

SOUTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE AND MARINE RESOURCES
COMMISSION MEETING

Eutaw Springs, S. C.
July 18, 1980

The regular monthly meeting of the South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources Commission was held at Eutaw Springs, at 10:00 a.m., July 18, 1980, with Chairman Edens presiding. Notice of the date, time and place of the meeting was mailed to the State's media. Commissioners present at the meeting included Commissioners Edens, Harrelson, Stubbs, Dawson, Compton, Bennett, Owen, and Shuler. Directors and staff members present included Dr. Timmerman, Larry Cartee, Jeff Fuller, Pat Ryan, Tommy Strange, Joe Logan, Tom Kohlsaas, Miller White, Dan Dobbins, Dr. Ed Joseph, Brock Conrad, Tommy Edwards, Sonny Baines, John Evans, Bill Mahan, Jack Bayless, Reggie Harrell, and Benny Reeves. Guests at the meeting included Pat Robertson of the "Columbia Record" and Robert G. Salisbury, John Rogers, and Mrs. Lee Shaffer of the Beaufort County Board of Education.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Edens called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMISSIONERS

Chairman Edens introduced Charles L. Compton as a new Commissioner from the 5th Congressional District and Larry C. Owen from the 3rd Congressional District. Chairman Edens welcomed them to the Commission and noted that he and the other members looked forward to working with them.

ITEM I. READING OF THE MINUTES

Commissioner Stubbs moved to dispense with the reading of the Minutes of the June 13, 1980 meeting and approve them as submitted. Commissioner Dawson seconded the motion and it was adopted by the Commission.

ITEM II. COMMENTS

Dr. Timmerman reported that the Marine Study Committee had met on July 9-10 in Charleston and the group is very active in its work. Another meeting will be held the first week in October and they will report to the Commission in December. Chairman Edens noted that this is a fine group and that notices will be sent to all Commissioners of their meetings. All Commissioners are invited to attend, if at all possible.

Dr. Timmerman advised the Commission that the Study Committee on Program Funding held its second meeting on June 27th. Their next meeting will be held



on August 8th in the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee Room. A notice of this meeting will be sent out to the Commissioners and the Study Committee has requested that the Commission meet with them. A draft report with funding recommendations will be developed and discussed at the meeting. After the August 8th meeting, the report will be refined and an Executive Summary will be developed. Chairman Edens noted that the Study Committee is beginning to firm up their recommendations. Mr. Laniel Chapman is serving as Chairman of this committee and is doing a terrific job. Chairman Edens stated that the Study Committee needs the Commission's support and he urged that each Commissioner be at the August 8th meeting.

Dr. Timmerman informed the Commission that signs are being constructed for boat ramps which were named in honor of Mac Flood and C. Alex Harvin at the last Commission meeting.

Dr. Timmerman noted that the Commission had recommended Thomas Salmons for architectural/engineering work for various office construction design work and this has been approved by the Budget and Control Board.

Dr. Timmerman stated that the staff had met with Commissioner Owen on July 8th and presented him with an overview of the Department's operations.

Dr. Timmerman advised the Commission that Dan Dobbins is in the process of setting up various meetings with key legislators concerning the commercial fishing proposal.

Dr. Timmerman informed the Commission that Vernon Bevill has been confirmed and hired as Executive Director of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Agency.

The August Commission meeting had been tentatively set for August 19th in Charleston with the Budget and Control Board, but they begin budget hearings in August. The Department's budget hearing is tentatively set for August 25th and Dr. Timmerman suggested that the Commission meeting be held on that date in order that the Commission could attend the budget hearing. The Commission could meet in the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee Room. The August 25th date will be confirmed by the end of next week.

Dr. Timmerman presented the Commission, for information, a copy of the vehicle accident report for the time period of January - June, 1980 (copy attached to original Commission Minutes). For the large number of miles driven each



year, only three (3) accidents were the fault of the employee. This has been written up and made a part of these employees' personnel file.

A copy of the S. C. Forestry Study Committee report was distributed to the Commissioners for their information. Chairman Edens noted that this is an excellent report that each Commissioner will find very informative.

Dr. Timmerman noted that we had imposed a spending freeze in February in order to stay within our budget and that we may face budget reductions this fiscal year. Dr. Timmerman distributed a memo (copy attached to original Commission Minutes) regarding our financial status and a thawing of the spending freeze. Budgets are being set up for law enforcement districts and project areas in order to have tighter control on our budget and making the staff more budget conscious.

Dr. Timmerman noted that he met last Friday with the local Highway Commissioner, engineers and legislators on the South Island Ferry problem. The long-term answer to this problem is a bridge and various legislators will seek one-half (1/2) federal funds and one-half (1/2) state funds for such a bridge. Dr. Timmerman thanked Commissioner Dawson for setting up this meeting.

Dr. Timmerman stated that PRT had dedicated a new state park adjacent to Lake Warren and that he attended the dedication ceremony. This 300-acre area along with Lake Warren will be a multi-purpose use area through the Department and PRT. This project, along with the Mountain Bridge Project, are areas where these two agencies are cooperating. As such, Dr. Timmerman suggested that the Commission and the PRT Commission meet jointly in the future to discuss multi-purpose use and other areas where we can cooperate. Chairman Edens suggested that this be done some time in the future to explore various avenues of cooperation. Commissioner Stubbs suggested that such a joint meeting be held at Table Rock State Park.

ITEM III. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Dan Dobbins reported that he was beginning to get input from field staff on the 1981 legislative proposal and a draft will be presented to the Commission at the October meeting. The rule and regulation procedure will be integrated into the legislative package. Mr. Dobbins distributed a package on all legislation that passed this year regarding the Department's operations. A final legislative report will be presented after the legislature adjourns in the latter part of August.



Chairman Edens stated that the rule and regulation procedure will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

ITEM IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Request from Beaufort County Board of Education - Use of Property at Victoria Bluff: Chairman Edens noted that the Commission had received a request from the Beaufort County Board of Education regarding the use of property at Victoria Bluff for a school site. The Commission has discussed this matter and decided to invite the School Board members to this meeting for a final decision on this matter. Chairman Edens introduced Mr. John Rogers, Mrs. Lee Shaffer and Mr. Robert Salisbury from the School Board and invited them to comment on their request. Mrs. Shaffer noted that the Board is involved with long-range planning for school sites and they are requesting that 50 acres at Victoria Bluff be set aside for the future development of a school. Mrs. Shaffer stated that she felt the School Board would probably assume responsibility for the costs of setting this land aside such as surveying, fencing, etc. Mr. John Rogers stated that the Board has been looking at the site since the 1960's and that it is a valuable piece of property. The location is perfect with good high ground and the school could also be used as a fallout shelter for the people on Hilton Head in the event of a national disaster. Mr. Rogers requested that rifle hunting not be allowed on this property if a school is constructed as a safety factor. Chairman Edens noted that it is now state law that rifles could be used on the property for hunting. Mr. Rogers asked for clarification of a couple of points in a letter of May 22, 1980, and these were discussed by Chairman Edens. Mr. Robert Salisbury, Superintendent of the School District, stated that the potential school site would be compatible with use of this area as a wild-life center. It would be compatible with the curriculum and science and biology labs which would be held. The proposal for 50 acres is only a small percentage of the total area owned by the Department and the Board would agree to a reverter clause for the property to revert to the Department if it was no longer used as a school site. Chairman Edens noted that he had received a request from the Heritage Trust Advisory Board Chairman and staff to speak on this matter and a letter had been sent out where the Board essentially objected to the use of a portion of this property as a school site. Tom Kohlsaas noted that he was representing the Board and that the Board has recommended that the area be dedicated under the Heritage Trust Program in order to protect the significant natural vegetation communities on the property. Mr. Kohlsaas discussed, in detail, the significance of this property and stated that the Board recommended that the area be kept in its natural state and the entire parcel be dedicated to



the Heritage Trust Program in perpetuity. Commissioner Harrelson noted that the Commission desires to cooperate with all agencies of state and local government, but we have a primary purpose to protect the environment and conserve wildlife for people and the future. As such, Commissioner Harrelson moved that based on the Heritage Trust information and the layout of the land that the Commission deny the request. Commissioner Shuler seconded the motion and it was adopted by the Commission. Chairman Edens advised the School Board members that this matter has been discussed a great deal and the Commission desires to cooperate whenever possible, but it is hoped they can understand why this decision was made. Mr. Salisbury thanked the Commission for their consideration of this request.

ITEM V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Federal Migratory Bird Regulations (Other than Ducks and Geese): Brock Conrad reported that these proposed seasons and regulations were mailed to the Commission (copy attached to original Commission Minutes). The dove season is standard as set by the Commission. This year, for the first time since 1948, we have the option of all day dove hunting. This is being recommended to the Commission. A nationwide survey on the percentage of doves nesting in September revealed that there is no significant difference in mortality of doves where there is September hunting compared to where there is no September hunting. Dr. Timmerman noted that we have tried to get the dove bag limit increased from 12 to 18. Other areas of the country have a bag limit of 10 and the federal government is considering standardizing the dove seasons and bag limits. As such, we may have to fight to keep our bag limit at 12. Dr. Timmerman also noted that other states are in favor of the full day of dove hunting. Mr. Conrad discussed the other regulations and seasons for marsh hens, gallinules, woodcock and common snipe. Following other discussion, Commissioner Stubbs moved that all the recommendations be adopted as submitted. Commissioner Owen seconded the motion and it was adopted by the Commission. Chairman Edens suggested that we issue a separate news release on this change in dove hunting ahead of the regular package. Dr. Timmerman stated that this release could also tell about our handouts on baiting.

B. Report on Santee Cooper Lakes Article: Chairman Edens noted that some recent articles have been published in Outdoor Life and in the State newspaper concerning the Santee Cooper Lakes. Due to the critical nature of these articles, Chairman Edens stated that he wanted to be sure we were doing our part on proper management. Chairman Edens asked the law enforcement and fisheries



staff to evaluate these articles and report on this. Chairman Edens stated that the staff did a good job of reporting on this and if the Commission feels it is appropriate, these reports will be sent to the authors of these articles. Pat Ryan went over his report noting that 635 cases were made on the lakes from July, 1979 to May, 1980. Mr. Ryan stated that he did not agree with all the articles as they were written from biased, fragmented information. Mr. Ryan noted that we have a good enforcement program around the lakes and the staff is adequate. Dr. Timmerman asked Mr. Ryan to send a copy of his report to all the Commissioners. Jeff Fuller presented his report and went over it with the Commission noting that we have a good record on fisheries work on the lakes. Chairman Edens noted that there is a lot of good information in these reports. This will be sent to the authors of these articles and let their conscience be their guide.

C. Division Reports

1. Administrative Services: Benny Reeves distributed a copy of the FY 1981-82 budget plan summary to the Commissioners for their information. A complete copy of the budget plan will be sent to the Commissioners. Dr. Timmerman asked Mr. Reeves to work with the Commission Finance Committee on this matter.

2. Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries: Jeff Fuller noted that about three years ago, a 3:00 p. m. closing on duck hunting was considered. The Department has introduced the mottled duck in the state and there is some confusion on identification of this species with the black duck and the possibility of closing some counties for mottled and black duck is being considered. Tommy Strange reported that we started bringing the mottled duck in the state in 1975. We are now getting reproduction and some protection is needed to provide a chance to reproduce. Consideration is being given to a 3-year closing on hunting mottled and black ducks in Georgetown, Charleston, and Colleton Counties. A recent survey indicates some interest in a 3:00 p. m. closing. This was presented as a matter of information as it will be handled at the next meeting. Chairman Edens asked that background information on these matters be sent to Commissioners Owen and Compton before the next meeting.

3. Law Enforcement & Boating: There was nothing further to report.

4. Information & Public Affairs: Sonny Baines passed out copies of the GMA and rules and regulations brochures which have been completed.



5. Marine Resources: Dr. Joseph noted that Commissioner Harrelson had asked about progress of the shrimp harvest. The average harvest over the last 20 years has been about 240,000 pounds and it was estimated that the harvest this year would be 250/300,000 pounds. Through the end of June, we can account for about 240,000 pounds harvested and it is believed the total harvest will be about 300,000 pounds. In terms of volume, the harvest looks good for the remainder of the season.

D. Advisory Board Reports:

1. Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries: There was no report from the Board this month.

2. Law Enforcement & Boating: Commissioner Shuler stated that the Board will meet in August.

3. Marine Resources: Commissioner Dawson stated that the Board will meet in August.

4. Heritage Trust: Dr. Timmerman stated the Board met prior to the last Commission meeting and a report was mailed out to the Commission.

E. Salary Review Committee: Dr. Timmerman noted that this report is in order and a copy has been sent to the Commission Chairman.

F. Appointments: Dr. Timmerman distributed a copy of the recommendations for appointments and re-appointments of Conservation Officers and Deputy Wildlife Conservation Officers (copy attached to original Commission Minutes). The Commission adopted motions to approve all appointments and re-appointments as recommended including the recommendation by staff not to appoint James M. Whitaker of Camden as a new DWCO. Dr. Timmerman noted that Mr. Whitaker will be given a chance for a hearing.

G. Other Remarks: With the appointment of two new Commissioners, Dr. Timmerman noted that several Commission committee appointments and the Vice-Chairman's position need to be filled. A listing of Commission committees and appointments was distributed to the Commissioners. Chairman Edens announced that this matter would be handled at the August Commission meeting. Chairman Edens asked that the biographical sketches on Commissioners Owen and Compton be sent out to the other Commission members.



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H. Time and Place of Next Meeting: Chairman Edens noted that it is helpful for the Commission to attend the budget hearing. Chairman Edens asked Dr. Timmerman to get a firm date for the budget hearing and the Commission will meet on that date in the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee Room.

ITEM VI. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the regular meeting, a motion was adopted to adjourn the regular meeting.

