

NEW HAMPSHIRE FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT

SEPTEMBER 12, 2018 COMMISSION MEETING

Meeting Location: NH Fish & Game Department, 11 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH 03301.

Commissioners Present: R. Phillipson, T. Baldwin, P. McInnis, C. Hodgdon, R. Green, B. Carr, D. Patch, B. Temple & E. Stohl.

Commissioners absent/excused: E. Millette

Executive Director Normandeau – Present

Chairman Phillipson called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m., and asked the audience to join in the pledge of allegiance. He informed the audience that the public is entitled to attend all Commission meetings and when recognized by the chairman, the public may speak on any item on the agenda. The Chair reserves the right to limit comment to the extent necessary for the orderly conduct of the meeting.

ACTION ITEMS:

- 1.) Commissioner Stohl moved to approve the August 8, 2018 Commission Minutes as written and Commissioner Hodgdon seconded. The vote carried with 8 in favor, 1 abstention (B. Temple-was absent from August 8, 2018 Commission Meeting).

- 2.) Consent Agenda - The following items were grouped together and were noticed as consent agenda items to expedite action on routine matters, which may not require public discussion. The Commission voted to approve these matters as presented. Commission members may remove certain items if further public input or discussion is deemed necessary.

Commissioner Carr moved to approve consent agenda items 2a-2d as presented below and Commissioner McInnis seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

- 2a.) Commission accepted the following donations in memory of Thomas Lambert, of Jaffrey, NH, as outlined below:

DONATIONS TO LET’S GO FISHING PROGRAM:

Monica Steele, Antrim, NH -	\$50.00
Peter Messineo, Concord, NH -	\$25.00

SMALL GIFTS & DONATIONS ACCOUNT:

Jenifer & Craig Bell, Swanzey, NH -	\$50.00
Conval High School, Peterborough, NH -	\$35.00
Gordon & Julianna Getty, Jaffrey, NH -	\$25.00
Kimberly & Marshall Chandler, Hancock, NH -	\$50.00
Raymond & Annette Gagne, Rindge, NH -	\$50.00
Kenneth & Gail Pineault, Wilmington, DE -	\$100.00
Todd & Cynthia Colburn, Milford, NH -	\$50.00

Allison Maher, Rindge, NH -	\$35.00
Donald & Shirley Mahoney, Jaffrey, NH -	\$20.00
Community Transport Employees –Jaffrey, NH -	\$150.00

2b.) Commission accepted donations in memory of Colonel William Grimes, of Rumney, NH, as outlined below:

DONATIONS TO CONSERVATION EDUCATION PROGRAM:

Joyce Skocic, Mt. Vernon, OH -	\$25.00
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SMALL GIFTS & DONATIONS ACCOUNT:

Reese Shinkle, Beavercreek, OH -	\$100.00
John Schutte, Xenia, OH -	\$50.00
645 AESS Unit Fund, Greenville, TX -	\$75.00

2c.) Commission accepted the donation of furs, valued at \$786.00, from the NH Trappers Association, to be utilized by the Trapper Education Program.

2d.) Commission accepted the donation of \$20.00 from Brian Perra, of Sunapee, NH, to be utilized by the furbearer program.

3.) The Commission participated in the annual hunting survey prize drawing as outlined below:

WINNERS

PRIZES

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| • Steve Sumple, Southbury, CT - | Escort M87 pump action shotgun
(Donated by the Ruffed Grouse Society) |
| • Daniel Keleher, Somersworth, NH - | Ruger American bolt action rifle w/ scope
(Donated by Sturm, Ruger & Company) |
| • Kenneth Fecteau, Jr., Conway, NH - | Woodman Arms Patriot Muzzleloader
(Donated by Woodman Arms) |
| • Anthony Cincotta, Somersworth, NH - | Ruger American bolt action rifle w/scope
(Donated by Sturm, Ruger & Company) |

Kent Gustafson, Game Program Supervisor, thanked the prize donors for their generous donations and gave a special thanks to Brad Marshall, of Marshall Firearms, for handling the necessary paperwork on behalf of the prize recipients.

4.) Jim Oehler, Habitat Biologist, came before the Commission seeking approval to add \$20,000 to the current FY'19 authorized budget of \$20,000 for exclusive use in our wildlife habitat enhancement Small Grants Program.

Commissioner Hodgdon moved to approve adding \$20,000 to the current FY'19

authorized budget of \$20,000 as presented and Commissioner Green seconded.

Commissioner Baldwin inquired as to changing the grant issuance requirement for managed lands to be kept open for hunting for a 5 year period to an 8 year period.

Much discussion ensued.

The vote was unanimous in the affirmative to add an additional \$20,000 for exclusive use in the Small Grants Program as requested in the above action item.

Chairman Phillipson invited Jim Oehler to come before the Commission within the next few months to discuss potential program changes with the Commission. Jim agreed to do so in the near future.

5.) Jim Oehler came before the Commission seeking approval to expend \$12,000 from the Wildlife Habitat Account to purchase an inholding with a deeded right of way through the Fort Hill Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in Stratford, NH.

Jim explained that the Fort Hill WMA is a 610 acre property along the Connecticut River with extensive open marsh and shrub/scrub wetlands, corn and hayfields, and floodplain forest among other habitats. He reported that there was approximately a ½ acre outlot for sale along the northern boundary that has a deeded right-of-way (ROW) through the WMA. He further reported that purchasing the property would extinguish the ROW that allows the landowner to pass through the department's gate at will and use the WMA as his/her own defacto private hunting preserve. He reported that the asking price was \$24,000, the appraised value is \$9,000, and the landowner and department have agreed on a purchase price of \$12,000, pending Commission approval.

After much discussion, Commissioner Stohl moved to authorize to expend \$12,000 from the Habitat Account to purchase an inholding with a deeded right of way through the Fort Hill WMA, Stratford, NH, with confirmation that the department does, in fact, have deeded access (ROW) and Commissioner Patch seconded. The vote carried with 7 in favor 1 opposed (B. Carr).

LATE ITEM:

1.) Commissioner McInnis moved to accept the following donations, valued at \$1,197.90, from the Wildlife Heritage Foundation of NH, to be utilized by the Wildlife Division and Commissioner Patch seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

- 10 Victure HC400 trail cameras- valued at \$600.00
- 2 Moultrie A-30i trail cameras- valued at \$239.90
- 2 Covert MP8 trail cameras-valued at \$230.00
- 10 32gb cards – valued at \$128.00

INFORMATION ITEMS:

1.) Kathy LaBonte, Chief, Business Division, reviewed the monthly financial statement with the Commission.

2.) Jim Oehler came before the Commission and provided an overview of a future action item to expend \$30,000 to fund road improvements on privately owned industrial forest land for the purpose of providing public access to nearly 2,000 acres of intensively managed habitat for woodcock specifically, however, also beneficial for grouse, snowshoe hare, deer, moose, and bear.

Jim reported that since 2008 Wagner Woodlands has been working with the Wildlife Management Institute (WMI) and other partners to improve woodcock habitat on 4,800 acres on three properties owned by Bayroot Company, in the towns of Carroll and Bethlehem. Timber harvests and brontosaurus work are occurring on this forest complex on a regular basis in order to maintain productive young forest cover for woodcock and grouse, as well as wildlife openings and evening roost fields that are important for woodcock and other species dependent on young forest habitat. He reported that all but 2,000 acres of this 4,800 acre managed forest are currently open to hunting. The remaining 2,000 acres would become publicly accessible with the addition of 3,900 feet of woods road built to accommodate standard vehicle passage.

In closing, Jim reported that Wagner and WMI have requested \$30,000 from the department to complete road improvements to facilitate public hunting access. He reported that Wagner and WMI are committed to implementing this habitat project over the long term. Other partners who have contributed to this project are The National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, NH Fish & Game Department Landowner Relations Program, The Ruffed Grouse Society, and The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

Much discussion ensued.

Commissioner Carr expressed the following concerns:

- Potential 10 year restriction for public access to this property.
- Bayroot, Forest Consultant, making money off this project.
- Gate to property being locked/closed.

Commissioner Stohl expressed similar concern over the gate issue and stated, “A closed gate to me says stay out. I’d like to see that gate left open so the sportsmen can access the property.” Commissioner Stohl reported that he was fine with the gate being closed/locked once the road conditions deteriorate due to weather conditions.

Commissioner Green agreed with Commissioner Stohl.

Commissioner Patch stated, “This project makes it more accessible for hunting & it seems like a good deal to me. I feel the numbers work very well.”

Commissioner Hodgdon inquired as to whether nongame species would benefit from this project.

Jim responded that the young forest habitat would benefit shrubland birds.

Commissioner Carr stated, “Understand, I would support this project in perpetuity and could live with it, however, without the potential 10 year restriction, as I feel access is limited.”

3.) Doug Grout, Chief, Marine Division, came before the Commission and provided an overview of the public hearing held on a variety of marine rules.

Doug reported that a public hearing was held on September 4, 2018 where new definitions of “commercial fishing”, “recreational fishing”, and “total length” of a marine fish were proposed, as well as changes to the marine aquaculture rules regarding competing applications, however, most were current rules that needed readoption.

In addition, Doug reported that public comments were taken on rules for ASMFC managed species including proposed changes to allow possession of striped bass fillets under certain conditions; as well as a variety of minor clarification and editorial changes to other ASMFC rules.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT: Director Normandeau reported that the Governor’s Office was very generous with the department in the recent budget discussions.

He reported that the next CORD (Commission on Resources & Development) Meeting would take place on November 8, 2018.

POLICY COMMITTEE: Commissioner Carr, Chair: Commissioners Millette & Temple. Commissioner Carr reported that the committee did not meet this month.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE: Commissioner Stohl, Chair; Commissioners Hodgdon, Patch, Green & Baldwin.

Commissioner Stohl reported that the committee met and Paul Sanderson, Legal Coordinator, provided an overview of the legislative process.

RIVERS COMMITTEE: Commissioner Hodgdon reported that his first meeting would take place in October.

LAKES COMMITTEE: Commissioner Millette was absent.

HANDBOOK & ORIENTATION COMMITTEE: Commissioner Patch, Chair; Commissioner Carr. Commissioner Carr reported that the committee did not meet.

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE: Commissioner Hodgdon, Chair: Commissioners Temple, Baldwin & Stohl.

Commissioner Hodgdon reported that the committee met briefly to discuss the next (CORD) meeting and the position the Commission took in May of 2018 to retain ownership of the Lake Sunapee Boat Access site (Wild Goose).

He further reported the committee briefly discussed the Strategic Plan.

WILDLIFE HERITAGE FOUNDATION: Commissioner Hodgdon provided a summary of the department's grant requests & awards made by the Foundation in 2018. (See Attached).

In addition, Commissioner Hodgdon provided the Wildlife Heritage Foundation's Annual Report for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2018. (See Attached).

AWARDS COMMITTEE: Commissioner Baldwin, Chair; Commissioners Carr & Millette. Committee is sunset at this time.

OLD BUSINESS: Nothing heard at this time.

NEW BUSINESS: Nothing heard at this time.

COMMISSIONERS REPORTS:
COMMISSIONER PHILLIPSON:

COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: Commissioner Baldwin reported that he attended a public hearing held in Franconia, NH, relative to erecting a platform & a 10 foot walkway on Profile Lake to accommodate wheelchair fishing. He reported that the project was turned down in its entirety.

COMMISSIONER CARR: Commissioner Carr reported that the Trapper's Rendezvous was well attended. He further reported that a hunter education class was held at the Farmington Fish & Game Club.

COMMISSIONER TEMPLE: Commissioner Temple inquired as to whether Director Normandeau & staff could look into a land/posting issue that was brought to his attention and report back to the Commission.

Staff agreed to look into the situation and get back to the Commission.

COMMISSIONER GREEN: Commissioner Green reported that he attended the Trapper's Rendezvous with Commissioner Millette. He further reported that he attended a vertical jigging seminar.

COMMISSIONER PATCH: Commissioner Patch reported that he had communications with many of his constituents this month on a variety of subjects.

COMMISSIONER MILLETTE: Commissioner Millette was absent.

COMMISSIONER MCINNIS: Commissioner McInnis reported that he attended the Marine Advisory Committee Meeting and the topic of discussion was dredging at Rye Harbor.

COMMISSIONER HODGDON: Commissioner Hodgdon had nothing to report.

COMMISSIONER STOHL: Commissioner Stohl reported that it was quiet in his area. He thanked the Commission for traveling to the North Country last month to hold a meeting at Barry Conservation Camp.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

Kristina Snyder, audience member, expressed her displeasure with a Commission Awards of Excellence recipient and felt the award was not merited.

Chairman Phillipson thanked her for her comment.

Julia Sinclair, audience member, inquired as to the status of search & rescues to date.

Colonel Jordan responded, “The number of rescues are increasing and it’s very concerning.”

Mike Gelinas, Durham resident, stated, “I do the water testing for the Powdermill Fish Hatchery/Merrymeeting River. We all realize that the law suit is a long way off; however, I’d really like to see some preventative measures take place in the interim, like a sediment filter bag installed at the end of trucks in an effort to suspend solids from going in the river.” He reported that he felt it would take considerable time for the river to recover.

At this time, 3:11 p.m., Commissioner Stohl moved to adjourn and Commissioner Green seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Respectfully submitted,

Barry Carr, Secretary

Approved: _____
Robert Phillipson, Chairman