

NJ Wildlife Rehabilitators Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
January 23, 2019  
Central Region Office Conservation Center –  
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: Giselle Chazotte-Smisko, Dr. Erica Miller, Diane Nickerson, Tracy Leaver, Heather Freeman, Michael O'Malley, Phil Brodhecker

Committee Member Stand-In: Lisa DeLambert for Dr. Nicole Lewis

Committee Members Absent: Dr. Jennifer Norton, Carol Dragland

Division Employees: Paulette Nelson, Krista Moser

Meeting called to order at 10:50AM.

- G. Chazotte-Smisko pointed out an error in the October 24, 2018 meeting minutes. A motion was made by P. Brodhecker and seconded by G. Chazotte-Smisko to approve the October 24, 2018 meeting minutes as amended. A vote was taken with all in favor.
- K. Moser advised that there were scheduling conflicts for the previously approved 2019 meeting dates.
- A motion was made by P. Brodhecker and seconded by Dr. E. Miller to approve new 2019 meeting dates. A vote was taken with all in favor for the meetings with a start time of 10:30AM for the following dates and locations:
  - April 24 at NRO
  - July 24 at NRO
  - October 23 at CRO Conservation Center
- A suggestion was received at the last meeting to e-mail meeting reminders to all rehabilitators and to put minutes on the Division's web site sooner. P. Nelson agreed to follow up on the possibility of approving minutes via email. K. Moser resolved to include a one-line blurb about WRAC along with the meeting dates in 2019 wildlife rehabilitator permit emails.
- P. Nelson and K. Moser gave an update on the proposed regulations to combine game with exotic and nongame species. A meeting occurred with the Commissioner's assistants, and she has since received a briefing memo about the proposed regulations.
- It was determined that the conflict of interest waiver previously prepared by D. Nickerson was no longer necessary.
- The Code of Conduct was passed out to all present WRAC members to sign and return to K. Moser.
- T. Leaver reported that the Division training program would be postponed until January 2020 due to some committee members' personal reasons. She advised that the subcommittee members would determine their next meeting date after today's WRAC meeting.
- P. Nelson reported on the proposed pest control operator (PCO) regulations.

- P. Nelson has been talking things over with wildlife control about this. She recommended a pre-meeting in the next few weeks before meeting with the official subcommittee. The PCOs she had communicated with did not appear to be opposed to mandatory permits, but there may be opposition to some of the proposed regulations. It was proposed that the subcommittee have only 3-4 members but that it would invite advisors to the meeting in order to allow interested parties to provide input.
- L. DeLambert advised that because NJSPCA is no longer, the subcommittee would have to research enforcement. She recommended finding something with better compliance because title 4 is difficult to prosecute.
- P. Brodhecker suggested an educational approach instead of a regulatory approach. Many rehabilitators already provide ongoing educational programs with PCOs and Animal Control Officers (ACOs). It was observed that ACOs are generally open to joining associations and attending educational events.
- Creating rules for PCOs will require legislation, not just regulation. An advantage is that a depredation control permit issued by NJDFW already exists, although it is not currently mandatory. P. Brodhecker suggested that rehabilitators recommend PCOs who already have this permit. D. Nickerson inquired whether those permittees would be interested in making the permit mandatory. K. Moser suggested posting the list of current depredation control permittees on the NJDFW web site and Facebook page.
- P. Brodhecker made a motion to talk about the committee taking on a multi-pronged approach to the PCO issue, i.e., to view the existing wildlife management laws such as the voluntary depredation control permit. There was no second, and the motion was tabled.
- K. Moser asked if there are existing PCO regulations in other states. Tennessee reportedly had a PCO training manual years ago.
- The decision was made that going forward, WRAC would look at existing regulations for this purpose. M. O'Malley volunteered to review the regulations and/or guidelines for New Jersey's depredation control permit, and D. Nickerson volunteered to look at other states' regulations.
- L. DeLambert left the meeting at 11:39AM.
- Dr. E. Miller reported that there were no veterinary committee updates.
- P. Nelson gave an update on another possible capture and transport course for the Wildlife Conservation Corps (WCC). The WCC is intended for Division-directed activities. No one would ever have been covered by Division insurance for transport from a veterinarian or the public to a rehabilitator; only from rehabilitator to rehabilitator. Kathy Clark of the NJDFW Endangered and Nongame Species Program had been interested in a capture and transport course for her WCC eagle volunteers. Those volunteers would be covered if she was directing them to capture. The question is whether rehabilitators directing a WCC volunteer would count as "Division-directed" because rehabilitators have a permit from the Division.
- D. Nickerson resolved that there should be two separate courses: one for Kathy Clark's eagle project and another for transport for rehabilitators. G. Chazotte-Smisko suggested that she and Dr. E. Miller could teach the volunteers instead of inviting a lecturer from out-of-state. Dr. E. Miller gave a "how to capture" presentation around 10 years ago for Kathy Clark. It was determined that once the insurance coverage is decided, NJAWR could host another course.
- D. Nickerson handed out a copy of the response provided to the rehabilitator who had sent a letter to WRAC before the October meeting. No response was received to the response.
- No members of the public were present for a public comment period.

- A motion was made by P. Brodhecker and seconded by G. Chazotte-Smisko to adjourn the meeting. A vote was taken with all in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 12:10PM.