



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/Acting 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/Assistant Director/Information and Education, Nicole McSweeney/Promotion and Marketing, David Stainbrook/Deer and Moose Project Leader, Craig MacDonnell/Contractor/Wildlife Lands, Captain Tony Kabir/OLE; PUBLIC: Elizabeth Wroblecka, Mel Crouse, Sean Humphries, Dave Morin, John Kellstrand, MaryAnn DiPinto, Stan Andriski, Anna Meshrery, Wendy Larson

DATE: June 13, 2018

LOCATION: Division of Fisheries and Wildlife Field Headquarters  
Westborough, Massachusetts

Chair Larson opened the June meeting of the Fisheries and Wildlife Board at 2:00 p.m.

### Acceptance of Minutes

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

### Chair's Comments

Chair Larson reported that the search committee is finalizing its work on the Director position. He stated that a report would be given at the next Board meeting.

The Chair also reported that in the members' meeting packets were copies of letters he had sent to the Massachusetts delegation to the U.S. Senate in support of restoring budget funding for the Coop Units, which is including in the House budget but needs to be passed by the Senate.

Chair Larson reported that staff had completed a draft summary response to the public comments received during the Rattlesnake Working Group's outreach process, and that it will be released sometime before the next Board meeting. Noting that the Board had also promised in that process to reexamine the comprehensive plan for rattlesnake conservation in the state, which is 22 pages long, he stated that the science position is currently being reviewed by outside reviewers, as is done for proposed MESA changes. The Chair stated that the objective is to put together a public-friendly digest of the plan.

### Commissioner's Comments

Commissioner Amidon reported that he had been on vacation the previous week in Maine, where he had visited a hatchery that rears landlocked salmon.

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He also reported that he had participated in an eagle banding trip near Wachusett Mountain, and was very impressed by the smooth process, with the well-organized staff doing a great job.

Commissioner Amidon reported that he'd participated in another Big COD meeting, and reported good progress in the planning. He stated that MOUs have been signed, and other groups are getting involved. He reported another interesting meeting with representatives of the Ruffed Grouse Society, stating that those talks are continuing to go well. Another meeting reported by Commissioner Amidon was with DCR Commissioner Leo Roy, including regarding deer herd management at the Quabbin, which is going well, and the two agencies will be consulting about adjusting the hunt to reflect that success. He noted that there was also a meeting the evening of the Board meeting with Wachusett watershed managers to discuss a deer hunt there. The meeting was scheduled at the 180 Beaman Street office in West Boylston, 7—8:30 p.m. Commissioner Amidon had met the previous day with Secretary Beaton, who is working to move forward on the budget, including work on the Environmental Bond bill, and the Commissioner hopes that the budget will be out soon.

Commissioner Amidon also reported that there is an animal rights bill in the state legislature that is not going well for us. The bill started as a kitten and puppy bill to protect pets, but in its current form it would prohibit the drowning of all animals, which would directly impact the trapping of muskrat and beaver, as this is the way these animals are currently harvested. He also reported a bill in which there is an attempt to change the presumption of openness to the opposite of what it is now. He stated that he understands that it is being corrected, but he encouraged the members and meeting participants to keep pressure on the legislature to correct and maintain openness as it has always been understood and applied.

#### Acting Director's Comments

Acting Director Tisa introduced former Hunter Education Volunteer Coordinator Todd Olanyk (Central District Manager), who started in his new position the previous week, and new employee Joseph Rogers (Connecticut Valley District Manager), who was to start sometime in the next month.

The Acting Director also reminded the Board members about the planned Statehouse Day on Thursday, June 21, 2018. He reported that the agency had held such days 20+ years ago, noting that it is a great opportunity to have face-to-face conversations with the state legislators. He stated that the Board members were welcome to attend, and that it would be held 10:30 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

#### New Business

##### *Cabela's Presentation (Mark Tisa)*

Acting Director Tisa reported that he had been invited to a presentation event earlier in the month and made a short promotional video with Mr. Rich Gilbert, General Manager at the Berlin Cabela's, who presented the Acting Director at the store with 400 fishing rods and reels for MassWildlife in support of its Angler Education Program as part of Cabela's *Gone Fishing* initiative. Acting Director Tisa then introduced Sean Humphries, Assistant General Manager at Cabela's in Berlin. Mr. Humphries stated that the vision of Johnny Morris, founder of Bass Pro Shops and now owner of Cabela's, is to challenge families to get kids outside this summer to discover the joys of fishing with the *Gone Fishing* campaign, through which the company is donating 40,000 rods and reels to organizations that work with kids and having many free fishing and introductory fishing events in its stores across the country. Acting Director Tisa also commended Hunter Education Program Instructor Tim Bradbury, whose personal relationship with the local Berlin store staff ultimately led to the donation.

*Annual Deer Review (David Stainbrook)*

Deer and Moose Project Leader David Stainbrook presented the annual Deer Review to the Board. He briefly explained how MassWildlife manages deer in the state, and presented the data on the 2017 deer harvest:

2017 Deer Harvest by Sex and Season

| Season       | Adult Male   | Female       | Button Buck | Total         | % Harvest   |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| Para/Youth   | 55           | 59           | 7           | 121           | 0.9%        |
| Archery      | 3,492        | 1,400        | 282         | 5,174         | 38.9%       |
| Shotgun      | 3,084        | 1,703        | 486         | 5,273         | 39.6%       |
| Primitive    | 1,287        | 1,186        | 214         | 2,687         | 20.2%       |
| Sub-Total    | 7,918        | 4,348        | 989         | 13,255        | 100%        |
| Quabbin*     | 25           | 21           | 4           | 50            | 0%          |
| <b>State</b> | <b>7,943</b> | <b>4,369</b> | <b>993</b>  | <b>13,305</b> | <b>100%</b> |

*\*Controlled Hunt with DCR-Limited Access (excluded from subsequent statewide analysis)*

Mr. Stainbrook presented his deer population analysis, then the proposed Antlerless Deer Permit Allocations, by Wildlife Management Zone. For context, Mr. Stainbrook also provided the 2017 allocation numbers, indicated the size of the proposed change, and the desired outcome:

| Zone             | 2017          | 2018          | Change       | Deer Management Direction |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------------------|
| 1                | 400           | 500           | 100          | Stabilize                 |
| 2                | 175           | 250           | 75           | Stabilize                 |
| 3                | 1,100         | 1,400         | 300          | Stabilize                 |
| 4N               | 375           | 500           | 125          | Stabilize                 |
| 4S               | 275           | 400           | 125          | Stabilize                 |
| 5                | 1,250         | 1,250         | 0            | Increase/Stabilize        |
| 6                | 300           | 300           | 0            | Increase                  |
| 7                | 2,250         | 2,250         | 0            | Stabilize                 |
| 8                | 2,500         | 2,500         | 0            | Increase/Stabilize        |
| 9                | 4,100         | 4,800         | 700          | Reduce/Stabilize          |
| 10               | 12,000        | 12,000        | 0            | Reduce                    |
| 11               | 11,000        | 12,000        | 1,000        | Reduce                    |
| 12               | 800           | 1,000         | 200          | Reduce/Stabilize          |
| 13               | 2,700         | 2,700         | 0            | Reduce                    |
| 14               | 2,700         | 2,700         | 0            | Reduce                    |
| <b>Statewide</b> | <b>41,925</b> | <b>44,550</b> | <b>2,625</b> |                           |

After some questions from Board members and a brief discussion, Secretary Booth made a motion to accept the allocations of antlerless deer permits as proposed; seconded by Mr. Sears; the vote in favor was unanimous.

Law Enforcement Comments

Captain Tony Kabir reported on Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) activity and calls for service for the previous month, with 103 calls of service for bear, 83 for deer, and 297 for hunter complaints. The MEP also had fielded 437 off-highway vehicle complaints, 28 of which were accidents, with 2 of them fatal. He reported that there were also 4 fatal boating accidents. The Captain elaborated that many of the bear calls involve cubs at this time of year, with the public often concerned about the welfare of the young in residential areas.

## Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee Report

Dr. Larson reported that the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee's June meeting was scheduled to be held the following day, June 14.

### Set Meeting Date

Members discussed dates for the July Fisheries and Wildlife Board meeting. Members selected July 17, at 1:00 p.m., at a location to be determined by staff somewhere in the Northeast District.

### Member's Comments

Mr. Winthrop, Vice Chair Roche, and Secretary Booth reported no comment.

Dr. Van Roo reported that she had attended the annual prescribed-fire program refresher training and was very impressed by the spirit and thoughtfulness of the planning. She also reported having attended a prescribed burn at Montague Plains about a week later. Dr. Van Roo stated that both were highly collaborative and very well run.

Mr. Foster reported he thought Mr. Stainbrook's was a great presentation.

Mr. Sears reported that the previous day former Board Chair Gige Darey had been honored as part of the class of 2018 of the National Wild Turkey Federation Hall of Fame, for his contributions to the restoration of the Eastern Wildlife Turkey to Massachusetts. Mr. Sears stated that the history of that restoration is fascinating and he would like to see a meeting presentation about it in the future. Mr. Sears also stated that the Berkshire County League has been asking for an update on the progress and control of Chronic Wasting Disease in New York, given the close proximity and the fact that many sportsmen/women also hunt in eastern New York. Acting Director Tisa stated that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies has just put out materials on the issue, and that he would instruct staff to contact Mr. Sears to arrange a CWD presentation to be given to the Berkshire County League. Mr. Sears also wanted to note that the League is still asking about the use of dogs to track injured deer. Acting Director Tisa stated that he would have staff prepare an analysis of the issue.

A motion was made by Secretary 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 Mr. Foster. The motion passed unanimously.

### Executive Session

Former Chief of Wildlife Lands and Land Protection Contractor MacDonnell presented four proposed acquisitions, which were each reviewed and all unanimously approved by the Board.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Booth  
Secretary

### List of documents presented to the Board in its June meeting packets

June Agenda

Draft May meeting minutes for review

Copies of Chair Larson's letters to Massachusetts Senate Delegation in support of funding for The Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Units

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

Documentation for the executive session