

Wildlife Rehabilitators Advisory Committee  
NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife  
Central Region Office  
1 Eldridge Rd.  
Robbinsville NJ

Meeting Minutes – 5/21/13

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**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.

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Called to order: 10:36 AM

Committee members present: Don Bonica, Lisa DeLambert, Giselle Chazotte-Smisko, Tracy Leaver, Diane Nickerson, Dr. Erica Miller, Kelly Simonetti, Phil Brodhecker, Dr. Jennifer Norton

Division of Fish & Wildlife: Paulette Nelson, Susan Predl, Hardy Wiedemann

- No members of the public present

- Motion to approve previous meeting's minutes (1/23/13) (with date correction) made by D. Nickerson, seconded by P. Brodhecker.

- New appointments:

- Giselle Chazotte-Smisko – Avian
- Dr. Jennifer Norton –Veterinarian
- Reptile concerns will be addressed by Tracy Leaver and Diane Nickerson

-Re-appointments:

- Dr. Erica Miller – Endangered and Nongame Species Advisory Committee representative
- Tracy Leaver – Mammal

- All Member terms are 3 years, Chairperson term – 1 year. Initial appointments had terms of less than 3 years, to allow for a staggered terms.

- K. Simonetti clarifies purpose of WRAC for benefit of new members (see above).

- S. Predl: update on regulations,

- New Jersey regulations are being revised to combine game, non-game and exotics, similar to Tennessee's captive wildlife regulations.

- Question regarding inclusion of test for new Wildlife Rehabilitators in Tennessee regulations. DFW – new regulations will include a test requirement for new rehabilitators.
- WRAC will have ample opportunity for input to regulation changes before regulation adoption process begins.

- S. Predl: The initial DEP Policy Directive, signed by Assistant Commissioner Amy Cradic in 2011 created the Wildlife Rehabilitators Advisory Committee. It is has been updated with the DEP Order Number 2013-01, which has the same purpose, policy and procedures as the Policy Directive, but allows for one additional avian rehabilitator committee member, more frequent meetings, and revised meeting notification requirement.

-Relocation Policy: T. Leaver and D. Nickerson reviewed the Relocation Policy which has been revised by the Division several times over the years. The proposed policy was presented to the WRAC includes:

- Additions pertaining to handling and release of beavers, otters, fishers, wild canines, and bats. Additions pertaining to emerging and infectious diseases such as white-nose in bats and lymphoproliferative in turkeys.
- T. Leaver will continue to work to amend and improve relocation policy.
- More questions about release of urban animals. Should urban raccoons be released back into urban areas? Increases chances of survival.

- Recommendations from WRAC on animal classifications for adding species to permit.

- Adding species within category does not require 200-hour apprenticeship, only letter from Rehabilitator who currently works with that animal. Exceptions: beaver within rodent category, otter and fisher within Mustelide category, venomous snakes within reptiles, all individual species within potentially dangerous category. Adding new category (i.e. avian or reptile to mammal rehab permit) will require 200-hour apprenticeship.
- D. Bonica and G. Chazotte-Smisko will consult with Dr. Miller on potential adjustments to bird categories.

- Status update from DFW on inspections and new Rehabilitators.

- A Warren County rehabilitator had two apprentices that applied for their own rehab permit as secondary and tertiary rehabilitators at her facility. An inspection of that facility was conducted in April and both apprentices were approved.
- A Cape May County Rehabilitator was inspected in April.
- 4 additional inspections expected to be completed by the end of the year.
- Two rehabilitators chose not to renew their rehab permits.

- Rehabilitator Communications

- WRAC recommends that DFW send a letter to all vets in the state advising them of list of Rehabilitators and hold and treat policy.
- Animal Control representation on WRAC? Any ACOs can attend WRAC meetings but will not be able to vote.
- S. Predl will email invitations to ACOs to attend WRAC meetings.

- Disaster Response Support

- Letter was drafted and emailed to all Rehabilitators regarding disaster response.

- Recommendation that if Rehabilitators are closed for a period of time that they notify the division.

- List of WRAC members with position and contact info to be compiled and sent out.

Meeting adjourned: 12:32 PM