

MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, & PARKS

Wednesday, July 18, 2012 @ 2:30 p.m.

MDWFP Main Office, 1505 Eastover Drive, Jackson, MS



MINUTES OF THE MEETING

PRESENT: Chairman Jerry Munro, Commissioners William “Billy” Deviney, Charles Rigdon, and Bryan Jones.

ABSENT: Commissioner 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; Ron Garavelli; Col. Steve Adcock; Sammy Fisher; Jim Walker; Donnie Tate; Sharon Polzin; and Doug Mann, Special Assistant Attorney General.

WELCOME

Chairman Munro welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked Deputy Director Robert Cook to open the meeting with prayer.

OATH OF OFFICE

Commissioner William “Billy” Deviney, having been reappointed to serve a new five year term beginning July 1, 2012 and ending June 30, 2017, was sworn in by Notary Sharon Polzin.

MINUTES

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Jones, the Minutes of the May 16, 2012 and June 25, 2012 meetings were unanimously approved as presented.

TODAY’S AGENDA

The agenda was amended to reflect Public Notice W4-3799 FINAL – 2012 Private Lands Alligator Hunting Season for Wildlife.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Rigdon and seconded by Commissioner Jones, today’s agenda was unanimously approved as amended.

PUBLIC COMMENTS



The following individual was listed on the agenda under **Other Business-McHenry Shooting Range Objection**, but the Commission unanimously agreed to hear him at this time:

McHenry Shooting Range Objection

Mr. C. T. Switzer, Jr. of Golden Pines Equestrian Center and Resort, 75 Golden Pine Road, Perkinston, MS: Mr. Switzer is the owner of a reported \$2 million equestrian riding facility which is located next to the McHenry Shooting Range. His objection was related to the shooting range noise level which he claimed would adversely affect his horses, livestock, and livelihood. He distributed a brochure of his Equestrian Center and aerial maps displaying the location of the McHenry Shooting Range as it correlates to his business and adjacent landowners, including some new homes and a church.

Mr. Switzer had further concerns with MDWFP's future plans to build a skeet range next to his pasture, possibly creating a stampede and injuries.

At a meeting with Dr. Polles in June Mr. Switzer presented the following four options to bring resolution to this problem:

- Work on a land swap with the U.S. Forest Service in order to locate the range in a location that may not have an adverse affect on adjoining properties and businesses. (Mr. Switzer suggested that an ideal swap would be U.S. Forest land around the Military Firing range located on Hwy 67 in Biloxi.)
- Sell the existing location and purchase new property in an area that would not affect the neighbors.
- Construct buffering berms around the perimeter of the range, tall enough to eliminate the noise to adjoining property, and the threat to trail riders and cattle production.
- Enter into a law suit against MDWFP for damages to Mr. Switzer's pre-existing business, and an injunction to close the range.

Mr. Switzer reported that he had spoken with Congressman Stephen Palazzo, who allegedly committed his office to helping solve these problems including helping with a U.S. Forest Service swap.

Mr. Switzer thanked the Commission for their consideration. No discussion or comments were made.

LICENSE SALES REPORT

Mr. Michael Bolden, Director of Administrative Services, presented the License Sales Report for the month of June 2012, marking the end of the fiscal year. This year ended with overall license sales up 1% or \$250,134.63 from last year. This is the first time since 2008 that MDWFP has ended the year on a positive note. The Marketing Department at MDWFP reported that all the license sales areas showing an increase last year were the result of license promotions/campaigns that targeted those license privileges. They further remarked that a direct marketing effort will be launched this fiscal year to target some of the areas that have been down, such as non-resident licenses.



Some highlights of Mr. Bolden's report are noted below.

Total Resident licenses	up 2%
Apprentice Sportsman License	up 75%
Resident All Game Hunt/Fish License	up 4%
Resident Exempt < 16	up 193%
Non-resident licenses	down 1%
Alligator licenses	up 65%
Other license total sales	up 18%

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.

- Michael Hall - Pontotoc, MS
He was convicted in 2010 and charged with spotlighting and killing an 8 point buck.

ACTION: Motion to reinstate Michael Hall's license was made by Commissioner Jones, seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, and unanimously approved.

- Kendall Davis - Aberdeen, MS
In November 2010 he and a friend saw a deer by the side of the road. He alleged to have fired a shot into the ground but did not shoot the deer.

ACTION: Motion to reinstate Kendall Davis' license was made by Commissioner Rigdon, seconded by Commissioner Deviney, and unanimously approved.

- Michael Brown - Lake Cormorant, MS
According to Mr. Brown, he was on the way home from a party and was caught spotlighting a deer. This is his second violation.

ACTION: Motion to reinstate Michael Brown's license was made by Commissioner Deviney, seconded by Commissioner Jones, and unanimously approved.

- Zachary Applin - Pearl, MS
Mr. Applin stated that he spotlighted around 10 deer, shot one, and took it home.

ACTION: Motion to reinstate Zachary Applin's license was made by Commissioner Jones, seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, and unanimously approved.

Commissioner Deviney reminded these individuals that laws are in place to preserve the natural resources in Mississippi. The Commissioners expressed their hopes that these men have learned their lesson and will go forward and serve as an example for others to uphold the law.

**Citation Report**

Col. Steve Adcock reported citation statistics issued in the Northern, Central, and Southern regions for Memorial Day Weekend through July 15, 2012. There were a total of 242 citations issued in the North region, 218 Central region, and 418 in the South region. Statewide totals were 878 citations. Memorial Weekend alone (May 25 – 28) 446 citations were issued. Statewide, the majority of citations were for no hunting and fishing licenses, boating related, and trespassing.

	<u>North</u>	<u>Central</u>	<u>South</u>
BUI	3	7	13
No license	50	32	57
No license, non-resident	21	--	30
PFD	43	75	44
No boat registration	39	47	79
Reckless Operation	--	22	--
No boat certificate	--	--	54
Trespassing (ATV)	--	--	48
No WMA permit card	--	--	57

Commendation Presentation

On May 10, 2012 a MDWFP Special Response team was activated by request of the U.S. Marshal's Service to search rough terrain and heavily wooded areas in Lee County. This team assisted federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies in Tennessee, Mississippi, and throughout the United States in the rescue of Alexandria and Kyliyah Bain, and the capture of their abductor, Adam Mayes. Mayes was accused of kidnapping the Bain sisters and murdering their mom, Jo Ann Blain, and 14 year-old sister, Adrienne. After two weeks on the run, Mayes and his hostages were located by the MDWFP Special Response team along with members of the Miss. Highway Patrol in a densely wooded area in Mississippi. Mayes was ordered to drop his gun, at which time he killed himself with a gunshot to the head. This team exhibited professionalism and worked tirelessly in a unified effort to find and successfully recover the Bain sisters and additionally locate an FBI Most Wanted Fugitive, an extremely significant event for any investigative team.

Col. Steve Adcock called out the names of the Special Response Team members listed below and a framed Commendation letter from the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks was presented by Dr. Sam Polles, Executive Director, and Chairman Jerry Munro. Assisting with the presentation was Judi Waters.

Capt. Al Crawford
Lt. Dale Bell
Lt. Lee Ellington
Lt. Richard Stephens



SGM. Craig Walker
SGM. Glen Jackson
MSG. David Holiday
MSG. Tracy Tullos
MSG. Michael Voyles
MSG. Mac Lowery
Sgt. Jay Holman
Sgt. Matt Haney
Sgt. Ricky Barry
Corp. Caleb Miller
Corp. Scott Poff
Corp. Kelvin Doss
Corp. Jody Matheny
Pvt. Marcus Christon
Pvt. Jonthan Shoup
Pvt. Willie Wesley
Pvt. Jarrett Watkins
Pvt. William Stricklin

A reception honoring the officers was held earlier in the day at the Jackson Office and letters of Commendation were presented to each from the Federal Bureau of Investigation. FBI stated that this was one of the most professional groups that they had ever seen.

Additionally, Jim Walker, Director of Mississippi Outdoors, commemorated this event by presenting Colonel Adcock and the Law Enforcement Department with a framed copy of the Clarion Ledger's May 12, 2012 newspaper article highlighting the accomplishments of the department's law enforcement officers. Their training and detailed grid search capabilities enabled MDWFP officers to bring this situation to a close on the first day of their deployment. Their searching technique kept forcing Mayes to move and finally corner him. This highly visible, media intensive event was significant for the state of Mississippi.

FISHERIES

Public Notice of INTENT F5-3798 - Paddlefish

Mr. Ron Garavelli, Fisheries Bureau Director, handed out a *Guide to Changes Proposed in the Notice of Intent*. Some of the significant changes included requiring paddlefish to be harvested during daylight hours and changing from a five-inch, mesh net to a six-inch, mesh net marked with orange colored buoys.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, the above mentioned Public Notice of Intent F5-3798 Paddlefish was unanimously approved as presented.

An additional handout entitled, *Summary of Paddlefish Harvest for the 2011-2012 Roe Harvest Season*, was presented to the Commissioners for information purposes. During the past year 8,300 paddlefish were released (1,328 of the released paddlefish were carrying eggs). The



number of paddlefish harvested was 1,574 with the retail value of their eggs being \$1.2 million. Participation this season included 31 participants, 15 harvesters, 13 helpers, nine processors, and two buyer/exporters.

WILDLIFE

Ed Penny, Wildlife Bureau Director, presented the following public notices for Commission approval:

- **Wildlife Public Notices of FINAL W4-3799 Private Lands Alligator Hunting Season**

This was approved as a FINAL at the May 16, 2012 meeting and was presented again due to a filing problem.

- **Wildlife Public Notice FINAL W-3819 Canemount WMA**

No changes from INTENT.

- **Wildlife Public Notice INTENT and TEMPORARY W15-3515 Hell Creek WMA**

This was approved as a FINAL on May 16, 2012, but was presented again at the July 18 meeting due to receiving further comment and request to add/change Squirrel, Rabbit, and Quail (Training Only), and Hunting Field Dog Field trial dates.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Jones, the abovementioned four Wildlife Public Notices were unanimously approved as presented.

Early Season Migratory Bird Seasons

Ed Penny, Wildlife Bureau Director, presented several handouts for Commission consideration entitled *2012-2013 Early Migratory Game Bird Season Recommendations*, *Proposed Dove Season Calendar*, and *Early Season Summary*. Listed below are details from the handouts.

Dove Season Dates:

Wildlife recommended a 70-day, 15-bird daily bag limit for Mourning and White-winged Doves. The possession limit was 30 birds. The North and South Dove Zone dates are:

- North Dove Zone: September 1 – September 23
October 13 – November 11
December 15 – December 31, 2012
- South Dove Zone: September 1 – September 9
October 6 – November 11
December 8 – December 31

Other Wildlife recommendations were:



Canada Geese:	September 1 – September 15 (bag limit 5; possession 10)
Teal:	September 15 – September 30 (bag limit 4; possession 8)
Rails (Sora & Virginia):	September 22 – November 30 (bag limit 25; possession 25)
Rails (Clapper & King):	September 22 – November 30 (bag limit 15; possession 30)
Moorhens & Gallinules:	September 22 – November 30 (bag limit 15; possession 30)
Snipe:	November 14 – February 28 (bag limit 8; possession 16)
Woodcock:	December 18 – January 31 (bag limit 3; possession 6)

Commissioner Munro suggested changing the December 8 – December 15 dates in the South Dove Zone to December 21, 2012 – January 13, 2013.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Rigdon, and seconded by Commissioner Jones, the early bird migratory season calendars were unanimously approved as presented with the one exception in the South Dove Season calendar to reflect Commission Munro's suggestion to change December 8 – December 15 date range to December 21, 2012 – January 13, 2013.

OTHER BUSINESS

Strategic Plan

Ron Seiss, Conservation Programs Director, presented the 2012 MDWFP Strategic Plan. In this plan the following six goals were established:

1. **Fish, Wildlife, and Habitat** – We (MDWFP) will conserve Mississippi's fish and wildlife and their habitats.
2. **Outdoor Recreation** – We (MDWFP) will encourage participation in fishing, hunting, and nature-based recreation and provide quality opportunities for safe and accessible enjoyment of our natural resources and parks.
3. **Information and Education** – We (MDWFP) will improve public understanding of and involvement in conservation and management of fish and wildlife.
4. **Private Lands** – We (MDWFP) will expand efforts to help private landowners advance conservation and address factors that limit managing their lands effectively.
5. **Public Lands and Waters** – We (MDWFP) will manage public lands and waters to optimize benefits to fish, wildlife, and the people who enjoy these resources.
6. **Management and Administration** – We (MDWFP) will enhance the MDWFP's capability to manage its resources and to operate effectively and efficiently, with accountability at all levels.

Each agency bureau further dissected each of the preceding goals and addressed the following questions:

1. What kind of changes need to be made?
2. How to get there?
3. How to know when we get there?



Seiss stated that this is the first step in MDWFP's conservation planning program. We have already started working on operational planning and adding strategies to tackle these issues. Every six months a feedback and accountability session will be held to see where we are.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney, and seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, the Commission voted unanimously to ratify the 2012 Strategic Plan.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Tentative Date: Wednesday, August 15, 2012
2:30 PM
Jackson Office

EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

Dr. Polles updated the Commission on the recent purchase of the Canemount property and the possible relocation of a business or industry (the bed and breakfast operation) and related matters. Discussion followed regarding fees and operational costs. No action was required of the Commission at this time; however, staff will continue to research and develop management plans and operational models.

Staff also updated the Commission on the pending purchase of 15 acres at Malmaison from Mr. Frank Weir. The total purchase price is \$30,500 and will acquire an in-holding at the WMA. This prospect had been brought to the Commission several months before in 2011, but delays in appraisals and some title curative work had postponed the purchase.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney, and seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, the Commission voted unanimously to authorize the purchase of the Weir Property.

Rickie Felder addressed the Commission on the pending FY 2014 Budget Request and its related impact on personnel. Several of the budget line items could affect the continued employment of individuals in specific positions, as well as the ability to operate certain programs. No action was required of the Commission.

There was no further business for Executive Session.

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




Rickie Felder addressed the Commission on the pending FY 2014 Budget Request and its related impact on personnel. Several of the budget line items could affect the continued employment of individuals in specific positions, as well as the ability to operate certain programs. No action was required of the Commission.

There was no further business for Executive Session.

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

ADJOURNMENT

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



Jerry Munro, CHAIRMAN

8/15/12

Date



John C Stanley IV, VICE-CHAIRMAN

8/15/12

Date