



**ILLINOIS STATE CHAPTER  
NATIONAL WILD TURKEY FEDERATION**



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**3rd Quarter Minutes – September 17, 2023**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Gerald Lively, Greg Shaffer, Steve McNeil, Kent Bushman, Mike Lowder, Bob Reich, Terri Lively, Eugene Stearns, Heath Jordan, Jeff Erb, Gerald Bois

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Michael Howie, Todd Batten, Wayne Prather

Note: Board members are required to attend a minimum of 50% (2 of 4) of the meetings to retain a seat on the board.

**NWTF STAFF PRESENT:** Cindy Spillman, Jeff Ravenscraft, John Burk **ABSENT:** Stacy Lindemann, Chase Seals

**GUEST:** Luke Garver

Pledge of Allegiance

A Moment of Silence for all of our service men and women serving domestic and abroad protecting our freedoms and for all those in harm's way.

Self-Introductions (Roll-Call): Board, Staff & Guests

Secretary's Report from June Meeting/Phone Conference: Cindy Spillman took minutes, Kent Bushman sent out approved minutes and attachments on 7/12/23

**TREASURER'S REPORT: ATTACHMENT A;** Steve McNeil - State Balance - \$7,084.83; 3rd Quarter Expenditures - \$11,406.88; 3rd Quarter Deposits - \$9,071.42. A complete summary was handed out. Motion to approve - Terri Lively; 2<sup>nd</sup> Greg Shaffer, Motion Carried

**SUPER FUND SUMMARY: ATTACHMENT B;** John Burk – Set annual budget and approve projects. Summary handed out. **Attachment B2** budget approved.

Super Fund proposals.

1) Approved; 2) Approved; 3) Approved; 4) Denied; 5) Approved; 6) Approved; 7) Approved; 8) Approved; 9) Approved; 10) Approved; 11) Approved; 12) Approved; 13) Approved; 14) Approved; 15) Tabled; 16) Denied;

Pennsylvania Jakes Hunt, expenses to fund travel, lodging, permits for hunter/chaperone, etc. Failed for lack of Motion.

Discussion that possibly next year we allow some money for travel allowance for the Pecatonica Youth Hunt.

Motion to approve Super Fund Budget; Terri Lively; 2<sup>nd</sup> Steve McNeil, Motion Carried

**Trap Teams,** lots of discussion, maximum amount set by State Board but must have at least matching funds upon request along with explanation of need. Motion Dr. Reich; 2<sup>nd</sup> Heath Jordan, Motion Carried

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

1) **Regional Field Staff Report:** Jeff – Calendar Update, lot of Calendars out, selling good so far. Looking to hire 10 new RD's in various states, hiring a DFO that will be over all the new RD's, currently 36 RD's, in 10 years they want 80 RD's and 2500 Chapters nationwide. Less Chapters in IL now than pre-covid but overall revenue is up for the State.

Cindy - have 3 Chapters that have not had a banquet since Covid but may be coming back in FY24, currently 27 banquets scheduled.

Gerald - Pre-covid 3000 Chapters nationwide and currently at 1100.

Jeff has 3 events left this year; Cindy has 1 event left this year.

Jeff & Cindy both reached their FY23 budgets.

Cindy - Nationally met our FY23 4th Qtr. Cash goal \$10 million/Actual \$10,783,932 and membership Goal 2,765/Actual 6,724. As of August 2023, Illinois ranks 3 in memberships by state with 14,169 adult members. Nationally we are at 224,959 adult members toward our goal of 250,000 adult members by the end of the calendar year.

State wide Whiskey raffle, will be drawing later today, it went very well. Look at guns for next year possibly cash prizes instead.

Cindy - thanks to all the Board members that supported Galesburg Guns Galore Party event yesterday, we did have some trips there yesterday by HGA, this is a new company that is much better so we will be using these in the future, mostly on Silent Auction.

Cindy - Kurt Dyroff and Matt Lindler have been in DC this past week meeting with top government officials on various topics. One was the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, as recently interpreted by some, this Act may prevent federal funds from being used on hunting and archery programs in the schools. They met with top officials and provided input on this topic in the hopes of creating a legislative fix for it.

Jeff - working with All American Classics, they offer sports and Hollywood memorabilia and can produce almost anything you would want, these would also be on Silent Auction, if sold would be shipped directly to purchaser. I have possibly two new Chapters coming on board for FY24.

Jeff - State Banquet, last year lost \$3,500, thinking about a winner take all raffle (all core package items + maybe 5 guns) 300 tickets maximum. Ticket price \$50 attend or non-attending, once sell 100 attending the rest would go Nationwide on sales for non-attending. Possibly sell Sponsor tickets, 5 chances at (winner take all) and if attending 2 people.

High school scholarships-online portal should be open November 1st. Kent will send out to Chapter contacts. Submission deadlines; January 1<sup>st</sup> to local chapter; February 1st for the State Scholarship and March 1<sup>st</sup> for the National Scholarship, local chapter can have later deadline for chapter scholarship but won't be considered for State.

2) **Regional Biologist Report:** John Burk; **District Forester:** Chase Seals; **Forester:** Stacy Lindemann  
**ATTACHMENT C** - CP Report was provided, John went over the handout and explained in detail. John went over Stacy and Chase's reports.



- 3) **IDNR Report:** Luke Garver – **Report page 2 ATTACHMENT C** - Luke went over his report. DNR is supporting legislation to allow .410s for Turkey Hunting, if turned down again they will try to maybe approach from another angle such as public campaign.
- 4) **Social Media Report:** Heath Jordan – Report on recent activity; Web Page 1,732 visits this year, past month visits to website 54 from Facebook, 34 from Google, 21 Direct & 1 from Bing. 65% via Mobile, 30% via Desktop and 5% via Tablet. Facebook has 4,776 followers, in the past 28 days it has had post reach 7,234, post engagement 944, new page likes 13 and 17 new followers. Visitors are 76.70% men and 23.30 women. Approximately 60% of the visitors are between the ages of 25 and 54.
- 5) **Land of Lincoln Scholarship:** Dr. Reich - applications sent out, deadline is November 1st, Kent can send it out again to Chapter contacts and Heath can post it again on Social Media.
- 6) **2024 LOL Rendezvous:** Jeff/Mike – January 12 – 13 at the Wyndham in Springfield, IL; Jeff & Cindy have contacted vendors, several have committed to attend. Possibly put vendors at one end of the large room. Need to start figuring out how many vendors so the contract on rooms can be wrapped up. Also contacted the DNR Director to attend but don't know yet if she will. Attending from NWTF National headquarters is Barry Woods, National Director of Event Fundraising and possibly Jason Burckhalter, Co=CEO (Marketing/Fundraising) if he doesn't have a conflict.
- 7) **Other:** Jeff, A request will be made to Scheels to provide \$25 gift cards to each attendee at the state rendezvous as an incentive.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- 1) **IFOR Report:** Dr. Reich – New gun legislation still going through some courts, most Sheriffs and Local Police say they are not going to enforce but State Police say they will. Registration for those guns in the new law is not set up yet.
- 2) **Wheelin' Sportsmen Report:** Michael Howie\Cindy – Michael is guest speaker at an event in Mt. Vernon, hoping to make some contacts and rebuild chapters in that area. He raised \$7,200 at Deer and Beer Fest with a raffle to help with the three hunts he has set up. 9/30-10/4 deer hunt Pope Co. for 7 hunters; 11/2-6/23 he is partnering with United Special Sportsman Alliance (critically ill youth like cancer survivors) on a youth deer hunt on TON for 5 youth; 11/10-12/23 he is partnering with IDNR and TON on a deer hunt for 50 disabled hunters, all of these hunts will have many helpers to make them happen. Michael made contact with Jeremy Critchfield, aka The Hunt Chef at the Deer and Beer Fest and if he is able to attend the Touch of Nature deer hunt on 11/10. He will share ideas to help participants better prepare what they harvest. Volunteers process the deer that are harvested and they divide it up amongst the participants. The Hunt Chef also plans on bringing seasonings to make breakfast sausage for everyone to take home if he is able to attend.
- 3) **JAKES and STH2 Report:** Heath Jordan – Getting whisker biscuit arrow rests, looking to order some arrows, have an extra BB Gun range from MO now. Still need to think about having trailers re-wrapped with new Logo. 2024 Youth Hunt at Pecatonica, so far 8 applicants, deadline January 7th. Keep spreading the word with Email and Social Media. Have hosts lined up for all weekends but always looking for mentors. New hunter numbers, NWTF members doing Hunter Safety Education get papers to fill out for new hunters to be counted but several have not been filling them out. Bottom line we are not getting numbers from the Hunter Education classes. Luke will look into possibly getting numbers from the State.
- 4) **PA Jakes Hunt of a lifetime:** Cindy\Jeff – Already had discussion
- 5) **Board Seat Elections/Officer Elections:** Six board seats will be opened up for election. Those include expiring terms for Mike Lowder, Robert Reich, Gerald Bois, Todd Batten, Jeff Erb and one vacant board seat. Application deadline is December 1st. All incumbents need to respond to me with their desire to run for re-election by December 1st. Additionally, all officer positions will be expiring in 2024.

Mike Lowder announced that he is not running for re-election.

Kent Bushman mentioned he would not be present at the January meeting.

6) **Other Business:** DNR Officer of the year applications have been sent out.

Jeff - the Board has approved Super Fund money for recruitment events. Cindy and I will use some of that money this year for Constant Contact, an online marketing company. It will allow us to expand our reach to non-members as well as members. Cost for a year is approximately \$2,000. Provide them with names to send an email to promote our banquets/events.

Cindy - would like the State Chapter to purchase leg bands again for Chapters as in the past, Motion by Steve McNeil 2<sup>nd</sup> by Terri Lively, Motion Carried

7) **Next Meeting:** January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at the Wyndham in Springfield, IL

Motion to adjourn by Gerald Bois; 2<sup>nd</sup> Greg Shaffer; Motion Carried - Time – 2:21 p.m.



Att. A

Financial Report 2023 4th Q

Check #	Date	Description of Transaction	Expense	Deposit	Balance
					\$9,420.29
DC	06/20/23	State Farm - Trailer Insurance	\$7.80		9,412.49
1055	06/26/23	Bob Reich - declaration	\$173.84		9,238.65
	06/26/23	National Deposit - Banquets		\$3,414.13	12,652.78
DC	06/26/23	Scheels - Board Lunch	\$117.06		12,535.72
	06/30/23	National Deposit - NLC		\$3,357.29	15,893.01
1056	07/01/23	Gerald Lively - NLC	\$1,051.13		14,841.88
1057	07/01/23	Marty Skorch - NLC	\$1,022.08		13,819.80
1058	07/01/23	Heath Jordan - NLC	\$1,284.08		12,535.72
1059	07/01/23	Heath Jordan - JAKES Hunt	\$124.87		12,410.85
DC	07/03/23	USPS - postage	\$63.00		12,347.85
DC	07/26/23	State Farm - Trailer Insurance	\$23.85		12,324.00
DC	07/26/23	State Farm - Trailer Insurance	\$23.85		12,300.15
DC	07/27/23	State Farm - Trailer Insurance	\$7.80		12,292.35
	08/21/23	Deposit - Whiskey		\$2,300.00	14,592.35
1060	08/23/23	NWTF - Whiskey Raffle	\$7,500.00		7,092.35
DC	08/25/23	State Farm - Trailer Insurance	\$7.52		7,084.83
			\$11,406.88	\$9,071.42	

Att B

PROPOSALS SUBMITTED TO 2024 NWTF SUPERFUND PROGRAM

Proj #	Project Originator/Agency	Amount Requested	Matching Funds?	Chapter	Description	Score	Approved Amount
1	Heath Jordan	\$2,500.00	\$8,950.00	Northern IL Thundering Toms	Support State Mentored Youth Turkey Hunts		
2	Bronwyn Aly	\$2,000.00	\$10,637.00	Shawnee Hills Longbeards	Stewardship week		
3	Gerald Bois	\$1,500.00	\$3,000.00	Rock River	Wheel'n Youth Turkey Hunt		
4	Scott Goeddal	\$3,400.00	\$3,400.00	Monroe County Longbeards	enclosed trailer for trap team		
5	Jeff Ravenscraft	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	Western IL Triple Toes	Mentored deer hunt		
6	Jeff Ravenscraft	\$1,000.00	\$1,500.00	Midwest Gobblers	Trap Team support		
7	Dave Perce	\$500.00	\$1,500.00	Jacksonville Gobblers	Trap Team support		
8	Michael Howie	\$4,000.00	\$9,700.00	Three Forks Wild Turkey	3 mentored deer hunts that will host up to 62 hunters		
9	Tiffany Gerfke	\$500.00	\$1,500.00	Jacksonville Gobblers	Trap Team support		
10	Brent Maseiro	\$7,500.00	\$2,600.00	Shawnee Hills Longbeards	Funding support for Great Rivers PBA		
11	Brad Petersburg	\$300.00	\$0.00	Jo Daviess Longbeards	Funding support for burn workshop in NWIL		
12	Greg Fretweg	\$10,000.00	\$30,000.00	Jacksonville Gobblers	600 acres of bush honeysuckle control at Mackinaw River SFWA		
13	Greg Fretweg	\$10,000.00	\$32,350.00	Full Struts	647 acres of bush honeysuckle control at Argyle Lake SP		
14	Ray Geroff	\$7,500.00	\$6,250.00	Jacksonville Gobblers	125 acres of sericea control at Jim Edgar Panther Creek SFWA		
15	Scott Crist	\$18,000.00	\$180,000.00	Shawnee Hills Longbeards	purchase dragon eggs to enable 10,000 acres of burning on the Shawnee		
16	Dan Day	\$7,052.00	\$1,000.00	Spoon River Gobblers	Trap shooting simulator system		

Total Amount Requested..... **\$78,752.00**  
 Total Amount Matched..... **\$295,387.00**

Amount approved **\$0.00**



Am B2

Year	Project Type														Total		
	4H	CP	HE	NASP	JAKES	WS	WITO	Sch	YS	Rebate	Travel	Seed	MH	Rec		AFF	HDS
Budgeted	1350	20000	2000	2150	2500	500	500	11000	1500	0	2000	8000	500	6000	5000	15000	78000
Spent	0	20000	2600	1075	2846	250	0	8700	900	0	2340	7385	0	3848	5000	33514	88458
Projected	1350	20000	4000	2150	4000	500	500	13000	1500	10000	5000	8000	500	6000	5000	16000	97500

CP = Conservation Program support

HE = Hunter Education

YS = Youth shooting (trap team support, wing shooting clinics, etc.

OE = Outdoor Education (environmental education program support)

MH = Mentored Hunts

Rec = Recruitment event support

AFF = affiliation dues support (IFOR, NASC, hunting heritage)

PB = Project Budget \$62,500

Att. C

## Conservation Programs Report for June Board Meeting 09/17/2023

### Stacy Lindemann: Illinois and Kaskaskia River Basins Focal Landscape

- Stacy continues to work on the deliverables associated with the NRCS grant
- NRCS June – August 2023 Update for Stacy:
  - Completed 16 Tree Planting/Re-enrollment/Mid-Management/Forest Management Incentive plans influencing 116 acres of CRP
  - Completed 6 Forest Management Plans (EQIP) influencing over 233 acres for NRCS
  - Reviewed 24 properties totaling 390 conserved acres of EQIP/CRP/HIP projects for compliance.
  - Completed 47 site visits
  - Was in contact with 32 landowners
  - Total of 739 acres influenced/conserved

### Chase Seals: Shawnee Hills Focal Landscape

#### USFS

#### Log Mark Pine SA

- Log Mark service work is underway. Contractor has completed roughly 468 acres of TSI (non-herbicide and herbicide) site preparation and non-native invasive species control (NNIS).
- Log Mark timber sale was sold for a sum of \$123,656.00. This yielded \$37,468.14 bid premium over the USFS required bid minimum.
- Extra revenue from the timber sale, my contract rate for service work, and the USFS adding \$80K in additional funding resulted in the addition of 1,039 acres that will be conserved/influenced.
- With the acreage addition, the total acres impacted via this agreement will be 2,249 acres

#### Buttermilk Hill SA

- Mastication contractor has only 1.5 units left and that work will be complete
- USFS staff and myself are planning to accomplish the tree planting side of the agreement this coming planting season (Feb-May 15, 2024)
- Once these two items are wrapped up, Buttermilk can be closed out.

#### Kincaid Lakeshore Restoration (CALR)

- I am working with USFS to finish a draft for this new agreement. If this agreement is approved as is, it will add little over \$33K in salary support for myself and roughly \$26K in indirect costs.
- At this time, we have zero cash obligated to this agreement and are sitting at ~6.7% match rate compared to the old standard of 20%.
- Work focus will be FSI within a buffer along the lake edge, removal of non-native invasive species, and releasing around giant cane patches.
- This work will help to keep the forest in the native oak/hickory ecosystem (which is essential for turkeys), improve usage and visibility for turkeys in locations, and help to promote the bamboo species native to the state.
- Ecologically giant cane is forage for deer when it is young. In addition, these young stands often provide good nesting and broad rearing habitat for turkeys.

#### NRCS

- We are currently in the 12-month window of our yearly NRCS agreement. I am sitting at just over \$127K in deliverables to date. Target each FY is little over \$88K per forester.
- I have impacted an additional 1,422 acres since the June meeting and have impacted 6,379.5 acres on the FY as of 9/13/2023.
- NRCS agreement fiscal year ends September 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

### Driftless Area Forester Position Update

The Driftless Area Forester saga continues. We thought we had a really good fit and conducted an interview with a strong candidate (Trevor Woodall) on 9/8/23. Trevor does have forestry experience, is an avid outdoorsman, and his references strongly recommended him; we thought he would've been a really good fit. When we post positions now it shows a salary range. Although Trevor seemed like a strong candidate, he is pretty fresh out of school with not a lot of practical experience. The top end of the salary range would be offered to someone a little further down their career path and we could not justify the offer he was needing so he turned us down. Jared intends to repost the position but he also stated to



our NRCS partners that we may have to have further discussions about the future of that position. We have exhausted every option we have to seek a qualified candidate. Finding qualified foresters continues to be a challenge, for whatever reason nationally, but particularly here in Illinois, because we have a tough time competing with DNR and the USFS for the handful that are available; their salary and benefits are much better than we can afford. Cost of living is another challenge exacerbating the situation.

### **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Acreage Goal Progress**

During Save the Habitat. Save the Hunt. our acreage goals included those acres considered conserved or enhanced. As a reminder a conserved acre would be some sort of restored habitat like a native warm season grass field or an open woodland and an enhanced acre would be something like a food plot; both counted the same. The “influenced acres” such as acres planned by our project staff were tracked but they did not count towards our acreage goals under STH2. The 50<sup>th</sup> calendar year anniversary acreage goal of a million acres impacted does include influenced acres. So far, Illinois has accomplished 13,375 acres with the 27 pieces of equipment we helped purchase over the years, 4,079 acres with 2023 approved projects, and Stacy and Chase have influenced another 8,190 acres. Nationally we are over 900,000 acres so we should have no problem eclipsing our million acre goal by the end of our anniversary year.

### **Showdown on the Shawnee**

As had been reported at the last meeting, this issue still seems locally contained and does not seem to be gaining any traction. However, I will continue to monitor it and report when and if anything changes.

### **Seed Subsidy**

Supply and demand were about equal in 2023 and we budgeted \$8,000 to cover the cost of a notification mailer of the program to sponsors and a 50% cost share subsidy on the seed blends offered. Seed blends that will be available and the costs are not known at this time for the 2024 spring seed subsidy program but we budgeted the same amount. We can adjust the budget up at the March meeting or even later via email if necessary.

Myself, Doug Little, Ricky Lucky, and Cully McCurdy are serving on a seed team to provide recommendations for seed program improvements. We have met nearly weekly throughout the summer and Doug is to provide our recommendations to Mark Hatfield within the next couple of weeks. Many of our recommendation were associated with the conservation seed program since it is the one that usually suffers annually from logistical challenges that we hope can be fixed.

### **Habitat Stamp Grant**

As I mentioned at our last meeting, we had been having issues with Habitat Stamp Program administration. There were differences of opinion between our grant administrator and DNR’s that were causing significant programmatic impasses concerning the large Habitat Stamp Grant we were awarded 2 grant cycles ago. The Forest Habitat Incentive Program was an over 800k grant to provide position support and over a quarter million dollars awarded to 60 landowners to do conservation work on their properties. That grant essentially created the position that Chase filled. We applied in the last cycle for 100k to do just the cost share work and we were approved. However, DNR still owed us almost 200k from the previous grant so we did not sign the contract for the second phase last year. There were discrepancies in reporting requirements that were the essence of the issue. The good news is that, between the last meeting and now, those discrepancies were addressed and we either have or will get paid within this first quarter. Mark Hatfield may request an extension for the grant we were approved for last year. If it is awarded, we may pursue the phase two efforts initially planned.

### **DNR Report:**

#### *Brood Survey:*

This year we made the switch away from paper postcards to a web-based survey for our annual brood survey. The new electronic version was accessible on both mobile devices and home computers. In addition to submitting surveys through their internet browsers, mobile users had the option to use the Survey123 app to log turkey sightings. We saw a reduction in overall submissions, but still got a robust sample size of turkey observations. A major improvement was the reduction in time required to mail postcards and manually enter data once they were received.

We saw a major increase in poults per hen this year. Preliminary data show 2.7 poults per hen compared to 1.67 last year. This is the fourth straight year of steady to increasing reproductive metrics.

**Fall Seasons:**

**Fall Archery:**

Permits available now, over-the-counter. Season runs concurrent with fall archery deer season (October 1, 2023 through January 14, 2024; closed during firearm deer season)

**Fall Shotgun:**

Both lotteries have run and remaining permits will be available over-the-counter September 1th. Season dates are Oct. 21 – Oct. 29, 2023.