

Wildlife Rehabilitators Advisor Committee

2/26/14 – Meeting Minutes

Present: Cathy Blumig, Giselle Chazotte-Smisko, Tracy Leaver, Dr. Erica Miller, Sue Predl*, Kelly Simonetti (Chair), Hardy Wiedemann*.

Public: Kathy Michell

Not Present: Don Bonica, Phil Brodhecker, Lisa DeLambert, Paulette Nelson*, Diane Nickerson, Dr. Jennifer Norton.

(* - Division of Fish and Wildlife)

- Previous Meeting's Minutes: Motion to accept made by Dr. Miller, seconded by K. Simonetti.
- WRAC Accomplishments List – K. Simonetti drafted a list of WRAC accomplishments. The list of accomplishments will be revised based on feedback and suggestions from WRAC members and will be sent out to licensed Rehabilitators.
- Review of open WRAC positions:
 1. D. Nickerson (mammal rehab rep) and L. DeLambert (state Dept. Ag rep) terms are expired.
 2. A letter was sent on 1/25/14 to all NJ rehabilitators announcing the open positions. No letters of interest were received for these positions, other than those from D. Nickerson and L. DeLambert.
 3. The Division drafted a memo to the DEP Assistant Commissioner, asking that D. Nickerson and L. DeLambert be re-appointed.
 4. All WRAC terms are 3 years. S. Predl will provide K. Simonetti with a list of WRAC members and their respective term expiration dates.

- Review of current Rehabilitators who have renewed / not renewed their permits.
 1. Suggestion made for new category of “Renewals Pending” on the Published list of rehabilitators. This category would allow facilities to continue to be listed on the public list if their permit renewal applications are delayed by unforeseen circumstances.
 2. Facilities who need additional time must request an extension from the DF&W.
 3. WRAC discussed changing the permit term to two years. The change in permit term would have to be incorporated into the new regulations. Discussion will continue at future meetings.

- Update on S1864
 1. At the time of this meeting the Bill was not heard.

- Update on Regulation changes and how they will affect Rehabilitators.
 1. Discussion on mandatory continuing education. WRAC recommends that continuing education be required of all rehabilitators in the new regulations and there was discussion as to what would qualify as education.
 2. Discussion of whether fees can be charged by rehabilitators and whether this should be addressed in the proposed regulations.

- Wildlife Transport Certification Course
 1. State has approved capture and transport certification program administered by NJAWR.
 2. Discussion about workman’s comp insurance coverage for state Wildlife Conservation Corps (WCC) volunteers who transport wildlife, and if this coverage can be provided to those in the Transport course that sign-up to become WCC volunteers.

3. A database of those taking the Transport course, those becoming WCC volunteers, their phone numbers, and county of residence will be maintained by the Division and the NJAWR.
 4. The names, phone numbers, and county of residence of those who take the Transport course and sign-up to become WCC volunteers will be provided to all NJ rehabilitators.
- Comments from Public: Kathy Michell – concerns about raccoon abundance and effects on fragile turtle populations. How do rehabilitated raccoons that are vaccinated and then released affect the overall populating dynamics? Also concerns about surgeries to implant transmitters into injured snakes prior to release.
 - Next meeting: Wednesday May 28th 2014 – Central Region Office.

Adjourned 12:26 PM