

**HUNTING AND FISHING ADVISORY EDUCATION COUNCIL**

**MINUTES**

May 21, 2008

Baton Rouge, La

The following constitute minutes of the Hunting and Fishing Advisory Council 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 225-765-2623

**HUNTING AND FISHING ADVISORY EDUCATION COUNCIL  
MEETING AGENDA  
Wednesday, May 21, 2008 - 1:30 p.m.  
Louisiana Room  
Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries Headquarters  
2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, La. 70808**

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of Minutes of March 26, 2008 Meeting
3. Council Special Announcements/Personal Privilege
4. Receive Public Comment
5. Private Lands Initiative – Wildlife Division  
Kenny Ribbeck, WMA Program Manager
6. Status Report on the Effects of the Bonnet Carre Spillway Opening on Lake  
Pontchartrain Basin Fisheries  
Brian Lezina, Marine Fisheries Division
7. Prairie Grasslands Restoration / Quail Habitat Improvement  
Fred Kimmel, Wildlife Division
8. 2008 Legislative Session Update
9. Other Business
10. Set Next Meeting Date
11. Receive Public Comments
12. Adjournment

MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE HUNTING AND FISHING ADVISORY COUNCIL.

May 21, 2008

**Welcome and Opening Comments** were made by Woody Crews.

**Roll Call**

Members of the Advisory Council in attendance included Jeff DeBlieux, IV, Joe Herring representing Vance Gordon, Nelson Roth, Barry Joffrion representing Will Courtney, Bo Boehringer representing Mike Windham, Dr. Donald Reed, Woody Crews, Stephen Pellessier, Mike Rainwater, and Samuel Smith.

Secretary Robert J. Barham, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, was also present.

Mr. Crews asked for anyone standing in for a member to introduce themselves.

**Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Crews called for a motion for approval of the March 26, 2008 minutes.

Mr. Bo Boehringer clarified that the copy included in the meeting was the 3<sup>rd</sup> revision sent one day prior to the meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Stephen Pellessier to accept the minutes and a second was offered by Mr. Samuel Smith.

Mr. Crews called for Special Announcements. Hearing none, Mr. Crews moved forward.

**Receive Public Comment**

Mr. Crews asked to receive public comment out of order from the posted Agenda. No public comment was received and he moved forward with the meeting.

**Private Lands Initiative – Wildlife Division**

Mr. Kenny Ribbeck, WMA Program Manager gave a short presentation regarding a new program called the Louisiana Landowners for Wildlife. Explaining it as an ethical assistance program that will be carried out to assist private landowners in managing their property for Wildlife. Wildlife and Fisheries will serve as the point of contact to private landowners. The program utilizes control burns in some situations.

Mr. Pellessier asked if the Department is running into problems with local government with this effort (control burns).

Mr. Ribbeck explained that we are providing a no cost or almost no cost service while addressing the big issue of liability concerns and smoke issues through the new Louisiana fire council.

Mr. Pellessier then asked if Mr. Ribbeck could discuss Wood duck boxes.

Mr. Ribbeck explained that if there is a habitat on or near land then we will go out and place a box. First the Department asks the landowner to provide maintenance -- in January they should clean out the box annually. We have focused Wood duck box installations on public lands, but we do have some private lands. Our biologist have had much success monitoring the eggs, we have a lot of data that has really been helpful.

Presentation available in file.

Mr. Crews offered that he could share a list of landowner organizations.

### **Status Report on the Effects of the Bonnet Carre Spillway Opening on Lake Pontchartrain Basin Fisheries**

Brian Lezina, Marine Fisheries Division, gave a presentation on the status report on the effects of the Bonnet Carre Spillway Opening on Lake Pontchartrain Basin Fisheries. He offered the history of the spillway, relative to previous openings, as well as its function and impact.

Mr. Nelson Roth asked, looking back historically, when the spill way was opened, do you think the lake recovered from 1997's opening? shell dredging? Mr. Lezina responded there are so many issues that go into dredging, we feel confident that we have baseline data and we have some data concerning the western part of the lake or how this system relates to normal changes.

Mr. Crews. How long do you expect to continue to monitor in regards to this specific event?

Mr. Lezina explained for at least one month post closure.

Mr. Pellessier asked if Mr. Lezina has seen a large change in plant life.

Mr. Lezina stated that there have been some past issues.

Presentation available in file.

### **Prairie Grasslands Restoration / Quail Habitat Improvement**

Fred Kimmel, Wildlife Division, gave a presentation regarding the restoration of Prairie Grasslands. He discussed the past statistics compared to today as well as describing changes in habitat including forestland, farmland and range land. Further explaining that the problems that we have seen in Louisiana are not unique to us, they are seen all over the southeast part of the United States,

Mr. Smith asked, concerning the decline in quail populations, if anyone ever figured out exactly happened.

Mr. Kimmel responded that it was a combination of changes in land use, mainly agriculture related. Changes have been seen in the piney woods; wild fires and controlled burns used to help clear the understory and improve habitat. That is not happening regularly enough.

Mr. Smith asked how much do predators play a part in quail decline?

Mr. Kimmel stated that predators are a factor and when you have a low population it is magnified.

Mr. Pellessier asked if Mr. Kimmel would please discuss the grasslands restoration program for wildlife.

Mr. Kimmel explained that it was up to the state to come up with projects, and we have two in Louisiana.

Mr. Randy Lanctot added that you have to be very strategic where to develop those grasses considering what could be a safety issue, also, habitat for other species should be considered. It is important to consider that the adjacent habitat in good shape as well.

Presentation available in file.

### **2008 Legislative Session Update**

The Legislative Session update was given by Mr. Bo Boehringer

Mr. Boehringer explained that there was no need to go through every bill being tracked by the Department, but pointed to the importance of the proposed SB-18 sales tax dedication for Wildlife and Fisheries noted on the Session Update Briefing sheet, and the five bills listed that are particularly important to recreational hunters and fishermen. Mr. Pellessier asked if HB 694 would open up youth hunts and that was confirmed by the Wildlife Division staff present. Managed youth hunts would be opened up to 16-17 yr. olds, and that would be a plus. Mr. Boehringer reported that Lt. Col. Jeff Mayne updated the Briefing sheet this morning. HBs 694, 701 and 1025 as of last night had passed on the Senate side and those 3 are in the process of being enrolled for the Governor's signature. Also, Lt. Col. Mayne's notes indicate that SB-18 has passed on the Senate side and is waiting to be scheduled in the House Appropriations Committee for a hearing. Senator Alario has sent a letter requesting that scheduling.

### **Other Business**

Mr. Crews explained that he is not clear on where we want this group to go, he sent out e-mail to members about a week ago asking for suggestions.

Mr. Vance Gordon suggested that the Council probably needed an update on the status of HB 68, the assault weapons bill, since we do not know much about the bill and it may be complicated.

Mr. Crews, stated that he didn't know if it was timely or appropriate for us to weigh in on this bill.

Mr. Randy Lanctot, commenting from the audience, said that HB 68 was scheduled this morning, and he would predict that it was deferred and it is just getting ready to go through the first process, but that doesn't mean that the subject matter is not relevant. He suggested that the Council be alert to certain gear changes being proposed.

Mr. Crews asks Mr. Lanctot to resend his synopsis to the group to send to organizations.

**Set Next Meeting Date**

Mr. Crews delivered the closing comments and asked that the Council meet in two months on July 22, 2008.

Adjournment.

Ch