

FINAL Meeting Minutes
Wildlife and Boat Committee
Board of Wildlife Resources
7870 Villa Park Drive – Board Room
Henrico, VA 23228

August 21, 2024
10:00 am

Present: Mr. James Edmunds, **Chair**, Mr. Woody Woodall, Ms. Laura Walters, Mr. Will Wampler (alternate), **Absent:** Mr. Brian Vincent; **Board Members** in attendance: Mr. George Terwilliger, Mr. Jon Cooper, Mr. Lynwood Broaddus, and Dr. Mamie Parker; **Executive Director:** Mr. Ryan Brown; **Deputy Directors:** Ms. Becky Gwynn and Mr. Darin Moore; **Director's Working Group:** Dr. Mike Bednarski, Mr. Bob Smet, Ms. Stacey Brown, Mr. George Braxton, Mr. Paul Kugelman, Mr. Michael Lipford, Ms. Shelby Crouch.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:00 am and noted for the record that a Quorum was present for today's meeting.

The Chair welcomed our 2 new Board Members to the Wildlife and Boat Committee, Ms. Laura Walters, and Mr. Lynwood Broaddus.

Approval of the May 22, 2024, Committee Meeting Minutes:

The Chair called for a motion to approve the May 22, 2024, Wildlife and Boat Committee meeting minutes. Ms. Walters made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 22, 2024, committee meeting. Mr. Wampler seconded the motion. Ayes: Edmunds, Woodall, Walters, Wampler

Public Comment - Non-Agenda Item: The Chair called for Public Comment – Non-Agenda Items.

- Mr. Gary Kimberlin spoke regarding Bear and Deer management plans
- Mr. Judge Charlton spoke regarding dog hunting

Naming of a New WMA: The Chair called on Mr. Michael Lipford for a presentation.

Mr. Lipford gave a presentation on the naming of a new Wildlife Management Area.

After comments and questions, The Chair thanked Mr. Lipford for his presentation.

The Chair called for a motion, Mr. Edmunds made a motion, I move that the Wildlife and Boat Committee of the Board of Wildlife Resources endorse the proposed property name and designations, as presented by staff, for consideration by the Board. It was seconded by Ms. Walters. Ayes: Edmunds, Woodall, Walters, Wampler

Biennial Wildlife Regulations Schedule: The Chair called on Mr. Cale Godfrey for a presentation.

Mr. Godfrey presented the 2025-26 Wildlife Regulations Review and Amendment Process along with the Recommended Timeline and Board Meeting dates.

After comments and questions, The Chair thanked Mr. Godfrey for his presentation.

The Chair called for a motion. Mr. Edmunds made a motion; I move that the Committee approve the recommended wildlife regulation review and amendment process timeline and recommended Board meeting dates for the coming year as presented by staff. It was seconded Mr. Wampler. Ayes: Edmunds, Woodall, Walters, Wampler

Bear Mange Update: The Chair called on Mr. Nelson Lafon for an Update.

Mr. Lafon gave an update on Bear Mange and DWR Commitments to Managing Sarcoptic Mange in Bears.

Public Speakers:

- Mr. Steve Knicely spoke regarding Bear Mange
- Mr. Raymond Carter spoke regarding Bear Mange
- Mr. Sean Clarkson spoke regarding Bear Mange (virtual)

After comments and questions, The Chair thanked Mr. Lafon for his update.

Boating Division Stakeholder Engagement: The Chair called on Ms. Stacey Brown for a report.

Ms. Brown provided a status update on current and future efforts of the Boating Division to engage with boating stakeholders and stakeholders' groups.

After comments and questions, The Chair thanked Ms. Brown for her report.

Wildlife Division Update: The Chair called on Mr. Michael Lipford for his Wildlife Division update.

Mr. Lipford reported:

- Virginia's Turkey Management Plan -Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting
- Southeast Wild Turkey Work Group meeting
- Wildlife Division Interns
- Elk Conservation License Program Update
- CWD Grant
- Habitat Management at Wildlife Management Areas
- NOAA Grant and EPA Grant for Coastal Habitat Restoration
- VDOT Funding for a Tern Cam at Fort Wood (Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel Colonial Bird Mitigation)

After comments and questions, The Chair thanked Mr. Lipford for his update.

Fish Division Update: The Chair called on Dr. Mike Bednarski for a Fish Division Update.

Dr. Bednarski reported:

- Update from the ICAST (International Convention of Allied Sportfishing Trades) trade show in Orlando, Florida. At this show, he spoke with Virginia businesses. These businesses included Missile Baits out of Salem, Rapid fishing Solutions and Cliff Weil Eyewear, both in Mechanicsville, Yak Attack out of Farmville, and Siegler Reels, Glovescaler, and Rachel Screenprinting, all out of Virginia Beach. DWR intends to work with these manufacturers to build partnership and better illustrate how the Agency's work directly supports these businesses.

After comments and questions, The Chair thanked Dr. Bednarski for his update.

Nongame Program Update: The Chair called on Ms. Amy Martin for a Nongame Program Update.

Ms. Martin reported:

- We are in receipt of our largest USFWS Traditional Section 6 Competitive Grants award. At just over \$163,000, this award will fund 10 research projects.
- We released mussels in late May on the James River near Richmond. This was a cooperative project with James River Association and USFWS. We released about 1,360 animals of two species of greatest conservation need, eastern lampmussels and alewife floaters.
- We trapped 8 more "nuisance" Alleghany woodrats near Sperryville, VA. These animals will be kept at the Wildlife Center of Virginia until they are deemed healthy and ready for transfer to the PA Game Commission. Over the life of this project, we

- have supported woodrat population augmentation in Pennsylvania, Ohio, New Jersey, and Indiana to keep this animal populous enough to avoid its listing.
- We repatriated (returned home) 8 spotted turtles that had been confiscated along with many other animals in New York. Upon genetic testing, it was determined that these turtles are native to Virginia and upon health testing, were deemed healthy. In mid-August, these turtles were picked up from the Wildlife Center of Virginia and returned to the wild.
 - We have received almost \$900,000 grant from the Paul G. Allen Foundation to enhance our work on Hellbender conservation in cooperation with Virginia Tech. Hellbenders are the largest salamander native to North America and is found in our southwestern Virginia rivers and streams.
 - We have received a \$30,000 grant from the Tennessee Valley Authority to enhance our restoration work for Appalachian monkeyface pearly mussels. This grant will allow us to work regionally on conservation efforts.
 - Our draft Sea Turtle Conservation Plan is out for expert review. Once we hear from the experts and update the document accordingly, it will go out for public review as well.

After comments and questions, the Chair thanked Ms. Martin for her Update.

Boating Division Update: The Chair called on Ms. Stacey Brown for a Boating Division Update.

Ms. Brown reported:

- 60,000 customer contacts
- Customer Service implemented a “going green” initiative.
- Stopped mailing customer and only send by their email address.
- Our Data Analytics team is evaluating the renewal process.
- The Boating Safety & Education program “going green” initiative to replace our paper “Dockside Checklists.”
- The Waterways Program is busy building a system to house the application paperwork to better track markers and will create a GIS layer of waterway markers.
- 19,000 students take a boating safety course.
- 56 boating incidents
- Fatalities rose to 10.

After comments and questions, The Chair thanked Ms. Brown for her Update.

Director’s Report: The Chair called on Director Ryan Brown for his report.

- Gave an update of the New Grants the agency has received recently and the work it takes to apply and all the paperwork to keep up with as the money is used and how exciting it

is for DWR for be awarded these grants. These grants are highly competitive, DWR was lucky to be able to receive these.

Chair' Report: The Chair thanked staff for support and how is enjoying being able to serve as Chair of this committee.

The Chair reported the next meeting will be Wednesday, October 23, 2024, and asked for any additional business or comments in which several board members spoke in favor and congratulated the Department on the awards and monetary grants DWR has received recently and complimented the work of the staff. The Chair adjourned the meeting at 12:00 noon.

Respectfully submitted,
Frances Boswell
/s/

