

## NEW HAMPSHIRE FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT

### FEBRUARY 20, 2008 COMMISSION MEETING

Meeting Location: Fish and Game HQ, 11 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH 03301

Commissioners Present: T. Hubert, W. Morse, W. Carney, R. Phillipson, M. Kalter R. Rowan, T. Tichy, S. Guaraldi, P. Costa, G. Normandeau and S. Nottonson.

Commissioners Absent: none

Acting Executive Director Clarke - present

Chairman Phillipson called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m., and asked the audience to join in the pledge of allegiance. He informed the audience that the public is entitled to attend all Commission meetings and when recognized may speak on any item on the agenda.

#### ACTION ITEMS

1.) Commissioner Morse moved to approve the January 23, 2008 Commission Minutes as written and Commissioner Nottonson seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

2 a-e) Consent Agenda - The following items were grouped together and were noticed as consent agenda items to expedite action on routine matters which may not require public discussion. The Commission voted as follows:

Commissioner Costa moved to approve the following donations and Commissioner Carney seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

a.) Donation of \$11,755.83 from Lucy Bartley and Shawn Allen, to be deposited into the Fisheries Habitat Account to study and protect wild brook trout habitat.

b.) Donation of \$5,000 from the Lakes Region Inland Fishing Association Inc., to be utilized to support fisheries research and management activities.

c.) Donation of \$50.00 to the "Let's Go Fishing" program, from Nobis Engineering, Inc., in memory of George Sapounas.

d.) Donation of \$500.00 from George Tombarello of Atkinson, NH, to be utilized for deer management purposes.

e.) Two donations totaling \$1,030.00, to be deposited into the Small Gifts & Donations Account.

3.) This item was tabled until the March Commission Meeting.

4.) Steve Weber, Chief, Wildlife Division, requested Commission approval for the following proposals for rulemaking for the 2008-2009 hunting and trapping seasons.

Commissioner Carney moved to approve the either sex day proposals for deer as presented (see attached) and Commissioner Rowan seconded. The vote carried with 9 in favor and 1 abstention. (G. Normandeau)

Commissioner Tichy moved to approve the other deer proposals as presented (see attached) and Commissioner Carney seconded. The vote carried with 9 in favor and 1 abstention. (G. Normandeau)

Commissioner Guaraldi stated, "I feel we are not protecting the resource by allowing reciprocity for Vermont youth to hunt in New Hampshire when our children are not allowed to hunt in Vermont without purchasing a license". Steve stated that he understood her concerns and agreed that many people feel the same way. He further stated that by allowing Vermont youth to participate in our youth hunt may potentially lead to them purchasing a New Hampshire hunting license once they reach the required age, leading to increase license sales. Commissioner Guaraldi inquired as to whether there was a method to determine if non-resident license sales have increased since 10 years ago. Steve stated that he would look into the matter and get back to her with that information.

Commissioner Guaralid asked Steve to leave the language, "Establish reciprocity with other states for participation in New Hampshire's youth weekend deer season", in the proposal to obtain public comment at the upcoming hearings. Steve agreed to do so.

Commissioner Guaralid moved to approve the moose season proposals as presented (see attached) and Commissioner Morse seconded. The vote carried with 9 in favor and 1 abstention. (G. Normandeau)

Commissioner Rowan moved to approve the moose permit abstract as presented (see attached) and Commissioner Carney seconded. The vote carried with 9 in favor and 1 abstention. (G. Normandeau)

Commissioner Carney moved to approve the other moose proposals as presented (see attached) leaving the language, "Allow the addition of an unarmed third person to assist the permittee and subpermittee in the moose hunt", in the proposal to be brought forward to public hearing and Commissioner Hubert seconded. The vote carried with 9 in favor and 1 abstention. (G. Normandeau)

Commissioner Rowan moved to approve the bear season proposals as presented (see attached) and Commissioner Costa seconded. The vote carried with 9 in favor and 1 abstention. (G. Normandeau)

Commissioner Tichy moved to approve the turkey season proposals as presented (see attached) leaving the language, "Archery draw weight reduction", in the proposal to be brought forward to public hearing and Commissioner Nottonson seconded. The vote carried with 9 in favor and 1 abstention. (G. Normandeau)

Bill Royce, President, Sullivan County Sportsmen's Club, was present at the meeting and suggested leaving the draw weight alone as he could vision it creating problems.

Commissioner Hubert moved to approve the small game proposals as presented (see attached) and Commissioner Guaraldi seconded. The vote carried with 9 in favor and 1 abstention. (G. Normandeau)

Commissioner Rowan moved to approve the fur season proposals as presented (see attached) and Commissioner Costa seconded. The vote carried with 9 in favor and 1 abstention. (G. Normandeau)

In closing, Steve reported that public hearings would be held on these rules in Lancaster on March 31, 2008, in Keene on April 1, 2008, and at Fish and Game Headquarters in Concord on April 3, 2008.

5.) Commissioner Morse moved to approve the expenditure of up to \$20,000 of additional current expense funds in support of game management programs and Commissioner Rowan seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

6.) Commissioner Costa moved to approve the expenditure of \$1,500 from the Game Management Account to pay the annual dues for the Fish and Game Department to the Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and Commissioner Carney seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Steve Weber reported that it was important for the department to remain a member in good standing with this organization, as game management issues are a central focus of much of the association's issues. He further reported that typically this bill is paid from a number of Fish and Game funded Division class 026 lines, however, due to budget cutbacks, funding is not available in those lines this year. These dues should be switched back to and funded by Fish and Game dollars as soon as possible.

7.) Commissioner Normandeau moved to approve the expenditure of \$3,710 on a SAS software license to support ongoing data analysis for game species management programs and Commissioner Morse seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Steve Weber reported that this license had historically been coordinated through the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, however, they have restructured their licensing and maintenance agreements with those types of organizations in such a way that the agreement is no longer an option. He further reported that the annual maintenance costs should be covered by a portion of the department's OIT budget.

**LATE ACTION ITEMS:**

Commissioner Hubert moved to authorize a grant of \$5,000 from the Wildlife Habitat Account to the Town of Unity, NH, for the Judkins Farm conservation easement, with the

contingency of adding language in the easement to allow hunting and trapping and Commissioner Nottonson seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Phillipson inquired as to the potential for the property to be used as a pheasant stocking site. Charlie Bridges, Habitat & Diversity Coordinator, reported that Ted Walski, Wildlife Biologist, didn't feel it was appropriate to put pheasant there.

**INFORMATION ITEMS:**

1.) Kathy LaBonte, Chief, Support Services, provided the monthly financial statement dated January 31, 2008. (See attached)

**STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**POLICY COMMITTEE:** Commissioner T. Hubert, Chair; Commissioners; Nottonson, Kalter, Rowan, and Costa. Commissioner Hubert reported that the committee met the morning of the February Commission meeting to discuss the Teleconferencing Policy and developed the following policy statement:

*Whereas, from time to time the Fish and Game Commission is required to make important decisions regarding time sensitive issues outside of the regularly scheduled Commission meetings.*

*Whereas, in order to remain compliant with RSA 91-A (requirement for public meeting under the Right to Know Law) we hereby adopt the following policy and procedure:*

- 1) *Post a teleconference meeting a minimum of 24 hours prior to the meeting date and time.*
- 2) *Set up a teleconference location with access for the public and department staff, allowing them to attend and listen in accordance with RSA 91-A.*
- 3) *The meeting will be moderated by the Chairman of the Commission or his designee. Minutes of the meeting will be recorded and posted in accordance with RSA 91-A.*

Commissioner Hubert moved to approve the above policy as presented and Commissioner Normandeau seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

In addition, Commissioner Hubert reported that the committee was researching the issue of signage on Fish and Game owned lands. He reported that the committee would be discussing the issue further at the March 19th Committee Meeting.

At this time, Commissioner Kalter moved that the Policy Committee conduct research to schedule a retreat with the Commission and Senior Staff to better address communication between the Commission and Staff Members and Commissioner Hubert seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

**LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE:** Commissioner S. Guaraldi, Chair; Commissioners Tichy, Carney, and Morse. Commissioner Guaraldi thanked the Policy Committee for developing a Teleconferencing Policy for the Commission to adhere to. She reported on the following legislation:

Commissioner Guaraldi moved to approve the draft amendment to HB-1648-FN as written, and Commissioner Morse seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Tichy reported that he met with Senator Gallus to discuss the convenience fee and the check off boxes when buying a license.

**RIVERS COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Morse; Commissioner Morse reported that the next committee meeting would be held on March 5, 2008.

**LAKES COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Kalter; Commissioner Kalter reported that the next committee meeting would take place on Friday, February 22, 2008. He further reported that all study committees have been put on hold until March.

**REVENUE COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Nottonson, Chair; Commissioner Nottonson reported that the committee did not meet this month.

**COMMISSIONERS REPORTS:**

**COMMISSIONER HUBERT:** Commissioner Hubert reported that he attended the Sullivan County Sportsmen's meeting and announced that they had a new President, Bill Royce.

**COMMISSIONER KALTER:** Commissioner Kalter reported that things had been fairly quiet this month.

**COMMISSIONER NORMANDEAU:** Commissioner Normandeau had no comments at the time.

**COMMISSIONER CARNEY:** Commissioner Carney reported that he received the regular calls. At this time, he made the following motion:

Commissioner Carney moved that the sum of approximately \$4,000, not to exceed \$4,500, be taken from the un-appropriated Fish and Game Fund to provide the necessary funding for the aerial helicopter stocking of the remote ponds in the North Country and Commissioner Kalter seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Commissioner Carney stated that this was to replace funds removed from the budget last budget cycle and felt it was important to continue the aerial stocking of remote ponds. He further reported that to backpack trout into these remote ponds by department staff would be extremely labor intensive and would far exceed the money spent to aerial stock these ponds. Steve Perry, Chief, Inland Fisheries Division, reported that it would be approximately 250,000 fish.

**COMMISSIONER COSTA:** Commissioner Costa reported that she attended the Belknap County Sportsmen's Association Game Dinner on January 26, 2008 in Gilford and had a long discussion

with Rick Estes regarding the remote pond aerial stocking issue. She reported that she was very pleased with the successful fundraiser at the game dinner for the Hunt of a Lifetime Program. She further reported that she attended the NH Trapper's Association Banquet on February 9, 2008 and sat with Fred Sheppard who talked about some of the trapping proposals. She stated that Eric Orff, formerly of the Fish and Game Department, was working with the National Wildlife Federation and provided a brief presentation at the trapper's meeting on global warming. Eric reported that he was seeking organizations to sign letters of support. She reported that apparently there is a federal funding component and if signing a letter could result in additional funding for the department it may be beneficial to look into it.

**COMMISSIONER TICHY:** Commissioner Tichy reported that he received calls regarding the hunting seasons and some calls of support for the antler restrictions. He further reported that he received calls regarding aerial stocking.

**COMMISSIONER NOTTONSON:** Commissioner Nottonson stated, "The digest is working". He reported that he received a few calls from constituents that had questions, however the answers to those questions were in the digest. He further reported that one of the recent losses on a North Country mountain was an acquaintance/friend of he and his wife. He reported that gentleman was a bus driver for Concord Trailways, who drove the bus that he and his wife take daily.

**COMMISSIONER MORSE:** Commissioner Morse reported that he also received the routine calls. He further reported that he recently met with Jack Bellanger, President, Pointer Fish and Game Club, and discussed the pheasant stocking program.

**COMMISSIONER ROWAN:** Commissioner Rowan reported that he received calls relative to stocking of ponds. He reported that he spoke with ice-fishermen who were catching some nice rainbows in Squam Lake. He further reported that the Strategic Plan was being reviewed. He stated that the committee made a list of discrepancies in the Commission handbook and asked the Commission to review the list and to provide input via e-mail or by telephone.

**COMMISSIONER GUARALDI:** Commissioner Guaraldi reported that she has received a few calls regarding search and rescue. She further reported that she has received calls of concern for getting lands open for ATV use.

**COMMISSIONER PHILLIPSON:** Commissioner Phillipson reported that he reviewed the game proposals at the liaison meeting and for the most part everyone was in agreement.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Acting Director Clarke thanked the conservation officers that are involved in search and rescue missions and stated that he has a new respect for the professionalism and ability of those individuals. He stated, "As a resident and taxpayer of New Hampshire, I want to say thank you for a job well done". He stated that Law Enforcement should be proud of those people for their dedication. The audience applauded.

He further stated that he and Commissioner Hubert met with the Sunapee Selectmen regarding the possibility of a boat access site. He reported that the selectmen seemed to be very

supportive of getting an access site onto Lake Sunapee and talked about sending the department a letter of support. The department has received the letter and he read it aloud:

*Dear Mr. Clarke,*

*Belated thanks to you and Mr. Hubert for your attendance at the Board of Selectmen's January 7th meeting. Forgive me for not writing sooner - this is a very busy time.*

*I want to put our discussion regarding a new boat launch to Lake Sunapee in perspective. We'd been looking forward to your input to help us resolve the problem of an over abundance of boaters needing access to the lake, especially during the summer. A solution to the crowding and queuing at Sunapee Harbor is vital to the town. Summer residents and boaters throughout Sullivan County nourish our economy and we enjoy their presence, however, we need to find a solution to the large number that line the docks waiting to get underway.*

*We, the Board of Selectmen, object to the construction of a boat launch at the Wild Goose site in Newbury, yet we had not heard of any concrete alternative or consideration of a substitute location. We have suggested that a boat launch at the state beach would be a safer, more easily accessible site. The standard reply to this suggestion is that the area is "too shallow". But, as offered at our meeting, our solution is to "dig it out". The state beach has ample room for turn arounds and parking, and access to a boat launch would be wide and easy.*

*A letter, dated November 17, 2007, to the Newbury Board of Selectmen, from David Brillart of the Department of Transportation, relayed the results of a review by Pathways Consulting regarding traffic speeds and traffic volume along Route 103. This review stated that "traffic speeds routinely exceed the posted speed limits and some additional police presence is warranted". The letter further indicates that "proposed right turn only requirements out of Birch Grove Road on to NH 103 may need a police presence at times." One of our main concerns about the Wild Goose Boat Launch is the possibility of traffic accidents along Route 103. The traffic circle at the entrance to the state beach seems, to us, to alleviate the strong possibilities of traffic accidents.*

*We hope to hear from you regarding an additional launch area on Lake Sunapee. Again, thanks for your time and interest.*

*Sincerely,*

*Emma M. Smith, Chair  
Board of Selectmen*

At this time, Acting Director Clarke reported that he distributed a copy of the matrix pertaining to the status of the suggested audit changes to the Commission.

He further reported that he provided a copy of the current Department Strategic Plan to the Commission.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Steve Courchesne, audience member, thanked the Commission, especially Commissioner Carney, regarding leashed dog tracking. He stated that he has taken this up and is thoroughly rewarded by the look on hunter's faces when you are able to find their deer for them. He stated that it is especially gratifying to know you are helping save the resource.

He further stated that the proposal to allow a third person on the moose hunt would be a mistake and felt it would open the door for illegal activity. He stated that he felt the general public would be in favor of it.

Colonel Gray reported breaking news - Gary Dodd's was found guilty on all charges. He further reported that the department would be seeking reimbursement for the search and rescue.

At this time, Director Clarke stated that he would like to recognize two Division Chief's who have announced their retirement. He announced that John Nelson, Chief, Marine Division, would be having a retirement party on March 1, 2008.

He further reported that Colonel Gray would be retiring as of February 29, 2008. The audience applauded. Colonel Gray thanked the Commission and stated that it was a pleasure working with the Commission and such a dedicated staff. He stated that his career with the department was rewarding and felt confident that the dedicated employees of the department would rally through these difficult times and carry on the important mission of the department.

At this time, 4:59 p.m., Commissioner Nottonson moved to adjourn and Commissioner Morse seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Costa, Secretary

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Robert Phillipson, Chairman

Date: \_\_\_\_\_