

**KINKAID-REED'S CREEK CONSERVANCY DISTRICT
CONSERVANCY COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, December 29, 2020**

The Conservancy Committee of the Kinkaid-Reed's Creek Conservancy District held its meeting on Tuesday, December 29, 2020. Trustee Mike Barone called the meeting to order at 6:14 p.m. at the District Office on Water Plant Road in Murphysboro, Illinois.

ROLL CALL:	Mike Barone	Present
	Steve McGriff	Present
	Chuck Novara	Present
	Donald Siefert	Present (Late in signing in)
	Scott Wilmouth	Present

Also, present: Cathy Rothe and Shawn Hirst of IDRN

MINUTEES: Trustee Dale Jones made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 12, 2020, Conservancy Committee meeting. Motion was seconded by Trustee Steve McGriff.

Roll Call Vote:

Mike Barone	Yes
Steve McGriff	Yes
Chuck Novara	Yes
Donald Siefert	Yes
Scott Wilmouth	Yes

Trustee Barone declared the motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS: Fish Management: Size Limits Discussion: Chairman Barone stated a lot of fisherman have been talking to him about size limits for fish. They are not talking so much size of fish, but the number of fish allowed to be kept. Chairman Barone stated he would like to see the number drop down to 15 or 30 per boat, because he does not think the numbers are what they used to be. Chairman Barone asked Shawn to provide some input. Shawn Hirst stated that he was not allowed to survey the lake this past spring. The 2019 survey is one of the best we have ever had in terms of sizes and numbers of bass and crappie. One thing noticed this year is, there is a very large amount of fishing pressure since we have been shut down. We have seen it in license sales, and at the boat ramps. Mr. Hirst stated he cannot submit any type of rate change until May of 2021, and before that date, we will have already done the 2021 spring survey where we sample the bass and the crappie. Trustee Barone asked if we needed to wait until May 2021 and revisit this item? Shawn Hirst replied that is correct, because the last sample that I was able to do was in the spring of 2019. Based on the 2019 survey I cannot justify lowering it.

The biological data from my last survey showed the numbers were outstanding. Trustee Barone stated this is something that has been brought to his attention. They are saying the numbers are not bad, just that everything is running between 8 to 9 inches and a lot on the lower end. Chairman Barone stated we can revisit this after the next sampling and see how Mr. Hirst feels about the numbers. Shawn Hirst stated another thing that is of concern is if you put it to low, the fish could possibly stack up between the minimum length and the limited number of fish. It also depends on if people are keeping their 25 fish per day limit. Mr. Hirst asked if anyone has seen people fishing and keeping their 25, or if they are only keeping 10 or 12 fish? Dropping to 15 inch maximum would not make a difference. Trustee Barone stated what he is hearing is they are all getting their 25 but they are running at the 9-inch minimum limit and a lot of them are even under, and being taken out of the lake. Trustee Novara stated, he thinks that Shawn has done a great job. Some of the concerns that Mike has talked about, he has heard also, but he did not know what the boat limits are. Trustee Novara stated he is going to pick on the guides, if they have 4 people in the boat, and they take 100 fish, that's quite a few fish, and he sees this as the main problem, and knows it is not Shawn's responsibility. There is not much enforcement on the lake. Whenever you hear of guys taking 2 or 3 limits per day, the lake needs to be enforced better than what it is now. As for the size limits of fish, he feels that is okay. About 5 years ago, you could go out there and catch 120 fish and maybe you would have 10 keepers and understands that fish are in a cycle, and right now maybe there are a lot of 8- and 9-inch fish. Trustee Novara stated he thinks the biggest issue is that more enforcement is needed on the lake. Shawn Hirst stated that he can mention that to law enforcement, however, if someone from the District would mention that to them, that would certainly help. The other thing is that when you see lots of numbers and they are just at or below the minimum length limit, that sometimes indicates a lot of harvest, for example, at Rend. You just don't see the big fish at Rend as you do at Kinkaid, because there is so much pressure and a lot of harvest, and the 10- and 11-inch fish are healthy. You just don't see really big fish like you do at Kinkaid in terms of crappie. The regulation at Rend is meant to have more of those bigger fish, but they just get taken as soon as they get to 10 inches. We sample every year, unfortunately this year they wouldn't let us sample, and the lock down forced more people out on the lakes than before. Fishing sales and fishing licenses are up. We can't go out and sample right now because the fish are in the deep water and we would not learn anything. We try to do the same lakes at the same times each year to follow population trends. Mr. Hirst stated they will be going out in late April or early May to do a survey and compare it to previous years, however, based on my previous survey in 2019, he could not sale a reduction in the creel limit. Mr. Hirst stated he was not opposed, if that is what the numbers say. The Mr. Hirst stated that another issue is that the technology is getting so good, the fish cannot hide anymore with this new live scope. People can find the fish, and we are monitoring this. If the spring survey is not very good with respect to crappie, Mr. Hirst stated he had no problem trying to submit a reduction in creel limit. Trustee Barone thanked Shawn. Trustee Novara stated that by catching the State record crappie on Kinkaid, the lake got pounded. A pro fisherman told Trustee Novara that the other day someone had posted on the internet that they had caught 70 fish, and 7 of those were crappie that weighed 19 pounds. Then all of a sudden you start hearing, I'm only 3 hours away, I'm going to Kinkaid, that is what we are dealing with. Shawn Hirst stated that there is nothing close around here to those trophy crappie. There are a couple of reservoirs in Mississippi that produce fish like that. Manager Wilmouth stated that the District should reach out to law enforcement, and he would reach out to Officer Taylor, but should probably go to somebody higher up and asked Shawn if this is correct. Shawn Hirst stated that he would start with Kris because he is the local Sargent. I wouldn't want to step on toes, and if you went straight to a captain, Kris might not be too happy. Manager Wilmouth stated that he knew they were short on staff. Shawn Hirst stated that the law enforcement needs to know if that is the word, that no one is getting checked, especially if you are aware that people are keeping fish that they are not supposed to be keeping. Manger Wilmouth stated he would reach out to Kris and go from there. Trustee Novara asked Shawn Hirst about the money the District gave him last year for the fish attractors, do you put out the GPS numbers on those? Shawn Hirst replied, we were shut down this year. I wasn't allowed to be at a building at Little Grassy Hatchery by myself and build them, with no one within 500 yards of me. They are now built and are at the Reiman barn on the Reiman property. I'm having truck issues right now and have

been towed 5 times. There is an electrical issue they cannot find. Mr. Hirst stated that he gets his truck back probably the first week in January. If the lake is not iced over, he is going to put them out within the first couple weeks. They will be going to existing locations. When I send out fish attractor maps, I tell people that there is a certain number of porcupine balls in all 50 spots, and there are 1 or 2 of these cubes at sites 1 through 4, and 2 at number 17. The reason we went out of order is because it was an Eagle Scout project, I was taking the scouts out to dump them off and sites 1,2,3 and 4 are right by the Water Plant boat ramp. Mr. Hirst wanted them to get a little bit of a boat ride and see the lake since they worked so hard to build them. We took 2 out to number 17. I'll probably start at 5 and put 2 at five more locations. They are built and are ready to go. As soon as he gets his truck back, he is going to move them over to the Water Plant ramp, if that is okay. Manager Wilmouth replied that would be fine and if he needed help to let Manager Wilmouth know. Trustee Novara stated that if Shawn or Manger Wilmouth would let him know, he would like to take some pictures of those going in the water.

Manager Wilmouth stated this is not on the agenda, however, Shawn Hirst is requesting some more money from the fish management fund to build more fish attractors. This will be on the January 13, 2021, agenda for approval.

Fish Tournament Request and Fish Tournament Regulations: Proposed Changes to Section 3 (B) of Fish Tournaments Regulations: Manager Wilmouth stated that in the packets is the proposed language change to section 3(b) of the Districts fish tournaments regulations. This was mentioned at the last Board meeting. Manager Wilmouth asked Shawn Hirst if he could explain. Shawn Hirst stated that everyone who has a fishing tournament has to have an IDNR permit and you cannot get an IDNR permit until November of 2020. This is when you can start applying for a permit for a tournament in 2021. It is set up on a first come, first served basis. There is no way to get into the system and post a tournament that the District has already approved, a year out. These tournament organizers get on the IDNR site on November 1st, and they apply for their dates and ramps at their lakes, and they see on the site, that there is nothing on the IDNR system for those dates. They submit the dates, then find out a week later that they didn't get it, because the District had already approved a big tournament. All the weekends fill up in about 3 or 4 days, so they are not able to get a weekend at all, when they thought they were the first ones in line to get the IDNR date. Mr. Hirst stated he would like to approve tournaments like it is done at Rand Lake, he would approve them, Joe Green, Site Superintendent for Murphysboro, would put in the comments that they must have a Kinkaid Reed's Creek Conservancy District permit as well, and provide the Districts the phone number. They would have to have these permits at the minimum 30 days before their tournament. Most are putting in for the IDNR permits within a couple of weeks in November, so there would still be time for them to get their Kinkaid Conservancy District permit and also have a meeting before their scheduled date. Since the District raised the maximum number of boats before having to get a Conservancy District permit, there might be only 3 or 4 tournaments that this would affect. A couple of those groups that apply a year out might have some heart burn because they are not guaranteed that weekend the following year. This would be a more fair system for those groups that cannot apply until November 1st. The system is not set up for me to have access to go in and put Kinkaid's, already approved tournament on certain dates. Manager Wilmouth stated that if the Districts language is changed, there might be some groups that would have to be transitioned into the system, however, after looking further, these groups were able to apply for permits November 1, 2020. The ones that the District has approved for 2021 are already on Shawn's system. If approved, it would take effect the day after the January 2021 Board meeting, next day, and they will be required to obtain an IDNR permit first and then apply for a Conservancy District permit. If they don't have the IDNR permit first, their permit will be denied by the District. That would be the language change. Manager Wilmouth stated he didn't see any issue with it. Manager Wilmouth stated if the Board approved the change, all of the people that submit applications for a permit, will be sent a letter advising them of the new rules, so they will be fully aware of the change in January. There is a need to get the two systems in parallel with each other. Trustee Barone asked Manager Wilmouth if he wanted the committee to take action on this? Manager Wilmouth replied, yes, then it will be presented to the full Board for approval. If the committee is okay with this change, he will get Attorney Richard Blake to draft a resolution making that change and have that prepared before the next Board meeting. If Attorney Blake cannot get the resolution drafted by the January Board meeting, it can be approved at the February meeting. Trustee Barone stated that he was fine with the change. Trustee Novara stated he was fine with the change. Trustee McGriff stated that he was fine with the change. Trustee Siefert stated that he was fine with the change. Trustee Barone stated that all committee members were fine with the change and directed Manager Wilmouth to proceed with having the District's attorney draft a resolution to be approved at the next Board meeting.

Deck/Shed Requests: Nothing to report

319 Update: Nothing to report

CAMPGROUND:

OSLAD Grant/New Campground Update: Manager Wilmouth stated that the proposed roadway has been staked out and they are working on where the sewer system will be located.

Watershed Management: Nothing to report

NEW BUSINESS: Nothing to report


OTHER MATTERS TO DISCUSS: Nothing to discuss

ADJOURNMENT: There being nothing further to discuss Trustee McGriff made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Siefert seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Mike Barone	Yes
Steve McGriff	Yes
Chuck Novara	Yes
Donald Siefert	Yes
Scott Wilmouth	Yes

Trustee Barone declared the motion carried.



CHAIRMAN