

**Summary of the Fur Advisory Council Meeting
February 20, 2013
Baton Rouge, Louisiana**

Council Present

Archie Domangue
Frank Ellender
Judge Edwards
Sam Smith
Charles Pettefer, Jr.
James Gallaspy
John Linzay
Steve Hughes
Allan Ensminger

LDWF Presence

Tanya Sturman
Edmond Mouton
Buddy Baker

Others

Tab Pitre

Council Absent

Allan motioned to approve the minutes from the October 2012 meeting. Frank seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Fur Show

Tanya and Sam talked about the success of the Beijing Fur Show. Tanya gave an overview of the show and the international buyers they met there. She showed photos of garments and nutria skins made by Hatem in Turkey. They talked about Peter Li's role in buying from Louisiana and assisting with the booth and supplies.

Bobcat Harvest- update

Edmond talked about the bobcat harvest trends and data collection.

Tony Howard made a presentation proposing that the State put a season on bobcats. He asked that the Council request data on the turkey population. Jimmy Gallaspy said that allowing people to shot bobcats and dump them is not right. It takes the opportunity to trap away from a retired man or a young person. Tony suggested that if the State creates a season on the bobcat, then it will be available for a trophy for a child hunter. Tony said that some areas have wiped out bobcat completely. The dollar value for a trapped bobcat skin is going up. Steve Hughes averaged \$96 on his cats last year. Steve said that since there is a value on the bobcat to the trapper and the unlimited harvest on bobcats should be banned. Jimmy said the prices showing on Edmond's data are green prices from Louisiana dealers. Tony suggested that there be a two week youth season and a two week adult season for bobcats. If there is a season, it will make enforcement possible. Edmond said that the harvest now is an experimental Commission rule. The way to change it would be to go to the Commission with a proposed rule change. Buddy said that the bobcat harvest by hunting and trappers should not impact the population. He said that southern states maintained a steady population even in the 70s, which was the period of Louisiana's highest harvest rates. Buddy said that the argument of animal waste was a stronger vantage point. He said

that others will argue that a landowner should have the right to shot a bobcat rather than invite a trapper onto his trapper. Seasons can be enforced, but bag limits are very difficult to enforce.

Edmond said that more trappers are processing their own fur. The Department is getting more requests for bobcat and otter tags.

John Linzay asked how the rule could be changed. Edmond said that the Council or the Louisiana Trappers and Alligator Hunters Association could ask the Department to approach the Commission. It may be more appropriate for the Association to approach the Commission directly.

Buddy said that law enforcement would be likely to support it if the season were reduced back to deer season. Frank said that he thinks they'd spin their wheels on asking for a two week season.

Jimmy said that he'd like to make a recommendation to the Commission to ask for a 9 day season with an additional youth hunt.

Jimmy motioned to send a recommendation to the Commission asking for a rule change to allow for a 9 day season with an additional youth hunt. Steve seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Fur Marketing RFP Consideration

Allan motioned to publish the RFP. Jimmy seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Nutria Control Program

Edmond review current data on the nutria control program. There are 93 active trappers right now. Terrebonne Parish has the highest turn in rate. Some landowners will not allow trapping until after water fowl season. He expects participation to increase. The harvest is down slightly from last year. He expects the number to decrease over time. The high was three years ago. The incentive value is still \$5. Federal funding will continue for an additional three years. The program is working. Coast wide damage is reducing yearly. It is cost effective as well.

Feral Swine Issues

The Department is in the process of documenting feral swine damage. They are assisting landowners in control techniques. The Department expects to become the lead agency to address the feral swine issue. The issues are region wide throughout the South East. Edmond wanted to let the Council know that they are working on the issue.

Other Business

Tanya shared a letter from Wesley Blanchard thanking the Council for donating traps for their trapping workshops. She showed a PowerPoint with photos from the workshops.

Tony said that Michael Consiglio will attend the Trappers Convention this year. Tony would like to consider trapper education in the fall that would be general education on grading and handling. Tony said that he looks forward to working with Michael. Edmond said that Tony may want to contact John Sturgis about incorporating trapping information into hunting education or to use Wildlife facilities for additional workshops.

John Linzay would like to attend the NTA meeting this year.

Jimmy motioned to pay travel for John and Steve to go to the NTA to represent the Council. Archie seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Jimmy motioned to adjourn. Steve seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Edmond recommends that we have a meeting in late January to vote on the RFP.

Adjourned