

NJ Wildlife Rehabilitators Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
November 20, 2019
Northern Region Office
NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife

WRAC Purpose: The purpose of the WRAC is to provide advice and assistance to the Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) to improve the wildlife rehabilitation program and the care that is provided to injured and orphaned wildlife.

Committee Members Present: Phil Brodhecker, Giselle Chazotte-Smisko, Lisa DeLambert, Carol Dragland, Heather Freeman, Tracy Leaver, Dr. Erica Miller, Diane Nickerson, Michael O'Malley

Committee Members Absent: Dr. Jennifer Norton

Division Employees: Krista Laws, Paulette Nelson, Katherine Szostak

Members of the Public: None

Meeting called to order at 10:33AM.

- D. Nickerson reported that the August 14, 2019 meeting minutes were approved via email. A motion was made on October 17, 2019 by D. Nickerson and seconded by M. O'Malley to approve the August 14, 2019 meeting minutes via email. A vote was taken with seven in favor and three abstentions.
- P. Nelson and K. Laws advised that there have been no new updates on the proposed regulations to combine game with exotic and nongame species. The regulations continue to be reviewed by the Division's lawyers.
- T. Leaver reported that the subcommittee continues to work on the Division training and that the subcommittee would meet again after this WRAC meeting. The training is expected to be ready by fall 2020.
- P. Nelson reported that she and M. Monteschio spoke with the Office of Risk Management for clarification on wildlife transport. If transporters are part of WCC, they are covered under State insurance only for injuries sustained from the animal being transported (i.e. not covered for damage to car, property, etc.). Suggestion was made to reach out to WCC volunteers to determine interest in transport. P. Nelson asked for suggestions on wording for this WCC request, and H. Freeman reported that she could potentially find a letter on the subject from NJAWR. P. Nelson advised she would talk to Kathy Clark about the golden eagle transport.
- D. Nickerson gave an update on the pest control meeting. The depredation control permit was discussed. Much of the problem is education of homeowners, contractors, lawn care services, roofing people, etc. There is a difference between "pest control operators" who apply chemicals and "wildlife nuisance control" operators. The meeting included ideas to get that whole group of people together for education. P. Nelson added that there had been a cross training discussion., which rehabilitators would like to be part of. One PCO had been tasked with obtaining an estimate of the number of wildlife nuisance control people. The suggested long-term plan was

to have wildlife control people need a permit by a certain year. This is a multi-pronged problem/solution. Wildlife nuisance control operators were encouraged to develop relationships with rehabilitators with whom they could reach out when issues arise (i.e. rehabilitators could recommend putting chicken wire around the outside of trees that have sticky tape for spotted lantern flies so that birds and other wildlife do not get stuck).

- Dr. E. Miller reported that there was no veterinary update. She advised that there are veterinary sheets in the new NWRA standards.
- Dr. E. Miller suggested that wildlife disease updates be provided at WRAC meetings.
 - Dr. E. Miller reported that Brian Zarate and other Division employees have been finding turtles with large shell lesions. Similar turtles have been found in Washington, Louisiana, Maryland, and Georgia. These lesions are believed to be caused by *Emydomyces*, which is a deep-dwelling fungus that isn't revealed by surface biopsies. The trigger for this fungus is unknown, but it appears to affect mostly aquatic turtles. UC Davis has developed some treatments for this fungus.
 - Dr. E. Miller reported that the rabies virus had been detected in more raccoons than bats this year. Gloucester and Monmouth were both "hot" counties for the virus.
 - L. DeLambert reported that there were EEE positives in pheasants in PA. P. Nelson reported that mosquito commissions have stopped testing due to the freeze. Sussex County was the hot spot in NJ. It was a bad year for EEE but low for West Nile.
 - The presentation of White Nose Syndrome in bats has vastly changed. In Pennsylvania, the bats' skin is sloughing off. In Washington, the bats appear fluorescent in black light, but there are no lesions.
- Question was raised regarding good Samaritan time holding. K. Laws advised that the captive game regulations give 12 hours for emergency possession. The Division, however, based decisions upon the Wildlife Rehabilitator Definitions and Requirements, which allows 24 hours for emergency possession to the public and 48 hours to veterinarians.
- G. Chazotte-Smisko was congratulated on receiving the Women in Wildlife Award.
- K. Laws provided updates on WRAC terms.
 - G. Chazotte-Smisko was reappointed as an Avian Rehabilitator Representative position. T. Leaver was reappointed as a Mammal Rehabilitator Representative. Dr. Jennifer Norton was reappointed as a Veterinarian Representative. L. DeLambert was appointed as a New Jersey Department of Agriculture Representative in place of Dr. Nicole Lewis. A new nomination had not yet been received from the ENSAC.
 - The Chair position also expired. A motion was made by T. Leaver and seconded by G. Chazotte-Smisko to nominate D. Nickerson as Chair. A vote was taken with all in favor.
- A motion was made by Dr. E. Miller and seconded by M. O'Malley to approve the following 2020 meeting dates. A vote was taken with all in favor. Locations were not yet known but would be updated when available.
 - January 22 (snow date of January 29)
 - April 22
 - October 28
- A motion was made by Dr. E. Miller and seconded by M. O'Malley to adjourn the meeting. A vote was taken with all in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 11:28AM.