

New York State FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD



**Minutes-NYS Fish and Wildlife Management Board
95th Session October 28, 29 and 30, 2004
Holiday Inn Turf
Lake George, New York**

The meeting was called to order at 1:15pm by Chairman Banks
Invocation was given by John Tusch.

Roll Call (Present at all or part of meeting)

Board Members

Region	Landowner	Sportsman	Legislator
3	Robert Underhill	Joseph Molinaro	Raymond Merlatto
4	Homer Casler	Carlton Hatch	
5	Absent	William Pike	Robert Banks
6	Judy Aldrich	Patricia Arnold	Tom Grow
7	Richard Fox	Harry Woodfield	Barbara Brown
8	Gary Evans	Emory Green	Glenn Larison
9	Jim Agle	Walt Hallbauer	Patrick Reagan

Advisors

NYSDEC- Gerald Barnhart, Jack Cooper
NYS Grange- Dwight Widger
NYS Farm Bureau- Barlow Rhodes/Judy Aldrich
Izaak Walton League of America- John Tusch
NYS Conservation Council- Clyde Muthig
NYS Forest Practice Board- Richard Fox
Cornell University- Tommy Brown

Guests

Erin Crotty, Commissioner, NYS DEC

Stewart Buchanan, Region 5
Michael Murray, Division of Law Enforcement
Walt Heinrich, Division of Law Enforcement
Steve Gerould, Division of Law Enforcement
Ed Woltmann, Bureau of Fisheries
Gordon Batcheller, Bureau of Wildlife
Steve Sanford, Bureau of Habitat
Dave Lee, Saratoga Tree Nursery Manager
Ken Kogut, Wildlife Manager, Region 5
Ed Reed, Bureau of Wildlife, Region 5

Robert Monacchio, Chairman, Conservation Fund Advisory Council
James Connolly, Director of Planning, Adirondack Park Agency
Dan Spada, Wetland Biologist, Adirondack Park Agency
Ira Stern, Deputy Director, Water Supply, New York City Department of Environmental Protection
John Potter, New York City Department of Environmental Protection

Approval of Previous Minutes, Spring 2004

A motion was duly made by Walt Hallbauer and seconded by Emery Green to accept the Spring 2004 minutes. The motion was unanimously approved.

Welcome to the Fall 2004 meeting and Region from Stewart Buchanan, Director, Region 5.

Region 5 is the destination of many sportsmen and women. The Region has over 300 brook trout ponds, 40 cold water lakes and ponds, 290 warm water ponds along with thousands of warm and cold waters streams available for fishing. Data from 1996 shows over 186,000 anglers in Region 5 fished for 2.5 million angler days and generated about \$57 million in revenue for the region. Angler surveys conducted by the region shows high satisfaction with the fisheries resources and opportunities.

The region has over 250 miles of PFR on private lands with numerous parking lots serving these areas. Region 5 hosts many fishing tournaments each year. The Region has 65 boat launches and waterway access sites. The region has placed a high priority on providing access to disabled anglers.

The Region stocks 1.4 million cold water fish annually and over 11 million warmwater fish. The Region has an active pond restoration program for native brook trout. Lake Champlain has an active sea lamprey control program in cooperation with the State of Vermont. There is over 16 miles of catch and release streams.

There are over 2 million acres of State lands in Region 5, 1.9 million are in the Adirondack park, 55 hundred acres of wildlife management areas. The region is active in the open space planing. Director Buchanan mentioned the Lewis Preserve Wildlife Management Area with over 1,356 acres of a mix of abandoned farm field and second growth forest located in the town of Altona, Clinton County. The area is noted for great upland bird hunting. Six areas are located along Lake Champlain providing great waterfowl hunting. The Wilton Wildlife Management area provides protection for the endangered Karner Blue Butterfly in addition to providing hunting opportunities.

Black Bears are an important issue for Region 5, they have become a problem in the High Peaks Areas for hikers and campers. The region is activity trying to deal with this issue. Hunting is an important management tool in the region, last year 809 bears were taken.

The Adirondacks provide a quality wilderness trophy hunting experience. The Adirondack region active in fur bearer research with fisher, martin and otter. The region has a good population of turkey, eagle, moose and other wildlife. Region 5 is the place to go for a quality wildlife experience.

Director Buchanan then continued introducing Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Erin Crotty.

Commissioner Erin Crotty

The Commissioner thanked Chairman Banks for inviting her to the meeting. Commissioner Crotty expressed her feeling that organized sporting groups were extremely important in helping the Department meet it's overall goal in fish and wildlife management. The Commissioner recognized Director Barnhart for his leadership in the Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources, Jack Cooper and Ron Montesi the Region 5 DEC liaison to local governments in the Adirondacks.

The Commissioner presented a PowerPoint presentation that included discussion of:

- Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative
- Acid Deposition Reduction
- Open Space Preservation
- Earth Day
- The Conservation Fund Working Forest Conservation Easement Project, including International Paper property
- DECALS
- Big Games License Sales
- State Wildlife Grants Program
- Aquatic Habitat Restoration and the Habitat & Access Stamp program
- Conservation Habitat License Plate
- Public Access (Boating and Fishing, PFR)
- Fish Hatcheries
- New York's Great Fishery (Lake Ontario, Oneida Lake, Atlantic Sturgeon Restoration)
- Deer Hunting and Management
- Upgrades to the Wildlife Pathology Unit
- Spring Youth Turkey Hunt and upland bird hunting
- Black Bear
- Adirondack Cooperative Loon Program
- Eagles
- Venison Donation Program
- Empire State Outdoors, The Conservationist
- Environmental Conservation Officers, Academy, K-9 Units, "Safe Boats"(ERAMP)
- Hunter Safety
- I Fish NY Program and Conservation Education Camps
- DEC Campgrounds

The Board gave the Commissioner a warm reception and thanked her for presentation.

Regional Reports

Region 3 - Pre-filed report

Missing

Region 4- Pre-filed report

Region 4 Representative Carlton Hatch provided pre-filed report. The Region 4 Board is keeping aware of the New York City Permit system for hunting and fishing. There is hope that small game and trapping will be allowed in the future. The Hunters for the Hungry program has increased in Green and Columbia Counties. Otsego Lake access continues to be a problem. Schoharie County is looking to expand pheasant stocking. Bear hunting opportunities are expected to include Wildlife Management Unit 4O and 4P. The Board has had considerable discussion about the habitat stamp program.

Carlton also mentioned a proposed development project located around the Belleayre Ski Area that is of concern to the Region 4 Board. He also indicated that the Board is concerned about the status of the Catskill Interpretative Center. There is a group that has formed to try to help move it along, the "Friends of the Catskill Interpretive Center."

Region 5 - No report

Region 6

Judy Aldrich gave an informal report: Since Denis Falkenham retired that has no DEC person assigned to the Region 6 board. The Board is having difficulty getting information from the Regional DEC office. There are still several members of the Board that do not have copies of the By-Laws. The Board had an issue with the amendment of the Unit Management Plan without public meeting. The board did not get a good answer. There was questions about WMU 6J going back to antler only muzzle loader season. That has not happened yet this season. Judy indicated that the attitude of the DEC Region 6 office toward the Region 6 FWMA Board is very disturbing. Judy asked Director Barnhart about public fishing rights mapping and brochures. Gerry indicated that there is funding and Region 6 is getting starting.

Judy talked about the invasion of Swallow Wart and the impacts that it is having. This will have an adverse impact on habitat in Jefferson County and is found in St. Lawrence County.

Region 6 does not have a full board and can not achieve a quorum.

Region 7 - prefiled report

Bud Woodfield reported that the Region 7 Board only has one dinner meeting a year. The Board has supported and funded the Nineveh Fishing Access site located on the Susquehanna river. The Board has also supported the Whitney Point and Cleveland Dock Access Sites and is proposing to contributed \$1000 to each of these sites through the habitat stamp program.

The Board has purchased access by permission signs for distribution to landowners.

The Board is working with the pheasants forever program.

The Region 7 Board is concerned about the lack of sportsmen's participation in Unit Management Planning and open space planning.

Region 8 - pre-filed report

Emery Green presented the Region 8 report. The Board is actively promoting the Habitat Stamp and is concerned that license agents are not publicizing the stamp.

The Board is following the acquisition of 210 acres to the High-Tor Wildlife Management Area. The CFAB's annual field took place in Region 8 this year. The trip include visits to various state owned facilities including ; Honeoye Inlet WMA, Naples Creek, High- Tor WMA, Bath Fish Hatchery and Montezuma WMA. The group also visited the Seneca Army Depot.

The Board was involved in the Empire Farm Days, hunting by permission signs were a popular item sold at the show. The 31st annual National Hunting and Fishing Day was celebrated at the Region 8 Office in September, licenses were sold at the event.

Region 9 - Pre-filed report

Jim Agle indicated that the Region is pushing a number of projects through the Habitat Stamp program. The Board has chosen three members to serve on the Region 9 Habitat Stamp review team.

Wildlife food plots and grassland cover has been planted at Carlton Hill Multiple Use Area in Wyoming County. Food Plots in Niagara County were damaged by too much rain.

Eighteen Mile Creek Salmon fish is improving in Niagara and Erie Counties, in the Town of Evans a house was purchased, demolished to provide a parking lot. LaFarge Gravel Company is working with the Regional staff to develop PFR along Elton Creek and to construct parking areas. They will continue to work on some habitat improvement projects for the creek. The Board reported that Cormorants are becoming a concern to Niagara River anglers.

The Region 9 office is negotiating with Niagara Power project to provide habitat improvement in the Niagara River and adjacent lands.

Bob Woodward is stepping down from his position on the Region 9 Board.

Advisory Members Reports

Farm Bureau

Judy Aldrich provided a copy of the Farm Bureau's policy resolution for consideration by the Board.

Jeff Williams wants to give an up-to-date report on actions of Farm Bureau at the State Level, has not been invited to Board. His address is: Jeff Williams, Senior Associate Director of Public Policy, Legislative Director, New York State Farm Bureau, 156 Wolf Road, P.O. Box 5330, Albany, New York, 12205.

Barlow Rhodes will be taking over as the Farm Bureau representative

Izaak Walton League Report

John Tusch provided a pre-filed report that indicated that the League was pleased to have played a role in eliminating the proposed tax on guns. The League feels that sportsmen need to be alert to similar proposals. The IWLA is concerned about the exotic fish “snake head fish” which has been found in US waters. The League is continuing to watch the St. Lawrence Seaway Project which appears to be dead at the moment but may just be in a coma. Windmill power is still an important issue for IWLA. The League continues to support windmill power.

New York State Conservation Council

The council reported on a resolution passed by the NYCCC relative to creating a mandatory habitat stamp. The resolution requested the creation on a mandatory stamp for non-residents who wish to purchase a hunting, fish or trapping license.

From the “Grassroots Newsletter” the NYCCC main goal this year is to get the \$22 million needed to repair NYS Fish Hatcheries. The Council wants to become a leader in trapping issues, the Council has a new program director Janice Hankey for trapping. She has a doctorate and has considerable experience in the trapping industry. The Council also want to improve small game hunting. The Council is looking for more places to stock pheasants. The NYCCC is beefing up the Legislative Team to include former ECOs and State Police officers.

New York State Grange - No report

New York State Forest Practice Board - Pre-filed Report

Dick Fox reported that the Director of DEC Lands and Forests has promised a rebirth of Regional participation in the Forest Practice Board (FPB). However the DEC will not be providing secretaries for the regional boards. The Forest Land Enhancement Program has been re-designated with \$15 million from the 2002 Farm Bill, no fund have been seen in NYS.

Soil and Water Board

Judy Aldrich reported that the State Meeting was going on this week. She reported that the state representative indicated that the State Soil and Water Board was making a resolution in support of the FPB and was amended to include the Region 6 FWM Board.

Cornell University Pre-filed Report

Tom Brown provided a written report to the Board. The report updated HDRUs work on Black Bear management with the DEC, Northern New York and Vermont Waterfowl Survey, and Suburban Deer Management.

Chairmans Report

Chairman Banks reported that he prepared a letter to the Commissioner in support of the ECO compensation package. He reported on the Governor’s veto of blaze orange bill.

Committee Assignments

The following is the assignments as of 10/28/04

Executive: Bob Banks Region 5
Pat Arnold Region 6
Emory Green Region 8
Walt Hallbauer Region 9
Joe Molinaro Region 3
Bud Woodfield Region 7 - for the fall meeting
Carlton Hatch Region 4 - for the fall meeting

Habitat: Gary Evans Chairman
Richard Fox
John Tusch
Emory Green
Ray Merlatto

Access: Bill Pike Chairman
Pat Arnold
Barlow Rhodes
Tom Grow

Resolutions: Glenn Larison Chairman
Barbara Brown
Judy Aldrich
Walt Hallbauer

Legislative: Bud Woodfield
Joe Molinaro

Farm Days: Emory Green
Joe Molinaro
Bud Woodfield
Carlton Hatch
Pat Arnold
Gary Evans

Nominating: Walt Hallbauer
Joe Molinaro
Bill Pike

Adirondack Park Agency - Land Use by James Connolly, Director of Planning and Dan Spada, APA Wetlands Biologist.

James Connolly is the Director of Planning for the APA. Jim came to the APA after many years with the DEC. While at DEC Jim worked with Public Affairs and later working on the management plan for Lake Champlain.

Jim presented a PowerPoint presentation on the APA. The “park” is composed of almost 6 million acres made up of 48% state owned and 52% private land. There are about 131,000 permanent residents with seasonally some 200,000 additional residents. Over 60 million people live within a days drive of the park. There are 5 watersheds in the park; St. Lawrence, Lake Champlain, Oswegatchie/Black, Upper Hudson and Mohawk, comprising 11,000 lakes and

ponds and New York's highest peaks. Teddy Roosevelt was instrumental in preserving lands for parks and open space. Size-wise, the Adirondack Park is larger than any other "park" in the lower 48 states. The establishment of the Adirondack Park was important in preserving many species of wildlife.

Article 7 of the New York Constitution in 1895 created the "Forever Wild Clause" that was critical to the establishment of the Adirondack Park. The APA was created in 1971 to... "ensure optimum conservation, protection, preservation, development and use...of the Adirondack Park."

The APA is an independent, bipartisan state agency with 11 members, 8 NYS residents appointed by the Governor, 3 ex-officio members from Secretary of State, Commissioners of DEC and Economic Development. The agency has approximately 65 staff.

The APA created a state master plan in 1972 and a private land use plan in 1973. The DEC must complete a Unit Management Plan for the park before any recreational facilities can be built. The DEC and APA has a UMP initiative to complete all outstanding Management plans UMPs.

Freshwater Wetlands Regulations within the APA, Dan Spada

Wetlands regulations first took effect in 1973 and was enhanced by the NYS Freshwater Wetlands Act in 1975. Wetlands protection is an integrated program which incorporates the Adirondack Park Agency Act, NYS Freshwater Wetlands Act and the NYS Wild and Scenic and Recreational Act. Wetlands have a vital link between environmental and economic issues. The NYS Freshwater Wetlands Act recognized APA jurisdiction of wetlands within the Park. About 12 % of the Park is wetlands, of which 60% are spruce/fir/hemlock/white cedar. A large amount of the wetlands in the park have been altered by beaver.

The park receives EPA funding from a Wetlands Grant Program that allows the park to address specific issues such as:

- acid precipitation within wetlands
- cumulative impacts
- biological assessment of wetlands
- invasive wetland plants

The APA is conducting project reviews of proposed development that impacts wetlands. APA staff are also coordinating an invasive plant monitoring, management and education program in the Park. This program includes both a terrestrial and aquatic invasive plant project. Non-native species have impacts on the ecology and economy of the Park.

Some of the invasive plants of concern within the park include:

- Purple loosestrife
- Japanese knotweed
- common reed
- garlic mustard
- Eurasian water milfoil
- curlyleaf pondweed
- watershestnut
- fanwort

Committee Reports

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee discussed the Habitat Stamp Granting Program. Jack Cooper reviewed the procedures for submitting an application. The DEC will be preparing a news release announcing the availability of applications by November 12. The deadline for submitting applications will be January 7, 2005. A PowerPoint presentation will be provided to the entire Board during this meeting.

The Executive Committee is still concerned about the actual sales of the Habitat Stamp.

The Spring meeting has been set for March 31, April 1 and 2, 2005 to be held in Albany at either the Quality Inn or the Best Western.

The Executive Committee will meet to plan for the Spring meeting on February 10, 2005 from 11 AM to 1 PM at a location to be announced. We will be looking at either Herkimer (DEC Lands and Forest Office or the Region 6 Utica Suboffice).

Pat Arnold expressed concerns about the lack of organization in the Region 6 FWM Board and the lack of involvement by the Regional DEC Staff. The Board can not get a quorum and can not get DEC staff to regularly attend meetings. It was suggested that the Board send a letter to Regional Director with copy to Lynnett Stark requesting help to resolve issues.

Emory Green asked how many regional FWM Board members were on the Open Space Committee. He feels that this is a good way to get access sites developed.

There was discussion if the Legislative Committee should remain a committee. It was agreed that it should and Bud Woodfield will remain chairman. The Publicity Committee will remain with Dick Fox the chairman. There was a suggestion that licenses be sold at the Empire Farm Days.

Nominating Committee will remain the same.

Habitat Committee

Gary Evans discussed a proto type for a habitat button that could be used to promote the habitat stamp. Gary passed around samples of the buttons for the Board. The button costs is around \$0.25. There was discussion that a quality button could help to sell the habitat stamp. The DEC needs to do something to increase the revenue from sales. There was a suggestion to prepare a letter on the objectives of the habitat stamp program and send copies of letter and button to the members of the legislature. Gary suggested that the DEC could hold a competition to let school kids design the button for the upcoming year. Gary also suggested that the FWM Boards get buttons made up to advertise the Boards.

Gary discussed how staff shortages are impact the ability of the DEC to manage state lands. In Region 8 there are several cases where there has been encroachments onto state land.

Access Committee

Bill Pike reported that mapping of access sites is getting started by the DEC. The lack of personnel has hampered this effort. Access for ATVs is a sore subject in the Adirondacks and

elsewhere in New York. In Region 6 the Regional Board asked an ATV club to work with the County to use their forest properties. There was concern about the cost of the licensing of ATVs and the lack of any return on this to the user.

The Tug Hill Commission put together a paper on ATV use in the Tug Hill. The paper presents a non-biased approach to providing information on laws and ATV use.

A factor impacting access on farm land is the lack of people living on the land.

There is a federal initiative to give landowners incentive to provide access to his land. This is the "Open Fields Legislation." This program also takes over some of the liability that the landowner could face.

There was also some discussion about when farmers get federal assistance, they should be required to provide public access. In the west this is being done under the CRP program.

There was discussion about the need to advertise the habitat stamp.

It was pointed out the successful program in Saratoga County to build an access parking lot on Kayaderosseras Creek.

Barbara Brown sited a situation in Oswego County where an ATV club with 500 members that pay dues are working with the county and local sheriff to improve an area that was logged through maintenance and protection of the area. The club has the right to issue tickets to non-authorized riders. This is an experiment to create ATV trails that appears to be working.

New York is trailing behind other neighboring states in providing ATV trails.

Tom Brown indicated that the "Open Fields Legislation" may provide more monetary incentive to large landowners such as those out west where the landowner has thousands of acres of land.

Resolutions Committee

Resolution 2004-02-1 Title: Resolution in Support of Increased Compensation for NYS ECOs and Forest Rangers

Resolution 2004-02-2 Title: Resolution in Support of Requiring All Users of State Lands to Participate in the Funding of Habitat and Access

Resolution 2004-02-3 Title: Feeding Waterfowl Resolution

Resolution 2004-02-4 Title: Resolution in Support of New York Farm Bureau Policy

The following resolution was submitted by the Region 3 FWM Board and was not supported by the Resolution Committee:

Resolution 2004-02-5 Title: Resolution in Opposition to the Development Project at the Belleayre Resort in the Towns of Shandaken, Ulster

Conservation Fund Advisory Board by Robert Monacchio

Robert Monacchio, chairman of the CFAB provided an overview of the Board and its mission. Originally called the Conservation Fund Advisory Council, the council was created by state law in 1982 to provide the license buying public information on expenditures of Conservation Fund monies. The purpose was to oversee the money spent for Fish and Wildlife resources and hunting, fish and trapping. In 1994 the Council was changes to the CFAB and place under the jurisdiction of the Conservation Law. Members represent the 9 DEC regions, 3 members appointed by the Governor, 3 members appoint from the Assembly and 3 from the Senate, a member from the NYCCC and one from the FWM Board. The board makes recommendations to State Agencies on plans, policies and programs effecting fish and wildlife. The Board submits and annual report to the commissioner of the DEC by November 15. There are several ex-officio members including the DEC Commissioner, Senate and Assembly EnCon Committees, Assembly Ways and Means, Senate Finance Committee.

The Annual report provides information on the sources of money for the Conservation Fund and the expenditures. The annual report and the Board's minutes are placed on the DEC Website.

The specific duties of the Board:

- Review allocation and expenditures of the DEC fish and wildlife programs
- Make reports available to sportsmen and women and general public of NYS about the Conservation Fund and fish and wildlife programs
- Consult with any wildlife interests and report annual to the DEC Commissioner on the fiscal needs and recommendations
- Assist the DEC on expanding sources of revenue to the Conservation Fund
- Provide recommendations on the needs of the fish and wildlife programs
- Evaluate the expenditure of Conservation Fund by reviewing existing fish and wildlife programs

All monies from the sales of hunting, trapping and fishing licenses must be used exclusively for fish and wildlife uses. The sportsmen and women of New York support themselves as a group of conservationists.

The Conservation Fund is made up of 7 accounts: traditional fund, marine resource account, habitat account, migratory bird account, surf clam account, guide license account, lifetime license.

The CFAB meets monthly and receive reports from the DEC, state legislators, Budget Office, former commissioners, Unions, organized sportsmen groups among others.

The CFAB also meets each summer in a region of NYS to look at regional facilities and resources. This August the Board met in Region 8 and looked are sites in Region 8 and 9.

When you look at the annual report you will see a projection of the health of the Conservation Fund. We are only projecting ahead by 2-3 years. The Board reviews a comparative statement each month the outlines license sales figures and expenditures. A big drain on the CF is the fringe benefits that go to state employees. The Fringe cost has gone up every year.

Last year over 600,000 hunting licenses and a million fishing licenses were sold. There was a decline of over 100,000 licenses this last year. Fishing is one of the areas where sales were down. When we lose license sales we also lose the Federal Aid that is based upon sales of state licenses.

The Board is continually working with the DEC to get complete, timely and accurate information on the state of fish and wildlife in New York. The Board is also concerned about the loss of hunting opportunity through the loss of access. We are also looking at where sportsmen and women are purchasing their licenses, especially in regions 1-3. The Board is looking at a voucher system for sportsman education as a way to insure that students who are signed up actually attend the courses.

The Board monitors the status of staffing in the Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources. This includes fish and wildlife staff as well as ECOs. The Department has lost staff over the last few years which impacts the quality of fish and wildlife management activities. The Board continues to lend its support to the department for improving funding for staff replacement.

Bob talked about the effort to get cross-bows accepted as a hunting implement. He discussed the needs for renovation within the hatchery system and looking at ways to find funds to help pay for upgrading the hatcheries. The Board is looking at ways to tap into the economic benefits that hatcheries and hunting and fishing brings into the state.

The CFAB has focused on DECALS license sales agents and how to improve the system by weeding out agents that do not sell enough licenses and getting new agents that will.

Emory Green thanked Chairman Monacchio for coming and providing the CFAB's charge to the Board. He indicated that this is the first time that someone from CFAB has addressed the FWM Board.

High Peaks Black Bear Study by Ken Kogut, Wildlife Manager Region 5 and Ed Reed (Region 5 big game biologist)

Ken reported that the Region has always had bear problems when people fed bears but now the problems are different. The region has broken down bear problems into a front country and back country problems. The region has an effort to resolve the "back country" problems by studying bears and how to change the behavior of bears as well as the hikers. The state has proposed legislation to require backpackers to use bear resistant canisters in the Eastern High Peaks areas as of 2005. Use of these canisters can change the behavior of bears and reduce bear human interactions. Ken then turned the presentation over to Ed Reed to discuss the Bear research going on in the Adirondacks.

High Peaks Bear Project

- Long history of bears taking camper's food
- Records from problems are limited
- 1999 and 2003 were very intense bear complaint years
- Bear cables installed but did not work to prevent bears from getting food
- Bears were captured and tagged in 2001
- Bear resistant containers begun to be used.

In 2003 about 170 bear encounters were reported where bear took food or damaged property. One human was injured by a bear.

The Bear Project Objectives include:

- Estimate numbers, sex and age and physical condition of bears near Marcy Dam/Lake Colden area
- Determine the home ranges, seasonal movements and habitat use of collared bears
- Determine the effectiveness of aversive conditions techniques use on nuisance bears
- Develop a Management plan to reduce negative encounters

During the First Year of the project

- Received Bureau of Wildlife Funding
- Wildlife Technician assigned to the project
- Captured and marked bears
- Tracked movement
- Began hazing bears
- Recorded bear sightings

The Study Area focused on the Eastern High Peaks Area.

Much of the effort focused on setting snares to capture and tag bears. Bears were marked using paint balls, ear tags and radio collars.

Bear activity picks up after July 4 in the Eastern High Peaks.

Some of the Early Results:

- GPS data has been downloaded but not analyzed
- Trail camera photos indicate that only the bears causing problems were captured
- Over 500 bear sighting forms have been collected.

The real problem with bears is “food storage.”

Solutions include cables, canisters, URSAC. The bears have found their way into each of these except the canisters.

Bear resistant containers will be mandatory in the Eastern High Peaks Wilderness Area in 2005. There will also be an education and outreach plan to increase the knowledge about regulations and availability of containers.

New York City Watershed Lands by Ira Stern, Deputy Director of Water Supply John Potter, NYC DEP

Since 1997 the City has been actively purchasing watershed land and purchasing easements. The City has purchased 750 new parcels amounting to 60,000 acres costing about \$150,000,000. The program is a willing seller approach. More than 100,000 acres of watershed lands have been opened to recreational use. The Watershed agreement with the NYS DEC required that lands purchased be opened to public use. The recreation rules of the city are currently being revised to include hunting and hiking. The Watershed includes 33,000 acres of reservoir land, 45,000 acres of buffer land and recently added another 60,000 acres. The 10 year plan for purchase of watershed lands ends in 2007. The City is actively purchasing easements on active farmlands. Much of the acquisition has focused on the terminal reservoirs where water can be sent directly

to the City.

Much of the of the City's watershed lands are in forest (90%) and Ag fields (8%).

John Potter discussed the Management of the forest lands on the watershed. Deer are having a significant impact on forest regeneration on the watershed lands. The City's goals for managing its property is to protect the drinking water supply quality, provide outdoor recreation opportunities to the public, provide a model for land stewardship. The City recognizes that many activities are compatible with the City's goals and include: fishing, deer hunting, hiking, snowshoeing, nature study, cross-country skiing.

In the last 6 years the amount of land available to the public for recreation has increased to 70,000 acres. After the terrorists attack of 9-11 all watershed lands were closed. The City did realize that having people using the land would allow the City to keep an eye on what was going on. The City re-instated a permit system to give people access to the watershed lands for fishing and hunting. Permits have been issued to 81,000 people, primarily people who live within the watershed. About 60,000 are fishermen, this year there should be some 10,000 hunters. The City is in the process of revising the fishing and boating regulations to include hunting and hiking into the overall regs. The City has combined all the regulations into one set and are in the process of having them reviewed by the City's sporting advisory committees. There is a committee for east of Hudson and West of Hudson. The draft regs are then subject to public hearings. The City uses a single access permit for all uses.

The City is conducting some stream improvement work within the watershed. Other kinds of land management include mowing and bidding out vacant farm lands for hay and row crops. The City is actively managing it's forests through 3-4 timber sales a year and firewood cutting occurring on watershed lands. The City has also leased some forest lands for maple syrup production.

The City has started a News Letter for recreational users of the watershed. The City could include topics of interests to the FWM Board and can work with the Board in getting articles included. There is a website that provides this information www.nyc.gov/watershedrecreation .

The City is looking at ways to make getting permits easier, through on-line. The City currently has the only public land available for bowhunting in Westchester County. The City is also looking a making snowmobile trails available to the public.

There was a question if the City pays taxes on watershed lands? Yes, the watershed agreement requires the City to pay taxes.

Law Enforcement Computer Dispatch System

Steve Gerould provided an overview of law enforcement program and the Computer Dispatch system. The DLE partnered with SUNY Oswego to develop a system. Over that past 2 years the DLE has a system to keep track of officers in the field that allows interaction with all 9 regions. The system works through the internet to maintain a dispatch system using passwords and other security measures. Captain Gerould demonstrated the system. The system can track what officers are doing during the day, what complaints are being investigated, who is on duty, who is off duty and where officers are working statewide.

The data base maintains all complaints filed since January 1, 2004. When a complaint is resolved it is marked as complete and archived. But the problem is that the system requires a dispatcher. This works ok during regular business hours, but after hours the system breaks down. The next phase of the program will attempt to resolve this issue. This system will use new technology that will connect a computer to each base station, that can transmit a signal to a centralized location from any site within the state. This could give the DLE actual 24 hour response. The DLE is working on a joint program with NYS Park Police who has 6- 24 hour dispatch centers. Once up an running other police dispatchers, 911 call centers and others can contact the dispatch center and know that they can get in touch with officers statewide.

Invasive Species Task Force - Steve Sanford, Chief Bureau of Habitat

Steve presented a PowerPoint presentation entitled “The New York State Invasive Species Task Force”

Invasive Species are defined as non-native, nonindigenous, exotic, alien species that are organisms that have been moved from their native habitat to a new location-often in a different country. Invasive species are second only to habitat loss as a threat to our biodiversity and are “non-native” to our ecosystem and whose introduction causes or likely causes economic or environmental harm or human health problems. Globalization is contributing to the rate of invasion. Invasive species have been around for a while such as; chestnut blight, water chestnut, Eurasian water milfoil, mute swan, common reed, golden nematode, Eurasian carp, Japanese knotweed or Dutch elm disease. There have been a score of new invasive including; zebra mussel, round goby, west Nile virus, woolly abelgid, Asian long-horned beetle. And others just waiting to invade like; Swede midge, southern bacterial wilt, soybean rust, plum pox virus, bighead carp, emerald ash borer, sudden oak death, Chinese mitten crab, chronic wasting disease, garlic mustard.

The Governor has established a Task Force to deal with Invasive that include state agencies, including the DEC and others. The Task Force is to assess impacts and identify existing actions and make recommendations to the Governor and Legislature by November 2005. The Group will look at prevention, early detection, rapid response, control and/or management and education.

Invasive species impact natural ecosystems, our food supply and our existing infrastructure. Various teams will be looking at impacts to terrestrial, aquatic, marine and agriculture systems, on fish and wildlife and Urban and suburban parks. The recommendations should be manageable number, easy wins, early wins, ideal solutions, pragmatic and succinct but clear.

The Task Group will provide “public outreach” with the use of a survey and request for input.

A draft report from the teams to task force due by June 2005.

Bureau of Fisheries Public Use and Outreach Update by Ed Woltmann

Ed gave an update on boat launch construction and rehabilitation. In the last 10 years 12 projects were complete. Two are being done in 2005; Lake Champlain at Ticonderoga and the Delaware River at Narrowsburg. These projects ranged in value from \$200,000 to 1.2 million for a total expended of \$6,585,000. The state budget has provided for \$500,000 for boat launch rehabilitation and fishing access sites for 2004-2005.

Proposed projects include:

- Village of Schroon Lake Boat Launch
- Fort Pond Fishing Access Site
- Grass Lake Fish Access Site
- Cranberry Lake Boat Launch
- Seneca River Fishing Access Site
- Miscellaneous other projects

Currently the State has 1240 miles of Public Fishing Rights on 422 streams and 554 fisherman parking areas. The State is in the process of mapping PFR holdings in the Catskills.

The Department is involved in many Outreach Efforts such as the “Angler Achievement Awards Program.” There were 204 entries in 2003 with 74% catch and release. So far in 2004 over 149 entries have been submitted. New state records were caught in 2004 for the Brook Trout, Splake, Hybrid Striped Bass, Fall Fish and Rainbow. The Department is preparing maps of popular lakes to aid anglers. The Division has prepared a new “user friendly” fishing regulations guide. We are working toward developing a standardized regulation sign to denote “Special Fishing Areas” and “Special No-Kill Bass Fishing Areas,” among others. New brochures are being prepared for use at DEC Hatcheries. The Division is also involved in “Angler Education” with the New York Angling All-Star Club and the First Fish Program. Finally the Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources will be hosting the 2006 American Fisheries Society Annual Meeting in Lake Placid.

Trapping update by Gordon Batcheller

Public attitudes seem to have changed for the better toward trapping. Markets are robust for furs such as racoons and otters. Its surprising that there are a lot of young people getting into the trapping field. One benefit here in New York is that there is no age limit for getting a trapping license. There are 4 areas that the DEC is involved in now:

- 1) Management for recreational trapping of abundant fur bearers such as racoon, red and gray fox and coyote to provide satisfaction with trappers.
- 2) Managing for sustained yield harvest of species with a limited range such as river otter, bobcat, martin, fisher which require more oversight by Department biologists and the federal government.
- 3) Managing for the future with trapper education and training and best management practices for trapping. New York is leading the nation in this effort. The goal is to be effective and selective for species.
- 4) Managing problem animals using a new nuisance manual.

There is a new regulation that affects beaver trappers. Some trappers are not happy with this new requirement. The regulation is designed to try to protect River Otter. The proposal is a new trigger system for body gripping traps used for beaver. The “proposed trigger” is set to allow otter to pass through the trap while beaver will be caught. The Department conducted considerable studies that showed the proposed trigger was effective at missing otter and catching beaver. This will allow the department to effectively manage beaver and avoid impacting otter populations.

The Department has purchased about 4,000 triggers and will provide them to trappers. The cost of retrofitting a trap to the new trigger system is about \$2.00. The Department is working with the Trappers Association to get this system implemented. The Association supports this proposal. The Department will be responding to comments provided on the proposal.

This trap requirement will be required in those areas where the beaver season is open but the River Otter season is closed. This will include all of Region 9 and Region 8 and most of Region 7, parts of Region 4, 5 and 6 within the southern zone.

Saratoga Tree Nursery by Dave Lee, Manager

The tree nursery program is one of the oldest programs in the DEC starting in 1902. The Saratoga Nursery began in 1908. The nursery is just over 200 acres. The nursery is a “bare root” nursery, which requires stock to be planted while the stock is dormant. Up until 5 years ago the nursery primarily sold conifer species for reforestation but within the past few years the nursery is offering more wildlife planting species. Production is down from a high of 5 million trees to around 1.5 million trees. This is a result of an excellent reforestation effort by NY State. Today the public can purchase in lots of 100 to 250 plants for conifers. Hardwoods are harder to grow and can be purchased in lots of 25 to 100. The nursery also sells seeding protectors to protect hardwoods.

The nursery was originally started for reforestation but now the focus is expanding to conservation planting for wildlife plantings, erosion planting and border plantings. Some of the original plants grown by the nursery have now been recognized as non-native species such as autumn olive, honeysuckle and are not provided currently.

The current emphases is on native species. Staff go out every year and collect seeds for planting, we get over 99% of seed from NY sources. The nursery has trouble getting enough seeds especially red oak, white oak, butternut, green ash among others and are purchased from the public.

The nursery is moving into the area of container stock. The nursery has 2 green houses to grow container stock such as, hemlock, red spruce and tamarack. Planting container stock during July and August require a watering source near the planting site otherwise they should be planted in either spring or fall. For bare root stock can only be transplanted after the plant has hardened up around November.

The nursery currently offer many species of hardwoods including: green and white ash, white birch, black walnut, butternut, poplar, maples, oaks, wild apple. For confers the nursery offers: Austrian pine, red pine pitch pine, spruces, firs and many others. The nursery offers many wildlife species and conservation species.

Division Report by Gerry Barnhart, Director Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources

Gerry gave the Board an overview of a new proposal for the 2005 deer season which calls for the archery season to open on the first of October and an early antler less muzzle loader season

opening in the southern zone on the third Saturday of October for 7 days with archery closed during that period, after which the southern zone archery season will open again until the Friday before the third Saturday in November when the southern zone gun season opens and runs until December 11. A late muzzle loader and archery will run for seven days concurrently.

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Habitat Access Stamp Update by Jack Cooper, Bureau of Fish and Wildlife Services

Jack reported that the funding process has been finalized by DEC legal staff and contracts unit. The application package will include information for applicants and an application that will be available on the DEC Website. The Deadline for applications will be January 7, 2005. Proposed projects must involve fish and wildlife habitat management and improvement and or development of public access for hunting, fishing, trapping and other fish and wildlife related recreation or study. Grant requests should be between \$1500 and \$14,999, matching funds are not required. Eligible applicants will include municipalities, not-for-profit corporation and individuals or organizations sponsored by a municipality or NFP. Applications will be assembled after the deadline date and sent to the regions were the project will be located for scoring. A team consisting of regional fish and wildlife staff and regional FWM Board members will score the projects and return them to Central Office for ranking statewide. The NYS Fish and Wildlife Management Board will provide technical assistance on the final selection of projects from a statewide prospective.

The Department is currently working on preparing a news release announcing the availability of the application. We hope to have the application packages ready to go (via the DEC Website by November 12).

Actions on Resolutions

Glenn Larison, Chairman of the Resolutions Committee presented the slate of resolutions for the Fall 2004 Meeting. The resolution committee met on Thursday October 28 and have 4 resolution to present:

- 1) 2004-2-01 Title: Resolution in Support of Increased Compensation for NYS ECOs and Forest Rangers. A motion was duly made by Glen Larison seconded by Walt Hallbauer to support resolution 2004-2-1. The motion passed unanimously. **PASSED**
- 2) 2004-2-02 Title: Resolution in Support of Requiring All Users of State Land to Participate in the Funding of Habitat and Access. A motion was made by Glen Larison seconded by Judy Aldrich to support resolution 2004-02-02. Chairman Banks feels that there would be no legislator that would support a requirement to require anyone using state land to have a permit. Others feel that the Governor is looking for other sources of revenue. Vote was called with a show of hands. The motion was defeated. **FAILED**
- 3) 2004-2-03 Title: Feeding Waterfowl Resolution. A motion was duly made by Glen Larison and seconded by Barbara Brown to support resolution 2004-2-03. The resolution was amended to remove the provision for the DEC to issue permits for feeding. A motion was duly made by Chairman Banks and seconded by Emory Green to amend the

original resolution to remove the clause concerning issuing of permits by the DEC. The amending motion passed unanimously. The motion on resolution 2004-2-03 as amended passed unanimously. **PASSED**

- 4) 2004-2-04 Title: Resolution in Support of New York Farm Bureau Policies. A motion was duly made by Glen Larison and seconded by Emory Green to support Resolution 2004-2-04. Chairman Banks indicated that the resolution would read, Be it resolved that the NYS Fish and Wildlife Management Board supports the following NY Farm Bureau Policies. The resolution will reference the list of Policy Resolutions provided by the Farm Bureau. The motion passed unanimously. **PASSED**

There were additional resolutions presented by the Region 3 Board and reviewed by the NYS FWMB Resolutions Committee and found to be unacceptable:

- 5) 2004-2-05 Title: Resolution in Opposition to the Development Project at the Belleayre Resort in the Towns of Shandaken, Ulster County and Middletown in Delaware County. A motion was duly made by Carlton Hatch and seconded by Raymond Merlatto to support Resolution 2004-2-05. Considerable discussion ensued concerning the resolution. There was concern about the size of the project and its impacts on habitat and access. It was not known if SEQR had been done on the project yet. Some members objected to the language in the resolution. Chairman Banks asked that the resolution be withdrawn and revised to identify impacts and concerns of the Board. The Region 3 representatives agreed to withdraw the resolution. **FAILED** (no vote taken)
- 6) 2004-2-06 Title: Resolution in Support of Sportsmen's Advisory Council of the Catskill Watershed Commission Resolution of 9-9-04. The resolution focus's on the dissatisfaction of the Sportsmen's Advisory Council over the way the City is managing watershed lands in the West-of-Hudson area for hunting and fishing. Chairman Banks indicated that it was up to the Region 3 Board to bring such a resolution to the Statewide Board. A motion was duly made by Joe Molinaro and seconded by Bud Woodfield for the Statewide FWM Board to support Resolution 2004-2-06 in support of the Sportsmen's Advisory Council resolution 9-9-04. Discussion focused on the language in the text of the Council's resolution as not being acceptable to Board members. It was discussed that this Board can not change the language in the Council's resolution. The Board must either support or not support as written. The question was called and a vote was taken. The motion was defeated. **FAILED**

A motion was duly made by Judy Aldrich and seconded by Walt Hallbauer to have the Executive Committee of the Statewide FWM Board review and prepare a resolution based upon recommendations from the Region 3 Board relative to the status of the Belleayre Project. The motion passed unanimously.

Glenn Larison suggested that in the future all proposed resolutions should go through the resolution committee so that all proposed resolutions are subject to review by the committee and the Board and prepared in a proper format. Chairman Banks agreed and indicated that he would be sending out some guidance on resolutions that will go out with the minutes.

There was a suggestion that when a Regional Board proposes a resolution that the regional representative appear in front of the Resolutions Committee when they are considering that

resolution. It was also pointed out that the By-Laws require that a proposed resolution be submitted to the Resolution committee one month before the statewide Board meeting.

Chairman Banks will put together a resolutions procedure and have the chairman of the Resolutions committee review it and send it out to Board members.

Expanded Bear Hunting Opportunities

A motion was duly made by Walt Hallbauer and seconded by Emory Green to have the Board submit a letter in support of the Department of Environmental Conservation's efforts to expand bear hunting opportunities to Gerald Barnhart, Director Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources. The motion passed unanimously. Chairman Banks ask the Board Secretary to prepare the letter on behalf of the Board and send it to Director Barnhart and Commissioner Crotty.

Judy Aldrich indicated that she was withdrawing her request for the Executive committee to speak to the Assembly and Senate.

A motion was duly made by Bud Woodfield and seconded by John Tusch to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 10:45 am.

Members: Representatives of County Boards of Supervisors/County Legislators, Landowners and Sportsman

Advisory Members: New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, New York State Conservation Council Inc., Farm Bureau of New York, New York State Grange, New York State Forest Practice Board, Izaak Walton League of America; New York State Division, New York State Soil and Water Conservation Committee, New York State College of Environmental Science and Forestry at Syracuse University, New York State College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell University.