

Minutes
Wildlife Resources Committee
A.W. Jones Heritage Center
610 Beachview Drive
St. Simon's Island, GA 31522

February 6, 2015

Attending:

Committee Members

Dee Yancey, Chairman
William Bagwell
Dwight Davis
Dwight Evans
Rob Leebern
Aaron McWhorter
Philip Watt
Philip Wilheit
Ray Lambert, Board Chair, ex-officio

Board Members

Nancy Addison
Duncan Johnson, Jr.
Bill Jones
Mike Phelps
Paul Shailendra
Bodine Sinyard
Brother Stewart

Visitors

Monica Smith
James Holland
Megan Desrosiers, One Hundred Miles
M.K. Boyd
Janice Browning
Mimi Waite
Ronny Just, Georgia Power

Staff Members

Mark Williams
Jud Turner
Homer Bryson
Dan Forster
Eddie Henderson
Spud Woodward
Steve Friedman
Kyle Pearson
Mary Kathryn Yearta
Cathy Barnette
Taylor Brown
Zachary Harris
Mary Walker
Trip Addison
John Bowers
Jeff Cown
Stephen Adams
Jeff Weaver
Walter Rabon
Keith Bentley
Dough Haymans
Bert Langley

The February 6, 2015 meeting of the Wildlife Resources Committee was called to order by Chairman Ray Lambert.

Chairman Lambert called on Dee Yancey, Chairman of the Wildlife Resources Committee, who called on John Bowers, Chief of Game Management, to give an update and review of the Alligator Management Plan.

Mr. Bowers stated the purpose of the Alligator Management Program is to ensure the long-term conservation of Georgia's alligator population while providing sustainable harvest and other recreation opportunities, promoting its value to wetland ecosystems, and minimizing conflicts.

Mr. Bowers gave an overview of the anticipated quota changes throughout the state. He stated quota increases are anticipated in Zones 2, 5, 7 and 8 where data indicates healthy populations and increasing trends; Zones 2, 4, and 9 have seen stable trends in alligator populations and anticipate no quota changes; and Zone 6 anticipates a decreasing quota due to data indicating a declining trend.

Mr. Bowers stated Zone 1's alligator population is a shared resource with the state of Alabama. He further stated Lake Walter A. George is located in Zone 1 which is managed jointly with Alabama.

Discussion ensued concerning the population surveys of alligators on public and private land.

Mr. Sinyard asked Mr. Bowers to explain the success rate of newborn alligators. Mr. Bowers stated the nesting rate is 70% but the survival rate is much lower and most do not survive.

Mr. Leebern asked Mr. Bowers to comment on the increasing number of alligator tag applications in recent years.

Mr. Bowers stated 12,000 applications were received making alligator hunting the fastest growing hunting opportunity in our state. He further stated alligator hunting is popular because it is a social group activity that many see as a team sport.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.