

**MINUTES OF THE  
HUNTING & FISHING ADVISORY EDUCATION COUNCIL**

Meeting of July 21, 2005  
Department of Wildlife & Fisheries Headquarters – Baton Rouge, La.

**ATTENDEES**

Members of the Advisory Council in attendance included Shane Crochet, Will Courtney, Jerald Horst, Dave Arnoldi for Dave Moreland, Stephen Pellessier, Jeff Poe, Rep. Wilfred Pierre, Mike Rainwater, Dr. Donald Reed, Nelson Roth, E.R. Smith, Samuel Smith, Al Stirling, and Kim Manning for Sen. Walter Boasso.

**OPENING COMMENTS**

LDWF Secretary Dwight Landreneau welcomed members to the initial meeting of the Hunting and Fishing Educational Advisory Council. He introduced LDWF staff members present to provide divisional reports on the operational responsibilities of the department and indicated that there would be time after the presentations for questions. The Secretary asked that at the conclusion of presentations the group discuss, with all staff present, the direction they would want the Council to take to accomplish the goals of the legislation that created their framework. Before the divisional reports, the Council viewed a departmental overview video (produced by the Public Information Section) that detailed the scope of LDWF responsibilities.

## **DIVISION REPORTS**

**Office of Management and Finance** Undersecretary Janice Lansing presented details on the particular responsibilities of OMF during a PowerPoint presentation. She outlined the administrative support provided by the division relative to computer services, licensing, human resources, property control, public information, economic research and fiscal oversight. Her overview pointed to a \$90 million budget that supported the efforts of 794 employees statewide in their fish and game management and customer service efforts.

**Enforcement Division** Lt. Col. Keith LaCaze outlined in his PowerPoint presentation the division's enforcement responsibilities relative to fish and game regulations statewide, the boating safety education component within the division and the search and rescue resource that LDWF agents provide around the state.

**Office of Wildlife** Biologist Mike Olinde spoke for the Wildlife Division and Fur & Refuge Division and their oversight of nearly 1.5 million acres of wildlife habitat from the coastal wildlife management areas (WMAs) and refuges along the Gulf to the upland forest WMAs above Interstate 10. The numerous programs under the Office of Wildlife which manage species including white-tailed deer, upland game, alligators, nutria and waterfowl, were outlined. Wildlife's responsibilities relative to forestry management on LDWF-owned properties and hunter education were also part of the PowerPoint presentation.

The responsibilities of the **Office of Fisheries** were detailed in presentations by Gary Tilyou, Inland Fisheries assistant administrator, and Jim Hanifen, Marine Fisheries assistant administrator. Tilyou explained that Inland Fisheries manages fish populations and habitats for the conservation and improvement of sport and commercial fishing primarily in the freshwater areas of the state. Hanifen outlined how Marine Fisheries is charged with management of the full range of Louisiana's estuarine and marine resources categorized as Fisheries Management Programs and Habitat Protection Programs.

### **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

With presentations completed, Secretary Landreneau opened the floor for discussion of the Council's mission to connect the public more with all that the department has to offer.

- Jerald Horst asked the Secretary what he envisioned the working partnership to do. Secretary Landreneau referenced the legislation and emphasized that the user groups represented were connected to LDWF's customer base and the input from those users could be used to improve LDWF's customer service efforts. Mr. Horst asked how often the group should meet. Secretary Landreneau felt a minimum of twice per year would be beneficial and a more frequent meeting schedule could be accommodated if the group had the available time to do so. The Secretary pointed out that each Council member would be provided lists of contacts within each division to allow questions to be brought forward between meeting times. Also, each Council member would receive a copy of the PowerPoint presentations shown today.
- Will Courtney asked Secretary Landreneau about legislation that La. Bass Federation had backed last session that would require life preservers on those age 17 and under while in

a boat. Rep. Pierre indicated that the legislation never got out of committee. Secretary Landreneau indicated that these are type of issues that the Council and LDWF could work on jointly for benefit of the public's safety.

- Al Stirling asked what type brochures the department might have to assist marine dealerships in better educating the public on boating regulations. Secretary Landreneau asked that Lt. Col. Brian Spillman (in the room) follow up and provide that information to the Council. Secretary Landreneau also pointed out that the contact information provided for the Public Information Office could be used to request any LDWF publications in print.
- Al Stirling followed up with a question about the Enforcement Division's "I Got Caught With My Life Preserver On" t-shirt campaign that his dealership had participated in as a sponsor. He wanted to know how many t-shirts had been given out. Lt. Col. Spillman responded that the program was instituted by the Wildlife Agents Association and 10,000 are imprinted annually and they are handed out statewide within a year's time.
- Rep. Pierre asked what happens to confiscated fish that are seized by agents during an illegal catch scenario. Lt. Col. LaCaze responded that if the fish are a commercially saleable species, then 3 bids are solicited from commercial outlets and the dealer with the best price becomes the point of sale. The funds derived are then held in escrow until the case is settled. Once the case is litigated, if the verdict is not guilty, the person from whom the fish are seized gets the money from the sale. If the verdict is guilty, the department retains the money. If the fish are recreational catch only, the seized fish are donated to charitable organizations (soup kitchens) or sometimes individual needy families if the amount is small.

- (Identity of person asking question not discernable on tape) How many vessels does LDWF have that are capable of going off shore? Lt. Col. LaCaze asked Lt. Col. Spillman to respond, which he did, but response was not discernable on tape. Follow up question from same person was: Do you have night vision equipment for surveillance? Response from LaCaze was affirmative. Follow up question from same person was: Do you track man-hours related to search and rescue? Response from LaCaze was affirmative and he gave example of FEMA re-imbursements following hurricane responses and the need to have paperwork in order detailing man-hours.
- (Identity of person asking question not discernable on tape) What programs does LDWF have in place to emphasize bringing youth back in to hunting and fishing? Responding for Office of Wildlife, Brandt Savoie, said that programs include Hunter Ed and Aquatic Ed, as well as the seasonal youth hunts for duck, deer and turkey that are part of each year's seasonal dates. The White Lake and Sherburne WMA lottery hunts are also special opportunities for youth. Hunter Ed and Aquatic Ed specialists create school programs and fishing clinics each year. Savoie added that Archery in the Schools is being offered as a program and becoming more popular. Secretary Landreneau also noted that Discover La. Hunting would be offered in the fall of 2005 during Thanksgiving weekend to provide 3 days of free-permit hunting for novices. The program is coming together and will be web site based. Hunter Ed certification will be required. Annually, the annual free fishing weekend in June will continue and National Hunting and Fishing Day will be celebrated again in September – an event that LDWF has sponsored for over two decades. The Secretary pointed out that Hunter Ed now has available Laser Shot training rifles to

simulate field shooting and the exhibit was very popular at public events -- and anyone interested in making the exhibit available to their group could contact Hunter Ed directly.

- Sam Smith asked about the criteria on LDWF's restocking program and boat ramp program. Secretary Landreneau responded that there is an application process for the boat ramp program and the applications are scored based on the number of licenses sold in the area and number of boat ramps already existing in the area. Federal funds and matching funds must be procured and Tim Morrison or Gary Tilyou in Inland Fisheries would be the contacts for more information. Concerning restocking, Gary Tilyou responded that each fall the department's regional biologists bring forward the list of water bodies where they want to stock fish and requests from the public/organizations with their preferences. The department's hatcheries output does not usually match the request list, however. Tilyou explained that the request list then has to be prioritized for conditions such as new water bodies, waterways affected by fish kills, trophy lake status, etc., and then the fish are allocated based on numbers available and top priorities for a specific area. The regional biologist contact information statewide will be forwarded to the Council members.
- (Question inaudible on tape and person placing question not identifiable) – Secretary Landreneau indicated that Sabine River Authority would have to answer question and he could provide contact information.
- (Identity of person asking question not discernable on tape) How many schools are participating in the Archery in Schools Program? Dave Arnoldi responded that he will verify the number with John Sturgis, Hunter Ed coordinator and get answer for Council.

Secretary Landreneau responded that he had received very positive comments on the program.

- (Identity of person asking question not discernable on tape) Relative to Marine Fisheries oversight of seismic activities on LDWF properties, does LDWF control the dates available for seismic work permits requested by private companies? Secretary Landreneau responded that LDWF does work closely with the Dept. of Natural Resources in the permit approval process. LDWF now has a permits coordinator on staff. Jim Hanifen then elaborated that the permit process included provisions for bonding, inspections and monitoring for compliance. He said restrictions are made for certain times of year and the number of passes that can be made over a certain area of the marsh – so that species disturbance is kept to a minimum. Follow-up question asked about fish killed in process. Hanifen responded that monitoring process was in place to minimize fish kills, but some mortalities did normally occur as side effect.

No further questions were asked.

Secretary Landreneau asked the Council to bring forward topics they were specifically interested in. Jerald Horst asked that one of upcoming meetings continue the orientation on LDWF programs in more detail. Jerald followed up asking for more updates on the biological research side, program related. He would like more information on wood duck banding. Another request came forward for information on Black bass regulations, and a push in north Louisiana being made for a statewide length limit. The Secretary indicated the department would accommodate.

Jerald asked the group if they wanted to meet before January. Consensus was that group would meet again in October. Dates will be circulated from the Secretary's office for consideration.

Secretary Landreneau's final comments focused on the assistance LDWF needs from those represented to stress to their groups the importance of all sportsmen continuing to buy the licenses that support the department's fish and game management efforts.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

---

Dwight Landreneau

Secretary

DL:bb

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