MINUTES OF MEETING OF WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSION IN COLUMBIA JANUARY 4, 1957

All members of the Commission were present except Mr. Huggins and Mr. Oliphant. Also present were Director Richardson, Director Seabrook, Bob Lunz, Jim Webb, Mr. Brown of the Commercial Fisheries Division, Crawford Billings, Jack Carroll, Alex Quattlebaum, M. C. Chandler, Jeff Fuller, Frank Nelson and Doug Wade.

Senator Warren reported the $5,000 set aside by the Budget and Control Board for the purchase of a boat had been returned to the Board.

Director Seabrook said that the metal shad tags agreed upon at a previous meeting had been ordered and were cheaper and better than the old tags.

Mr. Johnson reported that he had contacted President Russell of the University regarding a study of the tax situation in commercial fisheries and the matter had been turned over to a Mr. Earle.

The matter of game law revision was taken up and Director Richardson said a revision by Mr. Webb had eliminated objectionable sections and had been ready for presentation to the Legislative Council, until Jim Verner of the Attorney General's office asked that it be held up until he could study it.

Mr. Webb said that the revision changed no effects of the laws but clarified the working of some sections. He said all controversial matters would be presented as separate legislation.

Director Richardson pointed out that the Code had been taken section by section with unconstitutional and contradictory sections eliminated, and some sections amended for clarification. He added that the revision would repeal everything not in the new set of laws.

In answer to a question of Senator Warren Mr. Webb said that it embraces all provisions of Reorganization Plan Eight.

Mr. Johnson asked whether the revised set of laws would recognize the Union county game warden and the Commission agreed that all reference to county game wardens be left out.

It was agreed that copies of the proposed laws should be submitted to the Commission members for their approval, the members getting in touch with their respective members of the advisory committee. A meeting of the Commission would then be called to give the revision final approval before it was given to the Legislative Council for engrossing.

Mr. Lunz read his recommendations. He said that some changes were needed in the shrimp laws but that acts passed at the last session had helped the situation. He added that the present laws, although not perfect, were working fairly well.

Mr. Lunz added that the shad law prepared for the last session, but unacted on, corrected some of the sections on shad.

Mr. Seabrook said he had sent his recommendations to the Commission and that as soon as an attorney finished work on them they would be ready in the final form.

Senator Warren said that the recommendations of Director Seabrook and Mr. Lunz should be given to Mr. Earle in aiding him make his report on the tax structure.

It was agreed that consideration of the recommendations on commercial fisheries should be deferred until the next meeting.

The menhaden situation was discussed and Mr. Brown said the State might lose its menhaden plant unless the closed season on menhaden was eliminated.

Mr. Seabrook said the plant was about to close but officials had agreed to hold off final action to see whether relief would be granted by the General Assembly.

Mr. Lunz said that the closed season was wrong but pointed out that another factor was the fact that South Carolina menhaden had little oil, and the industry might be lost due to this, even if the law is changed.

He suggested that the proposed law on shad be changed so that it would not apply to menhaden netting.

Mr. Webb presented figures on the operation of a plane, saying it would cost $3-$4 per hour plus overhaul charges.

Mr. Chandler said the proper type of plane could be secured for around $6,000 and discussed the ways in which the plane could be used. Mr. Webb said a big problem would be arranging for ground-to-air radio communication. A motion of Mr. Johnson was adopted that, subject to the availability of a safe plane, Mr. Webb and Mr. Chandler make experimental surveys and give the Commission the benefit of the actual trials.

Mr. Chandler presented several recommendations regarding work on law enforcement and these were discussed. It was agreed that his recommendation for a reduction in the warden force and the training of new men to fill openings was desirable, but impractical at the present time.

A list of appointments was approved, except that those in the districts of Mr. Oliphant and Mr. Huggins would await their approval.

Mr. Webb said that the Bennettsville project was about completed. His recommendation that the lake be named Paul A. Wallace Lake was approved by resolution.

Mr. Webb was instructed to take charge of dedicatory exercises for the lake and to name a day for the dedication. Mr. Wade suggested that it might be good to have it during National Wildlife Week in March.

Mr. Cox named Mr. Quattlebaum as his representative on the advisory committee. (After the meeting, Mr. Hopkins named Admiral D. P. Polatty of Greenville as his representative. Mr. Huggins has named C. Marion Mimms of Elliott as his representative).

COMMISSION MEETING JANUARY 4, 1957

Mr. Warren brought up the possible acquisition of the Beidler tract of land south of Columbia and Mr. Cantey said that he believed a committee from the Commission, representing the State, might have some success in approaching the heirs to the estate. The tract of over 13,000 acres was described as having some of the finest virgin timber in the county and having wonderful possibilities.

Mr. Wade stated that the Nature Conservancy was interested in the tract and that a meeting of interested persons had already been planned. He suggested that the Conservancy be worked with in efforts to secure the land.

Mr. Quattlebaum said that he had been asked to approach the Commission and secure its support in enlarging the facilities of the federal fish hatchery at Cheraw. A motion was adopted that the Commission endorse the effort of the Federation to get an increased appropriation for the Cheraw hatchery.

Eddie Finlay