



MASSWILDLIFE

## DIVISION OF FISHERIES & WILDLIFE

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COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
DIVISION OF FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE  
FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES

PRESENT: Dr. Joseph Larson/Chair, Michael Roche/Vice Chair, Bonnie Booth/Secretary, Ernest W. Foster IV, Stephen Sears, Dr. Brandi Van Roo, Ron Amidon/Commissioner/DFG, Mary-Lee King/Deputy Commissioner/DFG, Mark S. Tisa/Director, Jon Regosin/Deputy Director, Kris McCarthy/Associate Director/Finance and Administration, Tom French/Assistant Director/NHESP, Michael Huguenin/Assistant Director/Wildlife, Trina Moruzzi/Assistant Director/Operations, Todd Richards/Assistant Director/Fisheries, Marion Larson/Assistant Director/Information and Education, Peter Hazelton/Chief/Conservation Science, Elizabeth Wroblicka/Chief/Wildlife Lands, Lynn Harper/Habitat Protection Specialist, Nicole McSweeney/Outreach and Marketing Coordinator, Lt. Tara Carlow/OLE; PUBLIC: Paul Beaulieu, Dave Morin, Josh Rownd, Jim Wallace

DATE: December 20, 2018

LOCATION: Division of Fisheries and Wildlife Field Headquarters  
Westborough, Massachusetts

Chair Larson opened the December meeting of the Fisheries and Wildlife Board at 10:05 a.m.

### Acceptance of Minutes

A motion was made by Secretary Booth to accept the minutes from the November meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Foster. The motion passed unanimously.

### Chair's Comments

Chair Larson welcomed the meeting. He stated that, in the interest of keeping his remarks brief, several items that were distributed at the December NHESAC meeting are contained in the Board's meeting packets for the members' perusal; if there are any questions or comments, he suggested that they could be discussed at the January meeting.

### Commissioner's Comments

Commissioner Amidon reported that he met with the Massachusetts Rivers Alliance (MRA) during the previous month at the organization's annual meeting in Belmont. He spoke about possible projects and found the members very receptive, noting that many land trusts and environmental groups are interested in the DFG's work around the state. He also announced that the DER's projects list for 2019 is out, with many watersheds across the state affected, and with partnerships with members of the MRA.

The Commissioner also provided a brief update on the Big COD, the Big MOE-style event that has been developed and planned for the Mass. Military Reservation on Cape Cod. He reported that roadblocks have been put up by Washington, so the planners have switched to the grounds of the Massachusetts Maritime Academy and another group associated with Makepeace Foundation has joined the planning efforts. Commissioner Amidon reported that there are meetings scheduled in late January-early February and that he will report back to the Board with progress.

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### Director's Comments

Director Tisa reported an excellent meeting with good presentations lined up. The Director also stated that his travel is finished for a month or so.

### Law Enforcement Comments

Lieutenant Tara Carlow introduced herself, stating that she had started as the CWD [Chronic Wasting Disease] Coordinator on a contract with MassWildlife 14 years ago, then was hired as a Technician with the Wildlife Section, where she worked for 3 years. She reported that she was interested in the enforcement side and joined the MEP [Massachusetts Environmental Police] 10 years ago. She immediately found herself assigned to the coast, and became Captain and the first woman boat operator for the MEP. She is now stationed inland, enjoys it, and thinks she is making the transition smoothly.

Lt. Carlow reported briefly on a number of completed investigations, including a number of instances that she has become aware of in which deer were brought into the state from a CWD-positive state or province. The Lieutenant also reported the following types of calls for service and number of calls received, from the beginning of 2018 up to November 30: Assist Fisheries & Wildlife (129), animal nuisance (209), bear (411), deer (205), moose (44), raptor (220), ATV accident (64), and motorboat accident (117).

Director Tisa reported to the Board that staff was preparing a full presentation on the status of CWD for the January 10, 2019, meeting.

### Personnel Report (Kris McCarthy)

Associate Director of Administration Kris McCarthy submitted the following personnel report for the Board's consideration and vote:

#### **Promotion**

<u>Employee</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Location</u>
Peter Hazelton	Chief of Conservation Science Environmental Analyst V	Westborough

Mr. Sears moved acceptance of the report, Vice Chair Roche seconded the motion; the vote in favor was unanimous.

### Spring Fishing Marketing Campaign (Nicole McSweeney)

Outreach & Marketing Coordinator Nicole McSweeney reported the results from MassWildlife's recent spring fishing marketing campaign and showed how staff is effectively using marketing and communications to better recruit, retain, and reactivate anglers in Massachusetts. Ms. McSweeney stated that, over the previous six months, she and her colleagues had been invited to share their results with a lot of different audiences, including at the state level to partners at Mass.gov IT, regionally with the NEAFWA [Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies] R3 committee, and most recently nationally at the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation's [RBFF] marketing workshop. There is a lot of interest in this type of work to try and figure out how to bring new people into these activities, how to keep the participants we do have engaged, and how to bring lapsed participants back across the country, and Ms. McSweeney reported that the MassWildlife team is very proud to be leading the way.

Ms. McSweeney provided some background and briefly described the MassWildlife campaign last year, in 2017, and what led her team to its strategy for this year's campaign. She provided a lot of detail on

her approach for the 2018 spring campaign, and described how the team selected and defined the target audience for the campaign with assistance from Southwick Associates and the RBFF. As part of her presentation, she also showed some ads the agency had developed to increase license sales. She described some improvements she was able to identify and make in real time to better track, evaluate, and improve the campaign and to share the results.

Ms. McSweeney finished her presentation with an analysis of the lessons her team learned during the two campaigns and the next steps. She stated that not only were her team's efforts to track the results directly and evaluate the campaign's effectiveness successful, but she stated she was very happy to report that the campaign itself proved very successful at generating license purchases and additional revenue. Ms. McSweeney stated that she was lucky to have a few other key staff helping her with this project, including website coordinator Emily Stolarski, who handled a lot of the behind the scenes work with the tracking enhancements, Human Dimensions Coordinator Jody Simoes, who provided customer insights and analysis during the evaluation stages, and CFO Kris McCarthy, who provided extensive overall support to the project.

Because staff was able to enhance the agency's ability to track campaign results this year, Ms. McSweeney reported that she able to quantitatively demonstrate the success of this marketing campaign. Not only does staff now have a better understanding of the types of customers who engage with agency ads, but the return on investment could also be quantified. For the email and postcard campaigns, staff quantified that the \$10,000 investment resulted in an additional \$55,000 in revenue. In the world of digital advertising, \$30,000 is a relatively modest marketing budget, but, for that investment, the agency was able to document at least \$305,000 in return. Staff can now demonstrate how much value these marketing programs are bringing to the agency and the team is very proud of this result and looking forward to continuing.

Looking ahead, the team plans to continue testing these tools. Digital platforms are constantly evolving, and what worked this year might not be the best techniques for future years. Staff plans to continue to invest in trainings and work with good partners. The team is planning to explore similar techniques to promote hunting, the Heritage Fund, and other initiatives. The team has also prioritized the need to work with the *MassFishHunt* vendor to improve the agency's mobile licensing site, which is going to require a lot of work, and it is going to need support from agency partners at Marine Fisheries and the Department to work with MassWildlife to achieve the necessary changes. Finally, Ms. McSweeney reported that the agency is to get a much-needed new *MassFishHunt* homepage in the following month to better welcome and inform first-time and potential license buyers.

After a discussion in which the Board members thanked and congratulated Ms. McSweeney and her team for the excellent results they had achieved so far, Director Tisa reiterated and stressed Ms. McSweeney's early statement that these results are nationally important, and that fish and wildlife agencies across the country are focused on these problems and interested in techniques to address them. He offered his thanks for the support of the Commissioner and the Secretary because staff needed permission to explore the use of Google analytics and other marketing tools. He stated that he hopes this support continues because Ms. McSweeney and her team were producing really exciting results.

#### Land Protection Review (Elizabeth Wroblicka)

Director Tisa introduced Chief of Wildlife Lands Elizabeth Wroblicka, stating that, in addition to wanting to address the requests of relatively new Board members, he knew that the Board has not had a general presentation on the land protection process in some time, so her presentation was designed to provide an in-depth examination of the acquisition work she and other staff were doing.

Starting with MassWildlife's mission statement to restore, protect, and manage land for wildlife to thrive and for people to enjoy, Ms. Wroblecka provided the Board with an overview of the process whereby MassWildlife acquires land or a conservation restriction on land. She described the makeup and process followed by the Lands Committee, detailed the many factors that go into the selection criteria for identifying the best parcels of land to protect, and then gave an overview of the various funding and gift sources that contribute toward MassWildlife's land protection effort.

After a brief discussion, Chair Larson thanked Ms. Wroblecka for her informative presentation.

#### Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee Report

Dr. Larson reported on the December Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee meeting during his Chairman's Comments, so he had no further report at this time.

#### Confirm Meeting Date

Members confirmed the January meeting on Thursday, January 10, 2019, at 10:00 a.m. They also discussed dates for the upcoming Fisheries and Wildlife Board monthly meetings. Members selected February 21, 2019, at 10:00 a.m., at the Cronin Building, and also selected March 14, 2019, 10:00 a.m., also to be held at the Cronin Building.

#### Member's Comments

In the interest of not having the meeting become over-long, given the executive session still to be held, Chair Larson asked that the members' comments be suspended until the next meeting.

Mr. Sears asked to be able to very briefly report that, as a new Board member, he was very proud to see excellent presentations by women of the agency, and that he believes the agency and the state's wildlife programs and lands are in very good hands.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Roche to move into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing certain land acquisitions and to not return to open session. The motion was seconded by Dr. Van Roo. The motion passed unanimously.

#### Executive Session

Chief of Wildlife Lands Wrobleka presented six proposed acquisitions, which were each reviewed and all unanimously approved by the Board.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Booth  
Secretary

#### List of documents presented to the Board in its December meeting packets

December Agenda

Draft November meeting minutes for review

Excerpt from MassWildlife's E-News, November 30, 2018, "Bald eagle numbers on the rise!"

Email: Jennifer Longsdorf, FW: "Biologists Respond to 'Science Denialism' Regarding Outdoor Cat Control"

UMass/Amherst; Center for Agriculture, Food and the Environment; Clean Energy Extension publication,

October 25, 2018, "A Wildlife-friendly Certification Program for Solar PV Facilities in Massachusetts"

*Cape Cod Times* article; updated December 11, 2018; "Native cottontails headed to Nomans Land"

Spreadsheet of Natural Heritage Fund Taxpayer Donations (1992 to 2018)

Documentation for the executive session