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MINUTES OF THE
FOREVER WILD BOARD MEETING
University of South Alabama
MacQueen Alumni Center
100 Alumni Drive
Mobile, Alabama
August 3, 2023
10:00 a.m.

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Transcript of Proceedings

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PROCEEDINGS, taken before Stacey
L. Johnson, Certified Court Reporter and
Commissioner for the State of Alabama at
the University of South Alabama, MacQueen
Alumni Center, 100 Alumni Drive, Mobile,
Alabama, on the 3rd day of August, 2023,
commencing at 10:00 a.m.

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BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Commissioner Chris Blankenship, Chairman**
- Mr. Reginald N. Holloway**
- Dr. Sean P. Powers**
- Dr. James B. McClintock**
- Mr. Jack Darnall**
- Ms. Karen Stanley**
- Mr. Jake Harper**
- Mr. Jimmy Parnell**
- Mr. Rick Oates**
- Dr. Heather Howell**
- Dr. Salem Saloom**
- Dr. John Valentine**

* * * * *

1 **CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP:** Good morning,
2 everybody, and welcome to the August 3rd
3 meeting of the Forever Wild Land Trust
4 Board. We appreciate the opportunity to
5 host this here at the University of South
6 Alabama, my alma mater. I even broke out
7 my 1989 University of South Alabama
8 Southerner tie, which is older than some
9 of the folks that are here at the meeting
10 today. But I'm glad to be here on our
11 campus, and I appreciate the president,
12 President Bonner, and the alumni
13 association for allowing us to use this
14 facility.

15 I'll call the roll and make sure
16 we have a quorum present. If you're here,
17 please indicate that when I call your
18 name.

19 Chris Blankenship's here.

20 Jack Darnall?

21 **MR. DARNALL:** Here.

22 **CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP:** Mr. Harper?

23 **MR. HARPER:** Here.

1 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Holloway?

2 MR. HOLLOWAY: Here.

3 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Howell?

4 DR. HOWELL: Here.

5 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. McClintock?

6 DR. MCCLINTOCK: Here.

7 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Oates?

8 MR. OATES: Here.

9 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Parnell?

10 MR. PARNELL: Here.

11 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Powers?

12 DR. POWERS: Here.

13 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Saloom?

14 DR. SALOOM: Here.

15 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Valentine?

16 DR. VALENTINE: Here.

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Neumann?

18 Ms. Stanley?

19 Mr. Childers?

20 Raymond Jones?

21 We have 11 members present. We do
22 have a quorum.

23 I'd like now to ask Ms. Margaret

1 Sullivan to come up and welcome on behalf
2 of the University of South Alabama.

3 MS. SULLIVAN: Thank you so much,
4 Commissioner.

5 I'm Margaret Sullivan,
6 vice president for development and alumni
7 relations. And on behalf of President
8 Bonner, who, unfortunately and
9 regrettably, was called out of town, I am
10 here to welcome you to the University of
11 South Alabama and to the MacQueen Alumni
12 Center. We are thrilled that you're
13 hosting the quarterly meeting here and
14 just commend you for all you do in service
15 to Alabama and to conserve our beautiful
16 lands, wildlife, and marine life.

17 Just briefly, I wanted to let you
18 know that the MacQueen Alumni Center
19 opened in 2020, and it is the campus home
20 to over 96,000 alumni. And since the
21 MacQueen Alumni Center opened in 2020,
22 there have been a lot of transformational
23 things going on on campus. We now have

1 the Hancock Whitney Stadium and had the
2 best football season of all time last
3 year. I invite you all to come to some
4 home games and would love that.

5 We are scheduled to break ground
6 on a new college of medicine education and
7 research facility in December. This will
8 be a 250,000-square-foot, 200-million-
9 dollar facility that will provide state-
10 of-the-art education and research. It
11 will also allow us to expand our medical
12 school class size from 80 to a hundred
13 students. So very excited about that.

14 You may have seen we announced the
15 purchase of Providence Hospital in April.
16 That will add over 2,000 employees to the
17 university.

18 We are planning for a new
19 performing arts center, and we are
20 building a Jaguar marching band facility
21 on campus.

22 One of the most relevant things I
23 think for you-all is our now Stokes School

1 of Marine and Environmental Sciences,
2 which was established, Dr. Powers, in
3 2021, received accreditation, and so there
4 is a lot going on here thanks to the
5 phenomenal leadership of President Joe
6 Bonner, our fourth president.

7 I also wanted to call out one of
8 our most accomplished alumni and your
9 Board Chair, Commissioner Chris
10 Blankenship. Chris is a 1993 alumni in
11 political science, and fortunately for all
12 of us, he did not take the path to DC to
13 pursue a career in political science. He
14 stayed in Alabama and has done such
15 amazing and great things that have been in
16 his DNA I think since he was a young boy
17 on Dauphin Island. Chris, if you don't
18 know, was a 2023 distinguished alumni for
19 the university. That is our most
20 prestigious award recognizing accomplished
21 alumni doing great things. So,
22 Commissioner, we are so very grateful to
23 call you part of our family and for all

1 that you do for this state.

2 I also want to recognize my dear
3 friend and colleague, Dr. Sean Powers.
4 Dr. Powers joined us -- and he will not
5 brag on himself but I will. He joined the
6 university in 2003 and since that time has
7 really built an incredible marine sciences
8 program, over 30 million dollars of
9 research, a strong, strong partnership
10 with Dr. Valentine and the Dauphin Island
11 Sea Lab, and I think over 156
12 peer-reviewed applications.

13 We started the new school of
14 marine and environmental sciences in 2021,
15 enrolled the first class last fall, about
16 40 students. We now have 205 declared
17 majors in marine and environmental
18 sciences. So the good work that you-all
19 will continue for generations to come.

20 But just want to welcome you-all
21 to USA. We want you to come back often
22 and our campus is your home, so thank you
23 so much for being here. It means the

1 world to us.

2 Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you,
4 Margaret. I appreciate that welcome.

5 Just for my purposes, how many of
6 the Board members this is your first time
7 on the University of South Alabama campus?

8 Well, glad to have you down here.
9 One of the good reasons for having these
10 meetings in different places around the
11 state is so that we can get a good feel
12 for what's going on from one end of the
13 state to the other. So I appreciate all
14 of you from North Alabama making the trip
15 down here.

16 We'll now begin our public comment
17 period. Just a reminder that we have a
18 three-minute time limit on the public
19 comments. We only have, I think, three
20 speakers this morning so far that have
21 signed up. If you wanted to make public
22 comment but haven't had the opportunity to
23 fill out one of these green slips, please

1 raise your hand and one of our staff
2 members will get that to you to make sure
3 that your opportunity for public comment
4 is available.

5 All right. I'm not seeing any.
6 Our first speaker is on the Belcher Phase
7 2 Tract. It's Justinn Overton with Coosa
8 Riverkeeper. That's Tab 3b. Just a
9 second. How are you today?

10 MS. OVERTON: I'm great. How are you?

11 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Good to see
12 you.

13 MS. OVERTON: This is also my first
14 time on campus. This is a beautiful
15 facility. Thank you for having us.

16 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Okay. Go
17 ahead.

18 MS. OVERTON: Good morning. My name
19 is Justinn Overton. I'm the executive
20 director and staff riverkeeper at Coosa
21 Riverkeeper.

22 We're a citizen-based river
23 conservation nonprofit representing over

1 3500 dues-paying members who love the
2 lakes, creeks, and skinny waters of the
3 Coosa River system as well as the land
4 that is over 5,000 square miles that we
5 work in at Coosa Riverkeeper.

6 I'm here today to enthusiastically
7 support the Belcher Phase 2 Tract. I have
8 had the opportunity personally to play in
9 that part of the Belcher Tract as well as
10 growing up going to Oak Mountain basically
11 begging my dad to go up to King's Chair.
12 For those of you that have ever done that
13 hike, it can be sort of brutal, especially
14 on a summer day like this, and so the
15 aesthetic value that this particular tract
16 of land can offer folks that are on the
17 Cahaba River basin looking out into the
18 Coosa Valley is substantial, as well as,
19 as y'all may know, Shelby County is one of
20 the fastest growing counties in Alabama.
21 Our office is actually located in
22 Shelby County about 15 minutes from this
23 tract of land, so it's incredibly

1 important to us as an organization, as
2 well as to me personally, that we keep
3 this aesthetic value from King's Chair
4 intact. There are so many new
5 neighborhoods in the Chelsea area. It
6 actually seems like they're popping up
7 what seems like every single day.

8 So the water quality is also a
9 vital reason that I'm here today.

10 Coosa Riverkeeper just settled a case with
11 a large developer that was having ongoing
12 sedimentation issues into the north fork
13 of Yellow Leaf Creek, which is a major
14 tributary to Lay Lake on the Coosa River.
15 So I believe by protecting this land it
16 will also protect water quality of Cooper
17 Branch, which is a very small skinny water
18 that is also a tributary to the north
19 fork of Yellow Leaf Creek, which is also
20 home to a variety of species that y'all
21 may know and love, including some really
22 excellent redeye bass. So the
23 sedimentation issue this particular part

1 of our watershed is facing is substantial
2 on top of the value that this will bring
3 to the communities that I represent and
4 serve that are looking for more places to
5 enjoy Alabama's abundant natural
6 resources.

7 So I'm very excited and hope that
8 y'all will consider this, and thank you
9 for the opportunity to speak.

10 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you.

11 Just for the court reporter,
12 Ms. Stanley has joined us on the Board.

13 Our next speaker is on the Turkey
14 Creek update from Jefferson County,
15 Charles Yeager and Carter Sanford.

16 MR. YEAGER: Carlee.

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Carlee. And
18 there's no tab. This is not a current
19 nomination. Okay.

20 MR. YEAGER: Thank you, Commissioner,
21 members of the Board. I really appreciate
22 you giving me an opportunity to speak.

23 I'm here to provide updates on things

1 going on at Turkey Creek every year.

2 My name is Charles Yeager, and I
3 am the manager of Turkey Creek Nature
4 Preserve. I've been there for now over 12
5 years. I have the wonderful honor and
6 responsibility of working with the State
7 to manage the Turkey Creek Nature
8 Preserve. If you are not familiar, it's
9 in Pinson, Alabama. We have estimated
10 around 130,000 that are coming out every
11 year. This is our busy time of year.
12 It's a very popular place for folks to
13 swim, fish, hike, and this year is no
14 different. We certainly are seeing record
15 numbers, and I think that our numbers are
16 up, to say the least.

17 This year it's been incredibly
18 busy here. Our education programs have
19 seen over 800 students come through our
20 programs. Just in the calendar year
21 alone, we've had over 25 volunteer groups
22 with 175 volunteers coming out to help us
23 maintain and improve the preserve. We've

1 had another number of events, including a
2 native plant sale. We have a trail ride
3 coming up in October. And amongst all
4 this, we've been working very closely with
5 the State to improve a parking lot, which
6 is a huge asset and a huge change for the
7 preserve. It's much needed with the
8 amount of traffic we have. So I want to
9 thank the State Lands folks, Zach and
10 Jacque, for working so diligently to make
11 this possible because it is much needed.
12 I want to thank you for helping to fund
13 that and make that possible. So thank you
14 so much for that.

15 I also want to introduce you guys
16 to Carlee. She's the executive director
17 of Ruffner Mountain Coalition. This year
18 we went through a pretty major transition,
19 and she's going to tell you guys about
20 that transition and some of the things
21 that are coming up in the future.

22 MS. SANFORD: Thank you. I'll be
23 quick. Just wanted to go ahead and

1 mention that Charles Yeager in April, he
2 became under -- under the staff of Ruffner
3 Mountain Nature Coalition.

4 So we are going through some major
5 changes in Jefferson County. I want to
6 just go ahead and mention them. Our bill
7 passed, so we are officially now the
8 Jefferson County Greenways Commission. So
9 we are looking at how we maintain and
10 operate and bring all the green spaces --
11 large-acre green spaces in the future.
12 Ruffner Mountain also has Forever Wild
13 land. We average about 100,000 visitors
14 per year. So it's really great. We're
15 all coming together, streamlining
16 operations, and we're working towards
17 being more efficient and having more in
18 the future. So hopefully, we'll be here
19 again soon once everything is in place.
20 So the Jefferson County Greenways
21 Commission, we're working for all of it
22 right now.

23 Thank you so much.

1 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: And that also
2 includes Red Mountain Park?

3 MS. SANFORD: Yes. It also includes
4 Red Mountain Park, yes. Five years in the
5 making.

6 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you very
7 much.

8 And just for the Board, there are
9 some reports from our State Lands Division
10 in the back of the folder. If you recall,
11 last May, y'all provided some funding from
12 the Stewardship Fund to do things. The
13 parking lot at Turkey Creek is one of
14 those projects that has been funded
15 through the vote that you had on those
16 Stewardship projects.

17 Thank, y'all.

18 The next speaker is Mike Bunn.
19 This is on the Historic Blakeley Pye
20 Addition, Tab 4b page 19, and also it's 5g
21 in your green folder.

22 All right, sir. Go ahead.

23 MR. BUNN: Good morning, everyone.

1 I'm Mike Bunn. I'm the director of
2 Historic Blakeley State Park. With me is
3 Jamie Jaye who is probably listed, maybe
4 separately. We're going to tell you about
5 this together.

6 Real quick, we just want to
7 reiterate probably some things that you
8 may know already, but the tract that's
9 being considered is adjacent to property
10 that's already operating as part of the
11 park. We already have some property on
12 the southern end of our park that Forever
13 Wild is allowing us to use for our trail
14 system, et cetera. This particular parcel
15 is, of course, incredibly valued for its
16 natural heritage. It's on the river.
17 It's a beautiful habitat for wildlife,
18 et cetera, but it also has some serious
19 significance associated with the Battle of
20 Ft. Blakeley. It's on the very northern
21 end of the confederate line during the
22 nine-day siege, and when the battle
23 occurred on April 9th, part of that line

1 charged right through that bluff on that
2 property to the northernmost portion of
3 the confederate line at Ft. Blakeley. And
4 what's really interesting about that is
5 that northern part of the confederate line
6 that was involved there represents one of
7 the largest concentrations of
8 African-American troops to fight. They
9 were on the battlefield at Ft. Blakeley.
10 So adding to that to what we're already
11 interpreting is the USCT Heritage Trail
12 would be really significant for us and I
13 think, you know, a really good use of
14 resources. And our park is prepared,
15 able, in a willing position to maintain
16 access to this. Just want to make sure
17 everybody understood that. We've got an
18 access road that is already deeded to the
19 foundation. We provide access to and
20 maintain that.

21 MR. JAYE: Good morning. My name is
22 Jamie Jaye.

23 I was introduced to Ms. Pye around

1 a year ago through a mutual friend of
2 ours, Sam Crosby. And although she's in
3 her mid-90s now, she's originally from
4 this area, and she relocated to Detroit,
5 Michigan, saying she could not handle the
6 heat in South Alabama any longer. But
7 she's very sharp-minded and was quick to
8 point out that she has strictly held onto
9 this piece of property for conservation
10 and preservation and, in her words, a
11 place for the critters to hang out. But
12 she's expressed a sincere interest in
13 allowing this property to be continued for
14 that and to be preserved and conserved for
15 future generations.

16 Thank you for your time.

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Powers?

18 DR. POWERS: Now, holding right in the
19 middle of that -- so this isn't
20 continuous. There seems to be a little --

21 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: In your green
22 folder on 5g, the nomination has been
23 edited and --

1 DR. POWERS: Never mind.

2 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right.

3 Thank you.

4 That's the end of our public
5 comment period. Is there anybody else
6 that wanted to speak that didn't get a
7 chance?

8 All right. Thank you.

9 By regulation, appraisal values
10 are confidential during periods of
11 negotiation. Accordingly, in order to
12 discuss tract appraisal values, the Board
13 will need to go into a recess for an
14 executive session.

15 Is there a motion for the Board to
16 now recess to attend an executive session?

17 MR. OATES: So moved.

18 MR. HARPER: Second.

19 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Moved by
20 Mr. Oates and seconded by Mr. Harper.

21 As I call your name, please state
22 your position on the motion to recess.

23 Those in favor indicate by saying aye and

1 those opposed by saying no.

2 Chris Blankenship, yes.

3 Jack Darnall?

4 MR. DARNALL: Yes.

5 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Harper?

6 MR. HARPER: Yes.

7 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Holloway?

8 MR. HOLLOWAY: Yes.

9 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Howell?

10 DR. HOWELL: Aye.

11 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. McClintock?

12 DR. MCCLINTOCK: Yes.

13 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Oates?

14 MR. OATES: Yes.

15 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Parnell?

16 MR. PARNELL: Yes.

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Powers?

18 DR. POWERS: Yes.

19 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Saloom?

20 DR. SALOOM: Yes.

21 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Valentine?

22 DR. VALENTINE: Yes.

23 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP:

1 Ms. Stanley?

2 MS. STANLEY: Yes.

3 Thank you. It is now 10:19.
4 We'll take approximately a 20-minute
5 recess and then return.

6 (Recess from 10:19 a.m. to
7 10:34 a.m.)

8 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. We
9 are back from executive session. It is
10 10:34. I'll turn it over to Ms. McCurdy
11 for program status.

12 MS. MCCURDY: Thank you, Commissioner.

13 All right. Board members, we'll
14 be on Tab 2a, and this is from your green
15 folder so it will be the slightly yellow
16 sheet. We had some updates to the
17 numbers.

18 So I wanted to run through the
19 properties that we currently have in the
20 closing process based on prior Board
21 motions for staff to proceed with second
22 appraisals and negotiation with landowners
23 to get these tracts across the finish

1 line. So I wanted to run through those
2 for status and also to let the Board know
3 what their current available balance is
4 for additional property actions if you
5 choose to move forward with anything
6 today.

7 All right. The properties that
8 are in some phase of the closing process
9 are the following: Bon Secour River
10 Wetland Addition, Baldwin County; Sipsey
11 River Swamp Brownville Addition,
12 Tuscaloosa County; Skyline WMA-Fowler Cove
13 Addition, Jackson County. If we take
14 those properties, the acquisition cost,
15 and also the required transfer to the
16 Forever Wild Stewardship Account and do
17 all that math, that leaves you with
18 approximately just over 20 million. We
19 have to stay within our budgetary
20 authority per the State budget process so
21 you actually would have an unencumbered
22 balance of just over 21 million, but
23 technically for this fiscal year, you are

1 operating more along the lines of 20
2 million. So that's the current status of
3 properties in closing. To remind the
4 Board, once you instruct staff to get
5 those closed, unless we hit a glitch of
6 some sort, we continue that process and
7 close those. If we hit a glitch or
8 something unexpected, I come back to you
9 and ask for further direction, but right
10 now everything is okay with those
11 closings.

12 I wanted to also run through the
13 properties that have closed this fiscal
14 year. Before I do that, are there any
15 questions on the properties that are
16 currently in the closing process?

17 Okay. Let's run through for the
18 benefit of the public as well as the Board
19 the tracts that have closed in this fiscal
20 year so far. Our fiscal year began
21 October 1st of last year. That's Autauga
22 WMA-County Road 112 Addition, Autauga
23 WMA-Hart Addition, Cahaba

1 River-Shelby County Park Peel Addition,
2 Coldwater Mountain-McVey Addition,
3 Coldwater Mountain-Robertson Addition,
4 Freedom Hills WMA-Boddie Addition, Perdido
5 WMA-Snowden Branch Addition, Red Hills-
6 Flat Creek Phase IV, also Phase V,
7 Riverton CHA-Hurd Hollow Addition, and
8 Riverton CHA-Barnett Mill Hollow. That's
9 so far this fiscal year a total of
10 approximately 3,184 acres.

11 Any questions on the closed
12 properties?

13 All right. Let's move to Tab 2b.
14 This is our Stewardship Fund information.
15 The Board had previously authorized
16 spending from the Stewardship account for
17 the various projects and that did include,
18 as the Commissioner noted, the parking lot
19 work that Charles was updating us on.
20 Currently, we have in our available
21 balance -- the accounting reports, which
22 is what I give you, would show that we
23 have an available balance of just over a

1 million dollars. However, in various
2 aspects and phases currently of our
3 procurement and process, there's an
4 additional \$946,000 that is in process of
5 being paid or is encumbered related to
6 contract work, such as the parking lot.
7 So actually, we're getting toward the end
8 of fiscal -- that will be September
9 30th -- so we don't expect a problem, but
10 we are approaching the figure we had
11 budgeted for Stewardship Fund expenditures
12 for this fiscal year, but we're fine.

13 I would also note for the Board we
14 give -- in connection with Tab 4c that was
15 in your green folder -- the quarterly
16 report the State treasurer office provides
17 us as to current net asset value of the
18 Stewardship Fund and that report is
19 detailed in Tab 4c. The bottom line
20 figures the net asset value is over
21 43.4 million at this point. The
22 Stewardship Fund by the constitutional
23 amendment it was formed is designed to

1 provide a basis of security perpetually
2 for care and maintenance of the tracts
3 that are acquired.

4 Any questions related to the
5 Stewardship Fund?

6 Okay. Commissioner, that wraps up
7 the usual financial reports. If there are
8 no questions, I will move on to the update
9 and status of our appraisals that have
10 been motioned by the Board. And that's
11 Tab 3a. Again, we had a few updates, and
12 so, Board members, you will be looking for
13 your yellow sheet.

14 Of the appraisals, this is -- I
15 will run through the appraisals that we
16 have in hand. Therefore, these tracts are
17 available for further Board action if the
18 Board should choose to move toward
19 acquisition. I also want to update you on
20 the appraisals you motioned for in
21 previous meetings that have not yet been
22 completed, so I'm going to run through
23 everything.

1 We have the Lake Guntersville
2 State Park-John Doss Mountain Addition,
3 Marshall County; the Lillian Swamp
4 Blackwater Addition, Baldwin County; Oak
5 Mountain State Park-Belcher Addition
6 Phase 2, Shelby County.

7 We have additional appraisals that
8 you've motioned for but we have not yet
9 initiated, and those include Blackwater
10 River SOA-Clapper Addition. We had not
11 initiated that one as we did not have
12 complete deed information back from the
13 landowner. We did receive that as I was
14 driving down yesterday so we'll review
15 that when we get back, but I anticipate
16 that one will move forward as soon as we
17 return. We're still missing some deed
18 information on the Coldwater Mountain-
19 Martin Addition. We're also missing some
20 deed information -- or clarifying
21 information on the West Fowl River Tract.
22 We did receive information from the
23 landowner, but we're having to follow up

1 on some questions related to that before
2 we move forward with the appraisals.
3 Again, we don't initiate the appraisals
4 until we have the information that ensures
5 we'll get a proper valuation from the
6 appraiser based on acreage, based on
7 potential encumbrances that we are aware
8 of at this time, so that's -- but those
9 are in -- hopefully will be in the process
10 of being available for our next meeting.

11 Any questions from the Board
12 related to pending appraisals?

13 All right. Commissioner, if you
14 don't have anything else, then I will move
15 forward to Tab 5a, which reflects the
16 status of various grant activity staff's
17 been working on.

18 And for the benefit of the public,
19 the Board has asked the staff to continue
20 to be vigilant in trying to find out
21 opportunities to leverage the Board's
22 dollars, either through partnerships or
23 identifying grant opportunities that some

1 of the tracts might fit within that grant
2 program requirements. Oftentimes those
3 are federal grants. A lot of our
4 partnership opportunities have also been
5 in conjunctions with our Wildlife &
6 Freshwater Fisheries Division, Chuck
7 Sykes' division, on their federal Pittman-
8 Robertson funds. So I just want to kind
9 of run through that quickly.

10 The nominations that have already
11 been approved that are in the acquisition
12 process that are benefiting from grant
13 funding or leverage funding or
14 partnerships include the Bon Secour River
15 Wetland Additions. That tract is
16 benefiting from a grant that we are able
17 to secure through the National Coastal
18 Wetlands Conservation program, and it is
19 providing -- that federal funding will
20 cover approximately 68 percent of that
21 land value portion of that acquisition.
22 We also are partnering with the
23 Wildlife -- our department's Wildlife &

1 Freshwater Fisheries Division on the
2 Skyline WMA-Fowler Cove Addition. Those
3 are some of Chuck's Pittman-Robertson
4 funds. They require a 25 percent
5 State-based match. Forever Wild provides
6 that State-based match so that we can
7 assess those federal funds.

8 The nominations that are in some
9 portion of the appraisal process that have
10 a leveraging opportunity include the
11 Blackwater River SOA-Clapper Addition.
12 That's another property that we are
13 working with Chuck on in the Pittman-
14 Robertson funding. We are currently
15 looking at an approximate 75/25 split on
16 that one.

17 Other nominations that are on our
18 short list that would provide a potential
19 grant opportunity, that includes the
20 Dugdown Mountain Corridor property. We've
21 discussed before that is a rather lengthy
22 grant evaluation process that the Forestry
23 Commission has been working on, and so

1 there are -- I'll offer, Mr. Oates, any
2 opportunity if you want to update, but I
3 know that last we heard, you were waiting
4 for possibly some indication that that
5 grant award might be forthcoming before
6 you proceeded with the appraisal. But the
7 Forestry Commission has offered to cover
8 that expense, or that was where we left
9 off. So how about an update?

10 MR. OATES: That's correct, Patti. We
11 are waiting -- frustratingly waiting for
12 the award announcement from USDA. We
13 expect it anytime. Nominations for the
14 next year are due in a couple weeks, and
15 we think it will be in before then. So
16 hopefully by the next meeting.

17 MS. MCCURDY: I know we're used to
18 waiting on that opportunity, so maybe
19 that's good news.

20 A couple of other grants that I
21 noted in Tab 5a are not really related to
22 acquisition but are helping us provide
23 some additional work on the properties.

1 One is the Little River Canyon Hancock/TNC
2 Addition. We are benefiting from some
3 grant funding through the National Fish &
4 Wildlife Foundation, or NFWF. This is
5 NFWF's Cumberland Plateau-Southern
6 Appalachian fund, and so we are currently
7 utilizing those funds on the Little River
8 WMA in Cherokee County. Harvesting
9 activities are underway. That is the
10 first step in the removal of the existing
11 loblolly pine stand and proceeding with
12 habitat restoration on that tract. So
13 that one moving in forward fine. And we
14 are about at 60 percent of the loblolly
15 stand having been harvested roughly at
16 this point, so that one's moving fine.

17 We also received great news since
18 the last meeting, and I want to thank
19 Commissioner Blankenship for his support
20 on this. The Department of Conservation
21 will be benefiting from some Gulf of
22 Mexico Energy Security Act, or GOMESA,
23 dollars that the Governor has awarded to

1 go toward enhancements to the Mobile-
2 Tensaw Delta Bartram and also Perdido
3 River Canoe Trails. It's going to be
4 about 1.9 million dollars. It will allow
5 us to add additional stops, improve the
6 shelters in some overnight accommodations
7 along those river-based trails that are
8 greatly used, and also refurbish some of
9 the existing shelters that were put in
10 many years ago that needed touch-ups. So
11 we are very excited to be able to enhance
12 that usage and add stops along those
13 water-based trails. But those are the
14 funds of some grant nature that we are
15 currently involved in trying to utilize.

16 Any questions from the Board as
17 far as grant work?

18 All right. Well, we will move to
19 Tab 4. This is the portion of the meeting
20 where I will run through our tracts that,
21 through our scoring process, have attained
22 a position on the short list. Of all the
23 nominated tracts that we receive once we

1 secure willing seller letters from the
2 landowners, we proceed with scoring in the
3 four categories of nature preserve, state
4 parks addition, wildlife manage -- or new
5 state parks, or wildlife management areas
6 or SOAs, either new or additions to those,
7 and then general recreation. Each tract
8 is scored in all four categories. Tracts
9 compete amongst themselves within the
10 North, Central, and Southern District.
11 That produces a short list that a tract
12 must score in the top 3 of one of those
13 four categories in its district. So the
14 result of all that magic, which, as you
15 can imagine, my staff does for me, results
16 in the short list that we will run through
17 now. As usual, I'm going to run through
18 just the tract by name. I kind of go
19 through it fairly quickly. If you have a
20 question and I don't see your hand,
21 please, as usual, speak up and stop me.

22 So of the tracts that are
23 currently on the short list and would be

1 available to the Board for a motion for
2 first appraisal include the following:
3 Alabama River-Montgomery Tract. I do want
4 to -- on some of these if I have an update
5 for you, I'll stop and give the update.
6 As I've noted in the information from the
7 Board, this has been a tract that we have
8 been involved in sort of an ongoing
9 assessment and evaluation both by myself
10 and my staff and Chuck Sykes and his
11 staff. We have determined based on some
12 of the restrictions on the property that
13 we would not be able to incorporate a
14 shooting range on this property. We would
15 not be able to install the berm that would
16 be necessary. There's also concerns that
17 flooding -- periodic water coverage -- let
18 me say it that way -- on the tract would
19 result in damage of the structure, so not
20 a very good use of those funds. Also in
21 the continuing assessment with Chuck,
22 there are some other access questions,
23 usage restrictions, that currently does

1 not look like Wildlife will be able to be
2 matching or providing the opportunity for
3 Pittman-Robertson match on that tract.
4 We're just having a little bit of a
5 difficulty working on how it would be
6 utilized, so I just wanted to update the
7 Board that we're just not really
8 successful and able to figure that out.
9 We were on the tract this week again and
10 that's just simply where we were.

11 On the Bennett Creek Tract, as I
12 noted for the Board, after the tract made
13 the short list, we have also found, it
14 looks like, an access issue on that tract.
15 I would ask the Board to let us continue
16 to look at that. We have an access
17 concern right now, so I don't think that
18 one is ripe to move forward.

19 All right. We have the Bon Secour
20 River-Cook Road Addition, Baldwin County;
21 Cathedral Caverns State Park-Gurly Drive
22 Addition, Marshall County; Coldwater
23 Mountain-Oxanna Addition, Calhoun County;

1 D'Olive Bay-North Addition,
2 Baldwin County; Dugdown Mountain Corridor,
3 Cleburne County; Freedom Hills WMA-Sutton
4 Hill Addition, Colbert County. The
5 Historic Blakeley State Park-Pye Addition,
6 we have that on the short list. That is
7 the tract that we mentioned. There's also
8 some green folder information, Tab 5g. I
9 want to note for the Board that at the
10 time of the map, we still had it listed at
11 85 acres. The map has been updated as you
12 will see in 5g. We worked with the
13 landowner to sort of remove some of the
14 acreage that we thought might produce
15 future management issues that sort of
16 circled around the existing area that does
17 have some residential homes, and so that
18 tract has been revised and it's now closer
19 to 81 acres. But that is a green folder
20 item. I want to thank my staff for their
21 work with that landowner and also Mike
22 Bunn in, you know, expressing our concerns
23 and getting that reshaped. And we

1 appreciate Ms. Pye's work with us on that.

2 The next one on the short list,
3 Natural Bridge Park, you will also see an
4 update in your green folder, Tab 5h, on
5 that one. I need to update the Board that
6 over the weekend, the Natural Bridge
7 nomination was acquired by a private
8 buyer, so that one is no longer available
9 to the Board. The nominator wanted me to
10 pass along their appreciation for the
11 Board's continual evaluation and
12 discussion on that tract, but it is now in
13 private hands. And I really don't have
14 any additional information. Literally,
15 that happened over the weekend. I just
16 know it's not available to us.

17 Red Hills-Blanton Addition,
18 Monroe County, I wanted to update the
19 Board somewhat on that one. As we've
20 mentioned in prior meetings, Chuck and the
21 Wildlife Division had been in discussions
22 with the landowners about possibly
23 acquiring that tract themselves with their

1 division's funds. It appears that the
2 landowner anticipated purchase expectation
3 will not be in line with appraised value.
4 I think those discussions have, therefore,
5 ceased. While it is still available to
6 the Board as an addition, it would
7 indicate that the acquisition of that's
8 probably unlikely due to the price point
9 expectation of the landowners on that
10 tract.

11 Those are the short list
12 nominations. I ran through those a bit
13 quickly. Any questions on those?

14 Okay. Commissioner, I don't see
15 any, so I'm going to turn it back to you
16 for general discussion. As I do, just
17 want to remind everyone be sure your mics
18 are on and that if you are speaking that
19 you are speaking into the mic. The court
20 reporter's moved up so I think she's
21 better, but just for the back of the room.

22 Commissioner?

23 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you for

1 those reports.

2 This is the portion of the meeting
3 where we generally receive motions for
4 nominations and motions for appraisals or
5 action on properties. Are there any
6 motions?

7 Dr. McClintock?

8 DR. MCCLINTOCK: Yes. I would like to
9 so move that the Belcher Tract 2-Oak
10 Mountain State Park property be considered
11 for purchase. I see this is the last
12 opportunity to expand this very popular
13 state park in our state adjacent to major
14 ongoing rapid development. As we heard
15 from the Coosa Riverkeeper earlier, it's
16 high in diversity, Coosa River Shed, and
17 potential locations for water quality
18 should all be considered, and I just would
19 like to say that this is an opportunity
20 I'd hate to see squandered.

21 MS. MCCURDY: The motion is for second
22 appraisal and move to purchase.

23 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: So the motion

1 is for a second appraisal and move to
2 purchase on the Belcher Phase 2 Addition.
3 That's in Tab 3 in your packet.

4 Any questions/discussion?

5 All those in favor, please raise
6 your hand.

7 MS. MCCURDY: I'm going to count. If
8 y'all could please hold your hands up.
9 One, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. I'm going to
10 ask for confirmation. Nine votes, nine
11 yea.

12 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All those
13 opposed?

14 MS. MCCURDY: We have two nays.

15 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any abstain?

16 MS. MCCURDY: Abstention, Mr. Harper?

17 MR. HARPER: No, this is nay.

18 MS. MCCURDY: Mr. Harper and
19 Mr. Parnell were nays. Do we have any
20 abstentions?

21 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Motion carries.

22 DR. SALOOM: Question, Commissioner.

23 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Saloom?

1 DR. SALOOM: The Red Hills-Blanton
2 Addition, there has not been an appraisal
3 on that as of yet; is that correct?

4 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: That's correct.
5 Our Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries
6 Division is working directly with the
7 landowner and they are working with him
8 and they may purchase without the Board --
9 a hundred percent with Wildlife &
10 Freshwater Fisheries dollars since it's
11 all --

12 MS. MCCURDY: Can you speak in the
13 mic. Make sure your microphone is on.

14 DR. SALOOM: So the question is in
15 order for that to come about to add to the
16 addition of the rest of the Red Hills, we
17 need a first appraisal on that now or not.

18 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: I think the
19 Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries is working
20 with them directly, and they can just
21 handle the appraisal through their
22 process.

23 MR. HOLLOWAY: Mr. Chairman?

1 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Holloway?

2 MR. HOLLOWAY: I'd like to move for a
3 first appraisal for the Historic Blakeley
4 Pye Addition, Baldwin County.

5 MR. DARNALL: I'll second that.

6 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Motion by
7 Mr. Holloway and second by Mr. Darnall for
8 a first appraisal on the Historic Blakeley
9 Park Pye Addition as presented today in
10 Tab 5 with the updated nomination.

11 MS. MCCURDY: 5g.

12 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any questions
13 on that? I know that's a little confusing
14 since we had a new revised nomination in
15 the packet.

16 MR. PARNELL: From 85 to 81?

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir. So
18 it would be on the 81-and-a-half-acre
19 piece.

20 MS. MCCURDY: Approximately.

21 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any questions?

22 All right. All those in favor,
23 please raise your hand for a first

1 appraisal on the Blakeley Pye Addition.

2 MS. MCCURDY: I have 11 yea.

3 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any opposed?

4 MS. MCCURDY: And Mr. Parnell one nay.

5 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you. The
6 motion carries.

7 Dr. Powers?

8 DR. POWERS: I'd like to move for a
9 first appraisal on the Cathedral Caverns
10 State Park-Gurly Drive Addition.

11 DR. MCCLINTOCK: I'll second that.

12 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Powers
13 makes a motion and Dr. McClintock seconded
14 for a first appraisal on the Cathedral
15 Caverns State Park-Gurly Drive Addition.

16 Any questions or discussion for a
17 first appraisal there?

18 All right. All those in favor
19 please raise your hand.

20 MS. MCCURDY: I see 11 yea.

21 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any opposed?

22 MS. MCCURDY: Mr. Parnell one nay.

23 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Motion carries.

1 Dr. Powers?

2 DR. POWERS: I'd like to move for a
3 second appraisal and purchase of the
4 Guntersville State Park Addition.

5 MS. MCCURDY: John Doss Mountain.

6 DR. POWERS: It's a relatively small
7 acquisition, but it seems like it would be
8 very valuable at that state park.

9 MR. HOLLOWAY: Second.

10 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by
11 Mr. Holloway. So it is for a second
12 appraisal on move to purchase on the
13 Guntersville State Park-John Doss Mountain
14 Addition.

15 Any discussion or questions?

16 All those in favor please raise
17 your hand.

18 MS. MCCURDY: Okay. Eleven yea.

19 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any opposed?

20 MS. MCCURDY: No nays. Any
21 abstentions?

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Motion carries.

23 Thank you.

1 Dr. Powers?

2 DR. POWERS: So this one is
3 actually -- I think this would be an
4 appropriate time to keep the D'Olive Bay
5 on for one more. And I apologize to the
6 Board. I was not able -- I have questions
7 about the existing structures on that. I
8 know this property's been on for a long
9 time. And I'd also like to talk to
10 Patti's staff about grant opportunities
11 for it. So I don't -- anyway, I'd like to
12 move to keep it on for one more meeting,
13 and I promise I'll make a decision at that
14 point.

15 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: And that's all
16 we need. Thank you. We'll do that.

17 MS. MCCURDY: For the court reporter,
18 that's the D'Olive Bay North Addition
19 Tract.

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any other
21 discussion? Any other general business?

22 Mr. Parnell?

23 MR. PARNELL: I think probably anybody

1 that's observed realizes I'm kind of
2 against us buying more land because I
3 don't think we're taking care of our
4 current property. I get complaints on a
5 regular basis about Forever Wild land
6 being an incubator for wild hogs. I would
7 ask -- make a motion that the staff do
8 some research and come up with us a wild
9 hog eradication program that would be
10 extremely aggressive on Forever Wild land
11 so that I don't have to hear about
12 Forever Wild being the source of wild hogs
13 all across Alabama.

14 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you for
15 that information. I think as we move into
16 these miscellaneous reports that are
17 provided by the staff, there's information
18 on the work that's being done, not only on
19 hog eradication, but other work on the
20 Forever Wild properties. And I will be
21 glad to provide to the Board some numbers
22 of wild hogs that have been removed on
23 Forever Wild properties because I do think

1 that that is important work that our staff
2 is doing to help manage these properties.

3 Would that be sufficient to do
4 that --

5 MR. PARNELL: Sure.

6 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: -- and let's
7 discuss it from there after you see some
8 of those numbers?

9 MR. PARNELL: Sure. I'm good.

10 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Because we
11 agree with you that it is an issue that
12 they are addressing on the properties.

13 So with that if there's no other
14 business, let's move into the Tab 5
15 reports where we can highlight some of the
16 work that is being done on the tracts that
17 includes a lot of the work that y'all
18 agreed to fund on the access and way
19 finding and then as well as some of the
20 forestry management work.

21 MS. MCCURDY: All right. Well, we
22 have taken care of Tab 5. The only tract
23 that was rolling off due to NBA procedure

1 was the tract that Dr. Powers has
2 continued, so we've taken care of 5b.

3 If you will look at Tab 5c, we are
4 required by Amendment 543 to initiate at
5 least an initial management plan for our
6 tracts within one year after acquisition.
7 I generally try to bring these to the
8 Board when I can one meeting in advance.
9 In case there are questions, we can
10 address them in between. The tracts that
11 are -- would be added to management plans
12 this time are existing tracts that were
13 additions and would fall into current
14 management plans, so I want to run through
15 those. Again, this is Tab 5c.

16 We have the Coldwater-Robertson
17 Addition that we would propose including
18 within the current Coldwater Mountain
19 Complex plan. We have the Barnett
20 Addition and Hurd Hollow Addition to the
21 Riverton Community Hunting Area complex.
22 Again, due to all these tracts being
23 additions, we would propose that they be

1 incorporated within the existing
2 management plans. If the Board agrees
3 with that and the information provided in
4 your packet for Tab 5c, there is a
5 potential motion, but I would need
6 eventually a motion and a vote by the
7 Board to accept.

8 MR. HOLLOWAY: Mr. Chairman?

9 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Holloway?

10 MR. HOLLOWAY: I'd like to move that
11 the Board approves the State Lands
12 proceeding with the inclusion of the
13 Coldwater Mountain Complex-Robertson
14 Addition, and the Riverton CHA Complex-
15 Barnett and Hurd Hollow Additions into
16 existing management plans as set forth in
17 the memorandum dated August 3, 2023.

18 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Is there a
19 second?

20 DR. SALOOM: Second.

21 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by
22 Dr. Saloom.

23 All those in favor please raise

1 your hand.

2 MS. MCCURDY: Eleven yea.

3 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any opposed?

4 Any abstention?

5 Motion carries. Thank you.

6 MS. MCCURDY: All right. With that
7 business taken care of, next I would like
8 to move to Tab 5d. Now, Tab 5d includes
9 several memos that we incorporated sort of
10 into one.

11 Each year at the August meeting,
12 we provide some information on the
13 activities that we have accomplished this
14 fiscal year. Now, the fiscal year is not
15 over. However, we generally go ahead and
16 present this in August due to other
17 business items that come up later in the
18 year. So it's not a full account, but it
19 is somewhat of an account of what the
20 staff has been engaged in.

21 Now, the staff works together
22 holistically, but we do these reports
23 divided into the certain different

1 sections/areas of my State Lands Division
2 that are targeting different activities
3 and are working together but with a
4 different focus. So I will run through --
5 as usual, I'm not going to read every word
6 in these reports, but I wanted to run
7 through the reports, give you some
8 examples of the activities.

9 And I will say as you will see by
10 these reports and that I often remark
11 quite truthfully, I stand up here and
12 report to you what's going on with the
13 program, but it is only through the hard
14 work of my staff and the Wildlife &
15 Freshwater Fisheries staff, State Lands,
16 and State Parks staff assisting us with
17 those efforts. These reports focus on
18 State Lands, but I don't want anyone to
19 think that it is not with great
20 appreciation and assistance from the other
21 divisions within the Department.

22 The first activity report covers
23 our field operations and our enforcement

1 operations on our tracts. I have
2 enforcement officers that are both on the
3 tracts for purposes of public safety,
4 compliance with Department regulations,
5 but are also either biologists or from
6 forestry backgrounds and so they are
7 simultaneously observing the tracts,
8 preparing for and organizing various land
9 management and land stewardship
10 activities. Again, I'm not going to run
11 through everything, but I do want to just
12 give you a few examples.

13 They engage in a lot of habitat
14 restoration or routine maintenance, both
15 of those types of work. We either
16 contract out, do ourselves, work with
17 partners such as the Forestry Commission,
18 sometimes the Nature Conservancy, other
19 division personnel, to perform a good bit
20 of prescribed burning.

21 Our staff proceeded with burning
22 on approximately 2200 acres this year so
23 far and then assisted with another 5300

1 acres related to prescribed burning. You
2 will note in the report some of the tracts
3 that benefited from this work included
4 Freedom Hills, Perdido, Little River,
5 Blackwater, and Wolf Bay. And we have
6 additional work that's going on currently
7 prepping additional tracts for burning.
8 You will see that. We have sort of
9 detailed the work by district, the North,
10 Central, and Southern. But the one
11 example -- we had some question on Freedom
12 Hills. So far this year, we've
13 accomplished burning on just under 1500
14 acres at Freedom Hills WMA.

15 In addition to the prescribed
16 burning, they are also actively evaluating
17 and preparing various herbicide and
18 mechanical applications on the tracts.
19 Cogan grass continues to be a challenge
20 and a source of a lot of man hours trying
21 to combat. There are others that we work
22 on, but obviously Cogan grass, as with
23 everyone, is a perpetual problem.

1 We provide both for habitat
2 benefit and public hunting benefit. We
3 perform a lot of supplemental planting and
4 various habitat projects designed to
5 increase recreational opportunities and
6 quality of hunting on the tract. This can
7 include various food plot establishment,
8 various plantings. Old Cahawba this
9 fiscal year, along with the Forever Wild
10 Field Trial Area, are a couple of tracts
11 that we have concentrated on continuing to
12 improve. We have a lot of very good
13 public feedback on the work on Old
14 Cahawba. And as we'll note in a separate
15 report, these efforts support several
16 activities at the Forever Wild Field Trial
17 Area in Greensboro.

18 My staff is also continually
19 ensuring -- and this is constant work --
20 that our boundaries are maintained and
21 marked. So there's ongoing evaluation and
22 work to mark boundaries or where we
23 realize we have issues arising obtain the

1 survey work necessary to clarify those
2 boundaries.

3 A lot of roadwork and access
4 improvements, and we'll have a full report
5 at the November meeting sort of giving you
6 the FY report on the work that was done on
7 your request to improve access through
8 parking, through signage, way finding,
9 trail markers on all the properties. So I
10 won't go deep into that for this meeting
11 because I'm going to go into more detail
12 on that for the November meeting. But we
13 always have routine work, but that was a
14 special focus this year.

15 We also have engaged in feral pig
16 trapping programs. We've had certain
17 tracts that have been the focus of that,
18 especially the Central and Southern
19 districts, and we are seeing improvement
20 in areas. We are also working obviously
21 with Chuck and his division -- a lot of
22 these tracts are managed as WMAs, and so
23 we're working with their division. A lot

1 of work continues in Grand Bay. We have
2 installed cameras -- additional cameras.
3 We had cameras. And so we are working on
4 those trapping numbers. I will have
5 certain numbers. Commissioner, I know you
6 have specific numbers on one tract.

7 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: It looks like,
8 Mr. Parnell -- and I will be glad to
9 provide this for the Board --

10 Ms. McCurdy's staff is still pulling some
11 stuff together because we do this trapping
12 cooperatively with Wildlife & Freshwater
13 Fisheries, the USDA APHIS, and the Nature
14 Conservancy, but this year so far
15 somewhere between 7- and 800 wild hogs
16 have been trapped and removed from the
17 Forever Wild properties. But I'll get
18 some better numbers by location and
19 provide that to the Board.

20 MS. MCCURDY: Ms. Stanley?

21 MS. STANLEY: Thank you. I just would
22 like to request for clarification 7- or
23 800 out of how many? A thousand? Five

1 thousand? How much is that?

2 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: It's not
3 enough, not enough.

4 MS. MCCURDY: I think she meant --

5 MS. STANLEY: I just want to know --

6 MS. MCCURDY: -- as opposed to the
7 total. And I don't know that we can give
8 a total number of hogs, therefore, to
9 subtract out what we successfully track.
10 We can tell by some cameras maybe some
11 activity, but I don't -- Commissioner, you
12 may be able to address it differently --
13 but I don't know that we can tell you a
14 total number of hogs.

15 MS. STANLEY: I just want to know if
16 you're putting a dent in it since my
17 colleague asked the question.

18 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: I would say
19 it's not half. It is making a dent, but
20 we can do -- and that is a focus of our
21 staff and working with these other
22 agencies to try and do more hog work on
23 these properties.

1 MS. STANLEY: We appreciate it.

2 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: We're like
3 every other landowner in South Alabama
4 that is struggling with wild and feral
5 swine.

6 MS. MCCURDY: Including my husband.
7 The field staff, the Stewardship staff is
8 also actively helping us evaluate. We get
9 research requests from individuals and
10 institutions wanting to do research on our
11 tracts, which we try to assist with, try
12 to foster, but we want to be sure it does
13 not interfere with our public recreation
14 activities or damage the land in any way.
15 So they assist us in those evaluations.

16 They're also involved in many
17 education and public outreach events.
18 This includes we host and work with
19 Chuck's division on youth tracking events,
20 provide staffing for the Mentored Hunt
21 Program.

22 Obviously, again, these officers
23 are assisting with routine law

1 enforcement, which is necessary based on
2 public recreation opportunities often.
3 They also, like all of our enforcement
4 staff across the department, are assisting
5 with various disaster events. We are
6 called upon -- our enforcement officers
7 are APOST certified, and they are called
8 upon in many differing activities.

9 Yes, Ms. Stanley?

10 MS. STANLEY: I'm sorry. You went to
11 the next question before I could state
12 something.

13 MS. MCCURDY: I'm sorry.

14 MS. STANLEY: You've got a lot of
15 information. I just wanted to commend the
16 organization. I specifically noticed that
17 the public outreach included work by
18 Alabama A&M, Tuskegee, and Alabama State,
19 and I would be remiss if I did not note
20 how important this is in terms of leading
21 to a pipeline of a more diverse workforce
22 in this area. It is greatly needed.

23 Thank you.

1 MS. MCCURDY: Yes. And it is the
2 reason for that focus. Both working with
3 the current students in assisting with
4 various research programs, we've also had
5 them on our properties and at our Wehle
6 Land Conservation Center that I'll mention
7 in a moment that provides grounds that
8 they can work on their research projects,
9 can stay on the property when necessary.
10 We also have facilities where the classes
11 can meet. We have outdoor experiences,
12 but also the indoor, almost classroom-type
13 facility. And I really want to thank
14 Chuck and his division as we work
15 collaboratively with them. We are very
16 excited about those partnerships and
17 wonderful students, and also to have them
18 fairly close by is of help to us in
19 fostering that. So thank you for noting
20 that.

21 All right. Since it is, as
22 Ms. Stanley mentioned, a lot of
23 information, I'll move on to the next

1 memo.

2 Yes, sir, Mr. Harper?

3 MR. HARPER: Ms. Patti, just inform me
4 on the maintenance. I visited the Barnett
5 Lawley Tract last year, and I was a little
6 disturbed by the lack of -- it looked like
7 the lack of maintenance. Are we
8 contracting with people for that? Is that
9 part of this? Who takes care of
10 maintenance?

11 MS. MCCURDY: Yes, sir. And when you
12 say maintenance, you mean of the land
13 or --

14 MR. HARPER: When I drove in, it just
15 seemed like it needed -- the grass needed
16 to be cut and bush hogged and all that.

17 MS. MCCURDY: I would encourage -- I
18 would love for you to come back and go
19 with us on that tract. We can move to
20 that to report. But we approach the
21 Forever Wild Field Trial Area this way.
22 Where we can burn to limit the need to
23 bush hog, we do. We have some specific, I

1 would say, cutting work that we do,
2 especially around the ponds. The various
3 dog events that occur require different
4 pond condition, grass height. It varies
5 competition to competition. I'm not sure
6 when you would have been on the site -- I
7 don't know what month that would have
8 been -- but we would have done extensive
9 burning and very specific eradication of
10 some invasives on that tract both in the
11 ponds and on the grounds. We can move to
12 that report, but I would love if we could
13 schedule a time -- I know your schedule is
14 packed -- to go out there. I would love
15 for you to look around. We also are in
16 the process of additional facility
17 improvements there.

18 So why don't we go to that report.
19 I'll go a little out of order. And so you
20 would be looking for what should be the
21 third report from where we just were, and
22 it's titled Annual Activity - M. Barnett
23 Lawley Forever Wild Field Trial Area.

1 I'll give you a second to get to that
2 report. It's in that same grouping.
3 While you're getting there, I will note
4 that this tract is actually a partnership
5 between Forever Wild and the State Lands
6 Division. Some of the acreage is held by
7 State Lands. It's held by State Lands as
8 it contained the structures on the
9 property. You know, Forever Wild does not
10 really acquire and maintain structures.
11 So State Lands purchased that acreage, and
12 we work to maintain the facilities, we
13 work to organize the events that take
14 place on this tract. And so, again, we're
15 not quite done with this fiscal, but what
16 has occurred on the tract so far and --
17 this is a -- the Forever Wild acreage is
18 about 3300. State Lands has just under a
19 thousand.

20 Anyway, so far this fiscal year on
21 the field trial area, we've had 34
22 sporting dog events, 13 physically
23 disabled deer hunts, 13 youth deer hunts,

1 we had 36 hunters -- they were accompanied
2 by the parents, but there were 36 youth
3 hunters, nine youth duck hunts consisting
4 of 14 youth hunters, again, accompanied by
5 parents, we had two youth dove hunts that
6 had approximately a hundred hunter --
7 youth hunters accompanied by parents. I
8 also again want to thank Chuck's division
9 for their assistance with those events.
10 We have also had ongoing interest that's
11 building in the birding community. It's a
12 stop on the birding trail, and we are
13 working a lot with Audubon on their events
14 in the Black Belt and they're utilizing
15 our tract as part of the stops on those
16 sort of field trips for those events. And
17 the Black Belt Birding Festival is also
18 one of the events that's occurring. We
19 continue to work with the birding groups
20 trying to increase how we can foster
21 additional birding events.

22 Field Trial and Hunt Tests are dog
23 events. Again, as I mentioned, each of

1 those events vary. Some are on horseback;
2 some are not. The requirements of what
3 each club looks for, the acreage that they
4 need, how that acreage is maintained,
5 varies group to group. We do our best to
6 accommodate their scoring needs, their
7 testing needs. It has many events. We
8 have gone to having multiple events at the
9 same time, and so far, that's working
10 well. It's a scheduling challenge. But
11 you'll note that of the field trial and
12 hunt test events, the best estimate is we
13 had about 2,931 dogs. Of course, those
14 dogs bring people, but we're counting dogs
15 on that.

16 So far this season, we had six
17 horseback pointing dog field trials, 12
18 retriever field trials/hunt test events,
19 13 fox hunting events, we had the -- we
20 had one National Wounded Game Seminar/UBT
21 Test -- that is sort of a new usage we're
22 seeing, but we appreciate their
23 participation -- the Drathaar Test, and

1 then we also had some weekend training
2 seminar that is put on there.

3 Now, we have day-to-day usage by
4 the handlers, the trainers who are coming
5 out with their dogs. They can come during
6 the day, during the week, and we provide
7 them areas to give them an opportunity for
8 one-on-one time training their dog and
9 hopefully improving their dog's
10 competition results.

11 We also have several hunting
12 programs as I've mentioned. I will say
13 that on this tract our focus, as opposed
14 to like a WMA, is to use it for very
15 targeted events benefiting youth,
16 benefiting physically disabled. We have
17 had women's deer hunts there in the past.
18 That is the type of hunting usage. Again,
19 we're incorporating that with our dog
20 usage.

21 We also are working to improve --
22 again, with the help of Chuck's -- the
23 Fisheries Division -- fishing

1 opportunities. You know, fishing
2 opportunities on our tract are very
3 popular, and we're continuing to try to
4 improve the ponds that we were left with.
5 Some of them were not in great condition,
6 but we are working on that and have
7 incorporated grass carp trying to decrease
8 some of the invasives in those ponds.

9 We also are carrying on
10 simultaneously various habitat restoration
11 projects and sort of a native grasses type
12 of restoration. That work has been since
13 the beginning of that tract acquisition
14 and has included various experiments on
15 what techniques work best. That continues
16 and we're seeing great progress. As any
17 tract, we have invasive species. Cogan
18 grass activity continues on the tract.

19 One thing that I do want to --
20 Commissioner, I don't know if you want to
21 add anything to -- but in addition to the
22 events that are really primarily utilizing
23 grounds, there are some structures there

1 that benefit the dog events, and we are
2 continuing to improve those. I separated
3 out in your memo of the infrastructure
4 improvements the ones that are being
5 furthered by State Lands dollars because
6 it's State Lands acreage and ones that are
7 being furthered by Forever Wild dollars.
8 But we have renovated our office to better
9 serve -- it's an old scale house when I
10 say office -- but anyway, have
11 accommodated it, it helps the daily user
12 sign in, a lot of the dog users. Our
13 outdoor pavilion received an upgrade and
14 painting and a pair of bathroom
15 facilities. We had a large building that
16 was formally actual inmate quarters. We
17 have demolished that building. Obviously,
18 it was of no use to us, and we took the
19 work on of demolishing that and making way
20 for future plans to add a new event
21 facility there we hope in the future. We
22 have two houses that were left on the
23 property. The clubs use those. A few

1 people may sleep there, but most of the
2 occupancy is pushed into surrounding
3 communities benefiting them economically.
4 But the clubs will host -- they may have a
5 small dinner in the houses. The judges
6 use that for scoring and for meeting
7 during the events. But there are two
8 houses used for those activities.

9 We're doing roadwork, trying to
10 improve a connecting road -- again,
11 improving access -- that will allow a
12 better flow between events in different
13 areas on the properties.

14 We have what we call the red horse
15 barn. Currently, the horse dog events can
16 paddock -- have paddocks there for horses.
17 We are expanding that, almost doubling
18 that capacity. We're going to add
19 fencing. We're working on mulching to
20 open up an area so that more horses can be
21 better maintained there. We're working on
22 installing hook ups for the attendees --
23 they're coming with very large dog

1 trailers -- for them to be able to stay
2 overnight and stay with their dogs there.

3 We have conducted surveys related
4 to that work, and basically also we are
5 requiring -- it doesn't sound exciting
6 maybe but will be well used -- five new
7 sort of bathroom -- permanent bathrooms
8 that will be placed for the public usage
9 so they are not trying to come back in to
10 those two houses to use the facilities.
11 They can -- the dog events can go on
12 without interruption, shall we say.

13 Any questions on the field trial
14 area? Anything, Commissioner, you would
15 like to add?

16 Yes, sir, Dr. Valentine?

17 DR. VALENTINE: I have a question
18 about how you're managing the invasive --

19 MS. MCCURDY: I'm sorry. Can you
20 speak up.

21 DR. VALENTINE: I have a question
22 about how you're managing invasive SAV in
23 the one pond and in the fishing. Is that

1 a sterile carp, or is that an invasive
2 carp?

3 MS. MCCURDY: It is in conjunction
4 with input from the dog events organizers,
5 the various ones. It was sort of a
6 mutually agreed upon carp. All I can tell
7 you is it a white amur grass carp. I'm
8 sure if you don't mind hanging out
9 afterwards, my staff can --

10 DR. VALENTINE: Just curious.

11 MS. MCCURDY: The biologist and not
12 the lawyer would probably be the better
13 person to tell you that.

14 DR. VALENTINE: I'm assuming it's a
15 sterile carp.

16 MS. MCCURDY: I'm going to have to
17 tell you I do not know, but my staff can
18 assist you. If you will hang around, I'll
19 plug you in with my staff on the tract.

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Saloom?

21 DR. SALOOM: Just a comment. I must
22 say this a very impressive report and the
23 work that is being done and the outreach

1 and education part of this and making all
2 this available to the public, you know,
3 it's a great testament of the mission of
4 what we're all about.

5 MS. MCCURDY: Thank you. It's a lot
6 of work.

7 MR. HARPER: Just a comment. I got
8 this and read this, and I reckon I visited
9 the property before I got on this Board.
10 But back April or May time frame of last
11 year, I was just a little disappointed in
12 the entrance. And this was after field
13 trial season, so May, June. You know, I
14 imagine everybody was gone. But that's
15 what I was concerned about, the
16 maintenance in that time frame. But it's
17 continued maintenance year round, I'm
18 sure.

19 MS. MCCURDY: Yes, it is. It is more
20 intensive when the events are taking
21 place, yes, but it's year round. And
22 please visit anytime. You may want to
23 take certain points in the year. I'd

1 actually love to sit down with you. We
2 can show you the plan that we have that we
3 follow on that tract and why we do what we
4 do when we do. Like everybody, I mean,
5 it's work and everybody's strapped.
6 Anybody with land is strapped to manage
7 it. But we have a plan that we follow, a
8 rotation of burning, a rotation of
9 spraying, which event's taking place when
10 that we concentrate on as far as pulling
11 the Bush Hog out or, you know, tracking
12 work or roadwork, but more than happy to
13 run through the seasonal plan on that
14 tract whenever you have time.

15 MR. HARPER: Like I said, I did read
16 the report and that's impressive. What I
17 saw didn't really match this, but that was
18 earlier than this. But this is
19 impressive.

20 MS. MCCURDY: We'd love to have you
21 out, and we'd love any input on the tract
22 that you might want to share.

23 Commissioner, I know we're running

1 long. I've now gone through -- well, let
2 me keep going. I'm sorry. Any additional
3 questions on the field trial area?

4 All right. Going back to pick up
5 where I was. We had the Natural Heritage
6 Section report, and I will -- this
7 section -- and Jo Lewis is head of this
8 effort -- straddles both the
9 administrative arm, getting the
10 nominations, overseeing the processing of
11 nominations, getting you information for
12 your packet, a lot of work that goes on
13 administratively from the staff. But
14 they're also doing many things that I want
15 to note. I'll, again, let you read
16 through.

17 The database that we maintain that
18 is utilized by over 2500 individuals
19 currently holds over 6 million records.
20 Just within this last year, we've exceeded
21 so far 975,000 additional entries that are
22 available and provide a lot of information
23 to the public when they call as to before

1 they take action where there may be
2 sensitive areas, but also various
3 researchers from around the nation that
4 are in need of additional information. We
5 have so far also attached the coordinates,
6 about 96 percent of those records. And
7 this work is also benefited by U.S. Fish &
8 Wildlife Service, State Wildlife grant
9 funding that Chuck's division allows us to
10 utilize. You will see also in this report
11 the interaction with the public that takes
12 place with the Heritage Section as well as
13 the research that is done that is then
14 turned back out into applications. I will
15 let you read through that, but it is an
16 impressive work that is ongoing also of
17 a -- going onto our tracts, for example --
18 is a very practical application.

19 When we're putting in a
20 recreational trail, we're adding a new
21 road, whatever we're doing, there is an
22 assessment that's done, an ecological
23 assessment on the tract to be sure that

1 we're not damaging a sensitive habitat,
2 but if we are, we're worried about that,
3 we're just going to route the trail around
4 it. But it is important, ongoing, very
5 intensive work, and while they're doing
6 that type of work inventorying the finds
7 of the various species -- plant species as
8 an example that will be encountered on
9 these tracts -- that helps us with various
10 federal funding opportunities in a lot of
11 different work that we do to have the
12 background on the tracts to demonstrate
13 that they qualify for grant assistance of
14 various natures.

15 Next, you'll see what we
16 categorize as our recreational programs
17 update. Again, this will be also part of
18 a more detailed report we'll have in
19 November after we've completed the fiscal
20 year, but I do want to highlight a few
21 stats. We currently are managing 173
22 miles of canoe trail, 79 miles of hiking
23 trail, 47 miles of mountain biking trail,

1 39 miles of horseback riding trail, and
2 54 miles of what we term multi-use trail.
3 It's hard for us to put it in one category
4 or another because of the multiple uses,
5 so we just call it multiple use.

6 This report also details the
7 various parking lot work and improvement
8 that we're currently undergoing. Again,
9 you'll hear more about that in December
10 (sic).

11 We also are lucky to have great
12 partnerships like with the City of Dothan.
13 There was an erosion issue that was noted
14 on that tract. The City of Dothan is
15 working with us on that and helping us
16 with certain work and repairs that will be
17 needed on that tract, so I want to thank
18 Dothan for their partnership.

19 Again, you will note the various
20 recreational access improvements. I
21 think, Commissioner, I'll just wait and
22 detail those again in more detail in
23 November when we have a more complete

1 picture.

2 Again, our rec crew, they're
3 certified burners. They help on burns.
4 Again, we're all working together, but
5 it's just how we group these reports.

6 I also have a detailed report on
7 the Wehle Land Conservation Center. This
8 is the facility that I mentioned in
9 Bullock County. We have used that
10 facility as a means for outreach to the
11 local school systems, providing
12 educational assistance in trying to have
13 field trips on those properties. We
14 provide some financial assistance. That
15 having been in conjunction with Auburn
16 University.

17 But if you'll see this tract --
18 I'm going to run through -- in addition to
19 its uses for field-based research, you'll
20 note that we have 14 open trail weekends.
21 I'm not going to detail all the visitation
22 numbers, but that alone is over 480
23 visitors. We had over 200 visitors for

1 various meetings. We have been a good
2 spot in that area of the state -- it's
3 fairly rural -- to bring together resource
4 agencies, both local and state. We had
5 143 students and teachers for the
6 Bullock County Water Festival. We had
7 youth at the Bullock County Youth Fishing
8 Derby. Again, you'll see the numbers in
9 the report on those activities, but that
10 is, again, another property that is used
11 for education. We are burning on that
12 property. We have trapped 23 hogs on that
13 property as part of one of our efforts.
14 I'll let you run through that reporting.
15 Again, Commissioner, I know we're running
16 long. But the interaction of that staff
17 and their knowledge and expertise and
18 biology expertise is also utilized on
19 other Forever Wild tracts, but their
20 primary responsibility day to day is
21 managing the Wehle facility, both the land
22 and the activities.

23 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: One thing that

1 didn't make the report that I'm probably
2 very proud of working here is that County
3 Road 47 that goes through the Wehle Nature
4 Center had potholes in it that you could
5 lose a school bus in. It was very in bad
6 shape. And working with Governor Ivey,
7 DOT Director Cooper, and Bullock County,
8 we were able to get that paved last year
9 and that has been a great addition getting
10 in and out of the Wehle Center. All the
11 stuff that we do, I'm tickled to get a
12 road paved. I think that was -- took a
13 lot of work and it was very -- took a lot
14 of cooperation from the Governor to get
15 that done. So I'm very thankful for her
16 help on that.

17 MS. MCCURDY: Yeah, I'm on the
18 Bullock County Tourism Council, and I
19 don't know -- every time I go, I think
20 that's the -- maybe the greatest comment
21 is thank you, Commissioner and Director
22 Cooper, for doing something about that
23 road.

1 So I think I hit the memos. If I
2 skipped one, I apologize. But I know that
3 went on a little bit. I both wanted to
4 point out a few aspects of that and also
5 note to the Board if these reports either
6 spark questions you have or concerns you
7 have, you know, please let us know.
8 Staff's available to sit down and go
9 through these with y'all. If there's
10 additional information you would like to
11 see in these reports and have them
12 recognized in a different manner, I'm also
13 always open for that. Please just let me
14 know and I'll put you in touch with the
15 staff member that is most focused in that
16 area.

17 Next, moving on is also an
18 activity report of sorts. I skipped over
19 forest management. Sorry about that. The
20 last report, 5d, before we move to 5e,
21 relates to an update on the forest
22 management activities. We have divided
23 that report usually in harvest activities

1 and then in reforestation activities.

2 We only had about 30 acres of
3 needed specific reforestation efforts this
4 year. We have made great progress in
5 working through some of the timber
6 reserves that we had to work through
7 reforestation on. Those are beginning to
8 lessen. That is on Uchee that we had the
9 reforestation work. I won't go tract by
10 tract, but between first, second
11 thinnings, final harvest, clearcuts as of
12 date of the report, we estimate about
13 3,550 acres had some type of forest timber
14 management activity, again, whether that
15 be thinning or clearcuts or final harvest
16 on those tracts. I do that last normally
17 because it leads to our next item, which
18 is Tab 5e.

19 At the August meeting, we also try
20 to -- in addition to updating you on
21 forest activity over this fiscal year, we
22 try to give you a picture of what we
23 anticipate will be the intended focus

1 going into this next fiscal year. And so
2 we are anticipating the need in the
3 upcoming fiscal year to either initiate or
4 continue thinning on Barbour WMA, Coosa
5 WMA, Freedom Hills WMA, Old Cahawba Tract
6 Addition, Portland Landing SOA, Red
7 Hills -- additional work there -- Skyline
8 WMA Post Oak Flat Patrick Addition, Turkey
9 Creek Nature Center Parker Addition, Uchee
10 SOA Tract. We anticipate final harvest to
11 be completed on Lauderdale WMA, Little
12 River Canyon WMA, Portland Landing SOA.
13 Again, you will see the exact acreage
14 figures in your memo. Then we anticipate
15 in the upcoming year reforestation
16 activity needed at Freedom Hills and,
17 again, at Uchee. Because it is a little
18 difficult to know in advance, also we may
19 encounter an issue on a tract that moves
20 work up in priority. We generally ask for
21 a fairly broad motion from the Board as to
22 upcoming activities. I will say if the
23 Board members any tract you want to visit

1 to see the activity or a tract that you
2 believe needs to be prioritized within the
3 next fiscal year that's not on that list,
4 you know, please continue to let me know
5 and work with staff and identify that and
6 add that. This is really just staff's
7 anticipated focus for the upcoming fiscal.

8 So I'll take any questions or
9 concerns on that.

10 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Powers?

11 DR. POWERS: So I move that the Board
12 authorizes the State Lands Division to
13 implement or continue, as applicable,
14 forest management activities for the
15 fiscal year 2024 as described in the
16 memorandum dated August 3, 2023.

17 MR. HOLLOWAY: Second.

18 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by
19 Mr. Holloway.

20 Are there any questions or follow-
21 up on that from the Board?

22 All those in favor say I.

23 Any opposed?

1 None opposed. The motion carries.

2 Thank you. I think that concludes
3 the reports from -- the miscellaneous
4 reports that we were going to cover.
5 There's some other information in your
6 packets. I think we've already talked
7 about most of those with Natural Bridge,
8 Blakeley State Park.

9 The next order of business is the
10 approval of the minutes from the May 4th
11 meeting. That's in your packet. It's
12 Tab 6.

13 Are there any corrections or
14 additions to the minutes?

15 Any edits?

16 Is there a motion to approve the
17 May 4, 2023, minutes?

18 MR. OATES: So moved.

19 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: So moved by
20 Mr. Oates.

21 MR. HARPER: Second.

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by
23 Mr. Harper.

1 All right. With no corrections or
2 additions, all those in favor say I of
3 approving the minutes.

4 Any opposed?

5 None opposed. The motion carries.

6 The next meeting will be in Auburn
7 on November the 2nd, my wife's birthday.
8 She'll be glad that I'm not here with her.

9 MS. MCCURDY: You can take her to a
10 good dinner while you're there. I'll help
11 you with that. And that's going to be --
12 the School of Forestry has graciously been
13 assisting us, so we anticipate being
14 there.

15 MR. BLANKENSHIP: So is there any
16 other business from the Board?

17 Any other from you, State Lands?

18 MS. MCCURDY: Unless staff tells me I
19 missed something.

20 Commissioner, I would like to
21 just, again, take the opportunity to thank
22 my staff for their hard work. They're the
23 ones out in hundred degree temperatures,

1 and I just want to -- many of them are
2 here today, and I just want to tell them I
3 appreciate your efforts.

4 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: And I
5 appreciate the reports. I enjoyed reading
6 about their work and more importantly
7 enjoyed seeing it on the tracts when you
8 go in, see how the access is looking so
9 much better, the way finding signage and
10 access improvements, and then all the
11 habitat management. Glad to see that, all
12 that work being done. Thank, y'all.

13 With that, we are adjourned.

14 (Proceedings concluded at
15 12:36 p.m.)
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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

STATE OF ALABAMA

AUTAUGA COUNTY

I, Stacey L. Johnson, Certified Court Reporter and Commissioner for the State of Alabama at Large, hereby certify that on August 3, 2023, I reported the proceedings in the matter of the foregoing cause, and that pages 3 through 90 contain a true and accurate transcription of the aforementioned proceedings.

I further certify that I am neither of kin nor of counsel to any of the parties to said cause, nor in any manner interested in the results thereof.

This the 15th day of October, 2023.

/s/Stacey L. Johnson
STACEY L. JOHNSON, CCR
Commissioner for the
State of Alabama at Large
CCR 386, Expires 9/30/2024
COMMISSION EXPIRES: 6/22/2027