

**Minutes**  
**Board of Natural Resources**  
**2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, S. E.**  
**Suite 1252 East Tower**  
**Atlanta, GA 30334**

**Tuesday, June 25, 2024**  
**9:00 a.m.**

**Board Members**

Joe Hatfield, Chair  
Gary Vowell, Vice Chair  
Lesley Reynolds, Secretary  
Nancy Addison  
Jeff Andrews  
Randy Dellinger  
Patrick Denney  
Dan Garcia  
Mark Hennessy  
Penn Hodge  
Steve Hufstetler  
Duncan Johnson  
Ray Lambert  
Brent Layton  
Paul Shailendra  
Bodine Sinyard  
Harley Yancey

**Guests**

Mark Woodall, Sierra Club  
Scott Hendricks, Georgia Power  
Bryan Tolar, GA Urban Agriculture Council  
Debbie Phillips, GA Industry Environmental Coalition  
R. J. Gipaya, Flint Riverkeeper

**Staff Members**

Walter Rabon, Commissioner  
Thomas Barnard  
Taylor Brown Fisher  
Cathy Barnette  
Kyle Pearson  
Kate Iannuzzi  
Mike England  
Doug Haymans  
Angie Johnson  
Ted Will  
Brent Womack  
Clint Peacock  
Scott Robinson  
GWFC David Wright  
  
Jeff Cown, Director  
James Boylan  
Chuck Mueller  
Anna Truszczynski  
Katie Hegarty

The June 25, 2024 Board of Natural Resources meeting was called to order by Chairman Joe Hatfield.

Chairman Hatfield welcomed Mr. Steve Hufstetler to the Board of Natural Resources, as an At-Large representative.

Chairman Hatfield called on Game Warden First Class David Wright, Law Enforcement Division, for a moment of inspiration.

Chairman Hatfield thanked GWFC Wright for attending the meeting and providing words of inspiration to the board.

Chairman Hatfield adjourned the Board meeting to move into the Committee meetings.

Chairman Hatfield called the June 25, 2024 meeting of the Board of Natural Resources to order.

Chairman Hatfield called for a motion to approve the minutes of the Board of Natural Resources meeting on May 20, 2024.

**A motion was made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Sinyard, to approve the minutes of the Board of Natural Resources meeting on May 20, 2024.**

Chairman Hatfield called on Jeff Cown, Director of the Environmental Protection Division, for his report.

Director Cown updated the Board on the recognition of Johanna DeCotis Smith, Manager of the Watershed Compliance Program, in the March/April edition of the Engineering Georgia magazine, as one of the 100 most influential women in Georgia Engineering. He further updated the Board on EPD Lab upgrades, Agriculture Water Well permit modifications, and modifications for Frost Protection permits.

Director Cown stated this concluded his report.

Chairman Hatfield called on Walter Rabon, Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources, for his report.

Commissioner Rabon began his report by recognizing several staff for their years of service: Richie Golden, Chief Information Officer, celebrating 30 years of service; Brian Nabors, Human Resources Manager celebrating 35 years of service; and Tracy Bowers, Office of Human Resources, celebrating 35 years of service. He thanked Richie, Brian, and Tracy for their faithful service and for all they do each and every day.

Commissioner Rabon updated the board on the Grants Unit's first in-person workshop since 2019. He stated that 30 individuals from NGOs and local governments attended the educational workshop. He further stated that in addition a virtual workshop was held, and the recorded videos will be available next month on the DNR website.

Commissioner Rabon stated that the DNR Leadership Academy is kicking off its second session, and he looks forward to the progress that each of the individuals will make throughout the academy.

Commissioner Rabon provided an update from the Wildlife Resources Division. He stated that results from the FY24 Chronic Wasting Disease sampling came back negative for the disease in Georgia's deer population. He further stated that Georgia remains one of just a few states with no detection of CWD. He added the department is continuing to educate the public about the disease and ways to prevent its spread.

Commissioner Rabon stated that the new campground at Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center is officially open and is taking reservations.

Commissioner Rabon stated the new Communications, Education and Outreach Section is wrapping up work on the combined Hunting and Fishing Popular Guide, which should be out by the end of July. He further stated that the new combined guide will include all relevant hunting and fishing information in one guide, instead of two different guides. He thanked the staff for their work in making the combined regulations guide a reality.

Commissioner Rabon provided an update from the State Parks and Historic Sites Division. He stated that the Parks division was one of 12 recipients of the National Association of State Parks Directors' Bronco Wild Fund Grant that provides funds for new introductory access programs in state parks. He further stated that with this grant the Parks Division will be able to purchase four GRIT Freedom Chairs to expand DNR's Outdoors Beyond Barriers adaptive program. He added that the Parks Division will begin offering additional Action Trackchairs starting on June 24 and will bring the total to 20 chairs statewide. He further added that there were 250 reservations for this free program last year and he hopes to see even more this year.

Commissioner Rabon stated that several of the Parks Division's golf courses were listed in the Georgia Golfers Choice Top 25 Public Courses this year.

Commissioner Rabon announced the passing of Mr. Abit Massey, an icon not only under the Gold Dome, but across the state. He stated that among his many areas of service, Mr. Massey chaired the advisory board for Roosevelt's Little White House. He further stated that the department is grateful for his long-term leadership in the state of Georgia.

Commissioner Rabon called on Colonel Mike England, Director of the Law Enforcement Division, for his report.

Colonel England provided an update on the new ROV training; North Georgia serial poachers; Boating season outreach; Memorial Day weekend stats; and the Glascock County Kids Fishing Event.

Colonel England stated this concluded his report.

Commissioner Rabon called on Doug Haymans, Director of the Coastal Resources Division, for his report.

Director Haymans provided an update on the new state record fish for the Crevalle Jack caught on Cumberland Island beach and weighed 33 lbs. 10.72 oz., and the Queen Triggerfish caught offshore in 180 feet of water and weighed 9 lbs. 6.24 oz.

Director Haymans updated the board on the Cobia meetings held for public input in June; Shrimp season opening on June 18; recent reef deployments from April to June; and the Private Dock Stakeholders Committee and their plan to provide input to CRD in creating new rules for private docks, including eligibility for revocable licenses, and standards for construction, maintenance, and modifications.

Director Haymans stated this concluded his report.

Commissioner Rabon stated this concluded his report.

Chairman Hatfield called on Ray Lambert, Chair of the Environmental Protection Committee, for his report.

**A motion was made by Mr. Lambert, seconded by Mr. Shailendra, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to the Proposed Amendments to the Rules for Air Quality Control, Chapter 391-3-1. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)**

Mr. Lambert stated this concluded his report.

Chairman Hatfield called on Harley Yancey, Vice Chair of the Wildlife Resources Committee, in the absence of Charles DePriest, Chair, for his report.

**A motion was made by Mr. Yancey, seconded by Mr. Shailendra, and carried unanimously that the Board approve the proposed amendments to Fishing Regulations, Subject 391-4-3.**

**A motion was made by Mr. Yancey, seconded by Mr. Shailendra, and carried unanimously that the Board approve the proposed repeal of Submerged Cultural Resources Regulations, Subject 391-5-9.**

Mr. Yancey stated this concluded his report.

Chairman Hatfield called on Paul Shailendra, Chair of the Land Committee, for his report.

**A motion was made by Mr. Shailendra, seconded by Mr. Johnson, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval of the Granting of a Revocable License Agreement and Permanent Easement by the State Properties Commission and General Assembly to Georgia Power on Fort Yargo State Park, Barrow County. A revision of the impacted acreage in the item approved at the March 2024 board meeting.**

Mr. Shailendra stated this concluded his report.

Chairman Hatfield stated the next board meeting will be held at 9:00 a.m., on Tuesday, August 27, 2024, at Lanier Islands, in Buford, GA.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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Joe Hatfield, Chairman

ATTEST:

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Lesley Reynolds, Secretary