

# Northwest CT Sportsman's Council

NWCSC  
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nwcsc.org  
Phone: (860) 491-4867

Council Report: April 27, 2004

The April meeting of the NWCSC was held at Borgeson Universal Co., in Torrington. Council Vice-President, Jason Marshall, called the meeting to order at 7:40PM. All rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **Roll** of Clubs, Delegates and Officers:

CT Classic Bucks	Dean Fraley	Newgate Coon Club	Elise Mauriello
N. Preston R&G	Craig Nelson	NWCSA	Jason Marshall
NW Trout Unlimited	James Bower	Woodbury/ Southbury	PhillipMauriello
Bell City Rifle	Dominic Basile	Harwinton R&G	Mike Fusco
NVBC	Chris Marino	Foothill's Sportsmen	Clyde Breakell
CT Trapper's Assoc.	Bob Andryzeck	Sharon F & G	Jim Fedorich
Waterbury F & G Protective	Gerry Ciarcia		

**Officers present:** President, Chris Marino and Vice-President, Jason Marshall. Excused absence, Clyde Breakell. Jason Marshall presiding.

**Minutes** of March meeting reviewed and accepted.

## **Correspondence:**

### Incoming:

A report was given regarding an invitation to attend a forum sponsored by the CT Audubon Society and hosted by the Goshen Conservation Commission regarding land management/ stewardship practices for large parcels of land to maintain bio-diversity and wildlife diversity. The actual date for this forum has been re-scheduled to June 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:30PM. The forum is to be held at the Goshen Town Hall.

CT Audubon is initiating a management plan on their Croft Memorial Preserve, a seven hundred acre forest holding located on the East side of Goshen East Street, North. This property is just opposite the North Goshen Road off East Street, putting it in close proximity to the Goshen Wildlife Management Area. A strong showing of sportsmen from NWCSC at this forum could prove beneficial to relations between our organization, the town of Goshen, the Torrington Water Company, CT Audubon and the management of Great Mountain Forest. Representatives from all of these concerns will be in attendance, along with some of our area legislators. We hope our delegates will consider attending and get the message out to their members. All will be welcome.

E-mail from state biologist, Peter Picone regarding volunteer work at the Goshen WMA was discussed.

Information relative to the former State Nursery was discussed. The new lessees, Natural Attractions Project, Inc, sent a sales notice of seedling offerings to the Council.

### Outgoing:

Letter to S&W requesting a discounted purchase of one Model 3913, Ladysmith pistol, along with payment of \$524.00 was issued. The handgun has been received.

Letter drafted to Deputy Commissioner, David Leff regarding status of newly acquired state lands has been sent.

## **Financial Report:**

Clyde distributed a reconciliation report for the NWCSC account, and reviewed all checks issued and income. Sales tax paid for first quarter of 2004.

Report accepted as delivered. Discussed payments for attendees of Western CT FNRA.

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## **Committee Reports:**

### **Rapid Response:**

Communications have been sent to our legislators regarding HB 5588, the Forestry Management Bill. This is a bill that we have supported since introduction in last year's legislative session. We have pointed out two flaws in the bill: 1; additional funds to Environmental Conservation Fund are not dedicated to the forestry division and forest management, although that is the stated intent of the bill. 2; The bill continues to suggest that oversight of Connecticut State Forestry Practices be contracted to an outside environmental organization. Our reservations being noted and so stated in our communications, we feel that passage of HB 5588 is a positive step in the right direction to enhance our state lands management programs.

**Note:** It was announced at our meeting that HB 5588 has been passed by the legislature and is on its way to the Governor for signing. We will follow the implementation and progress of this bill as it moves forward. We have reliable information of behind the scene activity and influence that must be monitored carefully to ensure the intent of this bill is fulfilled, and that the interests of sportsmen and conservationists are given credible weight in forest management programs. We hope to see the concept of "multiple use of renewable resources" implemented by our natural resource agency thus addressing the needs of all relevant sectors of outdoor users.

All sportsmen and conservationists who follow the various program and policy evolutions of the DEP's Bureau of Natural Resources should be encouraged by several recent agency initiatives; the Wildlife Division is working on the development of a ten-year management plan for wildlife; the forestry division has a credible start to manage more state lands, as well as the benefit of, a soon to be completed, "CT Forest Resource Plan" for the next ten years; and the acquisition of major public lands over the past few years. All of the recent initiatives seem to recognize the inter-related nature of habitat, wildlife and human values. Future funding for reaching goals looks good with enhanced federal programs instituted by the Bush administration; (which has been particularly helpful to sportsmen) the new DEP Wildlife Conservation License Plates; increased license and permit fees, etc.

Membership:

Banquet:

ATV Raffle:

### **Citizen's Advisory Council to DEP:**

Minutes of the May meeting are posted to the web site.

### **Legislative:**

The final report for this past legislative session has been received from Bob Crook of the Coalition of CT Sportsmen. **The good news is that no gun bills passed this session!** A bill to criminalize failure to report the loss of a firearm within 48 hours hung in there through the end of the session. No action was taken on this bill in the closing days of the session as more problems with it were revealed. Other attempts to further the gun control agenda included registering of all licensed dealers by the state, (in addition to federal licensing) and a backdoor attempt to register all firearms sales with the state Dept. of Public Safety. We can be grateful that this is an election year and the anti-gun proponents were probably reluctant to push their agenda too hard.

We also have to be aware that our pro-gun proposals fared no better this session. We did not eliminate any of the unnecessary paperwork required in handgun sales or the fourteen waiting period for long guns. Several versions of Sunday Hunting also failed.

### **WEB Site:**

Just a note to all of our members regarding the web site.

Our web site calendar is operational. If you have a significant event or item to post to the calendar, contact Chris Marino with the details. Please list only those events or items that will be relevant, and of general interest to the NWCSC membership.

We also have access to edit and modify the items listed on the Home Page. All delegates should check this page from time to time for important announcements. Again; if you feel you have something significant to report to the membership, contact Chris for inclusion.

Lastly; delegates will note that we have a page on the web site entitled "Articles". If you check this page, you will note a few articles on topics of importance to sportsmen. It should be understood that this is not an exclusive forum for a select few. We encourage any member who has knowledge of an issue or event to write an article for inclusion on this page. This is the best means we have to express our views and concerns. We urge all to consider using it.

You don't have to be an English Major to put your ideas in the form of an opinion piece or article. Do the best you can and get the information in a Word Document. Send it to Chris via e-mail. Chris has offered to edit and/ or correct any submissions. In other words, we offer help to any prospective author in creating a readable and interesting article, (at the author's request). Our delegates have many, varied opinions and experiences to share with their fellows. Please feel free to do so; and be assured, that by so doing, you will make our web site that much more informative and interesting.

#### **Old Business:**

Discussed the status of muzzle-loader turkey hunting proposal for spring season. Delegates were updated as to the status of this proposal. We are currently trying to make contact with the state leadership of NWTf in the several states where this type of hunting is allowed. This has proven to be a slow process; however the single contact made so far has been very positive. We hope to hear from several other state associations. Whether or not we do: we will be writing our proposal soon.

Discuss progress in getting together with Trout Unlimited to help with net coverings for the ponds at Burlington Hatchery. TU is on board with this effort. All that remains is to discuss what is needed with the hatchery manager.

Discussed the response from the Maine Fish & Wildlife Conservation Council to our recent donation to support their defense of bear hunting with hounds, over bait, and trapping in Maine, during the upcoming public referendum on the issue this fall. A letter of thanks was read at our meeting and a membership in the Sportsman's Alliance of Maine was issued to the Council. The subscription to SAM's newsletter should help keep us informed of this issue as it progresses.

There is a lesson to be learned from this controversy that all Connecticut sportsmen and women should heed. This referendum on bear hunting in Maine is being promoted and sponsored by the US Humane Society and Friends of Animals; two national animal rights organizations who would end all hunting, fishing and trapping nationwide, if it were in their power to do so. They have found, and are funding two small groups in Maine, who purport to represent the interests of, "real sportsmen" and actually claim to be sportsmen! The members of these two groups typify an attitude of intolerance between different segments of the sporting community that exists not only in Maine; but in many states as well, Connecticut included! If the principles of a free society and respect of the individual are to be realized then we must respect the choices of all sportsmen and women in the way they choose to enjoy their sporting heritage. So long as that choice is within the law and the precepts of sound, scientific wildlife management, we should respect it. We don't have to participate and we have every right to express our views on the subject in a proper forum, but that is where it should end. We all should have the right to enjoy our pursuits in the manner we choose without being attacked by our fellow sportsmen.

#### **New Business:**

Federal issues and bills were discussed; among them were the Federal Marine Fuel Tax, of which it was reported, only 75% of receipts goes back to the Aquatic Resource Trust Fund. We can only surmise that the other 25% is bled off for administrative purposes. Another bill before Congress would require the U.S. Treasury to re-direct 25% of, the excise tax on motor boats, small motors, and fuel to the general treasury fund instead of Aquatic Resource Trust Fund. On the plus side is a bill sponsored by John Beroux and Trent Lott that would add another \$110,000,000.00 to the Sport Fish & Restoration Act.

Council discussion regarding Junior Hunting Day. With individual clubs taking advantage of the grant money available through the NSSF, we need to determine what role the organized JHD will play in 2004. We will be in contact with Warren Spey to find out how he plans to proceed with this program.

Chris gave a report on the final meeting of the CT, "Statewide Forest Resource Management Plan" Advisory Committee. The plan is in its final draft stage. There will be one more comment period on the final draft and then we will move on to an implementation stage for the plan. A committee will be retained to facilitate implementation of aspects of the plan. It is a very comprehensive and ambitious document and if we are successful in promotion and implementation; there will be benefits accruing to our interests in habitat and wildlife management. Chris reported that several goals stated in the plan have already been achieved as a result of the advisory committee meetings and discussions.

Jim Fedorich reported on Torrington F&G development of a 10-year management plan for club land. Torrington has hired certified forester, Jim Gilespeie to oversee the project. Mr. Gilespeie has been successful in applying for habitat rehabilitation grants from the state through the WHIP program.

It is gratifying to see the number of Council Clubs active in responsibly managing their lands. We can now cite approximately 1,000 acres under professional management programs through five of our member clubs. Keep up the good work and invite other landowners to view and learn from what is taking place on your property.

**Good Of The NWCS:**

Clyde reported on prospects for holding a Council Pig Roast and Picnic this Fall. Clyde's generous offer opens a good prospect to hold a family day at one of our clubs. The consensus was to hold this event sometime in August. We will explore the possibilities and discuss this outing at the May meeting. We need to decide on a location and the type of event we want to promote. The timing would be good for a political get together and perhaps a Sportsman's Caucus invitation to attend one of our clubs. There are a lot of possibilities and this could become a major regional promotion for sportsman interests, if we plan it carefully. We should keep it simple and do the preparations in house. Pig roast and clam bake, with potluck from the members.

**Adjourn: 9:55PM**

