

National Rifle Association
State Political / Education Affiliate

Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs
County Affiliate

MERCER COUNTY FEDERATION OF SPORTSMEN'S CLUBS, Inc.
Harthegig Conservation Club Greenville Sportsmen's Club Hadley Rod & Gun Club
Mercer Co. Coonhunters Association Sandy Lake Sportsmen's Club
Hidden Valley Sportsmen's Club Pardoe Sportsmen's Association

* Dedicated to Promoting Better Outdoor Recreation and Cooperation Between the Farmers and Sportsmen since 1935 *

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: February 25, 2009

Held at: Hidden Valley

Time Meeting Called to Order: 1900 hrs

Chaired By: Pres. Fordyce

Officers Present: Pres. Fordyce, V.P Anderson, Secretary Myers, Treasurer Tidd, State Delegate Preston, Alt Delegate Rhoades

Affiliated Clubs with Delegates Present: Hidden Valley, Greenville, Pardoe, Harthegig, Sandy Lake, and Hadley

Affiliated Clubs Not Represented: Coonhunters

Resource Agency Represented: Pa. Game Commission, Pa. Fish & Boat Commission, DCNR Goddard, and DCNR Forestry

Life, Associate, & Club Members and Visitors Present: Senator Bob Robbins, County Treasurer Ginny Richard Stevenson, District Attorney Robert Kochems

Last Month's Minutes: No meeting in January. No changes to December Minutes approved Motion by Anderson

Northwest Division Minutes: Carl Rhoades providing briefing on last meeting. Only 3 counties were present out of 9. Next meeting will be March 8th, 2009 at PGC NW REGIONAL OFFICE, 1509 Pittsburgh Road, and Franklin Pa at 1pm.

Vote/Action on Present and State Resolutions: **Resolutions to be voted on at the Spring 2009 Convention**

Resolution # 1:

Pine Creek Sportsmen, Armstrong Co.

Antler restriction and the combined (Buck) and (Doe) seasons

WHEREAS:

Whereas: The strong out cry of the hunting population that are opposed to the (3) point and (4) point on one side restriction,

Whereas: Most hunters say antler restriction has taken the fun out of hunting,

Whereas: Due to the combined 2 week buck and doe seasons the deer herd has been drastically reduced in some areas, especially in the Northern tier counties,

Whereas: The drastically reduced deer herd has caused economic problems in restaurants, motels, hotels and other businesses especially in Northern tier counties,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

Therefore be it resolved: The Pine Creek Sportsmen's Club, at its meeting on December 7, 2007, in Armstrong Co, ask that the PFSC work with the Pennsylvania Game Commission to do away with the 3 & 4 point antler restrictions statewide. Then have a spike 3 inches on one side restriction statewide. This antler restriction would be for all deer seasons, no matter what the sporting arm may be.

Therefore be it resolved: The rifle season be 2 weeks of buck only and 2 days of doe season to start on the Monday after rifle season.

Clubs reporting:

Harthegig (yea), Greenville (nay), Hadley (yea), Sandy Lake (abstain), Hidden Valley (abstain), Pardoe (abstain)

Motion carried to abstain at convention.

Resolution # 2:

Rostraver Sportsmen & Conservation Assoc Westmoreland Co.

Reduce Bag Limits and Length of Doe Season

WHEREAS:

Whereas: The deer seasons in 2B start September 15, 2007, and go on until January 26, 2008, and in all of SW PA the seasons are far too long, and

Whereas: The incidence of E.H.D. found in all of the SW counties, that nearly eliminated the herd in many areas, and

Whereas: Large numbers of hunters are very dissatisfied with the state of our deer herd having not seen many deer during the past season and in some cases not even seeing any, where in past years many deer were seen and harvested.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

Therefore be it resolved: That the PA Game Commission reduces the bag limit and shorten the length of the antlerless deer seasons in the SW region.

Clubs reporting:

Harthegig (yea), Greenville (yea), Hadley (abstain), Sandy Lake (nay), Hidden Valley (yea), Pardoe (abstain)

Motion carried to vote yea at convention.

Resolution # 3:

PFSC Members at Large

Jennifer W. Sager, Jeffrey P. Uschak, Mark S. Hogan, S. Wesley Waldron, Michael R. Foust, Brad Gehman, Les Haas

TITLE: Potential ramifications of legislating crossbows in statewide archery seasons for use by the general public.

WHEREAS:

55 members of the House of Representatives have introduced a bill (HB2653) which will change the definition of a bow to also include the crossbow. Thus allowing the crossbow for use, statewide, in any current and future archery season.

Whereas: Commissioner Schleiden at the June 2008 PGC quarterly meeting asked agency staff to develop a proposal to include the crossbow in archery seasons.

Whereas: Only a handful of PA sportsmen have ever presented testimony in favor of general crossbow use in archery season at any public comment meeting in front of the PGC. However, manufacturer's rep's have presented testimony on occasion.

Whereas: Commercial interests stand to gain considerable revenue from crossbow inclusion into the PA Archery seasons. Thus their current lobby in the legislature and the PGC.

Whereas: A crossbow does not need to be drawn in the presence of the game animal, as with a bow. A crossbow handles more like a rifle and can be loaded and cocked prior to setting foot in the woods.

Whereas: Studies have not been conducted which would estimate the potential harvest or over harvest of deer in the vast public hunting lands outside of the 3 WMU's that currently allow crossbows for use in archery season.

Whereas: The potential for over harvest may require the PGC to shorten the archery season, and possibly the rifle seasons if antlered deer harvests grow considerably due to crossbow inclusion in archery season.

Whereas: As PA hunting license fee's are quite low, one can only assume that hunters from neighboring states may come to PA to hunt with the crossbow. The impact from these hunters is also unknown.

Whereas: There is no evidence from other states, that allowing crossbows for use in the general archery season will encourage more women and youth hunters to join the hunting ranks.

Whereas: PA crossbow harvest is up 26% year on year. 50% of that harvest being in the 3 WMU's where it is allowed in archery seasons. (These 3 WMU's have major hurdles against hunting access, but have a plethora of deer).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the PFSC oppose HB 2653 or other like-minded legislation, and oppose any proposal from the PGC which would allow crossbows for general use in all archery seasons.

Clubs reporting:

Harthegig(nay), Greenville(nay), Hadley(nay), Sandy Lake(nay), Hidden Valley(nay), Pardoe(yea)

Motion carried to vote nay at convention.

Vote/Action on Present County Resolutions: None Presented

Presidents Report: none

Secretary's Report: none

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Tidd gave his report. No activity since December. There are un-deposited monies in the treasurer's possession from recent activity. Motion to accept report by Anderson

Committee Reports:

***Youth Field Day Committee:**

- Treasurer Tidd reporting. Youth field day will be held at the Grove City Sportsmen's Club on June 13th.
- The cutoff will be 150 people and walk-ins are discouraged.
- There will no longer be three events held on the same day.
- Letters were drafted and will be sent out to the sponsors.
- Treasurer Tidd passed around a participation sign-up. If you would like to assist with the event, contact Treasurer Tidd.
- Treasurer Tidd would like to expand the committee and break it down into smaller divisions. Event is large enough that more help is needed.

***Fund-Raiser Committee:** No Report

***Mercer County Booklet Committee:** At this time, there appears to be no booklet. Will look at this again in upcoming meetings.

***Bylaws Committee:** No Report

***Audit Committee:** No Report

***Awards Committee:** At present time there are 2 Old Timer Awards. The WCOs and Co. Officers met after the general meeting and approved a nominee for the Howard Patton award. A potential candidate for Landowner of the Year was discussed. There was a nomination for a special citation for Pat Sabo. Pat was nominated for all his efforts for hunting and trapper education and many youth programs. Motion carried. Award deadlines are coming fast so please get your nomination in ASAP. Qualifications are in the Bylaws.

***Legislative Committee:** Legislative Breakfast was a great success. We wish to extend our THANKS to all those who were able to participate.

***Conservation Committee:** PFBC is considering listing 5 species of mussels on the endangered list. Allegheny River issue with dredging the river will affect the mussels. There will be a public meeting on the issue on March 2nd at Kittanning Fire Hall. Copy and paste this link for more details: http://www.fish.state.pa.us/newsreleases/2009/mussels_public_mtg.html

***Membership Committee:** Dues are due now. Lakeland Longbeards decided not to rejoin this year. It is important that we reach out to non-affiliated clubs and get their membership. The Federation is the sportsmen's voice in Harrisburg. Anyone with contact information on non-affiliated clubs please contact one of the officers so we can try to arrange a visit.

***Stoneboro Fair Committee:** V.P. Anderson reporting. Senator Robbins has raised \$36,000 towards a new fair building. There has been no contact from the Stoneboro fair committee. The Federation needs to stay involved with the process to ensure the floor plan will meet the needs of the Federation.

***Poster Contest Committee:** Theme for spring convention is "Invading Pennsylvania's Habitat". It is believed the topic is too difficult for the kids. The posters will be judged at the spring convention on March 8th.

***Old Timers Dinner Committee:** Event will be held on May 16th at the Hidden Valley Sportsmen's Club. Caterer has been confirmed for this date. Tickets will be sold and price is expected to be \$12 but this needs to be confirmed. The event will be held at 6pm.

Need to have communication with these organizations regarding banquets:

***Friends of the NRA:** No Report

***Whitetails Unlimited:** Event will be held on April 10th at Hickory VFW

***National Wild Turkey Federation:** No report

State Delegate Report:

<http://www.ppsc.org/Spring09.pdf>

Follow this link to get information on the Spring Convention to be held in Meadville at Days Inn.

- Delegate Preston reporting. Spring convention will be held March 20-22, 2009.
- Cost to Mercer County members is free for general convention meetings. If you do not pay the registration fee you will not receive a convention packet.
- There is still a cost associated for bus tour and dinner. The cost for the Friday night bus tour is \$5 and will include snacks at the hatchery.

- The cost of the dinner will be \$35 or \$60 for a couple. Steve is looking to have a table of eight for Mercer County. The cost will be \$240. (\$30 each person) If you would like to participate, call Steven Preston at 724-813-5641 or e mail at sgbc@zoominternet.net.
- More tables that are pre-registered, the better the prizes. Please reach out to your clubs to have them pre-register a table and represent Mercer County proud.

Alt. State Delegate Report: No Report

Resource Agency Reports:

US Army Corps of Engineers - Shenango Lake: No Report

Pa. Fish & Boat Commission:

- Erie Boat Show on March 6-8, 2009 at the Bayfront Convention Center in Erie.
- There will be a PFBC public meeting/Open House on March 24th, 2009 at 6pm in Meadville. See Flyer below
- Find more info here http://www.fish.state.pa.us/newsreleases/2009/pr_tour.html
- There will be a Safe Boating Course on May 9th, 2009 at Conneaut Lake Sportsmen's Club
- Mercer County Trout Streams to be stocked:

Cool Spring Creek 1.25 miles; From SR 2014 Bridge upstream to the abandoned railroad grade.
Shenango River - From dam downstream 1.5 miles to SR 3025.

2009 Trout Stocking Numbers

2009 Summary*						
Water	Number	Brook	Brown	Rainbow	Total	Trophy**
Streams	744	452,240	811,650	1,316,910	2,553,800	7,295
Lakes	124	95,820	39,280	496,600	631,700	1,370
Combined	868	521,060	850,930	1,813,510	3,185,500	8,665
Cooperative Nurseries (estimate)					737,000	
Total to be Stocked					3,922,500	
* Numbers planned for the 2009 stocking year (March 1, 2009 through February 28, 2010). Due to a number of variables actual numbers stocked may change.						
** Trophy are golden rainbow trout that average 1.5 pounds and 14 inches, their numbers are included within rainbow trout.						

- Local Fish report
 Shenango - Ice is not safe. Catching Trout larger than usual at spillway
 Wolf Creek - There will be no Kids Fish Derby this year. Looking into options for next year

OPEN HOUSE

March 24, 2009

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) invites the public to attend our area Commissioner's Open house on Tuesday, March 24th, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Vernon Central Fire Department Social Hall. PFBC staff will be in attendance to share ideas and fields questions.

The open house will include:

- Discussion on a new license proposal the agency will offer to legislators this spring.
- Displays and handouts from the PFBC and partnering organizations.
- An agency overview
- Regional fisheries update
- Information on activities in the region

Agenda

6-7 p.m. Open House

7-8 p.m. Presentations

Welcome: Exec. Director Douglas Austen and Commissioner Sam Concilla

15 minutes – Agency Overview

15 minutes – Regional Fisheries Update

30 minutes – Special Projects, Accomplishments, Activities in the District

8-9 p.m. Open discussion and Q & A session

Directions: 4/10 mile south of the intersection of Routes 322 and 19. Take exit 147(B) off of I-79 (St. Rt. 322 W.) to 2nd light. Turn left onto St. Rt. 19 South and go 4/10 mile and turn right onto McMath (look for Vernon Twp. Municipal Building sign on right). Go 2/10 mile to parking lot on left. Enter “Social Hall” doors.

The mission of the Fish and Boat Commission is to protect, conserve, and enhance the Commonwealth's aquatic resources and provide fishing and boating opportunities. For more information please visit our website at www.fishandboat.com.

DCNR - Forestry:

- The five gas well sites selected for the Goddard State Park will only affect the timber on two of the sites. One of the sites has some of the best cherry in the area. The cost of the timber was \$54,000.
- Forest Stewardship Program stills has money available if interested visit DCNR's forestry site
- "Introduction to PA Forests" This will be an all day event that is open to the public. Event will be held on July 9th, 2009 and will visit a number of sites. There will be an opportunity to inquire about forestry. There will be a fee. Contact the McKeever Environmental Learning Center for more details at 724-376-1000.

Goddard State Park:

- Natural Gas wells update: 5 wells have preliminary approval; require Phase I archaeological study. One awaiting PNDI Clearance. A silt fence was put in place to retain sediment.
- Fish Habitat Project (PFBC): April 25th (20 Porcupine Crib Jrs. off of launch 4). Mercer Co. Bass masters and BSA Troop Hadley to help
- Park received funds to establish/re-establish field habitats in specific areas. Efforts will consist of maintaining the more than 40 acres of warm season grass plots.
- There was an article in the January/February 2009 issue of Angler & Boater magazine on Goddard State Park. "Best Fishing and Boating in PA State Parks (M.K. Goddard State Park) by Kelly Houghton"
- Lake Wilhelm water quality results are still in progress but are expected soon.
- There will be a stream study completed below the dam. PASEC will conduct a Citizen's Volunteer Water quality monitoring on Sandy Creek. FROG may assist in this testing.
- **Public Meeting in conjunction with FROG Meeting tentatively scheduled on March 23rd, 2009 at 6:30pm at the auditorium at McKeever Environmental Learning Center. Go to here for more information http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/Calendar/view_event.asp?CalendarID=8258&Location=List**

- April 4, 2009: Mercer Co. Trails Assoc. will sponsor the "Prep for Pittsburgh" Half Marathon and 5K event at the park. Applications are located at the park office.
- June 6, 2009: National Multiple Sclerosis Society Tour (approx. 1600 riders) will be at the park. Launch 1 will be restricted temporarily that day for their use.
- Annual Dam Inspection will happen in September 2009. Will require a partial drawdown in order to inspect the inside of the outlets. 1-1/2 foot drop is expected and can take up to a couple of weeks to reach the level needed for inspection.
- **Pioneer Frolic (June 27-28, 2009) Dates were emailed to Mercer Co. Visitors Guide.**
- There is no boat rental concessionaire yet. One interested party has agreed to provide a written proposal.
- Whitetail Deer: PM Wasser didn't hear of any big bucks taken in the park. Park to start Deer Browse/Pellet Count Survey in 2009.
- Bluebird volunteers are needed

Pa. Game Commission:

- Bear Harvest numbers were released:

Archery Nov. 19-20	Statewide Season Nov. 24-26	Extended Season Dec 1-6	Total	Mercer Co.
69	2,951	438	3,458	6

- Deadline for open positions for Commissioners was March 1st, 2009. There are 3 openings.
- Distance Learning age dropped to 11yrs old study at home for Hunter Trapper Education.
- Hunter Trapper Education dates are listed on PGC website.
- **Pheasant Chick & Egg Program:** Sportsmen's organizations with approved propagation facilities can augment local ring-necked pheasant stockings and increase localized recreational hunting opportunities by raising day-old pheasant chicks supplied free-of-charge by the Pennsylvania Game Commission. See news releases on PGC website for more details.
- Several hundred little brown bats are dead from White-Nose Syndrome (WNS) in Lackawanna County, and the PGC is looking to residents for help uncovering other sites where this deadly disorder may have surfaced. See news releases on PGC website for more details.
- Commissioners January meeting determined the 2009 hunting season and bag limits. The meeting also approved the use of Crossbows without optical scope. See news releases on PGC website for more details.
- PGC is currently trapping turkeys to band them to harvest data. If you know of locations where there is large amount of turkeys, let your local deputy know. They are looking for Jakes and Gobblers, no hens. The area should not have any homes or businesses nearby.
- Local point of interest: WCO Don Chaybin and WCO Larry Hergenroeder reported as follows: A man obtained a second illegal license and harvested a deer. Then he went out of state and obtained a license and brought the deer back to PA. He took several deer without a license. When asked, the man said "he loves to hunt." He was issued fines for his actions.

Old Business: No report

New Business:

- MCFSC website mention at meeting. Secretary Myers explained the benefits of a website. This creates exposure for the Federation. Information and pricing will be gathered and presented at the March meeting.

Good of the Order:

- Dennis Anderson reporting: "Citizen Advisor" survey form was passed out at meeting for WMU 1A. Survey inquiries about deer population.
- Steven Preston reporting: Ginny Richardson is running for Mercer Co. Treasurer in the 2009 elections. Ginny has supported sportsmen's of Mercer Co. for many years. Ginny has supported our local clubs and the Federation. A motion was made to endorse Ginny, disregarding party affiliation. Motion made by Preston and seconded by Anderson. Secretary will compose a letter of endorsement to Ginny and present at next meeting.
- Ginny Richardson said a few quick words:
 - It has been her pleasure to attend Federation and local club meetings
 - 16 years ago when she first ran for treasurer, the Federation endorsed her and thank MCPSC for the support.
 - Contact her if you need her to attend any sportsmen's meetings
- Mercer Co. District Attorney Robert Kochems said a few quick words:
 - Commented on Ducks Unlimited Magazine's recent article on \$64,000 grant for waterfowl improvements at Pymatuning.
 - He attends MCFSC for a need to know information and is committed to MCFSC principles

- State Senator Robert Robbins said a few quick words:
PFSC is the only voice in Harrisburg and cannot stress the importance in defending sportsmen's rights
Expects more bills to surface that attacks the 2nd amendment right
He encourages all clubs and sportsmen to support the PFSC convention and you should plan to attend in March.
Members of affiliated clubs should get the word out to non-affiliated clubs to join PFSC and MCFSC.
Worst dog laws have passed. He would like feedback from clubs on the bills and laws.
Feeding bread to carp at the Pymatuning spillway will continue.

Club Announcements:

- Harthegig Sportsmen's Club have announced Family Fun day will be August 24th , 2009 from 12-5pm
- Hidden Valley Sportsmen's Club will be hosting a "Gun & Sporting Goods Show" on March 28th (9am-4pm) and March 29th (9am -2pm). Admission will be \$4.00. Vendors can reserve a table for \$15 (8 foot) by calling 724-528-2700.

Motion to adjourn made by Anderson

Next Meeting: March 25, 2008 at 7 PM at Harthegig

Disclaimer: Reports contained in these minutes are as given by the reporter and don't necessarily reflect the stand or opinion of the Mercer Co. Federation or any of its affiliates. *Any wording found within these minutes in italic form is a Secretary note or comment only and not directly related to the report or reporter.* Any questions regarding information contained in these minutes should be addressed immediately to the Co. Secretary listed below. ***Please ask rather than Assume!***

Minutes taken and entered by Secretary Myers with editing and distribution help by Co. Delegate Preston

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