

MINUTES

SOUTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE & MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING

Dutch Plaza, Columbia, S. C.
January 19, 1979

The regular monthly meeting of the South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources Commission was held in the Conference Room of the Dutch Plaza Office Complex, Columbia, S. C., at 10:00 a. m., January 19, 1979, with Chairman Trask presiding. Notice of the date, time, and place for the meeting was mailed to the state's newspapers, radio and television stations through a news release dated January 15, 1979. Commissioners at the meeting included Chairman Trask, Boykin, Edens, Dawson, Stubbs, Shuler, Buchanan and Bennett. Directors and staff members present included Dr. Timmerman, Larry Cartee, Dan Dobbins, John Evans, Jeff Fuller, Brock Conrad, John Frampton, Pat Ryan, John Culler, Fred Zeigler, Ned Pendarvis, Bill Chastain, Charlie Bearden and Tim Ivey. Guests at the meeting included Pat Robertson of "The Columbia Record", Mr. and Mrs. Belvin Horres of Charleston, Ken Kinard and Cathy Dreher of the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, Jim Kinard of the House of Representatives, and Mike Copeland of the Senate Fish, Game, and Forestry Committee.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Trask called the meeting to order at 10:00 a. m.

ITEM I. READING OF THE MINUTES

Chairman Trask asked if there were any changes to the Minutes of the meeting held on December 8, 1978, in Pinopolis. Commissioner Edens noted that on page 2, Item III (A), the Minutes read that, "(1) the either-sex days in the Western and Central Piedmont Hunt Units shall be on the same day so as to disperse the hunters." Commissioner Edens stated that he thought that the Committee's recommendation was to have only the opening either-sex day on the same day in the Western and Central Piedmont Hunt Units, rather than all of the either-sex days being on the same days. Commissioner Boykin stated that he felt that all of the either-sex days should be on the same day in both Units so as to disperse the hunters on all either-sex days. Following other discussion, Commissioner Stubbs moved to approve the Minutes as submitted. Commissioner Boykin seconded the motion and such was approved by the Commission.

ITEM II. PRESENTATION OF PLAQUE TO MR. BELVIN HORRES

Chairman Trask presented a plaque to Mr. Belvin Horres on behalf of the Commission and expressed thanks to Mr. Horres for being a friend of the Department for many years and dedicated service to the sportsmen of South Carolina. It was noted that Mr. Horres recently retired after many years of news reporting for the Charleston newspaper. Mr. Horres expressed his thanks to the Commission and noted that the Wildlife Department has been very good to him over the years as a reporter.



ITEM III. COMMENTS

Dr. Timmerman introduced and welcomed the guests at the meeting. Dr. Timmerman noted that the Beaufort Law Enforcement Office had recently been dedicated and there was a very good turnout at the dedication. Due to the time and effort of Senator James Waddell on the dedication, Dr. Timmerman noted that the Commission may want to express thanks to Senator Waddell for his contributions to the dedication.

Dr. Timmerman informed the Commission that he appeared before the Ways and Means Subcommittee to discuss the Department's budget. Dr. Timmerman discussed the critical needs with the Subcommittee which had been presented to the Budget and Control Board. Dr. Timmerman stated that the discussion with the Subcommittee went very good and they were very receptive. The Department is not asking for any additional personnel. Dr. Timmerman pointed as "seed thought" that one of the critical problems we need to look at for the next ten (10) years is the amount of available land for public hunting. Currently, we have approximately 1.6 million acres in the GMA Program of which a substantial portion is owned by the U. S. Forest Service and the paper companies. Through the GMA permit sales, about twenty cents (.20¢) per acre is paid for lease of this property for public hunting. In some cases, private leasing of land for hunting is running \$2.50 to \$4.00 per acre. There are small amounts of land owned by the Department. As such, we need to look into and think about whether or not we should make a concentrated effort to acquire bottomlands for public hunting purposes.

As a matter of information, Dr. Timmerman noted that we are having a problem with trespassing and illegal hunting at the South Island Plantation. As such, the Trustees have asked the Department to consider a sanctuary agreement for the property. Dr. Timmerman recommended that before any agreement is entered into, it should be thoroughly discussed with Commissioner Dawson and the legislators in the area. Fred Zeigler noted that a problem exists with people going into the area in boats and shooting ducks. A king's grant does exist on parcels of the property and ownership of the marshlands can be claimed, but not the waterways. It is proposed that an agreement be secured from the Budget and Control Board to place the waterways into a hunting sanctuary. Fishing would be allowed. This action would stop people from hunting from the waterways. Dr. Timmerman stated that no action is needed on this as it is a matter of information, and if the Commission agrees, it will be discussed with the resident Commissioner, local legislators, and presented to the Budget and Control Board.

Dr. Timmerman informed the Commission that Orangeburg County had recently transferred title to a piece of property to the federal government at the federal fish hatchery. Many years ago, this property was acquired by Orangeburg County and Chief Richardson, or his successor, was named as trustee for such.



In order for this transfer to be legal, Dr. Timmerman noted that he (being successor to Chief Richardson) must sign the deed. Dr. Timmerman stated that the Department has never used this property for any purpose and the transfer to the federal hatchery seems to be in order. Commissioner Shuler moved that the Commission approve this transfer of property to the federal government. Commissioner Boykin seconded the motion and such was approved by the Commission.

Dr. Timmerman informed the Commission that Governor Edwards presented the Palmetto Citation of Excellence to the "SOUTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE" magazine. This award is one of seven such awards presented by Governor Edwards. The Commission commended the magazine staff on the award.

Dr. Timmerman noted that he had been honored also, and passed around a letter to the Commission denoting such.

Dr. Timmerman informed the Commission that he and other agency directors had recently met with Governor Riley and his staff. Governor Riley stressed liaison between his office and the various commissions. He stated that he wanted to meet with the various commissions and their key staff in the near future. Dr. Timmerman noted that he has written an Executive Summary of the Department for the Governor and a copy of such was distributed to the Commission for their information. Dr. Timmerman stated that he plans to ask Senator Dennis to extend an invitation for the Governor to meet with the Commission at the February or March Commission meeting.

Dr. Timmerman noted that the federal government has a watershed project which the Department had agreed upon and two (2) projects are proposed for elimination from the agreement. In the past, only the Executive Director had to sign the document, but now the Commission Chairman must sign. The staff agrees with the elimination of these projects and Chairman Trask will be asked to sign this unless there are any objections from the Commission.

Dr. Timmerman stated that he had a financial statement for the Wildlife and Education Training Fund for Commissioners Buchanan and Stubbs to sign before they leave the meeting.

Dr. Timmerman noted that the Commission had asked the Law Enforcement and Boating Advisory Board to evaluate the problem of feral dogs in the state and such has been thoroughly discussed. Commissioner Shuler stated that various group representatives had met several times and they support proposed legislation on this matter. Commissioner Shuler noted that Jim Kinard and Frank Hill have worked very hard on this matter. Bill Chastain noted that a statewide survey of feral dogs in 1977 revealed that there are over 14,000 feral dogs in



South Carolina. In addition, over seventy (70) cases of attacks on livestock have been documented. Representative Jim Kinard noted that various groups have been asked to meet and address this problem. Some of these groups included the SPCA, Wildlife Federation, Sierra Club, Audubon Society, and the Wild Turkey Federation. It was the recommendation of the groups that the feral dog had to be dealt with and eliminated to the extent possible. Mr. Kinard presented a draft bill (attached to the original Commission Minutes) to the Commission for discussion. Basically, the bill would enable specially trained conservation officers to investigate wild and feral dog problems at the request of the landowner and either remove the feral dogs from the property or dispose of them in the most humane manner possible. Dr. Timmerman asked how much conservation officer time would be required for this program. Bill Chastain noted that such could not be determined at this time, but such could be accomplished through normal, routine patrols. Dr. Timmerman also asked if there were any legal problems with the draft bill. Fred Zeigler noted that if conservation officers are requested to investigate by the landowners, there should not be any problems from a legal standpoint. Following other discussion, Commissioner Boykin moved that the Commission endorse this bill as presented. Commissioner Shuler seconded the motion and such was approved by the Commission.

ITEM IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. 1979 Legislative Proposals: Dr. Timmerman noted that a lot of background work with field personnel has gone into the development of the legislative proposals which were mailed to the Commission. The proposals are listed in priority by each division. Dan Dobbins stated that the proposals were mailed to the Commission for their input so that such can be presented to the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee and the Senate Fish, Game, and Forestry Committee. Dr. Timmerman noted that it was suggested that we come up with an organized plan such as this to present to the Subcommittees of these two Committees. Dan Dobbins noted that the proposal to require an annual permit for gathering shellfish had met some adverse reaction and it is recommended that such be deleted from the package. This met with the general agreement of the Commission. Commissioner Boykin raised a question about Law Enforcement proposals #11 and #12 concerning the requirement that a non-resident be required to have a license to fish in a private pond. Commissioner Buchanan stated that he felt it was discriminatory to not allow non-residents to fish in a private pond without a license. Following other discussion, Commissioner Buchanan moved that the proposal be amended to allow non-residents to fish in a private pond without a license with the permission of the landowner. Commissioner Dawson seconded the motion and such was approved by the Commission. Dr. Timmerman stated that unless there are any objections from the Commission, we will go ahead with these legislative proposals. This action met with the consensus of opinion of the Commission.



B. Undercover Vehicles for Law Enforcement: Dr. Timmerman noted that the Law Enforcement Division has informed him they face problems and need to expand their undercover operations. It is recommended that two (2) unmarked vehicles be assigned to each law enforcement district and three (3) vehicles will be assigned to a motor pool to be available for undercover work. Dr. Timmerman pointed out that it will place a close responsibility on law enforcement that there would not be any misuse of these vehicles or create any adverse public reaction from improper use of the vehicles. If this proposal is approved by the Commission, it would have to be presented to the Budget and Control Board for their concurrence. Pat Ryan noted that they are asking to expand on their undercover capabilities. The two (2) existing undercover officers are worked to death and cannot get around to everything. These vehicles will be part of the existing fleet and not an addition to such. The officers will be trained in undercover work and will work in civilian clothes. When the vehicles are recognized in a district, they will be transferred to other districts. These vehicles will be under complete control of the District Captains and the Assistant Chief of Law Enforcement will be a full-time administrator of the program. The three (3) vehicles assigned to the pool will be for use as needed for officers that are not assigned undercover vehicles. Bill Chastain informed the Commission of a recent undercover operation dealing with illegal furs that were trapped and taken across the state line into North Carolina. These three (3) individuals were apprehended and arrested. Commissioner Buchanan commended the law enforcement staff on this proposal noting that such has been needed for a long time and suggested that the proposal be extended into the Boating Division. Commissioner Edens moved that the Commission approve the recommendation as submitted. Commissioner Boykin seconded the motion and such was approved by the Commission. Commissioner Boykin noted that the area of undercover work is a very sensitive matter inside the Department and as far as the public is concerned. As such, he suggested that one (1) Commissioner be appointed by the Chairman and the Chairman of the Law Enforcement and Boating Advisory Board to work with the staff and undercover group in order that the Commission be represented on this matter. Chairman Trask appointed Commissioner Boykin to serve in this capacity. Commissioner Boykin stated that he would look into this matter and see what the job should entail.

C. Regulation - Deer Depredation Permits: Jeff Fuller reported that we have problems throughout the state on deer depredation. A law exists whereby we have been issuing depredation permits, but a formalized procedure is needed to handle this matter. As such, a rule and regulation has been proposed to set up a procedure to handle all depredation permits alike and allow treatment of all landowners on the same basis (copy of Rule and Regulation attached to the original Commission Minutes). Commissioner Shuler moved for the Commission to endorse the proposed rule and regulation. Commissioner Boykin seconded the motion and such was approved by the Commission.



Dr. Timmerman noted that at the December Commission meeting, there was a great deal of discussion on the deer season, doe harvest, and establishing a tagging system. Jeff Fuller will discuss this matter to see if the intent of the Commission is being carried out so that each Commissioner can provide input, discuss with their constituents, and finalize at the February Commission meeting.

D. Division Reports:

1. Administrative Services: Benny Reeves reported that he did not have anything to add to the written report.

2. Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries: Jeff Fuller stated that the 79-80 GMA regulations have been approved at the last meeting and submitted for legislative approval. For 80-81, the staff has discussed and attempted to meet the Commission's desires with regard to statewide opening of the deer season on September 1, special areas for archery hunters, primitive weapon hunters, and small game hunters, and a tagging system for doe deer is to be implemented and doe days would no longer be in existence. A copy of the detailed proposal for 80-81 was mailed to the Commission and distributed for those that needed a copy (copy attached to the original Commission Minutes).

Commissioner Buchanan asked why October 1 - 16 had been set for primitive weapons and archery hunts when they have always been given the first chance for hunting before the gun hunts begin. Also, archery hunters have indicated that the December 1 - 13 season is useless because of the cold weather. Brock Conrad noted that the December 1 - 13 season was added last year at the request of the archery hunters. Commission Dawson noted that he felt a complete study on this matter should be made by the biologists and law enforcement staff to get the pros and cons and see what should be expected. Jeff Fuller reported on various pros and cons of this proposal. The additional thirty (30) days in the season would be a pro for the hunter. Since there will not be any doe days, there could be less trouble with trespassing. The designated areas for small game hunting would be a benefit to the small game hunter. On the cons of the proposal, Mr. Fuller presented several ideas. If there are no doe days, it will be hard to collect reproductive data. The costs of implementing a doe tagging program will increase significantly. In addition, without the doe days flexibility will be lost in harvesting doe deer. With the tagging system, we are not sure if the hunting pressure will be adequate to control the population. Mr. Fuller also noted that we may sell less GMA permits to residents and non-residents which would reduce revenue. The U. S. Forest Service may not be able to cooperate fully with this system since the multiple-use of Forest Service land continues into September. This will be discussed in further detail later with Forest Service officials. It is possible that trespassing may increase with an extension of the deer season an additional thirty (30) days in the season. Dr. Timmerman



suggested that the Commission review this proposal and recommend any changes at the February meeting. Commissioner Buchanan asked about the archery hunt situation earlier discussed. Brock Conrad stated that the private and GMA lands have always had the same archery season since they are mixed. The best solution is to open the whole area for gun hunting in September with the archery season being October 1 - 16. Commissioner Dawson stated that archery hunters will not be satisfied with this proposal as they need the first change at hunting. Brock Conrad noted that the archery hunters could be given the first hunting in September for bucks only, if so desired by the Commission. Chairman Trask noted that at the last meeting, the Commission had recommended that certain areas for archery hunting only should be set aside. Brock Conrad asked about setting aside special areas for archery hunting on the GMA lands and the private lands in a Hunt Unit as it would be difficult to impose such on private landowners. Following other discussion, Chairman Trask appointed Commissioners Dawson and Buchanan to meet with the staff to discuss how to set up special areas for archery hunting and come back at the February meeting for discussion. Commissioner Stubbs reported that hunters in the upstate are happy with the idea of opening the season on September 1.

3. Law Enforcement & Boating: Pat Ryan stated that he did not have anything to add to the written report.

4. Information & Public Affairs: John Culler stated that he did not have anything to add to the written report.

5. Marine Resources: There was nothing to add to the written report.

E. Advisory Board Reports:

1. Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries: Commissioner Edens reported that the Board would meet next month.

2. Law Enforcement & Boating: Commissioner Shuler noted that the feral dog matter discussed by the Board has already been presented to the Commission. As a matter of information, the Board discussed four-wheel drive vehicles and various problems of abuse on private and public land. Larry Hinkle of Hinkle Jeep Sales discussed this matter with the Board. Input on this is being secured and no action is needed at this time.

3. Marine Resources: Commissioner Dawson noted that the Board met on January 12th and copies of the Minutes were distributed to the Commission. The navigation for the pilot boats in Georgetown was discussed and a meeting with Senator Doar is scheduled for January 22, 1979.

4. Heritage Trust: Dr. Timmerman reported that the Board had met on January 18, 1979. There was some discussion on how involved the Department should be in the cultural and historical aspects of the Heritage Trust Act. Dr.



Timmerman stated that we should deal in our own area of expertise and assist in other areas where we can as we do not have the expertise to deal with these areas directly. Dr. Timmerman also informed the Commission that there had been some discussion on the Mountain Bridge Project and this project is more in line with the activities of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism; however, there is one area in the tract that is of interest to the Heritage Trust Program. Dr. Timmerman distributed a letter from Governor Edwards on this project along with our reply and contact with the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism. The natural area in this tract is under investigation by the Heritage Trust staff.

F. Salary Review Committee: Dr. Timmerman reported that the Committee had two (2) outstanding appraisals to report to the Commission.

G. Appointments: Dr. Timmerman distributed the recommendations for appointments and re-appointments of Deputy Wildlife Conservation Officers and the appointments and re-appointments of Conservation Officers (copy attached to the original Commission Minutes). Commissioner Boykin noted that it appears that DWCO appointments with "statewide authority" are becoming numerous and asked why we are getting back to recommending so many with "statewide authority". Dr. Timmerman stated that we have been giving retired employees an appointment with "statewide authority", but (in general) we have been very restrictive. Bill Chastain noted that re-appointments have been given the same authority as before and new appointments for "statewide authority" have been limited. Dr. Timmerman stated that, in the future, the District Captains should be informed to keep the "statewide" appointments to a minimum. Commissioner Boykin moved that all DWCO appointments and re-appointments be approved as submitted. Commissioner Shuler seconded the motion and such was approved by the Commission. Following other discussion, the Commission approved re-appointments of Conservation Officers and other Department personnel as recommended.

In regard to the NEW appointment of Joel Daniel Hudson as a Conservation Officer in McCormick County, Dr. Timmerman reported that after discussing this vacancy with the staff and resident Commissioner, this recommendation should be withdrawn at this time. The vacancy in McCormick County has been pending for seven (7) or eight (8) months of which such vacancies will be filled sooner in the future. An individual in Greenwood County was interested in the job, but the staff felt there was a qualified individual in McCormick County. Another individual in McCormick County had applied for the vacancy, but did not meet the six-month residency requirement when he applied. However, at the time of interviewing for the vacancy, this individual did meet the residency requirement and should have been interviewed. There was a breakdown in communication between the Personnel Office and the Law Enforcement Office and he should have been interviewed. As such, both of these applicants should be interviewed and a recommendation to the Commission should be re-submitted at the next meeting or poll the



Commission on such. This met with the general consensus of opinion of the Commission and no action was taken on the appointment of Mr. Hudson as a conservation officer.

H. Other Remarks: Commissioner Buchanan noted that in 1977, the Commission had sent personnel to Tennessee to look at some boats. In the financial statement, it is revealed that eighteen (18) boats were bought of which several are Glassmaster and some of these boats may cost more than what we could buy competitively. Three (3) of these boats cost over \$7,000 each and Commissioner Buchanan questioned whether or not we need to buy such expensive boats noting that the high performance type boat can be purchased fully equipped for \$2,850. Pat Ryan noted that in some cases, county funds are used to purchase these boats and the legislators ask for a particular type of boat. The \$7,000 is kept to a minimum and some are used for rescue work and a large boat is needed. In general, the old boats are replaced with the same type of boat. Dr. Timmerman noted that all boats go through the state bidding process and the staff will work with Commissioner Buchanan on this matter.

Chairman Trask noted that assembly costs on these boats for the controls, motor, etc., run about \$400/\$500 and asked if such can be purchased already assembled. Mr. Ryan noted that the boat, motor and trailer come from different manufacturers and the assembly has to be done separately. Dr. Timmerman noted that we are trying to accomplish this through an individual at Styx, but all of the assembly work cannot be handled by one person and some thought is being given to hiring someone to do this work full-time.

Commissioner Boykin asked about the status of the helicopter. Bill Chastain stated that the bids were opened on January 16th and Hughes Aircraft submitted the only bid which will be delivered in April or June.

I. Time and Place of Next Meeting: The Commission agreed to meet in Columbia on February 16, 1979.

J. Call for Executive Session: Commissioner Boykin moved for an Executive Session for the purpose of receiving legal advice. Commissioner Shuler seconded the motion and such was unanimously approved by the Commission.

ITEM IV. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the regular meeting, the Commission approved a motion to adjourn the regular meeting and go into Executive Session.

