

June 28, 2006
Policy, Regulation, and Trade Committee Meeting
UNCG Eberhart Building Conference Room

Dave Davenport, Sarah Cross, Ann Somers, John Groves, Ted Williams, Zach Orr, Keith Farmer, Dave LaPlante, Phil Bradley, David G. Cooper, Jeff Beane, Bob Pendergrass, Andrew Wyatt, Ed Corey; Daron Barnes, Kate Pipkin, Tanith Tyrr, Kendrick Weeks, and Rhonda Washington

1:20pm

Sarah- Let's go ahead and introduce everyone; NCWRC Herpetologist

Dave- Chair of this committee and used to be at NC Museum of Natural Sciences

Ann- Chair of Dept. of Biology UNCG

John- NC Zoological Park curator of amphibians and reptiles

Ted- NC Aquarium at Fort Fisher

Zach- Independent Crotalid Researcher

Keith- NC Aquarium at Fort Fisher

Dave(2)-

Phil- NC Museum of Natural Sciences

David- NC Museum of Natural Sciences

Jeff- NC Museum of Natural Sciences

Bob- Dan Nicholas Park Supervisor

Andrew- President NC Association of Reptile Keepers

Ed- NC Parks and Recreation

Daron- NCWRC Permits

Kate- NCWRC Policy

Tanith- Cape Fear Serpentarium

Kendrick- NCWRC

Rhonda- UNCG Graduate Student

Dave- There are some folks missing that are kind of integral but we will review. Last time we came up with a permit for five species of python and a license for all crocodylians and went to a license specifically to allow for inspection of facilities. We also came up with a license for venomous; viperidae, elapidae, , , hydropheidae, and There was a lot of discussion but we did not work out the nuts and bolts and that is our purpose today. What will requirements of the license be? Age restrictions, antivenin, letters of reference from other licensees? Who can have them? Who will be denied? And, how can they remedy that? Who is going to be an apprentice? I will say, I should wait for WRC folks but, there has been some resistance by WRC to regulate exotic species. Some would like to pawn it off on NCDA. There will be some resistance and we should try to push for WRC jurisdiction. Senator Basnight will be a good resource in steering the legislation to be regulated by WRC. It may stall perpetually because WRC might not want to regulate

John- All crocodilians are illegal

Dave- I don't think so

Daron- No. Only alligators due to T-S/A status. Administrative code lists them as a protected species. Out of state sources are allowed. There is an alligator farm, but it is licensed by NCDA

Ted- They aren't protected in FL

Dave- This is the northern limit of their range and are more protected than in FL. The first thing this committee tackled was the Turtle bill and after more external processes (WRC) we need to discuss. There are two main parts that WRC removed; exotic turtles and all native families. Our justification is that although bill was proactive of two families only, all families have the potential to be harvested. Snapping only four could be harvested...

Daron- Without permit

David- Right. Two reasons we included exotics; 1. enforcement issue (all protected), not really important to including them 2. Also, pet turtle trade have exotics.

Sarah- Emydids and Trionychids are still included. Kinosternids and Chelydrids not protected.

Ann- What is the state

Sarah-

Kate- Not sure we have the authority to regulate exotics. The clawed frog is an exception due to the potential damage to native species.

Dave- We are working on this in regard to inherently dangerous animals (IDAs).

Ann- Doesn't NCDA already have authority?

Daron- No. That is the problem, no one has the authority and no one wants to. The legislature will determine that and no one wants to tackle that beast. We are not ready to say we want this authority.

Dave- We want to have a framework that we can come back to later and amend. Personally, I would be willing to change the language to native and give up on the exotic things.

Sarah- All current owners of exotic species in those families just need to...?

John- They would still need permits if they have 5 exotics in this family.

Keith- How can we avoid exotics in the Turtle Bill (TB) and pursue it in the Inherently Dangerous Animal Bill (IDAB)?

Dave- Because it has to be done...

Sarah- We need to fix the problems of the TB but want it to be passed so we need to exclude issue that might provoke resistance

Ann- I don't like that...

Kate- That is how it works. If you do all this planning, it gets voted down, and then you are out of a year of work

Sarah- When can it be changed?

Kate- Anytime before March when the new rules are released.

Daron- Snapping turtles in particular have a large subsistence group

Ann- If it is made clear that there is just a permit.

Daron- That is sensitive and not sure if that is going to go anywhere.

Dave- The reason we are pursuing this is to prevent someone from Louisiana coming up and harvesting a million turtles and exporting them.

Ted- In my area, people trap em' and kill em' constantly and don't really care about the law.

Sarah- Well, the point is that it becomes something that law abiding individuals would have some recourse to be in compliance with.

Ed- Should they be made into game species?

Kate- That is possible and would allow for a lot of regulation...

Andrew- It would be more difficult to pass a law than a rule...

Ed- Makes sense

Kate- You might have resistance from hunters.

Ed- They already have hunting license.

Ted- What if it is eating your corn?

Dave- That is a depredation permit.

Ann- What is the route of the suggestions we make to WRC?

Kate- All of the rules we want to change will be put on the October meeting and they decide whether to send it to public hearing.

Ann- When is the agenda set?

Kate- Sometime in September

Ann- Those recommendations must have staff sponsor?

Kate- Yes but can be introduced by anyone.

Dave- If someone would like to make a motion...

John- Lets keep it like before and add snappers to game list

Ann- How many collection permits for snappers do you grant a year?

Daron- 113 for all amphibians and reptiles. The majority are researchers.

Andrew- Making snappers game would mess up those keeping them as pets.

Sarah- Yes, if we could manage them as game without actually listing them as game...

Ann- That will be a sticky issue will need some advice.

Dave- Lets vote on pursuing this... Aye's have it. Let's let it go through as is. I think it will be easier if we try to tackle that after consulting with the non-game advisory committee to push for the WRC regulating exotics.

Daron- The plan originally is to go to the general assembly as a bill. Therefore, whoever they give jurisdiction will immediately have the authority.

Andrew- There is going to be complete reworking because of

Sarah- Lets try our best to work with the Commission and get on their good side

Dave- Oh sure and we should get it done through cooperation...

Ann- What about this rule?

John- What happen to 1032?

Andrew- It died.

Daron- It went into committee and died.

Andrew- Basnight has told me that they want to do something about mammalian carnivores and is the main focus of the IDAB.

Dave- The main reason is to make these recommendations so that when this bill is discussed that there are guidelines to protect our interests.

Ann, Daron, and Kate talk about the difference between rules and laws. The next legislature will consider new bills in January.

Dave- We need to talk about the nuts and bolts.

John- I suspect that the inherently dangerous animal bill will come up in January. I don't like some portions...

Dave- It comes up again and again and we need to work out what we want or don't want.

Andrew- The key to our effort is simplicity and needs to be easy to implement.

Keith- If we don't get exotics in the jurisdiction of WRC, then it may be pushed towards NCDA.

Ann- The pet trade.

Keith- They are the least regulated industry.

Daron- It is huge and no one wants to touch, it is a huge burden.

Keith- You know how many pet stores are in NC?

Ann- No.

Keith- No one does! But, there is a NCDA representative at all their fairs. I asked one one time what she was doing there and she could not tell me.

Dave- This has the potential to bring this whole tangle of issues to the table; pet shop, IDAs, but lets focus on IDAs.

Ted- Well, pythons are very high sellers...

Andrew- We need to focus on IDAs

Dave- Lets take a five minute break.

2:37pm

Dave- Let's get started. We will try to get done by 4pm. Let's deal with the five large constrictors first. What will we require of the permittees?

Andrew- 18 years old for five large constrictors...

Steve- 21 years old for venomous...

Tanith- 18 years old across the board...

Daron- We don't get many requests from young folks.

Dave- But, if we do this, there will be kids trying to get permits.

Andrew- I was pretty young when I began handling "hots". Some will be ready but some won't. I personally believe that if you are old enough to serve your country, you are old enough to drink or do anything else.

Dave- Is it defensible to have age requirement?

Daron- If so, you are going to have to have a defensible reason for giving an age limit.

Ted- If you are a moron at 18, you're a moron at 21...

Tanith- 18 is most defensible.

Daron- For hunting licenses, 16 has become the level at which you are required to have your own license.

Andrew- I would hate if kids were excluded from experiencing what I experienced

Dave- If we stick with 18, what do we require?

Tanith- FL model is 2 references and 1000 hours or 1 year with licensed facility

Dave- Not venomous, constrictors...

Andrew- Keep it simple, let WRC know of the animals you have and where they are...

Keith- What are we trying to accomplish, what is the objective?

Daron- Exactly. That is the most important thing to keep in mind.

Andrew- Keep it basic so that all you have to do is give them your name and pay the fee.

Dave- And, I think that is the main purpose. In addition, we were worried about impulse buys and such. Another thing, Daron, is WRC having a list of people that are permitted to have these for options other than the pink needle after confiscations.

Daron- The more simple, the more acceptance. List species. Number of individuals.

Keith- If I have a reticulated python and other snake in January then get a green anaconda in August. Is it covered?

Dave- No. I mean that is something we need to figure out.

Daron- You can have it like gamebirds and have permittees update their permits by a call. Or, if all my dreams come true and we get ALVIN, it will all be handled online.

Keith- A permit for any of the five large constrictors and an annual report on numbers...

Andrew- Breeders may move through many individuals and record-keeping will be difficult to report.

Keith- Yeah, but that is needed to make sure this all works.

Daron- Well, even though there would only be an annual snapshot, it would be some information. It would be a lot easier. It could be that the records are kept that a dealer requires a photocopy of the permit and a driver's license.

Andrew- Most breeders keep good records because it is a business.

John- Wouldn't your office want to know why a person has something?

Daron- The only reason this happens now is because it is written in the law. We just want to identify who they are and where they are.

Andrew- The simple process weeds out those that may be reacting under impulse buy.

Dave- As soon as some parents find out you have to have a permit to own it, they will say 'no' to Little Johnny.

Daron- You need to identify the purpose.

Andrew- Identify who it is and a certain amount of responsibility.

Ann- Especially if it says on the permit how big the snakes get

Tanith- Permittee should acknowledge the characteristics of the snake

John- Just put 'Giant Snake' on the permit

Dave- You could require the seller to provide a standard statement that provides information on that species.

Daron- You could put cage requirements on the permit so that a rule would require particular care to protect the public.

Tanith- Although cages deal with animal welfare, they also deal with protecting the public and fits perfectly with IDAB.

Daron- Well, most of our current permits require cage requirements...

Tanith- A sturdy, locking cage...

David- The museum has that.

Daron- Permits might not be inspected but could be at anytime.

Dave- Summary; Permit for big 5, at least 18, annual reporting of species and numbers, and a statement of agreement of transferring ownership to another permittee.

Daron- You can add something about inspections can be made at any time. I would encourage it.

Dave- And, some information on care and cage requirements .

Daron- A guy that comes into the state has to have a permit.

Keith- When I sell stuff in VA, they require a \$15 permit and anyone serious about selling at a expo will pay it and VA can track what is going on.

Dave- The seller or giver is responsible for getting a photocopy of the buyers permit and driver's license.

John- If someone came from SC and bought retic here, would they need a permit?

Daron- If a person comes into the state to buy and sell, they would be required to get a permit.

Andrew- Would you then be present at the show to inform and help dealers get their permits?

Daron- Yes. That is definitely what would be a good idea and if it gets online, it will be real easy. Once it is done the first year, most dealers will know.

Tanith- I think we should have something about veterinarian line “Who is your veterinarian of record?”

Keith Farmer- Just complicates matters

Ed- No

John- No

Andrew- No

Dave- We don't have a consensus.

Tanith- But, I'd like to see it.

John- What do you hope to get out of it?

Andrew- It is unnecessary.

Tanith- I realize that this might be too much for some, but I think it should be a requirement.

John- Do we want to vote on it?

Dave- OK, well we need to include all of what we have talked about. We have a giant constrictor permit, 18 or older to apply, annual reporting species and numbers, list of rules on permit: understand they can be inspected, understand that selling and giving is not allowed to unpermitted folk, understand the proper caging solutions for animals that get so many pounds and so long.

Kieth- I think we should add numbers to poundage and length

Andrew- They are long-lived also.

Tanith- What about full-disclosure sheet?

Ted- It says Giant Constrictor on the Permit. I mean it can grow big enough to squeeze and kill you and your dog!

<Lots of laughter>

Lots of comments about how the permit already serves the purpose.

Dave- what would be the price?

Daron- Most are \$5 now and is basically a processing fee. Renewal will be denied if there is a lack of reporting. If you have wildlife violations, you could be denied. If you violate rules then you deny it to them. Or, you may not want to deny permits. Or, you can put provisions for denial.

Keith- If you violate any of the conditions indicated on the permit, then your permit may be revoked.

Daron- If license is revoked, when can you obtain one?

Dave- What does everyone think?

Andrew- Give a grace period for correcting violations. If problem corrected, then OK. If not, revoke the permits.

Dave- This opens up a big legal issue because...

Sarah- Leave the agency to fully develop the rules...

Andrew- I am worried about prohibitive rules after changing of the guard.

Dave- If you have something reasonable and accepted by the public then it can last.

Dave- As far as herps is concerned, WRC is the preferred authority. No one wants NCDA.

Keith- moved

Zach- second

John- third

Giant Constrictor Permit unanimously approved

Dave- If we could meet again to work out the details.

John- Are we going to submit even if no IDAB?...

Dave- We have not decided... We will consult with WRC and if we meet a lot of resistance we will go top down.

Next meeting?

September 13, 2006 1pm-4pm at UNCG Eberhart Building

Ann- Should we pick the next meeting?

Dave- Lets' try.

October 25, 2006 1pm-4pm at UNCG Eberhart Building