



STATE OF NEW YORK CONSERVATION FUND ADVISORY BOARD
625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-4750
Monthly Meeting Minutes

Two Hundred Seventy-eighth Meeting
Sunday, March 9, 2008
Best Western Airport Inn, 200 Wolf Road, Albany, NY

Call to Order

Mr. Bevilacqua called the meeting to order at 10:01 AM.

Roll Call

Voting Board Members Present

Charles Bevilacqua	Region 1
Gordon Whiting	Region 2
Alan Rosa	Region 4
Jason Kemper	Region 5
Charles Pace	Region 7
Howard Cushing	NYSCC
Bill Pike	FWMA

Voting Board Members Excused

Linda Sicley	Region 6
Charles Hancock	Region 8
Fred Langdon	Region 9

Ex-Officio Members Present

NYS DEC Commissioner, represented by
Douglas Stang, Division of Fish,
Wildlife and Marine Resources
Wallace John, Office of Natural
Resources

Ex-Officio Members Absent

Assembly Ways and Means Committee
Assembly EnCon Committee
Senate Finance Committee
Senate EnCon Committee

DEC Personnel

Arthur J. Newell and John Major, Division of
Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources
Major Tim Duffy and Lt. Larry DiDonato,
Division of Law Enforcement

Guests

Harold Palmer, Loren Sigman II and Raymond
Merlotto, New York State Conservation
Council
Robert E. Brown, Franklin Co. Federation of Fish
& Game Clubs
John Rybinski, NYS Quality Deer Management
Association
Fred Neff, Onondaga Co. Federation

Mr. Bevilacqua stated that a quorum of voting members was present and opened the meeting for the conduct of business.

Correspondence: None

Minutes of 11 February 08 meeting: After minor changes were made there was a motion to accept by Mr. Rosa, seconded by Mr. Kemper, and motion carried unanimously.

New Business: CFAB congratulates Bud Woodfield on being inducted into the NYS Conservation Hall of Fame.

Committee Reports

Legislation

Mr. Cushing distributed a report entitled “Legislative Report, Conservation Fund Advisory Board, March 9, 2008” which contained information on the status of a number of pending bills, and he said he would follow up with Chairman Hancock regarding CFAB position letters on four of the bills: invasive species, prohibition on sale of pan fish, ballast water and General Obligations Law. Mr. Stang said that the invasive species bill would support the DEC Invasive Species initiative.

After a discussion about CFAB’s role in state legislation Mr. Pike made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rosa, to confirm that one of CFAB’s duties is to educate the State Legislature and others on matters that affect the Conservation Fund. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Cushing distributed a draft letter regarding the Conservation Fund deficit. A motion was made by Mr. Pike and seconded by Mr. Kemper to accept the letter as amended, that CFAB will co-sign, along with a number of non-governmental conservation organizations, and will be sent to Governor Spitzer, Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno and Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, concerning the need to resolve the Conservation Fund structural deficit. The motion was unanimously approved.

Old Business

Comparative Statement and Fund Status

The latest monthly reports were not received as of Saturday, 8 March 08.

DECALS

Mr. Stang said that the Division will have a meeting with Verizon on 14 March 08, and Verizon will be told to allocate the resources needed to complete installation of three components: Harvest reporting over the internet, voice-recognition harvest reporting, web-based point of sale operations (DECALS goes over the internet instead of phone lines). Mr. Bevilacqua said that DECALS seemed to have operating problems on the first day of sales for a new license year. Mr. Stang said that it got better each year, and that he will ask Verizon if local phasing in of sales over some days would help. In response to a question by Mr. Kemper, Mr. Stang said that internet sales for turkey licenses might be available by 1 May 08, but probably not. There was some discussion on availability of license sales locations. Mr. Neff said that the license sales door in the Gander Mtn store in Cicero has been closed for two months. Mr. Whiting said New York City offices should be required to sell licenses. A comment from the floor said the focus should be on selling licenses on the internet.

Summit

Mr. Pike said the Summit group had not met since December 07. He was not sure of the status of the Summit's action on the bills the group supported.

Department Reports

Law Enforcement

Major Duffy distributed to each member copies of the DLE biennial report covering 2005 and 2006. Major Duffy brought everyone's attention to pages 6 and 7 that show enforcement cases steadily up since 2002. An ECO Academy will begin in April for 23 recruits. New development: all ECOs will be issued cell phones. Mr. Bevilacqua asked if ECOs could print tickets in their cars. Major Duffy said that option has not been pursued because many of the tickets are written while the officers are on foot, away from their cars. Mr. Bevilacqua asked about ECO staffing. Major Duffy said fills of vacancies were quicker now and keeping pretty well up to authorized funding levels. A comment was made that the ECOs did a great job on the yellow perch enforcement in Region 5, but that the judge did a poor job on the fine. Major Duffy said that judges decisions vary greatly; the deer jackers in Otsego Co, received very stringent penalties. Mr. Bevilacqua asked Major Duffy to look into the matter of shots made at two waterfowl hunters in Nassau Co. The Major said he would and noted that hunter/landowner conflicts were growing.

Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources

Messrs. Major, Stang and John each gave a report for the Division. Mr. Major distributed handouts on deer and bear. He said the DEC's managers have proposed to expand the zone of bear hunting, moving the northern boundary of the southern zone farther north. A Rulemaking Initiative Memo is in preparation, which requires Executive office approval before regulations can be developed. There was some discussion of the pros and cons of this for the public. Mr. Bevilacqua asked if the low numbers of small game in the Catskills could be due to coyote predation. It was noted that 200 coyotes were taken over a single weekend, and it was pointed out by another present that this harvest was part of a contest in Sullivan Co., but the take came from an area larger than Sullivan Co.

Mr. Stang reported that I Fish NY was being expanded to a statewide program; handouts were distributed. As part of this expansion the division was getting back into "show business," i.e., I Fish NY displays will be staffed at quite a few sport fishing and hunting shows this year. The expanded program will also include annual updates from DEC date on "fishing hot spots," and more info will be on the web site. Mr. Stang also reported that 1) effective upon filing, emergency regulations will be adopted to help reduce the amount of adult shad taken by fishing; this means implementing a catch-and-release-only season for recreational fishing; for commercial fishing, the actions will include a limit on certain types of fishing gear, restrictions on times and places where fishing is allowed, and other changes, and 2) the Bureau of Fisheries is getting a new mass, fish marking trailer, purchased for \$1.4 million with Lake Ontario Natural Resource Damage funds. It can process 60,000 fish in 8 hours. This year it will be used to mark NY's Chinooks, then it will go to Ontario to mark their Chinooks.

Mr. John gave a report on the status of DEC fish hatchery infrastructure work by Division of Operations.

He also distributed a handout on minimum age for small and big game hunting in the U.S., and described an article in the NY Times that said hunting was down 20% in the last 20 years. Mr. Bevilacqua asked that the article be distributed to all members.

Other Business

Mr. Kemper gave an update on the plans for the 3-5 Aug 08 field trip in Region 5. He distributed an update of the schedule for the three days, which was developed in cooperation with regional DEC staff. Comments should be submitted to Mr. Kemper. Mr. Bevilacqua expressed concern about the late end of the trip on Tuesday, 5 August, and a decision about that should be made at the April meeting.

Guide Book Committee – Mr. Cushing distributed a report on the work of the Committee. The Committee wants to discuss the proofs at the next CFAB meeting.

Mr. Cushing expressed concern about the increasing restriction on access to NYC DEP and OPRHP lands for hunting and fishing; it gets worse with each parcel NYC DEP acquires, particularly in the Catskills and other areas west of the Hudson. [A guest?] commented that east of the Hudson he was not displeased with hunting and fishing access on NYC lands. After some discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Cushing and seconded by Mr. Rosa that DEC request the Commissioners of the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and NYC Department of Environmental Protection to attend CFAB's April and May 2008 meetings, respectively, to discuss hunting and fishing access on lands controlled by their agencies. The motion was unanimously approved.

The next meeting will be on 14 April 08 at the Best Western Sovereign Hotel, 1228 Western Ave., Albany, starting at 9 AM.

Mr. Rosa made a motion to adjourn at 1:47 PM, seconded by Mr. Kemper, and the motion was carried unanimously.

Fred Langdon, Secretary