

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF
WHITE LAKE PROPERTY ADVISORY BOARD

Friday, January 26, 2007

Chairman Steve Linscombe opened the White Lake Property Advisory Board meeting held at the LSU Ag Center Rice Research Station in Crowley, LA and asked Ms. Lana Guidry to call the roll. The following members were present:

Steve Linscombe
Richard Hines
Sammy Noel
Don Hale
Karl Connor (arrived at 10:30)
Gay Gomez
Nathan Granger
Eddie Young

The following members were absent:

Cindy Brown
Buddy Leach
Sean Gayle
Annie Smith
Dr. Beverly Wade
Eddie Young

Comments from Secretary Bryant Hammett

Secretary Bryant Hammett introduced himself to the board members. He stated that he looks forward to working with the board members and is looking forward to visiting the property in the very near future. Secretary Hammett informed the board members that earlier in the week representatives from BP came to the Baton Rouge office and presented a check in the amount of \$250,000 for the White Lake Fund. He said that donation was the last of the five payments that BP agreed to in the Original Donation. Secretary Hammett commended the board members for the time and work they have contributed to the property and encouraged them to explore all opportunities of opening the property to the public. He also commended the employees at White Lake for their excellent work on the property and with the different hunts that took place.

Secretary Scott Angelle addressed the board and thanked them for their services and also welcomed Secretary Hammett. Secretary Angelle presented Secretary Hammett with a check in the amount of \$64,652.45 made payable to the White Lake Property Fund.

Secretary Angelle stated there is a state oil and gas lease, lease #18647. His staff has determined that 36.8 percent of that lease is within Clear Lake; therefore, 36.8 percent of income from that lease will go into the White Lake Property Fund. He stated the lease was awarded on July 13, 2005 and the company did make an annual rental payment. Secretary Angelle is very hopeful this will lead into drilling and production producing royalties which will provide a substantial amount of revenues to the White Lake Property Fund.

Potential for the Re-Introduction of Whooping Cranes into the White Lake Area

Ms. Mary Lynch Courville, Secretary of the Whooping Crane Conservation Association presented a PowerPoint presentation to the board on whooping cranes. Ms. Courville informed the board that in 1937 it was documented that there were whooping cranes in the White Lake area. Ms. Courville said that her father, John Lynch, actually took pictures of the whooping cranes that were present in White Lake at that time. She said her father left in 1941 for World War II and then was unable to survey the cranes. She stated that throughout the United States, White Lake was the last nesting site. She discussed with the board her interest and the possibility of bringing the birds back into the White Lake region. Ms. Courville stated she feels that this is an opportunity to re-create history and further conservation. Ms. Courville said she has corporations who are interested in adding large sums of money to next year's budget to assist with this project. She said that another corporation contacted her and is interesting in helping build a visitor's center and sponsor area, as well as maintenance for the area they sponsor. Ms. Courville feels this is a great opportunity and would like to work with the Department on this endeavor. Dr. Gay Gomez stated this is a hands-on and very lengthy process and that the Whooping Crane Recovery Team, which is jointly run by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Canadian Wildlife Service will ultimately determine if whooping cranes are placed at White Lake. Dr. Gomez stated they are apparently very interested in the possibility of a re-introduction in Louisiana if the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries is receptive to the idea. Dr. Gomez said the Whooping Crane Recovery Team is holding their meeting in Lafayette next week and will be taking field trips to White Lake and to Marsh Island. Ms. Courville stated that this process has been done in Kissimmee, FL and has been very successful.

Mr. Phil Bowman addressed the board and informed them that the Department has been actively involved with this item for a number of years. He stated they were looking at Marsh Island and did a lot of work with the recovery team during the assessment of Marsh Island a few years ago. Mr. Bowman stated that Marsh Island and Florida were the two top picks at that particular time and for various reasons the recovery team decided to move those birds to Florida. Mr. Bowman said it is a very structured process and this is not something that will happen tomorrow or next year; they will have to come in and perform an assessment of not only the habitat, but the food availability which we know is there; but it all has to be documented and will take time. He said once that is evaluated then they will move to determine what kind of birds (migratory or non-migratory), the number of birds to be placed, and infrastructure for the birds. Mr. Bowman informed the board that we currently have a whooping crane in the State right

now and that the Department is actively tracking the bird. He said the Department has been in communication with staff of the Whooping Crane Recovery Foundation.

Budget Report

Ms. Wynnette Kees presented the board members with a budget report. Ms. Kees reported to the board that the \$250,000 donation from BP was received and was being deposited into the White Lake Property Fund.

Mr. Richard Hines moved for the Board to send a formal letter to BP requesting an extension of the funding and to include a copy of the Master Plan, being very specific what the funds will be used for to have on file. Mr. Nathan Granger seconded the motion. Mr. Karl Connor stated he felt it is highly unlikely BP would extend any further obligations to donate anymore money, but said it is not a dead issue. The Board voted and the motion carried. Mr. Connor abstained from voting. Chairman Linscombe asked Mr. Connor who the letter should be addressed to and he suggested sending it to Pat Wright, Vice President. Mr. Connor also suggested including pictures of all educational events that have taken place at White Lake when they submit the letter requesting additional funding. It was recommended that these pictures be put on the website as well.

Mr. Connor suggested to the Board that they take the \$250,000 donation from BP and try to get another company to match it; he said at that point you are showing that your long term dependency on one company is not necessarily going to be there.

Mr. Bowman informed the board that the Fur and Refuge Division is presently going through some of these issues at the Rockefeller Refuge. Due to the enormous amount of construction, they are now using this opportunity to develop a Master Plan for Rockefeller and have hired an architect who has put together some draft plans for him after meeting with the Department and a number of other people. Mr. Bowman said once the plan is finalized, they will phase construction as funds are available and are able to get the contracts executed to do these things. Mr. Bowman told the board that they may want to investigate what it would cost to hire an architect or consultant to visit with them to develop a Master Plan that would incorporate the boat ramp, parking lot and education center. Mr. Bowman stated that the board would then have more accurate information to present to BP or any other corporation, along with the actual costs and the amount of money that would be needed for the different projects.

Mr. Eddie Young moved to urge and request the Department to earmark the \$250,000 donation from BP to be put in reserve and be held, based on the completion of the Master Plan, with emphasis and focus for development and construction of an education center. The motion was seconded by Dr. Gomez and the motion carried without opposition.

Committee Reports

Finance Committee

Mr. Hale stated that Ms. Kees presented the financial report which looks good and had no further comment.

Education and Outreach Committee

Dr. Gomez addressed the board and stated that Dr. Beverly Wade had asked her to meet with Mr. Wayne Sweeney to obtain more information on current activities associated with education. Dr. Gomez stated she met with Mr. Sweeney on October 25, 2006. Dr. Gomez reported that plans for a nature trail look good and when completed the trail would be approximately 2.5 miles with a bridge to the island where the lodge is located, and an observation tower overlooking the rookery area. She said there is also the possibility of developing a canoe launch at the island for group canoeing in the bass pond. Dr. Gomez recommends the Department and White Lake staff pursue the proposed strategy of developing a nature trail provided that some of the underbrush be allowed to remain so that food and cover for ground-level and under story-using wildlife will be preserved and also that the rookery remain off-limits to canoes and other potential disturbances to preserve habitat diversity and enhance wildlife observation opportunities. She recommends the parking lot/boat launch and education center site be to the east of the current boat dock. She stated the advantage to using land on the east side of the current dock is that to her understanding this is a larger parcel of land that could accommodate the education center, a pond, and possibly some research facilities as well but the funding source is uncertain at this time. She encourages the Department to think carefully about the flooding risk and ensure that all structures are designed with future hurricanes in mind.

Natural Resources Committee

Chairman Linscombe commended Mr. Hines for his efforts on behalf of the property. Mr. Hines reported to the board that Mr. Sweeney, Mr. Puckett, Mr. Fred Whitrock and Mr. Mike Windham were all involved in the process. Mr. Hines said he believes this is only the first check of many that we will receive. He said there are other state leases they are checking into right now to see exactly if they have any bearing on the White Lake Wetlands Conservation Area and he stated there are some future activities the Natural Resources Committee will be looking into. Mr. Hines reported he plans to have a committee meeting within the next month or two.

Agriculture Committee

Chairman Linscombe stated they did not sample anything on the White Lake property but approximately two weeks ago they did sample 12 sites they had previously sampled several times since the storm and in every site, including some on Mr. Noel's property, there was a significant reduction in salinity of the soil. In fact, on all 12 of the sites, only

one was still above the level that may be problematic producing rice. Chairman Linscombe stated the rainfall has helped quite a bit. Even though samples were not taken from the White Lake property he feels sure that there should be a significant reduction in salinity. Mr. Sweeney reported that all of the tenants signed an Addendum to Lease giving them a reduction in rental payments and all of the leases are up to date and have been paid. Mr. Sweeney reported there haven't been any breaches in the levees and that the levees appear to be in good shape. Mr. Sweeney stated the farmers have been pumping off the floodwaters and rainwater the property has received.

Approval of Minutes of September 14, 2006 Meeting

Chairman Linscombe called for a motion for approval of the minutes of the September 14, 2006 meeting. A motion for approval was made by Mr. Hale and seconded by Mr. Noel. The motion passed with no opposition.

Consideration of Proposed Bylaws for the White Lake Property Advisory Board

Mr. Don Puckett presented the board with proposed bylaws for the Advisory Board. Mr. Puckett stated he was contacted by Mr. Sean Gayle who questioned what constituted a quorum and why it was not included in the bylaws. Mr. Puckett explained that he did not define quorum in the proposed bylaws because it is defined in the Open Meetings Law as a majority of the body. Chairman Linscombe inquired if a board with an even number of 14 members would take eight members present to make a quorum and Mr. Puckett stated that is correct because it has to be 50% plus one additional member. Mr. Puckett explained these are proposed bylaws and the board can amend them and/or make any suggestions to the provisions within.

Mr. Hale moved to accept the proposed bylaws and having the bylaws be retroactive and the motion was seconded by Mr. Noel. The motion carried without opposition. Mr. Puckett will have the bylaws finalized and sent to the board members.

Consideration of Consumptive Component WLWCA Management Plan

Mr. Bowman addressed the Board and presented them with a proposed management plan for public use of consumptive resources. Mr. Bowman suggested this Plan be submitted to the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission for ratification to be placed into rule if approved by the Board. Chairman Linscombe inquired when inflation occurs will the availability to increase the costs on the activities be possible and Mr. Bowman stated that amendments to the existing rule can occur. Mr. Bowman stated the Department would request the Board's concurrence on any amendments and then bring before the Commission for their consideration. Mr. Granger asked how many fishing permits are going to be issued and Mr. Sweeney said that 75 permits will be issued and all 75 permits were issued last year. Mr. Sweeney stated that the permits are selected through lottery process unless they do not receive over 75 applications and that the application period for fishing is currently open and ends February 20. Mr. Hines moved to accept the proposed framework for public use of consumptive resources amending the Fishing to \$40 per

permit instead of \$40 per group and submit to the Commission for ratification. The motion was seconded by Mr. Connor and carried without opposition.

Consideration of Non-Consumptive Component WLWCA Management Plan

Mr. Bowman addressed the Board and presented them with a proposed management plan for public use of non-consumptive activities. He stated that this is a schedule of costs they have reviewed and discussed within the Department. Mr. Bowman stated the idea is to try to recoup the costs they would experience by providing these different types of activities. Mr. Bowman informed the Board that the daily use is for up to 15 people but the overnight use is only for up to 12 people because that is the maximum number that can be accommodated overnight. There was much discussion regarding the proposed costs, days the facilities would be utilized and costs for labor that will be needed during these activities. Mr. Connor expressed his concern of not having a financial analysis of the costs of the activities. Dr. Gomez moved to accept the proposed framework for public use of non-consumptive resources with an exception that the overnight use base cost of \$750 be increased to \$900 per night in order to cover anticipated costs, and to include in the plan that the use of the facilities is subject to availability, as well as staff availability, and other scheduled events on the area. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hale and carried but was opposed by Mr. Connor.

Report on 2006 – 2007 Hunting Season

Mr. Sweeney addressed the Board and provided the following handouts:

1. 2006-2007 Hunting Application Results
2. WLWCA Historical Waterfowl Hunting Results
3. White Lake Water Hunting Results 2006-2007

These handouts are attached hereto and made part of the record. Mr. Sweeney provided pictures of the handicap hunt and reported that 2006-2007 hunting season was a success.

Potential for the Development of a Master Plan for the WLWCA

Chairman Linscombe addressed the Board and stated he felt this was addressed earlier in the meeting today but wanted to discuss some key points Mr. Gayle feels the Master Plan should include. It includes the discussion of in-house v. consultant which was previously discussed by Mr. Bowman. Chairman Linscombe feels there is a consensus that the Master Plan is essential for the WLWCA. Mr. Bowman suggested that the Department have their staff who oversees construction projects to develop a process for what the Board would like to look at developing and the process the Department would have to use in the selection of an architect and provide that information to the Board for discussion. Chairman Linscombe asked if that would be possible to have that information put together and have this individual give a presentation and Mr. Bowman stated the Department would have someone speak to them about what they have done in

the past and the process that must be used, such as going through the Office of Facility Planning, Architectural Selection Board and the bid process. Mr. Hines suggested to Mr. Bowman to speak to the department staff who is handling this for Rockefeller Refuge and see if they would agree to address the Board at the next meeting and perhaps start assembling some direction for this Master Plan. There was also discussion of checking with the LSU School of Architect for assistance. Mr. Bowman stated that he would do some investigating between now and the next board meeting. He said he would contact Chairman Linscombe and also try to talk to some people at LSU to obtain some ideas on how to proceed.

Election of Officers

Mr. Puckett addressed the Board and informed them that since they approved the Bylaws it is acceptable now for the election of officers to take place.

Mr. Noel nominated Mr. Linscombe for Chairman and Mr. Linscombe was declared Chairman by acclamation.

Mr. Granger nominated Mr. Hines for Vice-Chairman and Mr. Hines was declared Vice-Chairman by acclamation.

Mr. Hale nominated Mr. Noel for Secretary and Mr. Noel was declared Secretary by acclamation.

Dr. Gomez nominated Mr. Hale for Treasurer and Mr. Hale was declared Treasurer by acclamation.

Other Business

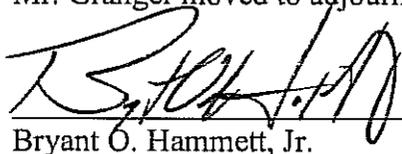
The next regular Advisory Board meeting will be held on April 4, 2006 at 9:30 a.m. at the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA in the Louisiana Room.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Chairman Linscombe asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Granger moved to adjourn the meeting and it was seconded by Mr. Noel.

 5/24/07
Bryant O. Hammett, Jr.

BOH:lg

(The preceding constitute minutes of the Advisory Board Meeting and are not a verbatim transcript of the proceedings.)

WHITE LAKE WETLANDS CONSERVATION AREA

HISTORICAL WATERFOWL HUNTING RESULTS (main season)

Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
DUCKS					
Marsh					
Total kill	2619	1854	2255	2269	2801
Avg. kill per hunter	4.80	4.25	3.80	5.00	5.00
Rice Field					
Total kill	N/A	230	182	355	437
Avg. kill per hunter	N/A	1.08	0.92	2.26	2.41
GEESE					
Marsh					
Total kill	288	348	371	216	203
Avg. kill per hunter	0.55	0.80	0.65	0.48	0.36
Rice Field					
Total kill	N/A	63	98	50	152
Avg. kill per hunter	N/A	0.28	0.48	0.32	0.84

WHITE LAKE 2006-2007 HUNTING APPLICATION RESULTS

	Applications Submitted	Applicants Selected	Total Hunts for Season	Total # of Hunter Participants
Teal Lotto	198	54	9	108
Youth Hunt	52	8	1	8
Handicap Youth Hunt			1	3
Marsh Lotto	468	60	10	120
Rice Field Lotto	791	63	21	189
Group Hunts	12	12	12	117

White Lake Waterfowl Hunting Results 2006-2007

Type Hunt	Greenhead Mallard	Northern Black Mallard	Summer Mallard	Gadwall	Widgeon	Green Winged Teal	Blue Winged Teal	Shoveler	Pintail	Redhead	Canvasback	Scaup	Ringed Necked or Blk. Duck	Bufflehead	Coot	Wood Duck	Other	TOTAL DUCKS	AVERAGE DUCKS per/hunter	Snow Goose	Blue Goose	Specklebelly	Canada Goose	TOTAL GEESE	AVERAGE GEESE per/hunter
Marsh (main season)	441	2	208	299	98	711	360	44	222	4	5	34	332	0	0	38	3	2801	5.00	0	16	187	0	203	0.36
Rice Field (main season)	42	0	13	57	18	120	38	92	47	0	1	3	3	0	0	2	1	437	2.41	3	15	134	0	152	0.84
Teal						282	141											423	2.66						
TOTALS	483	2	221	356	116	1113	539	136	405	4	6	37	335	0	0	40	4	3661		3	31	321	0	355	