

New York State FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD



Minutes-NYS Fish and Wildlife Management Board 94th Session April 1, 2 and 3, 2004 Albany, New York

The meeting was called to order at 1:10pm 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		Carlton Hatch	
5	Don Sage	William Pike	Robert Banks
6	Judy Aldrich	Patricia Arnold	
7	Eugene Blumer	Harry Woodfield	
8	Gary Evans	Emory Green	Glenn Larison
9	Charles Couture	Walter Hallbauer	

Advisors

NYSDEC- Jack Cooper, Gerald Barnhart, John Major, Douglas Stang
NY Farm Bureau- Judy Aldrich
NYS Grange- Dwight Widger
Izzak Walton League of America- John Tusch
NYS Conservation Council- Clyde Muthig
NYS Forest Practice Board- Richard Fox
Cornell University- Tommy Brown

Guests

Steve Schassler, Director Region 4

Dave Odell, DEC Region 8
Greg Fuerst, DEC Region 8
Deborah Peck Kelleher, Senator Carl Marcellino's Office
Howie Cushing-New York State Conservation Council
Major Walt Heinrich, NYS DEC

Welcome to the spring meeting and Region 4 from Steve Schassler, Director, Region 4.

Director Schassler indicated that there are several key issues that he would like to report on:

- The Department has appointed Natural Resources Supervisors in all regions. This will help to improve coordination between other program areas in the regions. Peter Innis was appointed the Region 4 NR Supervisor.
- There are more user conflicts over the use of state lands, these conflicts are between traditional users of the resources and passive users. We need to learn how to better work together as partners.
- This year NY had the lowest sportsman injury rate of any previous year. That says a lot about our sportsman education effort.
- Deer populations are becoming problems in some locations, use of hunting to control populations is critical.
- NYS is acquiring new state lands at a record rate, however the management of this land is lagging behind. We need to find innovative ways to provide management of this land including partnerships between traditional and passive users of the resources.
- Spring is the time for Striped Bass, get out on the Hudson River and enjoy.

Previous Minutes, Fall 2003 Minutes

Minutes were approved by Board

Major Reports

Chairmans Report:

Hot Button issue- "Mandatory Blaze Orange", need to reach consensus on this issue before a resolution is developed.

Question about status of Executive committee meeting with member of the Senate and Assembly environmental committees. The Chairmen on these committees were invited to the Spring 2004 meeting. Only representative attending is Senator Marcellino's assistant Deborah Peck Kelleher. Board want Legislature to know what we are all about. What should we tell them? The board is not a lobbying group. The Board is an "advisory" group. The board wants to know how to get the Environmental Committees to listen to FWM Board's interests.

The next Executive Committee meeting can be held in Albany and an attempt will be made to meet with Conservation Committee Chairmen and/or members.

The Board needs copies of Department Bills. Should make Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources is aware that the Board wants to see Department bills.

Considerable discussion about snowmobile bill and ATV use, trails, licensing.

Region 3- Pre filed report

Major activities from report follows:

- The Region 3 Board formed a committee to be liaison with NYS Parks and Recreation and Historic Preservation to review and improve access to parklands in Region 3
- The Board is working with Parks and Recreation on getting wider use of undeveloped parkland in Orange County including hunting and fishing.
- We are working to protect access at Stewart Airport and adjoining Stewart State Forest.

Resolutions adopted relating to:

- Supporting local sportsman in advocating a 3 point antler minimum in certain wildlife management areas in Region 3 as part of a quality deer management plan.
- The Regional Board provides input to DEC on maintaining access on their lands throughout the region.

Additional discussion:

- Hunters for the hungry program was down this year.
- Junior pheasant hunt and junior fishing program had good participation, 900-1200.
- Senior trout fishing day and fishing clinic for Girl Scouts.
- Holding Striped Bass clinic and derby.
- Proposed resolution on antler restriction (3 points on a side).
- Active habitat restoration assistance program available to regional clubs, over 30 clubs participating for a total of \$6,000.
- Discussed the problems with management objectives and access at Sterling Forest.

Region 4- Pre-filed report

Report included the discussion by regional board on the habitat stamp proposed criteria, Region Board members were surprised that they had not received anything on this. Regional Board does not fee that the DEC is pushing the sale of habitat stamps. The Region has a proposed habitat stamp project. Region elected officers.

Additional discussion included:

- Chairman of Region 4 Board wants a list of Chairs of all Regional Boards and their addresses.
- Concern expressed about the lack of action on the Habitat Stamp Program, need to move ahead.
- New member to the Region 4 Board, Dave Mclean.

Region 5 - No report

Discussion:

- There are a couple of Habitat Projects proposed.
- Youth pheasant hunt held.

- Not satisfied with snowmobile plan. Sierra Club putting out miss information about the impacts of the plan.
- Landowner concerned about liability as result of snowmobile plan and trail plan. Washington County dealing with liability with help of local snowmobile clubs.

Region 6- Pre-filed report

Topics included in pre-filed report:

- Cormorants- populations along the St. Lawrence River are expanding, most nests are on the Canadian side of the river. DEC is watching for effects on fish populations and other colonial nesting water birds. Population control efforts continue on Lake Ontario.
- Fisheries- Proposed new regulations on various regional waters effect walleye, musky and bass. A new catch and release area is being established on the West Branch of the St. Regis. PFR has been acquired on North Sandy Creek.
- Pond Liming- An ongoing program to lime 25 brook trout ponds continues. In Region 6, 2-3 ponds are limed per year, results are closely monitored.
- Re-opening of Snowmobile Corridor 8 Trail- Dave Smith reported on Adirondack Snowmobile Plan.
- Black River Salmon- DEC monitoring the chinook salmon run at Dexter Fishway.
- Americans with Disabilities Act Settlement- the “Galusha” settlement will ensure public access to Forest Preserve lands in the Adirondack and Catskill parks. Region 6 has 69 projects to improve access for the disabled, including, parking areas, restrooms, fishing access sites, boat launches and many more.

Round Whitefish restoration- Regional Fisheries staff report effort a success. Three of 4 waters stocked produced 2 year old fish averaging 12-14 inches.

FWM agreements - Currently 29 active agreements are in Region 6.

Additional discussion:

- there is concern that most regional board members do not have copies of by-laws
- Regional DEC office has not notified County Legislature that they need to appoint a landowner/sportsman representative and alternate to the board. Jefferson County has not had a representative present. The State Board should make sure that County Legislatures are aware of this need to appoint.
- Regional Board was notified by DEC that they will no longer send representative unless the board specifically requests someone in writing,
- Regional Board has problem with the lack of access maps and directions to PRF and state properties. Indicates that the Region 6 DEC does not have the staff to do mapping of state land

and access.

Region 7 - no pre-report

Discussion:

- New Regional Board Chairman
- Board is having trouble getting the County to appoint people to the regional board, difficulty getting the Farm Bureau and Grange to make recommendations. New Legislative representative just appointed.
- Youth pheasant hunt held with Pheasants Forever
- Pushing hard for 13-14 year old big game license
- Kings Ferry Cooperative has been a success. The Quality deer management effort has been a success. However there has been difficulty getting money to pay the people.

Region 8 -no pre-filed report

Discussion:

- Habitat stamp is a high priority for Region 8 Board. Awaiting the Habitat Stamp application form and evaluation criteria.
- Awaiting for the designation of a Regional habitat stamp project review committee.
- Hope that projects are evenly dispersed throughout the state.
- Want to see more recognition for local ECOs for doing a good job.
- Would like to see a Wanton waste resolution for venison left at meat process and not picked up.
- Need to get Habitat stamp program off the ground and moving
- Support a plan to require non-resident license buyers to purchase the habitat stamp.
- Concerned that a voluntary stamp will not generate enough money.
- Other states have mandatory habitat stamp requirements.

Region 9 - Pre-filed report

Key Points from report:

- Four potential habitat stamp projects have been received by the Region 9 Board.
- Board wants to see each region review habitat stamp projects to select the best from each region. Habitat Stamp money should be returned equally to each region.
- Report heard on the Eighteen Mile Creek restoration project- this includes stream restoration, streambank stabilization and increased public access.
- DEC reported a record bear take in the Southern Tier, deer take in Region 9 was down. Deer winter kill was higher than expected. There were observations that coyotes and dogs are becoming a problem for deer.

Advisory Members Reports

Farm Bureau

Pre-filed policy resolutions for consideration was submitted for discussion by the board.

Izaak Walton League Report

Expressing strong opposition to the Governor's budget bill to tax guns, this is a breach of the contract that permitted concealed carry. There is concern that this is a step in the direction of confiscation, also concern how this will effect existing pistol permits and other things like life-time hunting licenses.

IWLA support BOW program, the BOW program will be in Yates County this year.

IWLA also concerned about the Army Corps of Engineers studies to enlarge the Seaway. There is concern about what things are going on behind the scenes.

The IWLA supports wind generated power. The League has a goal of having 4% of the nations power needs supplied by wind generated power. There is a couple of potential problems with windmills, noise from the blades and death of birds striking the blades and towers. These may or may not be a significant issue.

New York State Grange

Legislative Policies for 2004, these remain in affect for 5 years:

- St. Lawrence Seaway Expansion - oppose
- Hudson River Dredging - oppose although there is support ridding the Hudson River of PCB contamination through dredging or other equitable method.
- St Lawrence River Low Water Levels- Urge that the IJC recognize the effect of low water levels on the economy of upstate New York.
- Great Lakes Water Removal- oppose
- Wildlife/Hunting- support opening bear season at the same time as deer season and/or expand the area in which bear hunting is allowed.
- Introduction of Elk- oppose
- Whitetail Deer Management- Support use of deer management permits by archers.
- Wild animal re-introduction- support prohibition of wild animal re-introduction with a referendum approved by area residents.
- Exotic Pet ownership- support legislation to promote responsible ownership before license issued.
- Endangered Species- support legislation to allow people to legally defend themselves from an

attack by a rattlesnake or any other animal.

- Trophy Deer Poaching- support legislation to place up to \$10,000 additional fine for poaching a “Trophy Whitetail Buck”

-Deer Population Control- Pledge to work with DEC to promote antlerless deer harvest.

- Re-introduction of Wolves- oppose

-Coyotes- support year-round season

- Landowners Deer Permit- support changing qualifying language to allow 50 acres of land (need not be adjoining) within the same DMU

Private Land Liability- support legislation to protect private landowners against medical claims and/or lawsuits by trespassers engaged in recreational activities.

- Compensation for wetlands designation- support just compensation paid to landowners for loss of land value as result in wetland designation.

- Development Rights- support legislation to increase amount available funding to purchase development rights from farmers.

General Obligations Law- support legislation amending the General Obligations law concerning limiting the liability of landowners and allowing the use of the land for recreational activities.

Wildlife/Hunting and Fishing- support constitutional amendment to guarantee the right to hunt, fish and trap. Support ban on the introduction of any wild animals into New York State from other areas.

New York State Forest Practice Board - Pre-filed Report

The Board traditionally had a bigger role in federal funding programs, but this year it was a “done deal” without the Board’s input.

No quorum of the NYS Forest Practice Board since October 2002.

The Forest Land Enhancement Program, part of the 2002 Farm Bill provided \$645,000 for 2003 to be distributed for education, technical assistance and cost sharing. Only 37% was received by NY Forest Owners Association to be shared with Cornell. The remaining funds have apparently already been exhausted. No further funding is expected for at least 6 years. Most forest owners see cost sharing as a higher priority than education.

The right to practice forestry law become effective March 1, 2004, provisions increase penalties for timber theft from \$10 to 250.00 per tree.

Cornell University Pre-filed Report

Over the past 3 years, HDRU staff have worked closely with DEC staff to support development and implementation of a new framework for black bear management decisions. A DEC publication outlining the framework is available from the DEC Bureau of Wildlife website. HDRU staff have conducted a range of activities (i.e., small group meetings, survey research, model development, document content analysis) that support DEC staff with information for decision making.

HDRU just completed a survey of deer and other wildlife damage to agricultural crops sponsored by, DEC, Cornell, Department of Agriculture and Markets and the Farm Bureau.

Two publications on Suburban Deer Management and Public Involvement; "Learning by Doing: Deer Management in Urban and Suburban Communities" and "Community-Based Suburban Deer Management: Six Case Studies of Issue Evolution" have just been completed. These should be available on the HDRU website shortly: <http://www.dnr.cornell.edu/hdru/>.

Other 2004 research in progress:

- 2003 statewide small game effort and harvest survey
- 2003 statewide trapper survey
- survey of waterfowl hunting effort and harvest in the Lake Champlain, Northeastern NY and interior Vermont waterfowl hunting zones.

New York State Conservation Council Report by Howard Cushing

Copy of NYS CC Grass Roots News for April 2004 provided.

- ATV restrictions- Council has not taken a position, discussed proposed and new laws, ATV Survey-800-900 responses, heard that there could be a new tax on ATVs.
- Open Fields Legislation- A Federal initiative-NY Legislative contingent have not committed on this legislation yet. Federal funding available to states with similar (access) programs related to private land access. States need matching funds. Designed to provide initiative to landowners to open land up for recreation. May provide tax relief to landowners.
- Acid rain getting more recognition in the Southeastern US. Using other issues that concern western legislators as a negotiation point to get acid rain on the agenda.

-Access funding issue-losing sources of matching funds-need to identify new sources of matching money. One possible area is selling the gas under state wildlife management areas. DEC is losing staff with the expertise on how to find sources of funding for programs. The revenue generated by exploiting the gas can provide source of matching money for federal projects and for restoration work.

NYS CC wants to offer Regional FWM Board members copy of their Legislative Report (Grass Roots News) at a cost of \$15.00 per member. This would be subsidized by a grant to the NYS CC. This publication is also available through their Web site at www.nyscc.com.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee

Set up spring State Board Meeting for March 31, April 1 and 2, 2005 in Albany.
Suggest meeting be held at the Quality Inn again for next year.

Set up fall State Board Meeting for October 28, 29 and 30, 2004 in Region 5
Suggest holding the meeting in Lake George. Need to find a hotel in the area.

Set up Executive Committee meeting for 11:00 am September 9, 2004 at Region 7 Office in Cortland to develop agenda for Fall 04 meeting. Need to contact the Region office to reserve a meeting room. **NOTE: A meeting room has been reserved for the FWM Board Executive Committee on September 9, from 10 am to 3 pm at the Region 7 office in Cortland.**

Possible Topics for Fall meeting:

- NYC Watershed
- Canal Authority
- Gordon Batcheller- International Trapping update
- Legislators
- DEC Staff
- APA presentation
- Lake George fisheries issues
- Hudson River Dredging Status
- Saratoga Nursery
- Halfway Book Bond Act Habitat Restoration Project.
- Review of Region 5 projects/Issues
- Invasive species issues/programs

Discussion on combining the Executive and Planning Committees, committee agreed to combine and eliminate the Planning Committee. Planning will be conducted by the Executive Committee.

Discussion on having the Executive Committee meet with chairmen of the Legislative Environmental Conservation Committees. Chairmen were invited to our spring 2004 meeting. The Executive Committee could go and sit in on one of the Conservation Committee session. Suggestion to send letter to Chairmen about meeting with the chairman and committee members.

It was agreed to make contact with the Chairmen and try to set up a meeting.

Need to outline the objective of meeting with the Chairmen:

- How committee reacts to bill we are concerned about.
- Let them know what our role is and what our interests are
- Interested in being more effective advocate for sportsmen of NY.
- Recommend that we include the key point of resolution 021-5 in our letter to Chairmen in that: “the NYS Fish and Wildlife Management Board...will continue to advise, inform and seek the support of the Legislature, the Governor, the Department of Environmental Conservation and any other entities involve in the formulation and adoption of laws, rules and regulations, and policies affecting the management of fish and wildlife in New York State”.

Also discussion about meeting with DEC leadership to discuss fate of Boards Resolutions and

how these relate to bills developed by the Department. Need to discuss how the Board can be more effective in working with the DEC in getting the Board's interests acted upon. "How can we help the DEC help us." The Board wants to do a better job representing sportsmen, legislators and landowners. The Board would like to get feedback from the DEC on the status and results of Resolutions prepared by the Board.

The Executive Board urges the Department to move forward on the Habitat/Access Stamp funding process. Also wants to urge the Department to require non-residents to purchase a Habitat Stamp.

Discussion about new Conservation Alliance.

Habitat Committee

Want to stay with the recommendations about the State Board being involved with the Habitat/Access Stamp project review process. The State Board wants to have input on the statewide perspective on projects.

Wants to see the requirement for non-residents to buy a habitat stamp. Committee recommends this be included in a Department bill.

Access Committee

The Committee and Board is concerned about the lack of promotion of the Habitat Stamp. Considerable discussion about ways to promote the stamp via television, fairs, flyers, posters, and/or including in sportsmen education classes. The DEC should come up with a presentation on the habitat stamp for shows and fairs. Recommend a 15 minute video loop on the stamp.

Regional access maps needed for the location of on rivers and stream. Region 8 has quality maps available to public.

Toronto Reservoir which has not had access even though there is a requirement under the regulatory permit to get access, however, access is being developed through the effort of a new property owner building an access road to the property.

Resolutions Committee

The Resolutions Committee brought forth the following resolutions:

#04-1-01 Resolution in support of Assembly Bill A10142 and act to amend the civil rights law, in relation to prohibiting the establishment of a centralized a registry of legally owned firearms.

#04-01-02 Proposed by the Farm Bureau

#04-01-03 Resolution to oppose any attempt to ban the use of 50 caliber firearms and further

resolves to oppose any legislation that impacts private ownership of firearms in the State of New York.

#04-1-04 Resolution opposes Assembly Bill A7985/Senate Bill s.4174 which makes it illegal to organize, conduct or participate in any contest or competition where the object of such contest or competition is to take the greatest number of wildlife.

#04-1-05 Resolution requesting that Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Erwin M. Crotty to immediately request that the Colton-Kildare Parce of state land in the Adirondack Park be classified Wild Forest and that the department work with the Town of Colton and the County of St. Lawrence to permit and complete the Colton Bridge and access trail in the Carry Falls/Raquette River Area.

Publicity Committee

Article prepared by Dick Fox “Another Great Grass Roots Volunteer Program” summarized the Habitat Stamp program and the Rating Criteria. Published in “Focus on Farming”.

Legislative Representative

Deborah Peck Kelleher, Director Environmental Conservation Committee, assistant to Senator Carl L. Marcellino

Senator Marcellino’s district is on Long Island.

Legislative Process/Bill Development process:

Ideas come from interest groups such as FWM Board

Governors Program Bill

Department Bills

Researched and reviewed by Legislative staff

Bills are amended (once -a, twice-b, three times-c, etc.)

Once language is good, goes to bill drafting office and bill is introduced

example: Junior archers bill (930A)

Bills in Senate has S, Assembly has A.

Bill is referred to the Legislative Conservation Committees and placed on their calendar.

The bills passed by the senate and then go to the Assembly.

If not voted on by Assemble it goes back to the Senate.

In order for a bill to become a law must be voted out of committee, passed by both houses and signed by the Governor.

Sometimes in the Senate a bill can remain in the committee and never voted on, in the Assembly the sponsor can request their bill be voted on to get it out of the committee.

When working with Legislators:

Call your legislator

Visit from January - June. (Legislators then return to the home district)

Legislators are usually in Albany weekly Monday - Wednesday

Website to check on bills <http://assembly.state.ny.us/leg/>

Bills that the Conservation Committee worked on last year:

- Invasive Species Taskforce - originator of bill Nature Conservancy
- Fishing licenses for nursing home residents - bill was passed and signed into law
- Extending the muzzle season setting authorization- sponsor DEC
- Sweepstakes for Conservationist Magazine - sponsor DEC

This year:

- Committee is rejecting the Governors bill for fee increase on pistol permits- most of Senate opposes
- Bill to allow rifle hunting in select souther tier counties
- Junior Archery bill
- Working with DEC to allow hiring additional 5 hatchery staff

Question: What happens when “bundled” bills are sent to the committee? They are unbundled and sent to the appropriate Senator who works on those issues.

Question: Where is the cross-bow bill? It is in the Conservation Committee, Senator Marcellino is not favorable toward that bill. It will like remain in the committee and not acted upon, there are very different opinions on the issue within the sporting community.

Question: What about the pistol permit fee increase bill in Governor’s budget? The budget process is different than the normal bill passing process. This bill was bundled into a package with a number of other initiatives, the chairs of all the committees who have interests in the items in the package have met to discuss the budget bills.

With respect to the pistol fee bill, a Senate budget resolution was sent to the governor, that bill was not supported by most Senators.

Question: 14-16 year old hunting bill? Has been introduced, Senator has concerns about that bill might draw in the gun control issue. No chance of passing in the Assembly.

Question: What about the Senate holding hearings? The Senate has very few, the Assembly has more hearings.

Department Reports:

Dave Odell - Habitat Stamp Program Rating Criteria

We will change the title of the document to “Habitat/Access” Fund

Will change any reference to “ranking” to “rating” because the State Board will be doing the ranking.

The Current amount in the Habitat/Access Fund is a little over \$76,000, we have requested spending authority for \$100,000. The legislature has given the DEC authorization to spend up to \$100,000.

The DEC is proposing to go with the document as it is (with some editing) for this year, the DEC sees the document as a “living” document and can be changed as we get some experience with it.

The Habitat/Access Stamp Program Application Package Includes:

- Cover Sheet - application form/proposal/workplan
- Evaluation of Eligibility
- Rating Criteria for Access Proposal
- Rating Criteria for Habitat Proposal
- Project Evaluation Factors

Discussion on projects that might have a combination of B1 and B2 points totaling up to 20. Concern was expressed that this might bias scoring toward larger projects. Larger projects would cost more and may be offset by other criteria relating to cost effectiveness. Dave also indicated that it was more likely that most projects would not involve work in B1 and B2.

Discussion on B4 related to “Not for profit” status. May consider changing to “Non-profit”. We will evaluate after the first round to see if there is a need to change.

DEC would like to encourage work on private land, DEC would also want to see the land available for public access.

Discussion over B5 “Project Access,” concern over “unrestricted” public access as this might result in damage to the environment and landowners property. The suggestion was to change unrestricted to something related to “appropriate” recreational use. Dave will edit B5 to reflect the appropriate recreational use and change the title to “Project availability”.

Participation in the rating of projects will include regional DEC staff that are familiar with the project areas.

Concern about how proposed projects that provide both habitat and access. Trying to provide both might be counter productive to habitat through increasing traffic through a habitat area. DEC suggests that we wait and see if there are projects proposed that provide both habitat and access. The ranking committee may take these issues into consideration when ranking statewide projects.

Discussion about how the State FWM Board will fit into the rating and ranking process. It was suggested that the Board discuss it’s role with DEC Division Director. The concern is to get a “statewide” perspective on the proposed projects that the State Board can provide to the review process.

Board members want to know when this process will begin. There is concern that this will take over a year to get the process started.

Board members indicate that they have started receiving projects, some members have already started reviewing projects using old draft criteria.

Dave indicated that he feels the Rating Criteria and application package is essentially complete (pending edits) and should be finalized shortly.

Motion was made to approve the proposed Habitat/Access Stamp Program Rating Criteria and seconded. No discussion, Motion carried unanimously.

Venison Donation - Greg Fuerst, Bureau of Wildlife, Region 8, Coordinator Venison Donation Program

9 DEC regions, 8 food banks, 8 RCD (Resource Conservation and Development) councils make up the Coalition.

1993 law authorized the venison donation program, law was re-authorized and made permanent in 1999.

Sportsman make the program work, in 2000, the Coalition was formed and will become a non-profit organization.

\$100,000 general fund money for match money to pay for processing went to Counties.

There are participating processors that accept legally tagged deer, processed deer are picked up by food banks.

Over 990,000 meals served.

Food banks can charge 14 cents per pound.

Some County Social Services Agencies assist with funding for the program.

In 2003, 50 counties are participating with 110 processors, processing 112,000 pounds of meat.

Focus on Fishing, Anglers

Doug Stang, Bureau of Fisheries, Albany

New York has 901,000 freshwater anglers spending 17.9 million days fishing. They generate \$740 million in retail sales, \$1.36 billion economic output generating \$11.1 mill in NYS income tax and 12,250 jobs.

Our job is to maintain angling interest and economic activity by identifying opportunities to develop additional enhancement opportunities and to continue sound resource protection and management.

Our focus is on the “angler”, we want to see the “smile” on their face that signify satisfaction.

How are we going to do this?

- Increasing access opportunities:
- Public Fishing Rights
- Boating Access Program
- Boat Launch Sites

The DEC is working on preparing better location maps for facilities, improving signage, and maintenance.

2004 Big Game Update

John Major, Bureau of Wildlife, Albany

Deer Management

Over 600,000 deer hunters participated in the 2003 season. The 2003 Deer Take was 253,000, approximately 18% decrease from the 2002 take of 308,000. This included 107,500 bucks, a 16 % decrease and 94,400 does, a reduction from the 105,00 taken in 2002. Winter kill had an effect at various location throughout New York.

Resident sales of big game licenses are steadily decreasing each year.

There are over 30 bills relating to deer and deer management pending legislative action.

Some key initiatives: 14-16 year old big game license (Junior license), lower age for archery license, change in Westchester Archery opening date to October 15, including a Saturday southern zone opening date for 2005, mandatory blaze orange,

Some Deer management issues:

- Deer damage
- Urban/suburban deer management
- QDM
- Ban on feeding deer
- Chronic Wasting Disease

Black Bear Management

Record bear take in 2003 with over 1800 statewide. The Bureau of Wildlife is developing a management plan to address the expanding population. Working with Cornell, Sportsman and the public through “stakeholder groups” within the Upper and Lower Catskill region and western New York.

Recommendations:

- expansion of areas open to bear hunting in the southern zone
- modification of Catskill bear season structure
- enhanced and increased public outreach and education

The Land Management Team of the Bureau of Wildlife

John Major, Bureau of Wildlife, Albany

There is a BOW staffer from each region working on the team. The team coordinates the operation and management of lands under the control of the Bureau of Wildlife. This includes funding, planning, organizing work, developing reports. Individual members coordinate and conduct work on Wildlife Management Areas within their respective regions

The amount of land administered by the BOW has increased to over 200,000 acres, which generate over \$200,000 in income to the conservation fund, at the same time, numbers of BOW staff has decreased.

The team develops and recommends best management practices (BMPs) for management of WMAs which may include:

- Road building/maintenance
- signage
- trails
- observation structures
- access facilities
- habitat management

The Land Management Team face many challenges including:

- competing uses
- management
- nuisance species
- compliance with legislative mandates
- funding
- loss of staff

Law Enforcement Update

Major Walt Heinrich

Region 4, 5 and 6

The Law Enforcement Academy will graduate approximately 26 in mid-July. Another class is targeted for later this year.

80 new vehicles will be available sometime this summer. Existing vehicles will need to be kept longer resulting in more miles on old vehicles.

There have been 5 promotions within Regions 3 and 4, there are 4 vacancy in Region 6, also looking to put four new k-9 units out in various regions. Head of K-9 Unit retiring.

Reported on the youth turkey hunt this spring, ECOs will be working and issuing gun locks to new hunters.

Bear nuisance complaints have been high, working closely with Bureau of Wildlife, several bears have been killed as a result.

Assistant Director of Law Enforcement retiring this summer.

Officers are working with the Hatcheries to provide enforcement during stocking activities.

Reports of mountain lions abound this time of year.

Work closely within the New York City Watershed with DEP police.

Comment from Board:

-Need to provide more publicity on numbers of violations handled by local ECOs.

-Recommend supporting a better pay package for ECOs.

-Need to provide better incentive for ECOs to stay on the job.

-Recommend letter from Chairman to Gerry supporting an upgrade (the package) for the ECOs,

Division Director Report

Gerald Barnhart, Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources, Albany

DECALS

Continues to make progress, World Com coming out of bankruptcy.

Ad Hoc Report system available to more DFWMR staff, including staff training session on the reporting system.

The value of the system is the ability to get data to use for promoting purposes

Internet sales off the web, going slow, we want it to be working right before we move forward.

Direct web sales mean more money for DEC since there would be no agent commission.

Sportsman education data base will help but will take long to get this up and running.

Question: Habitat stamp sales by license sales agents? Training session for agents will cover this.

Question: Is harvest reporting effective? DEC feels it is working well, two systems, DECALS and tax and finance. Reporting rates are somewhat down but not significantly.

Bureau of Habitat issues

Re-permitting the Lower Hudson River Powerplants, main concerns include the entrainment and impingement of fish onto and through the intake screens of these plants.

Hudson River Dredging and Natural Resource Damages, the Bureau is working with all parties to settle issues.

Redesign of statutory permitting activities for freshwater wetlands and stream protection programs. Trying to streamline the system to use our resources to the best of our ability. We are making decisions about how best to prioritize use of our limited staff.

New funding sources:

- Federal - Species of greatest conservation need. Preparing a "plan" for using this money

-State Wildlife Grants Programs, matching money, 3 million per year

-Wallop-Breaux reauthorization, we may get significant additional funding, new plan to tap into Federal Marine Fuels Tax. Could amount to around 2.7 million to the state

-Open Field Bill- recommend the Board become involved in promoting

-Nuisance Aquatic and Invasive Species Act could provide additional funds

Open Space Plan revision- due to be reauthorized, recommend the board becomes involved with this. Over 400,000 acres open to public access since the program began.

New Habitat Stamp will feature a “beaver”.

Question: Elk restoration funding under CARA light? No, we are in a hold mode with elk restoration because of chronic wasting disease.

Question: Habitat stamp, will department make it mandatory for non-resident? Not going forward as a Department proposal this year.

FWM Board Meeting Day 3

April 3, 2004

Called to order at 8:37 am

Action on Resolutions

04-1-1 moved and seconded, passed unanimously. Send to Governor, Majority Leader, chairs of Encon and Rules committees.

04-1-3 moved and seconded, moved to amend and seconded, amended resolution passed unanimously.

04-1-4 moved and seconded, passed. Send to Governor, Majority Leader, Speaker and chairs of EnCon Committees.

04-1-5 moved and seconded, passes. Send to Commissioner Crotty, Assistant Commissioner Stark, Rob Davis and APA Chairman

04-1-2 moved and seconded, passed.

The Resolutions Committee Chairman reminded board members that resolutions are due to the chairman 30 days in advance.

NOTE: The resolutions provided to the Secretary were not provide in the correct format and will be returned to the Resolutions Committee for correction.

Election of Officers

The nominating committee, comprising Joe Molinaro, William Pike and Walt Hallbauer presented a slate of candidates for officers to the Fish and Wildlife Management Board to be considered by the Board. The candidates included:

Chairman- Robert Banks

Vice Chair- Patricia Arnold

Secretary- TBA(will be named by DEC)

CFAB Rep- Bud Woodfield

Exec Committee- Joe Molinaro, Emery Green, Walt Hallbauer

Officers were elected with a single vote cast by the Secretary.

Walt Hallbauer reported that all access signs have been distributed and financial debts to NY Farm Bureau and Friends of Fish and Wildlife have been settled.

It was suggested that a letter supporting the concept of making the Habitat/Access Stamp mandatory for nonresident license buyers. It was moved and seconded, passes; 13 yae, 5 nay.

Chairman Banks will draft a letter supporting the upgrade package for the ECOs.

It was suggested that the Executive committee review and clarify committee member and chairs and provide a current roster of board.

Copies of the By-Laws should be sent to each region for distribution to state board reps. Each board member should take the time to read the By-Laws.

It was suggested that each regional board discuss the concept of making the habitat/access stamp mandatory for non-residents and be prepared to discuss adopting a resolution supporting same at the fall meeting.

Emery Green asked for volunteers to work at Farm Days, August 10-12. Joe Molinaro, Bud Woodfield and Carlton Hatch volunteered.

It was requested to distribute a copy of procedure for doing resolution with the minutes.

Discussion ensued regarding importance of getting draft resolutions to resolutions committee and board members in advance of meeting.

Move to adjourn, seconded and passed. Meeting adjourned at 9:30 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Acting Secretary, Jack G. Cooper
NYSDEC, 625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233-4752
518-402-8907
jxcooper@gw.dec.state.ny.us

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.