

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

May 27, 2009

Attending:

Committee Members

Bill Archer, Chairman
Joe Hatfield
Ray Lambert
Bob Rutland
Jim Walters
Tom Wheeler
Bill Carruth, Board Chairman, ex-officio

Board Members

Jenny Lynn Bradley
Walter Hudson
Loyce Turner
Jim Tysinger
Philip Watt

Visitors

Ronny Just, Georgia Power
Bryan Tolar, Georgia Agribusiness Council
Debbie Phillips, GA Industry Environmental Coalition
Andy Fleming, Friends of Georgia State Parks
Kelly Jordan, The Georgia Conservancy
Mike Giles, Georgia Poultry Federation
Abit Massey, Georgia Poultry Federation
Laura Hartt, Upper Chattahoochee RiverKeeper
Shana Udvardy, The Georgia Conservancy
Kelly Clark, Office of Planning and Budget
Will Wingate, The Georgia Conservancy
Richard Steughton, GA Golf Superintendents Association
Jimmy Geter, GA Golf Superintendents Association
Mike Crawford, GA Golf Superintendents Association

Staff Members

Chris Clark
Paul Burkhalter
Todd Holbrook
Dan Forster
Marlin Gottschalk
Becky Kelley
Ray Luce
Steve Friedman
Linda MacGregor
John Bowers
Doralyn Kirkland
Jim Ussery
Dave Crass
Emily Hitchcock
Lauren Curry
Sarah Dearman
David Freedman
Becky Marshall
Bryan Alexander
Suzanne Burnes
Alice Keyes
Dianna Trettin
Dominic Weatherill
Mary Ann Evans
Hellen Harris

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George Martin, Georgia Power Company

Jeanette Gayer, Environment Georgia

Teresa Tamburello, Environment Georgia

Doug Fulle, Oglethorpe Power

Doug Miell, Georgia Chamber of Commerce

Katie Kirkpatrick, Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce

Jon Huffmaster, Georgia Farm Bureau

Tom Leslie, American Council of Engineers

Todd Edwards, Association County Commissioners of GA

The May 27, 2009 meeting of the Wildlife Resources Committee was called to order by Board Chairman Bill Carruth.

Chairman Carruth called on Bill Archer, Chairman of the Wildlife Resources Committee, who called on John Bowers, Assistant Chief of Game Management for presentation of the proposed amendments to the Hunting Regulations, Chapter 391-4-2; Firing Ranges, Rule 391-4-9-.02, and Public Fishing Areas, Rule 391-4-3-.09.

Mr. Bowers stated that the process of amending the Hunting Regulations began in January 2009, when eight public meetings were held around the state, allowing the public to provide input for consideration in the development of the Hunting Regulation proposals. He further stated that in February, Wildlife Resources Division (WRD) staff began assembling the package that was presented to the board at the March meeting. He added that three public hearings were held around the state, allowing the public to comment on whether or not they supported the proposed amendments.

Mr. Bowers stated that he would like to request approval of the proposed amendments to the Hunting Regulations as presented at the March meeting, which established hunting seasons for the next two years in response to calendar shifts; expands alligator and bear hunting opportunities; expands coyote and feral hog hunting opportunities on Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs); adjusts the timing, length and frequency of deer hunts on WMAs and State Parks to facilitate management objectives while meeting public desires; provides regulatory tools for minimizing user conflicts and facilitating compliance on WMAs; amends the Firing Range Rules to address various housekeeping corrections, reflect enhancements in target technology, and meet public desires; and amends Public Fishing Area Rules to provide flexibility to the Department to allow hunting, fishing and other departmentally-sponsored activities at specified time periods between sunset and sunrise.

A motion was made by Mr. Lambert, seconded by Mr. Walters and carried unanimously that the Committee recommends that the Board approve the proposed amendments to the Hunting Regulations, Chapter 391-4-2; Firing Ranges, Rule 391-4-9-.02, and Public Fishing Areas, Rule 391-4-3-.09. (Hunting Regulations attached hereto and made a part hereof)

Mr. Archer called on Dan Forster, Director of WRD for an update. Mr. Forster updated the Committee on the activities over the Memorial Day weekend. He stated that it was a fairly calm weekend, due to the inclement weather and that no boating fatalities or drowning incidents had been reported. He further stated that a total of 12 boating accidents had occurred with one serious injury reported.

Mr. Forster handed out a copy of an electronic newsletter from the Nongame Program and encouraged everyone to sign up to receive it. He further stated that on

May 16, an estimated crowd of 1,800 individuals visited the Charlie Elliott Center for annual J.A.K.E.S. (Juniors Acquiring Knowledge, Ethics, and Sportsmanship) event.

Mr. Forster updated the Committee on the status of EGAL (Electronic Georgia Licensing) system. He stated that WRD is in process of trying to identify counties who do not have licensed vendors and encourage them to get on board.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.