

Approved 11/16/2011

NJ Endangered and Nongame Species Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

September 13, 2011

NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife
Central Region Office – Assunpink WMA
Robbinsville, NJ

ATTENDEES

COMMITTEE: Barbara Brummer-Chair, James Applegate, Joanna Burger, Emile DeVito, Howard Geduldig, Jane Galetto, Erica Miller, David Mizrahi, and James Shissias.

Absent: Rick Lathrop and Dale Schweitzer.

STAFF: Dave Jenkins-Bureau Chief, Jeff Brust, Kathy Clark, Larry Herrighty, Amanda Dey, Amy Wells.

GUESTS: Allen Burgenson (Lonza), Dave Burke (NJ FGC), Jim DeStephano (NJ Trappers Assoc), Gilbert Ewing (MFC), Rick Dutko (DPF), Maribeth Janke (Lonza), Caroline Kennedy (Defenders of Wildlife), Kelly Mooij (NJ Audubon), Kirk Moore (Asbury Park Press), Larry Niles (CWF-NJ), Sebastian Reist (NJDA), Barbara Sachau, Annette Scherer (USFWS), Benjle Swan (Limuli Labs), Philip Sebasco (DRKN), Maya van Rossum (DRKN), and others.

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 a.m. Notice of the meeting date and location were posted on the DFW website, filed with the Office of the Secretary of State on August 4, 2011, and distributed to the Newark Star Ledger and Atlantic City Press.

Introductions of those present were conducted.

Minutes

A motion was made by Joanna Burger, seconded by Erica Miller, to accept the July 2011 minutes as presented. All in favor, no opposed, the minutes were approved.

Action Items

Members reviewed the status of pending action items.

Members requested a review of all correspondence to, and status of subsequent responses from, Commissioner Martin since January 1, 2011.

DFW Directors Report

No report as Director Chanda was attending Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies national conference in Nebraska.

ENSP Bureau Chief's Report

Dave Jenkins reported staff are reviewing and preparing responses to the proposed amendment of the Endangered and Nongame Species listing rule; the Landscape Project version 3 mapping updates are continuing; the Delphi review of the Atlantic Sturgeon is progressing; and staff are conducting a Delphi review of mammals and freshwater mussels.

USFWS Red Knot Listing Status-update

Annette Scherer, USFWS Senior Endangered Species Biologist, noted the red knot was determined to be a candidate for USFWS listing in 2006. Staff are in the final phase of status determination and are reviewing whether designation of critical habitat is prudent and determinable. Ms. Scherer requested ENSAC / ENSP forward information regarding current and historic use of beaches and foraging areas utilized by the red knot to the USFWS.

Lonza - Horseshoe Crabs in Pharmaceutical Industry

Maribeth Janke, PhD, Segment Manager, and Allen Burgenson, Regulatory Affairs Manager, reviewed the evolution of endotoxin detection testing and the role of horseshoe crab blood in the endotoxin testing process. Dr. Janke referenced the ASMFC 2011 Annual Report which reports in 2010, approximately 550,000 crabs were bled; a 24% increase over the average of the past 5 years; and, over the last 5 years the LAL industry has exceeded the ASMFC recommended mortality limit. Dr. Janke's presentation expressed the following opinions with respect to the LAL Industry: a) the continual increase in harvesting and bleeding of crabs is not sustainable, b) there is a possibility of sanctions on the LAL industry for exceeding the limit, and c) declines in the Threatened Asian crab population is a threat to the availability of TAL (a LAL surrogate) which will increase demand on LAL and which supports the need for development of alternative endotoxin detection methods. Dr. Janke continued with a report on the development of a synthetic testing procedure based on a recombinant form of Factor C (rFC) which she characterized as an equivalent, reliable, and sustainable method for the future. As of this time, the US Pharmacopeia, a non-governmental standard setting organization, has not yet included this procedure in their compendial test chapter for endotoxin detection. Dr. Janke noted that it can be accepted as an alternative test method, if fully validated, which would include running 2 tests (HSC and rFC) simultaneously. However, this can be cost-prohibitive to pharmaceutical and medical device companies.

NJ Delaware Bay Shorebirds – update

Amanda Dey, PhD, ENSP Principal Biologist, provided an update on red knots and horseshoe crabs (HSC). In summary, the information presented noted that the harvest of HSCs has increased slightly since 2004 despite a NJ moratorium; there is no evidence of improved HSC numbers, egg densities and spawning females; red knot abundance in South America and Delaware Bay are low and declining. Dr. Dey relayed her concern that lack of recovery in HSC numbers and egg densities may indicate that HSC harvests are still too high to allow recovery of Delaware Bay crabs and eggs. Dr. Dey suggested that if this is the case that a full moratorium covering all states throughout the range of Delaware Bay HSCs may be the most risk-averse approach to ensuring the most rapid recovery of HSCs possible. Note: Dr. Dey's concerns

regarding insufficiency of current harvest restrictions and her recommendation for an expanded moratorium will need additional review by DFW and ENSAC.

Jeff Brust, DFW Marine Fisheries Research Scientist, provided a presentation on the harvest allocation strategy for the Horseshoe Crab - Shorebird Adaptive Resource Management (ARM) model. The presentation noted that output from the model is not state specific, so a suitable method must be devised to partition the total recommended harvest limit among the states of NJ, DE, MD, and VA. Mr. Brust reviewed the 4 areas of concern within the allocation strategy and corresponding options for each issue.

Wildlife Rehabilitation Advisory Committee (WRAC)

Barbara Brummer noted the DFW is developing a Wildlife Rehabilitator Advisory Committee. The committee will consist of 8 members including 3 mammal rehabilitators, 1 avian rehabilitator, 1 reptile rehabilitator, 1 veterinarian, 1 representative from the Endangered and Nongame Advisory Committee (ENSAC), 1 representative from the Fish and Game Council (FGC), 1 representative from the NJ Department of Health.

A motion was made by Jane Galetto, seconded by Joanna Burger, to appoint Dr. Erica Miller as the ENSAC representative to the NJ Wildlife Rehabilitator Advisory Committee. All in favor, none-opposed, the motion was approved.

Public Comment

Barbara Sachau presented questions and/or statements on Endotoxin and the HSC baiting industry.

Maya van Rossum, Delaware River Keeper, made reference to an article regarding the size of sand grains in the dredge material from the Delaware River deepening project. The article indicated that grain size may be detrimental to HSC spawning if used on the Delaware Bay beaches as proposed. Ms. Rossum will forward a copy for distribution.

Dr. Larry Niles stated he believes the need for lysate (LAL) from HSC blood provides an incentive for HSC conservation and that development of synthetic alternatives would remove this incentive.

Gil Ewing, Chair of the NJ Marine Fisheries Council, noted the Cape May Canal dredging project is conducted 1 time/year in April/May when HSC's are in the area. In addition, he noted NJ does need a HSC harvest allocation in order to reduce the total number of HSCs harvested.

The meeting adjourned at 12:30pm.