



Federation of Dutchess County Fish and Game Clubs, Inc.

P.O. Box 3201, Poughkeepsie, New York 12603
www.dutchessfishandgame.org

Delegates' Meeting
November 12, 2020

Extended Deer Season:

The DEC has proposed a regulatory change to provide an additional hunting opportunity following the close of the current Muzzleloader Season. The new season (if adopted) will be from December 26 until January 1. It will be for Muzzleloaders, Archery and Crossbows. FWMB and CFAB ha provided comments to DEC as part of the Regulatory process. The big issue in the snowbelt is possible conflicts between hunters and snowmobilers. Both boards did not take a position of the new season, the Boards commented on the process used to advance the proposal. The comment period closed on November 8. I have attached the comments generated by the Boards.

Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease:

As you likely have already heard, EHD showed up on our doorstep in late August or early September. It struck hard and fast. There have been more than 1450 whitetail deer carcasses reported to the Region 3 wildlife line. That number is of course, just those that have been found and reported. Many more have been found and NOT reported and you can be sure that there are many, many carcasses that have not been found.

The disease has been reported in all of the Region 3 counties (Westchester, Putnam, Dutchess, Ulster, Orange, Rockland and Sullivan), and in Columbia and Greene Counties in Region 4. There may be others, but I have not seen a report.

EHD does not affect humans and does not spread from deer to deer. If you happen to eat venison from an infected deer, it will not make you sick.

However, coincidentally, there have been four cases of rabies in whitetail deer farther upstate in Cayuga, Cortland and Ontario Counties, so DO NOT assume that a sick deer you see is infected with EHD, it could be any of a number of different diseases.

The DEC has not assessed the impact hat EHD will have on your hunt this year. I will be very surprised if you don't see an impact to the harvest in the Hudson Valley.

The bottom line is that deer hunting is going to suffer for a couple to a few years. You might want to hang on to those Deer Management Permits until later in the season. You might find yourself inclined to protect the remaining does as breeding stock. It's your call, the DEC is not going to call for a moratorium.

Deer Season ECO coverage:

DEC Division of Law Enforcement will not be adding usual extra patrols during the upcoming deer season. The Governor has put the skids on agency budgets. If you see something that requires an ECO call and ask for one. If it is during normal business hours call Region 3 at 845-256-3013. After hours call 1-844-DEC-ECOS (1-844-332-3267)

CFAB - The Conservation Fund Advisory Board is holding periodic virtual meetings. Because of the Covid 19 situation, it has been nearly impossible to get the attention of the Legislature and the Governor on key issues. We can at least report that license sales are up by 15% and revenue is also up. An Analysis will be done on revenue which was skewed somewhat by the cutover over to a new level of DECALS. As soon as the numbers become clear I will distribute them. The Virtual Hunter Education classes have attracted more women and youngsters. I doubt that we can in good conscience discontinue the virtual classes after the Pandemic come under control.

FWMB – We have not yet held a state meeting in 2020. They are two-day meetings held in a conference center. We may still try to have one before year-end, though it would likely be a (virtual) one-day meeting.

New York State Conservation Council (NYSCC):

NYSCC will be closing its office soon after the start of the New Year. Both the one part-time and one full-time employees are leaving. One resigned (part-time) and one is being laid off (full-time). The office will be managed as a virtual operation. The Council President and Board of Directors have decided to hire an Executive Director (replacing the full-time employee) and the functions carried out by the former part-time employee will be continued by 2 or 3 contractors. Contracted services will be used to handle the financials, web services, database maintenance, and editing/publishing of Grass Roots News.

Total revenue for the NYSCC has dipped to \$80,000 a year. Every dollar is consumed to maintain the office. Given the financial instability, closing the office is the only viable .

What does not make any sense is to commit funds for a full-time employee when there is virtually no chance that there will be enough revenue to sustain the position. My recommendation to the Board was to contract for services until a transition plan (to virtual/office services is complete), and a clearer understanding of the Council's financial position could be determined.

The NYSCC Board is offering a benefits package to the new employee. The Council's fund balance at this time is \$11,500.

We have to decide if we will continue to offer financial support to the Council given the current situation. I am suggesting that the Federation consider holding all payments until we are given documented Transition and Financial Plans. I no longer believe the Council is viable.

Penny Hickman remains hospitalized. I spoke to her this week by phone. She is not allowed visitors. She has sounded stronger this week than she has in the past. I would like the Federation to honor her service with the position of **Director Emeritus**.

Annual Dinner – Villa Borghese will accept a reservation for our annual dinner. Given the resurgence of Covid, I think we should put it on hold.