



## **Plymouth County League of Sportsmen**

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## **Wankinquoah Rod & Gun Club**

**October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

**At 7:00pm we began our monthly business meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence for all our family and friends who have died and for Service Men and Women in our Armed Forces that have died or have been injured to protect our Country.**

**Opening Statement:** President Paul Johnson welcomed all in attendance at the Plymouth County League of Sportsmen October meeting and thanked the Wankinquoah Rod & Gun Club for a wonderful meal. WR&GC President Charlie Wade spoke on behalf of the WR&GC welcoming all in attendance and thanked the PCLS for all they due for the sportsmen and hoped that everyone enjoyed their meal. He also thanked the kitchen crew for serving the meal. President Johnson also thanked the WR&GC kitchen crew for a wonderful meal and thanked WR&GC for all the work that they do in support of sportsmen and sportswomen. He also congratulated our treasurer Dee Bonney for her first place win, in Texas, earlier this month in the Cowboy shoot in her division. President Johnson also announced our guest speaker for this meeting is Ross Kessler, MDMF Public Access Coordinator. Also President Johnson thanked Jason Zimmer for spending part of his Columbus Day holiday traveling from Marshfield to the Southeast District Headquarters to open up and get Hunter Ed Equipment and supplies for a course at Sippican Rod & Gun Club. The Lead Instructor forgot that Monday was a holiday. Without those supplies the course would have suffered. This extra effort is appreciated and is why we are proud to count him among our delegates.

**Roll Call:** There were 33 delegates representing 15 clubs and organizations in attendance along with 8 guest.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Bonney gave a complete report on our finances. A motion was made, seconded and passed to accept the report.

**Secretary's Report:** The September meeting minutes was accepted as published by a motion that was seconded and passed. Secretary Armburg then confirmed a roll call purge of listed delegates from the previous meeting.

**Bills to be paid:** There were no bills presented to be paid..

**Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife Report:** Jason Zimmers began by letting us know that the Archery Deer season is underway. Jason reminded us to please be careful and practice tree stand safety. Quail and Pheasant season is also going well, the birds look nice and stocking is going according to schedule. Jason informed us that as of October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017 that there were only 300 doe tags left in zone 10 and none left in zone 11. The islands still has an abundance of doe tags left. Jason informed us of a new form that can be filled out by hunters on their Deer or Fowl harvest that will help MDF&W in their assessment of conditions in the woods. This form also has questions on other species of wild life that you might encounter. This form can be acquired on the MDF&W web site. Jason has delivered to the elementary and high school, of Marshfield the archery kits that we helped to make possible. Jason commented that the students were over joyed. Jason spoke about the issue on nuisance turkeys in the southeast district and how they are addressing the issue. There will be some literature becoming available to the public, from the MDF&W, on this issue in the very near future suggesting how to handle these issue of aggressive turkeys. Towns are requested to call the local district office for help on this issue. Fall Trout stocking has been completed for this year. Young of the year Herring has been notice in some waterways. Third Herring Brook has had antenna's place to track tagged fish. Still one more dam to be removed so that the fish will have optimal travel. The division just received the approval for the restoration project at Red Brook. Request for bids will now be solicited. Work will hopefully begin next spring.

**Special Guest Speaker:** Ross Kessler began by thanking the PCLS for his invitation to speak at our meeting. Mr Kessler was kind enough to provide a transcript of his talking points which you will find at the end of the meeting minutes report and on our website with graphics. He then proceeded with his report.

**Communications:** President Johnson was contacted again by the Baker Administration and the contact was a positive development. He was able to communicate our willingness to work on compromises as long as we come away from the process with some form of Sunday Hunting. President Johnson also reached out to Senator Gobi's office to determine if we are being effective pushing this issue and has been told we are likely 2-4 weeks out from a decision by the Joint Committee on Natural Resources and Agriculture. After that the bill if approved will move on to Ways and Means Committee. President Johnson urges personal letters from sportsmen to committee members. The importance of these letters cannot be overstated. Braintree Rifle and Pistol Club meeting on October 16, 2018. President Johnson reached out to Eric Goldman Braintree President and one other BR&P member that was supposed to attend to determine if the PCLS issue came up at their October meeting, which was held this week. Still no decision on the pending issue. President Johnson reached out to Ross Kessler and asked for him to update the League and see if he could attend the October meeting he agreed and will give us his report. President Johnson also reached out to the owner of 0 Marion Road to see what could be done to facilitate the MDMF acquisition of the property.

**MSC Report:** No comments offered.

**Seven Man Board Report:** No report given. Refer to the latest report on the PCLS web site.

**Legislative Report:** Don't stop our efforts of supporting Sunday Hunting with your personal letters to committee members.

**Old Business:** There was a media day on October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at the Cotton Mill Dam. President Johnson read from a Nature Conservancy News release dated Oct 12, 2017. The meeting notice did not get to President Johnson until Sunday night and he had business commitments that could not be changed so he requested President Emeritus John Fabroski to represent the League. John gave us a short report on how the work was proceeding. He also said that the final outlook was good. President Johnson then reminded us that we needed to get the Event Committee to begin planning for the banquet. Committee member Justin Jerome said he would solicit someone to help us acquire firearms for the Grand Raffle. The PCLS commercial video is still in the works. New footage has been shot using a drone and the raw footage appears to be high quality and usable. It's in the process of being downloaded for editing. We need high resolution images of club logos having received only a logo from Cedar Gun Club and Carver.

President Johnson informed us on the remaining balance for our Robo Calls, that of the original \$50.00 appropriation there is \$24.17 left. This should last approx. 4-5 months.

**New Business:** President Johnson has suggested a meeting of County League Presidents to coordinate advocacy on a statewide basis on Sunday hunting. There is a lack of coordination that we need to resolve among sportsmen's groups. There is also and a lack of professional lobbying that is no ones fault but is hurting our efforts. Initial reaction to this meeting has been very positive. President Johnson asked for a sense of the Delegates as to if they felt the league should participate financially should the other leagues feel the need for paid lobbying to support our efforts. President Johnson made a proposal of a unified effort by all county sportsmen leagues to be involved in helping promote legislation that pertains to sportsmen's issues. A long and objective dialog between delegates was entertained with the conclusion that more conclusive information be acquired before proceeding with this endeavor.

**Good of the Order:** Delegate Homer May, of Sagamore Riffle Club, reported that their last two events held at Monument Beach Sportsmen Club had been well attended and well enjoyed by participants. Offered by Ernie Foster that the Berkshire County League of Sportsmen is going to be holding a Habitat Management Workshop. For more information on dates, venue and times please contact the BCLS. Also he mentioned that some new faces at our monthly meetings would help to promote more knowledge of county leagues as to what they do and stand for. Hopefully this would bring in more ideas and future leadership. From President Emeritus John Fabroski mention the recently past banquet of the Rough Grouse Assoc. and the efforts of delegate Ernie Foster that this event was very informative, well attended and was a good time for all in attendance. From delegate Jim Augenti, of Southeast Trout Unlimited Chapter, informed us of the support that the TU organization from both Ma. and R.I. are offering to the MDF&W Trout spawning studies in the Deerfield River.

**Adjournment:** The meeting came to a close at 8:22 pm. Our next meeting will be at the Hanson Rod & Gun Club, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Comradery at 6:00 and agenda at 7:00 pm located at 1 Davis Rd. Hanson, Ma.

PCLS Secretary

*Mike Armburg*

# Marine Fisheries Report

Wednesday, October 18, 2017

by

**Ross Kessler**

If any of you want to contact me re MDMF issues: [Ross.kessler@state.ma.us](mailto:Ross.kessler@state.ma.us)

## GENERAL NEWS

- We have a new MassWildlife commissioner, Ron Amidon who replaces George Peterson. George Peterson was recently awarded the Francis Sargent Conservation Award.

## PUBLIC ACCESS

- **Deer Island-** putting the final pieces together. Now all we need is money. There is a line item for the pier in a supplemental budget from the governor's office.
- **Wareham-** Deal Collapsed over buried tank on property. We are taking a wait and see approach on the property at this point. I would like to take time to extend a thank you to certain members of the PCLS: Paul Johnson, Randy Parker, Bruce Westgate, and John Fabroski. Without you we may have stepped into an unknown liability.
- **Salem-** At a crossroads. Boring's showed that pilings need to be 'socketed' in. This will add up to \$500K to the cost of the project. Exploring options. Initial budget was about \$1million. We are now approaching \$2million.
- **Fall River-** I'd like to slide in a Fall River pier (terminus of Remington St., next to bicentennial Park) while we figure out how we want to fund the Salem Willows project. I think the cost of this project would be <\$500K.
- **Small Grant:** Applications are in. We should be making our recommendations to the Governors office within the next two weeks.

## FISHERIES

- The MDMF fishing Derby goes until the end of November. Get your measured or weighed fish to us. DMF is currently exploring new Tautog management. MA and RI may combine efforts under one management unit. The current proposal would mean that for both MA and RI the bag limit would be as follows:
  - April-May (4), Jun-Sep (MA 1, RI 0), Oct-Nov (4). \*\*\*\*\*DRAFT REGS NOT OFFICIAL\*\*\*\*\*
- A commercial tog tagging project will commence next year. Commercially caught Tautog will require some type of tag to identify them as legitimately caught commercial fish. This tagging is similar to striped bass tagging. The difficulty in Tautog tagging is that the fish are brought to the market live more often than not.
- The current Tautog R&R survey wraps up this fall. The results of the R&R survey are showing greater than expected abundance in Buzzards Bay and Vineyard sound.
- Striped bass Tagging is now complete. The tally for 2017 was 480 fish tagged over 10 trips.
- The Jonah crab tagging project is continuing. So far close to 25K tags have been deployed and we've gotten back 301 returns. The red tags have a lottery reward of \$200-\$500 and the green tags have a lottery reward of \$500-\$1000.
- Whelk- The commercial size was lowered from 3" to 2 7/8" but measuring methods were altered

actually resulting in an increase in minimum size. This size limit is still well under minimum size of maturity for female animals. Currently 0% of females at legal size are sexually mature. At 3 5/8" 5% of female conchs are sexually mature.

- Recreational regulations for conch: There is no minimum size for conch but there is a possession limit of 15 animals per person per day.
  - Shellfish- All below
    - PSP - a 'red tide' (Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning, *Alexandrium funyense* and *A Tamarensis*) was relatively quiet this year, there was a normal closure in the Nauset system.
    - ASP - another 'red tide' (Amnesic Shellfish Poison, *Pseudo nitchia*) was the new HAB. It never reached FDA closure levels but we did have some closures as this is an unknown in our area.
    - Vibrio, so far it has been a relatively quiet year.
    - Coccolodinium, generically known as brown tide was not present in large quantity this year.
  - Shark Project- Greg continues to identify and catalog the presence of white sharks near Chatham and Monomoy. Additionally, he tagged 19 sharks this summer.
  - Side Scan Sonar for eel grass, artificial reef, and dredging was performed in Cedarville, Sandwich, Tisbury (for munitions), and Barnstable.
  - We are exploring offshore aquaculture for things like kelp.
  - We are involved in offshore wind programs south of the Vineyard.
    - How does this affect any of our recreational fishing activities?
  - **Resource assessment**
    - Cod indices ticked up this year. The YOY index from the spring survey was very promising. But this does not mean that they will make it to commercial size. The 2004 year class appeared to be similar but never materialized in the fishery.
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### **Follow up to topics I discussed with PCLS members or that were brought up during the meeting**

I am including a number of attachments (Word Docs) to my email that show graphic relating to our towing locations, Cod, Haddock, Scup, and Northern Sea Robin.

Discussion on River Herring:

I spoke to Brad Chase, our Diadromous biologist today. As you know the harvest of river herring became illegal in 2006. Since that time the fishery has improved. Last year the Marine Fisheries Commission passed a regulation allowing the fishery to reopen if numbers were good and there was a local management plan that was approved in place. This is the case in Middleboro. If Middleboro desires to open their fishery to direct harvest and they have an approved plan in place it can be opened.

MDMF presence at shows: MDMF has been asked to participate in the Standish Show and Striper Fest.