



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, Ron Amidon/Commissioner/DFG, Mary-Lee King/Deputy Commissioner/DFG, 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, Major David Loos/OLE

DATE: September 22, 2020

LOCATION: Via Zoom Meeting

Chair Larson opened the meeting at 9:10 a.m.

Acceptance of Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Durand to accept the minutes from the August meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Secretary Booth.

Chair Larson: yes

Vice Chair Roche: yes

Secretary Booth: yes

Dr. Van Roo: yes

Mr. Foster: yes

Mr. Sears: yes

Mr. Durand: yes

The motion passed unanimously.

Chair's Comments

Chair Larson reported that he had received a letter from Brad Gage, former Chair of the Board. The Chair described a photo former Chair Gage has that he wants to give to MassWildlife. Chair Larson reported that he would put Mr. Gage in touch with agency staff.

Commissioner's Comments

Commissioner Amidon reported working with his staff in the previous weeks to distribute \$150,000 to the MassWildlife Districts and Hatcheries for capital improvements.

Director's Comments

Director Tisa deferred his comments until before the presentation.

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Law Enforcement Comments

The OLE's Lieutenant Colonel David Loos reported continuing incidents in bear contacts and some bear complaints, including some investigations in preparation for bear season.

Lieutenant Colonel Loos reported the first-ever gillnet case the OLE has had to investigate. In Worcester, an individual was found to be using a gill net; the individual was caught without fishing licenses and failed to show the equipment when challenged.

Personnel Report (Kris McCarthy)

Associate Director McCarthy presented the Board with two candidates for hire.

<u>Employee</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Location</u>
Joshua Freniere	Sunderland Hatchery Wildlife Technician Wildlife Technician II	Sunderland
Jacob Rawlings	McLaughlin Hatchery Wildlife Technician Wildlife Technician II	Belchertown

Dr. Van Roo moved acceptance of the Personnel Report as submitted; Vice Chair Roche seconded the motion.

Chair Larson: yes

Vice Chair Roche: yes

Secretary Booth: yes

Dr. Van Roo: yes

Mr. Foster: yes

Mr. Sears: yes

Mr. Durand: yes

The motion passed unanimously.

Presentation of the Draft R3 (Recruitment, Retention, and Reactivation) Plan (Introduction: Mark Tisa and Jon Regosin; Plan: Astrid Huseby)

Director Tisa introduced the presentation, stating that he was very excited about the subject, which has been one of his priorities since he became Director of MassWildlife. The Director stated that he thought it was an excellent draft that incorporates many of the concepts and strategies that have been developed and used in R3 projects around the country. Director Tisa reported that many staff have put a lot of time and hard work into the plan R3 Coordinator Astrid Huseby would be detailing for the Board, and he invited Deputy Director Jon Regosin to speak more specifically about that work.

Deputy Director Regosin reiterated that a lot of collaborative effort went into getting to the draft plan. The preliminary work involved the entire agency, which organized seven distinct work groups to study R3 and develop an agency-wide plan. There were two reasons for this; it was first a capacity issue, with many hours of research and writing to do; and, secondly, senior staff wanted to bring different people with different skills and knowledge sets together to make better, more inclusive products for R3. The Deputy Director reported that he has had the opportunity over the past 3 years to work with everyone involved, and he offered his thanks to everyone who participated. He stated that, as the core group organizing the meetings and the output, Associate Director Kris McCarthy, Ms. Huseby, and Outreach

and Marketing Manager Nicole McSweeney worked very hard to produce the draft that was being presented. Human Dimensions Project Leader Jody Simoes, Communication Coordinator Emily Stolarski, Angler Education Coordinator Jim Lagacy, and I&E Chief Marion Larson, and other I&E staff also contributed heavily to the draft document. Deputy Director Regosin also noted that the Director has quickly become a national leader in R3, while Associate Director McCarthy plays a leading regional role, as the Chair of the regional (NEAFWA) R3 Committee and member of the Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports working group. MR. Regosin reported that MassWildlife was identified as one of agencies to be a top-ten scoring state for its R3 efforts, and he noted that Ms. McSweeney led the outreach and marketing effort to make that happen. He also reported that Ms. Huseby also plays an important role regionally as the Vice Chair of the regional (NEAFWA) R3 Committee, and is heavily involved in the regional R3 Assessment Work Group, which is focused on identifying what's working in R3 around the Northeast.

R3 Coordinator Astrid Huseby introduced the basic concepts of R3 and detailed the Outdoor Recreation Adoption Model developed to describe the major component steps of R3. She also explained why R3 is so important, noting that hunters, anglers, and shooting sports participants are critical for the funding model for fish and wildlife agencies, for fish and wildlife conservation and management, and for creating the next generation of conservationists. Ms. Huseby reported at length on the non-traditional audiences MassWildlife and other agencies have identified, and detailed the areas where recent license-sales growth are occurring. She looked at efforts being made to reverse the nationwide declines in license sales by discussing national R3 efforts and what has been learned from them so far.

Mr. Huseby reported that five core principles of successful R3 efforts have been identified: having clearly defined objectives, identifying the target audience for the activity, developing effective communications about the event or activity, conducting rigorous evaluations of the outcomes, and committing the resources needed for success. having clearly defined objectives, identifying the target audience for the activity, developing effective communications about the event or activity, conducting evaluations of the outcomes, and committing the resources needed for success. She reported that the key takeaways from R3 research to date are that 1) R3 is not a single program but a framework for agency activities; 2) all the Rs are important, and the breadth of programs needs to address all three phases of engagement; 3) successful R3 efforts utilize the five core principles and 4) use data to make decisions; and 5) R3 need to be adaptive as programs are implemented and evaluated.

Ms. Huseby then presented the Massachusetts draft R3 Plan. She touched on the process used to develop it and explained that there is also an annual plan that identifies specific projects to be undertaken in the calendar year. The goal of the Massachusetts R3 Plan is to increase participation in and support for hunting, fishing, and the shooting sports. To reach the goal, Ms. Huseby explained that five strategies will be implemented, and she discussed the components of all five at length. The five strategies aim to provide coordination and partnerships; learning resources and R3 skills programs; access and opportunity; outreach and customer experience; and the acceptance of hunting, fishing, and the shooting sports.

In conclusion, Mr. Huseby reported that the next steps for the draft R3 Plan are the Board review of and feedback on the draft, finalizing the draft R3 Plan by the end of the calendar year, and Plan implementation starting in 2021. She stated that the Board would receive the draft R3 Plan in the coming days and that staff would appreciate its feedback.

After an extended discussion, the Board members thanked Ms. Huseby for the staff's collective efforts and for her excellent presentation.

Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee Report

Chair Larson reported that at the October meeting the NHESAC members were excited by a report given on the discovery of what was assumed to be an extinct flowing plant that was found recently in the Southeast.

The Chair then reported that the statute that created the NHESAC requires four meetings a year. When he joined there was a lot of excitement to get it underway and a lot of work for the committee members to do. They developed the original endangered species lists, expanding the then-usual boundaries by extending listing to plants, and the Chair found it exciting to see the contrast between participation in that committee and other committees in state government. He reported that it can be hard to get quorums in many subcommittees, but not for this committee, and he stated that it is a great place for the exchange of information among the different organizations represented by the members.

Now, Chair Larson reported, staff is entering into the development of BioMap3. The previous BioMaps involved a tremendous amount of work to provide important maps that identified the locations of species and so provided opportunities to conserve them. Noting that BioMap3 will again be a lot of work for NHESP staff, Chair Larson reported that the NHESAC is debating whether to conduct only 4 meetings per year, as it was set up to do, with special meetings when needed for list changes., etc. He stated that discussions began with the NHESAC Chair, Mark Mello, and will extend to the rest of the committee; that discussion began at last meeting and the question will now be looked at by the whole committee.

Set Meeting Date

Members discussed dates for the October Fisheries and Wildlife Board meeting. Members selected October 27, 2020, at 9:00 a.m.

Members also discussed dates for the November Fisheries and Wildlife Board meeting. Members selected November 24, 2020, at 9:00 a.m.

Member's Comments

Dr. Van Roo, Secretary Booth, Mr. Foster, and Mr. Durand reported no comments.

Mr. Sears thanked the staff in the Western District for the help Mr. Madden and his staff have given with ongoing lakes and ponds issues associated with drawdowns. He also made an observation that many MassWildlife constituents are frustrated and pushing for the crossbow bill to get moving, and he wondered whether it was possible to engage the sportsmen's legislators' caucus in the effort to develop leverage to move it forward.

Vice Chair Roche reported that it was very exciting and invigorating to see the plans and energy of staff for the R3 effort, and that he was ready to assist in any way he can.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Roche 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. Durand.

Chair Larson: yes

Vice Chair Roche: yes

Secretary Booth: yes

Dr. Van Roo: yes

Mr. Foster: yes

Mr. Sears: yes

Mr. Durand: yes

The motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session

Land Protection Specialist Lynn Harper presented one proposed acquisition, which was reviewed and approved by the Board.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Booth
Secretary

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

Agenda

Draft August meeting minutes for review

Personnel Report

Spreadsheet of Natural Heritage Fund Taxpayer Donations (1992 to 2019)

Documentation for the executive session