

MINUTES

SOUTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE & MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING

Bankers Trust Tower, Columbia, South Carolina
March 16, 1979

The regular monthly meeting of the South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources Commission was held in the Conference Room at 1116 Bankers Trust Tower, Columbia, South Carolina at 10:00 a.m., March 16, 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. Commissioners at the meeting included Commissioners Trask, Buchanan, Edens, Bennett, Dennis, Stubbs, Dawson, Boykin and Shuler. Directors and staff members present included Dr. Timmerman, Larry Cartee, Dan Dobbins, Brock Conrad, Benny Reeves, Ned Pendarvis, Bob Campbell, Jeff Fuller, Tom Kohlsaat, Paul Sandifer, Bill Chastain and Bobby Gifford. Guests at the meeting included The Honorable Richard W. Riley, Governor; Pat Robertson, Columbia Record; Ken Kinard, House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, Frank Caggiano, Assistant Senate Clerk; Dr. Jackie Jacobs and Mr. J. C. Coles of the S. C. Wildlife Federation; and Mr. Sam Crouch, Law Enforcement Advisory Board.

CALL TO ORDER

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

ITEM I. READING OF THE MINUTES

Commission Edens moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes and approve them as submitted. Commissioner Boykin seconded the motion and it was approved by the Commission.

ITEM II. COMMENTS

Dr. Timmerman introduced and welcomed all guests at the meeting. Dr. Timmerman informed the Commission that he had received the honor of being invited to speak at the National Conference of State Legislatures which will meet in Atlanta on June 14-15. Dr. Timmerman noted that this was quite an honor; however, June 15th is a scheduled meeting of the Commission and he has never missed a Commission meeting since becoming Executive Director. Chairman Trask stated that it would be in the best interest of the Department for Dr. Timmerman to attend this conference in Atlanta and some arrangements will be made to change the date of the Commission meeting in June.

Dr. Timmerman noted there was a great deal of concern on the Pittman-Robertson funds and a suit filed by environmental groups. The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the defendant in the case. Dr. Timmerman noted that as President of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, he has contacted the other members and there was a tremendous response. If necessary, most of the states will enter the case as party defendants. Legal staff has advised that the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies be a co-defendant in the suit and 15-20 states will be picked geographically to enter the suit as defendants.

Dr. Timmerman informed the Commission that the staff was concerned on the proposed diversion of funds by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service to salmon production in the Pacific Northwest and curtailing funds for trout production in the



Southeast. This would eliminate trout for stocking by the Department. Dr. Timmerman noted that he has talked with USFWS personnel in Atlanta and Washington about this matter. It is up to the Washington office as to how these funds will be allocated. Correspondence on this matter was passed out to the Commission for their information. Dr. Timmerman noted that he will do everything possible to see that the right priorities for South Carolina are established.

Dr. Timmerman noted that he has talked before about the concern of some timber companies leasing land to private concerns rather than through the GMA permit system. Some of the prime land may be leased out to private concerns at a higher per acre price than the existing twenty-five cents per acre under the GMA lease program. As such, Dr. Timmerman recommended that a subcommittee of the Commission be appointed to meet with the policy-makers of the major timber companies within the next three to four months to discuss the GMA program, and to make sure that policy decisions in the future are keyed in the right direction. Chairman Trask stated that he would appoint a sub-committee later for this matter.

In regard to the GMA brochure and the hunting and fishing regulations, Dr. Timmerman noted that we have in the past waited for the Legislature to adjourn before these were printed. Due to the length of the legislative sessions, this year we plan to develop a format for these publications and go out for bids in order that such can be printed by mid-June. These publications will include a disclaimer of any legislative changes that come about after the GMA brochure and hunting and fishing regulations are printed. In addition, the computerized license holders and license agents will be sent a Resource publication denoting legislative changes adopted after the publications were printed.

At this point in the meeting, Governor Riley arrived to meet with the Commission and staff. Dr. Timmerman welcomed Governor Riley to the meeting, particularly in view of his busy schedule. Chairman Trask introduced the members of the Commission and the Congressional Districts which they represent. Dr. Timmerman stated that he planned to provide the Governor a background of the Department in a consolidated manner and offer him an opportunity for questions or comments. Dr. Timmerman noted that the Department provides the people of South Carolina with the management, research, protection and conservation of the State's wildlife and marine resources. This responsibility extends from the mountains to the coastal areas and includes one of the most diverse natural resource systems in the nation. While South Carolina has its human resources, we do not have coal, mineral or other resources. Other than the human resources, the State's important resource is its natural resources. The State's natural resources are an integral part of the lives of South Carolinians and serves as one of the primary catalysts in attracting people, industry and other financial resources to South Carolina. As such, the S.C. Wildlife and Marine Resources Department works closely with the Governor's Office and state and federal economic development agencies to enhance economic growth while maintaining a suitable balance for conserving and managing the State's wildlife and marine resources. Dr. Timmerman noted that the Commission serves as a policy-making board and the Department carries out their policies and laws adopted by the Legislature. The Department is the largest natural resources agency in South Carolina with approximately 750 employees. Organizationally, there are two service divisions-- Administrative Services and Information and Public Affairs, and three functional



divisions--Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries, Law Enforcement and Boating and Marine Resources. Dr. Timmerman informed the Governor that the "South Carolina Wildlife" magazine is not just a wildlife magazine, but a State magazine. It has received numerous awards over the past years. In addition, Dr. Timmerman invited Governor Riley to visit the Marine Resources Center in Charleston which represents one of the best oceanographic and marine research facilities on the east coast. Dr. Timmerman stated that the Department is currently one of the most efficient operating agencies in state government. It is the Department's management philosophy to continuously improve efficiency and this is accomplished through cost containment measures, adoption of an internal sunset review of programs, improved management and accountability techniques at all levels, and excellent guidance from the Commission and Advisory Boards. Through these efficiency measures, the Department is able to stretch its dollars and provide greater benefits to the State's citizens. Dr. Timmerman informed the Governor that the Department's total budget is between 16 and 17 million dollars of which less than fifty percent comes from state appropriated funds. This budget comprises less than one-half of one percent of the total State budget. The Department's budget request before the Budget and Control Board for FY 1979-80 will be less than this fiscal year's budget even if all of our requests are made. We are trying to keep the fiscal year 1979-80 budget in line with this fiscal year's expenditures and hold the line on adding state employees relative to costs for such five years down the road. Dr. Timmerman noted that the Department's programs represent the most diverse operations in the natural resources field in South Carolina. The output and services of the Department's programs serve as viable tools in supplementing the State's economy. A recent survey made in 1975 by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service reveals that over three-hundred million dollars was spent in South Carolina on hunting, fishing and wildlife enjoyment. In addition, the Department support the commercial fishing industry which has an economic value of forty to fifty million dollars and a recreational sport fishing industry conservatively estimated to be valued at one-hundred million dollars. For the amount of funds received by the Department, there is a substantial economic return on the investment for the State. Dr. Timmerman stated that the Department is also actively involved in the non-consumptive uses of wildlife resources. These activities are carried out through the Heritage Trust Program, Non-game and Endangered Species Program and the Environmental Education Section in the Division of Information and Public Affairs. This area of non-consumptive use represents one of the fastest growing areas in the Department. About 20 percent of the nation's population is pro-hunting and about 17 percent are anti-hunting. The remaining portion of the population is interested in the well-being of wildlife and the non-consumptive use programs are designed to work through this group of people. Dr. Timmerman noted that last summer, we entered an agreement with EEOC to upgrade minority employment in the Department. Within the last six months, 30 percent of those hired have been minorities. The Department is doing everything it can to add minority employees in the Department. Dr. Timmerman also informed the Governor that the Department has been very involved with public involvement. The staff has made a great effort to meet with civic and sportsmen groups throughout the State to discuss the Department's programs and seek input for consideration by the Advisory Boards and the Commission. Dr. Timmerman noted that the wildlife and marine resources in South Carolina is in good shape and that the Department looks forward to working with the Governor and his staff. Following this, each Division Director presented a brief review of their division's activities and programs. In the discussion of the Marine Resources Program, Dr. Timmerman stated that we planned to discuss the Mariculture Program later in the meeting



and a copy of this report will be mailed to the Governor.

Governor Riley noted that he appreciated the comments of Dr. Timmerman and the Division Directors. Governor Riley stated that he was in basic agreement with everything that Dr. Timmerman had said. Governor Riley reported that he had met with agency directors and commission chairmen previously and expressed interest in being involved in a supportive and participatory way with all agencies. As Chief Executive of the State, and this being the executive department, it makes it interesting as to what is taking place in the various departments. The Governor noted that he plans to attend meetings of various departments and those which he cannot attend, staff members will represent him and work closely with the agencies. Governor Riley stated that he particularly appreciated Dr. Timmerman's comments regarding the natural resources of the State, the Department's efforts to hold the line as people of the State are demanding and that all agencies should be looking at the same goal. In regard to the Department's efforts to hire minorities, Governor Riley said that he is happy to see the Department is participating in this effort. Governor Riley stated that he is much aware of what's going on in the natural resources area and that he doesn't want to interrupt the future meetings but participate and have good working relationships with the Governor's Office. Governor Riley stated that he would stay for a while longer during the Commission Meeting before he had to leave. Dr. Timmerman resumed his comments that he was presenting when the Governor arrived at the meeting.

Dr. Timmerman reported that he was making every effort to meet with field personnel to prevent polarization of the divisions. Meetings have been held in Law Enforcement District 3 and 6. A meeting is scheduled on April 4th in District #1 in Pickens County and the Commission is invited to attend.

Dr. Timmerman noted that he had met last year with the Greenville Legislative Delegation and they wanted to know about our activities in Greenville County. Another meeting has been held with the Delegation and they are satisfied with our progress in the county. A letter identifying the Department's activities was distributed to the Commission for their information. Recently, twenty wild turkeys were stocked in the Ceasar's Head GMA. Deer have been stocked, dove field have been opened and trout stocking has played an important role in the county.

Dr. Timmerman stated that with increasing gasoline prices and possible allocations, we have to take a close look at gasoline consumption in the Department. With the budgeted funds for gasoline, we have to look at cutting back on travel. As such, Dr. Timmerman noted that he had formed a committee to develop a plan for reducing consumption without having an impact on effectiveness of programs.

Dr. Timmerman reported that the Law Enforcement staff requested that funds be approved from the Wildlife Education and Training Fund to send nine Conservation Officers to a two-day school in Florida for undercover training in blood identification. The total cost is \$1,400 and Dr. Timmerman stated that he recommended that \$1,000 be approved for this purpose. Commissioner Stubbs moved that the Commission as trustees approve the recommendation to use \$1,000 from the Wildlife Education and Training Fund for this purpose. Commissioner Boykin seconded the motion and it was adopted by the Commission.

Dr. Timmerman informed the Commission that it has been brought to the staff's



attention that the four percent cost-of-living increase for retired employees is due to expire next year as funds are expiring. Commissioner Dennis noted that the Budget and Control Board has been briefed on this matter and it is being worked on.

ITEM III. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Dan Dobbins informed the Commission that they had before them the seventh legislative report and it contains 6 bills that were on the Commission's legislative proposals. Four of these bills have been reported out of committee. A bill on the feral dog problem has been introduced and a hearing is scheduled on Wednesday, March 21, at 3:00 p.m. in the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. Mr. Dobbins stated that the staff is working on the commercial and non-game fishing proposal which is a large task. Once drafted, this will be one of the most complex bills with which we have dealt. Mr. Dobbins recommended that the staff meet with the legislative delegations most affected by this proposal to gain a clear understanding of the matter before it is introduced. Dr. Timmerman noted that this proposal is all encompassing with size limitations on sport fishing, regulation of commercial fishing and some shad regulations. As such, it may be that it would be more practical to separate these three areas into separate bills. This has been discussed with various legislators who think it would be advisable to discuss these proposals so they could offer some constructive criticisms. Commissioner Dennis noted that there is a need to discuss the trapping law as many sportsmen are unhappy with the current situation. Commissioner Dennis suggested that the trapping law be reviewed and see if there are any amendments that may need to be developed. Commissioner Bennett noted that many people are unhappy about North Carolina trappers engaged in trapping in the low country.

Commissioner Buchanan asked about a bill concerning a four percent sales tax on sporting goods. The staff noted that they were not familiar with any such bill in the legislature. Governor Riley noted that a bill was being considered on a sales tax for casual sales of automobiles, boats and motors. Commissioner Boykin asked about the status of the trespassing bill (H.2113). Dan Dobbins noted that it has been introduced in the House and referred to the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. On the commercial fishing proposal, Commissioner Shuler noted that people from fish camps on the lakes have questioned the size limitation on the striped bass in that if they are hooked they may die anyway. Commissioner Shuler suggested that this matter be investigated before some action is taken on it legislatively. Dr. Timmerman informed the Commission that he had met with Senator Lindsay and other representatives from Marlboro County to discuss the dam at Lake Wallace. Dr. Timmerman noted that an in-depth study is needed to determine how to make the dam safer and that Senator Lindsay will seek funds for the Land Resources Conservation Commission to conduct an in-depth study on this matter.

ITEM IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Division Reports

1. Administrative Services: Benny Reeves reported that he was opposed to the casual sales tax bill on boats and motors because we would be required to collect the tax, the funds would revert to the General Fund, and administratively we don't have the people to handle this fund. Dr. Timmerman noted that



we try to conservatively estimate our revenue and budget accordingly. If the revenue exceeds the amount budgeted, we do not have the leeway to spend these funds without approval of the Budget and Control Board and the Joint Legislative Appropriations Committee. Benny Reeves noted that there is some wording in the Appropriations Bill that agencies cannot receive or spend revenue over and beyond the estimated budget without approval of the Budget and Control Board and the Joint Legislative Appropriations Committee. Commissioner Dennis noted that the Joint Legislative Appropriations Committee was set up for the purpose of controlling indirect costs under federal grants. In the Department's instance, the referenced section may go a little too far and we should look at a proviso to put in the bill to protect an agency that has its revenue tied to its operations and it is difficult to estimate the exact amount to be received. This matter can be worked out. Dr. Timmerman noted that the Department's budget includes the county funds and the watercraft gasoline tax revenue. When we go to the Joint Legislative Appropriations Committee, it appears that the Department has over a million dollars of revenue in its budget. These funds are tied up and require approval from the county delegations to expend. Benny Reeves noted that the county game and fish fund builds up over a period of time as it is not totally expended each year. Commissioner Dennis stated that the Watercraft gasoline tax funds have been set up to come to the Department rather than being disbursed to the counties. With this fund and county game and fish funds, Commissioner Dennis suggested that the Department's budget be changed to denote that the Commission has no control over those funds. In addition, Commissioner Dennis recommended that before July 1, the Department develop a budget for the year for the county game and fish funds and the watercraft gasoline tax funds for the delegations to approve. Dr. Timmerman stated that it is difficult to get the delegation to agree on something. Commissioner Dennis noted that it may be possible to get a legislative directive in the Appropriations Bill requiring the county legislative delegations to jointly work out with the Department an annual budget for the expenditure of county game and fish funds and the watercraft gasoline tax funds. Commissioner Buchanan concurred with this recommendation and suggested that we push hard to use these funds during the year. Dr. Timmerman stated that we need some assistance for administration of the watercraft gasoline tax fund. Commissioner Dennis suggested that funds for administration of this program should come from the fund itself. Dr. Timmerman noted that he agreed with this idea but it would require approval of the legislative delegations. Commissioner Dennis stated that the legislature should mandate that each legislative delegation approve a budget for both funds with a reserve for a contingency prior to July 1. Dr. Timmerman noted that we need to hire an engineer to develop plans for boat ramps once this watercraft gasoline tax fund become available as it can be done quicker and at less cost than with past practices. Chairman Trask noted that the gasoline tax fund should be used for this position. Following other discussion, Commissioner Boykin moved that the Commission request that the legislative members of the Commission follow through on Commissioner Dennis' recommendations. Commissioner Shuler seconded the motion and it was approved by the Commission.

Benny Reeves reported that the question of going to staggered system for hunting and fishing licenses would cost about \$14,000 based on 1977 figures and to keep it running would cost about \$21,000 over a period of years. As Commissioner Shuler has suggested, it would be favorable to sell hunting and fishing licenses based upon a calendar year. This would enable the staff to make better revenue projections and it would alleviate some of the spring rush on the staff and the system. Commissioner Buchanan suggested we look at increasing the license



fees. Dr. Timmerman stated that it may not be a good time for a license increase. Benny Reeves noted that he would take a further look at changing license sales to the calendar year and report on it at the next meeting.

Commissioner Stubbs asked if there were any provisions for legislation affecting hunting seasons to be filed by certain times during the session. Dr. Timmerman noted that there weren't any provisions for this but it would be best to have bills that are adopted after a certain date to become effective the following year.

2. Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries: There was nothing to add to the written report.

3. Law Enforcement and Boating: Bill Chastain noted that the \$1,000 approved by the Commission from the Wildlife Education and Training Fund will be used to send nine (9) conservation officers to the University of Florida for training as expert witnesses in blood identification.

4. Information and Public Affairs: There was nothing to add to the written report.

5. Marine Resources: Dr. Timmerman noted that Chairman Trask had asked the staff to pull together some information on the mariculture program. This information has been developed and mailed out to the Commission. Dr. Timmerman stated that he was impressed with the approach that was taken and this matter will be on the agenda for the April meeting for further discussion. Dr. Paul Sandifer presented an overview of the report denoting aquaculture activities and status of various species in South Carolina. Dr. Sandifer brought to the Commission's attention four policy recommendations for the Commission's consideration. These policy items included: (1) the State of South Carolina, through the General Assembly and the Department, should adopt as a primary goal the development of private and public aquaculture as major economic activities in the State and the establishment of the State as a primary center of aquaculture research and training, (2) the S. C. Wildlife and Marine Resources Department should seek to become the State's leading agency for aquaculture research and development, (3) the Department should seek funding for and undertake to prepare a detailed plan for aquaculture development in the State, and (4) the Department should plan, construct and operate a suitably scaled and outfitted Aquaculture Experiment Station devoted to the further development of aquaculture in South Carolina. Chairman Trask asked how South Carolina compares in terms of resources and climate for aquaculture activities. Dr. Sandifer noted that available resources exist for aquaculture development but we have some problems with the climate for the development of certain species. Commissioner Dennis noted that the Wando is a good source of seed oysters and asked if port development there would have any effects on the oysters. Dr. Joseph stated that such has been considered but it is unlikely that the port development will have a significant effect. Commissioner Boykin stated that aquaculture is an area of great contribution and he suggested that we follow through on these recommendations with an effort to fund the overall program. Chairman Trask noted that Senator Waddell is interested in this matter and could assist with State funding. Dr. Timmerman noted that it may be a possibility of securing capital improvement funds on a one-shot deal for development of an Aquaculture Experiment Station. Commissioner Dennis recommended that the Commission focus attention on the goal of aquaculture development and seek a legislative resolution setting aquaculture



future, a statement will be included by Law Enforcement justifying the need for a statewide authority. This would apply to reappointments and new appointments. Fred Zeigler informed the Commission that proposed new statutes on DWCO commissions are being developed and asked if the Commission desired to restrict DWCO authority to game and fish laws or give them general law enforcement responsibility. There was some consensus to restrict their authority to game and fish laws but it was decided to let Fred Zeigler analyze this matter and make a recommendation at the next meeting.

E. Other Remarks

There were no additional remarks from the Commissioners.

F. Time and Place of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at 10:00 a.m., April 20, 1979, at the Dutch Plaza Office Building.

G. Call for Executive Session

There was no request for an Executive Session from the Commissioners.

ITEM V. ADJOURN

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

