

Conservation Advisory Council Minutes April 8, 2008 Meeting

Vice-chairman Tip Garritt called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM. Chairman Chris Marino arrived at the meeting at 7:15 PM and assumed his regular duties as Chairman.

Attendance: See attached attendance list.

Secretary's Report:

*Minutes of the March 11th, 2008 meeting were distributed to members who did not receive them electronically. The chairman requested a motion to accept the minutes.

A motion to accept was made by George Finch, seconded by Bob Crook. Discussion. Motion approved.

*The Secretary reported that letters have been sent out to absentee delegates and their respective Clubs or organizations. The letters contain a notification of a documented lack of required attendance to CAC meetings for the year 2007, and state the pertinent by-laws that apply to attendance and regular participation required of CAC member organizations. Each organization has been given an opportunity to review the continuation of their CAC membership and respond to the Secretary per our by-laws. The CAC will review the membership of each affected organization and their responses at the regular monthly meeting in June.

Chairman's Report:

None

DEP:

Conservation Environnemental Police Report:

*Sergeant Jim Wolfe presented the monthly Wildlife Hotline Activity report. Sgt Wolfe handed out a flyer to promote the "T.I.P." program.

BNR Report: Bureau Chief Ed Parker

Forestry:

Chris Martin has been hired as the new Forestry Director for the state, replacing Don Smith who has retired. Mr. Martin will begin his new duties on May 9th. He brings to his directorship dual degrees in Forestry and Wildlife Management, as well as his experience working in the private sector for a major water company.

Marine Fisheries:

*Ed gave a handout to delegates concerning Marine Recreational fishing Rules that have been adopted as interim measures to remain in compliance with Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Agreement for 2008.

The handout outlined changes in Minimum length, Creel limit, and Season dates in effect for the 2008 season related to Summer Flounder, Scup and Tautog.

Inland Fisheries:

* Copies of a DEP press release concerning the opening day of trout fishing season and agency programs were distributed to the delegates. The press release details related fishing programs, stocking amounts and locations. Ed reported the agency will sponsor radio spots on CT stations and announcements in The Hartford Currant promoting opening day and fishing programs in the state such as the "No child left indoors" program."

Wildlife:

*The C.A.C. Pheasant Committee will be meeting with Dale May, Lori Fortin and Mark Clavette at Sessions Woods W.M.A. on Thursday April 10th 7:30pm to discuss issues related to the Pheasant Program.

*Ed reported that cases of "White nose syndrome" have been found in bats that hibernate in caves in CT. Very little is known about this disease and what can be done. Further study is need. The Agency is looking for help from the Feds to investigate this issue.

*A persistent nuisance male bear in New Milford had to be euthanized by DEP staff recently. The Agency is reviewing nuisance bear control policy to more effectively handle problem bears. Ed reported that all telemetry collars currently in use on bears have recently failed for as yet unidentified reasons. Since all collars are involved, the cause is thought to be due to a design flaw. This problem will necessitate a great deal of extra work to re-collar bears for continuation of DEP bear research.

*Tip Garret asked if the D.E.P. is still collaring moose in CT. Ed informed him that no moose have been collared due to the difficulty of locating and capturing moose.

CAC Committee Reports:

Legislative:

*Bob Crook noted there have been some recommended language changes for HB 5852 "An act concerning the control of Lyme disease.

*Bob talked about proposed HB 5855 "An act concerning the hunting of bear and moose". Current language states that, "nothing shall prevent the Commissioner of the D.E.P. from designating a Hunting season for moose and bear. This will more than likely be an amendment bill.

*Budget item proposals for 2008 include monies for (8) new ENCON officers, (12) park employees, (10) park enforcement, (50) additional staff and \$350,000 for the "No child left inside" Program.

*The Forestry Bill is still alive and is now with the Appropriations Committee.

*Bob reported that the Coalition's web site is back up and running again after a major meltdown. "Ctsportsmen.com"

Old Business:

None

New Business:

*Bob Crook related a story about meeting Rep. Menga at a C.E.F.S. Instructor's Banquet at the Aqua Turf. Rep. Menga who sits on the Environment Committee wanted to know more about the deer problems in CT.

*Chris Marino brought up the topic of communications between biologists and project leaders involved in various habitat and wildlife projects throughout the State. He asked Ed Parker what the Agency could do to improve communications and project awareness. Suggested was a central clearing-house of habitat project information based on habitat type. If possible, known private land projects such as those receiving funding through the WHIP program should also be included. The benefit of having this information available might include efficiencies and costs savings through contact with project leaders to incorporate identified habitat component needs into existing projects.

*Ed Parker reported the state has filled the vacant position of Deputy Commissioner of the DEP. Hired for this position is Susan Frechette. Ms. Frechette brings to the DEP a background in administration, parks, policy, consulting and government affairs.

A motion to adjourn was made by Bob Crook and seconded by Vinnie Ringrose. Motion passed, meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Marshall
Secretary: C.A.C.