

**FISH AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
12/09/09 MEETING PRESENTATION SUMMARIES**

FWCC Meetings

FWCC will continue to have the previously stated objectives of:

1. To improve understanding and cooperation between the Division of Fish and Wildlife and our constituents/customers.
2. To improve responsiveness by listening to constituents/customers.
3. To increase public support for fish and wildlife related programs and policies.

The DNR Division of Law Enforcement has chosen to interact with FWCC as a resource rather than a co-chair. FWCC members are encouraged to continue to bring law enforcement questions and concerns to the group.

FWCC will continue to function as a sounding board for the Division of Fish and Wildlife.

In order to more efficiently use staff and FWCC members' time, three meetings of FWCC will be scheduled. A December meeting will be scheduled for the purpose of discussing pending legislation. A September meeting will be held to discuss action of the Natural Resources Summer Study Committee. An early June meeting will be convened for general discussions. All meetings will be agenda driven, i.e., a meeting will not be held unless a robust agenda exists.

The Division of Fish and Wildlife will provide notes from the recent meeting that will include any highlights or conclusions. These notes will be posted on the Division's website. Member groups are encouraged to disseminate these to their membership, with additional comments, if desired.

Public Participation in the Development of a New Deer Management Strategy

1. Defining the issue - Our hunting heritage stands to suffer if perceptions of high deer populations by some of the people of Indiana are acted upon while other social and biological interests are not taken into consideration. The Division of Fish and Wildlife is the right entity to address the management of the state's deer population. The division's approach is that all potentially affected interests should have an opportunity to participate in developing a reasonable, sensible and responsible deer management strategy.
2. Deer Management/Human Dimensions
 - a. Agriculture damage & car/deer accidents
 - b. Human population continues to increase requiring more space reducing natural habitat and creating habituated wildlife that are perceived as nuisance by many.
 - c. Increase in non-hunttable (urban, subdivisions and other types of private land use) area leading to pressure on politicians to do something about the perceived overabundant deer situation.
 - d. Legislative proposal to double bag limit in certain counties with highest accident rate.
3. Division Response/Public Participation - Legislators will take action if the division doesn't attempt to resolve issues raised by their constituents. In moving forward with a review of its deer management strategy, the division is asking to FWCC to participate in a discussion on this issue and hopefully begin to address this problem. The division recognizes FWCC as representatives of their primary constituent base. In order to protect our hunting heritage and prevent our whitetail deer from becoming viewed in a negative light, we must begin to act on this issue.

Comprehensive F&W Rules Enhancement Project

The following is the Advisory Council's list of items they are proposing to take to the Natural Resources Commission for further review and/or rule proposal as a result of their comprehensive fish & wildlife rule review:

1. Mammals other than deer
 - a. extension of raccoon/possum taking season
 - b. year round coyote hunting on public lands
2. Deer
 - a. hunter orange on ground blinds
 - b. comprehensive deer license (for all seasons & bag limits)
 - c. expand crossbow hunting with separate crossbow license
 - d. extend seasons, increase bag limits to decrease deer herd
 - e. support of teleharvest
 - f. make depredation permits for antlerless deer only
 - g. earn a buck
3. Birds
 - a. south waterfowl zone (mentioned it is too early)
 - b. expansion of fall turkey hunting opportunities
 - c. grouse concerns
 - d. teleharvest
4. Brookville Tailwaters
 - a. leave it alone
 - b. keep as a world class trout area
5. Fish
 - a. increase size limit on smallmouth bass
 - b. striper fishing with live shad, but take action to limit spread of shad
 - c. increase net size for catching bait
 - d. protection of large catfish resources

Delta Waterfowl Membership Petition

Delta Waterfowl membership petition was approved by FWCC. Scott Johnson will represent Delta Waterfowl and Travis Peters will be their alternate.

Scheduled Next Meeting

Fort Harrison State Park, Natural Resources Ed Center, June 5, 2010, 9:00 to Noon.