

Wildlife Rehabilitators Advisory Committee

NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife

1 Eldridge Rd

Robbinsville, NJ

Meeting Minutes – 5/28/14

WRAC Purpose: The purpose of the WRAC is to establish a group of representatives which will provide advice and assistance to the division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) to improve the wildlife rehabilitation program and the care that is provided to injured and orphaned wildlife.

Committee Members Present: Don Bonica, Lisa DeLambert, Kelly Simonetti (chair), Diane Nickerson, Tracy Leaver, Dr. Jennifer Norton, Giselle Chazotte-Smisko, Dr. Erica Miller

Committee Members Absent: Phil Brodhecker

Division of Fish and Wildlife Staff: Susan Predl, Paulette Nelson, Krista Moser

Present From Public: Kathy Malok and Chris Soucy (from Raptor Trust)

Call to order 10:28AM (Kelly Simonetti)

- Previous meeting's (2/26/14) minutes: Motion to accept by Diane Nickerson, seconded by Tracy Leaver, voted to approve, no objections.
- WRAC Accomplishments: Discussion on where to publish WRAC Accomplishments. Updated WRAC Accomplishments list will be sent via email to members to be reviewed.
- Update on bill S1864: Bill was reintroduced in Assembly last month, meeting was then cancelled, has not yet been rescheduled. Session began in January, going out for summer, does not end for 2 years. Recommendation by Tracy to contact Ag and Natural Resources Committee (5 members) about bill S1864 to keep suppressed; WRAC will resend letter. Senator and assemblyman would have to actively not refile at end of 2 years or it will be reintroduced.
- Division response to illegal possession of wildlife by a sub-permittee:
 - Sub-permittees, apprentices, volunteers, and the liability of a rehabilitator
 - Discussion of definitions of "apprentice" and "sub-permittee." Under current definitions, an apprentice is meant to become rehabilitator. Sub-permittee is meant to provide off-site

care. On federal permit for birds all caregivers need to be listed as “sub-permittee.”
Rehabilitator assumes liability for sub-permittees.

- Suggestion to change terminology to resolve liability for off-site sub-permittees acting independently. Recommendation to add sub-permittee category with same definition as on federal permit for workers caring for birds on-site, to change current “sub-permittee” name to “off-site caretaker.” Can also add secondary permittee to permit at those facilities that provide care to mammals and reptiles.
- Suggestion to change wording of requirements under sub-permittees, combining c, d, and e, belief of WRAC that liability should only be assumed by rehabilitators if animal comes through their facilities first.
- “Apprentice” to be taken off permit so as not to imply that they can care for animals without rehabilitator’s supervision. No changes to apprentice definition. Discussion on time limit for apprentices – WRAC suggests for DFW to contact apprentices after certain time period. If apprentice has no intention of becoming rehabilitator, that person needs to be re-categorized.
- Suggestion for rehabilitator to notify DFW if leaving facility for a specific amount of time. If facility remains open in absence, a caretaker must be designated but the licensed rehabilitator will still be liable.
- Discussion on WRAC recommendations on Division policies for issuing “notices of violations of permit conditions” – NJAC 7:25-10.12
- Motion made by Diane Nickerson to rescind Don Bonica’s violation, seconded by Dr. Erica Miller, motion passed.
- Discussion of steps taken by DFW in regards to Monmouth County situation.
- Review of “Capture and Transport” course
 - It was recommended at course for class members to volunteer at a rehab facility. List of those who passed course, including WCC members and non-members, was sent to rehabilitators by NJWAR and DFW.
- Discussion of relocation policy and rumors that shelters / pest control companies are taking wildlife.

Next meeting to be at Northern Region Office on August 27, 2014.

Meeting adjourned 12:06PM.