ADVISORY COUNCIL ON WILDLIFE & FRESHWATER FISH MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, August 29, 2017
Richardson & Robbins Building Auditorium
89 Kings Highway, Dover, Delaware
Phone 302-739-9912, FAX 302-739-6157

ADVISORY COUNCIL
1. Edward A. Montague, Chair
2. Garrett Grier, Jr., Vice Chair
3. Raymond F. Burris
4. Neal Dukes
5. Craig A. Karsnitz (Absent)
6. Joe C. Johnson
7. Steven M. Kendus
8. Dale R. Scuse

DIVISION OF FISH & WILDLIFE
1. David E. Saveikis
2. Chief Drew Aydelotte
3. Rob Hossler
4. Craig Rhoads
5. Jeremey Ashe
6. Joe Rogerson
7. Karen Bennett
8. Karen Kennedy

PUBLIC
9 Visitors

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Montague at 7:00 PM.

Agenda Item 1. Approval of Minutes (Chairman).

A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to approve the June 27, 2017 meeting minutes as written.

Agenda Item 2. Migratory Bird Forecast (Rob Hossler).

Rob Hossler, wildlife administrator, presented a PowerPoint presentation on the 2017/2018 Migratory Game Bird Forecast and Possible Future Regulatory Changes. Mr. Hossler reported that the video on the status of waterfowl which is usually shown at the August Advisory Council Meeting is no longer available from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and is now being sent as a document. Mr. Hossler stated that overall waterfowl breeding habitat conditions on the continent were similar to or improved compared to 2016. The total pond count estimate of 6.1 million was 22% above the 2016 count estimate. Winter temperatures were average and snowfall was either average to above average in most regions. Duck population numbers were slightly below last year. Canada goose numbers were down slightly and there is concern among biologists because of the overall 4% population decrease over time. The snow goose population was also down, with an 18% decrease in 2016. The mid-winter brant survey was 161,700 brant, which was 2% greater than in 2016. Swan numbers continue to increase. Mr. Hossler reported that the Division is proposing to have a tundra swan season in 2019 whereby Delaware would be allotted an estimated 31 permits by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Mr. Hossler announced that the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service is allowing dove season framework dates to be extended from January 15 to January 31 to allow for a later season. Mr. Hossler also announced that starting in October of this year, the daily bag limit on black ducks will be two birds for the first time in 45 years. Mr. Hossler explained the Atlantic Flyway's new Multi-Stock Model being considered for use, which would take a unique approach of modeling harvest based on five important species in the Atlantic Flyway rather than just mallard harvest. This new model could result in a shorter duck season length and smaller bag limits in the future. One of the driving factors is the decrease in the eastern population of mallards. The five important Flyway species that would be used in the model are mallard, wood duck, American green-winged teal, ring neck and the common goldeneye. One outcome could be that the mallard bag limit might also be reduced in the future.

Mr. Hossler will be attending the Atlantic Flyway meeting in Annapolis where more information will be available.

Agenda Item 3. Impoundments (Jeremey Ashe and Craig Rhoads).

Jeremey Ashe, construction manager, gave a PowerPoint presentation on three impoundment projects. The first project is at Ted Harvey Wildlife Area and includes restoration of 5,000 feet of dike and the installation of a new water control structure. This project is almost complete; however, the project has been temporarily halted to allow the dike to harden and set-up. This project will likely resume in the summer of 2018, so waterfowl hunting will be permitted during the 2017/18 season. The second project to install a new water control

structure at the Little Creek Wildlife Area Main Tract is on schedule and will be completed in time for the 2017/18 waterfowl season. The third project at the Augustine Wildlife Area Lang Tract, which includes restoration of 4,000 feet of dike and the installation of new gates to the existing water control structure, will be completed in 2018 and will have limited effects on the 2017/18 waterfowl season.

Craig Rhoads, wildlife program manager, answered a variety of questions relating to hunting this year in the impoundments.

Agenda Item 4. Director Update (David E. Saveikis).

Director Saveikis announced and congratulated Councilman Kendus on being re-appointed by Governor Carney to continue to serve as a Council member until August 2020.

Director Saveikis provided an update on sales of the new Conservation Access Pass and publicly thanked Candace Dunning and Karen Bennett for their hard work in modifying the eGov license system sales module in order to be able to sell the new Conservation Access Pass.

Director Saveikis provided the following legislation update, noting that bills that did not pass are still active in the upcoming second year of the 149th General Assembly:

H.B. #156, which would change the handgun calibers used for deer hunting to a range of calibers and allow selected pistol caliber rifles to be used during the deer handgun season and in lieu of a shotgun during shotgun deer season(s), was released from House committee but not voted on by the full House.

H.B. #157, which would allow the use of an air bow in lieu of a shotgun during shotgun deer season(s), was released from House committee but was not voted on by the full House.

S.B. #117, which would allow air powered firearms to be possessed and utilized for hunting, passed the Senate and was assigned to House committee.

S.B. #31, which would allow a hunter to use a handgun in lieu of a shotgun on farms enrolled in the Department's deer depredation programs, passed the Senate and was assigned to House committee.

S.B. #106, which creates a special vanity license plate for National Wildlife Turkey Federation members, passed the General Assembly and was signed by the Governor at the Delaware State Fair.

AGENDA FOR THE 9/26/2017 ADVISORY

COUNCIL MEETING

1. Approval of Minutes (Chairman).
2. Becoming An Outdoor Woman (BOW) (Lynne Pusey).
3. The Reintroduction of Trout Stocking to Red Clay Creek (Mike Stangl).
4. Director Update (David E. Saveikis).

There being no further business, a motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:22 PM.

Sincerely,

Karen Kennedy
Recording Secretary