

MINUTES
Annual Meeting: PA Game Commission and
PA Chapter National Wild Turkey Federation
June 2, 2006
PGC Headquarters, Harrisburg
1:00 - 4:00 pm

23 Attendees representing PGC, PANWTF and NWTF (see attached attendee list)

1. NWTF Regional Biologist Position and Funding Renewal Status (B. Boyd, B.Eriksen)
 - a. Annual Update & Accomplishments – B Eriksen provided his annual report to C.DuBrock.
 - b. C. Roe. Grant to NWTF in support of position is in 2006 budget, but if license increase fails, operational budget will be cut drastically. PGC intends to continue funding, but financial situation is uncertain. D. Heckman asked to use money from 2nd tag. C. Roe replied that money goes into general fund & cannot promise anything for 2007.
2. Youth Spring Hunt Update (MJ Casalena, C. Mowry)
 - a. Participation – data from 2005 will be available this summer from GT Survey. 2004 & 2005 harvest data from report cards (Table 1)
 - i. 2004 - 7.7% of overall harvest, ranged from 0% in WMU 5D to 9.8% in WMUs 4B and 4D.
 - ii. 2005 - 5.7% of overall harvest, ranged from 3.5% in WMU 1A to 8.8% in WMU4D (Table 1).
 - iii. B.Eriksen asked if PGC will conduct Survey to determine participation, harvest, impact – Game take survey includes a question to determine participation in youth gobbler hunt, and report cards indicate harvest and impact – This should be sufficient.
 - b. Chapter involvement report – no report for 2005.
 - c. Mentored Youth Program –will be voted on at June Commission meeting. **Update – Approved.**
 - d. Potential for all day spring youth hunt – any discussion within the PGC? No discussion since the 2nd bird tag. BWM recommended no additional changes to spring season for at least a 3-year period. G.Beatty clarified just the youth day would be all day. C.Roe suggested PANWTF propose such at Oct. Commission meeting. Spring 2007 begins the Mentored Youth Program, so not sure if Commissioners would approve of this additional change. WTMP does not specify this, but does state expanding spring hunting opportunities. It is a working document. As new suggestions come up, staff & the Commission will consider them.
3. 2006 Habitat Super Fund Report (C. Mowry, L. Holjencin, B. Myers)
 - a. Amount spent by state chapter for 2006 = \$161,911. Affecting 8,108 ac.
 - b. PGC: 49 projects on SGL; 1,136 acres; @ \$100,634.10. Most were to maintain, develop or rejuvenate herbaceous openings.

- i. NW- \$18,250, 371 acres; SW- \$27,026, 317 ac;
 - ii. NC- \$17,941, 167 ac; SC- \$4,800, 82 ac;
 - iii. NE-\$12,853, 71 ac; SE- \$17,359, 113 ac;
 - iv. Howard Nursery- \$2,405, fence 15 ac. Am. Chestnut hybrid trees.
 - c. Estimate of PGC expenditures for inclusion in press release – over \$100,000 through in-kind services, (equipment, gasoline, manpower, staff time, etc.). **Use for news release.**
 - d. Electronic green sheet form – status of review – PGC would like to use for 2007 and will email all PGC forms to all PANWTF habitat committee members. The latest version of form is more usable. **Committee will work out problems between now and this fall.**
 - i. B. Myers handed out the Superfund Worksheet that PGC will use in 2007 for each project to calculate project costs.
 - e. PANWTF – is trying to be more fiscally responsible and create a ‘nest egg’ to use for habitat projects so money will be available immediately for projects. Committee meets in February so currently they estimate the \$\$ available for the year. With the ‘nest egg’, the committee will know exactly how much \$ is available for the year. This will take another year or two to acquire.
- 4. Tri-State Gobbler Harvest Rate Study (MJ Casalena, B. Eriksen)
 - a. Goal of 900 gobblers banded - 708 total banded, even with the mild winter. 167 Ohio, 295 New York, 246 PA (139 adults, 107 juveniles). As of May 30th in PA, 72 gobbler legband returns (49 adults, 22 juveniles, one unknown at present). One of these was harvested in New York’s Chautauqua County (reward band), and another of these was not harvested, but found dead (reward band). Additionally, one NY gobbler was harvested in Potter County, Oswayo Township (non-reward band) approximately 3.5 miles from the state border.
 - b. PANWTF investment – more than \$14,600 for supplies (rocket charges, rocket boxes, nets, safety items, bait, straw). Budgeted \$12,500. Purchased more equipment than originally planned (safety items, wooden rocket boxes failed so we had to purchase metal boxes). Next year’s costs will be substantially lower.
- 5. Status of Wild Turkey Nuisance Complaint System (MJ Casalena, B. Boyd)
 - a. PGC has bear damage tracking system – mainframe application. Adding turkey to system will be complicated. PGC needs to evaluate bear tracking system before adding another species – ideally modify system to deal with all species to have comprehensive system. We don’t know extent of nuisance because we don’t currently track this. Problems are diverse from agricultural (more of perception than real problem) to urban.
 - b. B. Eriksen gave Bureau of I&E a CD – turkey crop damage manual from Ohio. Regions would like training at each Regional meeting this spring. **B.E. will create outline for training – 1 hour or less and provide to Regions.**
 - c. Draft SOP completed and being reviewed - goal is mostly I&E to help landowners solve the problems themselves.

6. Joint Articles for PA Game News (B. Eriksen, MJ Casalena, C. Graybill)
 - a. Habitat Super Fund project articles
 - b. Outcome of special spring gobbler license
 - c. Report on status of tri-state gobbler banding effort and first season results
 - d. Importance of reporting harvest – modify B. Eriksen’s Turkey Talk article. – also will modify for PGC news release.
 - e. PGC Turkey Program to look at turkey webpage quarterly and determine what is needed. Provide info to webmaster and I&E to be included.
 - f. Other suggestions – from D.Heckman
 - i. Safety – how safety has improved. But talk about ethics side of safety.
 - ii. Timing of spring season - modify B. Eriksen’s Turkey Talk article. - also will modify for PGC news release.
 - iii. Turkey management – public doesn’t understand how turkeys are managed – ongoing series of all aspects of turkey management – population, harvest, habitat, etc...
7. Thanksgiving 2005 Ceremonial Wild Turkey Release
 - a. Excellent press coverage including satellite feed from Philly that was picked up by other stations. Two schools were involved.
 - b. Status of transmittered turkeys – SE Region personnel, D. Lynch, haven’t yet located both turkeys, but will continue to search. Schools are interested in tracking turkeys with D. Lynch next school year.
8. Women in the Outdoors Report (T. Mowry) – written report. T.M. was at an WITO event and not in attendance.
 - a. Continues to grow, 24 events for 2006. Program 8 years old.
 - b. An important way to reach a large segment of voting public – in 2004, 65% of women voted, while 62% of males voted. 48% of working wives bring home at least 50% of household income, & control 80% of household purchases.
 - c. Almost 40,000 members nationwide.
 - d. 2005 study, women’s participation in hunting, fishing, and outdoors, barriers to participation & satisfaction with WITO. Research conducted by Responsive Mgmt, funded by USFWS, and commissioned by NWTf. Majority of all women approved of hunting & fishing. WITO members were more involved with hunting & fishing, and general public was more involved with camping & other outdoor activities. Members rated WITO events as excellent – liked learning new activities, meeting new people, quality instructors, spending time with friends/family. Event attendees increased their involvement > 40% in fishing, hunting, other outdoor activities.
 - e. Request PGC to consider renewing partnership agreement with WITO.
 - i. C. Roe agreed. This program is more effective than BOW because many one-day events throughout the year versus one BOW event for entire weekend. Does PGC need to sign an agreement with WITO?
9. WCO & LMO of the Year Awards and Joe Kurz Award (L. Holjencin)

- a. LMO & Joe Kurz awards have been combined by NWTF
 - b. Reminder of upcoming deadlines and criteria availability – Larry provided info. to M. Schmit, who will distribute info to regions. **COMPLETED. WCO deadline Nov. 20. Joe Kurz deadline July 13.**
10. Fall 2005 and Preliminary Spring 2006 Turkey Hunting Incidents Update (K. Snyder)
- a. Hand-out: statistics from 2000-2005. # & incident rates are decreasing. Hunting participation also is declining though.
 - b. Spring 2006, preliminary = 5 incidents, down from 13 in 2000.
 - c. Fall 2005 = 2 incidents, down from 15 in 2002.
 - d. 2007 New Hunter/Trapper Curriculum, with total revamp of turkey curriculum. PGC to use NWTF Turkey hunting safety DVD. Have distributed to each region - excellent resource for PGC, only \$5 per copy.
 - e. If we can develop a database of turkey hunters, via point-of-sale, PGC/PANWTF can partner with targeted mailings to turkey hunters dealing with safety, ethics, hunting seminars, & other courses on hunting techniques.
 - f. **Use participation (hunter days) from G-T survey to determine incident rate. – K.Snyder will look at that.**
11. Special Spring Turkey Hunting License (C. Roe, MJ Casalena)
- a. 8,040 sold in 2006. As of 6/2/06; approx. 1,500 report cards returned – mandatory reporting regardless of success. **B. Wildlife Mgmt determining how best to survey nonrespondents to determine harvest from special license – BWM will mail surveys to 400 nonrespondents.**
 - b. Procedure for next year – will it change? – Not for 2007, but yes, with point-of-sale hunters can purchase with regular license.
 - c. Main reasons didn't sell more, from PANWTF website comments – Too expensive, and deadline for purchasing by April 1.
 - d. Generated at least \$170,000. D. Heckman asked what is PGC doing for turkey mgmt with those monies? C.Roe – not intended as revenue producer, but to increase hunting opportunities. Money was not earmarked. PGC increased personnel costs to trap turkeys this year for gobbler study, but the money is not tracked as to how it is spent. Also, additional costs to mail licenses, data input, report card returns, data analysis, etc. If licenses were meant as a revenue maker, PGC would have made them available through the season.
12. Potential for Partnerships Between PGC and PANTWF in Women in the Outdoors and Wheelin' Sportsmen Programs (Carl Mowry, Tammy Mowry)
- a. More effective for PGC to partner with organizations with established Women's and Wheelin' programs rather than conduct the PGC weekend-long BOW program, that was just one event per year. PGC program did not generate the desired outcome like the NWTF WITO program does.
13. Private Land Initiatives (B, Eriksen, M. Pruss)
- a. Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) - 168,000 ac, in last 5 years, 20,000 ac. just last year. Seeing broods using fields – and fields aren't mowed. Turkeys benefiting. Avg. 20 acres enrolled per farm, 59

- counties across state. Need assistance with spreading information regarding CREP, especially Ohio River watershed. HOW can PANWTF help?
- b. PGC needs assistance with updating turkey habitat management on webpage. – B.Eriksen will help.
14. Report on Right of Way Management Grant in Washington County (B. Eriksen)
 - a. \$56,000 project. 1.5-year project, on schedule, fieldwork will be completed by July 06.
 15. Possible Extension of Spring Gobbler Season Dates through May 31 Annually (D. Heckman)
 - a. What can PANWTF do to make this recommendation to Commissioners? C. Roe suggested PANWTF make recommendation at Oct. Commission meeting to address issue early, giving PGC more time to address issue internally.
 16. Invitation to Attend WMU 5A Working Group Meeting on October 17 (D. Heckman)
 - a. Began in 1996, ran until 2004, cooperative effort among PGC, DCNR, PANWTF, local Chapters.
 - b. Meeting to review Ex. Summary to determine if we are on track.
 17. Possibility of Eliminating Orange Requirement for Spring Hunting (L. Holjencin)
 - a. Continual conflict between PANWTF and PGC.
 - b. C. Roe will address issue with staff and go with staff recommendation, and will inform PANWTF of outcome.
 - c. PANWTF is always welcome to discuss with Commissioners.
 - d. Suggestion made to make fl. Orange optional in spring.
 18. Northeast Wild Turkey Population Modeling Project Status (D. Heckman)
 - a. Dissertation and CD with model anticipated to be complete and mailed to participating states by end of June. CD not yet received as of July 1.
 - b. WTMP strategy – PGC intends to use model for PA. Haven't seen model yet, but we foresee it being useful. Will take a few years to implement, determine parameters/data collection needs for PA model.
 19. Partnering to Produce Educational Signs and Reminders (D. Heckman)
 - a. PANWTF produced signs, PGC distributed/posted signs. (Positively Identify Your Target). PGC could print signs on durable/weatherproof paper.
 - b. I&E will determine cost and get back to PANWTF for fall posting.- Completed
 - c. I&E will print signs with PANWTF superfund funding through Safety and Education.- Completed-Signs printed, distributed to Regions & PANWTF.
 20. NWTF Convention
 - a. Feb. 22 – 25, 2007, Nashville TN.
 - b. PANWTF will continue to provide PGC \$1,600 toward registration, includes LMO & WCO of the Year Award recipients, Ex. Director, Commissioners, turkey Technical Committee members and whoever else can attend.
 21. Wild Turkey Management Plan (C. Roe, MJ Casalena)

- a. Revision Status – Last week a 4-hour meeting between C. Roe and BWM, C. DuBrock, B.Boyd, and MJ Casalena. Identified several changes to plan – reorganized it. Next revision to be completed by June 30. PGC will provide 30-day external review because of changes, no substantive content changes.
- b. 10-year plan – better for planning, budgeting.
- c. Review of Plan Goal, Objectives, Strategies
 - i. Objectives and Strategies were laid out better, incorporated more narrative sections into strategies, with timeframes added. Provide consistency with other species management plans. Want to make sure all research needs identified in the plan are clearly identified in the strategies

Table 1. Percent spring turkey reported harvest from youth hunt in Pennsylvania, 2004 - 2005.

WMU	2004	2005
1A	8.4	3.5
1B	9.6	4.5
2A	6.3	5.7
2B	7.2	8.0
2C	7.3	6.8
2D	7.6	5.7
2E	6.9	6.0
2F	5.3	4.7
2G	7.9	5.1
3A	4.5	5.3
3B	6.7	5.6
3C	7.0	5.4
3D	5.1	4.3
4A	8.1	4.5
4B	9.8	7.8
4C	5.7	5.5
4D	9.8	8.8
4E	6.4	5.4
5A	2.7	5.3
5B	7.4	8.6
5C	9.0	5.7
5D	0.0	6.7
Average	7.7	5.7

**Cooperative Meeting Between PA Game Commission and
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Attendee List**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
1. Carl Roe	PGC, Executive Director
2. Mike Schmit	PGC, Deputy Ex. Director
3. Greg Houghton	PGC, Bureau Law Enforcement, Acting Director
4. Keith Snyder	PGC, Bureau I&E, HTE Instructor
5. Scott Klingner	PGC, Bureau Land Mgmt, Director
6. Mike Pruss	PGC, Bureau Land Mgmt, Private Lands
7. Brad Myers	PGC, B. Land Mgmt, Game Lands Planning/Dev.
8. Cal DuBrock	PGC, Bureau Wildlife Mgmt, Director
9. Bob Boyd	PGC, Bureau Wildlife Mgmt, Asst. Director, NWTF Tech Comm. member
10. John Dunn	PGC, B. Wildlife Mgmt, Game Bird Sec. Leader
11. Mary Jo Casalena	PGC, B. Wildlife Mgmt, Wild Turkey Biologist, NWTF Tech Comm. member
12. Bob Eriksen	NWTF, Regional Biologist
13. Larry Holjencin	NWTF, Senior Regional Field Supervisor
14. Carl Mowry	NWTF, PA Regional Director
15. Ray Smith	NWTF, PA Regional Director
16. Gary Beatty	PANWTF, Chairman of the Board
17. Don Heckman	PANWTF, Executive Officer
18. Dave Burdge	PANWTF, President
19. Donald O'Brien	PANWTF, Board Member
20. Jon Pries	PANWTF, Executive Officer
21. Bill Mackreth	PANWTF, Board Secretary
22. Hugh Shields	PANWTF, Board Member
23. Gene Alwine	PANWTF, Board Member