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

April 26, 2017

Attending:

Committee Members
Aaron McWhorter, Chairman
Dwight Evans, Vice Chairman
William Bagwell
Ray Lambert
Mark Mobley
Paul Shailendra
Miki Thomaston
Philip Watt
Philip Wilheit
Duncan Johnson, Jr., Board Chairman, Ex-Officio

Board Members
Bill Jones
Mike Phelps
Rob Leebern
Bodine Sinyard
Brother Stewart
Dee Yancey

Guests
Bill Hodges, Hodges, Harbin, Newberry & Tribble
Chris Manganiello, Chattahoochee Riverkeeper
Ronny Just, Georgia Power
Bryan Tolar, GA Agribusiness Council
Hunter Loggins, GA Agribusiness Council
Harold Reheis, Joe Tanner & Associates
Scott Tanner, Joe Tanner & Associates

Staff Members
Mark Williams
Walter Rabon
Terry West
Kyle Pearson
Melanie Johnson
Cathy Barnette
Amber Carter
Dave Crass
Steve Friedman
Rusty Garrison
Eddie Henderson
Becky Kelley
John Martin
Artica Gaston
John Bowers
Jeff Weaver
Thomas Barnard
Antoinette Norfleet
Richard Dunn
Lauren Curry
Jac Capp
Sydney Brogden
Karen Hays
Beth Blalock
Chuck Mueller
Laura Williams
Erin Ruoff
Thom Litts
John Biagi
Lt. Wayne Hubbard
Dr. Tina Johannsen
Larry Blankenship
Bert Langley
Allison Ashrock
Christopher Semerjian
Rose West
James McLaughlin
Michael Odom
The April 26, 2017 meeting of the Wildlife Resources Committee was called to order by Chairman William Bagwell.

Chairman Bagwell called on Aaron McWhorter, Chairman of the Wildlife Resources Committee.

Mr. McWhorter called on Dr. Tina Johannsen, Programs Operations Manager for the Wildlife Resources Division, to present the proposed amendments to Hunting Regulations, Pertaining to Migratory Bird Regulations, Chapter 391-4-2.

Dr. Johannsen stated that under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is the primary authority for regulating migratory birds. She further stated that the USFWS annually establishes a framework (opening and closing dates, maximum season length, and maximum bag limits) within which the states must set their migratory bird hunting seasons. She added that these frameworks are developed with the input of state wildlife agencies and are informed using biological population, harvest, and habitat parameters.

Dr. Johannsen stated that our proposed waterfowl hunting season dates are within the frameworks provided by the USFWS. She further stated that our proposal maximizes hunting opportunity within the approved frameworks. She added that she plans to request Board adoption of the enclosed proposals today.

A motion was made by Mr. Watt, seconded by Mr. Evans and carried unanimously that the Committee recommend that the Board adopt the Resolution to approve the proposed amendments to Hunting Regulations, Chapter 391-4-2, as presented.

Mr. McWhorter called on John Bowers, Chief of Game Management of the Wildlife Resources Division, to present the proposed amendments to Hunting Regulations, Chapter 391-4-2, Fishing Regulations, Chapter 391-4-3, and General Regulations, Chapter 391-4-9, as presented.

Mr. Bowers stated that these are housekeeping changes that affect numerous chapters within the Department of Natural Resources Rules resulting from the passage of House Bill 208. He further stated that the first item is that the permit requirements for hunting deer with dogs had reference to a dog-deer hunting license, which will be removed as a result of the statutory changes from House Bill 208. He added that with the pursuit of bears with dogs on Wildlife Management Areas, Management Area trout stream rule, and Public Fishing Areas – there were references in those rules to a Wildlife Management Area license, which is no longer a license per House Bill 208.

Mr. Bowers stated that the last change involves the Georgia Outdoor Recreation Pass, which was adopted several years ago by the Board, and created a pass for non-hunting or fishing related activities that occur on Wildlife Management Areas, Public Fishing Areas, and other designated sites. He further stated that with the changes from House Bill 208, it will become the WRD Lands Pass, which will be required for everyone 16 years or older. He added that anyone who has a hunting, fishing or combo hunting and fishing license is exempt from the WRD Lands Pass.
Mr. Bowers stated that these changes are responsive to public input. He further stated that he would return in June seeking action on these proposed amendments.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.