

New York State FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD



Statewide Fish and Wildlife Management Board Meeting

September 16-17, 2019
White Eagle Conference Center
Hamilton, New York

10:10 Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance (led by Robert Hodorowski)

Roll Call and Introductions

Fish and Wildlife Management Board Members Present:

Bill Conners ^{1,4}	Region 3	FWMB to Conservation Fund Advisory Board
David McLean	Region 4	Sportsmen Representative
Richard Steele	Region 4	Legislative Representative
Robert Hodorowski	Region 5	Sportsmen Representative
Jackie Mahoney	Region 6	Landowner Representative
Walt Paul ⁴	Region 6	Sportsmen Representative
Jim Petreszyn ^{2,4}	Region 7	Legislative Representative
Stephen Wowelko	Region 7	Sportsmen Representative
Tom Grasek	Region 8	Sportsmen Representative (Alt.)
Tom Ryan	Region 8	Sportsman Representative
Matt Foe ⁴	Region 9	Landowner Representative
Dan Tone	Region 9	NYSCC Representative
Zen Olow ⁴	Region 9	Sportsman Representative
Paul Curtis	Cornell	Cornell University Advisor to FWMB
Conrad Strozik		Isaac Walton League NYS Region

¹Statewide FWMB Chair

²Statewide FWMB Vice-Chair

³Statewide FWMB Secretary

⁴Statewide FWMB Executive Committee

Guests and Presenters:

Mark Rogers

NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historical Preservation

Tony Wilkinson	NYSDEC – Fish and Wildlife CO
Stephen Hurst	NYSDEC – Fish and Wildlife CO
Douglas Stang	NYSDEC – Fish and Wildlife CO
Jim Farquhar	NYSDEC – Fish and Wildlife CO
Justin Perry	NYSDEC – Lands and Forests CO
Richard Pendleton	NYSDEC – Region 6, Hudson River Unit
Krysten Schuler	Cornell University
Jackie Frair	SUNY – College of Environmental Science and Forestry

Several Regional, NYSCC, and CFAB reports were available to meeting participants and are attached to the meeting notes

Updates, Discussions and Presentations

Tony Wilkinson, Director DEC's Division of Fish and Wildlife addressed the group

Prevention of introduction and spread of CWD in New York remains a priority of focused effort. CWD Risk Management Plan:

https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/wildlife_pdf/cwdpreventionplan2018.pdf

DEC has proposed amended regulations pertaining to deer feeding and CWD available for public comment:

Several FWMB voiced support for including a prohibition on use of natural deer urine as part of the proposed regulation changes.

Motion: Draft a letter in support of DEC's proposed amendments to CWD regulations and submit during public comment period and draft a letter to deer urine / scent manufacturers to cease production of natural urine-based scents and promote synthetic scents.

Motion - Dave McLean, 2nd – Tom Ryan, motion passed unanimously

Action: Jim Petreszyn to draft letter re: DEC proposed regulation amendments and Bill Conners to draft letter to manufacturers. FWMB Executive Committee to approve drafts prior to sending letters.

Central Office and region 7 DEC staff are working together to get Cortland Waterworks into compliance with issued captive deer permit.

New DEC staff: Amanda Bailey wildlife biologist for small game and furbearers

DEC Special Licenses Unit receiving many, many calls for expanded use of crossbows during entire archery season by those that cannot draw and hold a longbow (compound bow).

DFW will be holding another Hunter Education training Class for DEC Executive staff and NYS legislative staff

DFW considering expanded focus on access to private lands for hunting, fishing, and trapping

- More than 20 states have private lands access programs – some pay landowners, some programs have been around for more than 70 years
- Suggestion to include access for hunting as part of revised 480-a program
- Suggestion to provide tax break to landowners that allow access to lands
- Concern over landowner liability even with the General obligations Law due to frivolous lawsuits

Dr. Krysten Schuler – School of Veterinary Medicine, Cornell University – CWD Update

(please see slide deck presentation for greater detail)

- CWD has expanded in range and intensity during past 20 years
- Hunters hunting in CWD-prevalent area in Wisconsin come from all across the United States
- Evidence suggests increasing prevalence of CWD in adult males and even more pronounced in older bucks
- DEC remains vigilant with its testing and monitoring program and New York remains only state / province to have eliminated CWD once found in the wild
- Hunters and generally supportive of and comply with natural urine bans
- Economic value of wild deer (\$1.5 B) dwarfs that of captive cervids (\$13.5 M)

Dr. Jacqui Frair – SUNY – Environmental Science and Forestry – Status of Otters

(please see slide deck presentation for greater detail)

- Historically, otters found in every New York watershed, but by mid 1900's they were only found in the Adirondacks / northern New York and the Hudson Valley / Catskills
- Translocations occurred 1995 – 2000 into area of New York that were otters were “functionally extinct” (the recovery zone)

- Estimated abundance of otters in the recovery zone “not different” from the southern zone
- Otter population has expanded within the recovery zone with increasing measures (sightings) and probabilities of colonization
- Otter evidence is positively correlated with undeveloped shoreline and negatively correlated with road density

James Farquhar, Chief of Wildlife – Wildlife Management Area Uses and potential amendments to 6 NYCRR Part 51(Public Use of State Wildlife Management Areas)

- DEC developing amendments to regulations pertaining to public use on Wildlife Management Areas that is consistent with current guidance:
https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/wildlife_pdf/publicuseofwmas.pdf
- Proposed changes include: definitions, parking restrictions / descriptions, allowance for tree stands and hunting blinds to remain during the season, target shooting prohibited except where specifically allowed, snowmobiles on connector trails

Brief discussion on New York AG policy re: acquiring lands from others (e.g. counties) that were acquired via sale for taxes or tax foreclosures

Action Item: FWMB Executive Committee meet with DEC Commissioner Basil Seggos to discuss level of access New York State purchases on easements compared to the level of access afforded via recreation plans and receive the list / time schedule for development of the remaining recreational management plans.

Doug Stang, Assistant Director DEC’s Division of Fish and Wildlife – administrative updates

(please see slide deck presentation for greater detail)

DFW current permanent staff stands at 340 positions with approval to move forward and fill an additional 16 positions

2019-20 Operating Budget and funding sources - Division of Fish and Wildlife (not including permanent staff):

- Environmental Protection Fund – Stewardship (maintenance) - \$1.23 M
- Environmental Protection Fund – Stewardship (projects) - \$3.43 M
- Capital (New York Works) - \$8.25 M
- General Fund - \$4.47 M
- Conservation Fund - \$4.96 M

- Federal Aid
 - o Wildlife Restoration - \$22.6 M
 - o Sport Fish Restoration - \$4.5 M
 - o State Wildlife Grants - \$2.2 M

Wildlife Management Area Acquisition (past 5 years):

- Acquired 48 parcels totaling 3,506 acres
- Added to 12 different WMAs
- Acquired 2 new WMAs
- Currently in contract process:
 - o 57 additional parcels totaling approximately 5,815 acres
 - o Adding to 3 WMAs
 - o Acquiring another new WMA

Promotion of Habitat / Access Stamp has significantly increased H/A Stamp sales

- Pins were available in 2019 moose at the State Fair
- Three “retro pins” – sturgeon, spotted turtle, and red fox were produced to boost sales in 2019 – purchasers at the Fair could select a pin for each H/A stamp purchased
 - o Sets of 11 pins were provided purchases of 10 H/A stamps
 - o H/A stamp purchasers are placed into a drawing for plushy moose
- Holiday promotion planned again for 2019
- Through first month of sales – 31% increase compared to 2018

Young Forest Initiative (YFI)

- 47 Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) have approved habitat management plans
- 7 WMAs have draft plans pending approval
- 15 WMAs have plans in draft
- 35 Public meetings held to date (covering 37 WMAs)
- Inventories have been completed on 75 (82%) of the WMAs totaling 155,050 acres (78% of acreage) of WMA
- 38 projects completed to date – 1,124 acres
- 38 more projects (1,856 acres) planned but not under contract
- 30 more projects (1,285 acres) with contracts in place or part of workplan
- Updates on effort: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/104218.html>
- Wildlife response to young forest initiative: https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/wildlife_pdf/yfirepcard.pdf

Richard Pendleton, DEC Hudson River Fisheries Unit – Asian carp

(please see slide deck presentation for greater detail)

Environmental and economic impacts (damage and control costs) of aquatic invasive species in New York Canal and Hudson River systems - \$408 M

Asian carp made up of four species (Bighead carp, Grass carp, Black carp, Silver carp) but “bigheaded” carp (Bighead carp and Silver carp) are most problematic to date

- Rapid growth (11.8 inches in first year)
- Early maturation (approx. 2 years)
- High fecundity (5 million eggs / year)
- Filter feeders that change zooplankton community which has trickle down / up effect to impact entire food web and fish community (biomass change and displaced native fish species)

Round goby – first discovered in Great Lakes system in 1990, rapid expansion through entire Great Lakes system and into Mississippi River system in 25 years

Non-native invaders in New York

- Great Lakes – 187 species
- St. Lawrence River – 87 species
- Lake Champlain – 50 species
- Hudson River – 122 species

Actions

- No action – competing views, no money, no risk reduction
- Non-structural control – monitoring, mechanical removal, pesticides, herbicides, education = allows flow of traffic, limited risk reduction
- Barriers – many options, expensive, slows traffic = not 100% effective
- Hydrologic separation – re-establishes natural watershed, expensive, low maintenance, requires facilities for passage, high cost = approx. 100% risk reduction

PREVENTION is far cheaper, more cost effective than management / control once established

Justin Perry, Chief of Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health – Aquatic Invasive Species

(please see slide deck presentation for greater detail)

New York has:

- Invasive Species Comprehensive Management Plan:
 - https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/lands_forests_pdf/iscmpfinal.pdf
 - o Build partnerships
 - o Centralized framework
 - o Set priorities for management and preparedness
 - o Improve response
 - https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/lands_forests_pdf/isrrprogrampolicy.pdf
 - o Evaluate success
 - o Recover ecosystem resilience
- Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan:
 - https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/fish_marine_pdf/nysaisplan15.pdf
 - o Focus on prevention – expand boat steward program and make program consistent statewide (WISPA)
 - Now at more than 250 locations in New York
 - Data standardization and centralized database of watercraft inspection program
 - Visualization of waterbodies “connected” by boaters – evaluate risk
 - 232,244 records collected to date
 - 11,442 records with organisms detected
 - Goal – OUTREACH and EARLY DETECTION
- Control and Management
 - o Case by case basis
 - o NYSDEC rapid response policy guidelines
 - o Species and region determine response team
 - o Resource dependent
- Research
 - o Biocontrol (water chestnut, phragmites)
 - o eDNA
- Invasive Species Grants
- Region Panels of the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force (federal)
 - o New York included in: Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, and Great Lakes panels
- iMapInvasives: <https://www.nyimapinvasives.org/>

Need to ramp up outreach efforts to foster more “top of mind” campaign re: invasive species prevention

Expand message to include non-motorized watercraft (canoes, kayaks)

Steve Hurst, Chief of Fisheries – Update from Bureau of Fisheries and stream access project

Fishing Access Initiative – joint effort with Regional FWMBs

(please see handout for greater detail - attached):

Not much progress to date with the trout stream access initiative collaborative effort between DEC and FWMA

- By October 15th - each regional FWMA Board will identify and provide to FWMB Chair – County in their respective Region to work in and County Representative (point of contact) for the effort

Trout Stream Management Plan

- 10 public meeting across New York to discuss the elements of the plan beginning October 1st
- Wild stream reached (approx. 40 lbs. / acre trout abundance) – will not be stocked
- Stocked Stream reaches – may have some wild trout
 - o Categories of management (varying intensities, varying regulations)
 - o Currently 26 different regulations on trout streams – to be reduced to 8 different regulations
 - o Trying to improve the strain of trout raised in DEC hatcheries and stocked to foster survival and contribution to recreational fishing opportunity
 - o December 31, 2019 – present the tenets of the plan

Stream Habitat Management, Restoration, Improvement seems to be a priority for many trout stream anglers

- 2019 projects on Oatka Creek and Chittenango Creek

New fisheries biologist hired to focus on Lake Champlain – Nicole Balk

Concerns voiced about impact of wind turbines on Lake Erie – where, when, scope, and scale of the proposed development

Next statewide FWMA Board meeting: April 2-3, 2020 – White Eagle Conference Center

Agenda items:

- Follow-up on Action items
- Follow-up on stream access initiative
- Election of Officers

Meeting Adjournment –Approval

- Motion to adjourn – Tom Ryan
- Second – Zen Olow
- Motion carried unanimously

New York State FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD

625 Broadway
Albany, New York 12233



State FWMB Fall Agenda 2019 (DRAFT)

Monday, Sept. 16 10am—Noon

Tony Wilkinson Dir DFW, “Walk-in Hunting”

Doug Stang - Department Report, etc.

Monday, Sept. 16 1pm— 5pm

Jacqui Frair – SUNY ESF

Otter Status

State land Acquisition Policy - Discussion

Krysten Schuler – SUNY ESF

CWD / Artificial attractants

Renewed Vision - Board Discussion

Tuesday, Sept. 17 8am—Noon

Steve Hurst – Bureau Chief—Fisheries

Inland Trout Stream Mgmt

Rick Pendleton – Fisheries Biologist, Hudson River Estuary Program/Cornell University

Asian Carp

Justin Perry - Bureau Chief—Invasive Species

AIS = Statewide Response

Jim Farquahr, Bureau Chief—Wildlife

WMA Use Policy – Part 51 Discussion

Election – Nominating Committee

Board Wrap-up

Adjourn

MEMBERS: Representatives of County Boards of Supervisors/County Legislators, Landowners and Sportsmen.

ADVISORY MEMBERS: New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, New York State Conservation Council, Inc., New York Farm Bureau, New York State Pomona Grange, New York State Forest Practice Board, New York State Izaak Walton League, New York State Soil and Water Conservation Committee, New York State College of Environmental Science and Forestry at Syracuse University, New York State College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell University.

Statement of Shared Interest:

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the Fish and Wildlife Management Board (FWMB) have a common interest in enhancing opportunities for the public to enjoy the State's freshwater fisheries accessed via private lands. It is consistent with the purpose of the FWMB and beneficial to the angling public to increase fishing access to waters on privately-held lands and ensure that waters stocked by DEC are open to the public in a non-discriminatory fashion.

Environmental Conservation Law § 11-0501. Fish and wildlife management practices cooperative program.

1. Purpose.

The cooperative program provided in this section is authorized for the purpose of obtaining on the privately owned or leased lands and waters of the state practices of fish and wildlife management which will preserve and develop the fish and wildlife resources of the state and improve access to them for recreational purposes by the people of the state.

Need:

1. DEC possesses nearly 1,300 miles of public fishing rights (PFR) easements on more than 400 streams across the state. Unfortunately, some of these easements lack corresponding parking areas and easements for ingress/egress to the streams, therein impeding the actual use of these lands for their intended purposes. However, opportunities may now exist to secure access from the road to the riparian corridor. Exploring the potential for expanded access to and additional parking for currently held easements is needed to realize the full value of PFRs.
2. DEC currently stocks fish in rivers and streams without PFR when landowners informally agree to allow public fishing access. These agreements rely on compliance through trust to ensure that the resource is accessible to all that want to fish. Additionally, many of these waters lack signage identifying that public fishing is permissible, which may unintentionally curtail use by uninformed anglers. Responsible use of the public's resource dictates that we provide a measure of assurance that privately-held lands that receive stocked fish are publicly accessible and that access is easily recognized through signage or other means.

Approach: DEC will employ the assistance of Regional FWMBs to:

Task 1: Contact current landowners that have existing PFR easements to determine if they are interested in providing:

- a. Ingress/egress where it is now lacking;
- b. New easements or property for sale, or an expansion of existing easements for vehicle parking; and
- c. Additional PFR easements on existing agreements to expand angler access to additional streams/rivers miles.

Task 2: Contact landowners that provide informal access to DEC-stocked waters to determine if they:

- d. Allow public fishing, and, if so,
- e. Will allow signs to be posted indicating that fishing is permissible and post these signs as applicable.

Note: In the near future, DEC intends to develop a map of informal access sites that are privately held and make this information available through the DEC website and other avenues to help ensure that the public is adequately informed of the fishing opportunities available.

Scope and Scale:

This initiative will be focused on streams and rivers in DEC Regions 3-9. During FY 2019, Regional FWMBs will address both tasks 1 and 2 for one county in each of the 7 Regions.

Desired Outcomes:

- Foster a working relationship between DEC staff and FWMB members.
- Improve angler access to rivers and streams.
- Ensure fish stocked on private lands deemed accessible are available to the public

Process and Timeline:

- **April.** Regional Fish and Wildlife Management Board selects a county to assess.
- **April.** Central Office Fisheries staff develop standardized forms for:
 - PFR landowner interviews;
 - Private landowner interviews; and
 - Maps of stocking sites on privately held lands.
- **May.** FWMB representative(s) and Regional Fisheries Manager (RFM) meet to discuss:
 - Waters in the selected county,
 - Priority needs regarding expanded PFR or access to PFRs

The RFM will provide the FWMB representative with:

- Maps of existing PFRs; needs for enhanced ingress/egress, parking, and/or expansion, as identified above; and forms to be filled out during the interview process.
- Maps of stocking sites on privately held lands.
- Forms that will be used to document interviews with landowners

Note: The FWMB representative will be responsible for obtaining the name, address and phone number of the landowner(s). Most counties have up to date information regarding landownership on GIS. The FWMB representative can also work with his or her FWMB Legislative Representative to get the information for the county of concern.

- **June – August**
 - Regional FWMB representative(s) contact current holders of PFR for selected counties and ascertain if the potential exists for enhanced access.
 - Regional FWMB representatives contact current landowners that allow for public access to verify that access and if they are agreeable, post signs indicating such.
 - Late August - Regional FWMB representative meets with RFM to discuss outcomes of interview processes.

- **September**
 - Early-Sept.- RFM sends copies of the interviews to Central Office Fisheries for compilation.
 - Early-Sept.- RFMs and Central Office staff hold a conference call to discuss outcomes and relative success of the initiative and how it may be improved.
 - Mid-Sept.- Results will be discussed at the Fall Meeting of the State FWMB (September 16 & 17).

- **October**
 - The Bureau of Fisheries will decide whether to continue the initiative based on the effort and outcome.
 - RFMs begin the process of acquiring additional access with interested landowners.
 - RFMs make adjustments to stocking policies

- **November - December**
 - RFMs begin the process of acquiring additional access with interested landowners.
 - RFMs make adjustments to stocking policies where access no longer exists

- **March**
 - DEC and FWMB discuss / plan efforts for the upcoming year at the Spring Meeting of the State FWMB

REGION 3 FWMB
c/o Nathan Ermer
NYSDEC
21 South Putt Corners Rd.
New Paltz, NY 12561
(845) 256-3047

**New York State
FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD**



Region 3 Fish and Wildlife Management Board

September 2019 State Board Report

NYS Public Fishing Rights Access Improvement Project

Region 3 board members are discussing and undertaking a project that will target areas where the state owns the public fishing rights (PFR) on streams, but the PFR is either inaccessible or access is difficult. Additionally, the project will identify locations where fish stocking (state or local) currently takes place but there are no formal agreements in place to permanently allow public fishing access. Board members will work with DEC regional fisheries staff to initiate conversations with landowners in strategic locations to improve public access to fisheries resources. The project will start in Dutchess County with the goal of expanding to a new county every calendar year.

Hunting and Fishing Access on New York City Department of Environmental Protection Lands

Region 3 board members are actively engaged with NYC DEP regarding public hunting and fishing access on DEP's watershed protection lands and water supply reservoirs. Representatives from DEP continue to attend all Region 3 Board meetings to provide comprehensive recreational access updates. Board members have provided DEP staff with input on the recent update of the DEP recreational access rules.

Young Forest Habitat Management

The Region 3 Board continues to discuss the importance of young forest management on private and public lands in the region. Kaylee Resha, habitat management specialist with the National Wild Turkey Federation, attended the June 2019 regional board meeting to discuss her continuing efforts to encourage young forest creation on private lands. Ms. Resha again provided information on the financial incentives available to landowners through the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to implement young forest management and reported that her coverage area has expanded to six additional counties.

Respectfully submitted,

Handwritten signature of Nathan Ermer.

Nathan Ermer, Secretary
Region 3 FWMA Board

NME/adm
Attachments

MEMBERS: Representatives of County Boards of Supervisors/County Legislators, Landowners and Sportsmen

ADVISORY MEMBERS: New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, New York State Conservation Council, Inc., Farm Bureau of New York, New York State Grange, New York State Forest Practice Board, Izaak Walton League of America, New York State Division, New York State Soil and Water Conservation Committee, New York State College of Environmental Science and Forestry, New York State College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell University.

New York State FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD Region 7 Fish and Wildlife



September 16, 2019

The Region 7 FWMB Board held meetings in December 2018, February, April, June and August 2019.

The following is the list of new Officers for 2019:

Stephen Wowelko, Chairman

Jim Petreszyn, Vice Chairman

Jim Corbet, Secretary

State FWMB Sportsman's Rep - Stephen Wowelko, Alternate Sportsman's Rep - Tim Evans

State FWMB Legislative Rep - Jim Petreszyn, Alternate Legislative Rep - Dale Weston

State FWMB Landowner Rep - Pete Walrod

- The R7 Board continues to work with the DEC, gives input and receive updates on progress on the following public access fishing projects that are scheduled to be completed in the Fall of 2019:

Cleaveland Dock

Otisco Lake boat launch

Mud Lock Dock

Onondaga Lake – Seneca River boat launch

Onondaga Lake – Honeywell welcome center boat launch.

- The board is actively working with the DEC on Fishing Access Initiative and talking to landowners about acquiring Public Fishing Rights on area streams. Also involved with the Habitat Partner project.

- R7 Board members attended meetings and sent a letter to the OPRHP Planning Bureau on the Master Plan/ Master Plan Addendum for Green Lakes State Park:

The R7 FWMB would like to see the additional recreational activity of hunting added to the opportunities offered at Green Lakes State Park.

The FBMB feels that this newly acquired portion of the Green Lakes State Park would be an excellent area to include the recreational activity of hunting. The addition of hunting would also

promote good wildlife and habitat management, in an area where these types of management are desperately needed.

- The R7 Board sent a letter to R7 Director Mathew Marko and also met with him about the Letter of Violation to Pulaski-Boylston Snowmobile Club asking the rationale for sending a Letter of Violation instead of sending a Notice of Violation. They were also interested in why the Army Core of Engineers was not copied on the Letter of Violation.

- The R7 Board sent a letter to Oswego County requesting information on Environmental Conservation Law infractions occurring on the Little John Wildlife Management a NYS DEC property located in Oswego County. The violations included the placement of fill in a NYS DEC Freshwater Wetland (DEC Worth Center #10) as well as the wetland adjacent area and the disturbance of a protected classified trout stream, Beaver Creek.

The R7 FWMB's understanding is the violations occurred when a snowmobile club placed a steel and wooden structure in the stream and wetland as a part of a State funded Snowmobile Corridor Trail, C-5A maintained by the Pulaski-Boylston Snowmobile Club. The R7 FWMB has begun to investigate how these violations occurred and is now formally requesting through the Freedom of Information the following:

- SEQRA Determination made by Oswego County for C-5A as part of the 2018-2019 Grant Documentation Grant-in-Aid Program Prior Approval Application Phase I application, and;
- The SEQRA Significance of Findings determination submitted with Oswego County's 2018- Grant-in-Aid Program Phase II application, as well as,
- The 2018-2019 Grant Documentation Grant-in-Aid Program Local Sponsor Signature Form, pages 33-35 of the Phase II application.

- The R7 Board sent a letter to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service about Steward Selection for managing properties in the Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration Projects for Onondaga Lake.

The Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan Projects for Onondaga Lake require the trustees to determine long-term management of the properties within the plan by selecting organizations to act as land stewards.

Some of the land parcels that will be under steward management include the Hudson Farms (217 acres of habitat protected) and Tully Recreational Area and Nature Preserve (1,023 acres of habitat protected).

At a meeting of the board ... the members unanimously voted to urge that you select stewards that practiced conservation - the wise use of our natural resources including hunting, fishing and trapping and that these activities be included in their management plans of the aforementioned properties.



CFAB Report to state Fish and Wildlife Management Board
September 16-17, 2019
White Eagle Conference Center - Hamilton, NY

- Kicked off 2019 with first of several discussions regarding ECO/Ranger Job Classification issue. CFAB was informed by Exec. Dep. Commissioner Ken Lynch that there is no plan to merge DLE with DFP. CFAB members expressed and continue to express concerns about internal tension the issue is creating within both Divisions.
- CFAB monitored budget process for impacts to open DFW position. At that time 12 position were identified as Critical Fills: 4 central office, 3 regional, 5 hatchery.
- Work progressing with hatchery alarm systems to avoid repeat of the Adirondack Hatchery failure resulting in loss of landlocked salmon..
- Next DLE/DFP academy may start in May with 42 ECOs and 14 Rangers slated for training
- CFAB started the year again pressing executive and legislative branches to fill the long-open Region three CFAB Representative. Despite Board's efforts, there has been no movement and as of this date (June) the position remains open. Hopefully the candidate will not lose interest, he is highly qualified.
- February saw continued movement towards May Academy. Academy did start in June.
- Increased concern about possible Conservation Fund (CF) crossover. In February it was likely that by mid-summer, the CF would start operating in the black. Eventually Budget Office moved ECO positions back to General Fund and crisis was averted.

- During March meeting EXEC. Dep. Commissioner Ken Lynch announced that he would be leaving DEC.
- Division of Land and Forests informed CFAB that there would be improved and earlier involvement of both CFAB and FWMB in the Conservation Easement and Fee Acquisition process.
- Discussions were held regarding DECALS replacement. Current timeline will have new system coming online in June of 2020.
- Bureau of Fisheries revised Great Lakes Fishing Regulations and kicked off process to develop updated trout stream management plan, including updated classifications for trout streams and updated trout stocking plan.
- Prior to start of May academy there were 48 DLE vacancies and only 42 slots available for ECOs in the scheduled academy.
- Board and DFW had discussions regarding allowable uses of WMAs.
- Department Bill this legislative session DID NOT include Universal Youth (12-year old) Hunting.
- Board continued to work with Comptroller and Legislature to improve investment portfolio for Lifetime License Account.
- May Mtg: Lucretia Paulsen has new duties and will no longer serve as CFAB Board Secretary. Ashley Ferrusi takes over her duties. Board thanked Lu for her exemplary service and support.
- DLE reported there were no HRSIs during Youth Spring Turkey Hunt.
- New York Works IV: \$8.25 million earmarked for DFW. Salmon River Hatchery will receive \$5.25 of the allocation for improvements.
- Discussion with DLE regarding ATV use on state lands. Expanded discussions needed with DLF staff.

- The new vendor selected for development of automated license sales system. The selected vendor (Kalkomey) has previous experience with such systems (prerequisite for bidding). Kalkomey is a solutions company. Visit their website at: kalkomey.com
- Young Forest Initiative continues to progress. Mid-year report showed 39 projects underway covering 2,000+/- WMA acres. Board suggested signage on WMAs to inform public that funding for YFI is in part from sale of H/A Stamps.
- Harvest contracts yielded \$2.6 million over the last 4 years. Revenue goes to Conservation Fund.
- Academy in May started with 42 ECO candidates. By June, attrition had trimmed ranks to just 30 ECO recruits (Division Director Bernie Rivers).
- An outbreak of Avian Cholera was detected at Reynolds Game Farm. Staff were able to quickly contain the problem and loss of birds was “minimal” as reported by Bureau of Wildlife Chief Jim Farquhar.
- Board members expressed concern about the [possible] loss of federal funding (\$600,000) because the contract for much needed SAFE Boat has not been approved. We have been told that the contract is being held up by the Budget Office.
- Graduation for ECO and Forest Ranger recruits is scheduled for December.
- Kelly Turturro formerly Director of Region 3 (2017) has been appointed Acting Executive Deputy Commissioner, replacing Ken Lynch.
- Anthony Kordziel, candidate for Region 3 Representative to CFAB, has still not been appointed by the Assembly Majority. Board members have brought the situation to the attention of Assembly members in their home district, DEC Senior Staff, the Governor’s Office and virtually anyone who will listen. Stakeholders in Region 3 are under-represented at this time. The position has been vacant since the resignation of Dominick Scarzafava (health issues) of Orange County in December 2016.

- The entire board remains frustrated by the lack of movement on sporting issues in the Legislature. The outlook for the 2020 session is no brighter than 2019.
- New Regulations promulgated for CWD and Deer Feeding. It is imperative that CWD be held at bay **OUTSIDE** of New York State borders.

Summary

Obviously, the overriding issue being continuously addressed by CFAB remains the solvency of the Conservation Fund and of course, lagging license sales. Month to month, and season to season, sales are slowing in spite of an occasional uptick. New sources of revenue must be found and that of course will require the support of the Governor and the Legislature to be able to tap into them should opportunities surface.

It would be impossible to collect in this report all the issues and the depth of the discussions reported here. Moving forward, I believe that an executive summary from each CFAB meeting should be distributed to FWMB. Feel free to review each summary and direct questions you may have to me or whomever is your Regional Representative to CFAB.

CFAB meeting minutes and other CFAB communications are posted to the DEC website. The postings are current and available to the public. If you have any questions you may contact me (or the current Representative). My contact information is: 845-635-1606 or via email at: conners@billconners.net.

On the DEC website, the minutes can be found at: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/about/719.html>

Yours in Conservation,

Bill Connors