

MINUTES TO THE CAC MEETING 03/09/04

Secretary's Report:

The March meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM. A discussion was had as to how the Ted Nugent United Sportsmen of America Club was removed from our roster. A motion was made, seconded, and approved to have the Ted Nugent group back on our roster. After confirming that all members had received the Feb. minutes, they were accepted.

Correspondence to the Chair:

None received.

Law Enforcement Report:

No T.I.P. report was available.

Officer Nelson reported to us that on April 3, the Spignesi Scholarship Dinner will be held at 5 PM. The Connecticut Conservation Officers Association is sponsoring this event.

Law Enforcement may be receiving a 35-foot, twin diesel, patrol boat from the Navy.

A new, advanced radar system has been installed in one of the marine patrol vessels. This radar has a one-foot accuracy. Many officers have been trained in its use.

Conservation Police will be keeping a more active eye on enforcing River Herring restrictions this year.

The current lobster boat being used by the DEP is getting tired but, a grant application has been put in to acquire anew one.

The Marine Division will have a Lobster Compliance Study coming out soon.

It was reported that there are currently 51 Environmental Conservation Police employed and that over the next 5 years, 22 of those officers will be eligible for retirement.

DEP Report from Ed Parker:

We adjourned to the Phoenix Auditorium for a presentation by Dale May entitled "A Vision for Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation".

Funding for this is coming primarily through State Wildlife Grants (SWG) and Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program (WCRP)

It was noted that almost 1 million CT residents engage in fishing, hunting, or wildlife watching activities and, that residents and non residents combined spend \$825 million on wildlife related recreation in CT.

Public participation throughout the process of creating this plan is vital.

A target completion date of 12/30/04 is expected.

It was mentioned how fish, along with insects and reptiles are considered wildlife in this project.

Inland Fisheries

Trout stocking is underway. We should see bigger trout this season as compared to last.

There is currently a proposal for the statewide ban on the taking of River Herring. Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Council (ASMFC) - Fred Frillici attended this meeting and is advocating an increase in the allowable catch for recreational anglers versus commercial fishermen.

Forestry

The State Nursery has been leased to a private facility as of Feb. 11

Wildlife

Falconry regulations were approved unanimously by Regulation Review. Forms, applications, etc. are currently being prepared. Regulations still need approval by the USFWS before Falconry can take place in CT.

Wildlife license plates, the eagle and the bobcat will be available in late June or early July.

A handout, copies of two articles from "The Chronicle" newspaper were handed out that spoke of the desire of some local residents to not allow firearm deer hunting in Mansfield Hollow State Park. The Army Corps of Engineers leases this land to the DEP, and the lease is up for renewal. Only small game hunting was allowed in the park in the past.

The Hunter Review Team inspected an area in the lower Housatonic River that has been the sight of many hunting complaints by residents. It was found that ownership of the northern and middle island in question could not be determined. Therefore you could not hunt from land in this area being that you need the landowners written consent.

It was reported that a rumor was started concerning a limited deer hunt on a stretch of property near Harkness Memorial State Park to thin out the deer population. There are no plans in the works currently for such a thing.

Legislative Report:

No report

Marine Fisheries

No report

Legislative Committee Report

Four Bills have been submitted to the Sportsmen's Caucus

Five various proposals were submitted regarding Sunday hunting

Motor Boat Fuel tax issue has to become a priority issue for Clubs. The

Legislation needs to hear voices. In SB 35 section 50, concerning the Motor Boat Fuel Tax, The first two million paid into the account shall go to the General Fund.

This would leave the Department severely short changed.

Another Bill was brought to discussion concerning the responsibility of the owner of any loss or stolen firearm, to report it is missing within 72 hours. Bob will be adding amendments to this.

Another Bill concerns the closure of fisheries to both commercial and recreational fishing based on environmental data that may be flawed.

Commissioner Rocque testified before the Legislature that the DEP is operating on virtually all private funds. No money is coming from the General Fund. This seemed to get the attention of many Legislators.

Old Business:

Chris Marino handed out draft copies of proposed by-law changes to the by-law committee.

Ducks Unlimited, Glastonbury Chapter, announced that they would be holding a banquet on April 22

New Business:

A motion was made seconded and approved to endorse the statewide ban on the taking of River Herring.

A motion was made, seconded, and approved to endorse the concept of the new Wildlife Plan.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Jon Puhalski