

**Summary of the Alligator Advisory Council Meeting
May 2, 2012
New Iberia, Louisiana**

Council Present

Nathan Wall
Errol Falgout
Chad Courville
Mike Bengé
Ronald Guy
Dan Davis
Tim Allen
Dwight Savoie

Council Absent

Gerald Savoie

LDWF Presence

Noel Kinler
Tanya Sturman
Buddy Baker
Ruth Elsey
Jennifer Hogue

Others

Dr. Javier Nevarez
Ted Joanen
Mark Staton
Ra'Pom- RTL
Dr. Lisa McRoberts & Stephanie
Archie Domangue
Frank Ellender
Jeff Donald
Jerome Caraguel- RTL
Mark Shirley
Johnny Price
Charles Pettefer
Don & Pam Ashley
Dr. Losso

Mike motioned to approve the minutes from the February, 2012 meeting. Nathan seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Defective Tag Issue- Noel Kinler

Noel explained the process of checking for the broken tags and issuing the no-year tags. The defective tags were sent back to Tyden Brookes. The inset on the tag locking housing pulled out easily. The manufacturer tested some of the tags and determined that they were okay. LDWF staff met Tyden Brookes staff in Kenner and checked 5,000 tags. The manufacturer took more tags back to the factory to test. They will replace all of the defective tags. Tim asked if LDWF could have some labor time compensated by the manufacturer.

Evaluation of Pulsed Electric Field Technology- Noel

Noel said that this contract consideration came out of the Swatch public perception issue. This project would cost just under \$9,000. The company has done a lot of marine animal work. From an animal welfare standpoint, this brings a lot of credibility to the company and their products. One of their engineers will come down and they will work with Dr. Nevarez, Noel Kinler and a couple of farmers to find a technique that will stun an alligator in the water humanely. In a later study they will look at brain wave patterns during electrical stunning. They will also measure stress hormones. These further studies would be done during a phase two part of the project.

Tim asked if the farmers thought that this is a good idea. Errol said that farmers are raising larger and larger alligators and handling them is becoming an issue. He thinks that this is a good

investment. Javier said that he will have some money to fund part of the next phase. Errol asked about research done in the past about shocking alligators. Will there be side effects? Jeff Donald said that it is common practice to shock crocodiles. Ruth hasn't heard of any side effects. Nathan said that the Farmers and Ranchers Association supports this. He said the stress to the animal is less than subduing alligators in other ways. Chad asked how long it would take to get results. Noel thinks there will be a quick turnaround: weeks or a couple of months. Phase two should take place next spring at the latest.

Nathan motioned to move ahead with this contract. Errol seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Physical and Biochemical Properties of Alligator Skins- Dr. Losso

Noel said that this project proposal came out of some hide quality issues. This project would look at diet and skin quality and the biochemical evaluations of the skin. They compared mineral and protein profile of alligator feeds from Burris and Lonestar. They also looked at collagen and keratin. They could not make a determination in connecting the difference in the food to the skin problems. In the future they could look at the pH of water and vitamins/minerals directly on defective skin spots. Mark Staton asked if they had compared the mineral level with what is expected in other animals. Javier said that the feed differences for minerals and amino acids are very significant. He believes it warrants further research.

Product Development Project- Dr. Lisa McRoberts

Lisa McRoberts showed some garments using alligator mixed with cloth. Fashion Week NOLA was a big success. Jessica Walther won first place in a student competition. The shoulders on her garment were designed in a cream color alligator skin. Dr. McRoberts went to an international fashion educator conference. A hat designer, Siguorney Morrison, has used alligator trim and is selling hats in North Beach, LA and Manhattan and New Orleans locations. Dr. Liu's students are preparing business plans using grade 3 products. The tanneries have provided all of the skins. LDWF has not purchased any skins. The fashion show in Baton Rouge will be May 18th. Tim suggested that Lisa start thinking about a proposal. Chad said that she should rough something out so that the Council can consider it as they look at next year's budget. Noel said the regional competitions seem very good. Nathan said that a lot of lower grade skins go into the Eastern market.

LSU Captive Research Facility- Nathan Wall

The facility is in place. The tanks are there. There is a half a mile of hot water pipe. The rest of the plumbing and electrical is still in progress.

Program Update- Noel Kinler

The farm releases are in underway. Revenues into the ARF are up to almost \$1.3 million. This is up from about \$900,000 a couple of years ago. Several years back revenue hit around \$1.5 million. Gerald had asked about some licensing issues. Someone can have a license to purchase and hatch eggs even if they do not have a facility to raise it. At the last meeting a question came up about harassment of an alligator on reality television. Noel said that it is very difficult to craft a law to determine what harassment is. France Croco asked us to host some people in the fashion industry to tour some alligator facilities.

Other Business

Chad gave an overview of the research committee. They invited representatives from many different branches of the industry. They will meet infrequently, but they plan to communicate by email. Anyone interested should contact Mark.

The Louisiana Ethics Board has sent some letters and fines to some Council members for being tardy in filing paperwork. Chad said that it is ridiculous that they would fine a volunteer for being late with a piece of ridiculous paperwork.

Tim motioned to adjourn. Mike seconded. Motion carried unanimously.