

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF
LOUISIANA WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION

Thursday, February 2, 2006

Chairman Terry Denmon presiding.

Earl King
Frederic Miller
Patrick Morrow
Henry Mouton
Wayne Sagrera
Robert Samanie, III

Secretary Dwight Landreneau was also present.

Chairman Denmon called for a motion for approval of the **January 5, 2006 Commission Minutes**. A motion for approval was made by Commissioner Miller and seconded by Commissioner Sagrera. The motion passed with no opposition.

Under **Commission Special Announcements** for this month, Commissioner Miller stated there was a meeting of the Commission's Hunting Regulations Committee with the Deer/Dog Task Force. He noted there was lively interchange at the meeting with some progress being made and more to be made. Commissioner Miller did not anticipate any recommendations from the Task Force in time to impact the 2006-07 regulations. He then announced the next meeting would be held Wednesday, March 1. Commissioner Miller then thanked everyone that has given their time and noted that the staff was well prepared on a number of issues involving regulations.

Employee Recognition Awards began with Mrs. Angie Dowdy explaining that these awards for the 2004-2005 year were to recognize exceptional employees. Nominations were requested and received on any full-time active permanent employee. Mrs. Dowdy then read the criteria for nominations. After the nominations were received, a committee was formed to review all nominations and then vote on winners for each category. The three categories of nominations are Customer Service with 2 recipients from each Office within the Department; Employee of the Year with 1 recipient from each Office for each of the 3 sub-categories, professional, support and technical; and Special Achievement by a Team with 1 award for each Office. From this group, 2 nominees are selected to be considered for the Secretary's Award. Then Mrs. Dowdy announced: Customer Service Award winners, Office of Secretary Ms. Elaine Moore and Ms. Debby Gill, Office of Wildlife

Ms. Danielle Fontenot and Ms. Vida Landry; Professional Employee of the Year, Office of Management and Finance Mr. Alvin Henry, Office of Secretary Mr. Joe Dewil, Office of Wildlife Mr. Daniel "Todd" Baker and Office of Fisheries Mr. Gary Tilyou; Support Employee of the Year, Office of Management and Finance Mr. Paul Downey, Office of Secretary Ms. Janet Abbott, Office of Wildlife Ms. Brandy Williams and Office of Fisheries Ms. Jenny Voisin; and Technical Employee of the Year, Office of Wildlife Mr. Mark Bible and Office of Fisheries Mr. Raymond Curtis. Secretary's Award were presented to Mr. Noel Kinler, Office of Wildlife and Mr. Mike Wood, Office of Fisheries. Then for Special Achievement by a Team Awards, from Office of Management and Finance, the Computer Team for their Enforcement Database and included Mr. David Dousay, Ms. Elizabeth Fisher, Mr. Mel Fleniken, Mr. Herbert McKnight, Mr. Lonnie Rafray, Mr. S. K. Mahajan and Ms. Bobbie Savant. The Team Award for Office of Secretary was the Region 7 DWI Team which included Sgt. Ronnie Englehard, Sgt. Paul Stuckey, Sr. Agent Todd Lewis, Sr. Agent Chad Menzina, Sr. Agent Joseph Moreau and Sr. Agent William Roberts. Then the Office of Wildlife Team Award went to the Wood Duck Banding Team of Mr. Glen Allemond, Mr. Francis Bordelon, Mr. Jonathan Bordelon, Mr. Jeffrey Dupuy, Mr. Jimmy Ernst, Mr. Scott Halphen, Mr. Gregory Lachney, Mr. Ben Oubre, Mr. Guy Patout, Mr. Donald Phillips, Mr. Kerney Sonnier, Mr. Shannon Soileau, Mr. Errol Theriot, Mr. Chad White, Mr. Tony Vidrine and Mr. Tom Woods. A Multi-Divisional Award was given to the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy Team which comprised of Mr. Doug Albert, Mr. Jimmy Anthony, Mr. Harry Blanchet, Mr. Jeff Boundy, Ms. Marianne Burke, Mr. Mike Carloss, Mr. Steve Carpenedo, Ms. Patti Faulkner, Mr. Jim Hanifen, Mr. Gary Lester, Ms. Ines Maxit, Mr. Tim Morrison, Mr. Mike Olinde, Mr. Chris Reid, Mr. Kenny Ribbeck and Mr. Tim Ruth. Ms. Dowdy thanked everyone associated with the awards program. Chairman Denmon congratulated everyone on behalf of the Commission as well as the Department for sponsoring the program.

Lt. Col. Brian Spillman handled the **Enforcement & Aviation Reports/ January** by stating there were a total of 78.2 hours flown in the 2 Department planes. There were 3 boating accidents reported in the month of January with 1 fatality occurring in Lake Salvador located in St. Charles Parish. The other boating accidents happened on Lake Pontchartrain and Bundicks Lake. The case reports showed a wide variety including migratory bird, night hunting and other hunting violations. Totals for January were 841 citations and 99 written warnings issued and 116 public assist calls were handled. News Releases discussed covered hunters killing ducks from a motorboat in Acadia Parish, a goose hunt in Vermilion Parish and a follow-up to a case in Concordia Parish in which a huge buck was shot from the road outside of a pen. Then Lt. Col. Spillman invited the Commissioners to the graduation of the 19th class of the Enforcement Academy which was scheduled for Friday, February 3. Chairman Denmon asked if the hunter that killed the buck was allowed to keep the buck and Lt. Col. Spillman answered no, it was returned to the owner.

Update on Ducks Unlimited Activities began with Mr. Ross Melinchuk stating this past duck season was better thanks to some normal weather. He felt that by the end of the presentation everyone would know that things were in order for a good production year up

in the Prairie Pothole Region of Canada. Mr. Melinchuk reminded the Commissioners that habitat was the key to a healthy continental waterfowl population. From banding returns, it was determined that 57 percent of the birds recovered in Louisiana were raised in Saskatchewan. The area being discussed was a “huge landscape” consisting of 300,000 square miles in 5 states and 3 provinces. The Missouri Coteau which is in this area was considered the best of the best and it consisted of almost 26,000 square miles of habitat. Since 1965, Louisiana has recognized the importance of supporting work on the prairies and this represents the oldest, most long standing contributing agency in the country. Mr. Melinchuk stated there are about 33 or 34 agencies that would support this work, but Louisiana remains one of the top agencies. Since 1965, the Commission has contributed almost \$8.5 million in support of Canadian NAWMP/NAWCA. For this year, the Commission has dedicated \$230,000 and this money will be matched by Ducks Unlimited, a number of other partners, conservation organizations or landowner groups and a federal grant which totals \$2.175 million which represents almost a 10:1 return on the funds.

Mr. Melinchuk then introduced Mr. Dave Custurski from Saskatchewan. Mr. Custurski stated he has been working for Ducks Unlimited Canada for 15 years as a biologist. The money from the Commission was directed to the Missouri Coteau. A slide of the Missouri Coteau waterfowl breeding density showed it to be as high as 100 pairs per square mile. He agreed that this area was the best of the best as indicated by Mr. Melinchuk. An aerial map of the farmland in the Missouri Coteau was discussed. The landscape supports gadwall, mallard, pintail, teal, coot and some non-game species. The goals for the Coteau were to protect the landscape, improve or restore the condition of the degraded habitat, and compensate for the loss that has occurred over the last 65-80 years. The cost for the goals over the 20 year life span of the Coteau was predicted to be \$100 million. A pie chart was shown of what they hoped to see happen on a broad scale for the next 15 years. Almost 50 percent of the area is crop land and it was hoped that a large portion would convert to perennial cover, cane forages, pasture and improve the native habitat, winter wheat and winter cereals. Further explaining the goals, Mr. Custurski stated they wanted to protect about 260,000 acres of existing habitat. The improve function dealt with grazing lands. To compensate for loss, more grass was needed on the ground and getting some of the cultivated lands into winter cereals and winter wheat. Next discussed were the accomplishments. The goal of protection was at 58,000 out of 81,000 and it was projected to be near 60,000 by the end of this fiscal year. Compensation goal of the winter wheat landscape has seen a tremendous increase in the last 10 years and it was expected to continue. This was year 3 of a 5 year plan and the easement goal was been exceeded, almost nearly accomplishing the tax credit program goal, deferred grazing goal has been exceeded, and virtually at the government pasture goal. With the possibility of mad cow disease, a lot of landowners did not plant grass for a few years, and the forage program went backwards with only 1800 acres accomplished last year. This year, almost 8,000 acres were accomplished in the Coteau. The goal for winter cereal has been reached after 3 of the 5 years. As a total, the program was 75 percent of the way and well on the way to achieving the goals in the original 5 year program. The discussion then centered on the Prairie Habitat Joint Venture (PHJV) which was the partnership for the North American Waterfowl Plan. From this Joint Venture, the accomplishment of 340 industry and

government partners have conserved a total of 5.4 million acres and spent about \$611.7 million. The Joint Venture has accomplished about 55 percent of its original goal with about half of the dollars, commented Mr. Custurski. Over 17,000 landowners have worked on the PHJV. He added that research always guides where program developments will go. Summarizing the PHJV was the landscape composition and the efforts and working with the farming practices, adding waterfowl biology, recognizing the economics which helps target how the programs were delivered. Programs being worked on now were wetland restoration, convert to more grass and protection. Species specific goals went to pintails and scaup. Extension and policy were items worked outside of the target areas. Then Mr. Custurski stated that 56 percent of the duck productivity occurs within the target area. Lastly, current habitat conditions showed that soil and moisture conditions were excellent and any precipitation will runoff during the spring thaw. With the habitat in place and the work being done and the wetland conditions, things should be excellent for a great waterfowl production year. Mr. Custurski expressed thanks to the Commission for their partnership and the financial support of DU Canada and also thanked the efforts and support of the Department.

Notice of Intent - 2006/2007 Hunting Seasons and the **Notice of Intent - General & WMA Hunting Rules & Regulations** were handled by Mr. Jimmy Anthony together. He reminded the Commission bold steps were taken last year to set seasons for three years with first year just finishing. The Department was to continue with the Promotional Hunting Days and the dates would remain the three days after Thanksgiving Day. He then stated there would be no amendments to the resident small game noting quail season will open on the third Saturday of November and squirrel and rabbit seasons would open on the first Saturday of October. Deer season Areas 1 and 2 will have only calendar adjustment for the next two years by one day only. Area 3 will have no changes, but the calendar adjustment will jump by 6 days. Area 4 will have only one day calendar adjustment for the next two seasons. Area 5, a low deer population area, will still have the short season with no changes. Areas 6 and 7 will have only a one day calendar adjustment. Area 8 will have the same 6 day calendar jump as Area 3. Staff was hoping to reduce limits on deer to 3 antlered bucks and 3 antlerless deer and incorporate a tagging requirement by using a deer tagging harvest card. These cards would be available at the district offices, Point-of-Sale vendors and inserted within the hunting pamphlets. With the change in the limits for does, staff asked that all days for modern firearm on private lands be available for either-sex hunting except for a portion of West Carroll, Plaquemines, St. Bernard and a portion of East Carroll Parishes. Wildlife management areas (WMAs), National Forest Lands and Federal Refuges would still have specified either-sex days. Orleans Parish will not have any modern firearm either-sex days since the parish does not allow modern firearm hunting. With the damage from Hurricane Katrina to Plaquemines and St. Bernard Parishes, there may be some areas that could handle either-sex hunting but it would be done through the DMAP and LADT programs on a case-by-case basis. West Carroll Parish had 2 days for the previous season and it was requested to have 3 days for the upcoming season. One deer area boundary change involved moving a portion of St. Mary Parish into Area 6 from Area 7. A change in the archery regulations would allow persons already qualified to use a crossbow (disabled individuals and those 60 years of age or older) use the draw-loc on

their bows. WMA season changes included: adding a youth deer hunt to the Boeuf WMA for 2 days; on Fort Polk WMA, there would be a reduction to the muzzleloader (2 days) and firearms bucks only (5 days) season to allow for 12 more days of small game hunting; and also on Fort Polk WMA, there would be 2 areas closed to deer hunting after a certain date to allow for small game and squirrel hunting with dogs. WMA regulation changes were: Boeuf, Ouachita and Russell Sage WMAs would go from self-clearing permits on the either-sex hunts to daily permits; requiring hunters that use ground blinds on WMAs must display a minimum of 400 inches of hunter orange above or around their blinds that may be visible from 360°; eliminating commercial crawfishing on Sherburne WMA; and adding 6 days to waterfowl hunting on Attakapas WMA. On the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Indian Bayou property, their changes would reflect what occurs on Sherburne WMA. The number of days for Kisatchie National Forest still hunting and with or without dogs would remain the same, the season would be moved up and do away with the late hunts and hunting on Christmas Day. The Catahoula Wildlife and National Red Dirt Reserve would have no changes from last year. One change on Kisatchie would be allowing deer hunting with dogs on the Catahoula Ranger District north of Highway 8 excluding the Preserve.

Chairman Denmon asked if the proposed changes discussed at the last meeting were adopted? Mr. Anthony answered no. Commissioner Morrow asked if there was a specific reason for cutting out commercial crawfishing in Sherburne WMA. Mr. Anthony stated that staff would rather see more recreational activities than commercial. Commissioner Morrow then asked if commercial crawfishing was permitted. Mr. Anthony noted they were permitted at one time, but those numbers were decreasing. Commissioner Morrow then added that Sherburne was a large area and there was a lot of crawfishing in the area. Commissioner King asked if the reduction in deer limits, the tagging requirement and either-sex day changes were all amendments. Mr. Anthony answered that everything mentioned was in the Notice of Intent as an amendment to the current rule. Commissioner Morrow asked if the 3 doe limit would not affect those hunters in LADT and DMAP and Mr. Anthony stated that was correct. Chairman Denmon explained to the Commission that Mr. Anthony's presentation overlapped the 2 agenda items and both hunting seasons and rules and regulations could be discussed. Chairman Denmon stated he has received calls on retrieving deer from WMAs and not being able to use ATVs on certain trails and asked if there was any relief that could be given to someone in this situation. Mr. Anthony reminded the Chairman that last year they tried to include language on this topic but it was amended to include only those hunters that were disabled or 60 years of age. He added that on most WMAs, a deer that has been shot should not have to be dragged more than 400 to 600 yards. Commissioner Sagrera stated he has received comments on the reduction in the doe harvest from 6 to 3 and wondered why it was not possible to allow hunting on all available dates. Mr. Dave Moreland stated that was what was being proposed with allowing either-sex hunting every day of the season except for a few parishes. Mr. Anthony felt this change would allow those hunters that have to work weekends the opportunity to harvest does. Commissioner Miller asked if the tagging program for this year would have any sequential limitations. Mr. Anthony answered there would be no order and added that a buck and a doe could be killed on the same day and recorded on the tags. Mr. Moreland clarified that the point of sale route would cost \$95,000 for this year and hopefully next year

it would be worked into the new contract for detachable tags. Commissioner Miller commented there has been tremendous support for the steps taken with the tagging program and felt it was a great beginning.

Chairman Denmon then asked the other members if they had any amendments that would be in addition to the Department's suggestions? Hearing none, the Chairman stated he had an amendment relative to the regulation on hunting bobcats and making it a typical big game item. Legislation allowed the Commission to set a bobcat season and it was set to occur only when a person was hunting deer. Commissioner Denmon's proposal would allow hunters to also take a bobcat when they were not hunting deer. He realized the Department was conducting a study on the bobcat and he hoped it would continue. Chairman Denmon noted two objections to the way the season was set and these included the fact lots of hunters did not want to hunt bobcat while they were hunting deer and no additional hunting opportunities were created for predator hunting. At this point, the Chairman read the following proposed regulation: "No person other than the holder of a valid big game license may take or possess bobcat except license trappers who may take or possess bobcat during the open trapping season. A big game licensee shall only take bobcat during the time period from one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset with a bow and arrow, shotgun, muzzleloader, or centerfire firearm. A big game licensee shall not take more than 2 bobcats per calendar year. This regulation applies only to property that is privately owned and does not apply to state wildlife management areas and refuges, the Kisatchie National Forest, federally owned refuges and lands owned by the Corps of Engineers." Assistant Secretary Parke Moore noted that both the Wildlife and Fur and Refuge Divisions had serious concerns about harvesting a resource that the population dynamic was not fully understood. For the first 2 years of the study, the data indicated that deer hunters have harvested over 21,000 bobcats whereas some professionals estimated the total population around the mid-30,000 range. He reminded the Commission that bobcats are not a federally endangered specie and were hunted throughout the southeast. Three biological concerns are: density of less than 1 per 200 acres would not support a sustained harvest of 13,000 bobcats under the 20 percent acceptable harvest premise; a trend could not be determined with just 2 years of data, trend estimates should use longer timeframes such as 5 years or more; and legislative and legal concerns. Chairman Denmon stated those were the concerns at the time of the initial legislation and agreed there was not a lot of data on bobcats. A season was initiated based on the belief that it would not hurt the resource. Chairman Denmon then added that he would never have supported the amendment based on his reasons. He did not feel his amendment would alter the take of bobcats by a lot but he could not prove it. When the hardwoods were being cleared in Louisiana and it appeared the bobcats were diminishing, Arkansas, Mississippi and Alabama continued bobcat hunting with no detriment to the resource. Based on that data, he felt his logic was just as good as anyone else, but it would not be as good when the scientific data was available. Chairman Denmon then asked that the bobcat be given the big game status and allow predator hunters the same opportunity as in other states. Commissioner Mouton agreed that bobcats were predators and made a motion to support Chairman Denmon's proposed change. Commissioner King

asked what would be the season dates for the taking of bobcats. Chairman Denmon stated it would be a year long season during daylight hours. Commissioner Morrow asked Assistant Secretary Moore if deer hunters harvested 21,000 bobcats during 2004-05. He answered no, it was during the 2 previous seasons, with an estimate 10,000 taken the first year and 11,000 the second year. Surveys to obtain the estimates for the third year would be sent out soon. Commissioner Morrow asked what the estimates were based on and Assistant Secretary Moore stated it was from a statistically valid survey. Then Assistant Secretary Moore informed the Commissioners that Mr. Mike Olinde worked with the survey data while Mr. Edmond Mouton worked with the trappers and Dr. Craig Miller with LSU and they came with comparable numbers to the estimates obtained by Mr. Olinde. Commissioner Miller stated he was prepared to add this proposal to the Notice of Intent, but he asked for additional biological information from the Department on the numbers within the next couple of months. Assistant Secretary Moore stated that new survey numbers would not be available for at least 6 months. He noted this was one of their concerns, not being able to give trend information. Commissioner Morrow asked for a summary from the Legal Section to address the technical problems that may exist. Commissioner Segrera asked Assistant Secretary Moore if they knew how far off they were from the original population estimate with the numbers received on bobcat harvest. Assistant Secretary Moore felt there were more than 100,000 bobcats out there. Commissioner Segrera then asked if the initial estimates were low. Assistant Secretary Moore stated staff assumed the initial estimates to be low. Commissioner King asked for the harvest numbers by trappers and Assistant Secretary Moore thought it was about 1,000. Commissioner Samanie asked how far away before the biological data was available in order to support a bobcat season. Assistant Secretary Moore commented, in 6 months, there would be better information and he would be able to report that either there are a lot of bobcats, or at the peak of the relationship between predator and prey, or the bobcat was being harvested out of proportion to their existence in Louisiana. But he added 5 years of good data was needed. Chairman Denmon agreed with the need for 5 years of good data, and he added that those 10,000 were being killed by deer hunters and the proposed regulation would not affect that at all. He felt the regulation would open hunting to another class of hunters. Chairman Denmon noted that the comments he received indicates that hunters are seeing more and more bobcats. Again the Chairman stated he was only asking for another small group of hunters be allowed to participate in the bobcat season along with deer hunters. Commissioner Segrera reported that, as a hunter and being involved in the trapping business, he felt the additional season would only apply to a small segment of people that were predator hunting and would have very little impact to the numbers being killed. Chairman Denmon did not think that a deer hunter would sit in a stand all day just to kill a bobcat. This proposal would allow a hunter the opportunity to take a bobcat when predator hunting. Commissioner Segrera seconded Commissioner Mouton's motion. Hearing no public comments, the motion to amend the Notice of Intent for bobcats passed with no opposition.

Chairman Denmon then asked if the Commissioners understood the Resolution for hunting seasons. Hearing no questions, he then asked Mr. Anthony to read the Therefore Be It Resolved portion of the Resolution. Commissioner Segrera made a motion to accept the

Resolution and it was seconded by Commissioner Samanie. Public comments were accepted at this point.

Mr. Daniel Nawadny asked where would those hunters over 60, under 16 and lifetime license holders be able to pick up their deer tags. Mr. Moreland stated it would be in the hunting regulations pamphlet, at the district offices and other sporting goods stores. Once the new point of sale system issued the deer tags, hunters would go to licensed vendors. Commissioner Mouton asked if the tags could be placed on the Department's website and then an individual could print them. Mr. Moreland answered yes for this year.

Hearing no further comments on the motion, the motion passed with no opposition. Then Chairman Denmon asked Mr. Anthony to read the Therefore Be It Resolved portion of the Resolution for the general and WMA rules and regulations.

Mr. Cal Baker, Kisatchie National Forest, voiced their support for the recommendations by the Department. He also noted they were very supportive of the Deer/Dog Task Force and their participation. Mr. Baker hoped the Task Force would resolve some of the conflicts that exists on the National Forest. As in the past 2 years, the Forest would continue with the same number of dog/deer days. A News Release and map was provided that explained a new dog/deer exclusion area on the Catahoula Ranger District of the Kisatchie National Forest. In addition, the Forest would be submitting a closure for free-ranging dogs and have specified dog training during the spring and summer of each year. Moving forward on both issues was key in maintaining the same dog/deer days as had in the past. Commissioner Miller asked for clarification on the map. He then asked Mr. Moreland to send a copy of the National Forest's documents to the members of the Deer/Dog Task Force.

Hearing no further comments, the general and WMA hunting rules and regulations were approved unanimously. Mr. Anthony stated that the statewide public hearings on the seasons would be held between March 13 and March 26. The Baton Rouge meeting will be held on March 25 at 6:30 PM in the Louisiana Room. Chairman Denmon stated that participation at the hearings were low and wanted another mechanism for the public to comment upon such as the Department's website. Mr. Moreland stated they could look into setting up a way for the public to comment on the website.

(The full text of the Resolutions and Notices of Intent are made a part of the record.)

RESOLUTION
LOUISIANA WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION
LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES
February 2, 2006

The following was adopted by the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission at its regular Commission Meeting held in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, February 2, 2006.

WHEREAS, it is the constitutional responsibility of the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to establish hunting seasons for resident game birds and quadrupeds, and

WHEREAS, authority to establish seasons, bag limits, possession limits and other rules and regulations for the hunting, taking and possession of any species of wild game birds or quadrupeds is vested in the Commission by R.S. 56:115, and

WHEREAS, this action will provide for the protection and conservation of these natural resources and allow for recreational opportunities for sport hunting on both public and private lands, and

WHEREAS, the Commission and Department staff have jointly reviewed and considered all available biological information, now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the attached rules, regulations, season dates, and bag limits affecting sport hunting of resident game species are hereby adopted by the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission as a Notice of Intent.

Terry D. Denmon, Chairman
Wildlife and Fisheries Commission

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 promulgate rules and regulations governing the hunting of resident game birds and game quadrupeds.

Title 76

WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES

Part XIX. Hunting and WMA Regulations

Chapter 1. Resident Game Hunting Season

101. General

The Resident Game Hunting Season, ~~2005-2006~~, 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 regulations are hereby adopted by the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission. A complete copy of the Regulation Pamphlet may be obtained from the Department.

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 21:707 (July 1995), amended LR 22:585 (July 1996), LR 23:871 (July 1997), LR 24:1324 (July 1998), LR 25:1290 (July 1999), LR 26:1506 (July 2000), LR 27:1061 (July 2001), LR 28:1615 (July 2002), LR 29:1122 (July 2003), LR 30:1493 (July 2004), LR 31:1627 (July 2005), LR 32: .

§103. Resident Game Birds and Animals ~~2005-2006~~, 2006-2007, 2007-2008

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

B. Consult Regulation Pamphlet for seasons or specific regulations on Wildlife Management Areas or specific localities.

| Species | 2005 <u>2006-2008</u> Season Dates | Daily Bag Limit | Possession Limit |
|---------------------|---|--|------------------|
| Quail | <u>OPENS:</u> 3 rd Saturday of November <u>CLOSES:</u> Last Day of February | 10 | 20 |
| Rabbit and Squirrel | <u>OPENS:</u> 1 st Saturday of October <u>CLOSES:</u> Last Day of February | 8 | 16 |
| Deer | See Schedule | 1 antlered and 1 antlerless (when legal) | 6/season |

C. ~~2005~~ 2006-2008 Deer Hunting Schedule

| Area | Archery | Muzzleloader (All Either Sex Except as Noted) | Still Hunt (No dogs allowed) | With or Without Dogs |
|------|---|---|--|---|
| 1 | <u>OPENS:</u> 1 st day of Oct. <u>CLOSES:</u> | <u>OPENS:</u> 2 nd Sat. of Nov. <u>CLOSES:</u> Fri. after | <u>OPENS:</u> Sat. before Thanksgiving Day | <u>OPENS:</u> 2 nd Sat. of Dec. <u>CLOSES:</u> Sun. |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| | Last day of Jan. | 2 nd Sat. of Nov. <u>OPENS:</u> Mon. after the next to last Sun. of Jan. <u>CLOSES:</u> Last Sun. of Jan. | <u>CLOSES:</u> Fri. before 2 nd Sat. of Dec. <u>OPENS:</u> Mon. after 1 st Sat. of Jan. <u>CLOSES:</u> next to last Sun. of Jan. | after 1 st Sat. of Jan. |
| 2 | <u>OPENS:</u> 1 st day of Oct. <u>CLOSES:</u> Last day of Jan. | <u>OPENS:</u> Next to last Sat. of Oct. <u>CLOSES:</u> Fri. before last Sat. of Oct. <u>OPENS:</u> Mon. after 2 nd Sat. of Jan. <u>CLOSES:</u> Sun. after 3 rd Sat. of Jan. | <u>OPENS:</u> Last Sat. of Oct. <u>CLOSES:</u> Fri. before 2 nd Sat. of Dec. | <u>OPENS:</u> 2 nd Sat. of Dec. <u>CLOSES:</u> Sun. after 2 nd Sat. of Jan. |
| 3 | <u>OPENS:</u> 3 rd Sat. of Sept. <u>CLOSES:</u> Jan. 15 | <u>OPENS:</u> 2 nd Sat. of Oct. <u>CLOSES:</u> Fri. before 3 rd Sat. of Oct. <u>OPENS:</u> Mon. after Thanksgiving Day <u>CLOSES:</u> Fri. before 1 st Sat. of Dec. | <u>OPENS:</u> 3 rd Sat. of Oct. <u>CLOSES:</u> Sun. after Thanksgiving Day <u>OPENS:</u> 1 st Sat. of Dec. <u>CLOSES:</u> Sun. after 1 st Sat. of Jan. | |
| 4 | <u>OPENS:</u> 1 st day of Oct. <u>CLOSES:</u> Last day of Jan. | <u>OPENS:</u> 1 st Sat. of Nov. <u>CLOSES:</u> Fri. before 2 nd Sat. of Nov. <u>OPENS:</u> Mon. after 1 st Sat. of Jan. <u>CLOSES:</u> Mon. after 2 nd Sat. of Jan. | <u>OPENS:</u> 2 nd Sat. of Nov. <u>CLOSES:</u> Sun. after 1 st Sat. of Jan. | |
| 5 | <u>OPENS:</u> 1 st day of Oct. <u>CLOSES:</u> Last day of | <u>OPENS:</u> 2 nd Sat. of Nov. <u>CLOSES:</u> Fri. before 3 rd Sat. of Nov. | <u>OPENS:</u> Day after Thanksgiving Day <u>CLOSES:</u> Sun. after 2 nd Sat. of | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| | Jan. | (BUCKS ONLY) <u>OPENS:</u> Day after Christmas Day <u>CLOSES:</u> Jan. 1 st (BUCKS ONLY) | Dec. | |
| 6 | <u>OPENS:</u> 1 st day of Oct. <u>CLOSES:</u> Feb. 15 (1 st 15 days are BUCKS ONLY) | <u>OPENS:</u> 2 nd Sat. of Nov. <u>CLOSES:</u> Fri. before 3 rd Sat. of Nov. <u>OPENS:</u> Mon. after the next to last Sun. of Jan. <u>CLOSES:</u> Last Sun. of Jan. | <u>OPENS:</u> Sat. before Thanksgiving Day <u>CLOSES:</u> Fri. before 2 nd Sat. of Dec. | <u>OPENS:</u> 2 nd Sat. of Dec. <u>CLOSES:</u> Next to last Sun. of Jan. |
| 7 | <u>OPENS:</u> 1 st day of Oct. <u>CLOSES:</u> Last day of Jan. | <u>OPENS:</u> 2 nd Sat. of Oct. <u>CLOSES:</u> Fri. before 3 rd Sat. of Oct. <u>OPENS:</u> 1 st Sat. of Nov. <u>CLOSES:</u> Fri. before 2 nd Sat. of Nov. | <u>OPENS:</u> 3 rd Sat. of Oct. <u>CLOSES:</u> Fri. before 1 st Sat. of Nov. <u>OPENS:</u> 2 nd Sat. of Nov. <u>CLOSES:</u> Sun. after Thanksgiving Day | <u>OPENS:</u> Mon. after Thanksgiving Day <u>CLOSES:</u> 1 st Sun. after Christmas Day |
| 8 | <u>OPENS:</u> 3 rd Sat. of Sept. <u>CLOSES:</u> Jan. 15 | <u>OPENS:</u> 2 nd Sat. of Oct. <u>CLOSES:</u> Fri. before 3 rd Sat. of Oct. <u>OPENS:</u> Mon. after Thanksgiving Day <u>CLOSES:</u> Fri. before 1 st Sat. of Dec. | <u>OPENS:</u> 3 rd Sat. of Oct. <u>CLOSES:</u> Sun. after Thanksgiving Day | <u>OPENS:</u> 1 st Sat. of Dec. <u>CLOSES:</u> Sun. after 1 st Sat. of Jan. |

D. Modern Firearm Schedule (Either-Sex Seasons)

| Parish | Area | Modern Firearm Either-sex Days |
|--------------|--------|--|
| East Carroll | Area 4 | Antlerless deer may be harvested during entire deer season |

| Parish | Area | Modern Firearm Either-sex Days |
|--------------|---------|---|
| | portion | on private lands (all segments included), east of mainline Mississippi River Levee and south and east of La. 877 from West Carroll Parish line to La. 580, south of La. 580 to U.S. 65, west of U.S. 65 to Madison Parish line. |
| | Area 4 | Nov. 11-12, 24-26, west of mainline Mississippi River Levee and north and west of La. 877 from West Carroll Parish line to La. 580, north of La. 580 to U.S. 65, east of U.S. 65 to Madison Parish line |
| Orleans | | None |
| Plaquemines | Area 6 | None |
| St. Bernard | Area 6 | None |
| West Carroll | Area 5 | Nov. 24-25, 26 |

E. Farm Raised White-tailed Deer on Supplemented Shooting Preserves

| Archery | Modern Firearm | Either Sex |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------|
| Oct. 1-Jan. 31 (Either Sex) | Nov. 1-Jan. 31 | Nov. 1-7 Dec. 1-7 Jan. 1-7 |

F. Exotics on Supplemented Shooting Preserves: Either Sex, no closed season.

G. Promotional Hunting Days

1. The following dates are established as promotional hunting days: the 1st three days after Thanksgiving Day.

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 21:707 (July 1995), amended LR 22:585 (July 1996), LR 23:871 (July 1997), LR 24:1324 (July 1998), LR 25:1290 (July 1999), repromulgated LR 25:1526 (August 1999), LR 26:1506 (July 2000), LR 27:1061 (July 2001), LR 28:1615 (July 2002), LR 29:1122 (July 2003), repromulgated LR 29:1521 (August 2003), LR 30:1494 (July 2004), LR 31:1627 (July 2005), LR 32: .

Public hearings will be held throughout the State during the weeks of March 13, 2006 and March 20, 2006. Also comments will be accepted at regularly scheduled Wildlife and Fisheries Commission Meetings from March through May. Interested persons may submit written comments relative to the proposed rule until Thursday, May 4, 2006 to Mr.

David Moreland, Wildlife Division, Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Box 98000, Baton Rouge, LA, 70898-9000.

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.

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).

Terry D. Denmon
Chairman

RESOLUTION
LOUISIANA WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION
LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES
February 2, 2006

The following was adopted by the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission at its regular Commission Meeting held in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, February 2, 2006.

WHEREAS, it is the constitutional responsibility of the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to establish hunting seasons for resident game birds and quadrupeds, and

WHEREAS, authority to establish seasons, bag limits, possession limits and other rules and regulations for the hunting, taking and possession of any species of wild game birds or quadrupeds is vested in the Commission by R.S. 56:115, and

WHEREAS, this action will provide for the protection and conservation of these natural resources and allow for recreational opportunities for sport hunting on both public and private lands, and

WHEREAS, the Commission and Department staff have jointly reviewed and considered all available biological information, now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the attached rules and regulations affecting sport hunting of resident game species are hereby adopted by the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission as a Notice of Intent.

Terry D. Denmon, Chairman
Wildlife and Fisheries Commission

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 promulgate rules and regulations governing the hunting of resident game birds and game quadrupeds.

Title 76

WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES

Part XIX. Hunting and WMA Regulations

Chapter 1. Resident Game Hunting Season

§111. General and Wildlife Management Area Hunting Rules and Regulations

A. - C.10.

11. ~~Bobcat. The hunting of bobcats will be legal only during the open deer season in all deer hunting areas. The legal shooting hours and the legal methods for the taking of bobcats shall be the same as defined for the taking of deer. License requirements shall also be the same for deer. The season limit shall be one. No person other than the holder of a valid big game license may take or possess bobcat, EXCEPT licensed trappers who may take or possess bobcat during the open trapping season. A big game licensee shall only take bobcat during the time period from one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset with a bow and arrow, shotgun, muzzleloader, or centerfire firearm. A big game licensee shall not take more than 2 bobcats per calendar year. This regulation applies only to property that is privately owned and does not apply to state wildlife management areas and refuges, the Kisatchie National Forest, federally owned refuges and lands owned by the Corps of Engineers.~~

D.1. - D.12. * * *

E. General Deer Hunting Regulations

1. Prior to hunting deer, all deer hunters, regardless of age or license status, must obtain a Deer Tag Harvest Card and have this on their possession when hunting deer. Immediately upon harvesting a deer, the hunter must document the kill on

the Deer Tag Harvest Card. All hunters, must file a deer harvest report with the Department at the end of the season, even if no deer were harvested.

~~4 2. One antlered and one antlerless (when legal) deer per day EXCEPT on some Federal Refuges (check Refuge regulations) and National Forest Lands where the daily limit shall be one deer per day. Six per season (all segments included) by all methods of take, EXCEPT antlerless harvest on property enrolled in DMAP and LADT does not count in the season bag limit for hunters.~~ One antlered and one antlerless deer per day (when legal) except of National Forest Lands and some Federal Refuges (check refuge regulations) where the daily limit shall be one deer per day. Season limit is six, three antlered bucks and three antlerless deer (all segments included) by all methods of take, except antlerless harvest on property enrolled in DMAP and LADT does not count in the season bag limit for hunters. Antlerless deer may be harvested during entire deer season on private lands (all segments included) except in the following parishes: West Carroll, Plaquemines, St. Bernard and portions of East Carroll. Consult regulations pamphlet, modern firearms table for either-sex days for these parishes. This does not apply to public lands (wildlife management areas, National Forest Lands, and Federal Refuges) which will have specified either-sex days.

2 3. A legal buck is a deer with visible antler of hardened bony material, broken naturally through the skin. Killing bucks without at least one visible antler as described above and killing does is prohibited except where specifically allowed and EXCEPT in Thistlethwaite Wildlife Management Area where a legal buck shall be defined as deer with at least 4 points on one side or a deer with unbranched antlers commonly referred to as spikes (no minimum length). To be counted as a point, a projection must be at least one inch long and its length must exceed the length of its base. The beam tip is counted as a point but not measured as a point.

3 4. Deer hunting restricted to legal bucks only, except where otherwise allowed.

4 5. Either-sex deer is defined as male or female deer. Taking or possessing spotted fawns is prohibited.

5 6. It is illegal to hunt or shoot deer with firearms smaller than .22 caliber centerfire or a shotgun loaded with anything other than buckshot or rifled slug. Handguns may be used for hunting.

6 7. Taking game quadrupeds or birds from aircraft, participating in the taking of deer with the aid of aircraft or from automobiles or other moving land vehicles is prohibited.

7 8. Still hunting is defined as stalking or stationary stand hunting without the use of dog(s). Pursuing, driving or hunting deer with dogs or moving vehicles, including ATVs, when or where a still hunting season or area is designated, is prohibited and will be

strictly enforced. The training of deer dogs is prohibited in all still hunting areas during the gun still hunting and archery only season. Deer hunting with dogs is allowed in all other areas having open deer seasons that are not specifically designated as still hunting only. Except in wildlife management areas, a leashed dog may be used to trail and retrieve wounded or unrecovered deer during legal hunting hours. Any dog used to trail or retrieve wounded or unrecovered deer shall have on a collar with owner's name, address, and phone number. In addition, a dog may be used to trail and retrieve unrecovered deer after legal hunting hours; however, no person accompanying a dog after legal hunting hours may carry a firearm of any sort.

§ 9. Areas not specifically designated as open are closed.

9 10. Muzzleloader Segment: (Special license and muzzleloader firearms specifications apply only to the special state, WMA, National Forest and Preserves, and Federal Refuge seasons.) Still hunt only. Specific WMAs will also be open, check WMA schedule for specific details. Muzzleloader license required for resident hunters between the ages of 16 and 59 inclusive and non-residents 16 years of age and older. Either-sex deer may be taken in all deer hunting areas EXCEPT Area 5 and as specified on Public Areas. It is unlawful to carry a gun, other than a muzzleloader, including those powered by air or other means, while hunting during the special muzzleloader segment. Except, it is lawful to carry a .22 caliber rimfire pistol loaded with #12 shot (ratshot only).

a. Legal Muzzleloader Firearms For Special Season: Rifles or pistols, .44 caliber minimum, or shotguns 10 gauge or smaller, all of which must load exclusively from the muzzle or cap and ball cylinder, use black powder or approved substitute only, take ball or bullet projectile only, including sabot bullets and may be fitted with magnified scopes. This includes muzzleloaders known as "inline" muzzleloaders.

40 11. Archery Segment: Consult regulations pamphlet. WMA seasons are the same as outside except as noted below. Archery license required for resident bow hunters between the ages of 16 and 59 inclusive and non-residents 16 years of age and older. Residents 60 years of age and older may use a crossbow without a special permit or license. Either-sex deer may be taken in all areas open for deer hunting EXCEPT when a bucks only season is in progress for gun hunting, and EXCEPT in Area 6 from October 1-15. Archer's must conform to the bucks only regulations. Either-sex deer may be taken on WMAs at anytime during archery season EXCEPT when bucks only seasons are in progress on the respective WMA. Also, archery season restricted on Atchafalaya Delta, Salvador, Lake Boeuf, and Pointe-aux-Chenes WMAs (SEE SCHEDULE).

a. Bow and arrow regulations: Hunting arrows for deer must have well-sharpened metal broadhead blades not less than 7/8 inch in width. Bow and arrow fishermen must have a sport fishing license and not carry any arrows with broadhead points unless a big game season is in progress.

i. It is unlawful:

(a). to carry a gun, including those powered by air or other means, while hunting with bow and arrow during the special bow and arrow deer season EXCEPT it is lawful to carry a .22 caliber rimfire pistol loaded with #12 shot (ratshot) only.

(b). to have in possession or use any poisoned or drugged arrow, arrows with explosive tips, or any bow drawn, held or released by mechanical means except that hand held releases are lawful and except disabled persons with a crossbow permit and individuals who are 60 years of age or older may use a bow drawn, held or released by mechanical means.

(c). to hunt deer with a bow having a pull less than 30 pounds.

(d). to hunt with a bow or crossbow fitted with an infrared or laser sight.

(e). to take deer while deer are swimming or while the hunter is in a boat with motor attached in operating position; however, the restrictions in this paragraph shall not apply to any person who has lost one or more limbs.

~~41~~ 12. Hunter Orange. Any person hunting deer shall display on his head, chest and/or back a total of not less than 400 square inches of "HUNTER ORANGE" during the open deer gun season including muzzleloader season. Persons hunting on privately owned, legally posted land may wear a hunter orange cap or hat in lieu of the 400 square inches. These provisions shall not apply to persons hunting deer from elevated stands on property that is privately owned and legally posted or to archery deer hunters hunting on legally posted lands where firearm hunting is not allowed by agreement of the landowner or lessee. However, anyone hunting deer on such lands where hunting with firearms is allowed shall be required to display the 400 square inches or a hunter orange cap or hat while walking to and from elevated stands. While a person is hunting from an elevated stand, the 400 square inches or cap or hat may be concealed. WARNING: DEER HUNTERS ARE CAUTIONED TO WATCH FOR PERSONS HUNTING OTHER GAME OR ENGAGED IN ACTIVITIES NOT REQUIRING "HUNTER ORANGE".

~~42~~ 13. Special handicapped either-sex deer season on private land. See regulations pamphlet for dates. Restricted to individuals with Physically Challenged Hunter Permit.

~~43~~ 14. Special Youth Deer Hunt on Private Lands (Either-Sex). See regulations pamphlet for dates. Youths under the age of 16 only. Youths 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 may not possess a firearm. Youths may possess only one firearm while hunting. Legal firearms are the same as described for deer 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.

F.1. - F.5. * * *

6. Area 6

a. ~~All of Orleans Parish is closed to all forms of deer hunting.~~ All of the following parishes are open: Ascension, Assumption, Iberville, Jefferson, Lafourche, Orleans, Plaquemines, Pointe Coupee, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. James, St. John, St. Martin, Terrebonne, West Baton Rouge.

e b. Portions of the following parishes are also open:

i. Avoyelles - All except that portion west of I-49.

ii. Evangeline - That portion east of I-49 to junction of La. 29, east of La. 29 south of I-49 to Ville Platte and north of U.S. 167 east of Ville Platte.

iii. Iberia - East of U.S. 90.

iv. Lafayette - East of I-49 and U.S. 90.

v. Livingston - South of I-12.

vi. Rapides - South of Alexandria between Red River and U.S. 167 to the junction of U.S. 167 with I-49 at Turkey Creek Exit, east of I-49 southward to parish line.

vii. St. Landry - East of U.S. 167.

viii. St. Mary - North of U.S. 90 from Iberia Parish line eastward to Wax Lake Outlet, east of Wax Lake Outlet southward to Intracoastal Waterway, north of Intracoastal Waterway eastward to ~~Terrebonne Parish line~~ the Atchafalaya River, east of the Atchafalaya River southward to Bayou Shaffer, north of Bayou Shaffer to Bateman Lake, north and west of Bayou Chene from Bateman Lake to Lake Palourde.

ix. St. Tammany - That portion south of I-12, west of Hwy. 1077 to La. 22, south of La. 22 to Tchefuncte River, west of Tchefuncte River southward to Lake Pontchartrain.

x. Tangipahoa - South of I-12.

xi. West Feliciana - West of Mississippi River, known as Raccourci and Turnbull Islands.

d c. Still hunting only in all or portions of the following parishes:

i. Avoyelles - North of La. 1 from Simmesport westward to La. 115 at Marksville, east of La. 115 from Marksville northward to the Red River near Moncla, south and west of the Red River to La. 1 at Simmesport.

ii. Plaquemines - East of the Mississippi River.

iii. Rapides - South of Alexandria between Red River and U.S. 167 to the junction of U.S. 167 with I-49 at Turkey Creek Exit, east of I-49 southward to parish line.

iv. St. Bernard - All of the parish shall be still hunting only EXCEPT that portion of St. Bernard known as the spoil area between the MRGO on the east and Access Canal on the west, south of Bayou Bienvenue and north of Bayou la Loutre.

v. St. John - South of Pass Manchac from Lake Pontchartrain to U.S. 51, east of U.S. 51 from Pass Manchac to La. 638 (Frenier Beach Road). North of La. 638 from U.S. 51 to Lake Pontchartrain. West of Lake Pontchartrain from La. 638 to Pass Manchac.

vi. St. Landry - Those lands surrounding Thistlethwaite WMA bounded north and east by La. 359, west by La. 10, and south by La. 103.

vii. NEW HIGH WATER BENCHMARK CLOSURE. Deer hunting in those portions of Iberia, Iberville, St. Martin, and St. Mary parishes south of Interstate 10, west of the East Guide Levee, east of the West Guide Levee, and north of U.S. Highway 90 will be closed when the river stage of the Atchafalaya River reaches 18 feet at Butte LaRose.

7. Area 7

a. Portions of the following parishes are open:

i. Iberia - South of La. 14 and west of U.S. Hwy. 90.

ii. St. Mary - ~~South of U.S. 90 from Iberia Parish line eastward to Wax Lake Outlet, west of Wax Lake Outlet southward to Intracoastal Waterway, south of Intracoastal Waterway from Wax Lake Outlet eastward to Terrebonne Parish line~~ All EXCEPT that portion north of U.S. 90 from Iberia Parish line eastward to

Wax Lake Outlet, east of Wax Lake Outlet southward to Intracoastal Waterway, north of Intracoastal Waterway eastward to the Atchafalaya River, east of the Atchafalaya River southward to Bayou Shaffer, north of Bayou Shaffer to Bateman Lake, north and west of Bayou Chene from Bateman Lake to Lake Palourde.

F.8. - G.5.m. * * *

n. All hunters EXCEPT waterfowl hunters and mourning dove hunters (including archers and small game hunters) on WMAs must display 400 square inches of "Hunter Orange" and wear a "Hunter Orange" cap during open gun season for deer. Hunters participating in special dog seasons for rabbit and squirrel are required to wear a minimum of a "Hunter Orange" cap. All other hunters and archers (while on the ground) EXCEPT waterfowl hunters also must wear a minimum of a "Hunter Orange" cap during special dog seasons for rabbit and squirrel. ALSO all persons afield during hunting seasons are encouraged to display "Hunter Orange".

o. Deer hunters hunting from concealed ground blinds must display a minimum of 400 square inches of "Hunter Orange" above or around their blinds which is visible from 360 feet.

p. Archery season for deer. The archery season on WMAs is the same as outside and is open for either-sex deer EXCEPT as otherwise specified on individual WMAs. Archery season restricted on Atchafalaya Delta and closed on certain WMAs when special seasons for youth or handicapped hunts are in progress. Consult regulations pamphlet for specific seasons.

q. Either-sex deer may be taken on WMAs at any time during archery season EXCEPT when bucks only seasons are in progress on the respective WMAs. Archers must abide by bucks only regulations and other restrictions when such seasons are in progress.

r. Muzzleloader season for deer. Either-sex unless otherwise specified. See WMA deer schedule.

G.6. - G.17.zz. * * *

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 56:115 and R.S. 56:116.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Wildlife and Fisheries Commission, LR 25:1279 (July 1999), amended LR 26:1494 (July 2000), LR 27:1049 (July 2001), LR 28:1603 (July 2002), LR 29:1124 (July 2003), repromulgated LR 29:1522 (August 2003), amended LR 30:1495 (July 2004), LR 31:1611 (July 2005), LR 32: .

Public hearings will be held throughout the State during the weeks of March 13, 2006 and March 20, 2006. Also comments will be accepted at regularly scheduled Wildlife and Fisheries Commission Meetings from March through May. Interested persons may

submit written comments relative to the proposed rule until Thursday, May 4, 2006 to Mr. David Moreland, Wildlife Division, Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Box 98000, Baton Rouge, LA, 70898-9000.

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.

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).

Terry D. Denmon
Chairman

Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy Presentation began with Assistant Secretary Parke Moore stating that the U.S. Congress charged each state and territory with developing a comprehensive wildlife conservation strategy. This “Plan” would help conserve wildlife and vital natural areas before they become rare and too costly to protect. Louisiana’s plan was submitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for review and approval before October 1, 2005. As of December 12, 2005, Louisiana was 1 of 17 states to have unconditional approval of their plan. The Louisiana Natural Heritage Program was in charge of coordinating and developing the plan. The core team was comprised of 16 members and they included: the 5 main authors Mr. Gary Lester, Ms. Patti Faulkner, Mr. Chris Reid, Ms. Inez Maxit and Mr. Stephen Sorenson; the support team of Mr. Harry Blanchet, Mr. Mike Carloss, Mr. Mike Olinde and a core team of Mr. Doug Albert, Mr. Jimmy Anthony, Mr. Jeff Boundy, Ms. Marianne Burke, Mr. Jim Hanifen, Ms. Nancy Higginbotham, Mr. Tim Morrison and Mr. Kenny Ribbeck. Then there were quite a number of other individuals involved such as those from other state and federal agencies, non-government organizations, ecologists, and professionals interested in the plan. Assistant Secretary Moore then asked Mr. Gary Lester to come forward and explain the plan. Mr. Gary Lester began noting this was a time consuming project over the last 1 ½ years. The Department currently receives about \$1 million per year from the State Wildlife Grant Program and it was expected that number would grow. There were 50 states and 6 territories that submitted plans and many have yet to be approved by the National Team. In Louisiana, a number of factors were considered when trying to decide what species to be considered. Those factors included: how rare the species was, whether it was found in Louisiana and not anywhere else, the distribution in the State, the number of ecoregions it occurs within, the degree of imperilment, and major threats associated with the species. Instead of looking at each specie separately, the members looked at the 6 terrestrial ecoregions and 13 aquatic species. There were 240 species identified of conservation concern which are those that are declining in Louisiana or some part of their range. Of

these 240, 173 were vertebrates and 67 invertebrates and they include both game and nongame species. The breakdown by taxonomic groups showed that the largest group was birds (69) and the goal was to stop the decline of these species before they became listed as threatened or endangered. Also, the staff identified 38 unique habitats in Louisiana with 37 being naturally occurring and 1 agricultural. The focus on habitats was due to the fact that habitat loss would affect the decline in the species; a single habitat may have more than 1 specie that was declining; and dollars would be saved going with a broad approach. When developing the strategy, Mr. Lester stated they talked with a lot of organizations and people and found that developing partnerships by continuing conversations with sportsmen and starting new dialogues were important. Workshops and day long focus group meetings were conducted and 18 threats were identified. More than 325 conservation actions were identified and 105 linked to partners and 42 linked the agency to landowners. Mr. Lester then showed where those 325 actions fell into different categories. How success would be measured over the next 10 years was defined as identifying a number of performance indicators and a schedule. Mr. Lester concluded his presentation noting that the Plan was on the Department's website. Commissioner King commended all of those that worked and contributed to the project.

Presentation of Stock Assessments for Black Drum, Striped Mullet, Southern Flounder and Sheephead began with Mr. Harry Blanchet stating this was an annual report on the 4 species. The reports go through external reviews and only 1 comment has been received for this year. Black Drum showed the harvest rate was above F.1, below F Max, yield was about 92 percent of maximum, spawning potential ratio (SPR) was 44 percent if natural mortality rate was .1. If higher rates of natural mortality was considered, then the harvest rate would be reduced. For striped mullet, the current fishery was estimated to operate above F.1 near F Max with yield about 100 percent and SPR of 37 percent. With a M of .5 on southern flounder, the yield was 96-99 percent and the SPR was between 23 percent and 29 percent. With sheephead, M of .2, yield was 66-79 percent and the SPR of 48-59 percent. Mr. Blanchet asked the Commission to take a voice vote to give the Secretary authority to transmit the reports to the Legislature. Commissioner Miller asked if the summaries were based on 2004 data and did not include impacts from the hurricanes. Mr. Blanchet stated that was correct. Commissioner Miller stated he was told there was a large flounder die-off in the Calcasieu Estuary after Hurricane Rita and he wondered if the Department had confirmed. Mr. Blanchet stated localized fish kills were not uncommon after hurricanes, but it would not have population level impacts. Then Commissioner Miller asked if the Marine Fisheries Division was ready to speak on any impacts from the hurricanes. Mr. Blanchet commented they have not seen any impacts in terms of stocks, but knew there were impacts to people. Chairman Denmon asked for a motion to accept the reports and authorize the Secretary to transmit them to the Legislature. Commissioner Miller made the motion, it was seconded by Commissioner King and passed with no opposition. (Commissioner Morrow left the meeting prior to this item.)

The Commissioners agreed to hold the **June 2006 Meeting** on Thursday, June 1, 2006, beginning at 9:30 a.m. at the Baton Rouge Headquarters.

Chairman Denmon asked for **Public Comments** and none were heard.

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

Dwight Landreneau
Secretary

DL:scf

AGENDA
LOUISIANA WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA
FEBRUARY 2, 2006

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