

**From:** melanie finn [melfinn1@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 27, 2016 1:57 PM  
**To:** Gingras, Jessica  
**Subject:** Fish and Wildlife Board members

Hello Ms. Gingras,

I've very kindly been given your email by the governor's office.

I'm a Vermont resident currently doing research into our state's Fish and Wildlife Department, and am interested in the current board. They wield considerable influence in shaping policy in our wild lands and refuges. I have been able to find out a little bit on-line about some members, but no complete biographies are available on the state's website.

I have the following questions:

- 1) What qualifications are required to be a board member?
- 2) By what process and by whom are members approved for the board?
- 3) The current board seems heavily skewed toward professional and amateur hunters and trappers; how are their individual financial interests kept separate from the decisions they must make for state-wide, communal wildlife use? (e.g. William Pickens is a professional trapper who runs Fur Traders of America; it stands that he is heavily invested in continuing and expanding trapping.)
- 4) Are there any qualified biologists or conservationists on the board? I cannot find one.
- 5) Is there an advisory board, or any other individual who is available to assist those board members who have no scientific background in understanding biological data?
- 6) Is there anyone with professional fund-raising experience on the board?
- 7) Are board meetings required to be open to the public?
- 8) Are the board members actually making laws? Sorry - I find this especially confusing! I'm trying to distinguish between state law and "regulations." The former require a legislative process that is generally representative of the people. What is required to create, change and enforce F&W regulations? Or are these considered laws?

Thank you so much for your assistance with this matter.

Sincerely,  
Melanie Finn