ADVISORY COUNCIL ON WILDLIFE & FRESHWATER FISH MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, July 31, 2018
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
6. Joe C. Johnson
7. Steven M. Kendus
8. Dale R. Scuse
9. F. Thomas Unruh (Absent)

DIVISION OF FISH & WILDLIFE
1. Director David E. Saveikis
2. Captain Drew Aydelotte
3. Rob Gano
4. Rob Hossler
5. Bill Jones
6. Eric Ludwig
7. Craig Rhoads
8. Joe Rogerson
9. Michael Valenti – Dept. of Agriculture

PUBLIC
30 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 by Councilman Scuse, seconded by Councilman Kendus and the Council voted unanimously to approve the May 29, 2018 meeting minutes as written.

Chairman Montague announced that for the record, the June advisory council meeting was cancelled due to a lack of agenda items.

Agenda Item 2. 2018/2019 Sunday Deer Hunting Seasons for Delaware (Rob Hossler).

Rob Hossler, Wildlife Section Administrator, gave a PowerPoint presentation on what additional Sundays will be available for deer hunting with the passage and signing of Senate Bill 198, which legalizes Sunday deer hunting for seasons established by the Department. Rob explained that the passage of this bill adds 18 additional Sundays for deer hunting above the existing 5 Sundays established in 2016 for a total of 23 Sundays, all of which are open for archery/crossbow. Eleven of these 18 new Sundays will allow archery/crossbow hunting only, six will allow the use of select firearms or lesser weapon to include archery/crossbow (4 shotgun days and 2 muzzleloader days) and one additional Sunday will be a special youth/non-ambulatory disabled firearm Sunday (the five previously approved Sundays remain in place for select firearms or lesser weapon to include archery/crossbow).

Agenda Item 3. Public Input on Proposed Sunday Deer Hunting Opportunities on Division of Fish & Wildlife State Wildlife Areas (Craig Rhoads).

Craig Rhoads, Program Manager for Conservation and Habitat Management, gave a presentation on the state wildlife areas proposed to be open to Sunday deer hunting in consideration of the enactment of Senate Bill 198. The Division was specifically seeking public comment on the proposal as required by law when changes to the locations and times are made to Sunday deer hunting on public lands. Craig's presentation listed those state wildlife areas and tracts that would be open during the regular established deer hunting hours of 1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset for Sunday firearms deer hunting and those wildlife areas and tracts that would be open for only Sunday archery/crossbow deer hunting to accommodate and avoid conflicts with non-hunting activities on Sundays at multi-use wildlife areas. Craig emphasized that this presentation was not discussing any proposed Sunday deer hunting on state parks, state forests or national wildlife refuges. There were no specific public comments on the Division's proposal on which and when state wildlife areas would be open for Sunday deer hunting.

A motion was made by Councilman Karsnitz, seconded by Councilman Kendus and the Council voted unanimously to recommend the adoption of which state wildlife areas as well as the times they are open for Sunday deer hunting as presented by the Division of Fish & Wildlife.

Agenda Item 4. Statewide Deer Management Approach (David E. Saveikis).

Director Saveikis gave an update on the State's approach to further manage Delaware's robust deer population to reduce deer damage being experienced by farmers, home owners and motorists. The Director outlined several approaches being undertaken which include enhancing our deer damage programs and expanding recreational deer hunting.

Agenda Item 5. . Public Input on Proposed Sunday Deer Hunting Opportunities on Department of Agriculture State Forests (Michael Valenti).

Michael Valenti, Delaware Forest Service Administrator, gave a presentation on the state forests proposed to be open and closed to Sunday deer hunting. The Forestry Service was specifically seeking public comment on the proposal as required by law when changes to the locations and times are made to Sunday deer hunting on public lands. Michael identified two Redden State Forest tracts (Long and Tunnel) that would be open for Sunday hunting. All other state forests and tracts will be closed to all Sunday deer hunting in an effort to provide continued non-hunting, multi-use activities on Sundays. The public provided comment on the proposal for consideration by the Delaware Forest Service. (The Council did not take action on the Forest Service proposal since the Council is not advisory to the Delaware Department of Agriculture Forestry Service.)

Agenda Item 6. Director Update (David E. Saveikis).

Director Saveikis updated the Council on relevant legislation passed by the General Assembly during the last legislative session, including legislation expanding Sunday deer hunting, approving the use of pistol-caliber rifles for deer hunting and establishment of the Delaware Native Species Commission to address the decline and extinction of native animal and plant species.

AGENDA FOR THE 8/28/2018 ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

The Council requested that the Division develop an agenda for the July 28, 2018 meeting.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Councilman Scuse, seconded by Councilman Kendus and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 PM.

Sincerely,

Amy Marie Ottinger

Amy Marie Ottinger
Recording Secretary