

NJ Wildlife Rehabilitators Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
October 25, 2017  
Northern Region Office –  
NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife

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.

Committee Members Present: Giselle Chazotte-Smisko, Diane Nickerson, Phil Brodhecker, Tracy Leaver, Dr. Jennifer Norton, Kelly Simonetti, Heather Freeman, Lisa DeLambert

Committee Members Absent: Don Bonica, Dr. Erica Miller

Division Employees: Paulette Nelson, Krista Moser, Nathan Figley

No members of the public were present.

Meeting was called to order by D. Nickerson at 10:09AM.

- A motion was made by H. Freeman, and seconded by G. Chazotte-Smisko, to approve the May 24, 2017 minutes. A vote was taken with most in favor, and abstention from T. Leaver.
- A motion was made by T. Leaver, and seconded by L. DeLambert, to approve the July 26, 2017 minutes. A vote was taken with most in favor, and abstention from K. Simonetti, H. Freeman, L. DeLambert, and Dr. J. Norton.
- Committee positions were discussed. One mammal rehabilitator representative position was open, for which the Division received four applications. No decisions had yet been made. The following additional positions would be opening in 2018: one mammal rehabilitator representative position, one avian rehabilitator representative position, and the Fish and Game Council representative position.
- Discussion ensued on options for meetings. The committee decided to meet three times a year instead of four. A question was raised on whether there was a way to call in to meetings. P. Nelson advised that there was no option to call in for meetings at the Division's Central Region Office Conservation Center, but that she would have to check for the Northern Region Office.
- A motion was made by T. Leaver, and seconded by P. Brodhecker, to approve the following dates for 2018 meetings. A vote was taken with all in favor.
  - February 21, 2018 – Northern Region Office
  - April 25, 2018 – Central Region Office Conservation Center
  - October 24, 2018 – Northern Region Office
- P. Nelson gave an update on the proposed regulations to combine captive game and exotic and nongame species. Division staff was in final review with the lawyers and working on the summary. The change would not go into effect during the Christie administration, but a new time frame would be available once the new administration came in. P. Nelson anticipated a two-year time frame, which would include a public comment period.
- D. Nickerson reported on the proposed WRAC Code of Conduct. She reviewed ENSAC's and nothing applied. She then reached out to counterparts in PA and NY who are looking into

anything helpful they may have. D. Nickerson resolved to draft something if the other states do not find anything applicable.

- T. Leaver reported on the progress of the Division training course committee reported on their progress. The five on the committee reviewed a draft of the information course. The statement of purpose for the course will be: "The purpose of this course will be to build a road of continuity..." The course is planned to be a minimum of half a day but could be longer, and is anticipated to be ready in early 2019. The general target by the committee is technicians, biologists, admins, and conservation officers. The suggestion was given that WARNDEP operators be invited. Discussion ensued on SOPs for answering wildlife-related phone calls, possibly in the form of flow charts. Discussion of SOP for WARNDEP. Flow chart may be the best way to go.
- Dr. J. Norton reviewed USFWS's requirements for a veterinary signoff and would like to require this for all non-releasable wildlife before placement in captivity. She came up with a list of items that veterinarians should be looking for in such animals. D.r J. Norton will continue to work on recommendations for this.
- A motion was made by T. Leaver, and seconded by G. Chazotte-Smisko, to form a committee whose purpose would be to promulgate pest control operator (PCO) regulations. A vote was taken with all in favor.
- Discussion ensued on the potential PCO regulations. D. Nickerson reported that she had received emails from non-WRAC members expressing interest in being on the committee. T. Leaver volunteered to be on the committee and it was determined that D. Nickerson would be chair. Possible positions on the committee were suggested, including a PCO representative, a trapper, USDA-APHIS employee, Humane Society representative, and an animal control officer. This discussion was tabled until the next meeting so that a decision on the composition of the committee could be made. K. Simonetti requested a draft purpose of the committee. D. Nickerson requested that any interested people send applications to her.
- Dr. J. Norton reported that she wrote a wildlife policy for her hospital's director. In doing so, she realized that many veterinarians do not know how to handle wildlife scenarios such as disposing of migratory birds' bodies. Dr. Norton proposed that rehabilitators give a presentation to veterinarians. T. Leaver suggested that the Division training course could be adjusted for veterinarians. L. DeLambert suggested that Dr. Nicole Lewis, her replacement as the Department of Agriculture representative on WRAC, could mention it at accreditation.
- N. Figley gave presentation on encapsulating foothold (also known as DP/Dog-Proof) traps. These traps were designed to trap raccoons, but occasionally catch skunks, opossums, or cats. They could be made more selective by the type of bait being used (i.e. eliminating cats by not using meat). By using marshmallows as bait, N. Figley had never caught an opossum or cat. Regulations were explained and recommendations on use were given. D. Nickerson asked about scenario if non-target animal were trapped. N. Figley answered that Law Enforcement should be called.
- Suggestion was made to allow members of the public to attend WRAC meetings but only to speak at the end for 3 minutes in a public comment period. K. Simonetti advised that that was already in the bylaws. It was determined that a public comment period would become a standard agenda item.
- A motion to adjourn was made by G. Chazotte-Smisko, and seconded by Dr. J. Norton. A vote was taken with all in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 11:59AM.