

MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, & PARKS

Wednesday, August 16, 2017

1505 Eastover Drive, Jackson, MS

10 a.m. Educational Session / 1 p.m. Business Session

EDUCATIONAL SESSION – 10 AM

PRESENT: Commission Chairman Clay Wagner, Commissioners Bill F. Cossar, Robert Taylor, and Billy Mounger.

ABSENT: Commissioner Scott Coopwood.

Among the MDWFP staff attending were: Dr. Sam Polles, Executive Director; Robert Cook, Deputy Executive Director; Michael Bolden, Larry Castle, Captain Chris Reed, Russ Walsh, Jennifer Head, Larry Pugh, and Jason Thompson.

Educational Sessions are for informational purposes only. Commission action on any topic may only be taken during a regular business session.

1. **Quail Hollow Golf Course**

Jennifer Head, Director of Parks, informed the Commission that the superintendent for Quail Hollow Golf Course had resigned. Since rain over the summer has kept play numbers down, the general consensus was to delay hiring a new superintendent until the fall revenue in September, October, and November could be evaluated.

2. **Funding Streams (Revenue)**

Jennifer Head presented a PowerPoint presentation depicting funding sources of revenue for the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks and how they are utilized.

3. **FY 2019 MDWFP Budget**

Jennifer Head presented a PowerPoint presentation of the FY 2019 MDWFP budget.

4. **MDWFP DIRECTION FOR NEXT FIVE YEARS**

Larry Castle, Director of Technical Programs, gave a quick overview of intra-agency discussions which have been conducted during the past month at four different levels of staff and involving personnel from all bureaus within the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks. The purpose of these discussions was to capture ideas from each level which were considered top priorities for the agency in the next five years. These lists are currently being compiled and all ideas and votes have been kept anonymous. Upon completion the lists will be prioritized and submitted to the administrative staff and Commission. The Commission will be submitting their input as well upon completion of the lists.

A handout was distributed showing Level 1 Manager Priorities Summary for each Bureau held on July 11, 2017.

5. Misprint in 2017-2018 *OUTDOOR DIGEST* magazine

Larry Castle informed the Commission of a misprint in the 2017-2018 *Outdoor Digest*. Two items on page 16 were not updated with changes made in the deer hunting regulations.

(a) The text in the section titled "Bag Limits" should have read:

"The bag limit on Delta, Northeast, East Central, and Southwest zones antlerless deer is three (3) per annual season. The bag limit on Southeast Zone antlerless deer is one (1) per day, two (2) per annual season."

(b) The text in the table titled "Legal Bucks" should show 13" for the Southwest Zone under the "Main Beam" column.

Corrective measures have been taken to print stickers with the corrected information and to apply them directly to all in-house copies. An outside printing service was used for the production of this magazine. License vendors were shipped the incorrect copies directly from the printer; however, the vendors have been made aware of this mistake. The website has been corrected and a News Alert has been issued to all social media.

Discussion followed concerning possible ramifications and unintended consequences of these errors.

6. Customer Survey Form

Dr. Bruce Leopold, Professor of Wildlife Ecology, Mississippi State University, volunteered his services to help design the "MDWFP INITIAL CUSTOMER SURVEY" form. This form will be given to our customers when they visit a park, WMA, or lake. Information from the completed forms will be entered into our Customer Satisfaction Trend Data Base.

A copy of the survey form was distributed to members of the Commission.

7. Periodic Uniform Review System

Michael Bolden, Director of Administrative Services, presented a PowerPoint presentation and handout to the Commission revealing a new evaluation tool for employees which would be used to supplement the Mississippi State Personnel Board's Performance Review System. This system includes a property inspection tool with the following capabilities: pictures can be downloaded, ability to review past inspections, inspectors can review applicable checklists for upcoming inspections, ability to link certain findings to a Purchase Order, and inspectors can view supporting documents, such as property lists, maps of facilities, policy guidance, and outstanding areas of concern.

8. Wolf Lake Executive Order

On May 23, 2017, the Commission on Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks approved an Executive Order to close Wolf Lake in Yazoo County to all recreational boating activities due floodwaters from the Mississippi River as set forth in MISSISSIPPI CODE ANNOTATED 59-21-111 *et. seq.*

Dr. Sam Polles, Executive Director, informed the Commission that this Executive Order was rescinded, effective June 20, 2017, after all floodwaters had withdrawn. Recreational boating activity on the lake has now resumed.

With no other items to be presented, the Educational meeting was adjourned. The Commission will reconvene at 1 p.m. for the Business Session.

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1505 Eastover Drive, Jackson, MS

10 a.m. Educational Session / 1 p.m. Business Session

MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS SESSION – 1 PM

PRESENT: Commission Chairman Clay Wagner, Commissioners Bill F. Cossar, Scott Coopwood, Robert Taylor and Billy Mounger.

Among the MDWFP staff attending were: Dr. Sam Polles, Executive Director; Robert Cook, Deputy Executive Director; Michael Bolden, Larry Castle, Captain Chris Reed, Larry Bull, Russ Walsh, Jennifer Head, Jason Thompson, and counsel, Doug Mann, Special Assistant Attorney General.

Chairman Wagner, having noted for the minutes that a quorum was present, gaveled the meeting to order at 1 p.m. Chairman Wagner welcomed Representative Scott Bounds, House Chairman of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (WFP) Committee; as well as, Senator Mike Seymour, and Representative John Glen Corley, a member of the House WFP Committee.

OPENING PRAYER

Robert Cook, Deputy Executive Director, opened the meeting with prayer.

OATH OF OFFICE

William (Billy) Mounger II, having been appointed by Governor Phil Bryant to serve a five year term beginning July 1, 2017 and ending June 30, 2022, was sworn into office by Notary Sharon Polzin.

MINUTES

ACTION: Upon motion by Commissioner Cossar and seconded by Commissioner Coopwood, the minutes of the June 14, 2017 meeting were unanimously approved.

AGENDA

ACTION: Commissioner Cossar moved to approve the agenda for August 16, 2017. Commissioner Taylor seconded the motion and the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Brian Montgomery and Brad Martin appeared before the Commission representing the Mississippi Bowhunter's Association. Mr. Montgomery stated that in the past leaders of this organization were mainly a political arm but now he and Mr. Martin are redirecting this charge to the promotion of the sport of archery and bowhunting in the State of Mississippi.

Mr. Montgomery's purpose today was to request the Commission to remove the 100 yard limit for bowhunters to shoot deer over supplemental feeding so that bowhunting would be on the same playing field with other weapons. Mr. Montgomery felt like a 20 yard distance for bowhunting would be comparable to 100 yards for a rifle.

Chairman Wagner stated that the Commission is aware and looking into this issue for the next hunting season. The agency's job is to first look at the resource and make sure that it is protected. Mr. Castle asked Mr. Montgomery to share with his membership that with supplemental feeding there is a risk of Chronic Waste Disease (CWD), which is a real and probable concern in the State of Mississippi. Please be sure to use the correct term which is supplemental feeding, not baiting, and emphasize how harmful it is for food to be placed on the ground.

LICENSE SALES REPORT

Jason Thompson, Director of License/Boat Registration, presented the License Sales Report for the month of July 2017. The total revenue for the end of July is down 3% but quantity of licenses sold is up 4%. The Wildlife Foundation bought 2,600 youth exempt licenses in June and July.

Highlights of Thompson's end of the month report are listed below:

- Non-resident licenses – up 4%, quantity sold up 8%
- NR Freshwater Fishing – up 10%
- NR 3 day Freshwater Fishing – up 3%
- NR 1 day Freshwater Fishing – up 17%
- Permit category – Alligator permits sold in the month of June 2017 generated over \$200,000
- Lifetime License category – down \$3,500; Sold only 2 less than July 2016
- Two hundred licenses totaling \$16,000 were sold during the Wildlife Extravaganza August 4-6, 2017.

WILDLIFE BUREAU

PROPOSED Rule - 40 Miss. Admin. Code Part 2, Chapter 1

- **Rule 1.2 – Non-state owned, Non-COE WMA Regulations**
Russ Walsh, Executive Wildlife Director, stated a change was made to the Calhoun County WMA rule portion that will allow the use of ORVs/ATVs on designated roads and trails for hunting and fishing access, and for removal/transport of harvested game.

- **Rule 1.23 – Sunflower WMA Regulations**

Walsh stated this removed antlerless deer harvest during Primitive Weapon season, December 2-15, which should have been removed in the previous edition of the rule.

ACTION: By motion of Commissioner Taylor and seconded by Commissioner Cossar, the Commission unanimously approved Proposed Rules 1.2 and 1.23 as presented.

PROPOSED Rule - 40 Miss. Admin. Code Part 2, Chapter 8

- **Rule 8.4 – Regulations for Game & Furbearing Animals in Capacity**

Walsh stated antiquated language was removed and changed, including:

- a) Removal of nutria and skunk from the incorrect furbearer species to nuisance animals.
- b) Correcting the use of the word “furbearer”.
- c) Removed outdated language that provided for permitting of captive possession of wildlife.
- d) Added the definition for “public zoological garden or educational institutions” and other persons for the purpose of identifying what facilities are eligible for a permit to possess live game of furbearing animals.
- e) Clarifies that MDWFP permitted deer/coyote/fox/rabbit enclosures and wildlife rehab facilities are not affected by this rule.
- f) Clarifies procedures for disposal of illegal wildlife discovered in captivity.

ACTION: By motion of Commissioner Cossar and seconded by Commissioner Coopwood, the Commission unanimously approved Proposed Rule 8.4 as presented.

FISHERIES

PROPOSED Rule- 40 Miss. Admin. Code Part 3, Chapter 3

Larry Pugh, Director of Fisheries, presented the following proposed rule changes:

- **Rule 3.1 – Commercial Fishing Regulations**

- a) Made crawfish trap language consistent with Rule 1.3
- b) Clarified tagging requirements for LA residents fishing reciprocal waters
- c) Clarified documentation required to run someone else’s commercial gear
- d) Legalized use of slat baskets in lakes on the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway

- **Rule 3.2 – Regulations regarding the Commercial Harvest of Paddlefish & Paddlefish Eggs**

- a) Inserted language for grammatical clarity
- b) Removed 35-inch minimum length limit for Paddlefish on the Mississippi River; all Paddlefish in MS must be a minimum of 37 inches in length
- c) Clarified Paddlefish transport regulations for AR license holders in reciprocal waters
- d) Inserted specific rule name where needed for citation and clarity

- **Rule 3.4 – Regulations regarding Paddlefish Management Zones & the Periods Open to the Commercial Harvest of Paddlefish**
 - a) Delineated waters and dates open to Paddlefish harvest; MS River and Yazoo River Basin will be only areas open and will be open concurrently (ref 37-inch minimum in Rule 3.2)
 - b) Inserted specific Rule name where needed for citation and clarity
- **Rule 3.5 – Procedures for obtaining Paddlefish Permits for the Commercial Harvest of Paddlefish & Paddlefish Eggs & Reporting Requirements for Paddlefish Harvest**
 - a) Corrected dates from 2017 to 2018
 - b) Clarified reporting requirements for April (last month of season)

ACTION: By motion of Commissioner Coopwood and seconded by Commissioner Mounger, the Commission unanimously approved Proposed Rules 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, and 3.5 as presented.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Citation Report

Captain Chris Reed presented the Citation Report in Col. Steve Adcock's absence. Captain Reed distributed a handout to the Commission which highlighted citations, shooting range attendance at Turcotte and McHenry, as well as, McIvor Range construction updates on skeet traps and rifle ranges. During the past month 160 officers participated in Operation Drywater, July 1-3, 2017 with 270 boating citations issued. Officers also seized slat boxes on the Pearl River in Neshoba County and three individuals were caught commercial fishing below the reservoir spillway in closed water with undersized gill nets. During the month officers assisted with the Spring Fling Super Hunt at Turcotte Range, monitored the Chickasawhay River Raft Race, executive details at the Southern Legislative Conference in Biloxi, and a ten-day recovery of a Marine Corps plane crash in Leflore County.

License Reinstatement Request

Captain Reed presented the following two license reinstatement requests. Reed asked the violators to come forward and state the circumstances of their arrest before the Commission. Both violators had paid their fines and attended the Hunter Education class as required for restitution.

- *Austin Pritchard, Kosciusko, MS*

Pritchard informed the Commission that on his way home he saw a buck, stopped, and shot the deer. He was arrested and paid fines in the amount of \$2,100.

MOTION: By motion of Commissioner Cossar and seconded by Commissioner Mounger, Pritchard's license was reinstated by unanimous consent.

- *Gavin Hollingsworth, Moss Point, MS*

Hollingsworth stated he was 16 years old at the time and got caught up with the wrong group of eight boys in two trucks spotlighting. A deer was shot by one of the boys. Hollingsworth paid \$2,500 in fines.

MOTION: By motion of Commissioner Taylor and seconded by Commissioner Cossar, Hollingsworth's license was reinstated by unanimous consent.

OTHER BUSINESS

Executive Order – Lake Mary Crawford

Larry Pugh presented Executive Order for Lake Mary Crawford. Pursuant to authority set forth in MISS. CODE ANN. 49-1-29(i), Dr. Sam Polles, Executive Director, signed an Executive Order on July 17, 2017, to close Lake Mary Crawford to the public in preparation for planned renovations. Draining the lake will allow MDWFP to make needed repairs to the water level control structure, fishing piers, and boat ramp. After repairs are completed, the lake will be restocked with bass, bream, crappie, and catfish.

MOTION: By motion of Commissioner Taylor and seconded by Commissioner Cossar, the Executive Order closing Lake Mary Crawford was ratified by unanimous consent. A signed copy of the Executive Order for Lake Mary Crawford has been appended to the minutes.

Adoption of FY 2019 MDWFP Budget Request

Jennifer Head, Director of Parks, presented a handout to the Commission outlining the only changes in the budget from last year which are listed below:

- Request for restoration of General Funds for Parks and Museum which were cut in the amount of \$2,092,753.
- Restoration of Motor Vehicle Fund in the amount of \$200,000 for Law Enforcement.
- Fully fund Project WILD for the Museum of Natural Science in the amount of \$285,000.

MOTION: By motion of Commissioner Coopwood and seconded by Commissioner Cossar, the FY 2019 MDWFP Budget Request was approved by unanimous consent as presented.

NEXT COMMISSION MEETING

DATE: Wednesday, September 20, 2017
LOCATION: 1505 Eastover Drive, Jackson, MS 39211
TIME: 1 p.m. Educational Session
2:30 p.m. Business Session

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Chairman asked if there was a need for an Executive Session. The Executive Director stated that there was need for a brief Executive Session to discuss several personnel matters.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Commissioner Taylor and seconded by Commissioner Cossar, the Commission voted unanimously to close the meeting to determine the need for Executive Session to discuss personnel matters involving job performance of specific individuals in specific positions, and transactions in real property.

Counsel announced that the meeting was closed to determine the need for an Executive Session to discuss personnel matters involving job performance of specific individuals in specific positions and transactions in real property.

Following a brief discussion, Commissioner Taylor made a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss personnel matters involving job performance of specific individuals in specific positions and transactions in real property. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Coopwood, and the Commission voted unanimously to enter Executive Session.

Counsel announced to those remaining outside the meeting room that the Commission had entered Executive Session for the purposes and discussions stated above.

Executive Director Sam Polles and Deputy Executive Director Robert Cook updated the Commission on pending personnel actions, including but not limited to, filling vacancies occasioned by retirements and resignations of specific employees.

Discussion followed. No action was required of the Commission.

Dr. Polles then informed the Commission of a couple of opportunities for the agency to purchase several significant pieces of real property suitable for hunting. The owners of these tracts are currently in discussion with other state officials and entities to convey the lands to the state. Discussions are still in the very early stages, but are far enough along to obtain Commission approval to move ahead with appraisals.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Coopwood and seconded by Commissioner Cossar, the Commission voted unanimously to move forward with appraisals on the aforementioned properties.

There was no further business for Executive Session.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Taylor and seconded by Commissioner Coopwood, the Commission voted unanimously to exit Executive Session and open the meeting.

Counsel announced that no action was required or taken by the Commission on the personnel items discussed during Executive Session, to members of the public still in attendance. Counsel then announced that the Commission had voted to conduct appraisals on several tracts of land which could be purchased by the agency.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Commission, Chairman Wagner gaveled the meeting into adjournment.



Clay Wagner, CHAIRMAN

Date



Bill F. Cossar, VICE CHAIRMAN

Date

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, AND PARKS

In Re: Closing of Lake Mary Crawford, and related matters.

EXECUTIVE ORDER

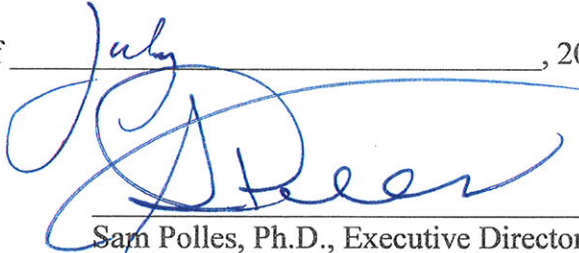
PURSUANT TO the authority set forth in Miss. Code Ann. §49-1-29(i), the Fisheries Bureau has requested to lift, suspend and/or remove the creel and length limits for fishing at Lake Mary Crawford, Monticello, Mississippi, for the period of time that the lake will be drained prior to repair and renovation. Fisheries has also requested that at such time as the lake is considered to be drained, that the lake be closed to fishing and recreation until repairs and renovation are complete.

Based upon the request of the Fisheries Bureau, I find as follows:

1. The creel and length limits applicable to sport fishing at Lake Mary Crawford in Monticello, Mississippi shall hereby be lifted, set aside and held in abeyance for such period of time as it may require for the lake to be drained prior to certain reconstruction/repair and renovation activities.
2. The public is encouraged to come to Lake Mary Crawford and remove such fish as they please, to reduce the number of fish that could be lost to low water and draining activities. All requirements for fishing licenses and /or lake permits shall remain in full force and effect during this period.
3. At such time as the draining operation has been accomplished, and following notice by Fisheries of such occurrence, Lake Mary Crawford shall be closed to fishing and recreational use until such time as the reconstruction/repair and renovation operations are complete.

THEREFORE, pursuant to the authority set forth in MISS. CODE ANN. '49-1-29(i), it is hereby ordered that the creel and length limits applicable to that certain lake in Lawrence County, Mississippi, known as Lake Mary Crawford, are hereby lifted, set aside, removed and held in abeyance while the lake is being drained for repairs and renovation. It is further ordered that the public may take such fish from Lake Mary Crawford as they please subject to existing license and permit requirements. It is finally ordered that the lake will be closed to fishing and recreation at such time as the draining operation is complete. The lake will remain closed until such time as the repairs and renovations are complete, at which time, by subsequent order, the lake will be re-opened.

SO ORDERED, this the 17th day of July, 2017.



Sam Polles, Ph.D., Executive Director
Mississippi Department of Wildlife,
Fisheries, and Parks