

ALLIGATOR ADVISORY COUNCIL (AAC)

TUESDAY, JULY 26, 2022
LDWF LAFAYETTE OFFICE: 200 DULLES DR

ATTENDANCE

Council Members Present

Tim Allen
Chad Courville
Nathan Wall
John Currier
Craig Sagrera
Tom Bengé
Ryan Smith

LDWF Present

Jeb Linscombe
Larry Reynolds
Jason Waller
Mike Dupuis
Brodee Landry
Tanya Sturman

Others Present

Isabella Daspit, Alligator Festival Queen
Archie Domangue, Apache Land
Noel Kinler, Contractor
Javier Nevarez, LSU

Council Members Absent

Tony Howard
Jeff Donald

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Motion made by Nathan Wall to re-elect the same officers with Tim Allen as Chairman and Chad Courville as Vice-Chairman. Craig Sagrera seconded. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS AAC MEETING

Motion made by Tom Bengé to approve the minutes as presented. Nathan Wall seconded. Motion carried.

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF NOTICE OF INTENT (NOI) FOR REGULATION CHANGES

Jeb Linscombe reviewed changes in the statute, which needs to be updated to the regulations. Severance taxes were removed from R.S. title 56. Fees will change incrementally over a three year period. Mr. Linscombe went over fee changes line by line.

Mr. Linscombe showed the projected budget through FY23 with the proposed tag fee reduction.

Motion made by John Currier to approve the proposed NOI as written. Tom Benge seconded. Motion carried.

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF BMPS

Jeb Linscombe showed the draft BMPS and opened the floor for discussion. Chad Courville asked that the Department add a couple of sentences that explains why it is okay for eggs to be collected from the wild. John Currier asked that the Department provide the BMPS to all nuisance hunters.

Motion made by Chad Courville to approve the minutes as presented, giving the Department the discretion to add language related to egg collection. Craig Sagrera seconded. Motion carried.

DISEASE TESTING UPDATE

Javier Nevarez explained that there are various species within the Chlamydiaceae family. They are using a broad PCR (polymerase chain reaction) test which will recognize any of the chlamydia species. The disease reflects the eyes and liver of alligators. The first diagnosis in Louisiana occurred in 2014, and the disease was originally associated with alligators imported from Florida.

They swabbed 8,676 animals for eyes and 3,252 for cloacal swabs. All sampling sites were positive. Eggs, nesting material and embryos all contained positive samples. There could be environmental contamination in the eggs, nests, and embryos samples since they are testing for all variations of Chlamydiaceae. In the future, they will test to rule out this sort of contamination.

The true prevalence is unknown. In order to save on testing expenses, they pooled samples from three animals to test together. The testing cost over \$200,000.

The species of chlamydia found in alligators in Louisiana is likely novel. Several known species have been ruled out. They will need to be able to grow the alligator chlamydia species in the lab in order to do DNA tests on it.

Motion made by Chad Courville to ask the Department to reconsider Dr. Nevarez' recommendation to require testing on imported alligators. Ryan Smith seconded. Four in favor and two against. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Isabella Daspit, the alligator festival queen, introduced herself. (Listen to recording). She thanked the Council for donating the alligator purse. The festival is in Luling, Louisiana in September. The festival raises money for scholarships.

Chad Courville is interested in training students in high schools and vocational schools to work in the alligator industry in tanning and manufacturing. He is putting together a group of people who are interested in moving this forward and may come back to the council at a later date with a proposal.

Jeb Linscombe said that the alligator promotional videos are in the final edits. They are working on dubbing one comment out that Jeff Donald had suggested removing.

Motion made by Chad Courville to ask the Department to fill the position recently vacated by Ruth Elsey. Nathan Wall seconded. Motion carried.

Motion made by Chad Courville to adjourn. Craig Sagrera seconded. Motion carried.
