

THE MINUTES OF  
NJ FISH AND GAME COUNCIL AND  
ENDANGERED AND NONGAME SPECIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
JOINT TELEPHONIC MEETING  
OCTOBER 12, 2021

The regular meeting of the Fish and Game Council was held on the above date.

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chairman Virgilio.

Chairman Virgilio read aloud the following notice: In accordance with P.L.1975, c. 231 notice of this meeting was filed with the Office of the Secretary of State on October 9, 2021, and delivered to the designated newspapers for the division, The Atlantic City Press and The Newark Star Ledger.

Roll call was taken in accordance:

**F&G:**

Chairman Frank Virgilio  
Councilman Phil Brodhecker –(late)  
Councilman Joe DeMartino  
Councilman Jim DeStephano  
Councilman Dr. Rick Lathrop  
Councilman Ed Kertz  
Councilman Rob Pollock  
Councilman Loren Robinson  
Councilman Ken Whildin

**ENSAC:**

Chairman Rick Lathrop  
Committee member James Applegate  
Committee member Joanna Burger  
Committee member Robin Dougherty  
Committee member Emile DeVito  
Committee member Russ Furnari  
Committee member Jane Morton Galetto  
Committee member Howard Geduldig  
Committee member Erica Miller  
Committee member David Mizrahi  
Committee member Howard Reinert

Division employees included: D. Golden, G. Kopkash, L. Barno, C. Stanko, J. Hearon, J. Heilferty, F. Panico, M. Monteschio, A. Ivany, S. Crouse, and D. Bajek.

Also in attendance was Assistant Commissioner for Natural and Historic Resources, Ray Bukowski.

There were numerous members of the public in attendance.

Chairman Virgilio asked if there were any changes or corrections to the September 14 minutes.

**A motion was made by Councilman Robinson to approve the September 14, 2021, minutes, seconded by Councilman DeStephano. Vote taken; motion carried.**

Chairman Virgilio of the Fish and Game Council started by welcoming everyone to our joint meeting of the New Jersey Fish and Game Council and the Endangered and Non-Game Species Advisory Committee.

Yesterday, we recognized indigenous people by Presidential proclamation. As the first stewards of the land, our indigenous ancestors showed enormous respect for the natural world. They understand the inter-dependency of the natural world between, consumptive use of wildlife for their existence and non-consumptive use for its spiritual significance. Indigenous peoples' lands cover 1/4 of the Earth's surface, and a recent report (Published by the Society for Conservation Biology) shows thousands of species of threatened wildlife are dependent upon indigenous lands for survival.

Today two well-respected wildlife committees join together to address critical issues facing New Jersey's fish and wildlife. We welcome the public on behalf of our joint committees and look forward to your comments after our presentations.

Chairman Lathrop, Chair of the Endangered and Nongame Species Advisory Committee wanted to thank everyone for coming together. He mentioned the overriding concern of both councils coming together is sustaining NJ's wildlife and we both want to recognize that to meet this goal, being the most densely populated state in the nation, requires proactive management based on science and data. Sometimes this management requires controlling wildlife populations or modifying natural habitats to benefit both game and nongame wildlife. For example, a whole suite of nongame songbirds benefits when white-tailed deer populations are kept in check, whether by regulated hunting or targeted population management. Similarly, managing our forests to ensure the diversity of age classes that include young regenerating plants benefit a different suite of nongame and game species. So, this shared interest in keeping wildlands and wildlife here in our state bring us together.

Director Golden thanked both Chairman Virgilio and Chairman Lathrop for their comments. He is excited to have a joint council meeting this year as last year we cancelled it due to COVID. Before the Director makes his comments, he would like to give Assistant Commissioner Bukowski a chance to address the Councils.

Assistant Commissioner Bukowski appreciates the time and wants to extend his heart felt gratitude working with you all. Many of you have already gotten the word that his last day with

DEP will be October 29, 2021, and he will be taking early retirement. Assistant Commissioner Bukowski has over 29 years with DEP and has been all over and has done a lot of things. The highlight of his career was the opportunity to work with the Division and their staff and all of you. He has the utmost respect for the work and balance we try to achieve. He is honored to be a small part of it in his tenure here and throughout his entire career with the department has been geared towards resource protection and it will be in the future as well. He has been an advocate and an ally and certainly a member of the constituency for a very long time in the department and the division. Thank you all for your partnership, wisdom, and good luck in the future.

Director Golden noted that Commissioner Bukowski has been a great supporter of this Division and he will be missed. We really appreciate all the support from him over the years.

Director Golden mentioned that Monday October 18<sup>th</sup> was supposed to be fulltime return to office but that is now being bumped back to November 8<sup>th</sup>. Quick update on RAWA, legislation has been making some great progress in terms of co-sponsor's support. Right now there are 28 senators and 125 House members all co-sponsors. Over the last couple of weeks there has been an uptick in support, roughly 28% of the house and senate are co-sponsoring that bill. In NJ, we do not have any senator supporters yet and as far as house members, there are only two out of twelve. As mentioned previously, should this legislation go through, the Division of Fish and Wildlife is estimated to receive roughly \$15.5 million dollars annually for management of species of greatest conservation concern. Last, to the Council and the Committee, we have two new deer biologists that are now working for Fish and Wildlife and are excited to welcome them to the Division.

#### **New Business:**

#### **Offshore Wind:**

Colleen Brust gave a brief presentation on Offshore wind and where we are on the wind projects, reducing impacts is our priority. She identified data collection efforts.

#### **Budget Update:**

Assistant Director Kopkash gave a brief presentation and update on the Division's fiscal budget. Jeffery Saintvil gave a presentation on the State portion of the budget with our revenue and expenses and Bob Longcor gave a brief presentation on the Federal budget.

#### **Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease in Deer Update:**

Chief Stanko gave a brief presentation on Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease in deer in New Jersey.

### **2021 Wildlife Management Area Closures:**

Chief Hearon and Chief Panico gave a brief presentation on the 2021 closures of the wildlife management areas along with the benefits and costs.

### **Climate Change:**

#### **Sea Level Rise/CERAP**

Chairman Lathrop gave a brief presentation on past and projected changes in sea level rise

### **Shorebird Migrations:**

Christina Davis gave a brief presentation on the migration of shorebirds.

### **Temperature Monitoring on Coldwater Habitats:**

Scott Collenburg gave a brief presentation on temperature monitoring on coldwater stream habitats.

### **Public Comment:**

William Russel commented he is a sportsman and recently had his dogs out for training on Glassboro WMA and just wanted to pass along how nice the roads were.

Jason W. is a taxidermist in north Jersey. He wanted to talk about the new rules and regulations on CWD coming into the state. He feels it will be hurting his business by at least 50% by losing NY and PA deer. He wanted to know if anyone has thought of any other options as far as allowing them to come in as long as they have been frozen first or letting us to be a designated drop off area for butchers/taxidermy who are willing to dispose of it properly, so we don't have to lose income.

Councilman DeStephano mentioned he was at the Bergen County meeting and there was a lot of confusion on how its worded in the digest of which parts can be brought back and what boneless means.

Chief Stanko responded that all meat has to have all bones removed.

Melissa who is a NJ Watershed Ambassador, just wanted to share they are a community orientated and if there are any areas that you are hunting and fishing that you would like to see cleaned up to please reach out to one of the twenty watershed ambassadors and we can organize a cleanup of that area.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 12:48 pm by Councilman DeStephano, seconded by Councilman Lathrop. vote taken, all in favor; motion carries.

Next meeting: November 9, 2021, 10:00 a.m. Location to be determined.