

## MEETING SUMMARY

### Western North Carolina Public Lands Council

*September 24, 2010*

*1:00 PM –3:00 PM*

*NCDENR Asheville Regional Office  
Swannanoa, NC*

*Members Present: All*  
*Others Present: Judy Francis*

Call to Order: Maxine Dalton called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM and asked each member to briefly introduce themselves because Delos Montieth, the Council's newest member was there attending his first business meeting. All the Council members welcomed Delos to the Council and remarked that, due to his interests and experience, he will make a fine addition to the group.

Discussion of Goals & Objectives Update & Review of Accomplishments: Maxine Dalton then asked the Council members to take a few moments to reflect on all that they had worked on and accomplished during the last year. The group reviewed the Goals & Objectives spreadsheet and agreed on specific items that should be removed because they had been completed (state support for cash settlement of the North Shore Road, updates to the council's enabling legislation including name change, the BRP 75 Initiative, the Council webpage, add an additional ex-officio member, meeting frequency, and establish electronic communication between meetings). The balance of the items should remain on the spreadsheet because they were still valid issues for the Council to be attentive of.

Maxine then led an interactive exercise to encourage members to suggest new items for the council to consider in the year ahead. Issues identified included:

Invasive species such as emerald ash borer and other exotic pests on public lands.

Trout buffer laws and the impact of a recent court case that has overturned past precedent about variances and best management practices.

NC Wildlife Resources Commission staff report re: lands under their management in the western region.

Public access to public land.

The status of state parks in the western region.

Event coordination and communication between counties and parkway staff. It was agreed that this should be done as a matter of course rather than a meeting topic.

Acidification of high mountain streams. Matt Kulp or Jim Renfro would be good potential speakers.

Coweeta Lab would be a good place to have a meeting. It's a distant location but they are doing relevant research on the acidification topic. Jason will help coordinate this meeting.

A vote was held and the new topics for the upcoming meetings will be invasive species / exotic pests on public lands, a request to the NC Wildlife Resources Commission staff to give an update on lands under their management in the western region, a status update on NC State Parks in the western region, and acidification of high mountain streams. It was also suggested that one upcoming meeting be held at the USFS Coweeta Laboratory facility. Jonathon also suggested the possibility that one meeting (maybe in May) could also be held at the Smoky Mountain Railway facility.

Judy will update the spreadsheet to reflect the Council's changes.

#### Other Business

Attendance Policy Status - Judy Francis gave members a copy of the Governor's attendance policy and an update on the number of absences each member has had. So far, only one member is in danger of having excessive absences.

Mountain Resources Commission - Maxine Dalton provided the Council with an update on the Mountain Resources Commission activities. The Technical Advisory Council has now been appointed and met. The Commission's website is up and running. All the members are very committed and bring a wide variety of skills and experience to the table. They are focused on long-term strategic issues.

Name change legislation - Judy Francis reminded everyone that their name change legislation was approved. In addition to changing the council's name, the legislation also added a member from Cherokee County. It is unclear if it added a seat or if a current seat will be filled by a Cherokee County representative once a current member's term expires. She has a request for more clarification in to the Governor's Boards & Commission's staff.

Council Election – Maxine Dalton reminded the Council that it is time to hold elections for Chair and Vice-Chair positions. She has enjoyed serving as Chair and would do so again if re-elected. She asked the Council to consider potential officers and prepare to elect a Chair and Vice-Chair at the November meeting. New officer terms will begin in January.

Establish 2011 Meeting Dates – Council Members then checked their schedules and established the following dates for their 2011 meetings: Feb. 11, May 13, June – TN, Sept. 16, Nov. 4

Other Business: Several members mentioned that they would like to have state business cards with their affiliation as council members noted on them. Judy said she would look

into whether or not the state has a policy about that. Jonathon Douthit also asked when there would be funds for mileage reimbursement again. Judy explained that there was a severe budget crisis now and that the reimbursements for boards and commissions would probably not be back in the budget for some time, but she would inquire about it. She also suggested that members make sure that legislators know they'd like reimbursements in the budget again.

Headwaters Tract Resolution - Maxine passed out a draft resolution of support she received from Tom Massie to encourage the NC Wildlife Resources Commission to commit the necessary resources to purchase and manage a large tract of land in Transylvania County. Delos said that property has rare species and trout waters and would be worthwhile to conserve. Judy said this is one of the very special tracts currently being considered for purchase by the state of NC. There are a number of issues currently being discussed regarding the financing and future management of the property. Hopefully, there will be more information available later in the year. The Council voted unanimously to table the resolution for consideration at a later date.

Before adjourning, Maxine asked the Council to think about some ideas on how to make interaction with agencies in the meetings more productive. Jason asked if the Council could get reports in advance so they could prepare to discuss them instead of just seeing them for the first time. Jonathon emphasized that face to face meetings are important and wanted to make sure that agency staff attend whenever possible.

Next Meeting: November 5, 2010

Adjourn: There being no further business; the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 PM.