauded their contribution and dedication.

MARKETING

Lacy Kuhn, Marketing Coordinator, presented the new "It's About Time" marketing campaign which is running in conjunction with an "80th Anniversary" promotion. A PowerPoint slideshow presentation identified the goals for the marketing campaign: (1) to increase awareness of the agency, (2) recruit new users.

With parents motivating 74% of all outdoor activities, most of the campaign emphasis was toward families with children and how to incorporate family fun into our state facilities and events. Four banners were showcased in the room highlighting the following MDWFP products and services:

1. Camping Scene:
"Oddly enough, the FURTHER we are from the OUTLETS, the faster we RECHARGE"
– Experience a State Park
2. Child Catching a Fish:
"Protecting HER RIGHT to brag about her FIRST FISH since 1932" – Purchase your License at www.mdwfp.com
3. Father and Son Hunting:
"In 1932, GAME wasn't just something he PLAYED on a TV" – Purchase your License at www.mdwfp.com
4. Family Viewing Fish in Large Aquarium Tank:
"You Don't Have to be UNDERWATER to have your BREATHE Taken Away" – Visit the Museum of Natural Science

The marketing presentation concluded with a surprise gift for the Commissioners. The staff presented each with a beautifully framed collage exhibiting pictures and logos over the past 80 years, including the 1932 signing of the Legislative bill which established the Mississippi Game and Fish Commission, currently known as the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks.

A time of celebration followed and a special cake was served to everyone showing off the new 80th Anniversary logo.



OTHER BUSINESS

Election of Officers

The Commission took up the matter of electing Commission officers for the upcoming State Fiscal Year 2013.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the nominations of new officers Jerry Munro as Chairman and John C Stanley IV as Vice Chairman to serve July 2012 through June 2013.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Tentative Date: Wednesday, July 18, 2012
1:00 PM
Jackson Office

EXECUTIVE SESSION

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Stanley and seconded by Commissioner Munro, 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 related issues. Upon motion made by Commissioner Stanley and seconded by Commissioner Munro, the Commission voted unanimously to enter into Executive Session.

Dr. Polles addressed the Commission on matters related to the acquisition of a property in Claiborne County formerly known as the Canemount Plantation. The proposed purchase price was well within the appraised value; and, per prior Commission authorization, monies had been moved into the Heritage Fund to affect the purchase. Currently, MDWFP is working with the former owners to transition the property over to Department control, and a regulation is under development for the upcoming hunting seasons.

No action was required of the Commission.

There was no further business for Executive Session.

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

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

William “Billy” Deviney, CHAIRMAN

Date

Jerry Munro, VICE-CHAIRMAN

Date