

NIAGARA COUNTY FEDERATION OF CONSERVATION CLUBS

Minutes for January 2005

Pledge to the Flag: Niagara County Federation of Conservation Clubs January 2005 Meeting held on the 24th• Called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President John Butcher at the 4-H Bldg., Lockport, New York with the Pledge to the Flag.

Guest Speaker: Mark Kandel of the NYSDEC. Mark was recently promoted to the Wildlife Manager of Region 9. He reported the number of deer hunters has been declining since the late 1980s, while deer population has increased. The NYSDEC is proposing several ways to maintain deer hunting as the primary tool for controlling deer populations on a statewide scale. They include changing the hunting season structure and providing new deer hunting opportunities, including opportunities for young hunters.

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The NYSDEC will be holding a series of statewide meetings in February to seek the public's view of changes to deer hunting in New York. The "State of the 2005 Deer Herd" will provide hunters and other members of the public a chance to participate in the planning and development in New York's long range deer management. The meetings in Region 9 will be held in:

February 7th (Monday) 7pm - Big Tree Elementary School Auditorium. 5-4460 Bay View Road, Hamburg.

Directions: Adjacent to Frontier High School.

February 10th (Thursday) 7pm - H.R. Clothier Building, Gerace Auditorium. Chautauqua County Office Building. 7 North Erie St. Mayville.

Directions: off Route 394, just Northwest of Route 430 in Mayville.

Specific Deer Season Changes under Consideration for the Southern Zone:

Early Archery Season - First Saturday in October to the day before the Regular Season (49 days).

- * For 2005: October 1 through November 18.
- Antlerless only during Early Special Muzzleloading.

Early Special Muzzleloader Season (Antlerless Only) - Third Saturday in October for 7 days.

- * For 2005: October 15 through October 21.
- Hunting Allowed with DMP and DMAP tags only.
- Archery season open but only for antlerless only deer.
- Same day as opening of pheasant season.

Regular Season - Third Saturday in November for 23 days.

- * For 2005: November 19 - December 11 (includes four weekends)
- Loss of 2 days of turkey season.
- Loss of one weekend of pheasant hunting.

Late Archery and Muzzleloader Seasons - First day after the close of the regular season running for 7 days.

- * For 2005: December 12 - December 18 (Any leftover tags are valid)

This restructuring utilizes the Saturday Opener concept as the standard opening day conventions: the 1st Saturday in October for the Special archery, the 3rd Saturday in October for the special Muzzleloader season, and the 3rd Saturday in November for the regular season.

To send written comments on the proposals, email fwwildlf@gw.dec.state.ny.us or mail to: Big Game Season Changes, NYSDEC, Bureau of Wildlife, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-4754. DEC will review the input provided from these meetings and from other comments, make changes to the proposals if necessary, and initiate a formal rulemaking with a 45-day comment period following publication in the New York State Register.

Minutes: Motion made from the floor by Chris Schotz to accept minutes, 2nd by Larry Koch, carried.

Roll call of clubs and directors: Sheets were passed around and signed by the delegates.

Financial Report: Motion to accept the financial report presented by Gordon Botting Sr. was made by Chris Schotz and seconded by John Chilcott, carried.

Communications bills and notices:

Sick Call: A card was passed around for everyone to sign for Dave Lavery.

Committee Reports: President John Butcher reminded all delegates to fill out a NCFCC COMMITTEE AND CLUB REPORT FORM and give it to Secretary William Mudge in the interest of having accurate information in the minutes. (See Insert)

Finance and Audit: John Butcher and Gordon Botting Sr will keyboard expenses and check all income and expenses by month to do better budgeting and cash flow. They met with past president Greg Tessmann at the Cornerstone Credit Union to change signatures on the account and update the list of officers.

Fund Raising:

Patches: We should have patches of a woodcock shortly from Promotional Solutions within price quoted with the colors we wanted.

Knives: A motion was made from the floor by Paul Jackson and 2nd by Dale Shank to purchase knives made in the USA at a cost of no more than \$35 each. They will be purchased from Case, Buck or Gerber depending on availability.

Spring shoot at North Forest: The event to be some time in April. Mark Richardson volunteered to serve on the committee. Problems with the shoot last year were time of the event, price of the ticket, we gave away too much in prizes and we had an all-inclusive ticket.

NRA Grants: Gordon Botting Sr reported he has not received the letter from the Friends of the NRA stating our grant was approved. Bill Mudge reported the amount tentatively approved at the State Funds Committee was \$3000. He will check on why the Grant letter was not sent out from headquarters to Gordon Botting Sr.

Public Relations: Bill Hilts Jr is going to do some publicity for us.

Rosters: John Butcher reminded delegates to fill out rosters after your elections and return ASAP so we can update mailing list for 2005 so the right people get the minutes.

Small Game: Chris Schotz reported on the pheasant program for day old birds.

Big Game: Dale Dunkleberger reiterated much of what Mark Kandel said about the proposed hunting season structure. He reported there is much confusion on the early Muzzleloader season and we don't have accurate information from the NYSDEC. When he left the meeting, archery season was closed during early Muzzleloader season. Please attend the NYSDEC meeting in February and state your view and participate in the planning and development in New York's long range deer management. Also, Dale reminded everyone to write to the NYSDEC on the proposals. Dale will attend the February 7th meeting and give us a report when he comes back. We have until March 15th to take a stand.

Water Fowl: Don Bronson - no report.

Hunter Safety: Gary Lowe reported he talked with Dave Lavery and asked everyone to get their hunter safety schedules in as soon as possible. There were many hunter safety programs that were not advertised on our posters last year. This year a note will be added to the posters stating these are the courses available at the time of publication. New courses may be added. Contact Niagara County coordinator Dave Lavery at 716-735-3343 or visit the DEC web page.

Sports Fishing: Paul Jackson

Paul brought in pictures of the second largest sturgeon ever taken from Lake Erie waters in the past 20 years. The 7ft. 6 inch sturgeon was found floating near the Upper Niagara River shore along River Road in the Town of Wheatfield. It weighed 235 pounds and had a girth measured 39"! The fish was sent to Cornell University for examination and early reports say it did not die of botulism. The fish is estimated at being around 100 years old.

Paul announced that on February 19, 2005 they will be having their Winter Steel Head Tournament. It will be from sunrise to 2:00 P.M. In the Lower Niagara River, Lake Ontario & Tribs \$10.00 Members and \$25.00 Non-Members (includes 2005 Membership)

Habitat: - No Report.

C.F.A.B.:

Bill Hilts reported if you fish in salt water in New York State, you don't need a fishing license. Almost everyone on Long Island fishes in salt water and New York is losing money on licenses. Many other states have licenses for fishing in salt water.

Bill reported the state's new proposal that would call for a one steelhead per person limit when fishing Lake Ontario does not make sense when you look at all the facts of the situation. It's time for the lake fishing community to write letters to the DEC policy makers. At the same time, they should keep their elected officials informed as well. This proposal may very well be a political battle before it's all over. The public perception will be that there's a major problem. Charter operations will suffer; lakeshore businesses will suffer; the Conservation Fund will suffer through decreased license sales; and ultimately fisheries programs will suffer at a time when funding is desperately needed.

Region 9 Fish and Wildlife Board: Greg Tessmann sent in a reported he received a Grant Application Form to apply for funds created by the Habitat Stamp. However, you can't apply unless you already put money up first. He will give a report at our next meeting, but it looks like we will scrap the grant unless we can fund a project in advance.

NYS Conservation Council: Gerry Bennett reported that the Conservation Council will hold its next meeting at 12:30 P.M. on January 30, 2005, at Gander Mountain Tonawanda, New York. President John Cushman will be there.

S.C.O.P.E.: Bill Mudge

Bill reminded everyone that to take advantage of the service they are offering to sportsmen on firearms related issues. Ken Mathison is working for then full-time as their lobbyist in Albany. If you go to their website [www. SCOPEny.org](http://www.SCOPEny.org) you can download a PDF file of 42 bills they are reviewing. Bill will bring copies to the next meeting for those who don't have email.

Bill invited everyone to attend the next Scope Meeting on February 16, 2005. Meeting will be held at the American Legion Post 410, 26 Niagara St, Lockport NY at 7:00PM.

Gordon Botting, Treasurer of the Federation was contacted by a Niagara County Pistol Permit holder who was burglarized and had his pistol stolen. Again he felt he was a victim when his permit suspended for six months by a recent court decision of Niagara County Court Judge Peter L. Broderick, Sr. The pistol permit will be reinstated upon proof of a proper gun safe (not glass) for the storage of his firearms collection when he is absent from his premises. It is interesting to note that Judge Broderick states possession of a handgun license is a privilege, not a right. However, the man is free to possess a shotgun on his business premises to afford him whatever protection he needs. The Niagara County Federation of Conservation referred the gentlemen to the Niagara County Scope Chairman William Mudge. Everyone is concerned if they come into your house and you don't have a gun safe you will lose your permit.

4H:

Shooting Sports - Mark Richardson - No Report

Pheasant Program - Greg Tessmann - No Report

Conservation Education:

Niagara County Fair - Will discuss at executive meeting on February 8th and we must appoint a chairperson before April or May 2006.

Wildlife Festival - Larry Koch volunteered to work with Lori Presti.

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Fourth & Fifth Grade Environmental Field Days schedules for the 7 ,8 of June 2005 - Bob Kerns will contact Darcy Tone of Niagara County Soil and Water.

DEC Youth Camp - A motion was made by Paul Jackson and seconded by Dale Dunkleberger to send two kids to camp, and carried. We need a volunteer to chair this committee.

Town of Wheatfield Picnic - Don Bronson & Larry Koch - No Report

Convention:
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Annual Picnic - Scheduled for July 25 at the North Forest Rod and Gun Club. We need to setup a committee and appoint a chairperson.

Awards Banquet - Gordon Botting Sr., Mark Richardson, and Joseph Wilskowski have volunteered to run a banquet. All other delegates and club members are welcome to help. Don't forget to start thinking nominations. Banquet date is Saturday, April 2nd, 2005. Tentative location is the Masonic Hall, Lockport, New York. Next meeting they will report on dinner choices and whether alcoholic beverages will be served.
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Application for Membership: A motion was made from the floor by Paul Jackson and 2 by Dale Dunkleberger and carried to accept the Niagara Falls Thundering Toms as a member of the Federation.

Old Business - None

New Business: A motion was made by Dave Whitt and seconded by Dale Shank to appoint Chris Schotz as a representative from Niagara County Federation to the NYSDEC Open Space Conservation Plan Committee.

For the Good of the Federation:

Iroquois Arms Collectors: William Mudge reported they are having a big 2-day gun show
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February & 13 , 2005 at the AMVETS 600 Ward Road in North Tonawanda.

LaSalle Sportsmen's Uub: Dave Jacobs reported there is a Wild Game Dinner, Sunday, February 27, 2005 1PM till 5PM.

Niagara Orleans Friends of the NRA: John Butcher reported that the 2005 "Gun of the Year" tickets are available: this year's gun of the year is a Kimber 45 ACP Eclipse Pistol. Those purchasing tickets that would prefer an alternative have the option of substituting the pistol for a Kimber .22-250 Varmint Rifle. (See Insert)

Niagara River Anglers Association: Paul Jackson announced there will be a wild game dinner on Thursday January 27 at the Quality Hotel & Suites 240 Rainbow Blvd North, Niagara Falls. Hospitality 6:30pm Dinner 7:00pm. All proceeds will benefit the K of C Scholarship Fund, Niagara River Anglers Youth Programs & Niagara Catholic High School. Cost is \$20.00. For more info or tickets call 297-2031 or 609-3174.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn, Dale Shank, 2nd Gerald Bennett, carried.

Respectfully submitted, William A. Mudge Secretary, NCFCC

For information about the NCFCC including minutes, and upcoming events check us out at www.outdoorsniagara.com