

**South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Advisory Committee
June 24, 2021, Minutes
Rembert Dennis Building, Room 335
Columbia, SC 29201**

Members Present:

Chairman Mike Hutchins, Vice Chairman Cleveland Smith, Eddie Kinsey, Martha Herbert, Jonathan Rabon, Will Shirley, Mac Baughman, and Trey Watford.

Members Absent:

Stan Halliday, and Titus Duren.

Members attending via teleconference:

Sam Hiott

Staff Present:

Robert Boyles, Emily Cope, Ken Prosser, Billy Dukes, Sam Chappelle, Will Dillman, Ross Self, Lynn Quattro, Leo Rose, Charles Ruth, Jay Butfiloski, Alicia Farrell, Shelley Ivester, Kelsey Huffstetler.

Others Present:

There were no constituents present.

Chairman Hutchins called the meeting to order.

The minutes of the of the March 4, 2021, meeting was approved as submitted.

Chairman 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.

Deputy Director Emily Cope announced two staff changes: Shelley Ivester is now the WFF Assistant Business Manager, and she has been replaced by Kelsey Huffstetler, who is the new Administrative Assistant to Emily Cope, and liaison for the Committee.

Fish Hatchery Stocking Dashboard

Leo Rose, Freshwater Fisheries Hatchery Coordinator, presented the new interactive digital fish-stocking dashboard available to DNR staff, that is being developed in coordination with GIS and IT staff.

Barnwell Hatchery Renovations Update

Ross Self, Freshwater Fisheries Chief, presented an update on the Barnwell Hatchery renovation, that included the purchase of an adjoining 62 acres that will support hatchery operations and provide additional fishing opportunities.

Coyote Harvest Updates and Trends

Jay Butfiloski, Furbearer Project Supervisor, 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.

Report on Turkey Season and SC Game Check

Charles Ruth, Big Game Project Supervisor, provided updates on electronic harvest reporting (tele-check) that was newly implemented for the 2020-2021 turkey season, and he presented harvest report statistics and trends, as well as brood survey results that indicate an on-going decline in the turkey population.

WMA Hunter Survey

Billy Dukes, Chief of Wildlife, presented research findings on WMA hunters in South Carolina, conducted in cooperation with the Rodriguez Human Dimensions Lab at Clemson University. The purpose of the project was to develop a profile of the “average” WMA hunter in South Carolina, assess their motivations for hunting, and examine their views toward conservation and management.

Legislative Update

Emily Cope, WFF Deputy Director, reported on legislative updates that included electronic display of licenses and privileges as an acceptable form of proof, repeal of prohibition on possessing game fishing devices while having nongame devices, nongame fishing devices on the Santee, Congaree, and Wateree Rivers, statewide blue catfish possession and size limits, identification of swine transported on roads, bear hunting over bait in Game Zone 4, and flounder size and catch limits. She also provided information on upcoming public meetings regarding Sunday hunting on WMA properties.

Date, Time, and Location of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Advisory Committee will be held at 10:00am, on September 8, 2021, at Santee Coastal Reserve in McClellanville.

Chairman Hutchins adjourned the meeting.