

**Fish & Wildlife Board  
Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, March 28, 2007**

**APPROVED (as amended 4/18/07)**

The Fish & Wildlife Board convened a meeting at 5:00 p.m. on March 28, 2007, in the Skylight conference room in Waterbury, Vermont.

Attendees

Board Members: Dana Kittell, Chair; Brian Ames; R. Keith Armstrong; Jeremy Baker; Wayne Barrows; Rob Borowske (as outgoing Washington County member); Walt Driscoll; Albert Floyd (as outgoing Orange County member); Ed Gallo; Craig Lefevre; Claude Rainville; John Roy; Bob Shannon; and Bruce Therrien.

Department Employees: Commissioner Wayne Laroche, Colonel Robert Rooks, Ron Regan, Steve Hill, Paul Hamelin, and Cathy Merrill.

Dana Kittell, the newly-appointed Chair, opened the meeting at 5:00 p.m. He asked Steve Hill for clarification on the procedure in the event the Chair is absent, as he will not be present at the April meeting. Hill said that if the Chair is going to be absent from a meeting, any Board member can call the meeting to order. Once the meeting has been called to order, the Board would then elect one of its members to preside over the meeting. The election of the “temporary” Chair will stand until someone else is elected, or until the Chair returns. Hill also said that if the Chair wants to speak personally to an issue, he can appoint someone else to preside over the meeting.

Kittell said that one thing he would like to change while he is Chair is the timeliness of receiving information from the Department. He would like the Department to provide information, handouts, proposed rules, etc., at least one week in advance of a Board meeting to allow the Board members time to review the materials.

Kittell also asked for a “visitors” agenda item on future agendas as he would like to hear concerns from the public earlier in the meeting in an effort to avoid making them wait. The “visitors” agenda item will follow the approval of the minutes.

**Approval of February 21, 2007 Minutes**

Borowske made a motion to accept the minutes, which was seconded by Roy. Lefevre said he did not recollect making the recommendation attributed to him on page 2 concerning the digest. It was confirmed by others that Lefevre did make the statement and after that clarification, the Board voted unanimously to accept the minutes as written.

### **Update on Moose Population Data**

Cedric Alexander's update on the moose population data was postponed due to a quality control issue with the vendor. Ron Regan quoted an email in which Cedric stated: "It appears the standing moose population in WMU E is reasonably close to what the Deer Hunter Survey indicated and no change in the proposed permit quota, up or down, is warranted." Cedric will be re-scheduled to give the update at the April meeting.

### **Presentation – WMA Accomplishments**

Paul Hamelin gave a presentation on Vermont's Wildlife Management Areas and entertained questions from the Board.

Board members requested that Hamelin provide them with hard copies of the summary slides, which he agreed to do. It was also suggested that these summary slides be available as handouts at deer meetings.

### **Presentation – Law Enforcement**

Col. Rooks gave a presentation on the Law Enforcement Division, which outlined the past, present, and possible future responsibilities of that Division.

### **Bear Hound Regulation – Second Vote**

Col. Rooks opened the discussion on the proposed bear hound regulation. Col. Rooks said he and other Department staff recently met with the directors of the Vermont Houndsmen Association to discuss the proposed regulation.

A motion to accept the Department's recommendation as presented by Col. Rooks was made by Ames, and seconded by Gallo.

There was discussion on the amendment regarding 3.3 and 3.4 under 3.0 Definitions, and the intent of the language.

Therrien made a motion to strike "addition or" in 3.4, and add "removal and" so the definition would read: "The ~~addition or~~ removal and replacement of one or more dog or dogs to the trail of a bear to the original pack of dogs consisting of a maximum of a six dog unit, once the pursuit has begun." Borowske seconded.

There was discussion on relaying of dogs and the number of dogs allowed.

All voted in favor of Therrien's amendment, except Baker, who opposed.

Kittell led the Board through the proposed regulation item by item. No other changes were suggested; except for a typo noted on 3.5 (should be 4.5).

Dennis Carver, a bear houndsman, addressed the Board with his concerns and believed the proposal would put houndsmen at risk for violations. Kittell said Mr. Carver's concerns were covered under Section 4.7.

All voted in favor of the proposal as amended, except Baker, who opposed.

### **Legislative Update**

Steve Hill gave an update on pertinent bills in the Legislature.

Hill said the proposed rules on wanton waste and the moose season have been approved by Interagency Committee on Administrative Rules (ICAR), and the public comment period on those rules will cease toward the end of April.

Hill informed the Board that the Department has not heard from the Attorney General's office regarding the Board's request for an opinion, and assured the Board that as soon as an opinion is issued, he will inform the Board. Borowske said he was contacted by the AG's office for a clarification of the request, but had heard nothing further.

There was discussion about the Funding Task Force's funding recommendations.

Commissioner Laroche said he and representatives from the US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), and New York's Department of Environmental Conservation met with Vermont's congressional delegation last week in Washington, D.C. to discuss a cooperative process to treat sea lamprey in the Poultney River.

### **Roundtable**

Kittell thanked Borowske for his tenure as Chair, which was followed by a round of applause.

Rainville expressed concern about the safety of overlapping seasons. Specifically, some bass tournament participants have been making it difficult and unsafe for waterfowl hunters to hunt and launch their boats. Commissioner Laroche said the Department will work with tournament organizers prior to issuing permits to address these concerns.

Ames asked if the Deer Team was going to recommend a three deer limit for next year's hunting season. Commissioner Laroche said the Department has been considering raising the limit to three deer. Laroche went on to say that there are areas in the state where the two deer limit is not controlling the herd, and the Department needs to control the herd in order to maintain the habitat.

Several Board members criticized the Commissioner for putting the "three deer" idea out to the public before coming to the Board. Laroche responded that the Department will listen to the public's opinion, but the harvest limit is one of the tools the Department has to manage the deer herd.

The 2007 deer season proposal will be in front of the Board at its April meeting.

Shannon said he had asked for the goals and objectives and would like to see them better defined. Therrien said to make sure the goals and objectives are included in the deer management plan, and he would like to hear from the Deer Team, not just the Commissioner.

Kittell reiterated his goal for future meetings of having information ahead of time, which will allow for timely review by the Board.

Gallo is concerned about the carrying capacity of the land. He would like to see identified in the deer management plan how the carrying capacity of the land could be raised.

Baker distributed a letter from the Central Vermont Public Service Corporation's Greenteam. The Greenteam partners with organizations on environmental projects in CVPS service areas.

Kittell emphasized his availability to the Board, and his openness for suggestions to make the Board meetings run smoothly.

Roy made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Rainville. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

***The next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 18, 2007 at 5:00 p.m. in the Skylight conference room at the State Office Complex in Waterbury, Vermont.***

Respectfully submitted:

***/s/cpm***

Catherine Pirie Merrill  
Executive Assistant

***The mission of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department is the conservation of all species of fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the people of Vermont.***