

## NEW HAMPSHIRE FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT

### DECEMBER 12, 2018 COMMISSION MEETING

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

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

Commissioners absent/excused:

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 Carr moved to approve the October 10, 2018 Commission Minutes as written and Commissioner Patch seconded. The vote carried with 9 in favor and 1 abstention, (P. McInnis).

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 Patch moved to approve consent agenda items 2a & 2e as presented below and Commissioner Millette seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

2a.) Commission accepted the donation of a Round Whitefish mount from Jennifer Perkins, of Wild Things Taxidermy, Alexandria, NH, to be displayed at the Region 2 Fish & Game Office.

2b.) Commission accepted the donation of \$25.00 from Susan McDonald, supporter of Salmon Sunday, to be utilized by the Inland Fisheries Division.

2c.) Commission accepted the donation of \$1.00 from the National Wild Turkey Federation, South Strutters of NH, to be utilized by the Inland Fisheries Division.

2d.) Commission accepted the donation of fly fishing & fly tying equipment, valued at \$500.00, from Mrs. Sidney Diekman, New London, NH, in memory of Paul Diekman.

2e.) Commission accepted 2 donations to the “Let’s Go Fishing” Program as outlined below:

Abigail Prescott, Penacook, NH - \$50.00 in memory of Bliss Magoon, Loudon, NH.  
Charles & Constance Dwinal, Laconia, NH - \$30.00 in memory of James Makris, Laconia, NH.

3.) Commissioner Green moved to approve utilizing up to \$900.00 from the “Sale of Fish Food Account” to purchase 2 new pH meters and accessories from Pentair Aquatic Eco-Systems for the Berlin and Warren Hatcheries and Commissioner Baldwin seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

4.) Commissioner Stohl moved to approve the expenditure of \$11,075.00 from the Fisheries Habitat Account to cover the cost of the FY’19 Dam Registration Fees assessed by the Department of Environmental Services, Dams Bureau and Commissioner Hodgdon seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

5.) Jim Oehler, Habitat Biologist, came before the Commission requesting to expend \$30,000 from the Game Management Account for the construction of 3,200 feet of a woods road to facilitate public access to nearly 2,000 acres of well-managed habitat for upland gamebirds, snowshoe hare, deer, moose, and bear.

Much discussion ensued.

Commissioner Carr expressed serious concern over the potential for Bayroot to sell the property in question in the near future. He stated, “There is a lot of speculation here, we are unsure of the economy. We already have access, just not road access. I have an issue with private companies making money off us.”

Commissioner Luppi reported that she walked the property on Sunday, December 9, 2018, and thought it was great for sportsmen. She reported that she found it more than accessible for someone like herself, who is very mobile, to access and did not see the need for additional access and spending \$30,000. She stated, “It looked like it could be a future development and I’d rather see that \$30,000 used for something we will own forever.”

Ray, Bayroot Project Leader, assured the Commission that there has been no talk or discussion of any plans to change ownership of the property.

Commissioner Stohl reported that this road would provide access to Coos & Grafton Counties. He stated, “Personally, I will support to build the road to provide better access for my constituents to get to Grafton County from Coos County.”

Commissioner Patch stated, “Look what we are spending and what public access we are getting. I think this would provide better access for the sportsmen.”

Commissioner McInnis moved to approve expending \$30,000 from the Game Management Account to fund construction of 3,200 feet of a woods road to facilitate public access to nearly 2,000 acres of well-managed habitat for upland gamebirds, snowshoe hare, deer,

moose, and bear and Commissioner Hodgdon seconded.

Commissioner Millette stated, "They are going to complete the access road regardless." Mark Ellingwood, Chief, Wildlife Division, stated, "This is a good deal for the sportsmen of the State. We feel this is a wise investment from the department's perspective and a worthwhile program."

Commissioners Baldwin & Green both expressed concerns over prior financial investments/donations made to Bayroot by the department and inquired as to what projects the monies were used for.

Jim Oehler responded that he would have to do some research in order to answer that.

Commissioner McInnis moved the question and Commissioner Carr seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

The motion on the table carried with 5 in favor, 4 opposed and 1 abstention (T. Baldwin).

**LATE ITEM:**

1.) Chairman Phillipson reported that the NH Fish & Game Commission has the responsibility of appointing someone to represent them on the Commission to Study the Effectiveness of the Current Statutes Related to Management of Non-tidal waterways and the Construction or Replacement of Structures within them.

Chairman Phillipson inquired as to whether anyone on the Fish & Game Commission wished to serve as the designated representative. He announced that Mark McConkey, of Freedom, NH, has inquired and volunteered to represent the Fish & Game Commission on this Commission.

Mark McConkey was present and stated, "If appointed as your designee, I pledge to keep you informed of the process and I will faithfully represent your interests."

Commissioner Stohl moved to nominate Mark McConkey to represent the Fish & Game Commission on the Commission to Study the Effectiveness of the Current Statutes Related to Management of Non-tidal waterways and the Construction or Replacement of Structures within them and Commissioner Patch seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative

Mark thanked the Commissioners for their confidence in him and stated, "I look forward to serving you on this Commission."

2.) Conservation Law Foundation Lawsuit – Chairman Phillipson reported that one of the named entities in the lawsuit is the Fish & Game Commission. He reported that he would like to get a motion to waive the requirement of service, in order for everyone to be represented by the Attorney General's Office.

Commissioner Patch moved to waive the requirement of services as discussed above and Commissioner Green seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

In addition, Commissioner Patch moved to designate Director Normandeau as the Commission's designee for litigation purposes in the Commission's absence and Commissioner Baldwin seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

**INFORMATION ITEMS:**

1.) Kathy LaBonte, Chief, Business Division, reviewed 2 financial statements with the Commission, Those statements were dated October 31, 2018 & November 30, 2018.

**POLICY COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Carr, Chair: Commissioners Millette, Temple & Luppi. Commissioner Carr reported that the committee met briefly the morning of the meeting and discussed the vision of the future.

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

Commissioner Stohl reported that the committee met and had lively discussion. He reported that there were 741 LSR's (Legislative Service Requests) submitted, with titles being the only thing known at this point. He reported that he would call a meeting in the near future, once the particular language was out.

**RIVERS COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Hodgdon reported that the committee has not met since the last Commission Meeting.

He reported that in early October, 2018, the Rivers Committee, jointly with the Lakes Committee, submitted comments on the draft instream flow rules, the 1900 rules. He reported that the letter is available on the DES website. He reported that it basically outlined a few areas of concerns and affirmed the department's support in the way they plan to prioritize the water management plans.

The ranking prioritization of the first 5 Rivers is as follows:

- |                    |                     |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1.) Cold River     | 4.) Isinglass River |
| 2.) Warner         | 5.) Oyster River    |
| 3.) Ashuelot River |                     |

**LAKES COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Millette reported that the Lakes & Rivers Committees have a video on the inflow stream protection program. He encouraged everyone to watch the 5 minute video. He stated, "It's very educational and fascinating. They are doing some great work!"

**HANDBOOK & ORIENTATION COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Patch, Chair; Commissioner Carr. Commissioner Patch reported that he & Commissioner Carr plan to start the yearly update on the handbook the first of the New Year.

**STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Hodgdon, Chair; Commissioners Temple, Baldwin & Stohl. Commissioner Hodgdon reported that the committee did not meet.

**WILDLIFE HERITAGE FOUNDATION:** Commissioner Hodgdon. Commissioner Hodgdon reported that the Firearm Raffle was still ongoing. He reported that tickets were still available through December 31, 2018.

**RAFFLE DETAILS:**

- \*Tickets will be sold from: November 1, 2018 – December 31, 2018
- \*Tickets are \$40/each.
- \*Only 1,000 tickets will be sold.
- \*Total of 30 winners will be drawn.
- \*Winners will be drawn on Jan 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>, (15 winners drawn each day).

**AWARDS COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Baldwin, Chair; Commissioners Carr & Millette. Commissioner Baldwin reported that the Committee did not meet. Commissioner Baldwin encouraged everyone to get their Commission Awards of Excellence nominations submitted and postmarked by December 31, 2018.

**OLD BUSINESS:** Nothing heard at this time.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Nothing heard at this time.

**COMMISSIONERS REPORTS:**

**COMMISSIONER PHILLIPSON:** Nothing to report at this time.

**COMMISSIONER BALDWIN:** Nothing to report at this time.

**COMMISSIONER CARR:** Commissioner Carr reported that he had the opportunity to meet with the Strafford County Sheriff and was able to get information on their high quality drone, which he found to be very impressive. He reported that he forwarded the information to Colonel Jordan for his information.

He further reported that there would be a memorial event held by the Hackle & Tackle Club, in memory of Ellis Hatch, former long term Strafford County Commissioner, on Monday, December 17, 2018, at the Rochester Elks Club, Columbus Avenue, Rochester, NH, from 5:00 - 9:00 p.m.

**COMMISSIONER TEMPLE:** Nothing to report at this time.

**COMMISSIONER GREEN:** Commissioner Green reported that he recently attended a Wildlife Heritage Foundation Event for 2 days at Bass Pro Shop, Hooksett, NH, supporting the department's K-9 Program. He further reported that he received a call from the New England Mudhog Safety ATV Group with concerns over ATV regulations. He reported that he was in

the process of setting up a meeting with Paul Sanderson, Legal Coordinator, to have discussion on their concerns and review the regulations.

**COMMISSIONER PATCH:** Nothing to report.

**COMMISSIONER MILLETTE:** Commissioner Millette reported that he recently met some dedicated fishermen from Belknap County, who made some great observations to him. He reported that he would like the group to share those observations with the full Commission.

Chairman Phillipson recommended that the group get in touch with Jason Smith, Chief, Inland Fisheries, after the meeting to set up a mutually agreed upon meeting time to discuss their observations/recommendations.

**COMMISSIONER MCINNIS:** Commissioner McInnis reported the he has attended a few meetings of the Marine Advisory Committee on Marine Fisheries, where they were updating rules on menhaden and getting updates on herring.

**COMMISSIONER HODGDON:** Commissioner Hodgdon had nothing to report.

**COMMISSIONER STOHL:** Commissioner Stohl reported that he was recently invited to attend the Androscoggin Valley F&G Club Meeting. He reported that it was a good meeting and very informative.

**COMMISSIONER LUPPI:** Nothing to report at this time.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Director Normandeau reminded the Commission that he had mentioned in the past that the Department may see a decrease in Pittman Robertson Funds, based on decreases in sales of firearms & ammunition. He reported that the Department received a preliminary report indicating that the agency will face an 18% cut in Pittman Robertson Funds for the next year, representing \$850,000. He reported that the Department does not rely on that money to run the agency, as it is mostly used to purchase property. He further indicated that assuming nothing changes, the agency can expect the larger property purchases to come to a close for a while. Director Normandeau stated, "This is a good time to focus on the management side of our properties."

He reported that he recently attended The Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies Executive Committee Meeting in Washington, D.C. He reported that the major topic was CWD (Chronic Wasting Disease) and the potential explosion of it. He reported that there was a confirmed case of CWD in Quebec. He reported that CWD is now responsible for 6% of Wyoming's deer herd and it is starting to affect elk as well. Director Normandeau stated, "This is going to be a big issue and will require national changes."

Much discussion ensued.

He further reported that the Department was in the beginning phases of the budget process and anticipated having further discussion on it in the beginning of the year.

He informed the Commission that Rick Fink, Facilities & Lands Division Chief, recently retired and that the position requires a Physical Engineer Certification. He reported that he would be handling those responsibilities until a replacement is found.

**CALL TO THE PUBLIC:**

Chris Schadler, audience member, spoke to the CWD subject and stated that it may be a good time to note that predators can detect illness in prey animals at an early stage. She reported that it being a neurologic condition, it would affect an animal's ability to detect a predator, thus, enhancing the opportunity for predators to take sick animals. She stated, "This is a timely issue. It may be time to think about a different way of managing coyote and I would be happy to help."

At this time, 2:44 p.m., Commissioner Carr moved to adjourn and Commissioner Stohl seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Respectfully submitted,

Barry Carr, Secretary

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Robert Phillipson, Chairman