

Minutes of the New York State Conservation Council
September 16, 2022

Location: "OneGroup" conference center
706 North Clinton Street
Syracuse, NY

The meeting was called to order at 9:07a.m. by Executive Director Casey Kordziel who read a welcoming greeting from President Arthur (Chuck) Parker. President Parker was unable to attend due to family matters.

Guest speaker Bureau Chief of Wildlife Jim Farquhar addressed the representatives on the following subjects:

- Management Plans for the Wildlife Management Areas are completed for about 65 areas and the rest are out for public comment.
- Hunter Education is back to the "new normal". 13-1,400 new hunters were certified last year through the on-line courses. A "Next Step" 4hr. course has been implemented to give the new hunters some field experience. This was not widely publicized as the implementers wanted to see how it would be received. So far the result has been positive and expansion of the program is expected.
- Wildlife health overall is expected to show a decline due to the fall migration and thus the potential for transmission. While CWD is still a threat the program instituted by the NYSDEC has thus far kept our deer herd clean. Deer have been determined to carry Covid but the threat of transmission to humans is consider very low. Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD) is making an appearance for the 3rd year in the Hudson Valley and on Long Island among the deer herd.

Questions: How's the Holiday Hunt doing?

A. Good reviews from all sources. No accidents and good comments from participating hunters and DEC officers. LET THE GOVERNOR KNOW IF YOU WISH THIS EXPERIMENT TO CONTINUE.

Q. What about the “opt out” for counties from the mentored hunt?

A. Only 2 did opt out. While not socially popular among the population at large, this experimental hunt’s results have yet to be evaluated. But again no accidents and generally good reviews from all concerned. The reason for the “opt-out” regulation was that if the provision became law it would be much harder to change than a regulation.

Q. What about the bear population?

A. Complaints are up so the population must be thriving. The dry weather has had the bears moving and therefore more human contact.

Q. Backtag regulation?

A. Laughter from all present.

Q. What about the Federal restrictions on waterfowl from Canada?

A. There was so much pushback that the regs. are being reviewed and revised.

Q. What is the status of a year round coyote season?

A. There is not a huge push for this and trapper organizations are opposed to such a season.

Q. What is the state/DEC doing to protect the Northeastern Cotton-tail?

A. The DEC is cooperating in all federal actions and restrictions.

Jim moved from the mic to a round of applause.

The next speaker to address the group was Steve Hurst, Bureau Chief for Fisheries. Steve reminded the audience that the DEC website was a wealth of information and that new apps made it more so.

On Access: A new state boat launch has been approved for Oneida Lake. This will be located off Cove Rd. in the Fish Creek/Sylvan beach area. The approved plans will cost \$1.7million so it will be a state of the art/science boat launch. Also, long

needed, the boat launch on Fourth Lake will be refurbished this fall. When asked about the possibility of a launch on Otsego Lake Steve pointed out that, although DEC and Parks were on board with this, there was a law prohibiting the building of any boat launch from which a boat larger than 16' could be launched. (As was mentioned with regard to the "op-out" regulation it is very difficult to change a law once passed.)

Steve also said that in response to the sporting community and an 8% increase in license sales 126 regulations have been removed and many others clarified. "Fishing Line" subscriptions have been low and Steve pointed out the value of this newsletter. Also there is the relatively new app "Tackle Box", which Steve demonstrated, capable of showing access points, parking availability, fish species and normally available in streams and lakes.

Over the last 11 yrs. the DEC has invested 8 million dollars in the hatchery program. The Salmon River Hatchery is nearing completion with a new fish ladder and walkways. The Salmon River Hatchery receives 30 to 50 thousand visitors a year. A bid request for design of an enclosed hatchery for Rome has gone out. Cost will depend on the accepted design with a projected completion date of 2025.

In an attempt to manage costs the hatcheries have changed feed suppliers. While the new feed is more expensive it is of higher quality and therefore smaller amounts are fed resulting in an overall savings.

Lake Erie walleye fishing has been outstanding, the "best in 60 years". Also the walleye in Oneida Lake are doing great and have reached a self sustaining level. Lake Ontario's two censuses, a boat survey and a tributary survey, have been combined. This should provide a simultaneous view of the lake populations. There is a scheduled survey of the East Basin of Lake Ontario. The alewife population has been going down since 2016 and this in turn effects the stocking plans.

Trout fishing survey – 20 of the 25 streams surveyed were subject to less than 10 hrs. of fishing a week.

Pan fish – feedback is good but the sampling is only 1yr.

Sturgeon – are coming back.

Brook trout – there is a state wide management plan. Concerns for the native Brook trout seem unfounded in that the DEC policy is to never stock Browns or Rainbows where Brooks are.

In the bad news department, “Snake Heads” have been found in several NY state southern waters. DEC asks that any suspected catch or sighting of Snake Heads be reported and the fish killed.

Bass Masters have declared the St. Lawrence/Lake Ontario area to be the # 1 bass fishing area in the nation.

Questions:

Q. In stocking Lake Ontario who puts in more fish, NY or Canada?

A. NY.

Q. What’s the status of Lake George Lake Trout?

A. The fishery is doing fine.

Q. From Essex County: Access needed. Reopen roads. Also don’t stock salmon and Brown trout on top of native Brooks.

A. As mentioned it is already DEC policy not to stock Salmon, Brown or Rainbows where native Brook trout are.

Q. Who manages Invasive Species particularly Waterchestnut?

A. The DEC department of Lands & Forests manages invasive species through the sub-department of Invasive Species. The best defense against Waterchestnut is to keep it, and others, out by cleaning our boats and gear. At the moment there is no overall approach to combat the Waterchestnut. But refer to the Lands & Forest sections of the DEC website for more info.

Q. What’s the status of Cormorant control?

A. As the population is driven off the larger lakes they have moved inland. So it’s an ongoing battle.

Steve also received a round of applause.

Election of Officers:

Present Officers

President	A. Charles Parker
First V.P.	Keith Tidball*
Second V.P.	Zen Olow
Legislative V.P.	Pat Mc Brearty
Secretary	Office vacant
Treasurer	Lorie Vezendy*

*Stepping down due to personal reasons.

With no nominations from the floor or the virtual attendees the following were re-elected to their offices by a voice vote with no nays or abstentions.

President	A. Charles Parker
Second V. P.	Zen Olow
Legislative V.P.	Pat Mc Brearty

Also up for vote/appointment:

Director at Large George Gibbs

We received one other nomination for Frank Dingman. After the vote was completed for either George or Frank the tally showed in favor of George.

Region 1 is looking for an Alt. Director

Region 3 nominated Gary Muthig for their Alt. Director spot and he was appointed at the Fall Convention

Region 6 is looking for an Alt. Director

The nominating committees in Regions 1-3 or Regions 4-6 are looking for volunteers as the seats are vacant.

Offices vacant: First V.P.; Secretary; and Treasurer if you or anyone you know is interested in these positions please email Casey at ckordziel@nyscc.onmicrosoft.com

Resolutions:

2022-01 Submitted by Erie Co. Federation

Implementation of a Preliminary Big Game Harvest Dashboard:

“...Be It Resolved: the NYSCC will pursue the idea with the NYSDEC that NYSDDEC construct a preliminary big game harvest dashboard to keep hunters up to date with reported success during big game seasons, as to increase transparency, trust, reporting compliance desire and keeping big game hunter informed to the progress deer management efforts are having throughout the hunting seasons.” Passed with 5 voted nay, and no abstentions.

2022-02 Submitted by Erie and Genesee Co. Federations

Oppose ground hunting restrictions for licensed youth hunters over the age of 12 years-old whom hunt deer with a rifle, shotgun crossbow or muzzleloading firearm.

“Therefore, be it resolved; that the NYSCC will pursue changes in legislation/regulation to permit mentors and their youth hunter to hunt big game from elevated positions that allow the mentor and their youth hunter to be in immediate physical contact with each other.” Passed with 3 voting no. No abstentions.

Overview of finances: Treasurer Lori Vezendy

As of 9/15/2022 NYSCC’s current was \$5,698.91. Lori then went back 5 months and the balance was about the same. Finally she looked back 5yrs. and the most startling fact was that we had about 20% more members. Currently our expenses run between \$4,000 to \$5000 a month. To say that we live very close to the edge financially would be an understatement.

Committee reports are posted on the NYSCC website.

In general discussion it was brought out that the permit to buy or transfer a semi-automatic is available on the NYS Police website and it’s 3-4 pages long. Another option may be to add the gun to your pistol license?

An Overview of NYS Gun Laws: An address by Paloma Capanna, attorney, and policy analyst.

In her opening remarks Ms. Capanna spoke of the confusion due to misinformation about the new concealed carry law. She pointed out that this law

was actually 5 anti-gun bills rolled into one law. She listed the 6 chapters of state laws impacted: Civil Practice & Rules (CPLR); Executive Law; Finance Law; General Business; Mental Hygiene Law; and Penal Law. Further she pointed out that the NYS Police are part of the state prosecution apparatus and therefore not necessarily your friends when they are “on the job”.

Ms. Capanna pointed out that the Bill of Rights amending the Constitution should be view as a whole, not that one amendment is more important than another.

As to Gov. Hochul’s defiance on the SCOTUS’s ruling on NYS’s earlier licensing law, she compared that to Arkansas’s Gov. Faubus’s defiance of the SCOTUS’S order to integrate the Little Rock schools in 1957.

Interestingly she made the point that under the old law you could not give an unlicensed person a handgun, even to fire with you present. Under the new law the applicant must qualify with a live fire exercise before being issued a license. (Comment from the audience was that the new live fire exercise could, and we emphasize could, cost \$400-\$500.)

Ms. Capanna remarks were very well received.

Awards:

Outstanding Sportsmen Organization	NYS Trappers
Outstanding Service	Pat Mc Brearty
Presidents	Mike Elam
Golden Compass	Keith Tidball PhD

Attending in Person:

Name

Michael Barretta

Dan Tone

Stephen Wowelko

Frederick Adriance

Jim Greeley

Virtual attendees:

Name

Rich Davenport

Mark Searles

Cheryl Warren

Mark Holt

Bohdan Rabarsky

Dale Dunkelberger

Dan Owen

John Fuller

Brian Krawczyk

Larry Becker

Doug Page

Bob Ciecierega

Joe Fischer

Glen Adams

Ray Gawlas

Gary Muthig

Zen Olow

Larry Jones

Don Sage

Mitch Tucker

Bill Conners

Douglas Mitchell

Lawrence DiDonato

Lori Vezendy

Ron Havlen

Keith Youngs

Les Monostory

Mike Elam

Steve Hurst

Jim Farquhar

Paloma Cananna

Kevin Sisson

Ron Havlen

Pat McBrearty

Dennis Race

Liz Reinhart

Don Reinhart

Mike Schiavone

Fred Neff

President Parker's Welcoming Statement:

New York State Conservation Council's 2022 Fall Convention

September 16, 2022

While due to family matters, I am unable to attend our Fall Convention, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all that were able to attend, be it person or virtually.

To our guest, NYS DEC and Attorney Paloma Capanna, Thank you for attending. To the DEC, your annual attendance and information given is a key to the success of our Convention. To Attorney Paloma Capanna, your return this year is also greatly appreciated. Your presentation and perspective on current 2nd amendment issues is of great concern to our membership. The presentations by DEC and Paloma as in the past go along way in guiding the action of the NYSCC Membership.

Due to job commitments and other issues, we are losing three Council Officer positions this year. I wish to thank all of them for their outstanding support of the Council and the key rolls they played.

When we held a preconvention meeting and expressed the additional help that would be needed, before it could be asked members from the Board of Directors, members stood up and volunteered to the jobs Casey mentioned that were needed. Thank for that support.

To our membership in attendance, your active support keeps us strong. May you enjoy the information presented and be active in your participation. May you carry this information home and share it with the sporting community. May we all remain in the Council and encourage others to become involved with the Council.

When you mention the Council about different issues, may you use “we the Council” over just the Council, wherever possible. It is you and the consensus of all our members that gives direction in what we do

Chuck Parker, President