

Erie County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, Inc.

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ERIE COUNTY FEDERATION OF SPORTSMEN'S CLUB'S, INC.

Member of New York state conservation council

Monthly newsletter and minutes

April 22, 2004

Call to order - 7:30 Erie County Conservation Society
Pledge to flag lead by President Chuck Godfrey.

Roll call -- Officers and Directors

Excused: Mike Smith, Tony Scime, Joe Fischer, Dave Barus, and Dave Reed

Absent:

Quorum of member clubs -- Present: Southtowns Walleye, Springville F&S, Bison City R&G, Hamburg R&G, Alden R&G, Lackawanna Cons., Alden Jr., West Falls Cons. Soc., Elma Cons., Blasdell R&G, Mohawk R&G, Hawkeye Bowmen, Lake Shore VF, NW Turkey Fed, Glen Coe Cons. WNY Trout Unlmted, Friends and Neighbors, Scope, Erie County Bassmasters, Deer Search, East Aurora F&G, 21 - Total

Pres. Godfrey noted The Federation has decided to promote the voluntary "Buck A Member Program" proposed by the Council. This, if successful, will insure a reliable source of income to meet the future needs for our only "conservation rights" lobbying organization in our state. For those clubs who feel this is a worthwhile cause, please make checks payable to - "New York State Conservation Council" and send to - NYSCC, 8 East Main St., Ilion, NY 13357.

To those clubs that donated last year, we hope that your commitment will carry on. Please don't wait until the Council solicits for your help. They need the resources now to fund the year's budget needs. Also, to those clubs who chose not to participate, please consider what the Council is asking for: "a dollar a member." A buck doesn't buy much these days, not a beer at a bar, not a pack of cigarettes or a good cigar, not a decent fishing lure, or even a couple dozen worms. Perhaps it's time we sportsmen and women consider putting this all in perspective!

The Conservation Council has requested an updated list of Federation clubs with names and addresses of contact people. It has been the Federation's policy not to give this list out to any other organization for privacy considerations.

Clubs wishing to receive the Council's "Grass Roots News" monthly publication, which gives updated information on state legislation and conservation issues, should contact the Council at 315-894-3302 and ask for Linda Coffin. You can also e-mail them at - nyscc@nyscc.com with the information. Clubs can send their "club's news" for publication to - NYSCC, 8 East Main St., Ilion, NY 13357 - or e-mail the by the 2nd Monday of the month. The Council also has a policy of not arbitrarily giving or selling private club information. Finally, there is an ongoing new member/renewal drive for individual Council memberships, with prizes available. Contact the Council or visit their website for details.

Membership Outreach – The membership secretary would like all club presidents to consider attending at least one regular Federation meeting a year. This might not only prove to be a learning experience, but

may also provide a better insight as to the importance of having representation on behalf of their clubs. If any club would like a visit from a Federation spokesman, please contact president Chuck Godfrey at 675-0057 or steelheader@cheekcentfcu.net . The president will also try to visit one club or so per month.

Membership Report – Mike Smith

No Report

Treasures report: - Tony Scime

No report

Secretary's report - no report

Correspondence report -- Will Elliott

Reported that he had sent 17 letters to WNY State legislators, and has received nine responses so far. For example Dale Volker, Marylou Rath and Paul Tokas all support our position and want the language concerning pistol-licensing fees removed from the budget bill.

Letters were sent to the local broadcast television news program directors thanking them for their coverage of anglers participating in the April 1st trout opener.

Next meetings and locations:

05/27/04 – Bd. Mtg. – 6:30, Reg. Mtg. – 7:30 – Friends and Neighbors Rod and Gun Club, VFW Post Lancaster, 3741 Walden Ave Lancaster, N.Y.

06/24/04 – Bd. Mtg. – 6:30, Reg. Mtg. – 7:30 – Alden R&G

7/22/04 – Bd. Mtg. – 6:30, Reg. Mtg. – 7:30 – Niagara River Station, 355 East River Rd., Grand Island NY

Jim Snyder, NYS DEC Sr. Wildlife Biologist gave an extensive report on the 2003 big game harvest, management goals, legislative proposals and management perspectives. The following is a brief summary of his presentation: The total statewide deer harvest was down approximately 50,000, the buck take was down approx. 20,000 in Western New York region 9 the buck harvest was down about 17% and the total was down 23%. It was not unexpected to see a drop in the harvest. The DEC tried to bring the population to the management goals but the drop was slightly more than planned and that could be attributed to last winter mortality and the warm opener. There probably was more winter mortality than calculated.

The fall of 2004 there will be a decrease in the number of Management Permits because in most management units we are near our population density goals. Two years ago there were about 200,000 management permits issued. 2004 will be the second year for a decrease in permits as we get near our population goals. We can expect about 80,000 to 100,000 permits to be issued in 2004.

Winter mortality was not excessive this winter was the snow did not last late into March as it did in 2002. Two places we did see winter mortality were Tiff Nature Preserve and the south end of Letchworth State Park. Poor habitat, over browsed left nothing to eat. The Letchworth deer need to be harvested to prevent habitat damage, if left unmanaged there will be more starvation and no new forest growth.

Urban deer damage permits 389 in Amherst and 176 in Clarence, which yielded 17,000 pounds of venison for the food bank. (68,000 protein portions for needy people) 550 deer car collisions last year in Amherst.

The bear harvest in NY was a record of almost 2000. Bear are becoming a nuisance in the Allegany State Park. So far, the park does not allow hunting bear but they will trap problem bears to move them. If they persist at being a problem, they are killed. NY DEC recommends that a bear hunting be allowed in the park to manage the population. The Park administrators have not adopted the recommendation.

There is a proposal to allow a special Youth Deer Hunt this fall probably Nov. 13/14 for 16 to 17 year

old hunters to shoot one deer and one bear either sex. The total people that could hunt under this proposal if everyone went out would be 18,000 statewide. This is very low and it is why the youth hunt is suggested to get young people interested and involved in hunting. The legislation to allow 14 and 15 year olds to hunt big game has not passed if it should before this proposed youth big game hunt they would be included.

There is consideration for a Saturday opener for Big Game. The intent is to get more youth involved in hunting so that they do not have to take a day off from school to hunt the opener.

Crossbow language is in the new Big Game regulation book in an anticipation of the law passing. There has been a lawsuit filed by handicap groups that if successful will allow the use of the crossbow.

Fred Langdon made a motion that we write a letter to the Allegheny Park Commissioner to allow bear hunting in the park. Bob Fuller 2nd the motion and it was carried.

Standing Committee Reports:

Law Enforcement: DEC Officer Lt. Tom Scott The DEC is looking for digital pictures for the State Syllabus, it would be great to see some with youth involved in hunting especially in the youth turkey hunt.

The Orchard Park Buck case has been brought to a satisfactory conclusion. The investigation brought together many agencies including the FBI forensics laboratory, the National Wildlife Forensics Laboratory in Oregon, NY Conservation Police, Orchard Park Police and the Erie County DA's Office. The Buck was taken illegally and the hunter, Michael Riker of Blakely Road, East Aurora in Orchard Park Court plead guilty to taking over the legal limit of antlered deer. In the plea agreement, he was fined \$500 the maximum allowed and forfeited the deer to the state of New York.

The buck will be mounted and used for educational purposes. The Erie County Conservation Society donated \$100 towards the mounting. The Federation will also be funding the mounting the details to be worked out.

In this day and age where we are in a heightened alert for the possibility of terrorism, the front line officer has to be alert for the unusual. Recently two officers observed two individuals in downtown Buffalo photographing city hall. When they were approached, they tried to flee. They were apprehended and found to be foreign nationals here illegally. It has not been determined if they were terrorists but they are now in Genesee county jail awaiting deportation. We all need to be aware and report anything that is out of the ordinary.

Albany is implementing a program to implement Conservation Law enforcement 24/7 through restructuring the use of manpower.

Often people are quick to complain however our Conservation Law Enforcement Officers work hard and if you have a positive experience with an interaction take a minute and send a letter or e-mail commenting on the good job the officer has done.

NRA Grant Process

Friends and Neighbors Hunting & Fishing Club is a facilitator for the NRA grant application process. They encourage any club needing funding for a project, apply to the NRA. Friends and Neighbors will help with filling out the application; the money is for youth programs. Last year in New York State the NRA awarded \$1.4 million and in Erie County \$30,000. With 54 organizations in the Federation, we should be able to come up with some worthwhile programs for grants.

Archery & Bowhunting—Mike Kemp

Hawkeye Bowman is opposed to the Youth Hunt Deer Hunt during the Archery season. They feel

there is a safety issue with camouflaged hunters in the woods at the same time youth will be using shotguns.

Crossbow Report- Tony Gonnello

The DEC will be submitting their own bill for the crossbow. (As reported above there has been a lawsuit filed to force the legalization of crossbow use.)

Washington State will allow the use of crossbows for disabled.

Pennsylvania will now allow the crossbow in all firearms seasons for elk, bear, and deer. There will also be special areas during the archery season where the crossbow will be allowed. The crossbow will also be allowed during the early muzzleloader season, which is during the archery season, plus the flintlock season, this is a real breakthrough in the east.

Rhode Island has passed legislation to allow the crossbow. **New York is one of only four** states in the United States that **does not** allow the use of crossbows.

Fish –

Will Elliot reported for Joe Fischer that at the up coming NYSCC meeting in Herkimer NY two topics will may be discussed, is the big controversy brewing over the striper fishery in the Hudson, which will become a national issue. Also, the proposal to make it a requirement to make the fishing license visible at all times when fishing (similar to Pa.). The Niagara County Federation has already come out in opposition to this regulation change.

Dan Tone made a motion that the Erie County Federation should oppose the proposed visible fishing license regulation. The motion was 2nd by Gene Sander and it was unanimously carried.

June 26 and 27 will be a free fishing weekend. No license will be required this is a good time to introduce someone to fishing.

June 5, the East Aurora Fish and Game Club will have its Kids Fishing Day contact Dave Barrus for details.

Pres. Godfrey updated everyone that the DEC has stocked the Buffalo River with 10,000 Steelhead, Buffalo Creek with 20,000, Cayuga Creek in Lancaster with 15,000, and 10,000 in Cazenovia Creek in East Aurora. The state raises a strain of rainbow trout called “urban rainbows” and Region is the only region in the state to get them. 1400 went into the Small Boat harbor, 500 went into Lake Kirsty at Tiff nature Preserve, and 500 went into Buffalo Creek near Indian Church Rd and Mineral Springs Rd,

Spencer Schofield updated everyone on the walleye restoration program for the Buffalo River. The DEC and volunteers were out sampling Smokes and the Cattaraugus Creeks. No walleye were found at Smokes Creek only gizzard shad and suckers, the water may have been too cold. At the Catt, several walleye were collected and eggs were harvested from the only ripe female for the program. Don Einhouse’s original plan was not to harvest eggs from Cattaraugus Creek but due to the uncertainty of getting walleye from Smokes creek a last minute decision was made to collect eggs from walleye in the Catt this year.

Will Elliot mentioned that the Friends of the Buffalo Niagara River who are very supportive to the walleye restoration project will be conducting a Buffalo River from April 22, to May first. They are also working to increase fishermen access to the river and waterfront.

Kids Fishing Clinic Kent Kruse - First clinic will be at Tiffit Nature Preserve, June 12th and two weeks later, June 26th at Chestnut ridge Park. Kent has been organizing these events and would like to get a handle on the number of volunteers that will step up and help. If we want this type of event to continue in to the future, we need people. Contact Kent and sign up for this event.

Small game -- Dan Tone

The youth turkey hunt will be this weekend (April 24-25) the one person who worked behind the scene and was very instrumental in getting this hunt was Al Guy he should be recognized for his efforts.

4H pheasants only 1365 chicks, perhaps this would be a program that could use an NRA grant funding to support raising pheasants.

Pheasants Forever Chapter 29 conducted a survey on March 6th, north of route 104 in Porter NY. In three hours they counted 11 birds (6 hens/ 5 roosters) which equates to one for every 20 acres last year the survey showed one for every 15 acres. They saw many tracks and signs of many more birds. They were satisfied with the result.

For the Youth Pheasant Hunt, Dan tone got two replies back from the winning clubs we need to hear from Evans R&G, and East Aurora F&G.

Big game – Paul Stoos

No Report

Trapping -- Patti Wattengel

No Report

Waterfowl – Paul Pietraszewski

The waterfowl season has been set for the fall. The Iroquois Wildlife Refuge due to a lack of interest will no longer hold an early nuisance season.

Conservation Council -- Joe Fischer

No Report

Resolutions -- Bob Fuller

We know there are 14 resolutions as soon as copies of them become available we will see that they get out to everyone who needs them.

Environment and Pollution –

No Reports

Legislation – John Susz To keep in touch with what's going on with firearm legislation in New York, check out SCOPE's website at - www.scopeny.org

There is a plethora of bills being introduced in the state legislature to change the distance from a building you may discharge a firearm. The current regulation is 500 feet from an occupied building. New proposals are from 1000 feet to as much as a mile. This could prove to be a hindrance for hunting by removing a lot of area for hunting.

On the Federal level, the Protection of Lawful Commerce Act was killed. Senators John Kerry and John Edwards came off the campaign trail to vote against your right to gun ownership. Assault weapon and gun show bans were added to the bill, which essentially killed the legislation.

Presidential candidate John Kerry over the past twenty years has voted 51 out of 55 times against your rights as gun owners. John Kerry represents a return to the anti gun rhetoric and campaigns of the Clinton administration.

As we approach the election, this fall there will be campaign regulations in place that will prevent the NRA from publishing information about the candidates. There will be a website www.nranews.com that will have information. It will be available daily 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM

The State Budget is late again. There have been emergency appropriations passed, which contain the pistol permit wording. We need to keep calling our Representatives about this issue. **For a complete listing of current gun legislation, visit the Scope Website**

Sportsman Education --

John Susz noted that there were 32 accidents in 2003 with two fatalities. The five-year average has been 56 accidents per year, while one is too many the accident rate is declining. This shows that the Hunter Safety Education is working very well. Most accidents involve carelessness.

Special Committee Reports:

Awards -- Will Elliott
No Report

Banquet --

Educational Opportunities --Chuck Godfrey Only one qualifying application for the scholarship, we will award it to Kevin Slade of Blasdell NY he is a student at Cortland University studying Environmental Science.

Fund Raising --

Tony Gonnello explained that we will be offering the Remington Calendars for sale, to support our Youth programs. He would like each representative to ask their club how many calendars they would like to sell. Contact Tony for all the details.

Shows—

May 18th there is a meeting for the Erie County Fair for all the Exhibitors
May 15 and 16 Gun show at Springville Rod and Gun.

National Hunting and Fishing days September 25 and 26, 2004

Old Business

The Federation will be an NRA recruiter the number will be on our website. We encourage all members to join to help support your organization and right for gun ownership.

Website- Paul Stoos

Needs clubs to contact him with the correct and current e-mail addresses so we can get the mailings

minutes out.

New Business

Niagara Frontier Chapter of the Wild Turkey Federation will host a Jakes Day on June 12th at the Elma Conservation Club for kids 17 and under. The event is free and runs from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM There will be seminars and various activities for the kids. Pro Staff from Knight and Hale will be on hand for a seminar and demonstrations. Kids will get to fish Elma Conservation Club will supply poles and bait. Lunch will also be provided.

50/50 Raffle

Winner Spencer Schofield

Thanks to Host Club

Erie County Conservation Society

Motion for Adjournment at 10:40