

Minutes

Coastal Committee

2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, S.E.
Suite 1252 East Tower
Atlanta, GA 30334

September 26, 2012

Attending:

Committee Members

Phyllis Johnson, Chairman
Mark Smith, Vice Chairman
Duncan Johnson
Rob Leebern
Loyce Turner
Philip Wilheit, Jr.
Philip Watt, Board Chairman, ex-officio

Board Members

William Bagwell
Dennis Billew
Joe Hatfield
Walter Hudson
Mabel Jenkins
Ray Lambert
Mark Mobley
Steven Woodruff

Visitors

Bill Donohue, North Georgia Mountains Authority
Nancy Gallagher, Attorney General's Office
Bryan Tolar, Georgia Agribusiness Council
Ronny Just, Georgia Power
Chris Manganello, Georgia River Network
Walter Jones, Morris News Service
Amber Brady

Staff Members

Mark Williams
Jud Turner
Todd Holbrook
Homer Bryson
Spud Woodward
Dan Forster
Becky Kelley
Dave Crass
Kyle Pearson
Zachary Harris
Lauren Curry
Ben Stowers
David Brady
Walter Rabon
Jim Laine
Kathy Knowlton
Wally Woods
Paul Nelson
Tim Banks
Randy Tate
John Martin
Sally Winchester
Jeff Weaver
David Clark
Toby Evans
Bret Albanese
Fred Hay
Jim Ussery
Doralyn Kirkland
Doug Lewis
Cathy Barnette
Mary Ann Evans
Hellen Harris

The September 26, 2012 meeting of the Coastal Committee was called to order by Board Chairman Philip Watt.

Chairman Watt called on Phyllis Johnson, Chairman of the Coastal Committee. Mrs. Johnson called on Spud Woodward, Director of the Coastal Resources Division (CRD), to present an action item.

Director Woodward stated that he would present the proposed amendments to the Saltwater Fishing Regulations, Chapter 391-2-4. He further stated that CRD is proposing amendments to the Saltwater Fishing Regulations pursuant to House Bill 869, as signed into law by Governor Deal. He added that House Bill 869 moves the governance of many aspects of saltwater fisheries management from statute to regulation.

Director Woodward stated that the Board had been briefed in June regarding the proposed amendments, and only one written comment had been received during the 60-day comment period. He further stated that one public meeting was held which was attended by four individuals, and none of those individuals chose to make a formal comment.

Director Woodward further stated that in order to accomplish the transfer of authority from statute to regulation, five new rules and three amendments are necessary. He added that these changes will become effective January 1, 2013.

Director Woodward stated that the primary features of the proposed amendments are as follows:

- Create Rule 391-2-4-.01, Eel Fishing;
- Amend Rule 391-2-4-.02, Commercial Shad Fishing, to “Shad Fishing” and include recreational as well as commercial shad fishing;
- Amend Rule 391-2-4-.04, Saltwater Finfishing, to include all species of marine finfish previously managed by the Legislature;
- Amend Rule 391-2-4-.06, Bait Shrimping, to “Fishing for Shrimp for Recreational Purposes,” thereby allowing the Board of Natural Resources to manage most aspects of recreational shrimp fishing;
- Create Rule 391-2-4-.12, Lawful Fishing Methods and Gear, to regulate the recreational use of gigs and seines, and the commercial use of multiple gears;
- Create Rule 391-2-4-.13, Commercial Fishing for Catfish in Saltwater;
- Create Rule 391-2-4-.14, Shrimp Bait Dealers; and
- Create Rule 391-2-4-.15, Horseshoe Crabs.

Director Woodward stated that the proposed amendments will result in no changes to current recreational saltwater fishing regulations and only one change to commercial saltwater fishing regulations. He further stated that this change is an increase in the quantity of live bait shrimp that may be transported via vehicle between commercial bait shrimp dealers from 50 quarts to 200 quarts.

Director Woodward stated that he would request the Committee recommend the Board adopt the Resolution to approve the proposed amendments as presented.

A motion was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Leebern and carried unanimously that the Committee recommends that the Board adopt the Resolution to approve the proposed amendments to the Saltwater Fishing Regulations, Chapter 391-2-4, as presented. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part hereof)

Director Woodward called on Kathy Knowlton, Supervisor of the Fisheries Statistics Unit, for a briefing on the methods used to estimate recreational fishing catch and effort.

Ms. Knowlton stated that there are two basic methods for collecting data:

- Census – every participant provides data – commercial fisheries; and
- Survey – a portion or sample of participants provide data – recreational fisheries.

Ms. Knowlton stated that a sample can accurately reflect a much larger population if the sample is representative of the whole. She further stated that recreational fishing data is combined from two separate surveys to produce estimates of catch fish, effort, and participation.

Ms. Knowlton stated that the first survey used is a telephone survey, which is randomly conducted from coastal households. She further stated that in the future this method will be used less, due to the dwindling number of landline telephones in households. She added that in 2013, CRD will begin conducting interviews with anglers licensed for saltwater fishing to create a saltwater angler telephone book, which will likely use both telephone and mail surveys.

Ms. Knowlton stated that the second survey method is angler trip interviews, which are dockside interviews with anglers from the shore, their private boats and charter boats. She further stated that the types of questions asked are:

- Number of anglers;
- Hours spent fishing;
- General area fished;
- Species of fish targeted;
- Type and number of fish released; and

- Biological data from harvested fish.

Ms. Knowlton showed graphs with examples of how estimates are calculated.

Director Woodward gave an update on the Red Snapper harvest. He also gave an update on CoastFest, which will occur on October 6, and invited all Board members to attend.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.