

MINUTES OF MEETING OF WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSION IN COLUMBIA, MARCH 8, 1962

All Commissioners were present, along with Directors Webb and Lunz, Jeff Fuller, Frank Nelson and Pat Ryan.

Director Webb reported that the plane insurance policy had not yet been returned by the company. He said that three copies would be received and he would send copies to Mr. Johnson and Mr. Tison for checking.

Director Webb said that some revision of the Barnwell Lake plans might be needed to increase the depth of the water, and he also asked authority to employ a superintendent who would oversee labor in cleaning up around the lake. This was granted on a motion of Mr. Heyward.

The appointment of several non-pay wardens was approved.

Director Webb reported that land appraisal for the Hampton County lake are scheduled to begin on March 26 by the Fish and Wildlife Service and that this would determine whether the lake would be built.

Director Webb brought up a pending bill in Congress that would prohibit the shooting of doves, saying that he had written all members of the South Carolina delegation opposing it but that it might be wise for the Commission to go on record in opposition. The Secretary was instructed to write all members of the delegation to this effect.

The Secretary was also instructed to write the delegation in support of the pending bill that would require approval of the Secretary of the Interior before lands could be drained that might adversely affect waterfowl.

He said the night hunting bill had been introduced as a committee bill by the Agriculture and Conservation Committee but that it might need some revision.

Mr. Fuller reported on the rockfish egg study on the Congaree and Wateree rivers and said plans of the Corps of Engineers to construct dams and locks on the Congaree would almost certainly destroy the Santee-Cooper striped bass fishery.



The report showed that 95 per cent of the striped bass spawning was in the Congaree River.

He said that even if ladders are constructed on the planned dams and the striped bass used them, which was doubtful, there would not be enough current upstream to allow hatching.

The Commission expressed itself unanimously as opposed to any obstruction of the river and there was a general discussion of the best ways of publicizing the report and organizing opposition to the planned dams.

Mr. Cantey said he understood there would be a favorable report by the Engineers for construction of the dams and said the Commission should go on record as opposing them.

Mr. Johnson said the legislative committee considering navigation of the Congaree and Wateree should be contacted and made familiar with the report, and it was suggested that Director Webb ask for a hearing before the committee.

Director Webb said the report should be summarized for release and sent to all members of the General Assembly.

The possibility of circularizing landings, motels and other establishments that would be affected was brought up by Mr. Johnson.

A notion of Mr. Cox was adopted that sufficient copies of the full report be printed so that they could be given to anyone asking for one and Mr. Fuller was authorized to proceed with this. It was agreed that a summary would go along with these.

The Secretary was instructed to draw up a resolution opposing the constructions of dams or locks on the Congaree that would impede the passage of striped bass or otherwise interfere with spawning activity; and another that interested persons be informed of the results of the striped bass egg study so that opposition to the proposed dams and locks could be organized.



It was agreed that license agents should be contacted through wardens and given copies of the summarized report.

Mr. Cox brought up the Saluda county warden vacancy and after discussing the ages and qualifications of certain men who had been recommended moved that the Commission waive its requirement of 40 years of age or under so that Mr. Laffette, who is 46, could be appointed. He recommended this appointment be made without the recommendation of Director Webb.

After some discussion Mr. Cox's motion was adopted by a four to three vote, Commissioners Cox, Heyward, Tison and Hopkins voting for the motion and Mr. Cantey, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Oliphant against.

On motion of Mr. Heyward a similar procedure was followed in the naming of Mr. Tuten as a Hampton county warden--Commissioners Heyward, Cox, Tison and Hopkins for and Commissioners Cantey, Johnson and Oliphant against.

Director Lunz said that in connection with the diversion canal proposed by the Corps of Engineers that would divert the Cooper river through Price's Inlet north of Charleston the Engineers wished to be held free from actions for damages to oyster bottoms and the shellfish industry. He said that neither he nor the Commission could sign any such agreement. (He was to meet with the Corps of Engineers, the Ports Authority and the Development Board later in the afternoon.) He said that damages would be around \$800,000 at least, although the total effect would be difficult to estimate.

He said that the opening of the Santee area to oystering had brought in many operators and had resulted in unwise harvesting, which under the law he had no way of controlling.

A motion of Mr. Cox was adopted that the Commission go on record as opposing the present plan for the diversion canal in view of the damage it would do to the shellfish industry. The Secretary was instructed to draw up a resolution and send copies to the Congressional delegation and the Governor.



Mr. Cox was authorized to set the time and place of a hearing for the oyster lease application of R. M. Edge in Horry county, granting of the lease being opposed.

Mr. Cox brought up a suggestion from Mr. Tison that the Commission hold some future meetings at Bears Bluff and other places where Department work and projects are established. After some discussion it was agreed that the next meeting would be held at Bears Bluff, those attending to come to Bears Bluff around 4 p. m. Friday, April 6 with the meeting Saturday morning, April 7. The May meeting was scheduled for Belmont.

A recommendation of Mr. Fuller that trout streams be closed the last seven days of the months of April, May, June and July, subject to approval of the delegations, was approved.

*Eddie Finlay*

