

CAC Meeting 12.14.04

Chairman Bill Campbell called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm

Secretary Report

- The minutes had just been received today via email and many members had reported not receiving the minutes. The minutes to the November meeting were then read followed by a motion to approve seconded and passed unanimously.
- Jon Puhalski again announced that he would be resigning his position after the December meeting.
- As there was a very large crowd in attendance, an around the room introduction was held.

Conservation Environmental Police

- Officer Lewok gave us the T.I.P. report for the time frame 11-08-04 to 12-14-04 and reported 95 incidents, 5 arrests, and 2 warnings.
- Officer Lewok then gave us a handout containing "Monthly Highlights" outlining some of their interesting activities in that time frame.
- The Department is very short on EnCon Officers and possibly within a few years, due to retirements could be down to little or no Officers.
- TIP had just made up 500 signs with the TIP Hotline number on them to be installed near specific waterways that have been trouble in the past.

BNR: Ed Parker

Ed passed out copies of the most recent CAC Bylaws. Ed also put out an organized format to be able to keep the monthly minutes in an orderly and consistent pattern. Ed will also be compiling an attendance sheet that will list all the Active, At Large, and Emeritus members. This will allow the secretary to check off names versus an around the table, informal sheet.

Ed then introduced Paul Rego and his presentation on Black Bear. He explained that to be able to deal with the Black Bear issue in the future, lots of good data collection would be needed.

Black Bear Presentation by Paul Rego began at 7:25 pm.

Highlights included:

About 15 years ago was when a resident bear population was determined.

In 1999 reported sightings were about 200 for the year. In 2004 there was almost 1800 reported sightings.

In 2004 there were about 530 incidents of bears causing some type of property damage with the majority of those bird feeders but there were also 2 home entries.

In 1990, there was the first reported road kill of a black bear in the state. In the last twelve months there have been 10 road kills.

Urban bears are increasing.

Trapping and tagging studies have been conducted primarily in Northwest CT in the Hartland/Barkhamsted area with over 50 bears being tagged. A conservative estimate of population is currently about .5/Mi²

Bears are migrating into and out of CT frequently with a Hartland bear being found in Albany NY and another found in St. Johnsbury VT.

Average reproduction rates are 2.4 cubs per female every two years.

Population estimates indicate our bear population is growing 20 to 25% each year.

The presentation and Q & A were over at 8:55 pm.

Forestry

Sudden Oak Death has become an issue to watch for here in CT. If it gets here, it could be devastating to our forestry endeavors. Both red oak and white oak are susceptible to this disease. Sudden Oak Death can kill a healthy tree in 3 to 5 years.

Wildlife

New regulations are going to Regulations Review on January 25. Three issues are in the new regulations that may bring some attention. Those being padded leg hold traps for coyotes, construction of duck blinds on state land, and making fishers a harvestable fear bearer.

Immuno contraception research at the CT Agricultural Experiment Station has been ongoing but, the individual that has been doing the bulk of the work on deer contraception has left and it is unknown if any of this work will continue at the CT station. The Comprehensive Wildlife Plan is coming along nicely. The first four elements are complete and will be available on the DEP web site soon. The other four components of the plan will be ready for review in '05.

On Falconry, the Federal Registry is now moving since the elections are over. It is hopeful that by late winter, early spring this will all be a done deal.

Planning for a controlled hunt at Bluff Point in January '05 is in the works.

The idea of a 'lifetime license" will be looked into a bit further. As CT only sells about 200k in combined licenses, a lot of research needs to go into a plan as this so as not to make any mistakes.

Marine Fisheries

The ASMFC has reviewed catches of Fluke and will recommend changes in harvest quotas to favor smaller states such as CT.

Maine is very alarmed about dropping numbers of American Eel and will likely be looking for Endangered Species protection. Some type of action is likely here in CT in the future. Winter Flounder stocks in CT waters are going to be very hard to recover due to the very small population of female fish.

There will be sweeping changes coming in regards to American Lobster in an effort to rebuild stocks.

Inland Fisheries

None

Legislative Committee Report

None

Old Business

None

New Business

Ed Parker gave us his thoughts on new DEP Commissioner Gina McCarthy. He is very excited about working with her. She appears to want to, and will engage in confrontational issues. She actively wants to put together a team to work on the top issues facing us. And, she wants to work more closely with core constituency groups such as the CAC.

A question was asked about the DEP controlling Cormorants in the state. It was stated that USFWS is granting states the OK to develop management plans on these birds. Ed responded that CT might look into this.

It was quickly reported that our Striped Bass population was in good shape and that a few successful spawn years were now showing us big fish.

It was reported that upland game hunting on Bristol Water Company property is in jeopardy due to the water company changing its hunting regulations.

There will be a Public Hearing on this issue in Bristol on Wednesday, December 15.

Fred Frillici made a motion to include in the 400 square inch requirement for florescent orange, a florescent orange hat. The motion was seconded. A motion was then made to table the original motion until the January meeting. This was seconded and passed to table.

As time was running out, it was agreed upon that Committee reports, Old Business, and New Business would be deferred until the January meeting.

As time had expired for us, the meeting was adjourned at 9:37 pm.

Respectfully submitted
Jon Puhalski