

**Minutes**  
**Wildlife Resources Committee**  
A.W. Jones Heritage Center  
610 Beachview Drive  
St. Simons Island, GA 31522

January 26, 2018

Attending:

Committee Members

Aaron McWhorter, Chairman  
Dwight Evans, Vice Chairman  
William Bagwell  
Dwight Davis  
Ray Lambert – Via Conference Call  
Miki Thomaston  
Philip Wilheit  
Philip Watt  
Duncan Johnson, Jr., Board Chairman, Ex-Officio

Board Members

Nancy Addison  
Bill Jones  
Rob Leebern  
Mike Phelps  
Bodine Sinyard  
Dee Yancey

Guests

Ronnie Just, Georgia Power  
Tom Rood, CCA-GA  
Beth Blalock, Gilbert Harrell Sumerford & Martin  
Chris Woodward, Sport Fishing Magazine  
Roy & Ann Ditmer, Save German Village  
Stuart Stevenson, Save German Village  
Wayne Dasher, Department of Corrections  
Wayne Tate  
John Duren, Coastal Conservation Association  
David Kyler, Center for a Sustainable Coast  
Ragen Marsh, Troutman Sanders  
Edward Wexler, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve  
Katherine Bayer, Save German Village  
Julian Smith, Sidney Lanier Environmental Advocacy Team  
Hannah Smith, Sidney Lanier Environmental Advocacy Team  
Megan Desrosiers, One Hundred Miles

Staff Members

Mark Williams, Commissioner  
Terry West  
Kyle Pearson  
Melanie Johnson  
Wes Robinson  
Cathy Barnette  
Dave Crass  
Rusty Garrison  
Doug Haymans  
Eddie Henderson  
Becky Kelley  
Steve Friedman  
Richard Dunn, Director  
Lauren Curry  
Jeff Cown  
Sydney Brogden  
Jon Ambrose  
Karl Burgess  
Bill Donohue  
Jeff Weaver  
Thomas Barnard  
Jill Andrews  
Greg Balkom  
Bobby Bond  
Beth Tasciotti  
Paul Medders  
Buck Bennett  
JT Bennett  
Dominic Guadagnoli  
Pat Geer  
Jill Andrews  
Linda Willis

Bryan Tolar, Georgia Agribusiness Council  
Gloria Burns, Save German Village  
Ingrid Metz, Save German Village  
Ed Meadows, St. Simons Island Planning Commission  
Chris Thompson, Save German Village  
Ad Poppell, McIntosh County  
Patrick Zoucks, McIntosh County  
Scott Tanner, Joe Tanner & Associates  
Mark Berry, Georgia Power  
Bill Hodges, Hodges Harbin Newberry & Tribble

The January 26, 2018 meeting of the Wildlife Resources Committee was called to order by Chairman Duncan Johnson.

Chairman Johnson called on Aaron McWhorter, Chairman of the Wildlife Resources Committee, who called on Jon Ambrose for a briefing on the proposed revision of fresh-water turtle regulations.

Mr. Ambrose stated that Wildlife Resources had been working with Law Enforcement over the past year to identify areas where fresh-water turtle regulations could be improved. He further stated that the demand for fresh-water turtles has exponentially increased, introducing a concern of species endangerment or extinction. Mr. Ambrose added that Law Enforcement has been investigating violations in fresh-water turtle regulations. Mr. Ambrose then stated that the proposed revision would remove the species-specific annual harvest limits, prohibit non-commercial exports of native turtles, and do away with some commercial permits. The proposed revision also includes specifications for fresh-water turtle ponds to help ensure sustainable production and protect public health. Mr. Ambrose added that the purpose of these regulations is to increase enforceability on regulations on harvesting, provide greater regulatory consistency, facilitate the continued operation of commercial ponds and trappers, and reduce collection pressure on native turtle populations. Mr. Ambrose then stated that the next steps in this process are to post the proposed rules changes by February 5, hold public meetings during the month of February, finalize the rules package by early March, and present the package at the March Board Meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.