



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, Bob Durand, Ernest W. Foster IV, Stephen Sears, Dr. Brandi Van Roo, Mark Tisa/Director, Jon Regosin/Deputy Director, Kris McCarthy/Associate Director/Finance and Administration, Eve Schlüter/Assistant Director/NHESP, Michael Huguenin/Assistant Director/Wildlife, Trina Moruzzi/Assistant Director/Operations, Todd Richards/Assistant Director/Fisheries, Marion Larson/Chief/Information and Education, Pat Huckery, Todd Olanyk, Jason Zimmer, Andrew Madden, Capt. Terry Davis/OLE, Bob Greco/Chief of Staff/DFG; PUBLIC: Dave Morin, Dave Small, Gene Chague, Graziella DiRenzo

DATE: October 19, 2021

LOCATION: Via Zoom Meeting

Vice Chair Roche opened the meeting at 9:05 a.m. Chairman Larson had connectivity issues for several minutes and did not join the meeting immediately.

Acceptance of Minutes

A motion was made by Dr. Van Roo to accept the minutes from the September meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Durand.

Vice Chair Roche: yes

Dr. Van Roo: yes

Mr. Foster: yes

Mr. Durand: yes

The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner's Comments

The Commissioner reported that he had no comments.

Director's Comments

Director Tisa reported that he had been travelling to the installations over the previous couple of weeks having mini-employee conferences at all the installations. Noting that he was not able to hold an in-person employees' conference last year or this year, the Director stated that it has been a great opportunity to have more personal, focused interactions with the staff at each installation. He reported that the conversations were very productive and he continued to be impressed with how hard and how well everyone was working throughout the agency.

Law Enforcement Comments

Captain Terry Davis reported four new officers that had graduated from the police academy and were starting their field training, then in the field on their own in January. The OLE has been transitioning from boat patrols to preparing for the hunting seasons, and officers are continuing WMA patrols for

MASSWILDLIFE

illegal ATVs. Captain Davis also reported on a moose-vehicle collision, adding that the moose was salvaged by a food organization.

Wild Fire and Prescribed Fire Activity (Caren Caljouw, Alex Entrup, Ben Mazzei)

Director Tisa introduced Prescribed Fire Program Manager Caren Caljouw, Seasonal Prescribed Fire and Habitat Restoration Ecologist Alex Entrup, and Habitat Biologist Ben Mazzei to the meeting. The Director reported how proud the agency is of its staff that engages in wildland fire and prescribed fire – they are highly skilled employees who do this arduous and demanding work out of love for the resource. Director Tisa pointed out that these staff play incredibly important roles in maintaining and improving biodiversity and landscape-level habitat availability, and stated that these dedicated staff do a great job, making him and all their colleagues very proud.

Ms. Caljouw began the presentation with a brief overview of the operations and objectives of the MassWildlife Prescribed Fire Program, Mr. Entrup reported in some detail on recent burns the agency has conducted across the state to improve and restore habitat, and Mr. Mazzei reported on his and other staff's recent deployments in the American West to help combat the wildland fires that have been such a management challenge across the country this during past fire season.

Chair Larson joined the meeting during the presentation and thanked Vice Chair Roche for conducting the meeting in his stead to that point, reporting that he was having connection issues.

Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee Report

Chair Larson had not attended the Advisory Committee meeting in October because of a conflicting appointment. He asked Assistant Director for NHESP Eve Schlüter to provide the Board with a synopsis of the highlights of the meeting.

Assistant Director Schlüter reported that staff discussed and shared with the Advisory Committee the draft schedule for the next round of MESA list changes. She reported that staff has decided to start the process next year, which should create a final amended list by 2024. Therefore, in the fall of 2023, the proposed changes will come to the Board for approval. Assistant Director Schlüter added that the list and associated data would then be available in time to be added to the SWAP [State Wildlife Action Plan], which will be updated by 2025.

The Assistant Director also stated that she had reported to the Advisory Committee on current work to update BioMap 2 with a plan to release a BioMap3 in June or July of 2022. Noting that there were exciting updates in store, including in climate resiliency and adaptation, Assistant Director Schlüter stated that the Program is providing information to partners at several levels, i.e., statewide, municipal, and organizational levels, and that staff is developing an interactive web-based tool to share the information efficiently.

Set Meeting Date

Members confirmed the November meeting. set the date for the December Fisheries and Wildlife Board meeting. Members agreed to Tuesday, December 14, at 9:00 a.m.

Member's Comments

Vice Chair Roche, Mr. Foster, and Mr. Durand reported no comments.

Dr. Van Roo asked for an update on her request to have discussions about diversity, inclusion, equity, and social justice at MassWildlife. Director Tisa reported that he would instruct Chief of I&E Larson to meet with Dr. Van Roo to review the various outreach and program activities MassWildlife staff has been engaged in to increase outreach to underserved communities.

Mr. Sears thanked staff again for the prescribed fire presentation, which he said was excellent. He reported that the Berkshire County League members are continuing to meet about issues of interest, one of which is the increase of people in the woods using apps on their phones when they're engaging in their various pursuits. Mr. Sears asked whether there were any tools or apps MassWildlife can develop to enhance user experiences through their phones, noting that most existing tools are apps that people must pay for. He added that he was raising the idea as a suggestion for staff to explore.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Roche to convene in executive session for the purpose of discussing proposed land acquisitions whose negotiations would be compromised by discussion in open session and to not return to open session afterward. The motion was seconded by Mr. Foster.

Chair Larson: yes

Vice Chair Roche: yes

Dr. Van Roo: yes

Mr. Foster: yes

Mr. Sears: yes

Mr. Durand: yes

The motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session

Deputy Director Jon Regosin presented one parcel for the Board's consideration. It was unanimously approved.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Booth
Secretary

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

Agenda

September meeting's draft minutes

Spreadsheet of Natural Heritage Fund Taxpayer Donations (1992 to 2020)

Executive session documents