

LOUISIANA WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION

MINUTES

July 9, 2007

**PATRICK C. MORROW
VICE-CHAIRMAN**

BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA

The following constitute minutes of the Commission Meeting and are not a verbatim transcript of the proceedings. Tapes of the meetings are kept at the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries 2000 Quail Drive Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808 For more information, call (225) 765-2806

**AGENDA
LOUISIANA WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA
JULY 9, 2007**

Page

- | | | |
|----|---|---|
| 1. | Roll Call | |
| 1 | | |
| 2. | Approval of Minutes of June 7, 2007 | 1 |
| 3. | Commission Special Announcements/Personal Privilege | |
| 1 | | |
| 4. | To receive and hear Presentation by Ducks Unlimited | 1 |
| 5. | To receive and hear Discussion on Bobcats | 4 |
| 6. | To receive and hear Discussion on Reciprocal Hunting and Fishing License Agreements | 5 |
| 7. | To receive and hear Enforcement & Aviation Reports/ June | |

6		
8.	To receive and consider Notice of Intent on the 2008 Turkey Season	
6		
9.	To receive and consider Season Dates on Early Migratory Birds (Rail, Snipe, Woodcock and Teal)	24
10.	To receive and consider Oyster Task Force request to expand State Public Oyster Areas in Lake Mechant	25
11.	Set November 2007 Meeting Date	26
12.	Receive Public Comments	
26		
13.	Adjournment	
26		

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

OF

LOUISIANA WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION

Monday, July 9, 2007

Vice-Chairman Patrick Morrow presiding.

Frederic Miller
Henry Mouton
Stephen Oats
Wayne Sagrera

Secretary Bryant Hammett, Jr. was also present.

Chairman Earl King, Jr. and Commissioner Robert Samanie, III were absent from the meeting.

Vice-Chairman Morrow called for a motion for approval of the **June 7, 2007 Commission Minutes**. A motion for approval was made by Commissioner Sagrera and seconded by Commissioner Miller. The

motion passed with no opposition.

Under **Commission Special Announcements/Personal Privilege** for this month, Commissioner Mouton stated he attended court in Alexandria on a case involving Dr. McCann, 2 other hunters and a juvenile on possession of over the limit of ducks, lead shot, no plugs in the guns and other violations. A deal was reached where all of the hunters would plead, they received \$5,000 to \$10,000 fines and no hunting privileges for several years. Judge Kirk ordered a pre-sentence investigation since Dr. McCann had prior convictions. Commissioner Mouton felt it was a good case made by Department agents working with federal agents. He hoped the Judge would “throw the book” at Dr. McCann. Vice-Chairman Morrow thanked Commissioner Mouton for the update and felt a number of people were interested in the outcome due to the numerous violations.

To receive and hear Presentation by Ducks Unlimited began with Mr. Ross Melinchuk thanking the Commission and Department for the opportunity to speak and give a “snapshot” of the work being done on the breeding grounds and in Louisiana. The preliminary numbers from the prairies on teal were the third highest on record. Mr. Melinchuk introduced several key people that help Ducks Unlimited carry out their conservation mission. Those introduced were Mr. Robert Walker, State Chairman for Ducks Unlimited in Louisiana; Mr. Mike Benge, DU Board Member and Past State Chairman; Mr. Chuck Smith and Mr. George Horton, 2 Senior Regional Directors; Mr. Hugh Bateman and Mr. Chad Courville, former employees of Ducks Unlimited; and Mr. Bobby Harmon, a friend. Mr. Melinchuk stated the presentation would be on what has been done with the Commission’s funding from the fourth year of a 5-year contract. Then he announced Mr. Pat Kehoe, Manager of Conservation Programs in Prairie Canada and Mr. Jerry Holder, Director of Conservation Programs in Louisiana would make the presentation. Mr. Kehoe began his presentation stating that approximately 57 percent of the banded ducks recovered in Louisiana come from Saskatchewan, 19 percent from Manitoba and 13 percent from Alberta. The Conservation Programs were designed to improve the probability of success. The Prairie Habitat Joint Venture, the major program under the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, had 20 years of conservation in prairie Canada, Ducks Unlimited was the primary delivery agent, and now there are 5.4 million acres of waterfowl habitat conserved. The impacts of the Joint Venture program was about 25 percent of the gain needed. Mr. Kehoe stated they have learned a lot and based on what they learned, there is a new implementation plan and process, setting new objectives, and refocusing programs and strategies to achieve full success over the next 20 years. The Coteau Legacy Project, which has partnered with Louisiana, covers the area from Saskatoon to Sioux City, South Dakota,

25,000 square miles of the best breeding habitat. The Coteau this year was very wet with over 100 potholes per square mile. Duck densities in this area exceeds 100 pairs per square mile. The Coteau also is home to birds other than waterfowl such as shorebirds, song birds as well as big game (mule deer and antelope) depend on it. Ducks Unlimited Canada wants to take the current landscape which was dominated by crop land and make it a landscape more waterfowl friendly dominated by perennial cover and other agricultural practices that supports waterfowl production. The protection goal for the 5-year plan was to protect just over 250,000 acres of existing upland habitat and wetlands from further loss through conservation easements and land purchase as well as a tax credit program; restore ecological functions on existing prairie habitats on over 1 million acres; and compensate for the continued loss of habitat through programs such as winter cereals and conservation forages. From the past fiscal year, DU Canada received \$204,000 from Louisiana, it was matched by Ducks Unlimited, Inc., matched by NAWCA, and another \$800,000 from other partners for a total leveraging effect of 8:1 match for Louisiana's dollars. Mr. Kehoe announced that this year was successful with achieving 106 percent of the stated goals, good success in habitat protection with about 9,000 acres of land purchase and conservation for a total impact in the Coteau of 270,000 acres. With completing the fourth year of the 5-year program, 96 percent of the goals were achieved with 1.4 million acres now under conservation. The future of the Coteau Legacy Program was to complete the current plan exceeding all goals, develop a plan to fully restore the Coteau, hopefully get a green cover Canada program which converts crop lands to perennial cover for 2 million acres, and announce the Natural Areas Conservation Fund. The last slide shown was a snapshot of the habitat conditions on the Prairie which showed the pothole region was in very good to excellent condition. Commissioner Miller asked how many acres were permanently protected. Mr. Kehoe stated the total was approximately 20,000 acres. Commissioner Miller then asked about the conservation forage and winter cereals. Mr. Kehoe stated that the forages were usually a 20 year agreement and the winter cereals are planted in rotation for maximum yield. After funding a winter wheat research program at the University of Saskatchewan, 90 percent of the varieties of winter wheat grown in Canada have been developed from this program. Winter wheat acres were at a low of 300,000 acres 5-6 years ago, and now has exceeded a million acres and the goal was to get winter wheat the dominate wheat type grown on the prairies. Commissioner Miller then asked, for the perpetual easements and land purchases, how much was it per acre. Mr. Kehoe stated land trades were about \$40,000 for a quarter section of 160 acres. Easements were bought at a range of \$70 to \$100 per acre for permanent protection and land values were in the order of \$250 to \$350 per acre. Commissioner Miller asked Mr. Kehoe to explain the tax credit

program. He stated Ducks Unlimited paid the taxes for natural habitats on an individuals landholdings. It was found to be fairly successful on the Coteau where there was lower demands for habitat. Commissioner Mouton thanked Ducks Unlimited for testifying before the Legislature on House Bill 919. Vice-Chairman Morrow noted that the funds partnered with Ducks Unlimited were generated from Louisiana license fees and the return of 8:1 was a good return.

Mr. Jerry Holden stated Commissioner Mouton's comment was an excellent way to open the report on Louisiana. He felt Wildlife and Fisheries was the Department of choice for Louisiana. Mr. Holden then thanked the Department for being the partner in working together. Within the state, the Delta, the Red River Valley and the Coast were priority areas. One of the primary conservation tools for Louisiana was conservation easements as mentioned by Mr. Kehoe. Projects discussed were on Pointe-aux-Chenes, Bayou Macon WMA, Crow Field Unit, Catahoula Lake, GTR structure replacement and levee enhancement on Russell Sage WMA. The next slide shown was a table on projects not on Department lands, but on private lands and federal refuges. In an average year, Ducks Unlimited spends from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 on Department lands primarily funded through NAWCA with the use of conservation easement as a match to get the federal money. Mr. Holden explained how NAWCA worked and where the funds come from. He then noted that it was critical to keep doing what has been done. Credit was given to the Department on partnering in the seasonal survival movements and habitat use of mottled ducks in Texas and Louisiana. Another project the Department was partnered with was on gadwalls and knowing how the waterfowl responds to the habitat we have in the state. Mr. Holden also complimented the Department on their contribution to the private lands program implemented by Ducks Unlimited. Mr. Melinchuk concluded thanking the Commission for allowing the opportunity to make their presentation and to say thanks. He then noted the DU Convention would be held on August 3-4 in Baton Rouge. Vice-Chairman expressed appreciation to Ducks Unlimited for their efforts to help make Louisiana one of the best duck hunting spots in the world.

Commissioner Sagrera began the next item, **To receive and hear Discussion on Bobcats**, stating that the Department was to provide an update on the bobcat hunting season. He knew there were some questions from the trapping industry as to what data was available and felt this was in response to that request. Mr. Edmond Mouton stated the latest update on bobcats would cover the 2005-06 deer hunting season, which now made 3 years of data. Bobcats were initially classified as outlaw quadrupeds prior to 1978 and could be harvested anytime except at night. The bobcat was reclassified as a non-game quadruped in 1978

and could only be harvested by trapping during the open trapping season. In 2003, the Legislature requested the Department consider a bobcat hunting season. The Commission considered and set a bobcat hunting season to run the same as the deer season with a limit of 1. The Department also committed to monitoring the harvest and evaluate the bobcat population trends in the State. Bobcat seasons in adjacent states showed that Mississippi allows hunting from November to February with no limit; Arkansas allows hunting from September through February with a daily limit of 2; and Alabama allows hunting during deer and turkey hunting seasons with no limit. The Department worked with LSU Experimental Statistics to develop a survey that would estimate the bobcat harvest, harvest distribution and population trends. A random sample of 10,000 licensed deer hunters received the survey. After 3 weeks, a second reminder mailing was sent out to those that had not responded which was then followed with a third mailing. The results for the 2005–06 season came from a total of 4,115 returned surveys. The data was broken into the 7 ecological regions. Results from the 2003–04 bobcat season showed 9,881 bobcats taken with the northwest region taking the majority followed by the northeast and central regions. For the 2004–05 data, the northwest region was again the highest, followed by the central and northeast regions. Harvest distribution for the 2005–06 season showed the northwest region had the highest level of harvest, followed by the central and northeast regions. Bobcat sightings for 2003–04 showed the region with the highest number was the northwest, followed by the central and Florida parishes for a total of over 67,000. In 2004–05, the highest region was northwest followed by central and then the Florida parishes for a total of 65,985. In the 2005–06 survey, the northwest region had the highest number of sightings followed by the central and Florida parishes for a total of 57,646. Conclusions showed that harvest decreased from last year only by 29 animals; the percentage of hunters seeing bobcats was still very high; the population appears to have increased in Louisiana and throughout the southeast United States; and the harvest should continue as well as be monitored. In July 2006, the Commission adopted a rule that changed the harvest of bobcat to one per calendar year. To address that change, staff adjusted the survey to capture bobcats harvested in 2006 and 2007 and to find out if the majority of the bobcats were still being harvested within the deer hunting season. Mr. Mouton stated they plan to continue to survey and monitor the take and distribution of the bobcats. Commissioner Sagraera noted Louisiana was more restrictive than the surrounding states and felt the season was not hurting the population. Mr. Mouton added that the fur trappers take since the bobcat season began was approximately 1,000 harvested and recorded for the 2003–04 and 2004–05 seasons. But there were only 678 recorded for the 2005–06 season.

Mr. Vance Gordon stated he commented last year on the bobcat limit. He did not feel deer hunters taking bobcats was a good management tool. If a deer hunter would take a bobcat with a rifle, the pelt would be ruined. Mr. Gordon also did not understand what purpose the season served except to obtain data for the Department's use. He hoped the Commission would keep the limit at one. Vice-Chairman Morrow did not know of a proposal that would raise the limit at this time.

The next item, **To receive and hear Discussion on Reciprocal Hunting and Fishing License Agreements** was handled by Secretary Bryant Hammett. He wanted to begin talking about the reciprocity process with adjoining states and possibly even the southeastern states. Discussions on how Louisiana handles non-resident hunting and fishing licenses could center around how other states handle these licenses, making comparisons, and seeing how changes could affect cash flow to the Conservation Fund. In Secretary Hammett's quest to market Louisiana as the Sportsman's Paradise to other states, he felt it important to see where the Department is in regards to non-resident hunting and fishing license sales, cost and availability. He asked that he would like to come back before the Commission at a future date to make a presentation on those findings. Vice-Chairman Morrow stated he receives lots of inquiries on reciprocal agreements with Texas, Mississippi, Alabama and others. He felt it would be good for the public to know what agreements there are with the surrounding states.

Secretary Hammett then took the opportunity to thank the Commission and others for their support on House Bill 919. He felt the end result was very positive. Vice-Chairman Morrow hoped the Governor would sign the bill which would generate much needed funds for the Department.

Mr. Vance Gordon stated he was Vice-President of a deer hunting club in Mississippi that has been in existence for about 20 years. He added that he has seen the impact of Mississippi license fees going up on their lease. Mr. Gordon noted he was in favor of looking at all of the reciprocity and urged the Department to be careful with Mississippi and not make them mad.

To receive and hear Enforcement & Aviation Reports/June began with Lt. Keith LaCaze stating activities were centered on boating and recreational fishing. He felt that the higher gas prices had not slowed down the boating traffic. Total cases for June were 1,602, 264 written warnings and agents helped with 50 public assists. He reported on a case from Rapides Parish where an employee from a cable company reported 3 freshly killed deer in the back yard of a residence which resulted in numerous violations being issued. Another deer case was

made in Region 7 when deputies responded to shots being fired which involved night hunting for deer. The Aviation Report showed one plane was down for engine replacement, while the other two planes flew a total 39.5 hours for the month. There were 18 boating accidents reported during June for a total of 76 for the year; 7 injuries reported for a total of 31 for the year; and 5 fatalities bringing the total for the year to 14. The fatalities occurred in Natchitoches, Terrebonne, Vermilion and 2 in Livingston Parishes. Lt. Col. LaCaze noted that 3 accidents involved inner tubes being pulled behind a boat and he emphasized that this was a very dangerous activity. News Releases covered 3 individuals were cited for gross littering in St. Bernard Parish and offering parents PFD safety tips for their children. Vice-Chairman Morrow asked how many of the fatalities were due to not wearing a PFD. Lt. Col. LaCaze stated that none of the deceased were wearing a PFD at the time of their incidence. Vice-Chairman Morrow complimented the Department on the excellent job of educating the public as well as agents checking boaters while on the water. Lt. Col. LaCaze noted that the agents will take the time to notify boaters on the proper fit of a PFD for children and encourage boaters that they wear them.

To receive and consider Notice of Intent on the 2008 Turkey Season began with Mr. Fred Kimmel stating he would give a brief background on the turkey season structure and summarize a survey conducted during the spring and Mr. Larry Savage would provide the recommendations. Mr. Kimmel stated that the Notice of Intent was reorganized by putting all of the general and WMA regulations in one section and then the season dates and area boundaries were put into another section. Since 2001, the turkey season framework has opened the fourth Saturday in March on a statewide basis except for when the fourth Saturday falls during Easter weekend, then the season would open on Good Friday with a bag limit of 2 birds. The goals of the framework were to moderate the gobbler kill rate which would lead to more adult gobblers in the population and to regulate pressure on public lands. From data obtained, staff has been able to determine the first gobbling peak and the later second gobbling peak. The latest the season framework would open would be March 28 where it catches some of the first gobbling peak and all of the second. The earliest opening can occur on March 21 or 22 where it catches the first gobbling peak and a portion of the second. Last year, there was a lot of discussion from the public on wanting an earlier or later opening date which Mr. Kimmel stated was not unique to just Louisiana. These discussions occur all over the southeast and nation. To understand where hunters stood on the season, a turkey hunter survey was conducted during the spring. About 9 percent of the turkey stamp holders and lifetime license holders from each parish were randomly selected for a total of 4,100 surveys with approximately 800 responses

returned. Survey results showed that hunters averaged about 8 days a piece, killed about one-half of a turkey a piece, about 21 percent participated in the youth hunt (which was an increase), and about 30 percent hunted on public land. A question was asked on season timing with the first being a generic on opening the fourth weekend of March. The results were that 59 percent felt it opened right, 29 percent felt it should open earlier and 12 percent thought it should be later. Then a question on specific dates was asked for 2008 to find out what the hunter preferred. The support for the fourth weekend was at about 48 percent while 31 percent preferred the earlier weekend and almost 17 percent preferred a later weekend. Results from the people that hunted in 2007 showed there was a little difference with a trend toward the later dates. Results on the uniform opening date showed 71 percent strongly favored or favored it, 25 percent noted it did not matter and only 4.1 percent opposed it. There was weak support for a week day opening of the season with 25 percent strongly favoring or favoring it, 25 percent did not matter and about 47 percent opposed. Mr. Kimmel added that Mr. Savage would recommend continuing with the same framework since it was biologically based, met the long-term needs of the wild turkey resource, provided a reasonable opportunity for people to hunt turkeys and maintain high hunt quality, and it had the support of the hunters.

Mr. Savage stated there were not many changes for the 2008 season. The baiting statute was added; the tagging rule was added which basically followed the format of the deer season; and clarification on pen-raised turkeys was added. On the Wildlife Management areas, the changes were: allow one person to accompany a lottery hunter; add a new 2-day lottery hunt to Dewey Wills WMA; and a new 1-day youth hunt to Tunica Hills. The season dates were calendar adjustments beginning on Good Friday for 2008. The opening date for all 3 areas will be March 21. Area A will close on April 20; Area B will close on April 13; and Area C on April 5. The bag limit will be one gobbler per day and 2 for the season. The youth hunt on private lands would be on March 15-16. There will be 12 WMAs and 2 National Wildlife Refuges open for the season. Physically challenged season (wheelchair classification) on private lands mirrored the youth hunt and would occur on March 15-16. On public lands, Jackson-Bienville WMA would open on April 12-18 and Indian Bayou, Corps of Engineers land, would open on March 15-16. There would be no area boundary changes for 2008. There will be 27 WMAs open for this upcoming year and the seasons ranged from a 1-day youth hunt up to the full 30 day season. About 630,000 acres of WMA lands would open for the turkey season. On the WMAs, there would be 12 open for youth lottery hunts, 17 would have non-lottery hunts and 10 would have lottery and/or combination of lottery and non-lottery hunts. Kisatchie Federal Refuge will open on March 21 and go to April 13. The

other federal areas would have calendar adjustments from the past season. Since 1985, the Department has been banding gobblers to monitor their kill rate. It was recommended from large scale dynamic studies that the state should not exceed 30–40 percent recovery to maintain a good adult gobbler component and to allow for the population to expand. Direct recovery from the 2000 2007 seasons ranged between 15 and 26 percent. Banding in 1985 began in the southeast portion of Louisiana, expanded to north–central Louisiana and then last year was conducted in southwest Louisiana. The banding program would continue to monitor the kill rate.

Hearing no questions from the Commission, Commissioner Oats made a motion to accept the Notice of Intent. Commissioner Mouton seconded the motion and it passed with no opposition.

(The full text of the Notice of Intent is made a part of the record.)

NOTICE OF INTENT

Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
Wildlife and Fisheries Commission

The Wildlife and Fisheries Commission does hereby give notice of its intent to amend the turkey rules and regulations for the 2007 2008 season.

Title 76

WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES

Part XIX. Hunting and WMA Regulations

Chapter 1. Resident Game Hunting Season

§113. General and WMA Turkey Hunting Regulations

A. General Regulations. Daily limit is one gobbler, two gobblers per season. Only gobblers (male turkeys) may be taken. Taking of hen (female) turkeys, including bearded hens, is illegal prohibited. Still hunting only. Use of dogs, baiting, electronic calling devices and live decoys is illegal. Turkeys may be hunted with shotguns, including muzzleloading shotguns, using shot not larger than #2 lead or BB steel shot, and bow and arrow but by no other means. Shooting turkeys from a moving or stationary vehicle is prohibited. Shotguns capable of holding

more than three shells prohibited. The running of coyote with dogs is prohibited in all turkey hunting areas during the open turkey season. No person shall hunt, trap or take turkeys by the aid of baiting or on or over any baited area. Baiting means placing, exposing, depositing or scattering of corn (shelled, shucked or unshucked), wheat or other grain, salt, or other feed so as to constitute a lure, attraction or enticement to, on or over any areas where hunters are attempting to take turkeys. A baited areas is any area where corn (shelled, shucked or unshucked), wheat or other grain, salt, or other feed capable of luring, attracting or enticing turkeys is directly or indirectly placed, exposed, deposited, distributed or scattered. Such areas remain baited areas for 15 days following complete removal of all such corn, wheat or other grain, salt, or other feed. Wildlife agents are authorized to close such baited areas and to place signs in the immediate vicinity designating closed zones and dates of closures. No person hunting turkeys more than 200 yards from a baited area will be in violation of the turkey baiting regulation.

B. Tags

1. Prior to hunting turkeys, all turkey hunters, regardless of age or license status, must obtain turkey tags and have them in their possession while turkey hunting. Immediately upon killing a turkey, hunters must attach a carcass tag to the turkey before it is moved from the site of the kill and must document the kill on the turkey harvest report card. The date of kill and parish of kill must be recorded on the carcass tag. The tag must remain attached to the turkey while kept at camp or while it is transported to the domicile of the hunter or to a cold storage facility. Hunters who keep the carcass or meat at a camp must also comply with game possession tag regulations. Within 72 hours of the kill, the hunter must report the kill and record the validation number on the turkey harvest report card. Hunters may report turkeys by calling the validation phone number or using the validation web site.

2. Turkey hunters purchasing licenses by phone or internet will be given an authorization number and a LDWF identification number that will serve as their license and tags until the physical license and tags arrive by mail. Turkey hunters who have purchased a license with tags, but have not yet received their physical license and tags, must immediately tag their kill with a possession tag before moving it from the site of the kill. The authorization number and LDWF identification number must be recorded on the possession tag. Hunters must retain documentation of any turkeys killed and upon receiving their physical tags and harvest report card, validate their kill as required in these regulations. The tags for turkeys killed prior to receiving the physical tags must be removed from the turkey harvest report card and discarded.

3. Tags removed from the turkey harvest report card prior to killing a turkey are no longer valid and if lost will not be replaced. Duplicate tags and turkey harvest report cards are available to replace lost report cards and attached tags. Hunters will be charged a fee for duplicate turkey harvest report cards and tags. Hunters that have killed a turkey prior to losing their remaining tag and harvest report card must remove and discard the duplicate tag to account for the original tag that was used and validated. Hunters must record any previously validated turkey on the duplicate turkey harvest report card.

B C. Possession of Live Wild Turkeys. It is unlawful to No person shall take live wild turkeys or their eggs from the wild, from the wild or possess in No person shall possess captivity any captive live wild turkeys, (Meleagris gallopavo silvestris, M. g. osceola, M. g. intermedia, M. g. merriami, M. g. mexicana) or their eggs, regardless of origin, without a valid game breeder license. No pen raised turkeys from within or without the state shall be liberated (released) within the state.

D. Statewide Youth and Physically Challenged Season Regulations. Only youths younger than 16 years of age or hunters possessing a Physically Challenged Hunter Permit with wheelchair classification may hunt. Youth must possess a hunter safety certification or proof of successful completion of a hunter safety course. Each youth must be accompanied by one adult 18 years of age or older. If the accompanying adult is in possession of hunter safety certification, a valid hunting license or proof of successful completion of a hunter safety course, this requirement is waived for the youth. Adults accompanying youth may not possess a firearm or bow. Youths may possess only one firearm or bow while hunting. The supervising adult shall maintain visual and voice contact with the youth at all times. An adult may supervise only one youth during this special hunt. Only one gobbler per day may be taken and any gobbler taken by the hunter during this special season counts towards their season bag limit of 2.

E. WMA Turkey Hunting Regulations

1. WMAs with youth turkey hunts are closed to all activities except turkey hunting by authorized youth hunt participants and fishing on the day(s) of the youth hunt.

2. Self-Clearing Permits: All turkey hunts, including lottery hunts, are self-clearing. Hunters must check in daily by obtaining a permit from a self-clearing station prior to hunting. The self-clearing permit must be in the hunter's possession while hunting. Upon

completion of each days hunt, the hunter must check out by completing and depositing the hunter report portion of the permit in the check-out box at a self-clearing station before exiting the WMA.

3. Lottery Hunts: All or a portion of the turkey season on Bayou Macon, Clear Creek, Loggy Bayou, Sabine, Sherburne, Sicily Island, Tunica Hills, Union and West Bay WMAs are restricted to those persons selected as a result of the pre-application lottery. Special youth only lottery hunts will be held on Big Lake, Bens Creek, Fort Polk/Peason Ridge/KNF Calcasieu Ranger District, Jackson-Bienville, Loggy Bayou, Sherburne, Sicily Island, Spring Bayou, Thistlethwaite, Union and West Bay WMAs. Deadline for receiving complete applications in the Baton Rouge office for all lottery hunts is 4:30 p.m. February 16, 2007. All or portions of some WMA seasons are designated as lottery hunts and are restricted to hunters selected by pre-application lottery. To apply for these lottery hunts, a hunter must submit a completed official application form to the Baton Rouge office by the deadline printed on the application. A non-refundable fee of \$5 must be sent with each application. Applicants for WMA youth hunts must be at least 8 years old on the day of the hunt. Applicants may submit only one application and may be selected for only one WMA Turkey Lottery Hunt annually. Submitting more than one application will result in disqualification. Hunters must abide by self-clearing permit requirements. Hunters chosen for WMA lottery hunts may be accompanied by one person. The person accompanying a lottery hunter shall not possess a firearm/bow or take a turkey, and must remain within a distance that allows normal voice contact with the lottery hunter at all times. Youths chosen for special youth only hunts will be guided by members of the Louisiana Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation. One person may accompany the youth and guide, but may not hunt.

4. WMA Physically Challenged Hunt (Wheelchair Confined): Open only to hunters with a Physically Challenged Hunter Permit with wheelchair classification. During this hunt, ATVs may be used by hunters on all designated ATV trails in accordance with the Physically Challenged Hunter Permit. Hunters must abide by self-clearing permit requirements.

4 5. Rules Specific to Certain WMAs:

a. Bens Creek: No turkey hunting within 100 yards of food plots identified by two yellow paint rings around the nearest tree.

b. Jackson-Bienville: Hunters participating in the Physically Challenged (Wheelchair Confined) hunt must possess a

Physically Challenged Hunter Permit with wheelchair classification. During this special hunt, ATVs may be used by physically challenged hunters on all designated ATV trails in accordance with the Physically Challenged Hunter Permit. Hunters must abide by self-clearing permit requirements.

c b. Sandy Hollow: No turkey hunting within 100 yards of food plots identified by two yellow paint rings around the nearest tree.

d c. Sherburne: All turkeys taken must be checked at the WMA headquarters.

e d. Tunica Hills (Angola North Tract): Area closed to all users April 16 14 - August 31.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 56:115.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Wildlife and Fisheries Commission, LR 25:2263 (November 1999), amended LR 26:2634 (November 2000), LR 27:2270 (December 2001), LR 28:2375 (November 2002), LR 29:2512 (November 2003), LR 30:2874 (December 2004), LR 31:3167 (December 2005), LR 32:2272 (December 2006), LR 33: .

§115. Statewide Turkey Hunting Areas, Seasons, and Bag Limits - Resident Game Birds and Animals

A. Shooting hours: one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

<< Conversion error >><< Conversion error >>**SPECIES**
<< Conversion error >><< Conversion error >><< Conversion error >>**SEASON DATES**
<< Conversion error >><< Conversion error >><< Conversion error >>**DAILY BAG LIMIT**
<< Conversion error >><< Conversion error >><< Conversion error >><< Conversion error >>**POSSESSION LIMIT**
<< Conversion error >><< Conversion error >>Turkey
<< Conversion error >><< Conversion error >>See Schedule
<< Conversion error >><< Conversion error >>1
<< Conversion error >><< Conversion error >><< Conversion error >>2/Season

B. Daily limit is one gobbler. Season limit is two gobblers. Turkeys taken on WMAs are part of the season bag limit. Only one turkey

may be taken during WMA lottery hunts.

B C. Turkey season will open in designated areas on the fourth Saturday in March. The Area A turkey season will be 30 consecutive days in length, the Area B turkey season will be 23 consecutive days in length, and the Area C turkey season will be 16 consecutive days in length. Wildlife Management Areas, National Forests, National Wildlife Refuges, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers land may vary from this framework. Deviation from this framework may occur in those years when the fourth Saturday in March falls the day before Easter.

C D. Statewide Youth Turkey and Physically Challenged Season on private lands shall be the weekend prior to the statewide turkey season. Only youths younger than 16 years of age or hunters possessing a Physically Challenged Hunter Permit with wheelchair classification may hunt. Youth must possess a hunter safety certification or proof of successful completion of a hunter safety course. Each youth must be accompanied by one adult 18 years of age or older. If the accompanying adult is in possession of hunter safety certification, a valid hunting license or proof of successful completion of a hunter safety course, this requirement is waived for the youth. Adults accompanying youth may not possess a firearm or bow. Youths may possess only one firearm or bow while hunting. Legal weapons and shot are the same as described for the turkey season. The supervising adult shall maintain visual and voice contact with the youth at all times. An adult may supervise only one youth during this special hunt. Only one gobbler per day may be taken and any gobbler taken by the hunter during this special season counts towards their seasonal bag limit of 2. Contact regional offices for a Physically Challenged Hunter Permit application.

E. Only those Wildlife Management Areas listed herein are open to turkey hunting. All other Wildlife Management Areas are closed.

D F. 2007 2008 Turkey Hunting Schedule

**AREA
SEASON DATES**

A

March 24 21 – April 22 20

B

March 24 21 – April 15 13

C

March 24 21 – April 8 6

Private Lands Youth and
Physically Challenged

Hunter (Wheelchair
Confined) Hunt
March 17 15 – 18 16

E G. 2007 2008 Turkey Hunting Season – Open Only in the
Following Areas:

1. Area A – March 24 – April 22
 - a. All of the following parishes are open:
 - i. Beauregard;
 - ii. Bienville;
 - iii. Claiborne (Exception: See Federal Lands
Hunting Schedule for Kisatchie National Forest dates);
 - iv. East Baton Rouge;
 - v. East Feliciana;
 - vi. Grant (Exception: See Federal Lands
Hunting Schedule for Kisatchie National Forest dates);
 - vii. Jackson;
 - viii. LaSalle;
 - ix. Lincoln;
 - x. Livingston;
 - xi. Natchitoches (Exception: See Federal Lands
Hunting Schedule for Kisatchie National Forest dates);
 - xii. Rapides (Exception: See Federal Lands
Hunting Schedule for Kisatchie National Forest dates);
 - xiii. Sabine;
 - xiv. St. Helena;
 - xv. Tangipahoa;

- xvi. Union;
 - xvii. Vernon (Exception: See Federal Lands Hunting Schedule for Kisatchie National Forest dates);
 - xviii. West Baton Rouge;
 - xix. West Feliciana (including Raccourci Island);
 - xx. Winn (Exception: See Federal Lands Hunting Schedule for Kisatchie National Forest dates);
- b. Portions of the following parishes are also open:
- i. Allen: North of LA 104, west of LA 26 south of junction of LA 104 to US 190, north of US 190 east of Kinder, west of US 165 south of Kinder;
 - ii. Avoyelles: That portion bounded on the east by the Atchafalaya River, on the north by Red River to the Brouillette Community, on the west by LA 452 from Brouillette to LA 1, on the south by LA 1, eastward to Hamburg, thence by the West Atchafalaya Basin Protection levee southward;
 - iii. Calcasieu: North of I-10;
 - iv. Caldwell: West of Ouachita River southward to Catahoula Parish line;
 - v. Catahoula: South and west of the Ouachita River from the Caldwell Parish line southward to LA 8 at Harrisonburg, north and west of LA 8 from Harrisonburg to the LaSalle Parish line. ALSO that portion lying east of LA 15;
 - vi. Evangeline: North and west of LA 115, north of LA 106 from St. Landry to LA 13, west of LA 13 from Pine Prairie to Mamou and north of LA 104 west of Mamou;
 - vii. Franklin: That portion lying east of LA 17 and east of LA 15 from its juncture with LA 17 at Winnsboro;
 - viii. Iberville: West of LA 1. EXCEPTION: see Sherburne WMA for special season dates on all state, federal and private lands within Sherburne boundaries;

ix. Jefferson Davis: North of US 190 from junction with LA 26 to Kinder, west of US 165 and north of I-10 west from junction of US 165;

x. Madison: That portion lying east of US 65 from East Carroll Parish line to US 80 and south of US 80. Also, all lands east of the main channel of the Mississippi River;

xi. Morehouse: West of US 165 from the Arkansas line to the junction of LA 140 at Bonita, north and west of LA 140 to junction of LA 830-4 (Cooper Lake Road), west of LA 830-4 to US 165 at Bastrop, south of US 165 to junction of LA 3051 (Grabault Road) south of LA 3051 to junction of LA 138, west of LA 138 to junction of LA 134, north of LA 134 to the Ouachita Parish line;

xii. Ouachita: East of LA 143 from Union Parish line to US 80 in West Monroe, north of US 80 to LA 139, west of LA 139 to the Morehouse Parish line;

xiii. Pointe Coupee: All of the parish except that portion bounded on the north by LA Hwy. 1, from Innis to the junction of LA Hwy 417, on the west by LA Hwy. 417 southward toward McCrea, on the south by LA Hwy. 417 from McCrea to its junction with Delhi Lane, then by Delhi Lane to LA Hwy. 418, then LA Hwy. 418 northward to LA Hwy. 1 at Innis. EXCEPTION: see Sherburne WMA for special season dates on all state, federal and private lands within Sherburne boundaries.

xiv. Richland: That portion south of US 80 and east of LA 17;

xv. St. Landry: That portion bounded on the west by the West Atchafalaya Basin Protection Levee and on the east by the Atchafalaya River. EXCEPTION: the Indian Bayou Area, see Federal Lands Hunting Schedule for Indian Bayou Area dates;

xvi. Upper St. Martin: All within the Atchafalaya Basin. EXCEPTIONS: Sherburne WMA and Indian Bayou Area, see WMA Turkey Hunting Schedule for special season dates on all state, federal and private lands within Sherburne WMA boundaries and see Federal Lands Hunting Schedule for Indian Bayou dates;

xvii. Tensas: That portion west of US 65 from the Concordia Parish line to its juncture with LA 128, north of LA 128 to St. Joseph; west and north of LA 605, 604 and 3078 northward to Port Gibson Ferry. Also all lands east of the main channel of the Mississippi

River;

2. Area B – March 24 – April 15

a. All of the following parishes are open:

- i. Caddo;
- ii. DeSoto;
- iii. Red River;
- iv. St. Tammany;
- v. Washington.

b. Portions of the following parishes are open:

i. Ascension: All east of the Mississippi

River;

ii. Bossier: All open except that portion bounded on the north by I-20, on the west by LA 164, on the south by LA 164, and on the east by the Webster Parish Line;

iii. East Carroll: East of US 65 from Arkansas state line to Madison Parish line;

iv. Iberville: All east of the Mississippi River;

v. Webster: All open except that portion bounded on the north by I-20, on the east by U.S. 371, on the south by LA 164, and on the west by the Bossier Parish line (Exception: See Federal Lands Hunting Schedule for Kisatchie National Forest dates);

3. Area C – March 24 – April 8

a. All of the following parishes are open:

i. Concordia;

b. Portions of the following parishes are open:

i. Caldwell: All east of the Ouachita River;

ii. Catahoula: All of the parish EXCEPT for that portion located in Area A;

iii. Franklin: West of LA 17 from the Richland Parish line southward to Winnsboro, west of LA 15 southward to the Catahoula Parish line;

iv. Richland: West of LA 17 from Franklin Parish line to Ringle Road, south of Ringle Road to Ferguson Road, south of Ferguson Road to Little Road, south of Little Road to Big Creek, east of Big Creek to Franklin Parish line;

v. Tensas: East and south of US 65 from Concordia Parish line to LA 128, south of LA 128 to St. Joseph, east and south of LA 605, 604 and 3078 northward to Port Gibson Ferry.

H. Wildlife Management Area Turkey Hunting Schedule

WMA

Non-Lottery Hunt Dates

Lottery Hunt Dates

Bayou Macon

None

April 7 5-8 6

Bens Creek

March 24 21-April 8 6

None

Big Lake

March 24 21-April 8 6

None

Bodcau

March 24 21-April 8 6

None

Boeuf

March 24 21-30 April 1

None

Clear Creek

April 2-22 March 31 - April 20

March 24 21- 25 23

March 31 29-April 1 30

Camp

Beauregard

March 24 21-30 April 1

None

Dewey Wills

April 12-13

Fort Polk

March 24 21-April 22 20

None

Grassy Lake

March 24 21-April 8 6

None

Hutchinson

Creek

March 24 21-April 22 20

None

Jackson-

Bienville

March 24 21-April 8 6

None

Lake Ramsey

March 24 21-April 8 6

None

Little

River

March 24 21-April 8 6

None

Loggy Bayou

None

April 14 12-15 13

Peason

Ridge

March 24 21-April 22 20

None

Red River

March 24 21-April 8 6

None

Sabine

None

March 24 21-25 23

March 31 29-30 April 1

Sandy

Hollow

March 24 21-April 8 6

None

Sherburne

March 29 27-30 April 1

March 24 21-25 23

March 26 24-28 26
Sicily
Island
None
March 24 21-26 23
March 27 24-29 26
March 30 27-29 April 1
March 30 - April 1 2-4
April 5 2-8 5
Tangipahoa
Parish
School Board
March 24 21-April 22 20
None
Three
Rivers
March 24 21-April 8 6
None
Tunica
Hills
South
Tract
April 9 7-15 13
March 24 21-25 22
March 31 29-30 April 1
April 7 5-8 6
Tunica
Hills
Angola
North
Tract
April 9 7-15 13
March 24 21-25 22
March 31 29-30 April 1
April 7 5-8 6
Union
None
April 75-86
Walnut
Hills
March 24 21-April 22 20
None
West Bay
None
March 24 21-25 23

March 31 29–30 April 1

I. Wildlife Management Area Lottery Youth Hunts

WMA

Lottery Youth

Hunt Date

Bens Creek

March 17 15

Big Lake

March 17 15

Fort Polk/Peason Ridge/ Calcasieu Ranger Dist.

March 17 15

Jackson–Bienville

March 17 15

Loggy Bayou

April 7 5

Sherburne

March 17 15–18 16

Sicily Island

March 17 15

Spring Bayou

March 17 15

Thistlethwaite

April 7 5

Tunica Hills

March 15

Union

March 31 29

West Bay

March 17 15

J. Wildlife Management Area Physically Challenged (Wheelchair Confined) Hunt

1. Jackson–Bienville WMA will be open April 14 12–20 18 to holders of valid Physically Challenged Hunter (Wheelchair Classification) Permits.

K. Federal Lands Turkey Hunting Schedule

1. Kisatchie National Forest (KNF) turkey hunting schedule: Caney Ranger District, March 24 21–April 8 6; all remaining KNF lands, March 24 21–April 15 13 (including Catahoula and Red Dirt National Wildlife Management Preserves).

2. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers turkey hunting schedule: Indian Bayou Area, March 17–18 15–16 physically challenged lottery only hunt, lottery hunt only on March 24–25 21–23 and March 26–28 24–26, non lottery hunt March 29–April 1 27–30. Old River Control and Lock Areas, March 24–April 8 March 21–April 6.

3. National Wildlife Refuges: Bogue Chitto NWR, March 24 21 April 15 13; Lake Ophelia NWR, March 24 21–April 6 3 hunt ends at 12:00 p.m. each day; Tensas NWR, March 17–18 15–16 (youth lottery only), March 24 21–April 8 5; Upper Ouachita NWR, March 17 15 (youth lottery only).

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 56:115.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Wildlife and Fisheries Commission, LR 25:2264 (November 1999), amended LR 26:2634 (November 2000), LR 27:2270 (December 2001), LR 28:2376 (November 2002), LR 29:2513 (November 2003), LR 30:2875 (December 2004), LR 31:3167 (December 2005), LR 32:2272 (December 2006), LR 33: .

§117. 2007 Wildlife Management Area Turkey – Hunting Regulations

Repealed.

A. General

1. The following rules and regulations concerning management, protection and harvest of wildlife have been officially approved and adopted by the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission in accordance with the authority provided in Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, Section 109 of Title 56. Failure to comply with these regulations will subject the individual to citation and/or expulsion from the management area.

2. Only those Wildlife Management Areas listed are open to turkey hunting.

3. ATVs, ATCs and motorcycles cannot be left overnight on WMAs EXCEPT in designated camping areas. ATVs are prohibited from two hours after sunset to 3:00 AM. All roads including trails and roads designated as ATV only trails shall be closed to ATVs from March 1 through August 31 unless otherwise specified. ATV off-road or off-trail travel is prohibited. Certain trails may be open during this time period to provide access for fishing or other purposes. These trails will be marked

by signs at the entrance of the trail. Otherwise, only walk-in hunting is permitted (bicycles permitted). All ATV trails on Jackson-Bienville WMA will be open for use by holders of Physically Challenged Hunter Permits (wheelchair bound classification only) during the special Physically Challenged Hunter (wheelchair bound classification) turkey season.

4. Bag limits on WMAs are part of the season bag limit. Only one turkey is allowed to be taken during special lottery hunts.

5. WMAs with youth turkey hunts are closed to all activities except turkey hunting by authorized youth hunt participants and fishing on the day(s) of the youth hunt.

B. Permits

1. Self-Clearing Permits: All turkey hunts, including lottery hunts, are self-clearing. Hunters must check in daily by obtaining a permit from a self-clearing station prior to hunting. The self-clearing permit must be in the hunter's possession while hunting. Upon completion of each days hunt, the hunter must check out by completing and depositing the hunter report portion of the permit in the check-out box at a self-clearing station before exiting the WMA.

2. Lottery Hunts: All or a portion of the turkey season on Bayou Macon, Clear Creek, Loggy Bayou, Sabine, Sherburne, Sicily Island, Tunica Hills, Union and West Bay WMAs are restricted to those persons selected as a result of the pre-application lottery. Special youth only lottery hunts will be held on Big Lake, Bens Creek, Fort Polk/Peason Ridge/KNF Calcasieu Ranger District, Jackson-Bienville, Loggy Bayou, Sherburne, Sicily Island, Spring Bayou, Thistlethwaite, Union and West Bay WMAs. Deadline for receiving complete applications in the Baton Rouge office for all lottery hunts is 4:30 p.m. February 16, 2007. An application fee of \$5 must be sent with each application. Applicants for WMA youth hunts must be at least 8 years old on the day of the hunt. Applicants may submit only one application and will be selected for one WMA Turkey Lottery Hunt annually. Submitting more than one application will result in disqualification. Contact any district office for applications. Hunters must abide by self-clearing permit requirements. Youths chosen for special youth only hunts will be guided by members of the Louisiana Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation. One family member may accompany the youth and guide, but may not hunt.

C. Wildlife Management Area Turkey Hunting Schedule*

WMA

Non-Lottery Season Dates

Lottery Dates**

Permit

Requirements

Bayou Macon

None

April 7-8

Self-Clearing

Bens Creek1

March 24-April 8

None

Self-Clearing

Big Lake

March 24-April 8

None

Self-Clearing

Bodcau

March 24-April 8

None

Self-Clearing

Boeuf

March 24-April 1

None

Self-Clearing

Clear Creek

April 2-22

March 24-25

March 31-April 1

Self-Clearing

Camp

Beauregard

March 24-April 1

None

Self-Clearing

Fort Polk

March 24-April 22

None

Self-Clearing

Grassy Lake

March 24-April 8

None

Self-Clearing

Hutchinson

Creek

March 24–April 22

None

Self-Clearing

Jackson–

Bienville

March 24–April 8

None

Self-Clearing

Lake Ramsey

March 24–April 8

None

Self-Clearing

Little

River

March 24–April 8

None

Self-Clearing

Loggy Bayou

None

April 14–15

Self-Clearing

Peason

Ridge

March 24–April 22

None

Self-Clearing

Red River

March 24–April 8

None

Self-Clearing

Sabine

None

March 24–25

March 31–April 1

Self-Clearing

Sandy

Hollow1

March 24–April 8

None

Self-Clearing

Sherburne2

March 29–April 1

March 24–25

March 26–28

Self-Clearing

Sicily
Island
None
March 24-26
March 27-29
March 30-April 1
April 2-4
April 5-8
Self-Clearing
Tangipahoa Parish
School Board
March 24-April 22
None
Self-Clearing
Three
Rivers
March 24-April 8
None
Self-Clearing
Tunica
Hills
South
Tract
April 9-15
March 24-25
March 31-April 1
April 7-8
Self-Clearing
Tunica
Hills
Angola
Tract3
April 9-15
March 24-25
March 31-April 1
April 7-8
Self-Clearing
Union
None
April 7-8
Self-Clearing
Walnut
Hills
March 24-April 22
None

Self-Clearing
West Bay
None
March 24-25
March 31-April 1
Self-Clearing

*Only those Wildlife Management Areas listed have a turkey hunting season. All other areas are closed.

**The deadline for receiving applications for all turkey Lottery Hunts on WMAs is February 16, 2007.

1No turkey hunting within 100 yards of food plots identified by two yellow paint rings around the nearest tree.

2All turkeys harvested on Sherburne WMA must be weighed and checked at WMA headquarters.

3Area closed to all users April 16 - August 31.

D. Wildlife Management Area Youth Hunts

**WMA
Lottery Youth
Hunt Date**

Bens Creek

March 17

Big Lake

March 17

Fort Polk/Peason Ridge/ Calcasieu Ranger Dist.

March 17

Jackson-Bienville

March 17

Loggy Bayou

April 7

Sherburne

March 17-18

Sicily Island

March 17

Spring Bayou

March 17

Thistlethwaite

April 7

Union

March 31
West Bay
March 17

E. Wildlife Management Area Physically Challenged (Wheelchair Confined) Hunt. Jackson–Bienville WMA will be open April 14–20 to physically challenged hunters. Hunters must possess a Physically Challenged Hunter Permit with wheelchair classification. During this special hunt, ATVs may be used by physically challenged hunters on all designated ATV trails in accordance with the Physically Challenged Hunter Permit. Hunters must abide by self-clearing permit requirements. Contact regional offices for a Physically Challenged Hunter Permit application.

F. Federal Lands Turkey Hunting Schedule

1. Kisatchie National Forest (KNF) turkey hunting schedule: Caney Ranger District, March 24–April 8; all remaining KNF lands, March 24 April 15 (including Catahoula and Red Dirt National Wildlife Management Preserves).

2. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers turkey hunting schedule: Indian Bayou Area, March 17–18 physically challenged lottery only hunt, lottery hunt only on March 24–25 and March 26–28, non-lottery hunt March 29–April 1. Contact USCOE at 337–585–0853 for further information. Old River Control and Lock Areas, March 24–April 8. Contact USCOE (225) 492 2690 for further information.

3. National Wildlife Refuges: Bogue Chitto NWR, March 24–April 15; Lake Ophelia NWR, March 24–April 6 hunt ends at 12:00 p.m. each day; Tensas NWR, March 17–18 (youth lottery only), March 24–April 8; Upper Ouachita NWR, March 17 (youth lottery only). Contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for information regarding NWR hunts.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 56:115.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Wildlife and Fisheries Commission LR 25:2265 (November 1999), amended LR 26:2636 (November 2000), LR 27:2272 (December 2001), LR 28:2377 (November 2002), LR 29:2514 (November 2003), LR 30:2876 (December 2004), LR 31:3169 (December 2005), LR 32:2274 (December 2006), repealed LR 33: .

The Secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries is authorized to take any and all necessary steps on behalf of the Commission to promulgate and effectuate this Notice of Intent and the

final Rule, including but not limited to, the filing of the Fiscal and Economic Impact Statements, the filing of the Notice of Intent and final Rule and the preparation of reports and correspondence to other agencies of government.

Interested persons may submit written comments on the proposed Rule to David Moreland, Administrator, Wildlife Division, Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Box 98000, Baton Rouge, LA 70898-9000 no later than September 6, 2007.

In accordance with Act #1183 of 1999, the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries/Wildlife and Fisheries Commission hereby issues its Family Impact Statement in connection with the preceding Notice of Intent: This Notice of Intent will have no impact on the six criteria set out at R.S. 49:972(B).

Patrick C. Morrow
Vice-Chairman

To receive and consider Season Dates on Early Migratory Birds (Rail, Snipe, Woodcock and Teal) began with Mr. Robert Helm stating the primary early season setting was for doves. But this year, the Commission went to zones for dove hunting and those season dates were adopted 2 months ago. Early migratory bird seasons are for those that begin before October 1. The September teal season can consist of a 9 or 16 day season depending upon breeding populations of blue-winged teal. The break off point is 4.7 million teal. Last year there were 5.9 million which allowed for a 16 day season, the first in 3 years. Mr. Helm then announced that the current breeding population was at 6.7 million for this year, which is the third highest count ever. Recommended season dates are September 15 to September 30, bag limit would be 4. Also having the same season as teal would be rails and gallinules, with the bag limits remaining unchanged. The woodcock season, 45 days in length, would run from December 18 to January 31. Snipe dates would be set during the August Commission Meeting. Then Mr. Helm stated Louisiana has about 75 licensed falconers and their season was open as long as the gun season. Also they have special falconry seasons set so they can partake outside the regular gun season. The dove season would be September 17 to October 9 and the woodcock season would be October 28 to December 17 and February 1 to February 11. Bag and possession limits during the falconry season were reduced with an aggregate of 3 for those birds. Shooting hours would be one-half hour before sunrise to sunset. With no questions from the Commission, Commissioner Miller made a motion to adopt the seasons, seconded by Commissioner Oats and passed with no opposition.

(The full text of the Resolution is made a part of the record.)

RESOLUTION

LOUISIANA WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION
LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES
July 9, 2007

The following was adopted by the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission at its regular Commission Meeting in Baton Rouge, LA, July 9, 2007.

WHEREAS, public hearings in Washington, DC have been held on early migratory bird season regulations that include dove, snipe, rail, gallinule, woodcock and teal, and

WHEREAS, the results of this meeting have been discussed with the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission, and

WHEREAS, rules and regulations governing early migratory bird season frameworks have been developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries staff has presented recommendations for migratory species that include season dates, bag limits, and shooting hours, and

WHEREAS, it is the statutory responsibility of the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to establish hunting seasons for these migratory species within constraints established by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service framework, now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that this Commission does hereby adopt the presented tentative season dates for migratory birds which are made part of this resolution, subject to the following stipulations:

(1) The Secretary is hereby authorized and delegated the authority to take any and all steps necessary on behalf of the Commission to promulgate and effectuate these seasons as a Declaration of Emergency and preparation of reports and correspondence to other agencies of government; and

(2) If significant changes occur as a result of changes in the

framework established by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or for other reasons, the Secretary is hereby authorized and delegated the authority to alter the attached seasons based upon the recommendations of Department staff, supported by biological and technical data.

Patrick C. Morrow, Vice-Chairman
Wildlife and Fisheries Commission

To receive and consider Oyster Task Force request to expand State Public Oyster Areas in Lake Mechant was presented by Mr. Patrick Banks. He stated that this subject has been discussed by the Oyster Task Force a number of times and the request came from their recent meeting of June 20, 2007. The request was to increase the size of Lake Mechant Public Oyster Seed Ground by about 500 acres. This seed ground is located in Terrebonne Parish, south of Houma, Louisiana. Mr. Banks referred to a letter and map included in the packets. Commissioner Mouton stated he spoke to Commissioner Samanie and wanted the Commission to consider a Declaration of Emergency for this item. Mr. Banks confirmed that the action was for a Declaration of Emergency, but the Department felt it was difficult to say whether it was an emergency. Commissioner Sagraera stated action for Sister Lake was through the normal process, and asked why this area was an emergency but Sister Lake was not. Mr. Banks stated they could bring this back before the Commission as a Notice of Intent at the next meeting.

Mr. Wilson Voisin, Jr. stated he was a member of the Oyster Task Force and they have discussed the expansion in the Lake Mechant area for some time now. The reason it had not come before the Commission until now was due to the current moratorium in place. The option the Task Force wanted to move on was to expand all of the unleased area in Lake Mechant, but there were 3 or 4 leases in the middle of the lake. That leaseholder was willing to exchange those leases in order to straighten the boundary line. No one had an issue during the meeting on exchanging the acreage. Mr. Voisin noted that Sister Lake has always been the main public seed area in Terrebonne Parish, but with the salinity changing, the industry feels the oyster production may move further north. Currently there is live seed oysters and marketable oysters in Lake Mechant and if the Department recommends opening the rest of the area for the oyster season, the Task Force would like to see the expanded area opened as well. Mr. Voisin added that Terrebonne Parish does not have the amount of acreage available to the industry as what is available across the River.

Commissioner Sagraera stated he was looking at the expansion area and

saw that there were still quite a few areas that are unleased but they were not in the expansion. Mr. Voisin stated the reason for not asking for the total unleased acres was the issue of a moratorium being in place. Commissioner Sagrera then commented that the Department's proposal was just for the area delineated on the map. He then made a motion that the Commission follow the usual rule process with a Notice of Intent to open the expanded area in the future. Commissioner Oats seconded the motion. Mr. Banks explained that in the past the Commission has acted on requests with a Notice of Intent and Declaration of Emergency at the same time. Hearing no further discussion, the motion passed with no opposition.

The Commissioners agreed to hold the **November 2007 Meeting** on Thursday, November 1, 2007, beginning at 9:30 a.m. at the Baton Rouge Headquarters.

Next item was to receive **Public Comments** and none were heard.

There being no further business, Commissioner Oats made a motion to **Adjourn** the meeting and it was seconded by Commissioner Sagrera.

Bryant O. Hammett, Jr.
Secretary

scf