

Minutes
Board of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
Rembert C. Dennis Building, RM 335
1000 Assembly Street
Columbia, SC
August 19, 2021 10:00 AM

The regular meeting of the Board of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources was held at 10:00 a.m., August 19, 2021. Notice of the date, time and place of the meeting was posted and mailed to the news media. Chairman Norman Pulliam presided at the meeting. Board members present included Dr. Mark Hartley, Mike Hutchins, Jerry Lee, Carlisle Oxner, Jake Rasor, Jr. and Duane Swygert. Director Boyles and staff members of the Department of Natural Resources were present at the meeting.

- I. **Call to Order**
Chairman Norman Pulliam called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- II. **Invocation**
Chaplain Eric Skidmore, SC Law Enforcement Assistance Program (SC LEAP), offered the invocation.
- III. **Pledge of Allegiance**
Mr. Hutchins led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- IV. **Chairman's Comments**
Chairman Pulliam welcomed and thanked Board members and staff for their work on the upcoming budget request.
- V. **Introduction of Guests**
Angie Cassella, Deputy Director for Administration, introduced Riley Egger, SC Coastal Conservation League.
- VI. **Constituent Comments**
Mrs. Cassella informed the Board that Ms. Egger has requested to make comments to the Board. Ms. Egger's comments were regarding shorebird protection.
- VII. **Introduction of Staff**
Mary Lucas, Chief Information Security Officer, introduced Elise Nickoli. Ms. Nickoli has been recently hired as a compliance officer and will be in the Legal Office.
- VIII. **Approval of Minutes**
Chairman Pulliam asked if there were any additions, deletions or corrections to the June 17, 2021 meeting minutes or July 15, 2021 workshop minutes. *Mr. Lee made a motion that the Board approve the minutes of the June 17, 2021 meeting and July 15, 2021 workshop as presented. Mr. Swygert seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*
- IX. **Presentations/Commendations**
Director Boyles commended DNR staff for their efforts in coordination of the acquisition of the May Forest property adjacent to the Marine Center. He shared with the Board a

letter from Sister Mary Joseph Ritter, OLM, of the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy expressing their gratitude for making the sale of their property so successful.

Director Boyles commended Chris McDonough of Marine Resources for his efforts in preparation and coordination of the SCDNR CARES Round 2 Fisheries Assistance Program (2021) Funding Proposal which involved a lot of hard work in submitting SCDNR's spending plan to ASMFC for distribution of the second round of COVID relief funding for SC commercial fisheries.

Director Boyles commended Amy Dukes, Eric Hiltz, Julie Dingle and Elizabeth Gooding, and all the staff of the Fisheries Statistics Section of Marine Resources for their years of hard work on electronic reporting and their diligence in implementing this program in a way that has garnered the trust of the fishermen themselves. Their efforts will be a huge help in eventually allowing us to bring all such reporting into the 21st century with better timeliness, accuracy and compliance for these essential data components for fisheries management.

Director Boyles commended Brooke Myres and Deanne Myrick of Land, Water and Conservation for their work in coordinating the South Carolina Envirothon competition. Director Boyles met with the State-winning Envirothon team from Spartanburg High School and spoke to the group and wished them well as they participated in the virtual National Conservation Foundation Envirothon competition. The State Envirothon Team representing Spartanburg High School placed third in the nation during the National Competition.

Director Boyles commended Joe Lemeris of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries and Tanner Arrington of Administration for their hard work that led to our Natural Heritage Program being recognized by Esri at their user conference with a Special Achievement in GIS award for the environment and natural resources industry.

Director Boyles commended Captain Michael Paul Thomas and the Region 4 Law Enforcement Officers for their efforts during the 4th of July holiday weekend and snapper season. Their efforts were recognized in an email from LT Nikki Corbett, Chief, Enforcement Division, USCG Section Charleston, who expressed the US Coast Guard's thanks and appreciation and included a note "many thanks to Captain Thomas, LT Godowns and all the DNR officers for their phenomenal work."

Director Boyles commended SSGT Scott Stephens, LT Dennetta Dawson, Paula Mills and Mary Anna Mayson of Law Enforcement Hunter Education for their work in coordinating the SCDNR Ladies Shotgun Clinic event and other outreach opportunities.

Director Boyles commended Valerie Shannon of the Executive Office, Joey Frazier of South Carolina Wildlife magazine and the Law Enforcement Region 3 Officers for their efforts in the Sportsman's Warehouse sponsored "Maintain the Terrain" clean-up on the Congaree River and surrounding areas in part of the Riverfront Parks in downtown Columbia. Sportsman's Warehouse sponsored the event for its employees as a "thank you" and show of support to the SCDNR Law Enforcement Division and a tribute to the men and women in green for their efforts in preserving the beauty of SC's natural resources.

Director Boyles commended Kevin Ryan of the Executive Office and LT Andrew Godowns, LCPL Ben Whaley and LCPL Willie Ladue of Law Enforcement for arranging and supporting a field briefing for Congresswoman Nancy Mace and her Washington and District staff to discuss the Crab Bank Shorebird project and other conservation issues in the 1st Congressional District.

Director Boyles commended Julie Jarrett and her staff in the Boat Titling and Registration Office who were recognized in an email from Will Grimsley, MG, US Army (Ret), Secretary of Veterans' Affairs, who visited the State Farmers Market to update his address and noted that "the customer service was exceptional-not just with me but the few people in line ahead of me with each of the representatives was so efficient, personable, and professional."

Director Boyles commended the Law Enforcement Dive Team for their commitment and dedication in recent search and recovery operations including a successful search and recovery operation on Lake Monticello in Fairfield County, a recovery operation in Georgetown County and in Horry County along with their other daily activities.

X. Advisory Committee Reports

A. Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries

Mr. Hutchins reported that the Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Advisory Committee met on June 24, 2021 in Columbia. Mr. Hutchins announced the appointment of Mr. William (Sam) L. Hiott, Jr., and the reappointment of Mr. Q. Stanford Halliday III, as well as the reappointment of Mr. Cleveland T. Smith, D.M.D., to the Committee. The Advisory Committee received presentations on the new interactive digital fish-stocking dashboard and the findings on WMA hunters in South Carolina. The Advisory Committee received updates on the Barnwell Hatchery renovation, coyote harvest trends and electronic harvest reporting (tele-check) and legislation.

B. Marine

Mr. Swygert reported that the Marine Advisory Committee met June 25, 2021 in Charleston. The Advisory Committee received reports on SC DNR Oyster Management, Black Gill in White Shrimp and MRD Volunteer Programs.

C. Heritage Trust

Mr. Razor reported that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board met August 12, 2021 in Columbia. The Advisory Board welcomed new members Norris Thigpen, SC Department of Commerce and Rob Keck, Gubernatorial Appointee for District 3. The Advisory Board approved several potential property acquisitions and donations. The Advisory Board approved the FY 2023 budgets, as presented. The Advisory Board received an update on the Cultural Preserve Management Program.

D. Land, Water and Conservation

Ken Rentiers, Deputy Director for Land, Water and Conservation, reported that the Land, Water and Conservation Advisory Committee met August 17, 2021 at Wampee Plantation. The Advisory Committee received updates on division activities, environmental programs, Berkeley Blueways and Envirothon. The Advisory Committee approved Conservation District Commissioner

Appointments/Reappointments that will be brought to the Board at a future meeting.

IX. Items for Board Information

A. Climate Update

Hope Mizzell, Land, Water and Conservation Division, reported on recent temperatures and rainfall due to Tropical Depression Fred. Dr. Mizzell provided rainfall totals, precipitation percentiles, streamflow, lake levels, groundwater monitoring wells around the state, the status of the 2021 hurricane season, precipitation forecast and temperature forecast.

B. Coyote Harvest Updates and Trends

Jay Butfiloski, Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division, presented updates on coyote harvest trends and provided insight on harvesting methods, requirements, and reporting. Coyote harvest numbers for the previous year are trending downward but are expected to stabilize.

C. SC DNR Coastal Beaches Survey

Blaik Keppler, Marine Resources Division, presented the results of the recent SCDNR Coastal Beaches Survey. The survey captured the following information: which SCDNR Beach is visited most often, number of people in the group, what time of year, reason for visiting, bring a dog, the number of people seen on the beach, what is liked most about visiting that beach, dislikes, perceived threats, interest in protecting sea turtles and shorebirds and support of management for the protection of wildlife. Emily Cope, Deputy Director for Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries, distributed draft recommendations for changes to Regulation Sections 123-204 to protect wildlife at beaches owned and managed by SCDNR for the Board to review prior to next month's meeting.

D. Legal Update

This item was deferred until executive session.

X. Director's Briefings

Director Boyles participated in the Environmental Awareness Award Ceremony honoring Jane Hill, the 2020 recipient and other nominees.

Director Boyles, Kevin Ryan and Law Enforcement staff participated in a boat tour of Crab Bank with Congresswoman Nancy Mace and her staff.

Director attended the annual American Sportfishing Association ICAST Trade Show in Orlando, FL.

XI. Legislative Report

Kevin Ryan, Director of Government Affairs, distributed and reviewed the draft bill for the Conservation and Antiquities Act. Mr. Ryan also discussed the possibility of non-recurring funding for the budget through the Savannah River Site Settlement and the American Rescue Plan.

XII. Environmental Report

No further report.

XIII. Deputy Directors' Reports

A. Administration

No further report.

B. Land, Water and Conservation

Ken Rentiers, Deputy Director for Land, Water and Conservation gave the Board a brief update on water planning efforts.

C. Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries

No further report.

D. Law Enforcement

COL Frampton gave a brief update on the current class of officers and where they are in the interview process for a new class.

E. Marine

Ms. Keppler reported on the recent retirement of Mike Denson and Wally Jenkins.

XIV. Item(s) for Board Action

A. Approval of FY 2023 Heritage Trust Budget

Mr. Rentiers briefly reviewed the FY 2023 Heritage Trust Budget, as included in the meeting packet. *Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the Board approve the FY 2023 Heritage Trust Budget as approved and recommended by the Heritage Trust Advisory Board. Mr. Oxner seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

B. Approval of FY 2023 Budget Request

Director Boyles reviewed, by priority, the FY 2023 Budget Request, as provided to Board members on August 13, 2021. At priority number 8 and 12, Law Enforcement Class, the Board discussed increasing the number of officers requested to 25. *Mr. Oxner made a motion that the agency increase the request for the number of officers from 15 to 25. Mr. Hutchins seconded the motion. The motion failed with Dr. Hartley, Mr. Lee, Mr. Razor and Mr. Swygert voting against the motion and Mr. Hutchins and Mr. Oxner voting in favor of the motion.* The Board held further discussion of the request. *Dr. Hartley made a motion that the Board affirm the priority order as appropriate and approve the FY 2023 DNR Budget Request as presented and recommended by staff. Mr. Swygert seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

C. Approval of Deletion of Policy #200.01 (Duck Stamp Distribution)

Angie Cassella, Deputy Director for Administration, reminded the Board that the General Assembly passed legislation to sunset the Duck Stamp Program, therefore Policy #200.01 is no longer necessary. *Dr. Hartley made a motion that the DNR Board approve the deletion of SCDNR Policy #200.01 regarding Duck Stamp Distribution. This policy is no longer necessary as legislation to sunset the program was passed by the General Assembly in 2020 in Act No. 152. Mr. Razor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

- D. Approval of Update of Policy #400.01 (Request to Use or Acquire Real Property Under the Jurisdiction of SCDNR)
Ken Prosser, Assistant Deputy Director for Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries, reviewed the proposed updates to Policy #400.01 (Request to Use or Acquire Real Property Under the Jurisdiction of SCDNR), as included in the meeting packet. *Mr. Oxner made a motion that the DNR Board approve the update to Policy #400.01 (Request to Use or Acquire Real Property Under the Jurisdiction of SCDNR) as presented by staff. Mr. Hutchins seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*
- E. Approval of Expenditure of Funds from Twelvemile Creek Mitigation Trust Fund
Ross Self, Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division, reviewed the request for approval of expenditure of funds from Twelvemile Creek Mitigation Trust Fund, as included in the meeting packet. *Mr. Lee made a motion that the DNR Board approve the expenditure of \$799,817.49 from the Mitigation Trust Fund of South Carolina, South Carolina Recreational Fishing Compensation Plan Funds, Lake Hartwell PCB Settlement, to implement Twelvemile Creek stream restoration projects through Naturaland Trust, as recommended by staff. Mr. Razor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*
- F. Approval of 2021-22 Duck Stamp Budget
Mrs. Cope reviewed the proposed 2021-22 Migratory Waterfowl Budget, as included in the meeting packet. *Dr. Hartley made a motion that the DNR Board approve the FY 2022 Migratory Waterfowl Budget as requested by staff. Mr. Oxner seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*
- G. Deer Hunting with Dogs
COL Frampton referred to the information included in the meeting packet regarding the Law Enforcement Advisory Committee Deer Hunting with Dogs Assessment and Georgia's Deer Dog Hunting Law. The Board then discussed some possible recommendations. *Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the DNR Board direct staff to work with legislators on crafting legislation to address the deer hunting with dogs issue. Mr. Oxner seconded the motion. The motion carried with Dr. Hartley, Mr. Hutchins, Mr. Oxner, Mr. Razor and Mr. Swygert voting in favor of the and Mr. Lee voting against the motion.*
- XV. Executive Session
Dr. Hartley made a motion that the DNR Board go into executive session pursuant to SC Code Section 30-4-70(A)(2) to receive a legal update related to Item(s) for Board Information (D) and to discuss contractual matters related to Item(s) for Board Action (H, I and J). Mr. Razor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.
- XVI. Open Session
Dr. Hartley made a motion that the DNR Board return to open session, noting that no action was taken during executive session. Mr. Razor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.
- XVII. Items for Board Action
H. Approval of Potential Property Donation in Charleston County

Mr. Rasor made a motion that the DNR Board accept the recommendation, as approved by the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, to investigate a potential property donation of approximately 7.62 acres adjoining Fort Lamar Heritage Preserve that would be dedicated as a heritage preserve and placed into the corpus of the SC Heritage Trust and the expenditure of up to \$20,000 of Heritage Trust funds for associated due diligence activities. Mr. Oxner seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

I. Approval of Potential Property Acquisition in Horry County

Mr. Lee made a motion that the DNR Board accept the recommendation, as approved by the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, and grant preliminary approval to evaluate the potential purchase of approximately 418 acres adjoining Cartwheel Bay Heritage Preserve/WMA in Horry County that would be dedicated as a heritage preserve and placed into the corpus of the SC Heritage Trust, and the expenditure of up to \$20,000 in Heritage Trust funds to conduct due diligence activities. Dr. Hartley seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

J. Approval of Potential Property Acquisition in Horry County

Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the DNR Board accept the recommendation, as approved by the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, and grant preliminary approval to evaluate the potential purchase of approximately 1,660 acres adjoining the Waccamaw River Heritage Preserve/WMA in Horry County that would be dedicated as a heritage preserve and placed into the corpus of the SC Heritage Trust, and the expenditure of up to \$20,000 in Heritage Trust funds to conduct due diligence activities. Mr. Rasor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

XVIII. Time and Location of Next Board Meeting

The Board's next meeting is scheduled for September 16, 2021 in Columbia.

XIX. Adjournment

Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. Mr. Oxner seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.