



MASSWILDLIFE

DIVISION OF FISHERIES & WILDLIFE

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COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
DIVISION OF FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE
FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

PRESENT: Dr. Joseph Larson/Chair, Michael Roche/Vice Chair, Bonnie Booth/Secretary, Ernest W. Foster IV, Stephen Sears, Dr. Brandi Van Roo, Fred Winthrop, Ron Amidon/Commissioner/DFG, Mary-Lee King/Deputy Commissioner/ DFG, Mark Tisa/Director, Kris McCarthy/Associate Director/Finance and Administration, Michael Huguenin/Assistant Director/Wildlife, Trina Moruzzi/ Assistant Director/Operations, Todd Richards/Assistant Director/Fisheries, Marion Larson/Chief/Information and Education, Elizabeth Wroblicka/Chief/Wildlife Lands, Jason Zimmer/Southeast Wildlife District Manager, Pat Huckery/Northeast Wildlife District Manager, Craig MacDonnell/Realty Contractor, Lieut. Kevin Clayton/OLE; PUBLIC: Maria Cruz, Len Pinaud, Jake McCumber, Annie Curtis, Mike Ciaranca

DATE: August 14, 2018

LOCATION: Joint Base Cape Cod Welcome Center
Connery Avenue, Sandwich, Massachusetts

Chair Larson opened the August meeting of the Fisheries and Wildlife Board at 11:00 a.m., and asked the Department of Environmental Protection representative on the Massachusetts Environmental Management Commission to introduce the Commission and say a few words about its structure and history.

Mr. Len Pinaud stated that he was the executive director of the Massachusetts Environmental Management Commission at Joint Base Cape Cod (JBCC), which monitors military and other activities in the Upper Cape Water Supply Reserve in the northern 15,000 acres of JBCC. The purpose of the commission is to ensure the permanent protection of the drinking water supply and wildlife habitat on the reserve. The Chair thanked Mr. Pinaud for attending and for his remarks. He also welcomed Jake McCumber and Annie Curtis, both with the Camp Edwards natural resources department, and Mike Ciaranca with the Environment and Readiness Center at Camp Edwards

Acceptance of Minutes

A motion was made by Ms. Booth to accept the minutes from the July meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sears. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair's Comments

Chair Larson reported that he had had an opportunity to meet with Kevin Parsons of the Trout Unlimited (TU) Deerfield Chapter, who provided him with a brief overview of the history of TU and its operations in the state. Mr. Parsons had also conveyed some of TU/Deerfield's concerns, including that the Deerfield is highly controlled and that federal reviews of different stretches of the river are not coordinated.

Chair Larson stated that Mr. Parsons would be getting in touch with the Director to explore avenues of potential partnership. Director Tisa reported that MassWildlife staff has a lot of expertise when dealing with flows on the river, FERC relicensing, etc. The Chair asked that himself, Mr. Roche, and Mr. Sears be informed of any meetings that are scheduled with Mr. Parsons and the Deerfield Chapter.

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Commissioner's Comments

Commissioner Amidon reported that a bill that would have impacted DFW, EEA, and OLE, the Wildlife compact bill, was buried in House Ways and Means.

The Commissioner reported on the Templeton failure of the Stony Brook culvert system, stating that the Williamsville Dam downstream was impacted but held. Staff arrived there almost immediately and the Town of Templeton was also on the scene.

He also reported on an issue in the Lower Mystic River: the DPH had wanted to post food health warnings that the fish is not safe to eat. Both MassWildlife and Marine Fisheries have issues with the process. Assistant Director for Fisheries Todd Richards explained that the posting as proposed would be a misuse of catch-and-release. The Marine biologists agreed there should be a consumption advisory, but also had objections to how it was proposed.

Commissioner Amidon reported that DFG had held an event on August 9 in Palmer and Ware to release \$350,000 in DER grants for culvert replacements. The grants will be used to replace culverts where the designs are improper or antiquated and updates will benefit wildlife. He also reported on two events over the previous weekend. The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, in which local, Central Massachusetts sportsmen are members, and also members of the Worcester County League of Sportsmen's Clubs held a Young Guns trap shoot competition, with 25-30 kids taking prizes. This year, 46 youth qualified for the finals, there was excellent shooting and the Commissioner thought it was great to see. The Commissioner reported that he was looking forward to attending the Massachusetts Junior Sportsmen's Conservation Camp graduation ceremonies with Director Tisa on August 17. And he also noted that the Deerfield TU [Trout Unlimited] chapter had contacted him the week of the meeting to receive its highest award from national organization, which is a real honor.

Mr. Sears asked the Commissioner about the Crossbow bill; Commissioner Amidon reported that it had died in the House Ways and Means Committee.

Deputy Commissioner King reported that five important Article 97 conversions were approved before the end of the session, with two at the very last minute at night.

Director's Comments

Director Tisa confirmed that he will attend the Junior Conservation Camp graduation, noting that he had attended himself 48 years ago. His message to the graduates would in part be that they could be where he is someday. On August 23, the Director had a site visit scheduled with Fred Heyes of Orange to review a recent wildlife cut on his property.

He reported that MassWildlife is cohosting the Northeast Transportation and Wildlife Conference at UMass/Amherst, and he stated that Endangered Species Review Biologist Dave Paulson, who is MassWildlife's lead at the conference, can come to the Board with a presentation on the projects he's been able to do with MassDOT; the Director noted that ours is a national model for such a partnership.

The Director reported that he will be attending the AFWA annual meeting September 9-13, and that MassWildlife will be hosting the Atlantic Flyway Council meetings at the end of September in Plymouth.

Law Enforcement Comments

Lieut. Kevin Clayton attended the meeting in Captain Khabir's stead and reported 73 general calls for service. He also reported 173 animal calls. There were 239 deer calls, 179 bear calls, 120 raptors. On the vehicle front, he reported 40 ATV accidents in the commonwealth with 1 fatality, and 57 boat accidents since the beginning of the year. There were 21 land Search-and-Rescue calls, and 25 on the water, back

to the beginning of year. The OLE also had 27 wetland-related calls for service in that time period. He also reported that the OLE had done several Facebook posts, including a popular one on the second annual Boston Police Department fishing tournament. Lieut. Clayton reported that the OLE currently has 73 personnel in the field, with 3 impending retirements.

Southeast Wildlife District Activities (Jason Zimmer)

Southeast Wildlife District Manager Jason Zimmer reviewed the extensive seasonal work and activities in his district. He provided numerous examples of staff work with habitat, surveys and research, state-listed species, public outreach, and stewardship.

He detailed the example of the saga of Burrage Pond WMA access at its southern end. There had been a major issue with an abutter and ultimately MassWildlife lost the access because the property line went through the access road. Mr. Zimmer explained that staff had arranged a deal with a local cranberry grower whose property abuts the WMA, and stated that it was a major win for the District to restore access at this site. He reported on other access issues at OFBA access points where people are using it for swimming beach access, which is not the intended purpose, both at a pond in Orleans and at Pompanessett Pond

Mr. Zimmer reported that Hyannis Ponds WMA is constantly under fire and its oversight and stewardship take a lot of time and attention.

He also detailed several successful land protection projects from the last several years that came together this year.

Chair Larson and the other Board members thanked him for his very informative presentation.

Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee Report

Dr. Larson reported that the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee does not meet in August. He reported that all the proposed changes to the MESA list are being reviewed by the committee members.

Set Meeting Date

The members confirmed the September meeting on September 25, 2018, at 11:00 a.m. at the Connecticut Valley Wildlife District office. The members also discussed dates for the October Fisheries and Wildlife Board meeting. Members selected October 30, at 1:00 p.m., at the Stationery Factory in Dalton.

Member's Comments

Mr. Foster thanked Mr. Zimmer for all his work and expressed his own extreme approval of the efforts of all the Southeast Wildlife District staff throughout the district.

Dr. Van Roo reported no comment, and the Chair thanked her for her recent article in the *Massachusetts Wildlife* magazine.

Vice Chair Roche stated that he would send Dr. Van Roo an application for membership in the New England Outdoor Writers Association.

Secretary Booth stated she thought this had been an important, very interesting meeting with a lot of good information. The great work of the districts is very appreciated.

Mr. Sears reported that in Western Mass. residents are trying to control lake drawdowns for weed control. He stated that it is very political and that the DEP is the regulatory agency. Sportsmen want to have more control over drawdowns to help fish populations. DFW involvement is currently only allowed

if a listed species is impacted. Mr. Sears is hoping MassWildlife's staff can make a report that will help. The Chair asked Director Tisa for a staff review of the report being developed by the Coop Unit. Director Tisa asked Assistant Director Richards to respond, who reported the schedule of possible presentations on the matter. He stated that sometime in the winter he could have a summary of MassWildlife's internal discussion of drawdowns, their impacts on fish, and what staff can do. A full report would not be available until after Jason Carmody finishes his Ph.D. Director Tisa reported that the Coop Unit was given money for the study because drawdowns are an important issue for fisheries resources and are also a lifelong interest of his. He acknowledged that it is a very political issue. People don't want to swim in weeds and they want to protect their docks in the winter.

A motion was made by Ms. Booth to move into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing certain land acquisitions and to not return to open session. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Roche. The motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session

Chief of Wildlife Lands Wroblicka and Realty Contractor MacDonnell presented an aspect of a proposed acquisition, which was discussed by the Board. There was no vote taken as a result of the discussion.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Booth
Secretary

List of documents presented to the Board in its August meeting packets

August meeting agenda

Draft July meeting minutes for review

Spreadsheet of Natural Heritage Fund Taxpayer Donations (1992 to 2018)

Documentation for the executive session