

Cheoah River Resource Management and Enhancement Fund
Annual Meeting
October 4, 2011, 11:00 a.m.
USFWS Office and Conference Room
160 Zillicoa Street
Asheville, NC

Meeting Notes

Participants: Chris Goudreau (NCWRC)*
Jason Farmer (USFS)*
Mark Cantrell (USFWS)*
Jim Mead (NCDWR)*
Jody Smet (EA Engineering)
Marshall Olson (Alcoa)
Steve Fraley (NCWRC)
Julie Moore (USFS)
Dick Eyestone
Don Orth (VT) via conference call
* Board member

Jason Farmer called the meeting to order and noted that all Board members were in attendance except Mike Bolt. Since all members were not present, the Cheoah Fund Operating Protocol states that any decisions made by the Board at the meeting are considered tentative.

1. Update of Finances

Jason Farmer provided a copy of the financial report for 2011 through September 20 (Attachment 1). Currently, there is \$64,284.55 in the account. After subtracting outstanding financial obligations, the Fund has approximately \$25,687.29 remaining without considering APGI's 2011 contribution. The original Fiduciary Report showed \$197.73 of interest. Jim Mead stated that this interest had been pulled from the account and moved to the NC general fund. After some discussion about the specific language within the fiduciary agreement, the board determined that no action was necessary at this time to make adjustments in the fiduciary agreement.

2. Reports of Funded Projects

a. Virginia spiraea monitoring & management (USFWS, USFS)

Jason Farmer provided a verbal summary of the ongoing nonnative invasive species treatments along the Cheoah River. The USFS contractors (using ARRA stimulus funds) are doing a great job and will continue their work until 2014. Reports from Gary Kauffman indicate that we have good control within 100 feet of Virginia spiraea. A written report from Gary is expected soon.

b. Restoration ecology of fishes (Virginia Tech 2007)

Don Orth provided a brief verbal summary of Ryan McManamay's research. Ryan had submitted 10 documents on September 28, 2011. The board members agreed that we will need considerable time to review the documents.

c. Captive culture and reintroduction of fishes and mussels (NCWRC 2009)

Steve Fraley provided a verbal summary of the propagation work. Sixty three wavy-rayed lampmussels and 66 rainbows were released into the Cheoah River this year. The facility currently has 10,000 wavy-rayed lampmussels and 5,000 rainbows from the 2010 cohort and they are growing well. The 2011 cohort is expected to be better than the 2010 cohort. This was the third year to lose all Appalachian elktoe juveniles. Conservation Fisheries (CFI) lost all of their 2011 spotfin chub fry. The Little Tennessee River may serve as a source population for transfer of fish to the Cheoah River in 2012. The NCWRC facility had a good cohort of spotfins at the hatchery. Monitoring has shown an expansion of spotfins approximately 2 miles from the release site and also located numerous young-of-the-year. The elktoe monitoring located 6 tagged mussels and one untagged dead mussel.

d. Propagation of wounded darters (CFI 2009)

Jason referenced the project update prepared by CFI and indicated that the darters were raised and stocked as indicated. Some discussion centered on the presence of blue-green algae and hydrilla within the river. Steve indicated that it is unknown if these growths are inhibiting the benthic fishes. Benthic fishes have been reduced and the number of river chubs (a host for the Appalachian elktoe) appears to be in decline. However, Steve has noticed an increase in fine substrate as alder clumps continue to break up.

e. Management of Yellow Cr. exotic vegetation (LTLT 2009)

Jason provided a brief overview of Philip Moore's report. A written report is anticipated after January 1, 2012.

The target completion date for gravel installation of the gravel is November 24.

3. Other Updates

a. Website (APGI)

The Cheoah Fund website needs to be updated. All Fund Board business should be sent to Jody for uploading to the website. Chris will send updates for 2010 activities to Jody.

4. Review of Fund Proposals for 2011

a. Captive culture and reintroduction of fishes and mussels (NCWRC 2010)

The Board members present agreed to extend funding for this proposal at \$10,000 annually for 2012 – 2014, pending submission of a formal proposal after receipt of the 2012 Alcoa funds. The propagation and stocking efforts meet the central goal of the

Fund and should be continued. The decision is tentative, pending agreement by Mike Bolt.

b. Propagation of wounded darters (CFI)

The Board members present agreed to extend funding for this proposal, \$6,000 per year for two years. Again, the decision is tentative, pending agreement by Mike Bolt.

c. Gravel installation – 2012

Another round of gravel will be installed in 2012 at the previously treated 5 sites. The 404 permit expires on March 18, 2012 so we will need to get the contract process started and let the contract prior to March 18 to be in compliance with the 404 permit. The estimated cost is \$5,000. The installation date would be in mid April. The contract should specify the equipment to be used. Chris will provide the previous contract information to Jim.

5. Select Chair for 2011

After some discussion, Jim Mead (or other DWR representative) was tentatively selected to be the Fund Board Chair for 2012.

6. Review Action Items

- a. Jason – follow up with Gary Kauffman to get a report of invasive plant treatments.
- b. Jim – Contact LTLT after January 1 to get a final report on 2011 activities
- c. Jim – Contact DENR regarding CFI and NCWRC contract (Done).
- d. Steve – Develop an updated scope of work for 2012 – 2014 mussel and fish propagation and submit to Jim Mead after Alcoa payment (February 1, 2012?)
- e. Chris – Update information for posting on website.
- f. Jason – Send email to Mike Bolt describing tentative decisions. [Done]

7. Adjourn

Note – Subsequent to the meeting, Mike Bolt concurred with the tentative decisions reached by the Board (Attachment 2).

Attachment 1

**Cheoah River Resource Management and Enhancement Fund
Fiduciary Report
2011 (through September 20, 2011)**

1/1/2011	Fund Balance		\$ 75,007.96
2/10/2011	ALCOA Deposit	\$28,891.00	103, 898.96
Disbursements (2011)			
1/11/11	NCWRC	\$3,688.00	
2/15/2011	Virginia Tech	10,801.18	
5/10/2011	Virginia Tech	7,734.32	
6/8/2011	NCWRC	10,000.00	
8/2/2011	Virginia Tech	7390.91	
9/20/2011	Interest	197.73	64,482.28
Outstanding Obligations			
	Virginia Tech	12,597.26	
	LTLT (Yellow Creek)	18,000.00	
	Conservation Fisheries	8,000.00	
Available Funds			25,885.02
Minus interest			25,687.29

Attachment 2

RE: Cheoah Fund Board Tentative Decisions - Message (HTML)

File Message

Ignore Delete Reply Reply All Forward More Meeting Move to? Team E-mail Reply & Delete To Manager Done Create New Move Actions Mark Unread Categorize Follow Up Translate Select Zoom

From: Michael Bolt <michbolt@nc-cherokee.com> Sent: Tue 10/11/2011 11:44 AM
To: Farmer, Jason
Cc:
Subject: RE: Cheoah Fund Board Tentative Decisions

Jason,
Thanks for the update.
I am good with these initiatives.
Mike

From: Farmer, Jason [mailto:jfarmer@fs.fed.us]
Sent: Tuesday, October 11, 2011 10:37 AM
To: Michael Bolt
Cc: Chris J. Goudreau "Goudreau, Chris J." <chris.goudreau@ncwildlife.org> (chris.goudreau@ncwildlife.org); Mark_A_Cantrell@fws.gov; Mead, Jim
Subject: Cheoah Fund Board Tentative Decisions

Mike,

At the October 4 meeting of the Cheoah Fund Board, the voting members present tentatively agreed to fund two proposals requesting funds for 2012. The WRC proposal is for \$10,000 per year for 3 years to continue propagating fish and mussels for reintroduction into the Cheoah River. The Conservation Fisheries proposal is for an extension of the existing project at \$8,000 per year for 2 years to continue propagation and reintroduction of wounded darters.

Two other action items were tentatively approved. We agreed to develop a contract to install another round of gravel at the same locations that we used in 2010 (estimated cost: \$5,000). This contract must be let by March 18, 2012 to satisfy the 404 permit requirement. We selected Jim Mead (or other DWR representative yet to be determined) as the 2012 Chair.

Per the Cheoah Fund Board Operating Protocol, I am notifying you of the tentative decisions. You have fourteen (14) calendar days from the date of this email to cast your vote as to the funding of the proposals and two additional action items. If you do not reply within the prescribed timeframe, the Board's tentative decisions will become final.

Give me a call if you have any questions about this matter or about the meeting in general.

Michael Bolt

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