

**Summary of the Fur Advisory Council Meeting
May 31, 2011
Baton Rouge, Louisiana**

Council Present

Archie Domangue
Curtis Cruse
Frank Ellender
Sam Smith
Allan Ensminger
Charles Pettefer, Jr.
John Lindsay

Council Absent

James Gallaspy
Judge Edwards

LDWF Presence

Noel Kinler
Tanya Sturman
Edmond Mouton
Bob Love
Buddy Baker
Jill Jordan

Others

Ronald Guy
Johnny Price
Tab Pitre

Curtis motioned to approve the minutes from the January meeting. Frank seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Budget Update

Tanya reviewed the budget. The Council discussed displays. Frank said that his company could donate the printing.

Allen motioned to approve the purchase of display materials for \$1,000. Curtis seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Chinese Delegation

Sam reported on the Chinese delegation that came to Louisiana. They visited Tab Pitre, but he didn't have any furs to sell. They also met with Archie Domangue. Nick Shao came from Hong Kong and translated. Mr. Li had asked about the nutria meat, but Sam explained that there is not enough meat to deal with and that the cost of holding it in freezers is too great for the return on the investment.

Edmond said that most of the nutria comes from marshes in the southeastern portion of the state. Many of the trappers don't know what to bring out. If the buyers only take number one grade nutria, the trappers don't know which ones to bring out and feel like their time is better spent focusing on trapping more and collecting for the tail. Edmond said that he sends a list of the trappers with contact information to the fur buyers.

Perry had quite a few furs available. Helmut Roth attended the Louisiana tour as well. He represents a large area of Eastern Europe. He is interested in Louisiana fur. Peter Li, from China, bought a lot of Louisiana fur on this trip.

Michael's report included a photo of a fleshing machine. Michael plans to test this machine with nutria and beaver to see if it will do a good job.

Sam reported that the muskrat prices are ranging from \$7 to \$9. This is a good indication for the fur market.

Nutria Update

Edmond gave an overview of the 9th year of the Nutria Control Program. They have funding for three more years. It is funded by CWPPRA. During the first four years they paid \$4 per tail. During the fifth year, they increased the tail payment to \$5. Qualified trappers receive an ID card that must be shown at the collection site. There were 287 participants this past year. The harvest has fluctuated over the nine years, but the damage has decreased consistently. Edmond went through a slide show illustrating numbers taken each year and percentages caught in various habitats and by various methods. He showed habitat photos showing various stages of damage. The 2011 vegetative damage survey showed a 26% decrease in damaged acres.

Beaver Update

Sam said that the felt market is coming back. They are experimenting with mixing some nutria in with beaver for felt.

Tab Pitre said that it is difficult to sell nutria. He could have sold 50,000, but at a selling price of \$3, it's not worth it. He pays the trapper \$1 and pays \$1.50 for processing. That only leaves him 50 cents. The buyer risks a lot of investment money and gains very little in the best case scenario.

D.C. Contract

Edmond reviewed the RFP process and proposals that were submitted. The winning proposer was Glenn Delaney.

Allen motioned to fund half of the DC education contract. Curtis seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Other Business

Edmond explained the proposed legislation for nutria and feral swine control programs. The Council reviewed draft letters showing support for these bills.

Curtis motioned to send the letters of support. Archie seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Sam asked about a quadruped bill. Edmond said that it would allow a year long take of otter, mink and muskrat. The bill is geared to protect agricultural crops. It is in the Senate Natural Resource Committee. Sam asked where to address a letter opposing this legislation. Buddy suggested that the best argument is that taking animals during their reproductive season will orphan the young and have a strong impact on population.

Curtis asked if education funds could be used to put an ad in the wildlife magazine for the Trapper's Association. Edmond said that he'd ask legal department.

John said that Louisiana is losing its avenue for a fur market. We only have a couple of dealers left. Buddy and Bob said that the Council could subsidize fur dealers out of Council funds.

Frank motioned to adjourn. Charlie seconded. Motion carried unanimously.