

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

January 24, 2012

Attending:

Committee Members

Joe Hatfield, Chairman
Mabel Jenkins
Duncan Johnson
Phyllis Johnson
Ray Lambert
Loyce Turner
Philip Watt, Board Chairman, ex-officio

Board Members

William Bagwell
Dennis Billew
Bill Carruth
Walter Hudson
Rob Leebern
Mark Smith
Jim Walters
Philip Wilheit
Steven Woodruff

Visitors

Ronny Just, Georgia Power
Debbie Phillips, Georgia Industry Environmental Coalition
Joseph Mendelson, Zoo Atlanta
Will Wingate, Georgia Conservancy
Leah Barnett, Georgia Conservancy
April Ingle, Georgia River Network
Chris Manganizno, Georgia River Network
Scott Tanner, Joe Tanner & Associates
Doug Fulle, Oglethorpe Power
Daniel Groce, Georgia Agribusiness Council
Bryan Tolar, Georgia Agribusiness Council
Mark Woodall, Sierra Club
Brant Lane, Consultant
Steven Hart, Attorney
Katie Kirkpatrick, Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce
Julie Cohen, Upper Chattahoochee RiverKeeper
Tas Smith, Georgia Farm Bureau
John Eberhart, Georgia Earth Alliance
Mike Giles & Abit Massey, Georgia Poultry Federation

Staff Members

Mark Williams
Judson Turner
Todd Holbrook
Spud Woodward
Dan Forster
Dave Crass
Becky Kelley
Kyle Pearson
Steve Friedman
Bryan Tucker
Mike Harris
Elizabeth Starkey
Jac Capp
Linda MacGregor
Mark Smith
Lauren Curry
Ben Stowers
Wally Woods
Paul Nelson
Jim Ussery
Doralyn Kirkland
Cathy Barnette
Thomas Floyd
Eddie Henderson
Mary Ann Evans
Hellen Harris

The January 24, 2012 meeting of the Wildlife Resources Committee was called to order by Board Chairman Philip Watt.

Chairman Watt called on Joe Hatfield, Vice Chairman of the Wildlife Resources Committee, who called on Mike Harris, Chief of Nongame Conservation Section, for presentation of an action item.

Mr. Harris stated that he would present the proposed Regulations for the Export, Farming and Sale of Native Fresh-Water Turtles, Chapter 391-4-16. He further stated that during the 2010 Legislative Session, the Georgia General Assembly passed O.C.G.A. Section 27-3-19.1, which authorized the Board of Natural Resources to regulate the export, farming and sale of native fresh-water turtles. He added that over the past 14 months, his staff has worked with a diverse group of stakeholders to develop regulations that balance the needs of conserving Georgia's fresh-water turtles and the turtle farming industry.

Mr. Harris stated that the proposals include regulations to define commercial activities related to fresh-water turtles, specify unlawful activities, establish permits, establish limits, and set forth requirements for turtle farms, and for reporting. He further stated that the proposals were given widespread distribution and that a public hearing was held on January 5, 2012, to receive comments.

Mr. Harris stated that he would like to request the Committee recommend that the Board approve this item as presented.

Mr. Hatfield called on Will Wingate, Vice President of Advocacy and Land Conservation for the Georgia Conservancy, who stated the Conservancy's support for the Regulations as presented.

Mr. Hatfield called on Dr. Joseph Mendelson, Research Curator for Amphibians and Reptiles for Zoo Atlanta, who stated Zoo Atlanta's support for the Regulations as presented.

A motion was made by Mrs. Jenkins, seconded by Mr. Johnson and carried unanimously that the Committee recommends that the Board approve the proposed Regulations for the Export, Farming and Sale of Native Fresh-Water Turtles, Chapter 391-4-16, as presented. (Copy of Regulations attached hereto and made a part hereof)

Commissioner Williams thanked Mr. Harris for his diligence and hard work in preparing the Regulations for presentation.

Mr. Hatfield called on Elizabeth Starkey, Communications/Marketing Manager, who presented a PowerPoint on Digital Communications and demonstrated how to sign up for these communications.

Director Forster gave a briefing on Nongame wildlife Conservation and Wildlife Habitat Acquisition fund (hand out given – attached hereto and made a part hereof), Weekend for Wildlife, one-day and annual fees collected on selected Wildlife Management Areas (WMA's), Boat Registration transition to the Department of Revenue on July 1, 2012, Evans County Public Fishing Area (PFA) dyke renovation, Shooting Sports Partnership with Georgia Southern University, and distributed the new Sport Fishing Regulations.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.