

FINAL MINUTES

Recreation Fishing Advisory Board Meeting January 12, 2004

Members Present

Edward Rhodes
Carolyn Brown
Charles Randolph
Jim Deibler
John Barr
Carlisle Bannister
Jesse Duell

Members Absent

George Hudgins
Andy Ligon

At 7:03 pm, acting chairman Mr. Edward Rhodes called the meeting to order.

Mr. Rhodes congratulated Ms. Carolyn Brown, Mr. Jesse Duell and Mr. John Barr on their reappointment to the RFAB.

Mr. Jack Travelstead gave a brief review of the results of the Licensing Round Table Committee meeting. Mr. Travelstead stated there would probably be some legislation presented based on the recommendations of the committee. The new legislation will allow the VMRC to increase commercial and recreational license fees as needed.

Mr. Routh then gave the status of the fund. He said there was approximately 1.6 million dollars available for allocation. There are about 3.1 million in projects currently applying for VSRFDF Funding.

Mr. Routh then asked for a review of the November 2003 RFAB meeting minutes. Mr. Deibler made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Randolph seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous to accept the draft minutes as official.

Mr. Routh then introduced Mr. Chad Boyce to the RFAB. Mr. Boyce will be replacing Cory Routh in the near future.

Mr. Rhodes then presented Mr. Routh with the VMRC Distinguished Service Award for his work with the RFAB.

Mr. Rhodes then started the presentation and asked that each presentation be kept to 5 minutes.

Project O. Mill Creek Landing

Mr. Phil Lownes stated that the Mill Creek site is a popular site among middle peninsula saltwater anglers and needs to be repaired. He said that the new request will be for \$94,500. This would repair or replace the damaged bulkhead that is allowing sand to

intrude upon the ramp. Ms. Brown asked if there were any contributions by the communities to maintain the ramps. Mr. Lownes stated that they always try to get the community to maintain the site.

Mr. Bannister asked that if VDGIF does monthly inspections, the how did the mill creek site get in such disrepair. Mr. Lownes stated that recently the site was dredged by the community, but the recent hurricane activity silted it back in again.

Mr. Barr asked if there has been any engineering study done that could identify the problem and fix it. Mr. Lownes stated that the site has been evaluated and the breakwater needs to be replaced.

Project P. Saltwater Boating Access Funds

Mr. Phil Lownes with the Va. Dept. of Game and Inland Fisheries made the presentation. Mr. Lownes stated that the VDGIF is seeking a partnership with the VMRC. He said that the VDGIF lost about 60% of its funds generated by boat registration. Mr. Lownes stated to maintain their current status the proposal is requesting \$67,875 to maintain and repair the 40 saltwater fishing access sites.

Project A. 2004 Kiwanis Club Children's Fishing Clinic. \$5,270.

Mr. Wesley Brown of the Smithfield Kiwanis made the presentation. Mr. Brown stated that last year there were approximately 150 kids. This year will be the 4th year of the clinic. Mr. Brown stated that this year there would be more children participating and less money requested.

Project B. Wallop-Breaux Match. \$154,662.

Mr. Jack Travelstead made the presentation; he stated that the majority of the funded projects are mandated research. He said that \$33,000 will come from the commercial fund and that VIMS will provide about \$110,000 of in-kind services.

Project C. 2004 Funding Support for the Artificial Reef Program. \$200,000.

Mr. Mike Meier of the VMRC Reef Program made the presentation. He stated that in the past VSRFDF monies have been used to buy buoys, purchase reef structure and have it deployed. Better equipment has also been made available by using license funds. Mr. Meier said that he is requesting more funds to support future deployment of artificial reef structure. The requested \$200,000 will allow rapid deployment of materials as they come available.

Project D. Monitoring Relative Abundance of Young-of-year American Eel. \$24,254.

Mr. Marcel Montane of VIMS made the presentation. Mr. Montane thanked the RFA for their past support and asked for continuing support for this project. He stated that that this project is part of mandated research by the ASFMC. Mr. Marcel stated that Virginia has some of the best eel recruitment on the east coast. Mr. Marcel stated that the slight increase was for a required 2.5% increase in salary for state employees.

Project E. Chesapeake Bay Trophic Interaction Laboratory. \$95,000.

Dr. Rob Latour of VIMS made the presentation on behalf of Chris Bonzek.

Dr. Latour said that his approach would involve the relationships between species in an ecosystem, rather than a single predator and a single prey item. Last year VSRFDF monies were used to develop the interaction laboratory, this year's request will expand the capabilities of the lab to more species.

Project F. MRFSS Study Update. \$ 100,000.

Mr. Travelstead made the presentation on behalf of Rob O'Reilly. Mr. Travelstead states that the Marine Recreational Fishing Statistics Survey (MRFSS) is used to establish recreational fishing rules. Mr. Travelstead said that a common complaint is that there is data that is bad and unbelievable. The goal of this proposal is to increase the reliability of the survey by increasing the amount of surveys conducted.

Mr. Barr asked if the law enforcement division has been asked to help out.

Mr. Travelstead stated that he did not want to add to their workloads.

Project G. Boat Scarring Effect on SAV. \$14,137.

Dr. Bob Orth of VIMS made the presentation. Dr. Orth began by saying that since 1989 most of the scarring that has occurred, has recovered. This particular study will be conducted on the ground at the specific grass beds and will determine exact recover time of seagrass beds.

Project H. Enhancing SAV Habitat. \$97,080.

Dr. Bob Orth stated that this particular study's goal is to restore seagrass habitats in areas where water quality is not a problem. Dr. Orth presented an aerial photograph composite that reflected success in previously planted seagrass plots.

Mr. Barr asked if any of the seagrass beds are starting to spread.

Dr. Orth said that there is a definite trend that the grass is starting to spread.

Mr. Rhodes asked if there was going to be any additional funding. Dr. Orth stated that there could be some additional funding that would result in a decrease in the requested amount.

Project I. Smith Landing Waterfront Improvements Project. \$ 525,750.

Ms. Chery Sonderman of York County made the presentation. Ms. Sonderman said that this is the first project from York County to apply for VSRFDF monies. Surveys showed that the use of the facility is regional and about 2000 boats launched from the facility in 2003. The Smith Landing facility has three launching ramps and a 52-space parking lot. At this point Mr. Bob Peters took over the presentation. Mr. Peters stated that the facility would be completely ADA compliant. He stated that the trailer parking and boat ramps would be widened and sufficient lighting installed. Fishing and boat staging piers would also be repaired and made ADA compliant. Mr. Peters said that the project goals are to increase the safety of the facility, become ADA compliant, and to improve the accessibility to recreational anglers.

Mr. Barr asked if the project could be broken up into separate phases to save cost.
Mr. Parker stated that the proposal could possibly be broken up.

Mr. Randolph asked if that there is going to be a fee.
Mr. Peters said there would never be a fee charged to use the facility.

Project J. Cultured Cobia as a Tool for Life History Studies and Potential Stock Enhancement Studies. \$90,139.

Mr. Mike Osterling of VIMS made the Presentation. Mr. Osterling stated that recreational fishing pressure on cobia has increased in the last few years. He said that since 2001 there has been a slight decrease in the amount of citations. Mr. Osterling stated that this project has two goals, to better describe the movement of juvenile cobia, and to demonstrate the feasibility to use cultured cobia as stock enhancement.

Project K. Paradise Creek Park Developments. \$233,000.

Mr. Lyle Jackson of the Elizabeth River Project made the presentation. Mr. Jackson stated that this project is part of a partnership to improve the quality of Paradise Creek. He stated that the city manager has suggested that the City of Portsmouth pull out of the project, because of a pollution issue. As a back up, the VDGIF may take over the cities commitments. Mr. Jackson said this would be the first boating access on Paradise Creek.

Mr. Barr asked if the facility is going to be sufficient for boating access. Mr. Jackson said that the land access would be improved and that small boats (canoes and kayaks) will be able to use the facility.

Project L. Effects of Longnose Gar on Local Juvenile Gamefish Populations. \$9,724.

Mr. Patrick McGrath of VIMS made the presentation. He said that the longnose gar is considered a nuisance and may feed on juvenile saltwater gamefish in their estuary nurseries. This project will use a multi-species approach to study this predator prey interactions. The goal of this study will be to determine the feeding selectivity of longnose gar and the potential effect on saltwater gamefish.

Project M. Norview Marina Ramp Lease. \$28,600 annually plus \$15,000 for startup.

Mr. Randy Stevens, owner of Norview Marina made the presentation. Mr. Stevens said that he is offering to lease his boat ramp and parking to the state for free usage to recreational anglers.

Mr. Rhodes asked what would be the liability of VMRC concerning the lease.
Mr. Travelstead that the proposal would have to be put out on competitive bid to work.

Mr. Routh stated that an organization is willing to help Mr. Stevens with this process and suggested that Mr. Stevens contact that organization.

Mr. Rhodes said the RFAB needs to decide whether or not they want to put this proposal through the bid process.

Project N. Buckroe Park Fishing Pier. \$382,626.

Ms. Cindy Martel of Hampton Parks and Recreation made the presentation. She said the demand for a fishing pier on the peninsula was very high. Since hurricane Isabel only one peninsula public fishing pier has remained open. Ms. Martel stated that there are several options available to the city and therefore the proposal will be amended. The main goal of the city is to get a public fishing pier in the city of Hampton. She stated that the pier would be completely ADA compliant. She said that the individual license would be required. The new requested amount will be \$382,626 that will fund an A&E study and begin initial construction. The project will then return for future funding.

Project Q. Wishart's Point Landing. \$296,926.

Ms. Darlene Burton of Accomack County made the presentation. She stated that this project had received A&E funding from the RFAB before. The goal is to improve saltwater access in Accomack County, by returning Wishart's point to it's previous status. The Army Corp. of Engineers has stated that they will not dredge the adjacent federal channel if the landing is not improved. The facility will be completely ADA compliant.

Mr. Rhodes asked if there was a housing development going in near the site.

Ms. Burton stated that there was a subdivision nearby.

Mr. Rhodes adjourned the meeting at 9:48 pm.