

Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources



Commission Meeting

December 6, 2024 | 8:30 AM (ET)

In-person: #1 Sportsman's Lane, Frankfort, KY 40601

Livestream: [YouTube.com/FishandWildlifeKY](https://www.youtube.com/FishandWildlifeKY)

Minutes

Call to Order and Welcome (Video 4:43)

Invocation (Video 6:21) – Meghan Obermeyer, Fisheries Division Program Coordinator

Pledge of Allegiance (Video 7:16) – Waylon Ridgeway, youth trophy fish angler

Commission Members in attendance (Video 7:36) Greg Cecil, Jerry Ferrell, Dr. Robin Floyd, Josh Lillard, Chuck Meade, Jeff Raymer, Matt Rhodes, and Walter Robertson

Chair's Remarks (Video 8:17)

Commissioner's Remarks (Video 10:15)

Informational Item:

- Quarterly Financial Reports (Video 32:49)
 - Melissa Trent, Director of Administrative Services, presented the quarterly financial reports.
- Recognition of the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Foundation's support for its donation of \$100K+ for 2024 conservation camp scholarships (Video 35:26)
 - Kevin Kelly, Director of Information and Education, acknowledged the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Foundation's record-breaking donation of over \$100,000. This generous contribution made it possible for 433 kids to attend camp this past summer.
- Update on CWD (Video 37:15)
 - Ben Robinson, Director of Wildlife, provided an update on the current deer season's progress and outlined the department's ongoing efforts to

monitor Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD).

Action items:

- Minutes from October 22, 2024 Special Called Meeting (Video 45:53)
 - Commission member Rhodes corrected the minutes, noting that the motion for the action item “Approval of the creation of a CWD Surveillance Zone in Meade, Breckinridge, and Hardin counties” was carried by a majority, not unanimously.
 - Commission member Meade **moved to approve the minutes with the correction added by Commission member Rhodes**, seconded by Walter Robertson. ***The motion carried.***

- Increase the daily limit for northern pintail from one (1) pintail to three (3) (Video 47:14)
 - Ben Robinson, Director of Wildlife, and Dr. John Brunjes, Migratory Bird Program Coordinator, proposed amending 301 KAR 2:221 Waterfowl seasons and limits. This amendment would increase the daily limit for northern pintail from one pintail daily to three pintail daily. There would be no further restrictions based on sex of the pintail harvested. The limit would apply for the 60-day regular season and special seasons. Immediate action is required in order to allow hunters to take advantage of this new federal allowance during the 2025 duck season.
 - Commission member Greg Cecil **made a motion to increase the daily limit for northern pintail from one to three**, seconded by Dr. Robin Floyd. Votes were as follows: Yes: Dr. Robin Floyd, Matt Rhodes, Greg Cecil, Jerry Ferrell, Chuck Meade, and Walter Robertson. No: Jeff Raymer. ***The motion carried by majority.***

(Video 54:27) Commission member Floyd left the meeting.

- Add the Federal Duck Stamp (e-stamp) to the list of licenses/permits offered for sale online by the Department (Video 54:56)
 - Ben Robinson, Director of Wildlife, and Dr. John Brunjes, Migratory Bird Program Coordinator, proposed amending [301 KAR 5:022](#) License, tag, and permit fees. This amendment would allow the Department to enter into a MOA with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Duck Stamp Office to allow the electronic sale of the Federal Duck Stamp (e-stamp) on the Department website.
 - Commission member Cecil **made a motion to approve this item**, seconded by Jeff Raymer. Votes were as follows: Yes: Jeff Raymer, Matt Rhodes, Greg Cecil, Jerry Ferrell, Chuck Meade, Walter Robertson. ***The motion carried unanimously.***

(Video 57:08) Commission member Floyd returned to the meeting.

- Otter Creek Outdoor Recreation Area (OCORA) deed transfer to Meade County Fiscal Court (Video 57:21)
 - Ben Robinson, Director of Wildlife, presented that the Meade County Fiscal Court would like to assume ownership of OCORA. The Wildlife Division strongly supports this transfer **IF** language is put into place to grant KDFWR public access for hunting and fishing (no net loss in public hunting access) in perpetuity. He explained that Otter Creek is not a WMA and that management of recreation areas is not a specialty of the department, and it would be a better fit for a local government with parks and recreation expertise to manage it.
 - Chairman Lillard requested that this item be moved to new business for today's meeting, making it a discussion item for the next meeting.
 - Commission member Chuck Meade **made a motion to move this action item to a new business item for today's meeting**, seconded by Matt Rhodes. Votes were as follows: Yes: Dr. Robin Floyd, Jeff Raymer, Matt Rhodes, Greg Cecil, Jerry Ferrell, Chuck Meade, Walter Robertson. ***The motion carried unanimously.***

- Holding and Preservation of Seized Wildlife (Video 1:07:01)
 - Colonel Jeremy McQueary, Director of Law Enforcement, proposed promulgating a new regulation to establish the parameters for when seized wildlife is impounded and either held alive or euthanized and preserved as evidence until adjudication. This regulation would conform with the Kentucky Attorney General Opinion [OAG 24-08](#). This regulation would: establish parameters that outline when wildlife is impounded in a criminal case and the animal is deemed to be causing damage to persons, property, or other animals or is spreading disease, it may be euthanized and preserved as evidence in the criminal case, exempt captive wildlife permit holders ([301 KAR 2:081](#)) and wildlife rehabilitator permit holders ([301 KAR 2:075](#)) from holding requirements to allow willing permit holders to serve as agents of the state to hold impounded wildlife as requested by the agency, and establish parameters to allow the department to contract with an individual or entity to hold impounded wildlife as evidence during judicial process.
 - Commission member Cecil **made a motion to accept this item**, seconded by Matt Rhodes. Votes were as follows: Yes: Dr. Robin Floyd, Jeff Raymer, Matt Rhodes, Greg Cecil, Jerry Ferrell, Chuck Meade, Walter Robertson. ***The motion carried unanimously.***

- Modify traditional fishing regulations on selected waterbodies (Video 1:19:13)
 - Dave Dreves, Director of Fisheries, proposed amending [301 KAR 1:201](#) – Taking of fish by traditional fishing methods. This amendment would:
 - Remove the catch and release regulations for sport fish on Clear Fork (Logan and Warren counties).

- Remove the 4-fish daily limit for Channel Catfish and 15-fish daily limit on sunfish from ponds at Kentucky River WMA, Boone Tract.
 - Add a 10-inch minimum size limit for crappie on Nolin River Lake and Rough River Lake.
 - Propose to add an 18-inch to 26-inch protective slot limit and 2-fish daily limit for native walleye on the Rockcastle River.
 - Commission member Cecil **made a motion to accept this item**, seconded by Chuck Meade. Votes were as follows: Yes; Dr. Robin Floyd, Jeff Raymer, Matt Rhodes, Greg Cecil, Jerry Ferrell, Chuck Meade, Walter Robertson. ***The motion carried unanimously.***
- ❖ “Thoroughbred Bass” selective breeding research project (Video 1:24:03)
- Dave Dreves, Director of Fisheries, sought Commission approval of higher cost than originally presented for identification of genetic markers for advanced size in native Largemouth Bass, previously approved at the August meeting. Further refinement of the necessary procedures with the genetics laboratory has made the cost higher than previously presented. This would be a 2-year study, which will cost up to \$100,000. After the two years, there would continue to be a yearly operational cost to collect samples.
 - Commission member Chuck Meade **made a motion to pass**, seconded by Greg Cecil. Votes were as follows: Yes; Dr. Robin Floyd, Jeff Raymer, Matt Rhodes, Greg Cecil, Jerry Ferrell, Chuck Meade, Walter Robertson. ***The motion carried unanimously.***
- ❖ Feasibility study of a low-voltage fish fence to harvest invasive carp in mass quantities (Video 1:33:17)
- Dave Dreves, Director of Fisheries, sought commission approval to conduct a research project that would use 100% federal funds to contract with an entity to evaluate the feasibility of the placement of a low-voltage fish fence in the Salt River to harvest mass amounts of invasive carp.
 - Commission member Matt Rhodes **made a motion to approve**, seconded by Jeff Raymer. Votes were as follows: Yes; Dr. Robin Floyd, Jeff Raymer, Matt Rhodes, Greg Cecil, Jerry Ferrell, Chuck Meade, Walter Robertson. ***The motion carried unanimously.***

(Video 1:37:14) 10 Minute Break

Discussion Items:

- Modify the language regarding the definition and usage of electric trolling motors on selected water bodies (Video 1:49:51)
 - Dave Dreves, Director of Fisheries proposed amending [301 KAR 6:001](#) – Definitions for 301 KAR Chapter 6 and amending [301 KAR 1:015](#) – Boat

and motor restrictions. These amendments would:

- Define “electric trolling motor” as an electric motor equal to or less than 3 hp, 1.3 kilowatts input power, or 120 lbs of thrust.
- Clarify that there is a restriction to idle speed only on selected water bodies when using electric motors exceeding 10 hp and 6.0 kilowatts input power.
- Move 301 KAR 1:015 to Chapter 6 and recodify as a new regulation.
- No objections were made to passing this item on to an action item.
- Boating Registration Fees and Definitions (Video 1:57:01)
 - Colonel Jeremy McQueary, Director of Law Enforcement, proposed amending [301 KAR 6:001](#) Chapter Definitions. The amendments are as follows:
 - Add [KRS 235.010 \(4\)](#) definition of “Personal Watercraft” (PWC)
 - Add [KRS 235.010 \(1\)](#) definition of “Vessel”
 - Modify “Class A” definition to include PWC
 - Define hydrofoil/eFoil boards and mechanically propelled surfboards
 - Repeal [301 KAR 6:005](#) (Boat registration fees) and replace into [301 KAR 5:022](#) (License, tag and permit fees)
 - Clean up and removal of antiquated language in Section 1
 - Clarify all vessels will be registered based upon vessel length
 - Remove the trolling motor only registration fee
 - Remove the inboard motor only registration fee
 - No objections were made to passing this item on to an action item.
- Recommendations for Guides and Outfitters (Video 2:02:33)
 - Gabe Jenkins, Deputy Commissioner, on behalf of the Fisheries, Law Enforcement, and Wildlife divisions, presented recommendations for Guides and Outfitters to conform with [HB586](#) changes to [KRS 150.175](#) and [KRS 150.190](#).
 - Amend [301 KAR 2:030](#)- Commercial guide license regulation and recodify in [Chapter 3](#)
 - Change the regulation title to “Fishing and Hunting Guide and Outfitter Licenses”
 - Create Fishing Outfitter, Hunting Outfitter, Fishing Guide and Hunting Guide license types for both a resident or non-resident.
 - Establish Tiering of outfitter license’s based upon number of guides working under the outfitter
 - Require the holder of an outfitter license to report on any guiding activity that the license holder provides
 - Modify the license suspension and revocation parameters for all 4 license types

- Create new applications for all 4 license types
- Amend [301 KAR 5:022](#) – License, tag and permit fees
 - Establish the following licenses and fees:

	Tier 1		Tier 2	
	Resident	Non-Resident	Resident	Non-Resident
Fishing Outfitter	\$250	\$1,000	\$750	\$1,500
Hunting Outfitter	\$500	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$2,000

	Tier 3		Tier 4	
	Resident	Non-Resident	Resident	Non-Resident
Fishing Outfitter	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Hunting Outfitter	\$1,500	\$2,500	\$2,000	\$3,000

	Resident	Non-Resident
Fishing Guide	\$100	\$400
Hunting Guide	\$100	\$400

- No objections were made to passing this item on to an action item.
- Recommendations for Biennial Adjustments in License and Permit Fees (Video 2:21:11)
 - Gabe Jenkins, Deputy Commissioner, proposed amending [301 KAR 5:022](#) – License, tag and permit fees. This amendment would:
 - Establish a biennial fee adjustment in 301 KAR 5:022.
 - Exclude fee adjustment for all fees in Section 8 (application fees)
 - Exempt Federal Duck Stamp (e-stamp) fee as the amount is set by the federal government
 - Include [boat registration fees](#), contingent on passage of the boating registration and definitions agenda item
 - Biennial adjustment amount would be determined by summing the 12-month percent changes in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) over the previous two years, as reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The final amount would be rounded to the nearest tenth of a percent. Note Appendix 1 as a reference that reflects the 2023 CPI-U and the 10 month CPI-U estimate for 2024.
 - Initial implementation to coincide with the start of the 2026 license year

- Establish a reduced price for first-time resident license buyers to obtain a sportsman’s license (same price as a youth sportsman’s license; \$30 currently)
 - Establish a bobcat permit fee of \$10
 - Remove the dog kennel and horse stall rental fees at WMAs Appendix 1. License Adjustment Proposal
 - Modify [301 KAR: 6:070](#) – Boat Dealers: remove the boat dealer application fee and place it directly into [301 KAR 5:022](#).
 - Add a 3-day non-resident fur buyer license
 - No objections were made to passing this item on to an action item.
- Establish a free annual shooting range permit for holders of a valid Kentucky annual hunting or fishing license, as well as a paid annual permit and a paid one-day permit for shooting range use on any KDFWR managed, leased or KDFWR affiliated shooting ranges (Video 2:42:26)
 - Kevin Kelly, Director of Information and Education, and Rachel Crume, R3 Branch Manager, proposed to make the following amendments:
 - Amend [301 KAR 3:015](#) - Shooting ranges on department-owned or managed lands
 - Require a shooting range permit for shooters ages 16 and older on any KDFWR-managed, -leased or -affiliated shooting range
 - Amend [301 KAR 5:022](#) - License, tag, and permit fees
 - Establish a free annual shooting range permit for holders of a valid Kentucky annual hunting or fishing license
 - Establish an annual shooting range permit for \$25
 - Establish a 1-day shooting range permit for \$5
 - Amend [301 KAR 3:010](#) – Public use of Wildlife Management Areas
 - Require groups or clubs with valid WMA use permits that hold events on shooting ranges to maintain a sign-in sheet for event participants and regularly submit this information to the department.
 - Amend [301 KAR 4:100](#) and [301 KAR 3:012](#) for conformity
 - No objections were made to passing this item on to an action item.
- Black Bass (Video 2:55:15)
 - Commission member Meade, along with members of the public—Jason Kinner, Chris Ferguson, and Ronnie Wells—proposed stocking 5,000 F1 Florida-strain hybrid bass in Paintsville Lake, with funding to be provided by the department.
 - Dave Dreves, Director of Fisheries, and Adam Martin, Fisheries Program Coordinator, spoke in opposition to the proposed stocking due to risks to the native largemouth bass population and because subsequent generations with Florida alleles would exhibit diminishing effects of hybrid

vigor and could weaken the overall hardiness of the largemouth bass population.

- Commission member Cecil motioned that the item not be moved forward as an actin item, but his motion did not receive a second.
- No objections were made to passing this item on to an action item.

New Business Items (Video 3:52:39)

- Commission member Floyd requested that under the new business item regarding increased hunter opportunities and simplified quota hunts on selected WMAs, he would like to see an open deer hunt on Lake Barkley State Resort Park added.
- Commission member Cecil made a **motion to pass all new business items on the agenda to discussion items at the next meeting**, seconded by Dr. Robin Floyd. ***The motion carried.***

Closed Session

- (Video 3:57:15) Commission member Meade made a **motion to enter executive session**, seconded by Dr. Robin Floyd. ***The motion carried unanimously.***

Steven Fields, Staff Attorney, read the following statement for public notice about the Commission entering into closed session:

“All meetings of a quorum of the members of any public agency at which any public business is discussed or at which any action is taken by the agency, shall be public meetings, open to the public at all times except for specific exceptions listed in KRS 61.810 or otherwise provided for by law.

The Commission has business today that will require entering into a closed session. KRS 61.815 requires notice of the general nature of the business to be discussed in the closed session, the reason for the closed session, and the provision of KRS 61.810 that authorizes it be publicly announced prior to entering closed session for most open meetings exceptions.

In the proposed closed session, the Commission will discuss the potential acquisition of real property via purchase. The discussions shall occur in the closed session to protect the state’s interests in the acquisition of land. By identifying KDFWR’s interest in the particular parcels, the general public would be alerted to the various owners’ willingness to sell the property and our intent to purchase. As such, the publicity increases the likelihood other parties may make offers on the properties. Such competing offers could increase the value of the subject properties. Alternatively, a private party could purchase a property from

the current owner more quickly than the Commonwealth and require the Commonwealth to pay a premium to acquire it.

This closed session is authorized by KRS 61.810 under Section 1(b) for the potential land acquisitions.

Upon an approved motion, the Commission will enter into closed session. The Commission shall not discuss any other matters and no action shall be taken occur during the closed session.

During the closed session, counsel and necessary members of staff will be present to advise the Commission.”

Action Items (Video 4:20:35)

- Commission member Floyd **made a motion to approve Land Project 2024-WILD-015**, seconded by Chuck Meade. Votes were as follows: Yes: Dr. Robin Floyd, Jeff Raymer, Matt Rhodes, Greg Cecil, Jerry Ferrell, Chuck Meade, Walter Robertson. ***The motion carried unanimously.***
- Election of Commission Officers (Video 4:21:42)
 - Commission member Ferrell **made a motion to nominate Josh Lillard as Chair**, seconded by Dr. Robin Floyd. Votes were as follows: Yes: Dr. Robin Floyd, Jeff Raymer, Matt Rhodes, Greg Cecil, Jerry Ferrell, Chuck Meade, Walter Robertson. ***The motion carried unanimously.***
 - Commission member Ferrell **made a motion to nominate Greg Cecil as Vice Chair**, seconded by Matt Rhodes. Votes were as follows: Yes: Dr. Robin Floyd, Jeff Raymer, Matt Rhodes, Greg Cecil, Jerry Ferrell, Chuck Meade, Walter Robertson. ***The motion carried unanimously.***
 - Commission member Meade **made a motion to nominate Jerry Ferrell as Secretary**, seconded by Walter Robertson. Votes were as follows: Yes: Dr. Robin Floyd, Jeff Raymer, Matt Rhodes, Greg Cecil, Jerry Ferrell, Chuck Meade, Walter Robertson. ***The motion carried unanimously.***

Public Comments (Video 4:25:18) Kevin Kelly, Director of Information and Education, read the following statement regarding public comments:

“Public comments regarding New Business Items or Discussion Items on the agenda may be submitted by email to FW.PublicAffairs@ky.gov. Emailed comments received by 5:00 PM (eastern) two days preceding the meeting date will be distributed to all Commission members the day prior to the meeting and will be read by KDFWR staff during the Commission meeting for up to 3 minutes

total per commenter, time permitting and at the discretion of the Commission chair. Emailed comments allow Commission members adequate time for consideration and correspondence if necessary, and they allow the Commission to conduct business more efficiently during meetings. Note: A commenter's contact information is not required for emailed comments, but will be necessary if a response is requested, and other than name and affiliation it will not be publicly disclosed if provided. Anonymous comments will be distributed to the Commission members but may not be read during the meeting. The Commission chair reserves the right to not read publicly any comments that are libelous, profane, derogatory of others, not pertaining to business items on the meeting agenda, or redundant with other comments. Questions will receive an email response. Commenters should include "Commission meeting" in their email subject line and include in their email message their first and last name(s), Kentucky county(s) of residence (or state of residence if a nonresident), and organizational affiliation and position if they are an officer or official representative for a particular organization. In-person attendees of meetings may also request to speak up to 3 minutes total per commenter on New Business Item(s) or Discussion Item(s) on the agenda, but will be required to sign-in on the public comment request form on the table at the meeting room entrance by 9:00AM (eastern) on the day of the meeting, and provide name, county and state of residence, organization represented and position (if applicable), and applicable agenda items. Commenters who speak in person will not have their emailed comments read publicly at the meeting and are asked to avoid voicing comments that are redundant with others speaking prior to them during the allotted public comments time."

Kevin Kelly, Information and Education Director, read the following emailed comment:

"I am Steven Bardin, a private-sector fisheries biologist. Three years ago, an angler group in Kentucky asked me about my opinion on stocking F1 largemouth bass to improve a reservoir. Over several conversations, I explained to this group how the correct approach to enhancing a fishery starts with genetic analysis, length-weight frequency, and relative weight or body condition scoring. I instructed the anglers to collect a genetic sample using a buccal swab, measure the length and weight of each fish, and log them into a relative weight calculator. Through this process, we learned that the distribution of the 97 fish captured by the anglers was from 12 inches to 19 inches, with an average of 13.91 inches. Weights ranged from .60 lbs to 4.76 lbs, averaging 1.41 lbs. Relative weight ranged from 63.77% to 122.21%, averaging 90.76%, and 16 of 97 individuals above 100%. Based on the genetic results provided by Dr. Peatman's lab at Auburn University, no correlations could be found between Florida allele percentage and length, weight, or relative weight.

I provided insight into the fact that the majority of physical characteristics shown by a largemouth bass are controlled by their environment, forage availability, and competition. The angler group was instructed to begin harvesting fish, push for the regulation change that allows for the harvest of additional fish, increase and diversify forage using threadfin shad, rainbow trout, and bluegill sunfish, to begin controlling aquatic vegetation while adding artificial structure, and to monitor water quality and make improvements when possible. Selective supplemental bass stocking is the final tool to be used after the corrections are made and fish begin to thrive and consistently exceed 100% relative weight.

To my knowledge, the angler group working in collaboration with Kentucky Fish and Wildlife has completed habitat work and then applied and earned additional funds through the Reservoir Fish Habitat Partnership for additional habitat. They have also privately funded the introduction of threadfin shad and began improving the culture around harvesting bass. Assuming their support for these efforts and others and that trends showing bass improvement continue, then the selective supplemental stocking of additional bass could be advantageous.

Stocking programs traditionally focused on using pure Florida or integrated bass stockings as they offered a simplistic way to attempt to increase bass abundance, growth rate, and/or overall size. With genetic analysis innovations, trophy markers have only recently been identified for Florida bass. This has been achieved by Texas Parks and Wildlife and privately by Redhills Fish Hatchery. Trophy marker technology allows for the selective breeding of carrier fish that provide their offspring the potential to reach trophy size. This works only when offspring are stocked into an environment that allows their potential to be reached.

If the goal is to improve abundance, growth rate, or maximum size, I offer my support of four things.

1. Continued collaboration with angler groups and agencies to make environmental, habitat, and forage improvements
2. The increase in selective harvest and overall education on the need for harvest
3. The selective supplemental stocking of bass using the best available technology to maximize success.
4. The funding of a full trophy marker panel, spawning, and stocking program is to begin immediately and continue for no less than 10 years.”

--Steven Bardin

“To the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources (KDFWR), and to the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission:

Please accept the below comments concerning proposed initiatives for the introduction and funding to stock F1 Hybrid Largemouth Bass in Kentucky waterways.

- Efforts to stock F1 hybrid largemouth bass in Kentucky waterways are in contrast and conflict with KDFWR scientific-based management practices, Strategic Plan Initiatives, Kentucky’s State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) and the findings of KDFWR’s staff.
- KYBHA promotes the conservation of wild public lands, water and wildlife, promotes that these resourced belong to the public, and consistent with the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation supports science-based fish and wildlife management. KYBHA is concerned that legislative/administrative initiatives are deteriorating the hard work of KDFWR staff and subverting science-based management decisions.
- KDFWR’s strategic plan states decisions are “[g]uided by science-based decision making.” Kentucky’s SWAP requires management decisions be grounded in science and prioritize native populations, stating Kentucky’s “native plants and animals are truly vital components of the “common wealth” and “we likewise share the responsibility to conserve them.”
- Current finds of KDFWR, posted on KDFWR’s webpage, oppose stocking, stating:
 - Decision is based on “decades of research” with anglers and native populations in mind.
 - A Kentucky study found native bass grow faster than F1 hybrids in the same ponds.
 - Stocking will result in hybridization with negative and “irreversibl[e]” affects.
 - KDFWR’s position was produced by “a team of KDFWR fisheries biologist with expertise in biology and management of black bass.”
- KYBHA supports hunting and fishing recruitment as well as providing greater opportunity for Kentucky hunters and anglers. Conducting further studies would be appropriate in isolated water bodies managed by KDFWR, unconnected to larger watersheds, so as to control and safeguard against unintentional stocking of public waterways, which is currently illegal.”

--Backcountry Hunters and Anglers

“I deeply appreciate the efforts made by the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources in safeguarding our wildlife, and I fully understand the need for regulations to ensure the well-being of our native fauna. However, there are certain concerns within our community that I would like to address regarding the current regulations and practices, which I believe could be improved for the benefit of both wildlife and rehabilitators. Some of the current regulations have what I am sure are unintended consequences.

1. RVSs as Ambassadors: One of our primary concerns is the requirement to euthanize non-releasable Rabies Vector Species (RVSs).

Rule(s) Title 301, Chapter 2, Regulation 075 Section 4 5(c)

A permit holder shall not possess a rabies vector species as non-releasable wildlife, except for those animals legally held outside the Enhanced Rabies Surveillance Zone prior to April 4, 2023.

Section 4 5(d)

Except as established in Section 5(5) of this administration regulation, rabies vector species shall be maintained within an enclosure sufficient to prevent:

1. Escape; and
2. Direct contact with a non-permitted person.
3. Section 6(3). Rabies vector species legally held as non-releasable, shall not leave the wildlife rehabilitation facility except for veterinary care or to transfer to another permitted rehabilitation facility and shall be included on the Wildlife Rehabilitation Annual Report.
4. Section 6(6) Only non-releasable wildlife may be displayed, except that non-releasable rabies vector species shall not be displayed. Displays shall only be for conservation education purposes.

Analysis:

-See articles to prove the efficacy of vaccination (e.g., World Health Organization)

-Purpose of being a licensed rehabilitation is not only to help the animal to return to the wild, but to work with those who have a good quality of life and are able to be in the community is to teach coexistence, why they're not good pets, and the purpose of each animal.

Conclusion: We propose that, rather than euthanasia, these animals should be allowed to serve as ambassadors for wildlife education and outreach, under the care and supervision of experienced rehabbers. Allowing them to be displayed for conservation education is invaluable to the education system and is a free service.

Parameters:

-public not allowed to touch face of animal.

-Ambassador has proof of rabies vaccination by a licensed vet

2. Transportation Permits”

--Mary Key, Nolin River Wildlife

Set a date for the next Quarterly Commission Meeting (Video 4:39:49)

- The next Quarterly Commission meeting will be held on March 14, 2025.

Adjourn (Video 4:42:00)

- Chuck Meade **made a motion to adjourn**, seconded by Walter Robertson. ***The motion carried unanimously.***