

MINUTES

SOUTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE AND MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING

Room 335, Dennis Building
Columbia, South Carolina
July 15, 1983
10:00 A. M.

The regular monthly meeting of the South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources Commission was held in Room 335 of the Dennis Building, Columbia, South Carolina, at 10:00 a.m. on July 15, 1983, with Chairman Webster presiding. Notice of the date, time and place of the meeting was mailed to the State's media. Commissioners present at the meeting included Commissioners Webster, Bennett, Stubbs, Dawson, Owen, Harrelson and Compton. Directors and staff members present included Dr. Timmerman, Larry Cartee, Dan Dobbins, Jeff Fuller, Benny Reeves, Sonny Baines, Pat Ryan, Bill Chastain, and various other staff. Guests present at the meeting included Beth Shockley of WLTR, Coy Johnston of the Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Advisory Board, Joe Layton of the South Carolina Bowhunters Association, George Pat Smith of Mullins, Ray Smith of Ridgeland, Trish Jerman of the Governor's Office, Nancy Stone-Collum of the House Ways and Means Committee, Betty Spence of the South Carolina Wildlife Federation, Mike Livingston of the "State" newspaper, and Pat Robertson of the "Columbia Record."

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Webster called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., and welcomed all guests to the meeting.

ITEM I. READING OF THE MINUTES

The Commission approved a motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the June 17, 1983 Commission meeting and approve them as submitted.

ITEM II. COMMENTS

Dr. Timmerman distributed a copy of the minutes of the July 12 Directors' Staff meeting to the Commission for information.

Dr. Timmerman advised the Commission that the Division of Information and Public Affairs had been judged the best in the Nation and several awards were presented by the American Association of Conservation Information and the Izaak Walton League. The plaques received were shown to the Commission. Chairman Webster recommended that a list of these awards be presented to the Budget and Control Board along with our budget presentation.

Dr. Timmerman distributed a copy of the Department's six-month Vehicle Accident Report to the Commission for their information (copy attached to original of Commission Minutes).

Dr. Timmerman noted a request has been made to stock bear in the upstate and the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission has agreed to provide the Department up to six bear for stocking. Arkansas would like to receive some ruffed grouse for these bear and we are working on a three-way exchange with West Virginia. Dr. Timmerman noted the staff has some concerns about stocking bear and if such is done, a two-year moratorium on hunting should be considered. Commissioner Owen discussed the need to stock bear and noted that we need to get involved with public education on the habits of bear. Commissioner Dawson noted this matter needs to be reviewed very closely to determine if stocking is feasible. Brock Conrad noted it has always been a policy that if stocking is done, the season is closed for a time to allow time to get established. Commissioner Owen noted the bear hunters would not object to the season being closed for a couple of years. Following extensive discussion, Commissioner Dawson moved for stocking of bear be delayed until this can be reviewed with the Department's expertise in order to reach a decision. The motion was seconded but was not adopted by the Commission. Commissioner Owen moved for the Department to proceed with securing up to six bear from Arkansas and stock in the upstate area. Commissioner Stubbs seconded the motion and it was adopted by the Commission. The Commission asked the staff to review and determine how long the season should be closed after the bear are stocked.

ITEM III. LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Dan Dobbins distributed a copy of the 1983 Comprehensive Legislative Report and went over the various actions on legislation by the General Assembly this year.

ITEM IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Administrative Order-Three Mile Enforcement Limit: Charlie Bearden noted this proposed order was sent to the Commission (copy attached to original Commission Minutes) and this basically reflects the action approved by the Commission at the April Meeting. Commissioner Compton moved for the Commission to approve this Order as distributed to the Commission. Commissioner Owen seconded the motion and it was adopted by the Commission.

B. Priorities for Law Enforcement Vacancies: Dr. Timmerman requested this matter be delayed until the August meeting in order to tie this in to a discussion of the Law Enforcement Report.

C. Discussion of Steel Shot Enforcement: Dr. Timmerman noted there are a diversity of views on steel shot and numerous reports have been developed on this issue. Dr. Timmerman distributed to the Commission a prepared statement (copy attached to original Commission Minutes) whereby he recommended the Commission approve steel shot enforcement for the 1983-84 waterfowl season in South Carolina as was done last year. Dr. Timmerman noted the federal government has not taken a positive role

on steel shot and have dropped this responsibility on the respective states. In this regard, Dr. Timmerman recommended that steel shot not be enforced in South Carolina in 1984-85 unless the Federal government takes a lead role on this issue. Dr. Timmerman noted the staff recommends enforcement of steel shot as it is in the best interest of the resource. Tommy Strange noted the Commission has approved the mottled duck program and if steel shot is not enforced this could have an impact on this program as mottled duck are the most susceptible to lead poisoning. Following extensive discussion, Commissioner Dawson moved for the Commission to approve the enforcement of steel shot in South Carolina for the 1983-84 waterfowl season as recommended by Dr. Timmerman and staff. The motion was not seconded. Commissioner Compton moved for the Commission to dispense with any steel shot recommendation in South Carolina this year. Commissioner Stubbs seconded the motion and it was adopted by the Commission.

ITEM V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Proposed FY 1984-85 Budget: Commissioner Stubbs noted the Commission Finance Committee met on July 8th and developed budget priorities for FY 1984-85. Benny Reeves distributed a copy of the proposed budget priorities (copy attached to original Commission minutes). The proposed budget increases were discussed with the Commission. Following discussion, Commissioner Stubbs moved for the Commission to approve the FY 1984-85 budget priorities as presented. Commissioner Owen seconded the motion and it was adopted by the Commission.

B. Proposed Bird Key-Stono Management Plan: Stu Greeter noted this proposed plan was approved by the Heritage Trust Advisory Board and recommended to the Commission (copy attached to original Commission). Following discussion, Commissioner Owen moved for the Commission to approve this management plan as presented. Commissioner Compton seconded the motion and it was adopted by the Commission.

C. Proposed Migratory Bird Regulations (other than ducks and geese): Brock Conrad distributed the proposed regulations for migratory birds for 1983-84, excluding ducks and geese (copy attached to original Commission Minutes). The Commission discussed these recommendations including the all-day hunting recommendation for mourning dove. Following this discussion, Commissioner Harrelson moved for the Commission to approve these regulations as submitted. Commissioner Owen seconded the motion and it was approved by the Commission.

D. Fund Recommendations - Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Advisory Board: Commissioner Owen noted the Board had evaluated various revenue sources and recommended to the Commission three proposals as sent to the Commission in the minutes of the June 16, 1983 Board meeting (copy attached to original Commission Minutes). These three proposals include: 1) Antlerless deer tag fee system-\$25 application fee per landowner or club and a \$5.00 per tag fee for each tag issued; 2) Resident Big Game Permit-\$5.50 per person with authority to increase to \$10.50 in the future; and 3) Trout Stamp-\$5.50 for residents and \$10.50 for nonresidents. Commissioner Owen moved for the Commission to approve these proposals as presented. The motion was not seconded. Commissioner Owen requested this information be made a part of the record for future reference.

Dr. Timmerman distributed a copy of the recommendations for appointments and reappointments of Deputy Wildlife Conservation Officers and Conservation Officers (copy attached to original Commission Minutes). The Commission adopted a motion to approve all appointments and reappointments as recommended.

H. OTHER REMARKS: Buford Mabry noted that at the April Commission Meeting, the Commission approved the Department entering into an agreement with the City of Bennettsville to maintain the water level at Lake Paul Wallace for the Department's purposes. An easement and license was developed with the condition that the water level be maintained at a certain mean sea level and whenever the Department determined that the loss of water in Lake Wallace, from whatever cause, endangered the fish, wildlife and waterfowl, the City would cease water withdrawal. The City of Bennettsville responded to this and asked the Commission to consider changing the conditions of the license to say that whenever the Department determines that the loss of water from Lake Wallace, from whatever cause, endangers the fish, wildlife or waterfowl, the City shall activate its wells on Beauty Spot road or shall cease further drawing of water until such time as the Department determines there is no longer a danger to the lake, fish, wildlife, or waterfowl with such action to be taken only after consultation with the City, the Department and other appropriate agencies of government. Mr. Mabry noted the staff considered this counter-proposal from the City of Bennettsville and it is recommended that the Commission reject the City's counter proposal and for the Commission to recommend that the City of Bennettsville agree to the license conditioned upon agreement that the City can pump from the Beauty Spot wells, with the elimination of the mean sea level provision in the license, but the Department will be the sole governmental agency to determine when there is a danger to the lake, fish, wildlife or waterfowl, and that the City cease drawing water from Lake Wallace when the Department makes that determination. Following discussion, Commissioner Harrelson moved for the Commission to adopt the recommendation as presented by Mr. Mabry. Commissioner Compton seconded the motion and it was adopted by the Commission.

Chairman Webster asked Commissioner Harrelson if he had developed any recommendations on the ban on Sunday hunting statewide as discussed at the last Commission meeting. Commissioner Harrelson noted that he has been contacted about this matter and he recommends that such be left alone.

Dr. Timmerman noted that we are pleased that Commissioner Bennett is back on the Commission, and we look forward to working with him.

I. TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING: Chairman Webster announced that the next meeting will be held in Columbia on August 19th at 10:00 a.m. Commissioner Stubbs noted the bear hunters club in Greenville County would like to invite the Commission to meet in that area in September. Chairman Webster stated that we would consider this invitation.

ITEM VI. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the regular meeting, the Commission adopted a motion to adjourn.

