

BEaR Board Meeting – Minutes – 04/29/08

Attendees: Kevin Nelms, Bo Sloan, Becky Rosamond, Jim Monk, Shaun Williamson, Darren Miller, Cathy Shropshire, Shauna Ginger

Called to order by Kevin Nelms at 9:45 a.m.

2007 Annual Report/Project Updates

- Kevin requested edits within the next week. (Needed edits are noted in bold below.)
- 2007 Projects
 - SAFE – we submitted and were approved for funding. State approved for 7,950 acres (state pool and national pool) that can be put into CCRP. BEaR now ready to put habitat on the ground. BEaR’s role – developed and submitted proposal, developed practice specific guidelines, responsible for getting word out via press release, etc., and monitoring practice via collared bears in the Delta (MDWFP); NRCS and FSA responsible for technical guidance. FSA waiting for new farm bill to come out before starting sign-up.
 - GDBA – 400 students, 8 stations, stayed all day, fed lunch, education day handled by Sharkey County Soil and Water Conservation District. Propose doing 600 students next year. 7,000 attendees—largest yet. Named “Top 20 Event” by the Southeast Tourism Society.
 - Entergy Grant – New sponsor: Hunt Sproull (works in Entergy Real Estate office in New Orleans) – Jim is leaving Entergy effective 4/30/08. Need to keep track of the “Entergy” collars on bears and send update to Entergy to help with the next grant.
 - “Bears of Mississippi” Calendar – **(correct spelling on Weyerhaeuser in Annual Report)** didn’t sell as well as hoped, but did make money with it. Extras given to legislators, many handed out to teachers.
 - Bear Crossing Highway Signs – approved with MDOT, manufactured and installed free of charge. Placed in at least 10 locations.
- Ongoing Projects in 2007
 - Website – hits have been increasing, need to develop resources for teachers
 - Educational Display – graphics ready for use now, just need to be ordered. May get a tent with BEaR graphics on flaps in addition (cost about \$800).
 - Print – have paid for cost, any additional sales are profit. Sales have slowed, so need to discuss promotional activities. May need to have a couple framed to help with sales.
 - Telemetry flights – Have been paying for gas only, with Entergy money.
- Other Accomplishments
 - Bear Cub Birth Celebration on WRP – co-hosted with USDA. First black bears born in the Delta in over 30 years.
 - Support of BBCC Banquet and Fundraiser – donated framed print for auction.
 - Press – numerous favorable articles. **Need to add “The Deer Creek Pilot” in list of newspapers with BEaR articles.**

Correct spelling of Weyerhaeuser under Board of Directors

New Projects

- GDBA 2008 Proposal (Kevin) – Currently holding \$12,094.42 of BEaR money and would like to hold that as seed money for GDBA '08. Date: October 25. 150th birthday of Teddy Roosevelt (which is that week). Need to encourage participation by BEaR members.
- Administrative Project proposal (Kevin) – Yearly operational budget.

BEaR Budget – Stephanie Hodnett (not present)

Over \$17,000 in account

Received \$250 from Lagnippe Foundation (Robbie Fisher)

New Candidates for Director's Election – Bo Sloan

Members whose terms are over:

Jim Monk

Melissa Darden

Meg Cooper

Tm Rosenblatt

New Candidates:

Stacey Shankle, Conservation Programs, TNC

Melissa Darden, re-election

Meg Cooper, re-election

Hunter Fordice, Landowner in Issaquena County

Direction from Board for Executive Committee

- Finish things started (website, exhibit) then focus on SE Mississippi (per Cathy)
 - Ideas for getting into SE MS (had high reporting rate last year)
 - Nature festivals in mid-April
 - TNC and Audubon (has office in Moss Point) may provide means to get contacts
 - Local newspapers (**Action item: write up article on bear for paper down there**)
 - Put up bear crossing signs in area.
- First grade teachers in most areas doing unit on bear. Need to put together a curriculum on bear. Can hire someone and can fund with Entergy. Who to contact: Bronson Strickland (Extension Service), Plymouth Bluff (Columbus), video/dvd on bears. Kevin will provide curriculum requirements to Becky. Becky will come up with list of folks who could develop curriculum.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.