

Wildlife Rehabilitators Advisory Committee
NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife
1 Eldridge Rd
Robbinsville, NJ

Meeting Minutes – 1/28/15

WRAC Purpose: The purpose of the WRAC is to 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: Phil Brodhecker, Lisa DeLambert, Tracy Leaver, Dr. Erica Miller, Diane Nickerson, Kelly Simonetti (chair)

Committee Members Absent: Don Bonica, Giselle Chazotte-Smisko, Dr. Jennifer Norton

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

No members of the public were present.

Meeting called to order by Kelly Simonetti at 10:18 A.M.

- It was announced that the agenda for the previously scheduled meeting that was cancelled would be used.
- The Division is revising the Definitions and Requirements to reflect the proposed regulations. There will be a 60-day time limit on how long an on-site sub-permittee and an off-site caregiver can be responsible for wildlife in their care. Discussion was held on the possibility of extensions as needed. Examples may be inserted in Definitions and Requirements.
- Letters were mailed to animal shelters regarding care of wildlife. No one has received any feedback about this. Similar letters were sent to veterinarians last year via email, and this year these letters will be resent via US postal mail. These letters also will be provided to rehabilitators so that they may share them with their veterinary and animal shelter communities. Dr. Erica Miller and Dr. Jennifer Norton will sign the letter to veterinarians before it is mailed. The letter to the animal shelters refers to a 12-hour time limit for emergency possession. Section 25:10.9 of the regulations (NJAC 7:25-10.9) addresses emergency possession and states that the Division needs to be notified of such possession within 12 hours.
- Review and approval of previous meeting's (8/27/14) minutes: Diane Nickerson moved to approve previous meeting minutes, Dr. Erica Miller seconded. A vote was taken with all in favor to approve the minutes.
- An on-line, fillable Adobe document has been created for renewal applications. Some rehabilitators have had trouble saving the information. Letters were previously mailed requesting renewal applications by the January 30 deadline. A suggestion was made to send a letter noting that if applications are not received then rehabilitators will not appear on the published list. The updated list will be posted on the Division web site by March 1.
- A request was received from Tri-State Bird Rescue & Research to add specific mammals (beavers, muskrat, etc.) impacted by oil spills to their permit. A letter will be sent noting that oil-

contaminated mammals may be handled temporarily by Tri-State for the purpose of treatment, but those mammals will not be added to their permit.

- There is no update on capture and transport volunteers at this time. Rehabilitators and WCC volunteers alike have been encouraged to reach out in advance to determine interest. This was emphasized again at the NJAWR meeting. The WRAC recommends that future classes have a "Transport" course rather than including "Capture."
- Nominees for three vacant Committee member positions were addressed (mammal, avian, Fish and Game Council). Letters were received from Kelly Simonetti, Don Bonica and Philip Brodhecker indicating their willingness to serve another term. No other letters of interest were received by the Division. A memo has been sent to Assistant Commissioner Boornazian requesting those reappointments. Anyone else who has expressed possible interest will be encouraged to attend future WRAC meetings. Diane Nickerson moved to nominate Kelly Simonetti as Chair, seconded by Brodhecker, a vote was taken with all in favor.
- An apprentice was planning on doing a program about wildlife rehabilitation at a Sierra Club meeting. She is not a rehabilitator and clarified that her intention was to educate the public on what to do with injured and orphaned wildlife.
- Committee member email addresses were noted and updated.
- The Division has some concern about releasing mute swans, an invasive exotic species. There will be a stakeholder meeting about possible management options, and a Committee member will be invited to attend that stakeholder meeting. It was suggested that other species such as house sparrows and starlings (and any exotic species that destroy habitat and push out native species) be added to this list.
- Tracy Leaver gave an update on the rehabilitation bill.
- The rewrite of the proposed Captive Game, Nongame and Exotic Species regulations was presented to different Bureaus for revisions. Some items may be pulled out which could speed up the adoption of the regulations.
- Discussion was held regarding the expiration date of wildlife rehabilitation permits. Permits expire December 31 but annual reports need to be included with renewal applications. Possible changes include changing the report period or requiring the application be submitted by December 31 and the annual report be submitted at a later date (such as January 31).
- Anticipated meeting dates for 2015 were reviewed.

Next meeting will be at the Division's Northern Region Office in Hampton on April 22, 2015.

Motion to adjourn made by Diane Nickerson, seconded by Philip Brodhecker. All present were in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 11:42 A.M.

Future agenda:

1. Review of Definitions and Requirements regarding extension of 60-day limit for on-site sub-permittees and off-site caregivers to possess animals.
2. The Division will provide an update on which rehabilitators have renewed their permits for 2015. The Division Web site will be updated by March 1.
3. Legislative update.
4. Updates on the transporter list.
5. Suggestions on handling the renewal application process.
6. Status of mailing of vet letter signed by Drs. Miller and Norton.