

NJ Wildlife Rehabilitators Advisory Committee

4/22/15 – Meeting Minutes

Present: Don Bonica, Phil Brodhecker, Lisa DeLambert, Tracy Leaver, Diane Nickerson, Dr. Jennifer Norton, Giselle Smisko,

Division of Fish and Wildlife employees: Krista Moser, Susan Predl, Hardy Wiedemann

Public: Katie Besbris, Paulette Brewer, Jean Pawker

- A motion was made by D. Nickerson to approve January 28, 2015 meeting minutes. The motion was approved by the Committee.
- A review of the definitions of on-site sub-permittee and off-site caregiver was provided by S. Predl. An explanation of the 60-day limit for on-site sub-permittees and off-site caregivers, and procedures for requesting an extension from the Division was provided.
- A review of the rehabilitators that have not yet renewed permits for 2015 was provided by the Division. Only one rehabilitator, who verbally confirmed that she plans to renew her permit to rehabilitate wildlife, has not yet done so.
- A review of the number of animals rehabilitated in 2014, including number of animals released, animals euthanized etc. was provided. Approximately 15,200 animals were received by rehabilitators and 7600 were released in 2014. The numbers are consistent with the number of animals rehabilitated in previous years. The number of animals received and released, by species, and by rehabilitator, were reviewed.
- A discussion ensued on the coyote attacks in Bergen County and the Division's response. Some rehabilitators have expressed concern that the attacks will lead to public pressure to kill coyotes. S. Predl stated that the Division has information on living with coyotes on the Division web site. Lisa DeLambert raised the issue of the Canine Influenza outbreak in the mid-west and advised NJ rehabbers to keep an eye out for sick animals. S. Predl agreed to find out if the Bergen County coyote dens were checked for young. The first coyote was a male. The second coyote was found dead in a trap. Two known den sites were checked for young, but no young coyote pups were found.

- S. Predl reviewed the use of WCC volunteers that took the Capture and transport course held in March 2014, by rehabilitators. 43 volunteers are currently certified to transport wildlife for Wildlife Rehabilitators. Only 3 rehabilitators have used those WCC volunteers. Some who took the course said they were never contacted by rehabilitators. Some rehabilitators stated that the volunteers were not available and/or did not return their phone calls. No new capture and transport class is planned at this time.
- At the suggestion of WRAC, at the January meeting, the permit renewal application was divided into two sections. S. Predl reviewed the changes to the rehabilitator permit renewal form. The new permit renewal application form allows rehabilitators to submit their permit renewal on 1/31 and their annual summary report on 3/1. A Motion was made by D. Nickerson, and seconded by T. Leaver to approve the new format.
- A question arose about the possibility of changing the permit duration to two years. However, captive game regulations state that all captive game permits expire on 12/31 on the year of issue. Therefore the permit will remain valid for one year.
- Dr. Jennifer Norton brought the letter that WRAC will mail to veterinarians, signed by both Dr. Norton and Dr. Miller. The letter will be emailed and mailed, once the databases are received by the Division. L. DeLambert offered to inquire whether the letter can be distributed to all new veterinarians are accredited.
- A form prepared by Brian Zarate of the Division's Endangered and Nongame Species Program summarizing the endangered, threatened and species of concern handled by rehabilitators was reviewed. B. Zarate requested that the form be completed whenever a rehabilitator admits an endangered, threatened or species of concern. The form will be modified by S. Predl to include additional information and distributed to rehabilitators.
- Lisa DeLambert updated the WRAC on the current Avian Influenza concern. If rehabilitators hear of dead birds they should immediately notify State Dept. of Agriculture. A phone number was provided. This information will be distributed to all rehabilitators. Currently two different types of AI are circulating and this is a growing concern. West Nile calls can be directed to Dr. Colin Campbell.
- A memo, signed by DEP Assistant Commissioner R. Boornazian confirming the re-appointment of K. Simonetti as a mammal rehabilitator representative, D. Bonica as an avian rehabilitator representative and P. Brodhecker as the representative of the Fish and Game Council was shared with the Committee.

- The next meeting of the WRAC will be on 7/22/15 at 10:00 AM at the Central Region Office in Robbinsville.
- Agenda Items for the next meeting were discussed. These include an update on the changes to the Game and Nongame regulations and wildlife rehabilitator concerns with Pest Control.
- At 12:00 noon, D. Nickerson made motion to adjourn, T. Leaver seconded.