

**Summary of the Fur Advisory Council Meeting
January 25, 2011
New Iberia, Louisiana**

Council Present

Archie Domangue
Curtis Cruse
Frank Ellender
Sam Smith
Allan Ensminger
James Gallaspy
Charles Pettefer, Jr.

Council Absent

Tommy Stoddard
Judge Edwards

LDWF Presence

Noel Kinler
Tanya Sturman
Edmond Mouton
Bob Love
Maria Davidson

Others

Ronald Guy
Johnny Price
Ms. Gallaspy

Beijing Fur Update

Sam gave an update on fur issues. The Beijing Fur Fair brought several orders to Louisiana. Daniel Perry just finished up an order. The lack of fur is coming from the trapper level.

There are 360 participants registered for the nutria control program. Edmond expects to sell just over 1,500 trapper's license. Edmond has seen an increase in calls requesting fur dealers.

Sam said that the nutria prices have gone up. Nutria is now being mixed with beaver for felt. Edmond said that they are still seeing a lot of nutria damage in Terrebonne and in a few other hot spots in the south eastern part of the state.

Edmond said that we are still looking for funding for the feral swine program. The nutria control program has solid funding now and it looks like it will continue for several more years.

Sam summarized Consiglio's most recent report. The international fur market is generally healthy.

There are some calls coming in recently about nuisance mink. There are some coyotes in Baton Rouge. Edmond said that there are a lot of nuisance calls regarding bobcats and coyotes.

Snares

Edmond said that there was a meeting held recently in Baton Rouge regarding bears. There have been some concerns with the use of snares. Bears have been caught in snares meant for feral swine. Edmond said that they were trying to avoid putting a lot of restrictions on the snare.

James said that bears will be a big nuisance in just a few years. Maria said that the snares restrictions are very lenient and would not prevent trappers from catching any furbearers animals.

Curtis said that his opinions are his own and not the opinion of the USDA. Curtis said that the bears caught in snares are insignificant. Maria said that break-aways are the most common snare

restriction across the U.S. Maria said that the break-away is the easiest on the trapper. Allen said that once they start putting regulations on traps, they'll create more and more regulations.

Sam asked if there have been any impact studies done on bears.

Edmond said that the regulations have not been written. Once it is written, it will go out for public notice and opinions will be taken. Then the commission will vote on it.

James said that the whole problem is the size of the snare. Curtis asked how you would test the break away weight of a snare. Maria said that it is not recommended to test snares in the field. Curtis said that some of the industry packaged break-aways do not break at the load requirement. He is concerned about being held liable for a manufacturing error.

Edmond said that they are recommending that people do not use snares for feral swine because of the bear in the area. There are other ways to catch swine.

James asked why they can't use live catch snares for swine. Maria said that a bear would fight until it died, even in a snare with a relaxing lock. Also, the individual cannot release it. Wildlife control would have to come out and sedate it in order to release a live bear.

Nutria can produce 3 litters in 18 months. Hogs produce more than that. Hogs cause 1.5 million worth of damage in the state. Sam said that the department is restricting one method to control the hog.

Edmond asked the Fur Council work with the Trappers Association and the Land Owner Association to come up with some comments, concerns, or public opinions. Bob said the Department is looking for a balanced opinion. The Department will have to come up with an opinion.

Sam asked that each individual member write down their opinion to Tanya and let her compile them so that we can formulate a statement.

Johnny expressed the sentiment that outlaws will be outlaws. Curtis thinks that this is an education and enforcement issue.

Maria said that they have not had incidents of bear attacks in Louisiana. LDWF takes DNA samples of Louisiana bears and can check Minnesota influence on populations here. She estimates that there are less than under 1,000 bear in Louisiana. The Department's intent is to increase the population to the point that they can be delisted and available for big game trophy hunting.

Budget- Discussion

The budget was reviewed. Bob Love said that it is not critical to spend all of the money. Edmond said that he would look into pricing a display. A table top display would be more useful for current educational venues. Tanya agreed to look into some prices for table top displays.

Other Business

Edmond explained the Washington D.C. RFP is in the Baton Rouge office now. It includes alligator and furbearer issues. The language is worded so that it can also address feral swine.

Susan Newsome recommends that we do an RFP if we want to continue the educational contract.

Frank motioned to have Tanya prepare a three year RFP for an educational contract. Curtis seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

The Council agreed to come up with two or three recommendations to fill the House position.

Curtis motioned to adjourn. Allen seconded. Motion carried unanimously.