

## FINAL MINUTES

### **Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Advisory Committee (NHESAC)**

January 13, 2022

DFW Field Headquarters, Southwest Meeting Room #103  
1 Rabbit Hill Road, Westborough, MA 01581  
*Meeting held virtually via Zoom*

#### **MEMBERS:**

Present: Bill Brumback, Tim Flanagan, Joseph Larson, Mark Mello, Wayne Petersen, Kevin Powers, Dave Small

Absent: none

#### **ASSOCIATE MEMBERS:**

Present: Andy Finton

Absent: Russ Hopping

#### **AGENCY STAFF:**

Present: Eve Schlüter, Dave Paulson

#### **OTHERS:**

Present: Ranee Duncan

– The meeting was called to order at 1:33 P.M. –

#### **1. Approval of the Previous Month Minutes**

Bill Brumback motioned that the October 14, 2021, minutes be accepted, Dave Small seconded, and members voted unanimously to approve.

#### **2. Chair's Comments – Mark Mello**

Mark provided an update on work concerning Pine Barrens conservation in Southeastern Massachusetts. Cooperative research is providing valuable data collection to inform Natural Heritage interests.

#### **3. Board Member's Comments – Joseph Larson**

MassWildlife staff are fully engaged in numerous habitat management activities. The Board, Director Tisa, and conservation partners welcome opportunities to inform legislators about the value of Agency work.

#### **4. NHESP Report & Assistant Director's Report – Eve Schlüter**

- Significant progress on BioMap3 has been reported to the Secretary of EEA.
  - Reports at Advisory Committee meetings and conservation conferences are planned for spring 2022. Andy Finton contributed additional details of progress made.
  - Rollout is expected in early summer 2022.
- Permitting under MESA and WPA are being transitioned to online processes.
- The Endangered Species Review Biologist position has been posted.
- The Penikese Island and Buzzards Bay seasonal tern monitoring positions have been posted.
- The Great Marsh Restoration Project is proceeding in cooperation with multiple agencies and stakeholders.
- The Mosquito Control Task Force is active in conducting assessments, evaluations, and making recommendations for statutory and regulatory policy changes.
- The Glyphosate Commission is reviewing potential health effects and management implications regarding glyphosate and herbicide alternatives.
- MassWildlife, NHESP, and MEPA are examining MEPA regulations including a view towards holistic attentiveness to environmental justice.
- A new book has been published on the *Biology and Conservation of the Wood Turtle*, edited by Michael T. Jones and Lisabeth L. Willey. Hard copy supplies are limited, and electronic distribution is planned.
- The “Recovering America’s Wildlife Act” has many signatories who support preventing fish, wildlife, and plants from becoming endangered. Massachusetts is well positioned to participate as funding becomes available.
- Federal infrastructure apportionment for transportation aid may create additional opportunities for MassWildlife and NHESP.
- Eve invited Advisory Committee members to email suggestions for topics of interest to be addressed at future meetings.

#### **5. *Linking Landscapes for Massachusetts Wildlife: A Model Partnership for Interagency Coordination* – Dave Paulson, Senior Endangered Species Review Biologist**

- The project fosters collaboration drawing expertise from state agencies including MassDOT, MassWildlife, NHESP, the academic community, and the public utilizing citizen science tools.
- Benefits include reduced wildlife collisions, improved public safety, conservation of listed species, and habitat restoration adjacent to roadways, bridges, and stream crossings.
- Wildlife conservation is improved by using alternatives to traditional structures. Examples included bioremediation in slope stabilization, wildlife passages, and hydrologic suitability analyses.
- Long-term ecological planning includes continuous monitoring and greater understanding through research.

#### **6. Member's and Associate Member's Comments**

**Wayne Petersen** – Commented on the phenomenon of Blue Jays consuming house paint. Further research is needed for interpretation and understanding.

**Bill Brumback** – No comment

**Tim Flanagan** – No comment

**Dave Small** – Described habitat management and conservation successes in Athol. Dave suggests inclusion of burn plans in future MassWildlife small grants programs.

**Kevin Powers** – Kevin observed a road-killed gray treefrog in Plymouth around Dec. 28th, 2021.

**Andy Finton** – Progress on BioMap3 is of great interest to all conservation partners.

Kevin Powers motioned to adjourn, which was seconded by Dave Small, and approved with unanimous vote.

– The meeting adjourned at 3:15 P.M. –

Drafted by: Tim Flanagan  
Submitted by: Kevin Powers