***Saline Lake Game and Fish Preserve***

 ***Commission***

 ***P.O. Box 847, Winnfield, La. 71483***

 ***Meeting Minutes***

***Meeting Date: February 11, 2021***

***Meeting Location: Couley Methodist Church, 14245 Highway 84W, Winnfield, La. 71483***

***Members Present: J. Atherton, B. Butler, W. Smith, J. Kelley, W. Smith, P. Todd.***

***Members Absent: T. Brewton, B. Carter***

***Called to order at: 5:00 pm by: J. Atherton***

***Invocation by: W. Smith***

***Pledge by: W. Smith***

***Agenda/Minutes:***

***Adopt/Amend Agenda***

 ***Motion: W. Smith Second: J. Kelley Vote: Unanimous***

***Adopt last meeting minutes***

 ***Motion: W. Smith Second: B. Butler Vote: Unanimous***

***New / Old Business:***

1. ***Sign-in Sheet for Meeting Guests***
2. ***Contact List for Volunteers/Guests that would like to have E-mail updates.***
3. ***Introduction of new Natchitoches Commissioner – J. Atherton***

***New member Pat Todd***

1. ***Discussion of Commissioner’s Responsibilities for 2021:***

***Duck Blinds- W. Smith***

***Long Range Tree Cutting – J. Atherton***

***Short Term Spraying / Drawdowns – B. Carter***

***Motion to stay the same.***

***Motion: W. Smith Second: B. Butler Vote: Unanimous***

***5. Introduction of Guests:***

1. ***Elected Officials: none***
2. ***LA. Department of Wildlife and Fisheries: V. Dowden***

***6. Financial Report (current)***

* 1. ***Checking Account Balance $8,926.16***
	2. ***CD Account Balance $11,469.12***
	3. ***Duck Blind revenue $2,225.00***

***7 Duck Blind Permits***

* 1. ***2021-2020 Season permits will be available August 1, 2021 through October 31, 2021. Any permits not paid for in this time frame will become available on first come, first serve basis.***
	2. ***Permits will be $25.00.***
1. ***LADOTD Chee Chee Dam Inspection***
	* 1. ***Inspection performed 4/11/19- Report to be sent. Bridge maintenance crew to schedule the repair on spalling around handrail posts. Replaced some caps on post already. Will continue to replace caps as needed.***
		2. ***Remove unwanted vegetation near spillway on Natchitoches side.***
		3. ***Install valve stem covers and replace underdrain caps that are broken.***
		4. ***B. Sticker waiting on State’s Brontosaurus machine to clear brush before end of year. Willing machine is available.***
		5. ***B. Sticker has taken new job in Baton Rouge and continues to work on inspection items.***
		6. *R*emote level gauge for Saline dam requested from LADOTD. B. Sticker, on 11/8/19. Six lakes on local DOTD list for level gauges. Sticker contacted USGS and Baton Rouge DOTD for availability of money and / or matching funds. USGS typically installs radar type gauges.  Gauges cost about $14,000 for the initial installation and about $7,000 per year for USGS to operate and maintain them. Sticker determined that the Louisiana Watershed Imitative will be installing any in the future. Per Ed Knight, P.E. who is a State Dam Safety Official with DOTD Public Works & Water Resources - the Louisiana Watershed Initiative is currently planning to initially fund several gauges. A formal request was made to the Louisiana Watershed Initiative on 1/22/20 and 1/25/20 to install a stage gauge on Saline Lake.
2. ***Lake Rules and Regulations WLF Status – V. Dowden***
3. State Wide Lake Rules & Regulations – List of requested regulations given to V. Dowden on 8/18/19 for WLF discussion on State wide approval changing from “waterbody” passive gear regulations to “statewide” passive gear regulations. List of regulations on the next biologist meeting (likely December, 2019) agenda to consult with every inland district manager, interested commissions, and the public to streamline all aspects of passive gear within the State.
4. Channel Marking Status – WLF has requested that “the channel needs attention other than just treatment to visually navigate from Cedar Bluff to Key Hole.  Re-marking would likely occur after the lake rises.  WLF could supply low cost supplies such as red and green paint or stencils.” Started marking north of sand dump and stopped at Brewton boat road. WLF will continue to mark where needed.

 ***10 Short Term Spraying***

1. **New Cypress Tree Growth –** In 2020 it was determined that 2021 was the year that the new cypress growth between Oak Point #1 and Oak Point #2 would be addressed after approximately 4 years of growth.  It has previously been discussed that the water level must be approximately 2 to 3 feet below pool to allow the top of the trees to be out of the water and enough water to float the spray boats. Plan to be established.
2. **Salvinia Evaluation / Problem Areas:**

Report of spraying / Salvinia situation North of boom.

Report of spraying / Salvinia situation between Oak 1 and 2.

Status of WLF Baton Rouge request for $115,000 needed for spraying South of boom in March, 2021.

***11 Boom installation Mulligan Inn boat Ramp***

1. ***A boom was placed from the east bank to the west bank at the pipeline by Mulligan Inn.***
2. ***There are currently 3 entries and exits. These entries and exits will likely be decreased to 2 or 1 to minimize salvinia in the open areas.***
3. ***Boom is still in place and will be monitored.***

***12 Drawdown***

* 1. Drawdown strategy for 2021 to be determined

***13* Long Range Tree Cutting – J. Atherton**

 A. Initial equipment demonstration performed on June 11, 2019.

 B. Trees from 6/11/19 demonstration moved to USFS dirt pit on 9/3/19. Tress on hump South of Mulligan Inn removed by WPPJ to open up area around ramp and taken to USFS dirt pit. Email vote to pay US Forest Service permit fee of $394 results by motion by W. Smith, second B. Butler 5 Yeas - 1 abstain – 1 vacant. However, USFS has waived fee, so it will not be paid.

 C. Second contractor reviewed 10 acre test plot with WLF to determine feasibility and cost. Waiting on estimate. Emails sent requesting pricing sent 9/16/19, 10/4/19, and 1/8/20.

1. Second permit request made to Corp of Engineer for Letter of Permission (LOP) Permit #MVK-2019-139M for additional acres approved.
2. US Forestry Service issued a Nominal Effects Letter on July 31, 2019 for use of the dirt pit for burning of trees.
3. Cypress Chipping – If there are enough (5,000 trees for 1 week of work) trees (assuming pulp wood size) available at the burn pit, then contractor would move in a portable chipper. Can chip up to 30” meaning maybe some limbs / stumps would be left for burning. Calculations: 5,000 trees / 200 trees per load = 25 loads of raw trees. Trailers are 45’ + 15’ over hang = 60’ long. Weight is 30Tons per truck at 25 trucks = 750 Tons for 5,000 trees. Cypress density about same as pine at 32 lb/cf.
4. Sabine River Authority (Mike Carr) contacted concerning equipment used for stump removal on Toledo Bend. Two types of equipment used, cutting head attached to backhoe with hydraulic 404 pitch chain saw with “V”, trackhoe barge to push stumps over when water was low. No longer have equipment purchased from Byles Welding & Tractor (Many). Byles to give approximate quote on barge to cut trees. Possible barge supplier Leevac Shipyards, Jennings.
5. To date, no contractor found to remove trees.
* ***14.* Land Donation –** The Saline Lake Commission was contacted on 11/10/20 by Macs-Development, LLC, Matthew Calderone concerning the donation of a 58 acre parcel of land owner by O.M. Cummings in Natchitoches parish. The land is PARCEL# 0020036 100 listed as being N 1/2 OF SE, NE OF SW & SW OF NE SEC. 9-11-5, Less 102 AC TO STATE. The USFS was contacted to determine interest in receiving the land but the USFS was not interested. Owner is still possibly interested in donating to the Saline Lake Commission.

***15. Public/Commission Comments or Questions: none***

***Adjourn: 6:20 pm***

 ***Motion: W. Smith Second: B. Butler Vote: Unanimous***

 ***Jimmy Atherton Bill Butler***

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***Jimmy Atherton – President Bill Butler – Secretary/Treasurer***