

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23

MINUTES OF THE
FOREVER WILD BOARD MEETING
Lake Guntersville State Park Lodge
1155 Lodge Drive
Guntersville, Alabama
May 4, 2023
10:00 a.m.

* * * * *

Transcript of Proceedings

* * * * *

PROCEEDINGS, taken before Stacey
L. Johnson, Certified Court Reporter and
Commissioner for the State of Alabama at
the Oxford Civic Center, 201 Dexter
Avenue, Montgomery, Alabama, on the
4th day of May, 2023, commencing at
10:00 a.m.

* * * * *

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Commissioner Chris Blankenship, Chairman**
- Mr. James "Mickey" Childers**
- Mr. Reginald N. Holloway**
- Dr. Sean P. Powers**
- Dr. James B. McClintock**
- Mr. Jack Darnall**
- Mr. Raymond B. Jones, Jr.**
- Ms. Karen Stanley**
- Mr. Jake Harper**
- Mr. Jimmy Parnell**
- Mr. Rick Oates**
- Dr. Heather Howell**

* * * * *

1 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Good
2 morning. Welcome to the May Forever Wild
3 Board Meeting. I'm going to call the roll
4 and make sure we have a quorum, and then
5 we'll move on. Please indicate your
6 presence when I call your name.

7 Chris Blankenship is here.

8 Mr. Childers?

9 MR. CHILDERS: Here.

10 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Darnall?

11 MR. DARNALL: Here.

12 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Jones?

13 MR. JONES: Here.

14 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. McClintock?

15 DR. MCCLINTOCK: Here.

16 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Oates?

17 MR. OATES: Here.

18 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Parnell?

19 MR. PARNELL: Here.

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Harper?

21 MR. HARPER: Here.

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Ms. Stanley?

23 Mr. Holloway?

1 MR. HOLLOWAY: Here.

2 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Howell?

3 DR. HOWELL: Here.

4 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Neumann?

5 Dr. Powers?

6 DR. POWERS: Here.

7 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Saloom?

8 Dr. Valentine?

9 We have enough for a quorum, and I
10 appreciate y'all coming.

11 I would like to give park
12 superintendent here, Michael Jeffreys, the
13 opportunity to welcome everybody to the
14 park. Mike?

15 MR. JEFFREYS: Thank you, sir.

16 First, welcome to the Board
17 members. Welcome everyone in attendance.
18 I see a lot of familiar faces, and I hope
19 you guys had a chance to enjoy the dinner
20 last night. I heard that most people
21 highly enjoyed it and that just showcases
22 my staff I have here.

23 Those of you that don't know a lot

1 about Lake Guntersville State Park, I'd
2 like to supply a few numbers. The park is
3 right at 7,000 acres. The Tennessee River
4 is 69,000 acres, 35 miles of shoreline.
5 We've got 112 rooms in this lodge. We've
6 got 35 cabins, 112 campsites, and about 35
7 miles of hiking trails. We average about
8 260,000 guests per year. And we just
9 enjoy having you guys back.

10 We've got a lot of new things
11 coming online. We've got glamping, if any
12 of you guys know about that. It's coming.
13 You just have to look it up is the best
14 way for me to describe it. But I know
15 there's going to be a lot of new interest.
16 And I am the district superintendent, so I
17 will be in control. It's a great
18 relationship with the Department and State
19 Parks. I hope you enjoy yourselves. I
20 can't do it without my staff. Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you,
22 Michael. I think everybody did enjoy
23 dinner last night, the ones that had the

1 chance to do that, and breakfast this
2 morning, and the view is always incredible
3 here. Thank you. The park looks great.
4 Thank you for your work, you and your
5 staff.

6 Any other opening remarks from any
7 of the Board members?

8 If not, we'll move on with the
9 public comment portion of the meeting.
10 I've got a few names here to speak. If
11 you have not had a chance to register to
12 speak and you would like to, please raise
13 your hand and we'll get a green slip to
14 you.

15 I don't see anybody, so we'll go
16 ahead with our -- our first speaker is
17 Drew Nix on the Alabama River, Montgomery
18 County. That's Tab 4b page 3, 4b page 3.

19 MR. NIX: Thank y'all for the
20 opportunity to speak to you this morning.
21 This is about the Alabama River Montgomery
22 tract.

23 It's about 800-plus odd acres just

1 outside of the city of Montgomery. It's a
2 peninsular tract there that I-65 runs down
3 through one side of it and actually
4 bisects a couple of properties. It's a
5 great opportunity. You don't find tracts
6 like this in the metropolitan area of
7 Montgomery that could offer the public use
8 this tract can offer. Just wanted to come
9 and speak. If y'all have got any
10 questions, I'd be happy to take them.
11 There are some deed restrictions on the
12 property. But just wanted to be here
13 today if y'all had any questions about it.

14 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you,
15 Drew.

16 The next speaker is Steve
17 Northcutt on the Belcher Phase 2, Tab 3b
18 page 3.

19 MR. NORTHCUTT: So I'm Steve Northcutt
20 with the Nature Conservancy. Thank you
21 for being here today. I'd like to talk
22 about this addition to Oak Mountain State
23 Park. It's called the Belcher Phase 2.

1 The property was owned by EBSCO, and it
2 was a 2,000-acre block that they came to
3 the Nature Conservancy a few years ago and
4 asked about the possibility of finding a
5 way for that property to be in
6 conservation. So we talked about a couple
7 of options, a conservation easement and
8 some other different things, but we felt
9 like because of this addition and shared
10 boundary with Oak Mountain and the
11 difficulty of adding property to Oak
12 Mountain State Park that we would try to
13 work with them to try to get it in front
14 of the Forever Wild Board.

15 The property has had a biological
16 inventory done. This particular property
17 right off of Highway 11 has great access
18 and was slated for development. And if
19 any of you know much about EBSCO's realty
20 arm, they developed a huge development,
21 kind of a new urbanism development called
22 Mount Laurel. So this was absolutely
23 targeted for development. They pulled it

1 back. They wanted to see if there was a
2 chance to get it under Conservation. A
3 good bit of property right off the road is
4 in longleaf pine. It's mature longleaf
5 pine. Probably a lot of you know longleaf
6 pine has lost 98 percent of its forestry
7 since the European settlement from Texas
8 to Virginia, and so I know Forever Wild,
9 the Department of Conservation, Nature
10 Conservancy, and federal agencies longleaf
11 pine protection and restoration is a high
12 priority.

13 But just to give you a few things
14 about Oak Mountain, it's the second most
15 visited state park. There's an average of
16 600,000 visitors a year. It offers
17 recreational amenities to the largest
18 urban population portion of the state,
19 good access. They have hiking, extremely
20 well-attended mountain biking, golfing,
21 horseback riding, swimming, and it's just
22 one of these opportunities that I feel
23 very strongly would -- and to get this

1 size property, even though I realize, you
2 know, prices are high in this area, I
3 think if you look at this acquisition now,
4 you know, this body is Forever Wild and so
5 you would have it in protection forever,
6 and I think it would be an extremely good
7 amenity to the park.

8 If anybody has any questions, I'd
9 be glad to answer them.

10 MR. CHILDERS: I have a question.

11 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir?

12 MR. CHILDERS: The railroad, is it
13 active?

14 MR. NORTHCUTT: I don't know the
15 details. I believe it is and --
16 Commissioner?

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: It is, yes,
18 sir.

19 MR. CHILDERS: It is. Thank you.

20 MR. NORTHCUTT: But I will say this,
21 there are forest roads that have access to
22 both the lower part and the upper part,
23 so, of course, with, you know, being

1 careful, you can still access both
2 parcels.

3 Yes, ma'am?

4 MS. STANLEY: Thank you so much.

5 Along those same lines, what would be
6 your plan for providing safety to people
7 who might be enjoying the bulk of the
8 park, which is very, very big, which is
9 already there, and trying to get across
10 the railroad tracks? The other little,
11 small -- it looks like it might be 10 or
12 15 or at the most 20 percent of what's
13 already there. Or would you just not
14 allow access across the railroad and
15 people have got to enjoy it over here or
16 enjoy it over here?

17 MR. NORTHCUTT: That's a great
18 question. I'll answer it by first saying
19 that the Nature Conservancy owns the
20 property right next to Raymond Jones'
21 property in Jackson County. It is a
22 railroad tract. As soon as you get off,
23 you have to cross it. So we have fixed

1 signs and we tell people to be careful.
2 So they have to cross that. The reality
3 is there. There are other railroad tracts
4 that border other Forever Wild properties.
5 What the park would do if y'all decided to
6 make this purchase is they would do a plan
7 and they would decide what are the
8 amenities of the property. I would think
9 because of where it's located an extremely
10 good hiking trail system. Because the
11 property has so much old growth, longleaf
12 pine, I think it's a great kind of
13 education and research area of the
14 property, and it complements that full
15 2,000 acres that EBSCO is offering. I
16 just hate to see that not be part of the
17 park and end up being a housing
18 development, which I don't know if you
19 heard, before it was offered, it was
20 slated to be developed, the whole entire
21 property. So I would say mostly hiking
22 trails.

23 MS. STANLEY: Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you, sir.

2 MR. NORTHCUTT: Thanks.

3 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: The next
4 speaker is Scott Fleming on the John Doss
5 Mountain Addition to Lake Guntersville
6 State Park, Tab 4b page 21, 4b page 21.
7 Give me just a second to find that,
8 please, sir.

9 MS. MCCURDY: And for the Board
10 members, there's a handout that Wayne's
11 going to pass out, so it might take just a
12 second also.

13 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Let everybody
14 get that before you start.

15 MS. MCCURDY: And that's something
16 that I believe the landowners have
17 provided for the Board, so it's not from
18 staff, it's from the landowners.

19 MR. FLEMING: Okay. I want to thank
20 the Board for allowing me to speak here
21 today. I'm Scott Fleming with Back
22 Country Horsemen of America, the Alabama
23 chapter of that.

1 We maintain the trails here in the
2 state park with all volunteer hours. And
3 this land connects to our existing trail
4 system, so it would give us an
5 opportunity, you know, with approval to
6 expand our equestrian and multi-use
7 trails. We have a lot of hikers that use
8 the trails. We're an equestrian group,
9 but we share.

10 This land is in the sixth
11 generation of ownership, and it's from the
12 same family that the Stubblefield tract
13 that was bought a few years ago is from in
14 the same area. And, you know, there's not
15 a lot more I can say about it other than,
16 you know, it would be a great addition to
17 the park. It would give us the potential
18 for some trails -- some additional trails.
19 And if there's any questions about the
20 land, one of the landowners here would be
21 glad to answer that.

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: I do have a
23 question on what you passed out. Would

1 this be kind of a proposed trail that you
2 would build on this property and how it
3 would connect to the current horse trails?

4 MR. FLEMING: Yeah, that land connects
5 in a close proximity to some existing
6 trails on the park.

7 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Gotcha. I was
8 just making sure that --

9 MR. FLEMING: Yeah, that was just kind
10 of a --

11 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: An idea. Okay.

12 MR. FLEMING: Yeah, just an idea of
13 where we could put some trails. I think
14 you can see the view of Town Creek in
15 those pictures.

16 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir.

17 MR. FLEMING: And we get a lot of use
18 on our trails. We have a spring ride and
19 a fall ride as our fund raiser, and we
20 usually have about 70 riders in one day.
21 And spring break and everything, the
22 campground parking lot at the trailhead is
23 packed. I mean, it's packed for a week.

1 So we get a lot of use on these trails.
2 And we have a lot of hikers that come in
3 and share the trails. Bikers not so much,
4 but the hikers -- and we get a lot of
5 compliments on the trails. So this would
6 just be a chance for us to expand on what
7 we've got. We've got just north of 25
8 miles of trail in there now. We have
9 about 450 members statewide, 12,000
10 members nationwide, and I think this year
11 we had somewhere around 300 volunteer
12 hours just on these trails here. So, you
13 know, with the cooperation of the park, we
14 did all of the maintenance. And, you
15 know, we provide the labor; they provide
16 what equipment we need.

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any questions?

18 Mr. Jones?

19 MR. JONES: I don't know if Greg -- I
20 haven't seen Greg Lein here today, but do
21 we need another addition? Does State
22 Parks feel like this would be a good
23 addition to that? Can someone speak to

1 that?

2 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yeah. I talked
3 with Greg and Michael Jeffreys, but, yes,
4 it would be an asset to the park.

5 MR. JONES: Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you for
7 the work y'all do on keeping up those
8 horse trails. I know that's a job.

9 MR. FLEMING: Thank y'all for being
10 here.

11 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you.

12 The next speaker is Mr. Sean
13 Johnson on that same piece of property,
14 the John Doss nomination.

15 MR. JOHNSON: Thank y'all for allowing
16 us to come today. Me and my uncle, David
17 Culbert, present this property. Like he
18 said, we're sixth generation landowners
19 here. Some of the original property
20 bought for the state parks was bought from
21 our family. Mr. Fleming pretty much
22 covered everything I was going to say.
23 But any questions, I would be glad to

1 answer if there's anything.

2 MR. HARPER: One question I had is
3 this all of the family land, or is this
4 just some more to --

5 MR. JOHNSON: Just some.

6 MR. HARPER: The family owns more
7 contiguous to it?

8 MR. JOHNSON: Yes, sir.

9 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you, sir.

10 The next speaker is Mr. Paul
11 Kennedy on Natural Bridge. That is not a
12 tab in the book.

13 MS. MCCURDY: You do have a Tab 5b --
14 really Tab C -- B and C that has some
15 information, but it's not a current
16 nomination.

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Good to see
18 you, Mr. Kennedy. How are you today?

19 MR. KENNEDY: Good morning,
20 Mr. Blankenship. Good morning, everybody.

21 I'm here to speak to you about
22 Natural Bridge Park. I'm Paul Kennedy. I
23 am registered forester number 1257, but

1 I'm here today as the president of the
2 Walker Area Community Foundation. That
3 represents 115 million dollars. We are
4 one of the largest community foundations
5 in the state of Alabama.

6 We have been working for years on
7 creating a recreation-based economy, and
8 now that is in keeping with Governor
9 Ivey's Innovate Alabama plan enhanced
10 commission and advisories.

11 I have walked the property. We
12 have talked with some of our university
13 partners about coming out and looking at
14 it doing a bio blitz. I do believe that
15 the property is worthy of consideration as
16 part of the southern terminus of the
17 Appalachian chain. I think it's worthy of
18 consideration because of its history. Its
19 location has been recognized as a landmark
20 and as a tourism destination for nearly a
21 century. It has unique geology, I
22 believe, ecology. And the geology out of
23 northwest Alabama I think is worthy also.

1 My foundation is committed to
2 provide technical resources, human
3 resources, and financial resources to
4 develop the recreational economy of Walker
5 and Winston Counties and I believe that
6 this property and Forever Wild's
7 participation is key to developing that
8 plan. So I'm just asking today for you to
9 give it every possible consideration and
10 hopefully get it back on your agenda.

11 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any questions?

12 Dr. Powers?

13 DR. POWERS: So is your organization
14 volunteering to manage the property if we
15 put it back on the --

16 MR. KENNEDY: We're volunteering to be
17 part of putting together a management
18 group with the local entities.

19 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you, sir.

20 MR. KENNEDY: Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: The next
22 speaker is David Denton, also on Natural
23 Bridge.

1 MR. DENTON: Good morning.

2 Commissioner Blankenship, Board members.

3 I thank you for the privilege of hearing

4 me. It's my privilege to come.

5 I'm representing my family. This
6 was a dream of my parents. I grew up in
7 the St. Louis area. I'm one of ten
8 children. Mom is from Jasper; Dad grew up
9 in Mississippi.

10 The history of -- the property, of
11 course, was developed by the Lake family
12 in 1954 from Jasper and my parents
13 acquired the property November 1980.
14 Since that time, I've been traveling back
15 and forth. Sometimes I hate to have to
16 leave to go back to St. Louis. I love the
17 South. I love my family history. It's a
18 real privilege. My opportunity -- I just
19 want to share over the past few years as
20 my parents' health declined, when someone
21 from one of the agencies in the state
22 considered -- the conversation we had,
23 they would say why don't you think about

1 contacting Forever Wild. So I think
2 that's why we're here today. So as my
3 parents have -- my dad is deceased, my mom
4 is in her 90s, and we're at that point of
5 looking to move beyond and having another
6 owner for the property. I just want to
7 say thank you again for the consideration.

8 As I look at it, northwest
9 Alabama's not well represented by Forever
10 Wild, and it's just a smaller property.
11 As I heard the description of Guntersville
12 State Park, I feel, like, about this tall
13 in comparison. 149 acres, Highway 278 cut
14 through and took several acres from that
15 several years ago, so it's 149 plus or
16 minus. There's a beautiful opportunity to
17 consider people coming to and from that
18 part of the state. There's a lot of
19 people traveling on Highway 278, 13, I-22
20 going through north Alabama. We have
21 always tried to keep it natural. I
22 would -- as a child, I wanted my parents
23 to develop it to something, like, a

1 Branson, Missouri, but through the years
2 I'm grateful that it has continued to be
3 natural and scenic and just a great place
4 to steal away. You know, I love the
5 place. Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any comments or
7 questions?

8 Thank you, sir.

9 And the last speaker is Melinda
10 Weaver on the same property, on Natural
11 Bridge.

12 MS. WEAVER: Yes. Good morning. I'm
13 Melinda Weaver. Thank you for the
14 opportunity to speak to the Board today on
15 behalf of Natural Bridge Park.
16 Representative Estes had planned to be
17 here to speak but needed to be in
18 Montgomery and sends his regrets.

19 First, I would like to start off
20 by telling a story. When I was two years
21 old, my family moved to Winston County,
22 and we would have relatives come to visit
23 from south Alabama as well as other states

1 and we would often take them to Natural
2 Bridge Park. So me and my brother, that
3 was one of our favorite things to do, and
4 we have a lot of memories there. One of
5 my favorite pictures is me riding atop my
6 dad's shoulders as we're strolling through
7 the park. And I feel like there are a
8 lot of other families that have similar
9 memories of Natural Bridge Park.

10 Another thing I wanted to mention,
11 just yesterday, I read an article in our
12 local paper. We have a local artist from
13 Haleyville. She had a rendering of
14 Natural Bridge Park and talked about her
15 dad drove a horse and buggy over that
16 natural bridge. She was born in 1927 so
17 that would have been early 1900s, so it's
18 definitely an integral part of
19 Winston County's past.

20 Another thing, Winston County is
21 home to the Bankhead Natural Forest, as I
22 know you-all are very aware of, where we
23 have thousands of visitors annually. And

1 those folks may spend a day. They may
2 spend a few days to a week. Especially
3 now -- know you've all heard of glamping,
4 so, you know, a lot -- especially a lot of
5 younger folks love that type of thing.
6 While those people are in our area, they
7 are shopping at our stores, they are
8 eating at our restaurants, and spending
9 their money locally, which is huge for our
10 economies.

11 So the same can be said for
12 Natural Bridge Park. I believe they've
13 logged in over a hundred thousand visitors
14 over the last five years. So those are a
15 very important piece to bringing tourism
16 to Winston County.

17 Representative Estes plans to pass
18 a resolution in this legislative session
19 to name part of the highway from
20 Interstate 22 to Alabama Highway 13 the
21 Natural Bridge Parkway. He feels like
22 this will encourage more visitors to slip
23 off our new interstate to visit the most

1 beautiful wonder.

2 We've had overwhelming support
3 from our mayors, county commissioners, as
4 well as our legislative delegation, and
5 the Walker Area Community Foundation and
6 others in support of making this happen.

7 The Winston County Commission,
8 they have agreed to provide garbage
9 pickup, demolish existing structures and
10 haul off resulting debris and either lay
11 sod or overseed the impact areas. They
12 have also agreed to share the
13 responsibility of purchasing a
14 remote-controlled gate along with the Town
15 of Natural Bridge. Leaders within
16 Winston County have spoken with nonprofits
17 and elected leaders in Winston and Walker
18 Counties about applying for grants to help
19 maintain the trails and educate the public
20 about the significance of the property.
21 Winston County Sheriff's Office as well as
22 the Lynn Police Department have also
23 agreed to patrol the area with increased

1 patrols.

2 The Dentons have done a wonderful
3 job over the last several decades taking
4 care of the park and making sure that it
5 stays open to the public, and we just want
6 to ensure that it remains that way. We
7 feel that Forever Wild is the best
8 opportunity to protect Natural Bridge Park
9 and secure public access in perpetuity.
10 Our hope is to save this biological
11 treasure for the state and that the public
12 will continue to have an opportunity to
13 enjoy it as we have for many years. Thank
14 you.

15 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you. Is
16 there anybody else that wanted to make
17 public comment that did not have the
18 opportunity or got here a little bit late
19 and needed to register?

20 All right. Thank you. That
21 concludes our public comment period.

22 Now we'll talk about dismissing
23 into executive session to discuss tract

1 appraisal values.

2 By regulation, appraisal values
3 are confidential during periods of
4 negotiation. Accordingly, in order to
5 discuss tract appraisal values, the Board
6 will need to go into a recess for an
7 executive session.

8 Is there a motion for the Board to
9 now recess to attend an executive session?

10 DR. MCCLINTOCK: So moved.

11 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Is there a
12 second?

13 MR. HOLLOWAY: Second.

14 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Moved by
15 Dr. McClintock. Seconded by Mr. Holloway.

16 As I call your name, please state
17 your position on this motion to recess.
18 Those in favor indicate by saying aye.
19 Those opposed indicate by saying nay.

20 Chris Blankenship, yes.

21 Mr. Childers?

22 MR. CHILDERS: Aye.

23 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Darnall?

1 MR. DARNALL: Yes.

2 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Jones?

3 MR. JONES: Yes.

4 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. McClintock?

5 DR. MCCLINTOCK: Yes.

6 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Oates?

7 MR. OATES: Yes.

8 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Parnell?

9 MR. PARNELL: Yes.

10 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Harper?

11 MR. HARPER: Yes.

12 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Ms. Stanley?

13 MS. STANLEY: Yes.

14 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Holloway?

15 MR. HOLLOWAY: Yes.

16 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Howell?

17 DR. HOWELL: Yes.

18 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Powers?

19 DR. POWERS: Yes.

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: And for the

21 Record, please note that Ms. Stanley

22 joined us just prior to the public comment

23 period.

1 So that is unanimous of all those
2 in attendance. We are now in executive
3 session. It is 10:29. We will return in
4 approximately 30 minutes.

5 (Recess from 10:29 a.m. to
6 11:03 a.m.)

7 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. We
8 are back from executive session. It is
9 11:03. We're back on our normal agenda
10 with number 5 on the agenda, the program
11 status report.

12 Ms. McCurdy?

13 MS. MCCURDY: All right. Board
14 members, if you'll be sure that you have
15 your green folder sheets, your Tab 2a. I
16 say green folder. It's this kind of
17 beige-ish paper. That's the most up-to-
18 date information.

19 The first thing I'm going to do is
20 run through status on the properties that
21 you have previously motioned for staff to
22 pursue acquisition and to try to get
23 closed for you. They're in various stages

1 of closing, but because they are pending
2 and we're trying to get them done, I
3 always run through for you the balance you
4 currently have with funds available for
5 acquisition and run through the properties
6 that are pending to tell you how much
7 available cash you have without going over
8 what you can work with. So that's what
9 I'm going to run through first as usual.

10 The current balance in the account
11 where you pull from to acquire property is
12 just about 26.7 million. I'm going to run
13 through what has been subtracted from that
14 as they are in closing. We have the
15 Autauga WMA-Hart Addition, Autauga County;
16 Bon Secour River Wetlands Addition,
17 Baldwin County; Cahaba River-Shelby County
18 Park Peel Addition, Shelby County -- and I
19 think that's maybe closing as we speak or
20 is very close to it -- then Red Hills-Flat
21 Creek Phase V, Monroe County; Riverton
22 CHA-Barnett Mill Hollow, Colbert; and
23 Riverton CHA-Hurd Hollow Addition, also

1 Colbert; we also have Skyline WMA-Fowler
2 Cove Addition, Jackson County. If I take
3 into account those acquisition offer
4 amounts and also the portion that we
5 transfer into the Stewardship Account --
6 total that up -- you are left with
7 approximately, let's just say, 21 million
8 of funds availability. And so that is the
9 report on available encumbered balance.

10 Any questions on that?

11 All right. The second page of Tab
12 2a notes the properties from the prior
13 fiscal year and the current fiscal year
14 that you made offers on, whether they were
15 accepted or declined, and it shows what
16 has fully closed, fully closed and is now
17 titled to the Alabama Trust Fund for the
18 benefit of this program. So for this
19 fiscal year, I'll run through the status
20 of those, and that is the Autauga
21 WMA-County Road 112 Addition, that has
22 closed; Coldwater Mountain-McVey Addition,
23 closed; Coldwater Mountain-Robertson

1 Addition, closed; Freedom Hills WMA-Boddie
2 Addition, closed; Perdido WMA-Snowden
3 Branch Addition, closed; Red Hills-Flat
4 Creek Phase IV has closed. So that's the
5 status for this fiscal year, and as I
6 said, I think the Peel Addition is closing
7 as we speak.

8 Any questions on any of that
9 information?

10 Yes, sir, Mr. Parnell.

11 MR. PARNELL: Since I'm new and trying
12 to understand, on the first one, the
13 Autauga County, it says 580 acres of 2239.
14 Tell me about those two numbers.

15 MS. MCCURDY: The Autauga WMA -- oh,
16 they already closed. Yes, sir. That
17 acquisition was supported by the Wildlife
18 & Freshwater Fisheries Division, Chuck
19 Sykes, Pittman-Robertson funds. That
20 grant program requires a State match of no
21 less than 25 percent of the value. And so
22 we have to translate the value --
23 appraised on the grounds, and sometimes

1 the acres aren't exact but that's -- it
2 was supported. You might also have a
3 grant -- I'm sorry -- was that a grant?
4 That was Pittman-Robertson.

5 MR. SYKES: Yeah.

6 MS. MCCURDY: You would see similar in
7 a grant-supported transaction.

8 Any additional questions?

9 All right. If you would now look
10 again in your sort of beige-colored Tab
11 2b. As I mentioned for each acquisition,
12 there is the simultaneous transfer to the
13 Stewardship Account. This is money that
14 we use for the land activities, land
15 management on the properties. We are
16 currently -- you'll see that the amount
17 remaining available for us for this fiscal
18 year is going to be closer to at this time
19 about 1.4 million, so we're still in good
20 shape. Although, we are going through it
21 pretty quickly. Some of the access
22 improvement we're doing and the signage
23 and parking lot improvements, we have a

1 lot moving right now, in addition to our
2 usual burning and road improvements and
3 all those activities, but we are fine.
4 You will also see in connection with that
5 that the net asset value of that fund is
6 just over about 42.6 million at this
7 point. And that fund is designed for the
8 lifetime of the program, the needs for
9 management, so that we're never failing to
10 be a government program that acquires
11 something it does not take good care of.
12 So that was the purpose of that fund.

13 Tab 2c provides you some more
14 detailed information. That's the report
15 we get from the treasurer's office each
16 quarter -- and we're very appreciative of
17 the State treasurer taking time to do this
18 for us -- that details the net asset as of
19 March 31st amount that you see that our
20 mark is just over 42.6 million. So that's
21 some additional detail on that.

22 Any questions on the Stewardship
23 Fund?

1 If none, Commissioner, we'll keep
2 moving. And we will now look at your Tab
3 3a again, another beige page. Tab 3a, I
4 want to run through for the Board. And
5 also for the benefit of the public, we
6 cover at each meeting the status of every
7 appraisal motion that was made by the
8 Board. I provide you an update as to
9 whether those motions -- those appraisals
10 are complete based upon those motions or
11 if there is an issue or if they are moving
12 fine but just not complete. And so I want
13 to run through those appraisals this
14 meeting. Actually, everything that has
15 been previously motioned has been
16 appraised and is available to the Board
17 for action. Those transactions or
18 nominations are the Lillian Swamp
19 Blackwater Addition, Baldwin County; the
20 Oak Mountain State Park-Belcher Addition
21 Phase 2; and the Sipsey River Swamp
22 Brownville Addition, Tuscaloosa County.
23 Those appraised nominations, the appraisal

1 value connected with those is currently at
2 almost 7.4 million total. I only throw
3 out that number because sometimes you
4 literally have more on the appraisal page
5 than you have on the available funds page,
6 and so I always want you to be very aware
7 of that amount.

8 Questions on the current in-hand
9 appraisals?

10 All right. If none, Commissioner,
11 we will keep moving. Now, in your packet
12 if you'll turn to Tab 4, and specifically
13 we're going to be -- I'm going to be
14 running through Tab 4b. But while you're
15 getting there, for the benefit of the
16 public, we just discussed the nominations
17 that have received a motion for appraisal.
18 We're now moving to the short list.

19 Staff compiles the short list.
20 Once we have willing seller confirmed
21 nominations, we get a nomination, our
22 first step is to send a willing seller
23 letter to get confirmation from the

1 landowner that they're okay with us
2 looking at their tract of land. Obviously
3 these meetings happen in public. We want
4 them to be aware that their property could
5 be discussed in public. We have that in
6 hand, and we proceed to scoring. Under
7 our scoring process, the staff --
8 different staff members look at each
9 willing seller nomination and then
10 appraise it based on criteria that tie to
11 the four categories that are in Amendment
12 543, the constitution which formed the
13 program established. In shorthand, those
14 four categories are nature preserve,
15 recreation -- that can be any type of
16 recreation, and it does include hunting
17 but it's hiking, biking, bird watching,
18 paddling, any kind of recreation -- third
19 would be new WMA, Wildlife Management
20 Areas, specifically hunting. We also now
21 have the Special Opportunity Area, SOA,
22 program, but basically a WMA property,
23 either a new one or an addition to an

1 existing property. But both are focused
2 on hunting. But now also even on those
3 tracts, you can have additional
4 recreation, but they score high for
5 hunting. Then the final category is
6 either a new or an addition to an existing
7 state park. So it's got to specifically
8 benefit a state park. And it's -- they're
9 each scored -- every single one -- in
10 those four categories.

11 The nomination then competes
12 within our Northern, Central, and Southern
13 Districts. Those districts relate to our
14 scoring process. They relate to the Board
15 nominations to be sure how many -- that
16 the Board is sort of equally distributed.
17 Although, it is considered -- we use the
18 term north, central, and southern, the
19 amendment makes clear that those who are
20 nominated will also consider everything to
21 the east and the west. I mean, it's just
22 how to spread the nominations across the
23 state. So we use that same district

1 structure for the nominations to compete
2 among themselves. To get on the short
3 list, a tract must score within the top
4 three of their district competition in at
5 least one of those four categories.
6 That's how it makes the short list.

7 Now, you will notice in your
8 information several of the tracts score in
9 more than one category because they have,
10 you know, several attributes that qualify,
11 but it only takes one category competing
12 within their district to make the short
13 list. It is a living, breathing short
14 list, so to speak. It could change
15 meeting to meeting. Something rolls on;
16 something rolls off. Something that's on
17 today could be off next meeting because we
18 received a nomination that scored higher
19 and bumped it off in that district.
20 That's how it works. But what I'm going
21 to cover are the end results of all that,
22 the nominations that scored in their
23 district top 3 in at least one category.

1 So I'm going to run through those. As I
2 tell you each time, I'm looking down when
3 I do this. If you have a question and I
4 don't stop, please speak up so I'll know
5 to stop.

6 Okay. So the current properties
7 on the short list, meaning they are
8 available to the Board for a motion for a
9 first appraisal -- that's where these
10 tracts are in the process -- are the
11 following: Alabama River-Montgomery
12 Tract, 797 acres, Montgomery County;
13 Alligator Bayou, approximately 383 acres
14 in Mobile County; we have the Blackwater
15 River SOA-Clapper Addition, 27 acres,
16 Baldwin County; Coldwater Mountain-Martin
17 Addition, 37 acres, Calhoun County;
18 Coldwater Mountain-Oxanna Addition 2023 --
19 that's just part of the nomination name --
20 that is 62 acres in Calhoun County;
21 D'Olive Bay-North Addition, 23 acres,
22 Baldwin County; Dugdown Mountain Corridor,
23 1,984 acres, Cleburne County; Freedom

1 Hills WMA-Sutton Hill Addition, 17 acres,
2 Colbert County; Historic Blakely State
3 Park-Pye Addition, approximately 85 acres
4 in Baldwin County; Lake Guntersville State
5 Park-John Doss Mountain Addition,
6 60 acres, Marshall County; Martin Slough
7 Tract, 429 acres, Hale County; Red
8 Hills-Blanton Addition, 40 acres,
9 Monroe County; West Fowl River, 525 acres
10 in Mobile County. And that completes the
11 short list nominations for this meeting
12 anyway.

13 Any questions on those or anything
14 about the short list from the Board?

15 MR. CHILDERS: I have a question,
16 Patti. I don't know if it's available.
17 The Alabama River tract, how much of that
18 is open land?

19 MS. MCCURDY: If you look at your
20 map -- and by that you mean agriculture
21 open, or what do you mean?

22 MR. CHILDERS: Farmland.

23 MS. MCCURDY: If you'll look on your

1 map, not all, but a substantial -- let me
2 just call it substantial portion -- of the
3 River Plantation tract that you'll see --
4 not the green but the -- or the purple --
5 gosh, I don't know what color to call
6 that -- but the Landowner 1 (River
7 Plantation) -- Chuck, I don't know if
8 y'all have an exact number -- but I would
9 say not the entire tract but pretty close
10 to it.

11 MR. CHILDERS: Pretty substantial?

12 MS. MCCURDY: Pretty substantial.

13 MR. INGRAM: About 380.

14 MS. MCCURDY: About 380 came from the
15 back. Thank you. That's Jerry Ingram for
16 the court reporter. Jerry, why don't
17 you -- 380 acres -- come up here so I
18 don't mess this up. And then I'll tell
19 you how the structure would work if it
20 were to move forward.

21 MR. INGRAM: It's roughly
22 380 acres. The DOT when they built the
23 interstate back in the '60s, they placed

1 deed restrictions on that property in that
2 area that whatever was in open farmland
3 has to stay in open farmland. You cannot
4 plant trees on it. It has to stay open.
5 Whatever's in timberland has to stay in
6 timberland and the timber cannot be cut on
7 it. So this place has got some Cherrybark
8 Oaks on it since the late 1960s that have
9 been growing. It's beautiful timber on
10 it. I think altogether, it's over four
11 miles of river frontage, you know, on this
12 tract, right across from -- you know,
13 downtown Montgomery, they just spent --
14 the City of Montgomery -- I don't how many
15 of y'all go through Montgomery -- but they
16 just spent 65 million dollars on a
17 whitewater park in downtown Montgomery,
18 which is basically right across the river
19 from this tract.

20 MR. CHILDERS: Is that the only deed
21 restrictions?

22 MR. INGRAM: Yeah. You can't build
23 on it either. You can't -- you can

1 basically hunt it and use it for
2 recreation, you can farm it, but you
3 cannot -- you can't build on it, you
4 can't -- you can't mine gravel on it or
5 anything like that. It pretty much has to
6 stay like it is today.

7 MS. MCCURDY: There are restrictions
8 on ground disturbance, there would be some
9 limitations on fill, there are some air
10 restrictions that we're going to have to
11 kind of be sure there's no -- I think that
12 may be -- end up okay. You know, Maxwell
13 Air Force Base is right next door, so
14 there's a little more work that has to be
15 done on that. To give you some context --
16 and I know we're going to talk about it in
17 the grant report, but I'll go and
18 mention -- this one was a Pittman-
19 Robertson offer from Chuck, and so we
20 would be looking at a structure where we
21 would have the agriculture -- try to have
22 as much ag as we could in Chuck's portion
23 of the property.

1 The other thing that we are
2 looking at is the desire to try to put a
3 shooting range on that property. Where we
4 are in addition to the restriction work,
5 we're going to have to do -- determine --
6 there's no other choice but to do a very
7 specific site visit to see where we could,
8 if we could, site a shooting range,
9 because that's also going to have to
10 figure into the PR split and portion and
11 where it could go.

12 And there are some ground
13 disturbance limitations and the ability to
14 add what we would -- there's no --
15 sometimes we have geographic features that
16 help. Here we don't. We're going to have
17 to add fill for the berm and that may
18 cause another issue.

19 And also obviously, you know, it
20 is an area -- if anybody drives over it,
21 you see a lot of water on it, so we need
22 to be sure about how to accurately protect
23 the structure. So we have talked with

1 Jerry and his team, and Wildlife and I are
2 going to go -- we're going to have to make
3 a very specific visit to tie down if and
4 where a shooting range could go before we
5 can fully work out how to split the work
6 and confirm it will work.

7 MR. CHILDERS: Is all this work going
8 to be done before you even take a
9 nomination or not or -- I mean a motion?
10 Are you going to do the work without a
11 motion?

12 MS. MCCURDY: Not unless you make a
13 motion before I do the work. I mean, the
14 Board has the ability to do as they --
15 whatever they want. But, no, I would
16 consider this one -- if I was asked my
17 opinion -- needs a little more work before
18 we would spend money on an appraisal
19 because I've got to be sure how to
20 structure it.

21 MR. CHILDERS: That answers my
22 question.

23 MS. MCCURDY: But that's just personal

1 opinion.

2 Any other questions?

3 Okay. Then speaking of the grant
4 status, we'll move on to that. If you'll
5 turn to Tab 5a. So this is the point in
6 the meeting that we give -- I give just a
7 general update on grant matters. That
8 includes properties that we have gotten
9 awards for. I'll give you the status of
10 that. Some are in closing. Some would be
11 ones that -- you know, might be ones you
12 can take further action on. I'll let you
13 know if we've got a deadline problem, so
14 if you do have an interest, we move on
15 that. And so I'm going to run through the
16 status of that and give you some
17 information related to various grant
18 programs.

19 So as we talked before, we have
20 some nominations that have benefited from
21 supporting leveraging funds of one type or
22 another. The ones in closing now include
23 the Autauga WMA-Hart Addition, which had

1 Pittman-Robertson support; the Bon Secour
2 River Wetlands Addition, which has the
3 National Coastal Wetlands Conservation
4 Grant Program funding that supported that
5 acquisition; Red Hills-Flat Creek Phase
6 V -- that property had funding that came
7 through U.S. Fish & Wildlife's Recovery
8 Land Acquisition, or RLA, and Habitat
9 Conservation Plan that we also call HCP
10 funding supporting that acquisition -- the
11 Skyline WMA-Fowler Cove Addition, that one
12 is still under negotiation, not fully in
13 the closing process, but we're working on
14 that one. That one has some -- is also a
15 Pittman-Robertson property, so Chuck and
16 them have offered leverage funding on
17 that.

18 Moving to opportunities for
19 leveraging as to what we currently have on
20 the short list, I'm going to run through
21 that next. The Blackwater River
22 SOA-Clapper Addition -- and that is Tab 4b
23 page 7, Baldwin County but it's Tab 4b

1 page 7 if you want to look at that one --
2 Chuck has offered to put in Wildlife's
3 Pittman-Robertson funding on that tract.
4 I noted in the memo that we were working
5 on a split map and that I would update the
6 Board on that at the meeting. Let me tell
7 you kind of where we are on that. After
8 looking at it, I think the best I can say
9 right now on what the split would look
10 like is that there are some structures on
11 the west side of the property, so our
12 split would be our 25 percent of the
13 value, which is required under PR with
14 Forever Wild being the non-federal
15 matching fund, our portion would be on the
16 east side. The exact line is going to
17 depend on us working -- if you motion for
18 an appraisal us working with the
19 appraisal. As you're transitioning there
20 from the more wetland area to some pretty
21 good upland area to the west that
22 valuation is going to shift. So I really
23 can't draw much of a line for you at the

1 moment other than to say if you're
2 interested we would move forward. We
3 would work with the appraiser to get that
4 valuation line. We would have the east --
5 I'm going to say -- you know, it's not
6 going to be exactly 25 percent, but let's
7 say the eastern 25 percent with the
8 western 75, which include all of the
9 structures being purchased by Wildlife
10 with the grant funds. So you could look
11 in the back and see that. But that's
12 where we are. There's an offer on that if
13 the Board's interested in the first
14 appraisal on it.

15 I have one change, and I'm going
16 to ask Rick Oates -- to make sure I don't
17 say anything -- to back me up on this. If
18 I say anything wrong, please speak up. I
19 had noted -- we thought we might be where
20 AFC was -- this is a tract in Cleburne
21 County -- that's Tab 4B page 15 -- that we
22 had discussed at prior meetings that is a
23 U.S. Forest Service Grant opportunity. It

1 is still in the application process. AFC
2 has not received --

3 MR. OATES: Have not received our
4 final word on it, but we are pretty
5 confident we will receive the grant.

6 MS. MCCURDY: We initially thought in
7 talking with Rick that we would ask the
8 Board on this nomination to move forward
9 with the first appraisal. However, we had
10 a little more discussion, and they've --
11 Forestry Commission has been able to
12 identify funding where they are -- they
13 will pay for the first appraisal and the
14 review appraisal, which is a second layer
15 of the federal requirement. And the
16 Forestry Service has a very specific,
17 somewhat complicated procedure that we
18 follow. But they're going through us to
19 acquire the appraisal work, but they're
20 going to pay for that. And then the Board
21 would be able to adopt it as a first
22 appraisal later. Subsequently, if it
23 continues to move forward by the Board,

1 Forever Wild would pay for our necessary
2 second appraisal and our portion of the
3 acreage, so that would be if it moved on
4 to an opinion offer.

5 MR. OATES: And this is a 75/25 split,
6 Patti.

7 MS. MCCURDY: It's a 75/25. But
8 there's a map, and it is acreage that is
9 adjacent to the Treat Mountain Voluntary
10 Public Access area in Georgia. This is
11 the one that would create a fairly large
12 ecological corridor on our Georgia border.
13 So for now, I would say there's no motion
14 that needs to be -- well, really can't be
15 made by the Board until after that. But
16 we're going to work with AFC and make that
17 a smooth transition. If the Board does
18 want to use the appraisal, it will be
19 available. So that's really your
20 nominations, but I wanted to update you a
21 little bit on some other grant funds that
22 we have either obtained or tried to
23 obtain.

1 A little bit of an update on the
2 Little River Canyon-Hancock/TNC Addition,
3 as you might remember, we were awarded a
4 National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, NFWF,
5 Cumberland Plateau-Southern Appalachian
6 Fund -- we were awarded just under
7 \$100,000 to support establishment of a
8 shortleaf pine forest and that work
9 continues. The Stewardship Account will
10 provide the necessary state match or
11 none -- well, the necessary match for
12 that. We have a -- timber harvest is
13 under contract. We were pleased. We
14 received six bids and is now under
15 contract. That work is proceeding. And I
16 don't want to jinx anything, but it's a
17 little ahead of schedule. I probably
18 shouldn't have said that. But that's
19 moving well, and we'll keep you updated on
20 that work.

21 We had submitted a Recreational
22 Trails Program, RTP, proposal to -- at
23 ADECA for funding under the Federal

1 Highway Administration for some additional
2 work on that tract, but we were not
3 successful. We were going to use it to
4 construct some trails on that tract. We
5 were not awarded funding, but we're moving
6 forward with it. It's needed work, it's
7 trail work on the property, so we'll
8 proceed with Stewardship funds. But I
9 wanted you to know we did make an effort
10 on that.

11 And finally, we put in a request
12 for Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act --
13 GOMESA is the acronym -- looking for some
14 additional funding trying to -- working
15 with the Commissioner trying to work
16 through a plan to increase paddling
17 opportunities, basically river-based trail
18 along some existing trail in the
19 Mobile-Tensaw Delta and along the Perdido
20 River. Both of those canoe trails are
21 very popular. They are well used. We're
22 trying to both add some stops and some
23 sites that provide connectors and

1 different skill level of opportunities, as
2 well as just improve some of the current
3 shelters. There are shelters available
4 for overnight rentals. Some are put
5 in/take out points; some are just stopping
6 points. But we're looking to do that.
7 Not all, but several of the sites are
8 Forever Wild acreage sites and will
9 benefit overall the program, but I'll keep
10 you updated on that.

11 Any questions on the grant status?

12 All right. I usually do grant
13 status after short list. I'm sorry. I'm
14 sleep deprived today. But anyway, we got
15 it all done. So if there are no questions
16 on the short list, the grant status,
17 anything else that I ran through, I think,
18 Commissioner -- double check me -- we're
19 ready for general discussion.

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Sure. I have
21 one thing I would like to update the Board
22 on on a bill grant, infrastructure grant,
23 that we received from NOAA last week after

1 the packet had already gone out on some
2 property in West Fowl River/Mississippi
3 Sound that was announced. So if you look
4 at Tab 4 page 28, the map -- the easiest
5 way to explain it is just looking at the
6 map -- the Forever Wild Portersville Bay
7 tract is in the yellow and then there's
8 the red nomination for the West Fowl River
9 tract. The 490 acres between the yellow
10 and the red outlined area was -- we've
11 been awarded a grant to purchase that
12 property between the yellow and the red
13 that is moving forward, just to kind of
14 put that in context with the nomination.
15 So just for information. It was after the
16 packet went out that that was actually
17 announced by NOAA.

18 Yes, sir?

19 MR. CHILDERS: Is there matching funds
20 on that grant?

21 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: The part
22 between the red and yellow is 100 percent
23 federal funds, grant funds, yes, sir. So

1 it doesn't -- that grant doesn't impact
2 the Forever Wild match or any money. I
3 just wanted to show the connectivity
4 between all those parcels right there. I
5 thought that might be of interest to the
6 Board.

7 MS. STANLEY: Very much, very much,
8 Mr. Commissioner. What would be the
9 monetary value of that grant?

10 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: 1.2 million.

11 MS. STANLEY: Congratulations.

12 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you. And
13 then there was another -- just of interest
14 maybe to the Board, there was also another
15 part of that that added some property on
16 Weeks Bay adjacent to property that
17 Forever Wild Board and the Department own
18 in the Weeks Bay watershed, a smaller
19 piece, but adds a very critical in-holding
20 there.

21 MS. MCCURDY: I think we're ready for
22 general discussion.

23 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Let me put my

1 papers back in place and then we will move
2 on to general discussion.

3 MS. MCCURDY: I'm trying to do the
4 same.

5 MR. CHILDERS: Open for motions?

6 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir, open
7 for motions.

8 MR. CHILDERS: I'd like to move for
9 first appraisal on the LGSP-John Doss
10 Mountain Addition, please.

11 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Childers
12 has made a motion for a first appraisal on
13 the Guntersville State Park-Doss Addition.
14 Is there a second?

15 MR. JONES: Second.

16 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by
17 Mr. Jones.

18 Any discussion for a first
19 appraisal on the Guntersville State
20 Park-Doss Addition?

21 All those in favor of first
22 appraisal, please raise their hand.

23 All those opposed?

1 Any abstained?

2 Motion carries.

3 Dr. Powers?

4 DR. POWERS: I'd like to move for a
5 first appraisal for the West Fowl River
6 tract. That's an extraordinary piece of
7 property that is really a value for
8 recreation and preservation.

9 DR. MCCLINTOCK: I'll second that.

10 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Motion by
11 Dr. Powers. Seconded by Dr. McClintock
12 for a first appraisal on the West Fowl
13 River tract.

14 Any discussion? Questions?

15 All those in favor of the first
16 appraisal, please raise their hand.

17 MS. MCCURDY: Let me count. That
18 would be all but Mr. Parnell. So we've
19 got 11.

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All those
21 opposed?

22 Any abstained?

23 Motion carries.

1 Dr. McClintock?

2 DR. MCCLINTOCK: Yeah,
3 Mr. Commissioner, I'd like to
4 enthusiastically recommend we move to
5 purchase of the Oak Mountain State
6 Park-Belcher Addition Phase 2. It's just
7 really the last bit of land that the park
8 is going to have an opportunity to grow
9 into, and I think it's --

10 MR. HOLLOWAY: Second.

11 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Motion by
12 Dr. McClintock and seconded by
13 Mr. Holloway for a second appraisal and
14 move to purchase on the Oak Mountain State
15 Park --

16 MS. MCCURDY: Commissioner, I'm sorry
17 to interrupt you. Since we have the
18 second and had the reconciliation, it's
19 just a motion to purchase. This one's a
20 little different.

21 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you for
22 the clarification.

23 MS. MCCURDY: You're welcome. It's

1 rare that I get to --

2 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: You get to
3 correct me, huh? You and my wife will
4 both be happy you get to do that.

5 Let me state it again so everybody
6 knows what we're voting on. So it is to
7 move to purchase the Oak Mountain State
8 Park Phase 2 Belcher Addition.

9 Any questions or comments on that?

10 Yes, sir, Mr. Parnell?

11 MR. PARNELL: I speak against this. I
12 think this price -- this tract is priced
13 so high that it is not the right use of
14 the funds.

15 MS. MCCURDY: Ms. Stanley?

16 MS. STANLEY: I will agree with the
17 statement to move against this purchase
18 for a slightly different reason. I
19 believe that what we have already in that
20 state park is very sufficient to offer
21 recreation and other uses that we
22 typically offer. And particularly because
23 it is across the railroad tracks and to me

1 presents a safety issue and a liability,
2 just let it go.

3 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any other
4 comments or --

5 MS. MCCURDY: Dr. Howell?

6 DR. HOWELL: Is the stream on the
7 property ephemeral or permanent?

8 MS. MCCURDY: I'm going to look to --

9 DR. HOWELL: Has anyone done a survey
10 of --

11 MS. MCCURDY: Jo, come up.

12 MS. LEWIS: The topographic map
13 indicates that it is.

14 MS. MCCURDY: The topographic map, Jo
15 thinks may indicate something, but we
16 don't have confirmation of -- I don't
17 think we have biological information on
18 that for sure so --

19 MS. LEWIS: No, we are not aware of
20 any biological surveys conducted. On that
21 portion, Steve, you said some were but I
22 don't know about the --

23 MS. MCCURDY: Y'all have got -- you

1 can't -- for the court reporter -- if
2 you're going to -- come up.

3 MR. NORTHCUTT: I've read the
4 biological report, but the stream was
5 mentioned. I don't think it's ephemeral,
6 but I don't know for absolutely sure.

7 MS. LEWIS: On the topographic maps,
8 there's a standard broken line to
9 represent ephemeral. This is not a broken
10 line. This is a quite heavy line
11 indicating a permanent stream.

12 MS. MCCURDY: But that is us looking
13 at that.

14 DR. HOWELL: Is it in the Cahaba River
15 watershed?

16 MS. MCCURDY: One second. Hold on.
17 I'd rather be sure of the answer than
18 answer you wrong on that, so we can
19 certainly get those questions clarified
20 for you at the next meeting.

21 DR. HOWELL: Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: So we have a
23 motion to move to purchase the Oak

1 Mountain State Park Phase 2. All those in
2 favor please raise your hand.

3 MS. MCCURDY: So let me count. Keep
4 them up. Sorry. Seven.

5 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All those
6 opposed?

7 MS. MCCURDY: Hold on. We have
8 Ms. Stanley, Mr. Harper, Mr. Childers,
9 Mr. Parnell, so -- and with an abstention
10 from Mr. Darnall.

11 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: So the motion
12 fails seven to four. It takes nine
13 affirmative votes to act on a piece of
14 property.

15 Next? Anybody else? Mr. Jones?

16 MR. JONES: I'd like to move to
17 purchase the Sipsey River Swamp-Brownville
18 Addition.

19 MR. HARPER: Second.

20 MS. MCCURDY: I'm sorry. So Mr. Jones
21 and then Mr. Harper?

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes. So the
23 motion is to move for a second appraisal

1 and move to purchase the Sipsev River
2 Swamp-Brownville Addition; is that
3 correct?

4 MR. JONES: Correct.

5 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: A motion by
6 Mr. Jones. Seconded by Mr. Harper.

7 Any discussion or questions on
8 that?

9 All those in favor please raise
10 your hand.

11 MS. MCCURDY: All right. We have ten
12 votes. Mr. Harper, are you voting yes?

13 MR. HARPER: Yes.

14 MS. MCCURDY: So we have everyone but
15 Mr. Parnell, right? We have 11.

16 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any opposed?
17 Any opposed?

18 Any abstained?

19 Motion carries.

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Powers?

21 DR. POWERS: This won't be a motion
22 but I have a question. So the D'Olive Bay
23 property is scheduled to come off if we

1 don't do anything. I'd like to -- I don't
2 know if it's a motion. I don't think it's
3 a motion. I would just like to request
4 that it stay on one more meeting for --
5 the reason is I haven't had a chance to
6 look at that property yet and there -- it
7 looks like it would be a valuable
8 addition, but the description says there's
9 a lot -- seems to imply there's a lot of
10 structure and development already on that
11 property.

12 MS. MCCURDY: We'll be happy to go
13 with you there. And we'll cover all this
14 with Tab 5b, but I've got that noted. Why
15 don't we plan a trip there and let's let
16 you eyeball it before the next meeting?

17 DR. POWERS: And second, we had talked
18 about any grant opportunities available
19 for that area. It seems that it would be
20 prime for some NOAA help or things like
21 that. And you didn't touch on it in the
22 grant report. I assume that's because
23 y'all concluded there's other better

1 opportunities.

2 MS. MCCURDY: Right. I don't think
3 there's a NOAA opportunity. We looked at
4 potential wetland opportunities, but it
5 didn't score as high by that category as
6 some of the other tracts, so it has not
7 been pursued by us. But we'll get with
8 you, Dr. Powers, on that.

9 DR. POWERS: So we have holdings there
10 already. Just, to me, it's the question
11 of how much development is already there
12 and the condition of the property. And I
13 drive by it numerous times. Is the hotel
14 on that off ramp?

15 MS. MCCURDY: No.

16 DR. POWERS: The Hampton Inn is --

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: No. This is
18 really where that restaurant is, the
19 volleyball courts.

20 DR. POWERS: So it's before that.

21 MS. MCCURDY: We'll go. That will be
22 great. We'll just go on site and get
23 your -- you can give some feedback to the

1 Board for the next meeting. That would be
2 great if you don't mind doing that.

3 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Jones?

4 MR. JONES: Could I do two very small
5 tracts? They're not in the same location.
6 Could I roll that up into one motion?

7 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: I would
8 probably rather us do it individually,
9 please.

10 MR. JONES: So I would like to make a
11 motion for a first appraisal on the
12 Blackwater River SOA-Clapper Addition.

13 MR. DARNALL: I second that.

14 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: So motion by
15 Mr. Jones. Seconded by Mr. Darnall for a
16 first appraisal on the Blackwater River
17 SOA-Clapper Addition.

18 Any questions or discussion?

19 MR. CHILDERS: What tab is that on?

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: It's 4a page --

21 MR. JONES: Page 7.

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Page 7, 4a
23 page 7 and 8.

1 All those in favor of first
2 appraisal on the property please raise
3 your hand.

4 MS. MCCURDY: All right. We have 11
5 Other than Mr. Parnell, we have 11.

6 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any opposed?

7 Any abstained?

8 The motion carries. Thank you.

9 You said you had another one?

10 MR. JONES: I'd like to make a motion
11 for first appraisal on Coldwater
12 Mountain-Martin Addition, 37 acres.

13 MR. DARNALL: I'll second that.

14 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. The
15 motion is for a first appraisal on the
16 Coldwater Mountain-Martin Addition made by
17 Mr. Jones. Seconded by Mr. Darnall.

18 Any discussion or questions?

19 All those in favor please raise
20 your hand.

21 MS. MCCURDY: We have 11, other than
22 Mr. Parnell.

23 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any opposed?

1 Any abstained?

2 Motion carries.

3 Do you have another one,
4 Mr. Jones, or was that all?

5 MR. JONES: No.

6 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Parnell?

7 MR. PARNELL: The Lillian Swamp, I'd
8 like to make a motion we make an offer of
9 50 percent of the appraised value.

10 MS. MCCURDY: And for the Board, that
11 is Tab 3b page 2.

12 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: So the motion
13 is that -- let me make sure I get this
14 right -- that we make an offer of
15 50 percent of the first appraised value.

16 MR. DARNALL: I'll second that.

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by
18 who?

19 MR. DARNALL: Jack.

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by
21 Mr. Darnall. Help me make sure I word
22 this correctly, please. The attorneys
23 make sure this is correct. So 50 percent

1 of the appraised value, would we make that
2 motion if accepted to move to second
3 appraisal, or how would we -- since we get
4 two appraisals --

5 MS. MCCURDY: We would normally make
6 the offer, and if the offer is accepted,
7 then -- your motion is normally a motion
8 for second appraisal and proceed to
9 purchase. Why don't we do a normal
10 motion, which would be a motion for second
11 appraisal and to proceed with purchase at
12 50 percent of the first appraisal value.

13 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Would that be a
14 more -- we're just in discussion about the
15 motion. So would that be a more
16 appropriate motion to be able to make sure
17 we follow the constitutional amendment?
18 We have to have two appraisals.

19 MS. MCCURDY: Yes. There's no way --
20 the amendment has specific language
21 requiring two appraisals. The third that
22 we -- the reconciliation we do is more
23 procedural, but the two appraisals is an

1 amendment -- constitutional language. So
2 I think we still have to have two
3 appraisals. You would still -- because,
4 frankly, you still -- if you're making a
5 motion at 50 percent of the first
6 appraisal, you still need to know that the
7 first appraisal is firm --

8 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Is valid.

9 MS. MCCURDY: Is valid, yeah. Or your
10 50 percent is not really a 50 percent of
11 true market value. So I think it's a
12 standard motion for a motion second for
13 second appraisal proceed to purchase at
14 50 percent of the first appraisal value,
15 and we will do what we normally do. If
16 the second appraisal does not confirm,
17 you'll have to come back to the Board as
18 we always do.

19 MR. PARNELL: I'm fine with that
20 language. That does not differ from the
21 intent of the motion.

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Is the seconder
23 okay with that change?

1 MR. DARNALL: Yes.

2 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Let's see if
3 Dr. Powers has some discussion.

4 DR. POWERS: Yeah. So I'll oppose
5 this (a) because -- I mean, I think I'd
6 like to see the second appraisal before we
7 decide what is the basis for any
8 reduction, and there's -- is there a
9 reason why we chose 50 percent on this?
10 What's the basis for us coming up with
11 50 percent?

12 MR. PARNELL: Fair question. No, sir,
13 I just pulled that from right there. I do
14 believe based on my study of the
15 appraisals that there is a real
16 possibility that you can buy this tract
17 for less than the appraised value.

18 MR. CHILDERS: So for me to be clear,
19 the motion would be a second appraisal but
20 not to purchase; is that right?

21 MS. MCCURDY: The motion on the floor
22 would be a standard -- the standard way we
23 do it, which is a proceed with purchase --

1 second appraisal proceed to purchase. If
2 the second appraisal came within
3 10 percent of the first appraisal as our
4 normal procedure, we would keep moving if
5 the landowner accepts 50 percent. Does
6 that make sense?

7 MR. CHILDERS: Yeah, it makes sense,
8 but that's not -- I don't think that's the
9 intent of his motion. I think the
10 intention of his motion would be to look
11 at the second appraisal with no purchase.

12 MS. MCCURDY: Well, let's -- then
13 let's pose back.

14 MR. PARNELL: No, Mickey, if I made an
15 offer, I would stand behind my offer if I
16 was doing it personally, so I would feel
17 the same way about this Board. I know
18 there's some procedures you have to go
19 through to make certain you're correct,
20 but I have real concern about the
21 appraised value of most of the parcels
22 that we're looking at. This is an attempt
23 to see if my speculation has any validity.

1 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: So just to make
2 sure that we're -- I want the Board to be
3 clear on what the motion is and I want to
4 make sure the intent of the motioner. So
5 the way I understand it would be for a
6 second -- move for second appraisal, and
7 if it meets our requirements for second
8 appraisals, then to offer 50 percent of
9 the appraised value to the landowner?

10 MS. MCCURDY: I will note -- I don't
11 want to interrupt you -- but that would be
12 a little different than our normal
13 process. Let me say how. We go to the
14 landowner off the first appraisal and make
15 our offer. Here, we would go to the
16 landowner and offer 50 percent. We only
17 then proceed with the second appraisal.
18 Frankly, if they're not in the ball
19 game -- this is how we normally do it. If
20 they're not in the ball game, I don't want
21 to spend your money on a second appraisal
22 if the landowner is not -- I mean, I don't
23 want to omit them exactly. I mean, they

1 signed an offer letter. They're
2 committed, I guess, but --

3 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: So maybe a more
4 appropriate motion might be for us to
5 offer the landowner 50 percent of the
6 appraised value and if that is acceptable
7 to them to move forward with the second
8 appraisal. Would that be a better
9 process?

10 MS. MCCURDY: That is exactly what
11 will happen under -- even our normal
12 motions just how y'all say it is normally
13 a motion for second appraisal, proceed to
14 purchase. That means if everything is
15 fine, we close it. But you can word it
16 however -- that way is a fine way to word
17 it. That is how it will work. We will
18 offer the landowner 50 percent of
19 appraised value, and if accepted by the
20 landowner, we'll proceed with second
21 appraisal. And I will tell you
22 procedurally if the second appraisal does
23 not come back within that 10 percent,

1 which that offer is contingent upon, our
2 offer's dead and I'll come back to you and
3 tell you, hey, the second appraisal did
4 not come back within the range. We do the
5 reconciliation and I tell what the real
6 value is, but I have to come back to
7 y'all. That's on any tract. We don't
8 move forward. You word the motion like
9 you think is the most informative to the
10 Board. I think what you said is fine.
11 It's different, but it's exactly what will
12 happen.

13 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: I'm not making
14 the motion. I'm just trying to make sure
15 it's clear to Board members what we're
16 voting on. I wanted to make sure it's
17 clear.

18 So, Mr. Parnell, if I word this,
19 will you please let me know if this is
20 what you mean -- and the seconder as
21 well -- is that we make an offer to the
22 landowner on the Lillian Swamp property at
23 50 percent of the appraised value, and if

1 they are affirmative that they would
2 accept that, then we move forward with the
3 second appraisal. Would that be -- is
4 that correct?

5 MR. PARNELL: Yes, sir, that's fine.

6 MS. MCCURDY: And with one addition.
7 If all that happens, we have authority
8 from this Board to proceed with purchase
9 is exactly what you said, but you want us
10 to move on forward, no need to come back
11 if that works out. So that is proceed to
12 purchase at the end of what you said.

13 MR. CHILDERS: At the offer price at
14 50 percent?

15 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Darnall, is
16 that --

17 MR. DARNALL: That's what I --

18 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: As the seconder
19 is that --

20 MR. DARNALL: That's what I
21 understood.

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir.

23 DR. POWERS: One more question.

1 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Powers?

2 MR. HARPER: And if he doesn't accept
3 it, it's dead.

4 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: If he doesn't
5 accept it, it will be --

6 MS. MCCURDY: If it's not accepted,
7 it's -- at that point, it's declined. The
8 Board could still make a motion -- you
9 know, a different motion.

10 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: At the next
11 meeting.

12 MR. HARPER: Second appraisal and then
13 reduce it then and see?

14 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: You have
15 multiple options, yes, sir.

16 Dr. Powers?

17 DR. POWERS: So a couple of things,
18 and some might be obvious. So since we're
19 a public entity, is there any chance the
20 property owner gets to see the first
21 appraisal before you make your offer, or
22 is it all confidential until the end? In
23 other words, the way you phrase things

1 out, they won't know you're offering
2 50 percent unless they look at the
3 transcript, I guess, of this meeting.

4 MS. MCCURDY: Then I think they'll
5 have a heads-up, but, yes. By regulation,
6 the appraisals -- unless they involve
7 federal funds -- and that gets a little
8 more wishy-washy -- but it's confidential
9 until the point of the offer. I have to
10 reread the regulation. We'll follow it,
11 but it is confidential until offer
12 acceptance or offer made --

13 DR. POWERS: Actually never mind
14 because they can just look at the minutes
15 of our meeting.

16 MS. MCCURDY: They will know --
17 anyone would know whether your motion went
18 up a percent or -- I mean, yeah, they'll
19 know.

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Let's call the
21 question. Let's vote. I think we've
22 discussed this a pretty good bit. All
23 those in favor of making an offer of the

1 50 percent of the appraised value on the
2 Lillian Swamp property and if accepted by
3 the landowner moving -- our staff moving
4 to a second appraisal and move to
5 purchase, all those in favor please raise
6 your hand.

7 MS. MCCURDY: Y'all keep them up.

8 Six.

9 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All those
10 opposed?

11 MS. MCCURDY: Four.

12 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Motion fails.

13 MS. STANLEY: Abstention.

14 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Oh, and one
15 abstention. I apologize. One abstention.

16 Anything else?

17 Thank you. We'll move to
18 miscellaneous reports, number 7 Tab 5.

19 MS. MCCURDY: All right. We've
20 already covered Tab 5a. We will move to
21 Tab 5b, which we've discussed most of
22 this. Tab 5b is where we report to you
23 the nominations that will disappear for

1 the next -- at the next meeting absent a
2 Board request. The only property we had
3 to discuss this time was the D'Olive Bay
4 property, which we covered and which will
5 remain on the list.

6 We then have what is really the
7 first time the Board has -- another
8 procedure that was established by the
9 Board -- first time you've had to run
10 through this, so I want to take just a
11 minute. The previous procedure is
12 attached to your Tab 5b handout, but it is
13 for what we call repeat nominations. We
14 consider a -- if we've had a nomination --
15 an original nomination and then within
16 two years get the same tract -- exact same
17 tract nominated again, then it is called a
18 repeat nomination because we received the
19 nomination during the two-year moratorium
20 period. These are names we came up
21 without -- but you have seen some tracts
22 that have been previously nominated, but
23 they either were done so prior to the

1 Board adopting that procedure or it was
2 after that two-year period had expired.
3 So it's considered just a regular
4 nomination. We have a tract this time,
5 the Natural Bridge Park, which is --
6 sorry. It's on the list because it's
7 not -- it attached -- the original
8 nomination, the language -- your normal
9 Board meeting material is attached to
10 Tab 5c.

11 MS. STANLEY: Exhibit A Tab 5c.

12 MS. MCCURDY: Exhibit A Tab 5c --
13 thank you, Ms. Stanley -- is what was in
14 your packet -- the old packet at the time
15 that Natural Bridge Park rolled off due to
16 no action. It had been extended, but
17 anyway, it rolled off ultimately. And so
18 under our procedure, we do not enter the
19 scoring process. We do not process a
20 repeat nomination until we come back to
21 the Board and see if there's a renewed
22 interest in doing so, putting that repeat
23 nomination back in our process. So

1 similar to keeping a tract on -- just like
2 Dr. Powers did -- it only takes one Board
3 member to say, hey, yes, I am okay with
4 staff reassessing and begin scoring like a
5 normal nomination would be a repeat
6 nomination and that's what Natural Bridge
7 is.

8 So I've attached the supporting
9 information we have received from various
10 parties. The concerns I think that the
11 Board previously had -- and there were
12 several meetings where it was discussed --
13 did relate to the items such as security,
14 structure removal, the necessary
15 restoration work after structure removal.
16 Sometimes my staff can handle demolition,
17 but these are significant structures that
18 we're going to have a cost to taking them
19 off the property. It included an old gift
20 shop. When I say old, I don't mean bad
21 looking or anything, but a gift shop. And
22 then an area that had previously served as
23 a community center on the bottom and

1 living quarters for a family member on the
2 top, but it is going to require more
3 professional demolition work, which the
4 County has now offered to provide.

5 We have concerns about -- or the
6 Board did of security on this tract due to
7 the fact that neither the Department nor
8 the Forever Wild program -- we really
9 don't have anything that close by. It's
10 not very easy for us to go check on it.
11 There were some concerns in addition just
12 to your normal security about if we could
13 adequately protect what is a
14 significant -- the natural feature on the
15 park, various concerns that kind of
16 detailed it. You're going from -- we're
17 going from a property that had on site --
18 people on site daily to what would be one
19 of our normal properties that really you
20 don't have somebody sitting on site all
21 the time. But the difference this time is
22 several of the offers, I guess, for
23 assistance that were made last time have

1 been put in letter form. We don't have
2 written agreements. I would not go to
3 that effort unless this Board wanted us to
4 consider it and put this back in the
5 process.

6 But anyway, based on the
7 information that you have in Tab 5b and
8 5c, if there is a Board member that
9 requests us to begin processing this
10 nomination, we will. We'll see how it
11 scores, and it will be like anything else
12 that's a willing seller nomination.

13 Ms. Stanley?

14 MS. STANLEY: Mr. Chairman, I move to
15 reconsider this property given the
16 additional support that is offered in the
17 package for Natural Bridge Park.

18 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right.
19 Thank you. We'll have our staff score it
20 and put it back in the rotation. Thank
21 you.

22 MS. MCCURDY: All right. Thank you.
23 Now you know another new process. See how

1 valuable the meeting was.

2 All right. Tab 5d -- if you'll
3 turn to that -- we're kind of going into
4 some routine matters now. As the Board
5 has heard before, upon acquisition of a
6 property, we are required to prepare a
7 management plan for that property. That
8 must be done within one year of
9 acquisition. Because it has to be done
10 within one year of acquisition, we try to
11 bring it to the Board one meeting in
12 advance of that expiration in case there
13 is a question from the Board, we can
14 address it, but also because, therefore,
15 it is fairly early in the acquisition
16 process, we are generally still, you know,
17 securing the tract, getting it ready for
18 public access, et cetera. So it's a bit
19 early in the game, but it's when we have
20 to do this.

21 So in Tab 5d, the properties that
22 are due to be included in or have -- that
23 are planned to develop are the following:

1 The Coldwater Mountain Complex-McVey
2 Addition, Perdido River WMA
3 Complex-Snowden Addition, and Red Hills
4 WMA Complex-Flat Creek Phase IV Addition.
5 Those are all simply additions to existing
6 plans. If the Board approves that, I will
7 need a motion. I provided a sample motion
8 for the Board. And I'll take any
9 questions on those plans.

10 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Powers?

11 DR. POWERS: So I move the Board
12 approves the State Lands Division
13 proceeding with the inclusion of the
14 Coldwater Mountain Complex-McVey Addition,
15 Perdido River WMA-Snowden Addition, and
16 Red Hills WMA-Flat Creek Phase IV Addition
17 into existing management plans as set
18 forth in the memorandum dated May 4, 2023.

19 MR. HOLLOWAY: Second.

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by
21 Dr. Holloway.

22 Any questions or comments on that?

23 All those in favor of the motion

1 please raise your hand.

2 MS. MCCURDY: That's unanimous,
3 Commissioner.

4 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: The motion
5 carries.

6 MS. MCCURDY: All right. The next
7 sort of routine administrative -- two more
8 matters that -- the next two memos are 5e
9 and 5f. There are certain things that we
10 every year do at a certain quarterly
11 meeting. Every May, we address both
12 requests of the Board for the
13 administrative support to State Lands for
14 administration of the project -- as you
15 know, Forever Wild itself has no employees
16 as an entity. It has Board members but no
17 employees. So we do two things at the May
18 meeting. We address the administrative
19 support. We also will address next a year
20 in advance Board approval for -- the
21 administrative support is for this fiscal
22 year. We wait on the end of the fiscal
23 year to be sure there's no change of any

1 sort that I think needs to be brought to
2 the Board's attention. We then will move
3 to addressing authority to make
4 expenditure from the Stewardship Account.
5 I'll explain that in a minute. We do both
6 of these in May, the administrative
7 support for this fiscal year and the
8 Stewardship authority for next year.

9 So what I've presented to the
10 Board in your packet, what I do every year
11 to give you context for the request, I'll
12 take the last fiscal year -- just because
13 it's a full fiscal year that I can give
14 you actual numbers on -- and run through
15 both expenditures and reimbursements for
16 various things that come in to us to get
17 to what -- the expenses to State Lands
18 Division.

19 So each year, we ask for
20 administrative support, and this year
21 we're asking to stay at the \$900,000
22 level, which we have maintained for the
23 last three years. So I will take any

1 questions from the Board on that. There's
2 really nothing different this year than
3 the previous years. I'm happy to take
4 questions. And then because it does
5 require a motion from the Board, we'll
6 need a motion similar to what's provided
7 to the Board in the memo.

8 Any questions?

9 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: No questions.
10 Is there a motion?

11 Mr. Holloway?

12 MR. HOLLOWAY: Mr. Chairman, I move
13 that the Board approve the State Lands
14 Division staff to proceed with the
15 requested Administrative Transfer in the
16 amount of \$900,000 for fiscal year 2023
17 administrative support provided by the
18 State Lands Division.

19 MR. CHILDERS: Second.

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by
21 Mr. Childers.

22 All those in favor please raise
23 your hand.

1 MS. MCCURDY: It's unanimous,
2 Commissioner.

3 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: The motion
4 carries.

5 Thank you.

6 MS. MCCURDY: Thank you.

7 I do want to thank my staff. I
8 stand up here and give you a lot of
9 information, but that is provided from my
10 staff both in the office and in the field.
11 So I want to thank them.

12 The next matter --

13 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Before you move
14 from that, I think I saw a lot of -- well,
15 a lot of your State Lands staff -- field
16 staff were here.

17 MS. MCCURDY: My enforcement staff.

18 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: The enforcement
19 staff. So I want to make sure the Board
20 knows that we have -- if y'all don't mind
21 standing up just for a second. That's not
22 all of them but quite a few of them.

23 These guys are in the field on the tracts

1 every day doing work and just wanted to
2 recognize them. You meet a lot of the
3 biological and staff from the Natural
4 Heritage Section, but you may not always
5 get to see some of the other guys that are
6 in the field. So thank y'all for your
7 service and thank you for the work y'all
8 do making sure that everything stays good
9 on our tracts. Thank you.

10 MS. MCCURDY: And I do want to say
11 they are a special type of enforcement
12 officer. They're not only dealing with,
13 you know, the public activity on the
14 tract, but they're doing physical land
15 management work and biological evaluation
16 on the tract, forestry evaluations and
17 implementing those decisions, and watching
18 over our contractors that are working on
19 whether it's timber or restoration work.
20 They've overseeing that. So they wear
21 a lot of hats, and I do appreciate it in
22 addition to keeping everybody safe.

23 Our next tab, Tab 5e, again, this

1 is every time at the May meeting. The
2 Amendment 543 in addressing expenditures
3 from the Stewardship Account has very
4 specific language. A couple of those
5 points are, one, I have to obtain
6 authority as to disbursements from the
7 Stewardship Account in advance of the
8 upcoming fiscal year. So we have this
9 meeting and the August meeting that we
10 need to get that done, we're going to be
11 allowed to make expenditures from the
12 Stewardship Account. That's why it's
13 being brought up at this meeting. What
14 the Board --

15 The language also of the
16 amendment, at the time it was written, we
17 were -- the management of the Stewardship
18 Fund was envisioned to be for the purpose
19 of interest income generation. That
20 worked great maybe some years, but as you
21 can imagine, it's not continuing to
22 provide enough money to manage the tracts.
23 So what is done because of the language of

1 the Amendment 543, the Commissioner has to
2 make a determination that there will not
3 be enough interest income from the
4 Stewardship Fund and that we -- it's
5 called an insufficiency determination.
6 That's the language used in the amendment.
7 Therefore, he has to come to the Board to
8 ask for authority to use funds from the
9 corpus of the Stewardship Account. So
10 this procedure is required because of the
11 specific language in the amendment.

12 So we have complied with that.
13 The Commissioner has made that
14 determination that he will need additional
15 authority -- or we will need additional
16 authority from the Board. And that is all
17 the detail in Tab 5f. And what my
18 division does is we work with Parks
19 Division and Wildlife & Freshwater
20 Fisheries to evaluate what, in our
21 language, we call routine management
22 needs. That's, you know, your fire on the
23 tracts, your repairs, your recreational

1 maintenance and some enhancements,
2 invasive species work, boundary line
3 maintenance, just truly -- and forestry
4 assessments, anything that's actual land
5 management. We then have some non-routine
6 tasks. And I don't know what else to call
7 it. That's what we call it. We sometimes
8 have reforestation needs on some of the
9 tracts either because we have harvested
10 timber and obviously are going to reforest
11 that, or we have tracts that have timber
12 reservations. The timber's been removed
13 and so we are performing restoration work.
14 So we have some restoration work coming
15 this next year.

16 If you'll look at Tab 5, Exhibit A
17 is Commissioner's determination. Exhibit
18 B is expected reforestation efforts. I
19 will add to that if the Little River
20 Canyon harvesting -- if it continues to be
21 ahead of schedule, we may have some on
22 that tract as well.

23 But this year and every year, what

1 Commissioner does is recommend approval of
2 disbursements. You don't really know what
3 your needs are going to be in reflection
4 of that and then reflection of the
5 continued effort to try to make headway in
6 adding recreational trails. We have now
7 some specific groups under contract that
8 can do design and construction of those.
9 We can do them faster now than just using
10 our crews. So all this taken into
11 consideration and working with
12 Commissioner, Commissioner is recommending
13 that approval of the current state
14 budgetary amount that we have in our
15 budget, our availability for budget, at
16 2.5 million dollars of allowing an
17 expenditure up to that amount, whatever
18 amount exceeds interest that may be
19 gained.

20 So if the Board has any questions,
21 let's address those now. We'll try to
22 help you with those. Commissioner, if
23 there are no questions, we would still

1 need a motion. If the Board's ready to do
2 it at this meeting, we would need a motion
3 similar to what's in there.

4 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Just to be
5 clear because we have several new Board
6 members since last May, when the amendment
7 was passed, it just speaks to interest
8 income. Since our Stewardship Fund is not
9 in a money market, but we have in working
10 with the State treasurer invested that in
11 a diversified portfolio and actually the
12 change in value has been much higher than
13 the amount that's requested for use, but
14 the actual interest is not up to that
15 amount and so that's why we have that
16 insufficiency notice. Does that make it
17 understandable?

18 So we're doing good. It's just
19 not interest. It's a change in -- an
20 increase in value through the portfolio
21 managed by the State treasurer.

22 MS. MCCURDY: And that's your Tab 4c
23 report that you get.

1 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Parnell?

2 MR. PARNELL: I'd make the motion to
3 do this.

4 MS. MCCURDY: Mr. Parnell, if you
5 could read the -- or Commissioner, one of
6 you -- the Tab 5f. The sample motion's on
7 the second page of that at the bottom.

8 MR. PARNELL: I make a motion for the
9 Board to authorize the ADCNR, after
10 exhausting available interest income from
11 the Stewardship Account, to extend the
12 funds from the corpus of the Stewardship
13 Account up to an amount that, when added
14 to the available interest income, does not
15 exceed two and a half million for FY24.

16 DR. MCCLINTOCK: I'll second that.

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by
18 Dr. McClintock.

19 All those in favor please raise
20 your hand.

21 MS. MCCURDY: It's unanimous.

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Motion carries.

23 Thank you.

1 MS. MCCURDY: All right. You have
2 some additional information in your
3 packet, but I know we're running long.
4 You can look at your Tab 5d, Tab 5f.

5 I do want to take just a minute
6 just to give you some -- I'll probably
7 have more information at the next meeting.
8 But if you'll turn to Tab 5i. That would
9 be your last -- yeah, your last -- Tab 5.
10 I just wanted to mention to the Board that
11 as you may know, Birmingham Southern
12 College has been making some changes to
13 some of their operations, and one of those
14 is they have transferred all of their
15 interest in the Turkey Creek Nature
16 Preserve tract. You know, you often hear
17 from Charles Yeager who works there and
18 comes and updates the Board on some
19 various things and thanks the Board for
20 various things. All the interest -- and
21 Charles has informed us -- has transferred
22 to the Ruffner Mountain Nature Coalition.
23 Basically if you're familiar with Ruffner

1 Mountain, that's the existing organization
2 that manages Ruffner Mountain. They have
3 taken all of Birmingham Southern's
4 interest, and the City of Pinson has done
5 an assignment, which I just received
6 before the meeting, noting the transfer of
7 that. So we're working through
8 procedurally kind of shifting that. But I
9 don't think the Board will see anything
10 different. I don't think the public will
11 see anything different. But I did want to
12 make you aware of that change in the
13 relationship moving from Birmingham
14 Southern College to the Ruffner Mountain
15 Nature Coalition.

16 Commissioner, I think with that,
17 the other matters in your packet I think
18 you can read on your own. Other than -- I
19 don't want to -- I have one announcement.
20 I just want everybody to know that Evan
21 Lawrence, who has been helping so much
22 with Forever Wild and the packet and has
23 helped a lot of y'all, is not leaving the

1 Department, but he and his family are
2 moving a little bit north and he's going
3 to be working for our State Parks
4 Division. So I'm sure you'll be seeing
5 and hearing from Evan again, but I want to
6 thank Evan for all of his help that he's
7 been to me. And, gosh, Evan, how many
8 years have you been with State Lands now?

9 MR. LAWRENCE: Twelve, 13 if you count
10 my seasonal laborer time.

11 MS. MCCURDY: Evan started as a
12 seasonal laborer, so it's been 12 or
13 13 years. So anyway he has been a very
14 valuable asset to the Department as a
15 whole. So I just want to thank him,
16 Commissioner, but, yeah, we'll be working
17 with him still. We know where he is.

18 That's it for me.

19 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you,
20 Evan.

21 The next item is approval of the
22 minutes from the February 2, 2023,
23 meeting. Is there a motion -- are there

1 any corrections or changes or anything for
2 those minutes? If not, I'll entertain a
3 motion to approve the minutes.

4 DR. POWERS: So moved.

5 MR. HARPER: Second.

6 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Powers has
7 motioned. Seconded by Mr. Harper.

8 Any other corrections or changes?

9 All those in favor of the approval
10 of the February 2nd minutes please raise
11 your hand.

12 MS. MCCURDY: That's unanimous.

13 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: The motion
14 carries.

15 So the next meeting will be at the
16 University of South Alabama in Mobile at
17 the McQueen Alumni Center on August the
18 3rd. Thank you, Dr. Powers and President
19 Jo Bonner, for hosting us on the
20 University of South Alabama campus, my
21 alma mater. And I appreciate the
22 opportunity for y'all to be able to visit
23 the campus down there.

1 **Any other business? Any other**
2 **comments from the Board?**

3 **Seeing none, we are adjourned.**

4 **(Proceedings concluded at**
5 **12:23 p.m.)**

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

