

Minutes from NCPARC PRT Working Group Meeting October 4, 2007

1-4 PM, Eberhardt building, UNC-G

Dave Davenport opened the meeting. Introductions. Those attending included:

Dave Davenport
Ann Somers
Grover Barfield
Phil Bradley
David Cooper
Jeff Hall
Andrew Wyatt
Ted Williams

Davenport opened discussion around the minutes from the previous meeting. No corrections needed – minutes approved. PRT working group is still seeking a secretary. Hall will serve in interim.

Hall discussed PRT recommendations with respect to summary presented to NCPARC Steering Committee. The Steering Committee recommends that PRT recs. be forwarded on to communities, municipalities, and other state agencies; they did not feel that WRC was the place for this to go. WRC has been reluctant to handle nonnative species and has tried to minimize any dealings with them. Davenport disagreed with the Steering Committee and maintains that WRC is the best place for these recommendations due to staffing issues, biological backgrounds of staffing and housing of other herpetologically-related regulations. Somers et al. discussed issues surrounding the Asian market(s) in NC. Somers and others felt that dealing with this issue may “force” WRC to begin dealing with more exotic species and may open the door to more opportunities within PRT’s recommendations.

Bradley asked about other options if WRC is not the home for this or cannot take it on. Hall and Davenport discussed the potential to work with the state vet through the Department of Health and Human Safety. This could work well if these animals are perceived as a threat to health and human safety. However, the state vet has stated that regulation of these “inherently dangerous animals” is not a safety issue. Davenport and Hall will attempt to contact and/or meet with the state vet soon to see what can be accomplished.

Wyatt explained another option by attempting to incorporate PRT recs. into existing Article 55 legislation (see Attachment 3 from 7/11/07 PRT minutes). Discussion followed about NC State Museum of Natural Sciences (NCSM) mentioned as the designated body tasked with housing confiscated animals. Article 55 also currently mentions NCSM and “its agents” can be responsible for these animals. Several members asked what the requirements are to be an “agent” of NCSM. Phil Bradley will check and find out details for next meeting. Wyatt asked whether NCARK might be able to serve as

a designated agent? Wyatt also mentioned that the rewrite of Article 55 actually changed the language slightly to give NCSM release from liability – basically trying to satisfy many different parties in this document. Davenport led discussion about whether pushing Article 55A would preclude attempts to adopt PRT’s full recs. later (i.e. some year down the road)? No one was sure of the answer, but all agreed that the two appear to not be contradictory. Wyatt mentioned that 55A could not be pushed until 2009, but that thinking about it now will help PRT be ready to make a decision by that time. Davenport reemphasized importance of determining whether 55A would impair attempts in the future to push for the full PRT recs. Some discussion followed about the details of 55A and a few revisions were suggested. Hall agreed to talk to Chris McGrath and potentially others within WRC (attorney?) about view of 55A and how it might affect future work. Bradley agreed to check with NCSM attorney if possible.

At this point, a suggestion was made that the PRT recs. should be minimally posted on the NCPARC website and that they might also be sent to individual counties (not sure of method). After discussion, it was agreed that the PRT recs. would be sent as is with no particular specific changes for any county. That way all counties will receive the same information and have the ability to act similarly.

Took a 15 min break.

Grover Barfield asked whether NCARK could use PRT recs. to designate its members as compliant or not. Wyatt considered this, but wasn’t sure this would accomplish the goals of the recs.

If SB 1477 comes up again (revived), NCPARC will send another letter in opposition.

Short discussion about possession permits. Hall mentioned they are in process, but applications are not available yet. PRT working group will likely need help from Education and Outreach (EO) working group to “get the word out.” Hall agreed to look into these permits to enable PRT and EO members to understand these new permits more fully.

Brief discussion on snapping turtle regs. Hall mentioned that the WRC would be holding a meeting soon to discuss details of this proposed reg and if it passed through the commission, then would go to public hearings. Hall agreed to look into public hearing dates and disseminate this information.

Very brief discussion about Asian markets and impact on PRT working group. Ted Williams agreed to call local health departments and “fact find” for the group. Future discussions will probe this issue further.

Davenport moved to set two meeting dates to try and accomplish as much as possible in the short term. The next two meetings were set for Nov. 13 and Dec. 17, both from 1-4, and both at UNC-G.

Action Items:

- Hall and Davenport – meet with state vet
- Wyatt and Bradley – look into what it takes for NCARK to become an NCSM agent
- Somers and Hall – look at whether 55A inhibits future potential for full PRT recs.
- Davenport – look up most current version of PRT recs. to distribute to PRT members and for NCPARC website
- Williams – call local health departments and learn more about regulation of Asian food markets