

MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, & PARKS

Wednesday, August 15, 2012 @ 1:00 p.m.

MDWFP Main Office, 1505 Eastover Drive, Jackson, MS



MINUTES OF THE MEETING

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

Among the MDWFP staff attending were: Dr. Sam Polles, Executive Director; Mr. Robert Cook, Deputy Director; Ramie Ford; Larry Castle; Noel Hughes; Michael Bolden; Ed Penny; Ricky Flynt; Ron Garavelli; Col. Steve Adcock; Jim Walker; Donnie Tate; Sharon Polzin; and Doug Mann, Special Assistant Attorney General.

WELCOME

Chairman Munro welcomed everyone to the meeting and Director of Technical Programs, Larry Castle, opened the meeting with prayer.

MINUTES

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Jones, the minutes of July 18, 2012 were unanimously approved as presented.

TODAY’S AGENDA

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

LICENSE SALES REPORT

Mr. Michael Bolden, Director of Administrative Services, presented the License Sales Report for the month of July, 2012, marking the beginning of the fiscal year. Even though sales for July are down, this seems to be the pattern for license sales for the past three years. The new norm reveals July as a slow month and sales gradually increasing throughout the year. Mr. Bolden handed out a report to the Commissioners showing when sales peaked last year. By the end of the quarter Mr. Bolden predicts that license sales will catch up.



LAW ENFORCEMENT

Citation Report

Col. Steve Adcock, Chief of Law Enforcement, reported fishing violation citations issued the past month were eight in the North Region, 11 in Central, and 29 in South Region for July 16, 2012 through August 14, 2012.

Law Enforcement Hunter Education classes are stable and currently average around 11,000 students per year. Boat Safety enrollment in the classroom is down due to increased on-line class participation.

FISHERIES

Public Notice FINAL F5-3798 - Paddlefish

Mr. Ron Garavelli, Fisheries Bureau Director, stated that there were no changes to the Public Notice from the Intent. However, he had received several comments from the public concerning the change from a five-inch, mesh net to a six-inch, mesh net. The public concern was the availability of the six-inch net. Mr. Garavelli informed the Commission that the webbing for the nets is produced in China and shipped to net makers in the states. The Fisheries Department would like to take a couple of weeks to investigate and see if the six-inch net regulation should be mandated this year or held off until next year.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Jones, the above mentioned Public Notice FINAL F5-3798 Paddlefish was unanimously approved subject to any changes staff may need to make on net mesh size.

WILDLIFE

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

- Wildlife Public Notice FINAL W15-3515 Hell Creek WMA

No changes from the INTENT.

- Wildlife Public Notice INTENT & TEMPORARY W-3819a Canemount WMA

This was reopened to change dates for Archery and Primitive Weapon season for Antlerless deer and legal bucks.



ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Stanley, the abovementioned W2-3070 Public Notice was unanimously approved as presented.

2012-2013 Waterfowl Season Outlook

Ed Penny, Wildlife Bureau Director, provided a handout entitled *2012-2013 Waterfowl Season Outlook* for Commission review. Listed below are details from this handout.

- 2012 Waterfowl breeding populations at an all-time high overall, with Mallards up 15%.
- These estimates reflect carry-over of adult birds from 2011.
- Nest success and brood survival will play a large role in the “Fall Flight” (dependent on wetland habitat conditions).
- Breeding Habitat Conditions mark a 32% decrease from 2011.
- While breeding populations are high, duck production could be decreased due to less wetland habitat.
- Reduced grassland acres (loss of CRP, grassland conversion)
- Winter severity will play a large role in duck migration timing and intensity.

This item was for advisement and no action was needed.

Late Migratory Game Bird Season Recommendations and Calendars

Other handouts presented by Ed Penny for Commission approval were the *2012-2013 Late Migratory Game Bird Season Recommendations* and *2012-2013 Hunting Calendars for Ducks and Geese*. These recommendations are listed below. After discussion by the Commission two dates were adjusted in the Ducks, Mergansers, and Coots season and one date change in the Youth Waterfowl Days as noted below with a strike-through and new date added.

Ducks, Mergansers, and Coots:

Recommendation: ~~November 22 – November 25~~ November 23 – November 25

November 30 – December 2

~~December 6 – January 27~~ December 5 – January 27

Bag Limits: total of 6 ducks, including no more than 4 mallards (no more than 2 of which may be females), 3 wood ducks, 2 redheads, 4 scaup, 2 pintail, 1 canvasback, 1 mottled duck, and 1 black duck. Merganser daily bag limit is a total of 5 mergansers, only 2 of which may be hooded mergansers. Coots have a 15-bird daily bag limit.

Possession Limit: twice the daily bag limit.

Justification: Maximum number of days allowed and extends as late as allowed by the framework. Season structure similar to last year, maximizes weekends and holidays, and provides most opportunity late in the season when waterfowl populations typically peak.

Framework: 60 days between September 22 and January 27. The season may be split into 3 segments. MS currently has 1 zone for waterfowl, and this will be in place until the 2015-2016 Season.



- **Wildlife Public Notice INTENT W16-3467a Sunflower WMA & TEMPORARY W16-3467 Sunflower WMA**

There was a typo in the original INTENT.

- **Wildlife Public Notice TEMPORARY W7-3758(T), Public Waters Alligator Season**

The original Public Notice for Public Waters Alligator Hunting Season was discovered to contain a drafting error in the delineation of the areas on the Pearl River that would be open to hunting alligators. Staff is presenting this Temporary rule to supersede and replace the current rule which went into effect a month ago.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Stanley, the abovementioned Wildlife Public Notices (FINAL W15-3515; INTENT & TEMPORARY W-3819a; and INTENT W16-3467a; TEMPORARY W16-3467; and TEMPORARY W7-3758) were unanimously approved as presented.

- **Wildlife Public Notice of INTENT W3820 McHenry WMA**

This is being designated as a WMA for administrative and regulatory purposes.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Rigdon and seconded by Commissioner Stanley, the abovementioned W3820 Public Notice was unanimously approved as presented.

- **Wildlife Public Notice INTENT W2-3070 Trapping and Fur Dealing Regulations**

Ed Penny introduced Ricky Flynt, MDWFP Wildlife Alligator/Furbearer Coordinator. Mr. Flynt explained that W2-3070 removed the stipulation that Wildlife officials must be present for the tagging of federal CITES identification on bobcat and river otter prior to shipping pelts out of the state of Mississippi. MDWFP will provide trappers such tags for purchase at designated MDWFP locations.

Language was also changed that licensed trappers who fail to complete or return a trapper harvest report or survey “*may*” be denied trapping license renewal for the following year instead of “*will*” be denied a trapping license renewal.

When questioned by the Commission on the current activity of trapper licenses, Mr. Flynt replied that trapper license sales are currently around 500, which is lower than the 1,500 licenses ten years ago, even though pelt prices are the highest in 25 years. To get the best price trappers must ship their pelts to Canada and bypass the middle man. A resident trapping license is \$25 and non-resident trapping license is \$205. Most Mississippi trappers go for the beaver and raccoon pelts. The southern bobcat pelt runs \$50, while the Western bobcat pelt averages \$400-\$500. Russia, Italy and China determine the market price for pelts.



Youth Waterfowl Days:

Recommendation: ~~November 17 and~~ February 3
February 2

Bag Limits: total of 6 ducks, including no more than 4 mallards (no more than 2 of which may be females), 3 wood ducks, 2 redheads, 4 scaup, 2 pintail, 1 canvasback, 1 mottled duck, and 1 black duck. Merganser daily bag limit is a total of 5 mergansers, only 2 of which may be hooded mergansers. Coots have a 15-bird daily bag limit.

Possession Limit: twice the daily bag limit.

Justification: Provides one day of early season opportunity and one day of late season opportunity, which may afford more participation by spreading out the days. Youth may be more likely to participate in an early season hunt due to mild weather, and may be more successful due to low-pressured birds.

Framework: May select 2 days outside the regular duck season on weekends or holidays. Bag and possession limits and shooting hours are the same as the regular season.

Geese: Canada, Snow, Blue, Ross', White-fronted, and Brant

Recommendation: November 15 – January 27
Canada Goose Bag Limit 3; Possession 6
Snow, Blue, and Ross' Bag Limit 20; No Possession Limit
White-fronted Goose Bag Limit 2; Possession 4
Brant Bag Limit 1; Possession 2

Justification: All goose seasons are synced for simplicity and end with the close of duck season for maximum overlap. Recent change in Canada Goose framework allows for additional days to match white-fronted goose season (74 days).

Framework: For Canada Geese, states may select either 92 days with a 2-bird bag, or 78 days with a 3-bird bag between September 22 and January 31. For Snow, Blue, and Ross' Geese, states may select 107 days between September 22 and March 10. For White-fronted Geese, states may select 74 days with a 2-bird bag or 88 days with a 1-bird bag between September 22 and February 17. For Brant, states may select 70 days with a 2-bird bag or 107 days with a 1-bird bag.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Jones, and seconded by Commissioner Deviney, the late migratory game bird season recommendations were unanimously approved as amended above.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business to discuss.

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

Tentative

Date: Wednesday, September 19, 2012

Place: Jackson Office

Time: 2:00 p.m.

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 relocation of a business or industry, transactions in land, and discussions on job performance of personnel in specific positions, and related issues. Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, the Commission voted unanimously to enter into Executive Session.

Commissioner Deviney updated the Commission on a recent trip to Texas by staff and other interested parties to study the captive deer breeding industry. No action was required of the Commission.

Ed Penny updated the Commission on operational plans and staffing of the new Canemount WMA. No action was required of the Commission.

There was no further business for Executive Session.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Jones, 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

Date

9/19/12



John C. Stanley IV, VICE-CHAIRMAN

Date

9/19/12