

SOUTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE & MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION

Marine Center, Fort Johnson

April 15, 1977

The regular monthly meeting of the South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources Commission was held at the Marine Resources Center at Fort Johnson in Charleston, South Carolina, with Chairman Hudson presiding over the meeting. Other Commissioners present were Boykin, Edens, Trask, Bennett, Shuler, and Dennis. Others present were Dr. Timmerman, Dr. Joseph, Jeff Fuller, Dr. Beam, John Reeves, John Culler, Bob Campbell, Larry Cartee, Bill Chastain, Lewis Rogers, Sally Hopkins, Pete Laurie, Gene Smoak, Ned Pendarvis, Duncan Newkirk, Charles Bearden, David Cupka, A. S. Lachicotte, T. C. Welch, Jr. Commissioner Bennett introduced guests present at the meeting - Representatives Archie Buchan, John J. Snow, Jr., Fred Moore and Charles L. Griffin; Mr. Frank Caggiano, Mrs. Rosemary S. Smith, Mrs. Charles Griffin and Mrs. Ed Bennett; Mr. Mike Copeland; and also Representatives Marion D. McGowan, Don Holt, and C. Alex Harvin III.

CALL TO ORDER

ITEM I. READING OF LAST MEETING MINUTES: Commissioner Edens made a motion to adopt the minutes of the March 1977 Commission Meeting as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Boykin and passed.

ITEM II. COMMENTS:

Dr. Timmerman stated that the Corp of Engineers had been contacted and asked for their response to the Wildlife Department's areas of concern regarding the Cooper River Rediversion Project. He passed out a copy of a letter from the Corp to Mr. Clair P. Guess, Jr., Executive Director of the S. C. Water Resources Commission responding to the areas of concern. Dr. Beam stated that it is his opinion that the Corp has responded favorably to all of the stipulations that were set forth in our letter to them. There is some question in regard to Item H. in Colonel Wilson's letter to Mr. Guess in regard to a control structure to regulate the flow of water down the South Santee River. The Marine Resources Division would like to see the feasibility study done which will probably be entirely funded by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Dr. Joseph stated that one of the Marine Division's concerns is that there are very valuable clam resources in the lower parts of both of those rivers, especially adjacent to the South Santee where there is an extensive area of high salinity marshes and creeks that extend into the McClellanville area and there are some real dangers of too much freshwater flow going down the south branch and getting in behind barrier islands. The Marine Division would be prepared to undertake a study to investigate the flow patterns where the two branches meet the intercoastal waterway if given the opportunity. Dr. Timmerman asked for Commission approval to have staff coordinate with the Corp and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service to see if funding could be obtained to investigate this particular matter. There was no objection by the Commission.

Dr. Timmerman stated that he and staff met with individuals from Greenville to discuss the Small Game Program, particularly in Greenville and the adjacent counties. The main concern by the group was that they wanted to be able to hunt rabbits with dogs during the season which begins sometime in November. They were also interested in what could be done on clear cuttings by the Department to increase hunting opportunities. Staff will reevaluate the matter and possibly



make recommendations to the Commission at a later date.

ITEM III. OLD BUSINESS:

A. FOLLOW-UP ON RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 1977-78 GOOSE SEASON: Jeff Fuller reported that the Water Fowl Symposium was held recently with over 160 people in attendance. The subject of closing the goose season was discussed at that Symposium and the group there was unanimous in wanting to keep the season open. Fuller reported that last year the Atlantic Flyway had 1,129,886 geese reported which was an increase of 9.4%. The count in South Carolina alone was 12,100 which was a 20% decrease. There was discussion on the pros and cons of closing the season and Chairman Hudson stated that this information should be taken for consideration until such time for a final decision.

B. REPORT ON PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF BICOLOR NURSERY: Jeff Fuller presented a preliminary report on the establishment of a bicolor nursery stating that he is awaiting information from two sources. Lewis Rogers and Bill Mahan compiled a proposal for a nursery where we would procure 20 acres of land and hire a man to operate the nursery at an estimated total cost of \$68,000. There is a possibility that the land could be procured at a location that we already have in the state or leased more inexpensively than purchasing a new site, and an operator for the nursery would only be necessary for approximately four months of the year. The estimated annual operating cost to produce one million plants would be \$25-30,000. Fuller stated that we could continue present system or rent or borrow from an existing nursery. Plans for this year are to put in a five acre patch near Chester and a small patch near the Styx Fish Hatchery near Columbia in addition to continuing efforts at Webb Center. This should allow us to produce the plants needed at a reasonable cost, and there is not time enough this year to go to another program. Estimates have been obtained from Georgia to furnish seed and pick up the plants and they will grow them for us for \$17.50 per thousand. Another source in Virginia has plants for \$30 per thousand and a verbal agreement has been made with the Forestry Commission to grow the plants for us for \$35 per thousand. Fuller suggested to the Commission that the program continue as it is for this year and that staff come back at a later date with additional information for the Commission. Commissioner Edens stated that he would continue to work with Fuller and his staff and through the Advisory Board would come back to the Commission in adequate time with recommendations for next year.

ITEM IV. NEW BUSINESS:

A. DIVISION REPORTS:

1. Administrative Services: John Reeves reported that the Budget Bill passed the Senate yesterday and will probably go to Conference Committee for amendments or changes. Reeves stated that he has been working on resolving the Fringe Benefit problem that came up at the last Commission Meeting and will notify the Commission when a solution is obtained. A Bill to increase the boat titling and registration fees and to give the Executive Director the right to issue gratis license under certain circumstances has passed the House. There were increases in titling fees from \$1.50 to \$5.00 with the non-resident



hunting license reduced back to \$37.00 and an additional non-resident ten (10) day hunting license added. This did pass the House. The point system Bill did pass the House, also. Reeves also reported that the Budget Status Report was mailed out with the Commissioner's Package and noted that we are running a very tight budget. Reeves also stated that if the Fringe Benefit problem cannot be worked out, next year will present a severe problem. Reeves gave a brief summary of what the Administrative Services Division does within the Department stating that the primary role of the Division is a support service for all other Divisions within the Department. The Division provides purchasing, inventory control, finance and management, budget preparation, boat titling and registration and various other duties within the Department as a whole. Commissioner Dennis stated that the assumption of fringe benefits by the Wildlife Department will not be implemented this year.

2. Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division: Jeff Fuller gave a brief summary of what the Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division does within the Department stating that the basic purpose of this Division was to maintain and supply good hunting and fishing to the citizens of South Carolina. He also stated that the state is divided up into six (6) Game Districts with a Game Biologist over each District. In addition, there are 1.6 million acres of land in the Game Management Program in the State that is leased or controlled by the Department and is available to the public; a Turkey Research Program; a Deer Research Program; Alligator Research Program; and a Statewide Research Program through Clemson University on Game Projects. The state is divided up into seven (7) Fisheries Districts with a Fisheries Biologist over each District. Fuller reported that this Division has a striped bass hatchery in operation; warm water hatcheries; Dennis Center where striped bass fry and hybrid fry are raised; a Non-game and Endangered Species Section; and various other projects within the Division as a whole. Commissioner Dennis requested that Fuller contact former Senator James P. Stevens from Loris regarding turkey stocking, etc. on his land to see if he qualifies.

3. Information and Public Affairs Division: John Culler gave a brief summary of what the Information and Public Affairs Division does within the Department stating that it is the public relations and education and information section of the Department. He stated that the primary role of the Division is to keep the public informed of news and they do this by movies, news releases, films for the film library, public speaking, news paper, magazine, etc. Brochures on hunting, fishing, boating, etc. regulations are also published and distributed by this Division. Chairman Hudson noted that the Information and Public Affairs Division has been number one in the nation on the magazine in all categories for the last two years. The current circulation of the magazine is approximately 85,000.

4. Law Enforcement and Boating Division: Bill Chastain, Chief of Law Enforcement reported in the absence of Division Director Pat Ryan and gave a brief summary of what the Law Enforcement Division does within the Department. Chastain stated that the primary responsibility of the Law Enforcement Division is enforcement of all the game, fish, commercial fisheries, boating laws in the State. Also, he stated that there are two Assistant Chief's in the Division with one being in charge of enforcement of the freshwater fish and game laws and the other one being in charge of enforcement of the commercial fisheries laws.



Chastain stated that the State is made up of eight (8) Law Enforcement Districts in the Freshwater Fisheries and Game area and one (1) Law Enforcement District in the Commercial Fisheries area. Also, there is a Hunter Safety Program within the Division in addition to an Aircraft Program which is utilized greatly in enforcement of the game and fish laws. Tommy Welch, Chief of Boating gave a brief summary of what the Boating Division does within the Department stating that the prime responsibility of the Boating Division is to implement the South Carolina Boating Act and administer it. These responsibilities include maintenance of navigation, marking hazardous areas, construction of boat landings and ramps. A Boating Safety and Education Program has been established and boating handbooks have been published and are being distributed to registered boat owners within the state. Under this Section, the first closed circuit ETV program on boating in the nation was developed. In addition, the Boating Division is responsible for processing boating accident reports in the State, and an annual boating safety school is conducted in cooperation with the Coast Guard for all Conservation Officers. Dr. Timmerman suggested that possibly the Department could work with the Delegation Members through County Council in order to get them to use a small portion of the gas tax rebate for maintenance of some of the watercraft activities. There was a question raised as to the possibility of placing a small sign that says "pier" in the center of boat ramps, primarily in the coastal area where the tide is going out or coming in, to assist boaters in getting their boats out. Dr. Timmerman asked Tommy Welch to look into this matter.

5. Marine Resources Division: Dr. Ed Joseph welcomed the Commission and guests to the Marine Resources Center. Joseph stated that the principle responsibility of the Marine Resources Center is dealing with the management and protection of the Marine Resources, commercial fisheries and recreational fisheries. The Division also provides a Marine Research capability for the Department and the State at large, and, in addition, provides a facility for the Colleges and Universities of the State which have an interest in the Marine Sciences. Dr. Joseph invited everyone to take advantage of a tour of the building immediately following lunch.

6. Natural Area Acquisition and Resources Planning: Dr. Wayne Beam gave a brief summary of what the Natural Area Acquisition and Resources Planning Division does within the Department stating that the primary functions of the Division is administering the Heritage Trust Program which inventories areas of historical and cultural significance to be preserved for future generations. In addition, the Division formulates the Department position on permits, doing environmental studies and reporting these comments back to agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency, Corp of Engineers, State Budget and Control Board, Coast Guard, etc. This Division also provides staff for the Coastal Zone Planning and Management Council.

B. ADVISORY BOARD REPORTS:

1. Marine Resources: Charles Bearden reported in Commissioner Lumpkin's absence stating that the Board met in Charleston and made several recommendations for Commission consideration. Bearden stated that the Advisory Board made a recommendation that the feasibility of closing the shrimping season on out to the twelve (12) mile limit under the new Federal legislation, Fisheries Conservation



Management Act on the 200 Mile Limit be investigated and would like to have Commission Endorsement. This was brought about by the severe winter which resulted in a heavy mortality in white shrimp along the coast. The adjacent states are in agreement that the season should be kept closed this spring as long as necessary to protect what white shrimp are left. Dr. Joseph reported that this possibility was checked out with the attorneys for this program, and the findings were that in order to invoke the emergency provisions of this act, there has to have been an overall management plan for that 200 mile zone already created and approved by the Secretary of Commerce. The opinion of the Federal attorneys is that there is nothing that can be done this spring in that regard. Dr. Joseph stated that he feels that this case might be self-regulatory since there are so few shrimp present. Dr. Timmerman stated that the adjacent states have been contacted and will work with our Law Enforcement and Marine Resources Divisions to guard against law enforcement violations in this regard. Another concern of the Advisory Board is night shrimp trawling. The Advisory Board recommended that the law should be changed to read that it shall be unlawful to trawl for shrimp in the waters of this State between official sunset and official sunrise from September first through December thirty-first of any year. In addition, the Advisory Board feels that the penalties for illegal shrimp trawling should be increased in the length of time for suspension of boat license, etc. A Bill has been introduced by Senator Waddell setting forth these items and the Bill has been reviewed by the Advisory Board and mailed to the Commission for review. The Advisory Board would like the Commission's endorsement of the Bill. Commissioner Dennis made a motion to endorse the Bill. The motion was seconded and passed. Chairman Hudson asked Dr. Timmerman to notify the Advisory Board of the Commission's endorsement. Also, the Advisory Board was concerned that there was some misuse of cast nets and seines in the coastal area and that this should be looked into and possibly legislation could be developed to provide some type of permit or license or to regulate cast nets or seines. Staff mailed recommendations to the Commission prior to this meeting, however, discovered that Representative Sauls from Gaston County has introduced a bill, particularly on cast nets to put a \$30 license on a non-resident using cast nets on shrimp and \$5 license on residents. The Advisory Board recommended that Representative Sauls be contacted and asked to withdraw his Bill or hold it up until more general legislation can be put together concerning both seines and cast nets. Frank Caggiano will contact Representative Sauls and discuss this matter with him. No Commission action needed at this time on this matter.

2. Law Enforcement and Boating: Commissioner Boykin reported that this Board met last week and serious consideration was given to trying to define legal hours of deer hunting and extending legal time until later in the evening. The general consensus of the Board was that there was no reason to change the night hunting deer law except that the Board recommends to the Commission that the present law needs to be amended to include the stipulation that deer may not be hunted with a light. This would aid Law Enforcement Division considerably. The use of airboats and hunting was discussed and the Advisory Board unanimously congratulated the Law Enforcement Division on the adoption of their Dress and Grooming Code for the Officers.

3. Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries: Commissioner Edens reported



that this Board met yesterday at the Dennis Center with six members present. The Minutes of that meeting will be distributed and items will be brought to the attention of the Commission at the next meeting.

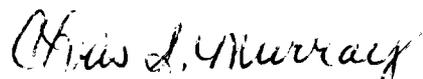
C. SALARY REVIEW COMMITTEE: Dr. Timmerman reported that all reviews were in order and presented a copy of the report to the Chairman for the Commission file.

D. APPOINTMENTS: Dr. Timmerman presented an outline of the format to be used in presenting the recommendations for appointments and re-appointments to the Commission at the meetings. He went over this with the Commission pointing out that the new format will list the name, district and Commissioner for the individuals under the categories of Deputy Wildlife Conservation Officers (non-pay) re-appointments recommended and re-appointments not recommended; Deputy Wildlife Conservation (non-pay) new appointments recommended and new appointments not recommended; Department Conservation Officers reappointments; Department Conservation Officers new appointments; and Other Department Personnel reappointments and Other Department Personnel new appointments. Dr. Timmerman also stated that anyone who receives a Commission after January 1972 will have to go through the same Criminal Justice Training Program as that of a Conservation Officers - this is on new appointments and re-appointments. A ruling has been received on this from the Attorney General's Office. This procedure met with the approval of the Commission. Dr. Timmerman presented recommendations for Deputy Wildlife Conservation Officer (non-pay) reappointments as follows: Mr. Frederick T. Woods, District Four, Commissioner Trask, Countywide Authority Beaufort, Colleton, Dorchester and Jasper Counties; Mr. William H. Woods, District Four, Commissioner Trask, Countywide Authority Beaufort, Colleton, Dorchester and Jasper Counties. Department Conservation Officers reappointments Mr. Billy R. Vinson, Law Enforcement District Seven, Chairman Hudson. A motion was made to approve these recommendations as submitted. Seconded and passed.

E. OTHER REMARKS: Commissioner Edens made a motion to approve the Minutes of the meeting held with the Laurens County Delegation recently. The motion was seconded and passed. Commissioner Trask made a motion that the Commission retire into Executive Session. The motion was seconded and passed. This Session will be to discuss personnel matters.

ITEM V. ADJOURN: There being no further business to be brought before the Commission in the regular meeting, a motion was made to adjourn the regular meeting. Seconded and passed.

Respectfully submitted,



(Mrs.) Chris S. Murray,
Commission Secretary

