

# Citizens Waterfowl Advisory Committee

## March 3, 2012 meeting

Meeting called to order @ 9:14 AM by Chairman John Huffman

Members: Pat Murray, James Bahr, John Huffman, Bud Dankers, Leonard Kaanta, Paul Conners, Steve Wyckoff, Richard Smith, Trent Bellingar, Erv DeWeerd, Terry Laymon, John McNamara, Jeff Godi, Marc Curtis, Ed Retherford, Dan Cleary

Michigan DNR: Russ Mason, Barbara Avers, Dave Luukkonen, Joe Robison, Nik Kalejs, Brian Piccolo, Dave Jentoff, Dave Shaw

Joe Robison – Presented CWAC goals & mission statement.

Citizens Waterfowl Advisory Committee mission: To provide feedback to the DNR-Wildlife Division on existing and proposed waterfowl regulations and wetland management issues. CWAC members must present views and concerns which represent stakeholders from their areas of the state and disseminate information learned at CWAC meetings back to those stakeholders.

Barbara Avers – Joe Robison was presented with a gift to recognize his time spent as CWAC coordinator (11 years!). Don Avers will replace Joe as coordinator.

M/S Paul Conner/Leonard Kaanta to accept minutes as presented. Passed 12, no opposed.

Russ Mason – Touched on Waterfowl Legacy Initiative. Discussed funding & employment issues. Noted that each small game license sold brings in a total of \$60 worth of funding to wildlife related issues. Stressed that we, as sportsmen and women, need to contact our legislators over wildlife issues.

### Season at a glance from around Michigan:

Paul Conner – Slow season at Harsens Island. Duck harvest down as were the refuge counts. Preferred split move back to late goose opener.

Erv DeWeerd – SW/Allegan harvest down, hunter trips down. Want later seasons.

Dan Cleary – Goose numbers up, duck harvest down. Make split later.

Ed Retherford, NE/Fish Point – Duck numbers down, split should be later. Goose numbers down, also.

Terry Laymon, DU – Early season goose OK, slow on ducks statewide. Late goose season was good.

Steve Wyckoff, mid-Mi – Slow season, not many birds available.

Jeff Godi, Saginaw Bay – 1 goose shot, redheads good, mallards slow. Need to be flexible in location to maximize harvest. Want a later split.

Trent Bellinger, Central UP – Good numbers before season, down at opener. Hunter numbers steady. Migration late Oct./early Nov. Don't like early opener. Lot's of cranes available.

John McNamara, Livingston Co. – Goose population good, but down from last year. Dec. saw a push of birds.

Marc Curtis, Muskegon – Slow season, divers out in big lake. Marsh hunters struggled. Don't like where the split fell.

Rick Smith, Central Mi. – Woodies up, mallards stable, local goose down. Divers on inland lakes mid-Nov.

Jim Bahr, Lake St. Clair/Sag Bay – Divers moved to central lake early, tough to get. Saginaw Bay: big storms blew out blinds, good numbers of redheads, teal and gadwalls up, mallards slow. Saw lots of geese east side thumb. Airboats disrupted opening day hunts. Most like a later split, Saginaw Bay liked it.

Pat Murray – Black ducks & divers up, woodies good. Like later split.

Leonard Kaanta – Didn't have opportunity to hunt.

Bud Dankers, SFCHA – Early goose slow, regular goose started good, duck slow but steady. Late goose steady.

John Huffman, SE Mi – Early goose slow, good youth hunt. Regular season started good, slowed down later, divers good. Regular goose inconsistent. Late duck good. Late goose end of season (last 10 days) real good.

Barbara Avers – Passed out season at a glance & Mississippi Flyway season at a glance. Got a variety of hunts in during season.

Dave Luukkonen – Hunted less but had good youth hunt. Goose nest success on Hudson Bay down, which was seen in numbers.

Joe Robison – Same as everyone seemed to see. Record harvest at Pt Moulliee, Harsens Island harvest down. Weather patterns were strange this year.

Dave Shaw, Cadillac – Didn't have a good year. Woodies up, goose up, large numbers of birds never migrated.

Brian Piccolo – Nayanquing Point, Fish Point harvest above 5 yr average, Shiawassee down (but up from last year). Goose harvest up at Shiawassee & Fish Point. Spinning wing decoy ban at Shiawassee seems to be working. Late Oct./early Nov. peak of migration. Nayanquing Pt. mallard harvest up 88%. Redhead numbers way up on Saginaw Bay. Northern lower migration late. Birds scattered. Mostly along Huron shoreline. Mallard numbers down, woodies up.

Dave Jentoff, north/central UP – Warm opener, precip down. Teal up for opener, good woodies, mallards down. Strange weather patterns. Hunting pressure up for opener, mostly Munuscong Bay.

Nik Kalejs, west lower Mi – Warm weather, slowed early harvest, divers good, mallards down until late. Goose down but good. Harvest down for goose.

Barbara Avers – Hunting zone proposals.

M/S Steve Wycoff/Terry Laymon 3 zone/1 split per zone 16 in favor 0 opposed. Passed.

M/S Paul Conner/Terry Laymon to keep zone boundaries as previous years. 11 in favor 5 opposed. Failed.

M/S Marc Curtis/Jim Bahr to adopted MDHA proposal w/Tuscola/Huron GMU to become middle zone. 5 in favor 11 opposed. Failed.

M/S Paul Conner/Erv DeWeerd to reconsider keeping boundaries same. 13 in favor. Passed.

M/S Paul Conner/Bud Dankers to keep zones same as previous years. 13 in favor. Passed.

Dave Shaw – No funding for new officers available. All flights canceled, no OT for waterfowl opener. Where tied up with fishing in fall (salmon). Discussed arrests for season. 125 anniversary of Mi Conservation officers.

Dave Luukkonen/Barbara Avers – Mississippi Flyway update. Proposing a 92 day (2 bird) or 78 day (3 bird) Canada goose season. Recommend early teal season for production states. Redhead harvest strategy. Central Flyway recommended a 3 bird redhead limit, but no action due to concern over threshold issue.

M/S Trent Bellinger/Leonard Kaanta to open north zone regular goose season on or after Sept. 22. 16 in favor. Passed.

M/S Bud Dankers/Paul Conner to hold youth waterfowl hunt on Sept 15 & 16. 15 in favor 1 opposed. Passed.

M/S Paul Conner/Marc Curtis to keep early goose same as 2011. 16 in favor. Passed.

Barbara Avers – Michigan Waterfowl Legacy. A cooperative partnership to restore, conserve, and celebrate our waterfowl resources. This is the year of the duck! 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary Pitman-Robertson funds, DU, MUCC, 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NAWMP. Passed out info on mute swans and canvasback study. Also, a proposal to allow harassment of cormorants during the fall. Ed Retherford is cormorant control coordinator for Lake Huron.

Barbara Avers introduced Don Avers as new CWAC coordinator.

M/S Paul Conner/Steve Wycoff to hold next meeting on Aug 4. 15 in favor. Passed.

Next meeting August 4<sup>th</sup> at Bangor Township Hall.

Adjourned at 2:51.