

# **MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, & PARKS**

Thursday, October 25, 2012 @ 8:00 a.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, and Charles Rigdon.

**ABSENT:** Commissioner 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; Libby Hartfield; Ed Penny; Chad Dacus; Ron Garavelli; Lt. Col. Sammy Fisher; Jim Walker; Donnie Tate; Sharon Polzin; and Doug Mann, Special Assistant Attorney General.

## **WELCOME**

Chairman Munro welcomed guests from Mississippi State University, Ducks Unlimited, Inc. and Delta Waterfowl.

## **MINUTES**

**ACTION:** Upon motion made by Commissioner Rigdon and seconded by Commissioner Stanley, the Minutes of the September 19, 2012 meeting were unanimously approved as presented.

## **TODAY’S AGENDA**

**ACTION:** Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Stanley, today’s agenda was unanimously approved.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Chairman Munro welcomed Mr. Kim Campbell of K&L Caviar, Carrollton, MS. The Commission received his letter of September 5, 2012, requesting to appear before the Commission. Mr. Campbell listed the following concerns to the Commission related to the change from 5” to 6” square mesh netting for the upcoming fishing season.

- Mr. Campbell advised the Commission that he received a letter on August 6<sup>th</sup> from the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks mandating a change from 5” to 6” netting



for paddlefishing, effective November 20, which he concluded was not enough notice to change out the size.

- Secondly, the 6" netting is not commonly stocked or sold in the U.S. and no one in the states has the capabilities of producing it. An import order takes 4-6 months to receive, plus three months to build a finished product. Supplemental documents were passed out by Mr. Carpenter for Commission review. These documents verify the type and size netting required for state compliance is not available. (e.g. letter from Mr. Lee Charpentier, General Manager of The Fish Net Company, and an email from Mr. Albert Carruthers, Memphis Net & Twine Co., Inc.)
- Thirdly, carp, catfish, and buffalo encompass a large portion of his income and very few of these fish can be caught with the 6" netting.

Due to these considerations, Mr. Campbell asked the Commission to rescind the 6 inch netting rule for one season to allow ample time for fishermen to not only purchase and make the required changes but to use the nets which were already purchased for this season.

Additionally Mr. Campbell requested the Commission to consider opening up new water areas in the Mississippi River which have never been touched. This would allow fishermen to spread out and help with the fish harvest. New water would also allow more people to be involved and more permits sales.

Chairman Munro stated that the Commission would take this under advisement and let him know. He thanked Mr. Campbell for his comments.

## **LICENSE SALES REPORT**

### **License Sales Report**

Mr. Michael Bolden, Director of Administrative Services, presented the License Sales Report for the month of September, 2012. The Commissioners were asked to disregard the License Sales Report in their notebooks. Mr. Bolden distributed a line chart report entitled "All Months-Internet Only," which displayed 2010 – 2012 sales by month. Mr. Bolden's office has been revisiting every scenario as to why and how sales are different and changing. The greatest change is in respect to how licenses are sold. The number of total licenses sold through the internet has steadily increased. His conclusions were that the average person is now waiting until a week or days before hunting season opens (November) to buy their licenses, where in the past their licenses were purchased in July.

### **Marketing: 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conservation Celebration November 3 – 4**

The Marketing team has done a lot of work on our 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary plans. Lacy Kuhn handed out copies of the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration poster to the Commission while Mr. Bolden requested for the Commission to waive the admission fees and user permit requirements to all our WMAs, State Lakes, and State Parks on November 3-4 and free admission to the MS Museum of Natural Science on November 3 only. Hunting and fishing license requirements and WMA regulations would still be applicable to engage in hunting and fishing activities. This



waiver would highlight the Conservation Celebration that would be held in honor of MDWFP's 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

**ACTION: Motion to approve the waiver of admission fees and user permit requirements to all WMAs, State Lakes, and State Parks on November 3-4 and free admission to the MS Museum of Natural Science on November 3 was made by Commissioner Stanley, seconded by Commissioner Deviney, and unanimously approved.**

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

### Citation Report

Lt. Col. Sammy Fisher, Law Enforcement Assistant Chief, distributed the October citation report for Commission review. No remarks or action was made.

### Reinstatement Requests

Lt. Col. Sammy Fisher, Law Enforcement Assistant Chief, brought before the Commission five requests for reinstatement. Each violator appeared before the Commission and stated the reason for his conviction. Commissioner Munro requested to hear all five requests and vote at the conclusion.

- Michael Hayman, Leland, MS

Mr. Hayman stated that he was convicted in 2009 and charged with killing a deer on a public road. A local farmer called the conservation officer.

- Derek Dedeaux, Saucier, MS

Mr. Dedeaux was convicted in 2010 with killing a deer on a public road. Two other guys were in the truck with him. All three received a ticket. He was fined \$2,000 and spent five days in jail.

- Hunter Sullivan, Jr., Vardaman, MS

Mr. Sullivan informed the Commission that he had killed a deer earlier in the day. Later in the day his girlfriend had asked him to pull off the road since there were no bathroom facilities close at hand. A Law Enforcement Officer stopped to investigate and noticed that Mr. Sullivan had a loaded rifle in his possession. He stated that he had intended to shoot hogs in the potato field with his gun. He was fined \$3,800 and spent two nights in jail.

- Richard Hanks, Vicksburg, MS

Mr. Hanks spotlighted and shot a deer. A conservation officer heard the shot and had a road block set up as he was leaving. Everyone in the truck with him received a ticket as well.

- Ethan Porter, Kosciusko, MS

Mr. Porter explained that he was returning home from a softball game. His friends had been drinking and appointed him as the designated driver. On the way home a deer was



spotlighted and shot. A conservation officer heard the shot and ticketed everyone in the truck. His fine was \$2,800.

Chairman Munro emphasized that the penalties are tough so that we can protect wildlife for future generations. He hoped that these men would spread the word of their experiences and the consequences.

Lt. Col. Fisher advised the Commission that all these men had met the requirements and paid their fines. He recommended that they be reinstated.

**ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Stanley and seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, the request to reinstate hunting privileges to all of the above mentioned men was unanimously approved.**

## WILDLIFE

### Hope Outdoors – Scott County & Stone County Deer Hunts

Mr. Ed Penny, Wildlife Bureau Director, presented the following exemption requests from Hope Outdoors. By letters of October 3 and October 9, 2012, Hope Outdoors informed the Commission that they would be hosting deer hunts in Scott County (December 1 and 2) and in Stone County (December 7 and 8) for physically disabled and terminally ill hunters. In these letters Hope Outdoors requested exemption in the type of firearms used from primitive weapons to normal firearms. The use of a regular firearm would allow more hunters a chance to participate. Eight to twelve youth and adults will be participating in each hunt.

**ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Stanley, the abovementioned exemptions were unanimously approved as presented.**

### State Waterfowl Stamp Sales (1988 – 2012)

Mr. Ed Penny provided a handout listing the 2012-13 Duck Stamp Funding requests and recommendations. Several representatives from these organizations were present to provide further information on their funding requests.

MSU Research: Brian Davis, Assistant Professor at Mississippi State University, distributed an information packet to the Commission on a waterfowl study being conducted by graduate student, Mr. Joe Lancaster. Mr. Lancaster is an award-winning master's student at MSU who has just finished his second year on the survival study of radio-marked female mallards in relation to habitat use. Davis stated that his office would like to continue this study for two more years in the South Delta and expand it to the North Delta in winters 2013-14 and 2014-15. There will be no field work conducted this year while Mr. Lancaster is analyzing his data and writing his thesis.

Mr. Lancaster came forward and thanked the Commission for their support of this study. He stated that habitat use in the Mississippi Valley has only been studied once before and that was in Louisiana and southern Arkansas. The Louisiana study found a high use of forested habitats.



Unfortunately with that project they were not able to quantify availability habitat which is an important aspect. He stated that it is necessary to not only look at what habitats are being used and preferred but what habitats are available. Mr. Lancaster is currently using satellite imagery to extract water availability from landscaping. His study quantified this with individual female mallard's winter home range sizes. His results show that mallards prefer forested habitats.

Mr. Lancaster stated that this study went a step further to study mallard survival. Survival has not been studied until now. His findings indicate that mallards using forested wetlands exhibited greatest winter survival. He encouraged managers to integrate forested wetlands (e.g., red oaks) into habitat complexes.

Delta Waterfowl: Mr. Joel Brice with Delta Waterfowl, Bismark, North Dakota office, stepped up to the podium next. He advised the Commission that the North Dakota prairie is facing the possible extinction of CRP (Conservation Reserve Program) acres (land the government has paid landowners to keep idle). He gave detailed information on two conservation programs: Delta's Adopt A Pothole and ALUS (Alternative Land Use Services) which he described as a "homerun" for waterfowl.

In 1999 Delta Waterfowl started a partnership with the Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation, which is a perpetual wetlands easement program. This program covers 1,500 acres of wetland that will be protected forever. Delta Waterfowl's target area is Southwest Manitoba, which is a part of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan target area.

He concluded that the U.S. wetlands are somewhat protected, even though dwindling each year, but in Canada the protection is either not there or it is not enforced. If you lose water from the breeding grounds, you do not have ducks. He stated that they were asking in their proposal this year for a change from the traditional support of ALUS to the Adopt A Pothole Program, which would work directly with Mississippi Duck Stamp funds covering 550 acres of wetlands. Mr. Brice expressed his appreciation for MDWFP assistance this year and year's past.

Ducks Unlimited: Dr. Curtis Hopkins, Director of the Southern Regional Office of Ducks Unlimited, Inc., invited members of the Commission to the Ducks Unlimited Office in Ridgeland. The Southern Regional Office covers 13 states from Virginia to New Mexico. Ducks Unlimited (DU) has a long standing relationship with MDWFP. DU and MDWFP have worked together on properties MDWFP owns and manages as well as with private land owners on approximately 200,000 acres here in Mississippi.

We know that we need to do work here in Mississippi but continue working in the breeding grounds as well. He presented a request to continue the breeding ground work in Eastern Saskatchewan Parklands NAWCA Project. These funds will be matched 4:1 with other agency and DU funds.

A beautiful gold and wood plaque was presented by Dr. Curtis Hopkins, Dave Kustersky (Grants Land Manager for DU Canada), and Tim Willis (Regional Biologist) to the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks in appreciation for contributions of \$1,000,000 for the conservation of waterfowl breeding habitat in Canada. Accepting the plaque were Dr. Sam Polles, Executive Director, and Chairman Jerry Munro.





**ACTION:** No decision was made by the Commission on these requests. They will be discussed further with the staff before a final decision is made. An announcement will be made at that time.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business.

### **TENTATIVE MEETING DATES**

Tuesday, November 27, 2012 (Working Session) - 3:00 PM - Location: Jackson Office  
Wednesday, November 28, 2012 (Commission Meeting) – 8:30 AM – Location: Jackson Office  
Wednesday, December 19, 2012 (Commission Meeting) – 1:00 PM – Location: TBA

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**ACTION:** Upon motion made by Commissioner Rigdon and seconded by Commissioner Stanley, the Commission voted unanimously to close the meeting to determine the need for executive session. The Commission determined that executive session was needed to discuss transactions in land, relocation of a business or industry, ongoing investigations, and related issues. Upon motion made by Commissioner Rigdon and seconded by Commissioner Stanley, the Commission voted unanimously to enter into executive session.

Ron Garavelli was asked to address the Commission on the K&L Caviar request regarding the net mesh size change for paddlefish. The Commission was informed that the mortality rate would be greater with the five inch netting as compared to a six inch size. Mr. Garavelli also had made some phone inquiries and found that the six inch netting is available for purchase in the states.

Discussion followed regarding whether or not to go back to the smaller mesh. The Commission then directed the staff to bring a temporary rule forward that would allow the smaller five inch mesh to be used in the 2012-2013 season.

**ACTION:** Upon motion made by Commissioner Stanley and seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, the Commission voted unanimously to allow smaller five inch mesh nets to be used in the 2012-2013 paddlefish season.

Ron Garavelli also advised the Commission that 4.5 acres at Lake Bogue Homa were available for purchase. This tract would provide permanent access to the lake's emergency spillway. The Commission directed staff to pursue this purchase, without formal action.

Discussion followed regarding the requests for Duck Stamp fund grants from MSU, Delta Waterfowl and Ducks Unlimited. Staff presented its recommendations and discussion followed.



The Commission determined that Delta Waterfowl should receive \$100,000; Ducks Unlimited should receive \$100,000; and MSU should receive \$33,686.00.

**ACTION:** Upon motion made by Commissioner Deviney and seconded by Commissioner Rigdon, the Commission voted unanimously to award Duck Stamp funds as set forth above.

Dr. Polles updated the Commission on the current PEER review of deer management programs, specifically management of enclosures. No action was required of the Commission.

There was no further business for Executive Session.

**ACTION:** Upon motion made by Commissioner Rigdon and seconded by Commissioner Stanley, 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

11-28-12  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John C Stanley IV, VICE-CHAIRMAN

11-28-12  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date