

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
FISH AND GAME COUNCIL

Central Region Office
Robbinsville, New Jersey
March 12, 2008

The regular meeting of the New Jersey Fish and Game Council was held on the above date. In attendance were:

Acting Chairwoman Jeanette Vreeland
Councilman Dave Burke
Councilman Ed Kertz
Councilwoman Jane Morton-Galetto
Councilman John Messeroll
Councilman Robert Puskas
Councilman Dan Van Mater
Councilman Len Wolgast

Absent: Councilman Richard Culp
Councilman Fred Hough

Division employees included: Director Dave Chanda, Assistant Director Larry Herrightly, Paulette Nelson, Jim Sciascia, Tim Cussen, Lisa Barno and Raymond Porutski.

Members of the public included representatives from the Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs and others.

The meeting was called to order at 10:09am.

In accordance with P.L. 1975, notice of this meeting was filed with and posted at the Office of the Secretary of State and sent to the designated newspapers of the Division, the Newark Star Ledger and The Press (Atlantic City) on February 20, 2008.

A motion was made by Councilman Burke, seconded by Councilman Kertz to accept the minutes of the February, 2008 meeting. Councilman Kertz noted one change that was to be made on page 6, the word "gold" course should read "golf" course. **A vote was taken, with all in favor, none opposed, to accept the minutes with this change.**

Acting Chairwoman Vreeland reported on her activities for this past month. She noted that she had met with several members of the Legislature yesterday and was able to speak to them on Division funding matters.

A letter was distributed to the members of the Council that was received on February 7, 2008 from Commissioner Jackson and stated her feelings on the Bear Policy. Acting Chairwoman

Vreeland asked the members to review this letter so that it could be discussed during the Game Committee meeting on April 3, 2008 and again during the April 8, 2008 Council Meeting.

Director Chanda reviewed some of the activities from this past month, including the public fish forums that were held at Pequest and Batsto. He also noted that on February 11, 2008 the Marine Fisheries Council held a special meeting to consider the Department's proposed rule for the Horseshoe crab moratorium, and they chose to exercise their option to disapprove the rule. He explained how their council differs from this council and noted that legislation is proposed to implement a moratorium.

He noted that work is underway to produce a book on the history of the agency. Kathy Porutski has been working with current and past employees on this project, and Director Chanda discussed some of the topics that they were reviewing for inclusion in this book.

Director Chanda gave a brief review of the Teaming with Wildlife trip to Washington, DC that he took with Legislative Liaison Paulette Nelson. This meeting was also attended by representatives from other sportsmen's groups. He gave a brief review of some of the items that were discussed during their trip and possible funding issues for the future.

Director Chanda also noted that he had a meeting scheduled with Dean Goodman from Rutgers (formerly Cook College) to talk about programs they offer and how they may relate to the Division for the future of wildlife management in New Jersey.

It was reported that the Division would possibly be losing just over \$1 million dollars with the current State budget reductions. Director Chanda noted that \$856,000 would be cut from the inland accounts, adding that \$541,000 of this was targeted for salaries. He also noted that the black bear appropriation would be cut by \$185,000. On a positive note, he added that revenues as of last Thursday were tracking \$722,000 ahead of the same time last year, due in part to the code changes and how buck permits are distributed. These monies will help offset the budget, but there still will be a reduction in services if the budget does get cut by \$1million. He noted that Chief Sciascia would be giving a program later in the meeting on efforts to help increase license sales. Director Chanda also gave a review of a program that was slated for this Spring with a partnership with the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation and possible funding that may be available through them. There was some additional discussion on this matter and other funding issues.

Councilman Kertz asked if there was any movement on the salt water fishing license, and Director Chanda noted not yet, but there may be more information on this after the May Marine Fisheries Council Meeting.

Councilman Kertz also asked about the funding from the Corporate Business Tax monies and Director Chanda gave an explanation of how they were being used and what other projects were being looked at for the future using these monies.

Councilwoman Galetto asked the status of the salt water fishing license in other states, and Director Chanda explained that most of the southern states do have them, and briefly reviewed this topic.

Councilwoman Galetto also asked if a continuous billing system was being considered with the new electronic licensing system and Director Chanda noted that the plan was to track license buyers, and this was something that would be covered in Chief Sciascia's program. There was some additional discussion on this matter and possible ways that a hired position or consultant may be beneficial for implementing this type of program, but Director Chanda also noted the present funding status and hiring freeze impacts on the Division and what can be done.

At this time the meeting was open to public comment. David Bachinsky, President of the Southern New Jersey Branch of the Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA) asked to speak. He distributed some information to the Council from their organization. He explained who they are and what they do, and noted that they are working with Southern Region Superintendent Lee Widjeskog on food plots in Southern New Jersey. He added that they are in support of Quality Deer Management (QDM) zones that are currently in place in New Jersey, and added that they have sent in petitions in the past that they have not seen noted in the minutes, as well as having a petition to submit today. They are asking Council to consider adding five additional zones to QDM program; zones 28, 30, 31, 34 and 47. Assistant Director Herrightly noted that a summary of their petitions had been given to the Game Committee for consideration, and Councilman Wolgast added that the harvest data has not been analyzed yet and they do not have recommendations from the Division regarding changes, but this should be considered at the April committee meeting. There was additional discussion with Mr. Bachinski on what his group would like considered for the future.

Acting Chairwoman Vreeland commented that there was a letter received from the Department of Agriculture regarding the fish code, and she would let Chief Lisa Barno review it today. Chief Barno noted that the code did make the March 17, 2008 Register, however on February 7, 2008 two days after the Council meeting, she was advised by the Legal Affairs Office that a letter had been received from the Department of Agriculture regarding the code. The Legal Affairs Office was advised that this was after the public comment period had closed and the comments were too late. The next day, a fax transmittal was received from the Department of Agriculture that showed the letter had been sent on February 1, 2008 at 3:30pm. Because of this, Chief Barno had to contact each member of the Fish Committee to get their permission to incorporate their comments in to the final code, which she did. She reviewed the topics that they addressed in their letter for the Council today. Chief Barno also recommended that Council may want to start work on the 2010 Fish Code this August or September because of the amount of time needed to complete this task.

Chief Barno reported that trout stocking is now underway, and provided a copy of the schedule to the Council. Press related articles are also being work on for the trout stocking program. Council members are invited to Pequest on Monday to see the trout trucks being loaded, noting that personnel from the Pequest Hatchery continually find new ways to improve and make easier the trout truck loading process, while still maintaining the daily operations of the hatchery.

As mentioned earlier by Director Chanda, there were two public meetings held this month. The first one was the Public Trout Meeting at Pequest on February 9, 2008 and there were about 60 people in attendance. Chief Barno noted that it was a good opportunity for discussion among the anglers to gather their ideas and comments about the program. The second was the Freshwater Fish Forum at Batsto, and Councilman Burke reported that there was a good turn out with approximately 60 people attending. Those in attendance seemed to enjoy it, and they had the opportunity to talk to Fisheries Biologist Chris Smith and others, and he noted that staff did an excellent job.

Chief Barno reported that the Hackettstown Hatchery would be starting the brood stock collection tomorrow at the Spruce Run Reservoir, adding that the program would be done in a shorter time frame than usual.

Personnel have begun filling the ponds at the Hackettstown Hatchery. They have also been dealing with the wind damage that occurred over the weekend. She noted that Jim Oross had spent the weekend keeping an eye on the floodgates to keep flooding to a minimum at that facility. Members of the council were advised of whom to contact should they choose to assist with trout stocking activities, and anyone interested in assisting with the opening day trout angling counts should contact Mark Boriek.

Councilman Burke noted that there have been some good articles in the Atlantic City Press recently about the placement of an artificial structure being put in Lake Lenape.

Councilman Messeroll reported for the Federation. At their most recent meeting, they discussed National Rifle Association grants for shooting sports, and he advised those present today that they should apply now through October 31, 2008 for those grants.

He also noted that the New Jersey Fish and Wildlife Coalition has been working on the stable source funding issue, and members of the Federation have been active on this issue. They also promoted the lobby day press event that was held recently.

The Federation Convention will be held on June 13, 14 and 15, 2008 in Cape May. The ad book and hotel registration forms will be available in April. They are looking to make the 2009 Convention more centrally located.

The e-mail listing for club contacts is being reinforced.

Councilman Messeroll also noted the Nominating Committee has presented the following Federation officer nominations:

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|-------------------------|---|---------------|
| President | - | Ed Cuneo |
| Recording Secretary | - | Pat Glazer |
| Corresponding Secretary | - | Tom Surlak |
| Treasurer | - | Gary Wolff |
| Assistant Treasurer | - | Mike Bathurst |

The Federation was able to obtain some new recording equipment. They will be contacting Regional Superintendent Ray Porutski to see if it can be incorporated into the Conservation Center.

Game Code proposals were also discussed at the meeting, including crossbow issues and the dove resolution that came out last year.

Upcoming activities include a sporting clays shoot at Redwing Sporting Clays on June 1, 2008.

Councilman Kertz reported for the Agriculture Committee. He noted that things have been moving along, but the farmers are not happy with the Department of Agriculture situation, adding that at the Atlantic County meeting last night they were working on ideas to present to the Governor not to do anything to remove the Department. He noted some of the topics reviewed at that meeting, and different ideas that were discussed.

Councilman Puskas also reported for the Agriculture Committee, noting that things are the same in his area. Rallies are being planned, and people have been contacting their Legislators. He noted a recent poll that showed a 75% opposition to the Department of Agriculture being eliminated. There was additional discussion on this matter.

Councilman Puskas also noted the amount of damage being done to the wheat crops by geese, noting that everyone is frustrated with the amount of geese that have not moved out of the area.

There was additional discussion regarding appointments to various Councils, if the Department of Agriculture is eliminated, as well as how it may affect appointments to this Council. Councilman Kertz also shared copies of some written information he had with the members of the Council.

Councilman Messeroll asked Legislative Liaison Paulette Nelson to give the Legislative report. She noted Assembly Bill A2260, which would place a moratorium on the harvest of horseshoe crabs. She added that this was passed by the Agriculture and Natural Resource Committee on February 28 with amendments regarding possession. There was some discussion on this matter, and a review of the fines that could be charged for violations. It was also discussed that there may be a subsequent bill which would reduce penalties since the fines imposed are endangered species level fines, and the horseshoe crab is not listed as an endangered species. Legislative Liaison Nelson noted that this bill would be voted on Thursday by the full Assembly, and there is a deadline to have this in place by April 1 before the upcoming crab season. Additional discussion continued regarding the horseshoe crab moratorium.

Legislative Liaison Nelson also commented on two other bills, one regarding fishing gear on artificial reefs that passed on February 21, and the Hooked on Fishing, Not on Drugs (HOFNOD) Program which passed the Senate Environment Committee and now needs to go to the Senate Budget Appropriations Committee.

She distributed a copy of the current bills being watched. The newest bills on this list were reviewed. Bill A-2353 and its companion bill S-1413 provide for no net loss of DEP lands for fishing, hunting and trapping purposes.

The Senate also had bill S-1391 which would increase the membership of the Fish and Game Council and clarifies it has sole authority to regulate freshwater fishing, hunting and trapping. Councilman Wolgast noted that the part of this bill which would increase membership to the Council will be withdrawn, since it was meant for the Marine Fisheries Council. The sole authority portion of this bill will stay in place.

Also reviewed was resolution ACR-140 which proposes constitutional amendment to preserve the right of people to fish, hunt, trap and harvest wildlife. Councilwoman Galetto also mentioned bill A-823, which has no Senate sponsor, and yesterday they approached a Senator on this who would not be able to sponsor this bill until a later time. She asked if anyone knew of a possible Senator who may be able to sponsor this at this time.

Acting Chairwoman Vreeland asked if there was any new information on the appointments to the Council, but there was no new information to report. Councilman Messeroll distributed a resume from Gerald Bracht who would be a candidate to replace his seat.

Councilwoman Galetto reported for the Endangered and Non-Game Species Committee. They will be having a meeting next week, and more information will follow after. In addition to the Horseshoe crab discussions of today, she noted that Law Enforcement would be reviewing a case later in the meeting regarding a case involving an eagle nest. One of the topics to be reviewed at their March 19, 2008 meeting will be beach nesting birds.

At this time, Council was asked to break to go into Executive Session, followed by lunch. **A motion was made by Councilman Kertz, seconded by Councilman Puskas to go into Executive Session at 12:01pm.**

The meeting resumed at 1:05pm. Chief Timothy Cussen reported for the Bureau of Law Enforcement. He reported that at last month's meeting, he spoke of a bear case that was made by Conservation Officer Hutchinson. He noted that the Bergen Record newspaper reported that these individuals did not get any jail time for their actions, but a person in Highlands Lakes who had been tampering with bear traps was sent to jail for trying to save bears. Chief Cussen felt this was a landmark investigation for the Department and noted the work done by Officer Hutchinson. There were no criminal penalties assessed with this case, and the other individual who was sent to jail was convicted of tampering with a bear trap, not because they were trying to save bears.

In addition to the aforementioned cases, Chief Cussen reported on another case that occurred last month involving bears. This case was presented to the Sussex County Prosecutor's Office for their review to see if criminal charges could be filed. Chief Cussen summarized the case, where a biologist from the Wildlife Services Unit who had been monitoring a collared female bear that they had ten years worth of data on. On New Years Eve day, a signal was received from the collar that they were within a half-mile or so of where the bear was. On January 2, 2008 there

was no signal, and the mortality switch was activated. It took several days, but they did locate the collar nailed to a board that had been set adrift down river. Lieutenant Frank Panico interviewed many people in the area where the bear was known to live. Near the end of January he spoke with four people, and determined that one of the individuals had killed a sow and cub while deer hunting on January 1, 2008. The individual was cooperative once their confession was secured, and they took officers back to the scene where the bears had been killed. The adult bear was still there, but the cub had been scavenged by predators, but parts still remained in the area. Chief Cussen noted that this case is similar to the other case where the bear was killed, and will be finalized tomorrow in Stillwater Township. The settlement could be close to \$6,000. Chief Cussen hopes to have our own press release in place regarding this case. Additional discussion continued on this matter.

Chief Cussen noted that the Bureau would like thirty-minutes next month for Executive Session with the Council to review revocation appeals.

During the past month, Conservation Officers reported a total of 6,455 hours of duty. Some of the hours reported were:

4,812.5	Law Enforcement Activities
862.5	Marine Resources
612.5	Deer Hunting
383	Hunting
315.5	Wildlife Management Area Activities
103.5	Non Game and Endangered Species
76	Bear Investigations

Officers made 1,077 field inspections, resulting in the issuance of 180 summonses, 16 warnings and 7 criminal arrests. Summonses issued were:

42	Deer Hunting Violations
49	Wildlife Management Area Violations
16	Small Game Violations
13	Waterfowl Violations
12	Fishing Violations

In the Northern Region, Conservation Officers Paul and Applegate investigated a complaint of hunters being too close to a residence during the permit shotgun season. From their investigation they were able to determine that a deer had been killed within a safety zone then moved to another location without being properly tagged. Numerous summonses have been issued for this case.

In the Central Region, Conservation Officer Mutone recently convicted a person in the Lacey Township Municipal court for illegal dumping of a large amount of trash on the Greenwood Forest WMA. Chief Cussen noted that this was an extensive case that took quite a lot of time to investigate. The individual was fined \$2,000.00 plus court costs.

Also in the Central Region, a call was received from the New Jersey Audubon Society regarding illegal trapping in Southampton Township. The Audubon Society had been receiving numerous calls about leghold traps being set in trees, and upon investigation, Officer O'Rourke and Lt.

Sich found various baited traps at the area, as well as dead cats and a dead raccoon. The individual they met with admitted to setting the traps, claiming he was trying to get rid of groundhogs that were burrowing under the fence. The individual has been charged by Fish and Wildlife, and the SPCA is investigating the killing of the cats.

In the Southern Region, Conservation Officer Stites was on patrol in Woolwich Township, Gloucester County. He observed a group of waterfowl hunters taking over the limit on Canada Geese, and with assistance from other officers in that region, was able to apprehend one of the individuals when they left the area. This individual received various charges, including hunting without a license, interference, possession of untagged waterfowl and hunting within 450 feet of an occupied dwelling. At the end of the day when the other hunters were closing down their blind, officers went in and were able to apprehend seven individuals who were over the limit by 19 birds. They faced a variety of charges, and Chief Cussen noted that Officer Stites showed a lot of determination on this case, since he had work for ten hours out in the cold.

Also in the Southern Region, Lt. Honochevsky along with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service investigated a complaint in Millville, Cumberland County where it was reported a tree had been cut down that had contained an eagle's nest. A reward was offered for information leading to charging the individual responsible. To date, 14 people have been interviewed and one search warrant has been executed in the State of Pennsylvania to retrieve the chain saw used to cut the tree down. At this point and time, with assistance from the Major Crimes Unit of the Department of Criminal Justice and the United States Attorney's Office, they are seeking to institute criminal proceedings against those involved. Chief Cussen noted that it is possible that Federal charges may also be made. More information on this case will follow in the future.

In the Marine Region, officers have been doing a lot of work on shellfish enforcement. Conservation Officer James was working on the Maurice River Cove on the Delaware Bay and made three apprehensions this past month, all involving harvesters taking oysters from condemned waters. With assistance from the New Jersey State Police Marine Unit, the individuals were contacted outside of the condemned area, but brought back to the docks at the Maurice River to be interviewed. CO James was assisted by CO Petrucci in receiving statements from the individuals. These individuals are facing a variety of charges.

Chief Cussen reported that Captain Brown and Lt. Cianciulli from the Training Unit attended a career day held at Unity College in Maine. He noted that Unity College is one of a few secondary educational facilities with a program dedicated to conservation law enforcement. They were able to make contact with several individuals who may be interested in applying for a Conservation Officer III position in the Bureau of Law Enforcement.

It was also noted that seven of the eight newly hired CO III recruits have been at the Cape May Police Academy for about a month. The eight candidates that were hired have decided against keeping the position with the Bureau. They are in the process of finalizing paperwork to interview candidates to fill four vacant positions as CO III's.

Chief Cussen reported that at the last meeting, there was a question from Council regarding drag racing that had occurred at the Millville WMA. The New Jersey State Police have informed us

that over 200 summonses were issued as a result of this cooperative effort. So far, 175 of those have been disposed of, with some of the complaints being downgraded because the individual was observing the racing activities, not participating. So far, approximately \$20,000 has been collected for ordinance violation charges. The remaining cases to be heard are for those individuals who were the participants in the drag racing activities. Those charges will not be downgraded, and if convicted, these individuals will get a five point charge to their driver's license record. Councilwoman Galetto asked if a press release could be done on the outcome of this case to possibly act as a deterrent to this type of activity, and Chief Cussen noted he would check into this when the rest of the cases are done.

There was some additional discussion with Chief Cussen on the information reported today.

Assistant Director Herrighty reported for the Bureau of Wildlife. He noted that they have received the go ahead from the Commissioner to move forward with the removal of the feral pigs on the White Oak Ranch WMA in Gloucester County. The United States Department of Agriculture will also be receiving a permit so they may assist with this activity. They will try to trap, euthanize and shoot over bait, and this will be a cooperative effort with the USDA. The New Jersey Department of Agriculture will provide assistance to take blood samples. The pigs will be disposed of at a licensed landfill. Funds were made available from an USDA grant to build the traps and perform lab analyses.

Members were reminded that the Game Committee would be meeting on April 3, 2008 at the Central Region Office.

Copies of letters received regarding the Game Code Proposals were distributed, as well as information on the sale of the leftover Spring turkey permits.

Staff has been doing winter den work on bears. Members were advised to contact Kelcey Burgess if they are interested in attending any of these activities.

Assistant Director Herrighty reported that the South Mountain Reservation has finished with their Community Based Deer Management Program Permit. In all 213 deer were culled, and of those 86 were adult does, with 83 of those being pregnant, 32 fawn does, with 5 of those being pregnant, 32 antlered bucks, 20 shed bucks, and 38 fawn bucks. He noted that it was a very successful program noting the limited amount of time and shooters that were involved. Councilman Wolgast noted that this shows how inaccurate the forward looking infrared flights (FLIR) can be for data. There was additional discussion on the FLIR program.

Assistant Director Herrighty reported that a letter had been received from Millburn Township last week asking the Division and the Council to reconsider the denial of allowing them to tranquilize deer, recover them, and take them off site to shoot. Council rejected this last year because it would be wasting the meat, and they had been met with regarding areas where they may be able to use the net and bolt method. The Division also believes that the 450ft. safety zone and required issues regarding permission of the landowner apply to the use of the tranquilizer by non-government entities such as in this situation. Millburn does not have such required permission.

Mid-winter waterfowl surveys have been completed. Over 694,000 waterfowl were counted, and this number is up by 13%, probably due to the mild winter weather. However, the Canada goose numbers were actually down by 27%.

Councilman Messeroll asked if it was possible to get multiple proposals into the Register regarding the crossbow policy, and Assistant Director Herrighty was not sure that this has ever been done in our area. He noted the Federal government has used this format when they propose alternatives, including one indicated as the preferred alternative. Director Chanda also noted how the Federal Governments' proposed regulations are posted.

Regional Superintendent Ray Porutski reported for the Bureau of Land Management. He presented maps of three surplus properties for the Council to consider releasing for sale.

The first property reviewed was on the Musconetcong River WMA in Holland Township, Hunterdon County. The sale would be for the house, but the Division would maintain a trail corridor there. The second property reviewed was Eagle Manor in Fairfield Township, Cumberland County. The area marked on the map was originally deeded off to be sold or rented. The last property is on the Clinton WMA in Union Township, Hunterdon County. The property includes a house. This sale needs to go through the State House Commission, and they would like to see how the Council votes on this before they proceed. There was discussion on where the proceeds for the sale of these properties would go, and it was noted that if the purchases were made with Hunter and Anglers funds the money would come back to the Division, but if they were obtained with Green Acres funds, the money would go back to them. Director Chanda noted that the Eagle Manor and Musconetcong WMA properties money would go back to Green Acres, and they would have to confirm what monies were used for the Clinton WMA property. After some discussion on these various properties, Councilwoman Galetto noted that she would like to see the Eagle Manor property come back to be use for the preservation within the Delaware Bayshore Region. She noted that she felt the site itself has historic resources and that they had spoken with conservation groups about having some historic resource preservation for this area. **A motion was made by Councilwoman Galetto that this property go to the auction block with conservation restrictions and historic resource preservation restrictions set by the Department of Natural Resources. This was seconded by Councilman Messeroll.** Acting Chairwoman Vreeland asked if this was possible, and Councilwoman Galetto noted that Deputy Commissioner Jay Watson said it could be done. Assistant Director Herrighty added that he though there going to be some restrictions on that land. After some additional discussion, **a vote was taken with all in favor, none opposed to approve the sale of this property with stipulations.**

The Musconetcong WMA property was voted on next. It was clarified that we would maintain an easement along the river, since the Division does not own the properties on either side of the house but are looking to obtain them in the future. **A motion was made by Councilman Messeroll, seconded by Councilman Wolgast to approve this sale.** There was some additional discussion this property, and after discussion, **a vote was taken with all in favor, none opposed to approve the sale of this surplus property.**

Regional Superintendent Porutski reviewed the property on the Clinton WMA for the Council. He noted that this was previously occupied by a retired Crew Supervisor, and consists of the house and many other structures. **A motion was made by Councilman Messeroll, seconded by Councilman Wolgast to approve this sale.** There was some discussion on the lot size that would be created and how it meets the township ordinances that are in place. After reviewing this matter, **a vote was taken with all in favor, none opposed to approve the sale of this property.**

Regional Superintendent Porutski also reported that trout stocking will start on March 17, 2008. He noted that due to the current lack of staff, he would be assisting crews with trout stocking activities in the Central Region.

Statewide winter mowing activities will be concluding before April 1, 2008 because of wildlife nesting timetables.

Regional Superintendent Porutski reported that the road to the main lake on the Assunpink WMA has had some flooding problems due to a beaver problem. There have been several inquiries from sportsmen who utilize the area as to why the road has been closed. He hopes to have this matter resolved soon with cooperation from the Wildlife Control Unit.

Regional Superintendent Porutski reported that the eight Wildlife Worker positions that were pending for approval to fill have been cancelled. He noted that 130 applications were received for these eight positions, and those applicants have been notified by Personnel of the status of these positions. Acting Chairwoman Vreeland added that she spoke with some Legislators yesterday about the needs for backfills on positions.

Chief Jim Sciascia reported for the Bureau of Information and Education. He noted that the Hunter Education Unit has completed a new manual for the Home Study Program. The manual that has been used is a copyrighted publication that we do not own, so staff has created this new manual that can be modified as needed. He is hoping to have the entire Home Study Program on line within the next few months. He noted that Hunter Education classes have begun again last weekend and will run through the Fall.

The final engineering report has been received for the Black River WMA archery range, and it looks as though it should cost around \$2 million. Between the Capital funds and Hunter Education funds, they will need to raise about \$1.6 million. They are meeting with the Easton Foundation and the Archery Trade Association in the next several weeks and both are willing to make the commitment to raise those funds. Chief Sciascia will keep the Council updated on these activities.

Trout Unlimited started a program several years ago called Trout in the Classroom. The program was run by a volunteer coordinator, who has taken a full time position and will be moving on. Since this program now includes over 60 schools and has the potential to grow to include hundreds of schools, Chief Sciascia reported that the Division has spoken to the Trout Unlimited Council and we will be taking over the administration this program in New Jersey. A full time staff member from Pequest will be devoted to this program and we will be working in close

partnership with Trout Unlimited whose members will be critical in providing support for the classrooms and aquatic conservation activities outside of the classroom. Chief Sciascia is hoping to expand this program from the classroom to hands-on student conservation projects working with groups like Trout Unlimited and the DEP's Watershed Ambassador Program.

Chief Sciascia reported that the Pequest Trout Hatchery will be closed to the public on the weekends with the exception of scheduled programs due to staffing shortages and the commitment to Trout in the Classroom.

Chief Sciascia gave a presentation on the promotions of both trout fishing and deer hunting they have worked on. The promotions targeted Pennsylvania hunters' anglers' who reside in the New Jersey border counties. Significant increases in nonresident firearm and archery hunting licenses and nonresident fishing and trout stamp were observed after each promoting. This year's promotion of fishing in New Jersey was also presented. Because we now have the electronic license data we will be targeting New Jersey anglers who did not renew their license last year and 2007 anglers', who have not renewed their license by the end of April, 2008. The promotion will include an extensive radio ad campaign and postcard mailings which are being funded in part by a cooperative agreement with the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation. After the conclusion of his presentation, there was some discussion on the topics covered.

Old and new business was addressed. It was noted that the Wounded Warriors Veteran's Program is looking to hold fishing activities for their members and are in need of equipment. Chief Sciascia noted that there may be some HOFNOD equipment available for them to use.

There was no additional public comment. **A motion was made by Councilman Kertz, seconded by Councilman Puskas to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 3:15pm.**