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MINUTES OF THE
FOREVER WILD BOARD MEETING
Alabama Department of
Agriculture and Industries
Montgomery, Alabama
February 6, 2020

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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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Proceedings taken before Tracye
Sadler Blackwell, Certified Court Reporter, ACCR
No. 294, and Commissioner for the State of Alabama
at Large, at the Alabama Department of Agriculture
and Industries, Richard Beard Building, 1445
Federal Drive, Montgomery, Alabama, on Thursday,
February 6, 2020, commencing at approximately
10:00 a.m.

1 BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

2 Commissioner Christopher M. Blankenship, Chairman
3 Mr. Rick Oates
4 Mr. Horace H. Horn, Jr.
5 Mr. David Wright
6 Mr. Raymond B. Jones, Jr.
7 Mr. William "Bill" Satterfield
8 Mr. Russ A. Runyan
9 Dr. Patricia Sims
10 Dr. Salem Saloom
11 Dr. Sean P. Powers
12 Mr. Reginald Holloway
13 Dr. John Valentine

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CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Good morning,

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everybody. Welcome to the February 6th
Forever Wild Board Meeting. Glad you
all made it and braved the weather to be
here today. Thank y'all for coming. I
know it was a very exciting morning for
some of you in different parts of the
state.

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I'll call the roll, and when I say
your name, please let me know that
you're here to make sure we have a
quorum.

23

Chris Blankenship is here.

1 Reginald Holloway?

2 MR. HOLLOWAY: Here.

3 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Horace Horn?

4 MR. HORN: Here.

5 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Raymond Jones?

6 MR. JONES: Here.

7 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Rick Oates?

8 MR. OATES: Here.

9 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Sean Powers?

10 DR. POWERS: Here.

11 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Russ Runyan?

12 MR. RUNYAN: Here.

13 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Oh, good to see you,

14 Russ. I haven't seen you since I've

15 been here today.

16 Dr. Saloom?

17 DR. SALOOM: Here.

18 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Satterfield?

19 MR. SATTERFIELD: Here.

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Sims?

21 (No response.)

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Tolley-Jordan?

23 (No response.)

1 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Valentine?

2 DR. VALENTINE: Here.

3 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Wright?

4 MR. WRIGHT: Here.

5 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Hall?

6 (No response.)

7 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: And Dr. Watson?

8 (No response.)

9 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: We have 11. We have a
10 quorum. Thank y'all so much for being
11 here this morning. I do have a couple
12 of remarks I would like to make as we
13 get started.

14 First I want to thank Rick Pate for
15 allowing us to use the auditorium here
16 at the Department of Ag and Industries
17 to have the meeting. The parking is a
18 lot better here and a lot easier to get
19 in and out than the Capitol downtown.
20 So I appreciate him allowing us to use
21 the facility here.

22 I would also like to take just a
23 moment to recognize the passing of one

1 of our former board members, Mr. Sonny
2 Cauthen. Sonny passed away a few weeks
3 ago. And he was a valuable member of
4 the Forever Wild Board for many years,
5 serving on the board, I think, multiple
6 times and for multiple years. So take
7 just a minute -- a moment of silence
8 just to remember Sonny.

9 (Moment of silence.)

10 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you. He surely
11 will be missed not just by the board but
12 around Montgomery. He was a very
13 likeable and very involved person in the
14 government and good things that are
15 happening here in the River Region.

16 I'd also at this time like to
17 recognize Mr. Drew Nix.

18 Drew, will you stand up for me,
19 please.

20 Drew has recently retired from the
21 Department of Conservation and Natural
22 Resources. Drew has been very involved
23 in the Forever Wild program and in the

1 properties that have -- with his work
2 with the Department of Conservation on
3 the wildlife management areas and some
4 of the Forever Wild properties.

5 Just wanted to thank you for your
6 years of service and for the good work
7 you've done. And I'm glad to see that
8 you're still hanging around with us.
9 You didn't retire and dislike us so much
10 that you're never coming back. So it's
11 really good to see you. But in all
12 seriousness, thank you so much for the
13 work that you've done for the state.

14 MR. NIX: Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: We just recently
16 completed the legal compliance audit for
17 the Forever Wild program. We don't have
18 the final report in your packet yet. We
19 haven't received that from the auditor.
20 But I just wanted to report to you that
21 there were no findings at all in the
22 Forever Wild audit just as a piece of
23 information for you.

1 And Mr. John Hall, who was one of
2 our newer board members, he submitted
3 his resignation effective February 1st.
4 Just with time commitments and other
5 things, he was not able to commit to
6 continued participation on the board.
7 And so that is a position that the
8 Governor will have to appoint from the
9 Central District of Alabama and
10 hopefully have that in place before --
11 we'll have that in place before our next
12 meeting in May, but just as a piece of
13 information about Mr. Hall.

14 Now is time for our public comment
15 period. When I call you up, you have
16 three minutes. We'll try and hold you
17 to those three minutes if we can. We
18 don't have very many speakers today, but
19 we still want to try and be concise.

20 Also, I was remiss -- before we do
21 that -- in recognizing Sean Powers.
22 Sean is our new board member. Sean is
23 from the -- at the University of South

1 Alabama. He's chair of the Marine
2 Sciences Department out at the
3 University. And we have worked together
4 a lot in south Alabama on red snapper
5 and reef fish research and other things.
6 And so I'm glad to have you serving on
7 the board. I think this is your first
8 meeting.

9 DR. POWERS: Yes, sir. Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Our first speaker is
11 going to be Steve Northcutt. It's on
12 the Red Hills-Flat Creek Phase III,
13 Tab 3-B, page 8. 3-B, page 8.

14 Give everybody just a second to find
15 that, Steve.

16 MR. NORTHCUTT: Sure.

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right.

18 MR. NORTHCUTT: All right. So my name is
19 Steve Northcutt. I work for The Nature
20 Conservancy.

21 And I know you hear me talk about
22 the Red Hills in Monroe County at a lot
23 of the board meetings. And, you know,

1 the history of land acquisitions in this
2 area is kind of extraordinary. I've
3 worked for The Nature Conservancy about
4 almost 20 years, and I have never seen
5 the amount of leverage that the board
6 has been able to take advantage of
7 through a federal -- a specific federal
8 program.

9 So I actually ran some numbers so
10 the board could kind of see over the
11 years how much federal dollars -- and
12 these are dollars from U.S. Fish and
13 Wildlife. They're used because you have
14 an endangered species there, the Red
15 Hills Salamander.

16 And so starting back in '08 with the
17 first closing in 2010, with the funding
18 that's available now which we think is
19 available to the Department -- you will
20 need to get a confirmation letter, which
21 I think will come in any day now or at
22 least within the next month or so -- the
23 state would have received \$16,170,000.00

1 for land acquisition in this area.

2 That's real extraordinary. One of the
3 reasons is because you have the Fish and
4 Wildlife dollars through the RLA program
5 which has Section 6 recovery, and
6 because these HCPs were signed by a lot
7 of the landowners, you have money
8 through the HCP program. So I think the
9 board has done an extraordinary job on
10 leveraging their money there.

11 So today I'm asking you to consider
12 the third phase of Red Hills-Flat Creek,
13 which is 2,746 acres. I'm asking the
14 board to consider a motion that would be
15 the second appraisal and close
16 contingent on the federal dollars
17 becoming available, which I believe --
18 and I think Doug will probably go over
19 this, but I believe it's \$4.94 million.

20 So that would be the grant funds you
21 would have to purchase that property.
22 And I think that would be something that
23 would be a great addition to this

1 project. As you can see, the properties
2 that have been acquired in the past --
3 this is a mosaic of properties that
4 really come together.

5 And, Chris, if I'm not mistaken,
6 this is to be a WMA at some point in the
7 future and would be managed for hunting,
8 birdwatching, hiking, and recreational
9 opportunities.

10 So the motion I'm requesting today
11 is a second appraisal and close on Flat
12 Creek Phase III. And if anybody has any
13 questions, I'll be glad to answer them.

14 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any questions on that?

15 It was my mistake. That was
16 actually page 9, but I think y'all are
17 smart enough and found that.

18 MR. NORTHCUTT: And Page 8, Al will be talking
19 about that next.

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. Thank you,
21 sir.

22 Let the minutes reflect, please,
23 that Dr. Sims has arrived and that she

1 is here for the meeting.

2 Thank you, ma'am. So glad you made
3 it down in the poor weather.

4 DR. SIMS: Thank you, Commissioner.

5 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Our next speaker is
6 Mr. Al Stokes on the Red Hills-Baucom
7 Addition. That is Tab 3, page 8.

8 Mr. Stokes, thank you for being
9 here. Mr. Stokes is a representative of
10 Senator Doug Jones, working with Doug
11 Jones in his office here in Alabama.
12 Appreciate you taking time to be here
13 today.

14 MR. STOKES: Thank you, Commissioner. And I
15 appreciate the introduction, but one of
16 the things I would like to emphasize is
17 while I represent Senator Doug Jones,
18 I'm also here today representing the Red
19 Hills. I grew up in that area. And
20 some of you might recall I made that
21 comment when we were here a year ago.

22 You made the decision to acquire
23 some properties there, and I can report

1 to you that that decision has been
2 fantastic in terms of the impression it
3 has made upon the people of that
4 community. The little area is kind of
5 lost away from main Highway 21. Don't
6 nobody know they're back there unless
7 you're a hunter or what have you.

8 Well, the word has gone forward that
9 Forever Wild has focused on the
10 community, and we appreciate the
11 attention. So we're back here today
12 again asking that you would vote
13 favorably on the acquisition of the
14 Baucom -- the 20 acres in the Baucom
15 site. It's a tremendous piece of
16 property, and I would venture to say
17 again it will continue to expand your
18 vision, expand the purpose that you
19 serve and the people of that area.
20 Grossly appreciate what you do. Thank
21 you so very much.

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you, sir.

23 Any questions?

1 (No response.)

2 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you.

3 Our next speaker is Mr. Mitch Reid
4 on the Prairie Grove Glades, Tab 3-B,
5 page 7. 3-B, page 7.

6 MR. REID: Thank you, Mr. Commissioner, Board
7 Members, for letting me come up and
8 request that you consider the second
9 appraisal and close on the Prairie Grove
10 Glades. This has been discussed quite a
11 few times.

12 This is a TNC preserve of 191 acres
13 along with an adjoining tract of land,
14 20 acres that the neighboring family has
15 been sort of joint managing it. We're
16 sort of packaging this together in one
17 package. I'm sure that you're well
18 aware that we are proposing that we do a
19 40-percent bargain sell on the portion
20 of the property that is TNC's, that 191
21 acres. So that is money that would be
22 sort of not out of pocket.

23 I know there's been quite a lot of

1 discussion about the management of the
2 glades itself. Currently we're in
3 contract with a neighboring landowner
4 who is basically letting us bring his
5 cows on there to just be a cheap way of
6 making sure that the seeds are
7 dispersed. We've talked to botanists
8 about the science of that. That can be
9 mechanically done. It can be done by
10 fire. Obviously it's just management at
11 the right time. If there were concerns
12 about that, I think we could work
13 through it.

14 I'd be happy to answer any
15 questions, but I think a second
16 appraisal and close would be an
17 appropriate motion today. Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any questions?

19 (No response.)

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you, sir.

21 MR. REID: Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Our next speaker is
23 Chandler Graham on the Thigpen property,

1 Tab 4-B, page 10. 4-B, page 10.

2 Just a second, Chandlar.

3 MR. JONES: Tab 3, page 10.

4 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you. Tab 3-B,
5 page 10.

6 Thank you, Chandlar.

7 MR. GRAHAM: Good morning. I'm here today
8 again just to discuss the possibility of
9 y'all moving forward --

10 MR. SATTERFIELD: Excuse me. Some of us have
11 shot too many quail lately and we have a
12 hard time hearing.

13 MR. GRAHAM: Okay.

14 MR. SATTERFIELD: So if you would speak up,
15 that would be helpful to me.

16 MR. GRAHAM: Sorry.

17 So I'm here today obviously to
18 discuss the Thigpen property in Butler
19 County and ask for, you know, a motion
20 to move forward with the second
21 appraisal and purchase of this tract.
22 We have been in this process for quite a
23 while. I think most everybody realizes

1 the potential this property has to add
2 to the Forever Wild assets in the state,
3 and I know there's been some discussion
4 about, I guess, the size of the
5 purchase.

6 And so what we want to communicate
7 today -- and I believe it's in your
8 package -- is the ability to work with
9 the landowner on an installment sale or
10 a partial purchase today with a future
11 purchase coming down in order to kind of
12 break up the fiscal expenditure.
13 Instead of a one-time hit, we could do
14 it over time.

15 And I guess that's the message I
16 want to deliver is I'm not sure there's
17 ever been a more willing landowner or
18 partner with Forever Wild as there is
19 with Ms. Isabel Hill here. She is more
20 than excited to be considered on this
21 project -- or have her property
22 considered, and she's more than willing
23 to work in any way to help facilitate

1 this. And I think she's demonstrating
2 that by, you know, engaging in this
3 potential to split this purchase up in
4 two phases.

5 Other than that, I mean, the merits
6 of this tract being located where it is
7 and adjacent to the infrastructure that
8 it is, it really can leverage on that
9 infrastructure to attract the public and
10 to have the public actually use this
11 property in a way that -- I'm not sure
12 there's a lot of properties in the
13 Forever Wild program that could have
14 that sort of use.

15 So I'm happy to answer any questions
16 anybody has.

17 MR. SATTERFIELD: I have a question that sort
18 of begs the question: Is she willing to
19 participate with Forever Wild in
20 discounting the price of the property or
21 helping contribute part of the price of
22 that property to Forever Wild?

23 MR. GRAHAM: I think there -- I mean,

1 obviously I can't speak for her on that
2 part, but I think there's potential down
3 the road to have her partner with some
4 of the potential development of the
5 property.

6 I don't know if you're familiar with
7 her. I mean, she's a very philanthropic
8 person. She is, you know, what I would
9 call a legacy seller. She's not
10 interested in -- I mean, she obviously
11 has fiscal needs and she's a capitalist,
12 but that's not the only motivating
13 factor.

14 I mean, honestly, we could have sold
15 this property three or four times over
16 for top dollar, but, you know, she's
17 willing -- she would like public
18 ownership of this tract. But she does
19 have needs. But there is a potential,
20 now -- we've discussed it -- of, you
21 know, partnering down the road to help
22 develop this tract into some sort of
23 multiuse property. You know, there is

1 that potential.

2 DR. SALOOM: Could you extrapolate on that
3 since you opened the door about
4 development?

5 MR. GRAHAM: Well, I mean, you know --

6 DR. SALOOM: Yeah. Can you extrapolate about
7 possible future plans that you may have
8 in the pipeline about development?

9 MR. GRAHAM: Yeah. I mean, to be candid, our
10 conversation with Ms. Hill on this tract
11 was, you know, if there was need to
12 develop a trail system on this tract,
13 you know, to help with funding, you
14 know, along those lines, whether it's to
15 build a boardwalk -- I mean, I believe
16 Ms. Hill would be an ongoing participant
17 in this property if y'all would like her
18 to be, and she's willing to do that.
19 That's how strongly she feels about, you
20 know, having this property in a public
21 ownership. Does that ...

22 DR. SALOOM: Yeah, somewhat.

23 MR. GRAHAM: Yeah. I mean ...

1 MS. McCURDY: And I think as an example, on
2 any tract that we can acquire, getting
3 in the trail system, whether it's hiking
4 trails, horseback trails, whatever is
5 suitable for the property, we
6 generally -- you know, we don't just
7 have the extra funding to day one do
8 that on the tracts. We've worked with
9 ADECA for some other grants we've gotten
10 that do help, but I -- maybe a little
11 similar to some local governments
12 that -- like Shelby County that has
13 helped us with some efforts or groups
14 that jump in. But I think that's the
15 type -- when he says development, it's
16 the recreational aspects, the
17 trailheads, how you get the public on it
18 and enjoying it faster with that type of
19 partnership.

20 And I don't want to speak for
21 Ms. Hill, but that's my understanding of
22 what --

23 MR. GRAHAM: Yes, that is accurate.

1 DR. SALOOM: Yes.

2 MR. JONES: Could you help us understand where
3 the split is that --

4 MR. GRAHAM: Yeah. So I believe the two
5 options, you know --

6 MS. McCURDY: If you'll turn in your tab --
7 Tab 5-H, you will see a memo there
8 that ...

9 MR. JONES: Got it.

10 MS. McCURDY: And so you'll see the two maps
11 that were estimates based upon our
12 discussions with Chandlar of our
13 understanding of the two options that
14 the landowner has put forward as a
15 possibility.

16 MR. GRAHAM: Right. I mean, there was two
17 options. The most logical option is to
18 split it along the highway as it gives a
19 hard boundary, you know, for both
20 parties. Obviously that split is
21 probably a 75/25 split. So it may not
22 ease the purchase price as much as you
23 would like. So we went ahead and did a

1 more 50/50 split. But in doing so, we
2 had to use sections and township or
3 section lines to come up with that
4 division. So, you know, that division,
5 while it does make it a 50/50 purchase,
6 it's not going to be as concrete on your
7 boundaries. But the idea being that one
8 purchase happens this year and one
9 happens next year, you know, that
10 boundary would not have to necessarily
11 be established. I mean, that would
12 be --

13 MS. McCURDY: What we did on that one is we
14 did ensure that both parties would have
15 access without tripping over each other,
16 so to speak. Staff did review it for
17 that perspective. But there obviously
18 is not as clear a boundary as using a
19 road, you know, obviously. But there is
20 sufficient access for the Option B
21 during the pendency of the phased
22 transaction.

23 MR. SATTERFIELD: Mr. Chairman?

1 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir.

2 MR. SATTERFIELD: I have a technical question.

3 Maybe it's more for staff than for you.

4 But on this piece of property, this

5 southernmost piece that extends down and

6 is surrounded by the golf course, that

7 piece of property is also within the

8 city limits of the city of Evergreen as

9 I understand.

10 MR. GRAHAM: Greenville.

11 MR. SATTERFIELD: Greenville.

12 And my question is, have we looked

13 into -- and it's really, I guess, more

14 for staff, Patti.

15 Have we looked into what

16 encumbrances that would place on this

17 piece of property and how it can be

18 used?

19 Because I know cities have all kinds

20 of -- having been involved in permitting

21 myself throughout my career, I know

22 cities have a lot of restrictions on

23 what can be done and what cannot be done

1 such as discharge of firearms and that
2 sort of thing within the city limits.
3 And so we've got that challenge. I'm
4 interested in finding out what
5 encumbrances there might be on that
6 piece of property there.

7 And, secondly, have we had any
8 discussions with the RSA in operation of
9 the golf courses and how that being --
10 that piece being surrounded by golf
11 course on three sides would impact the
12 use of that property or any restrictions
13 that it would put on there?

14 Because I would assume that RSA is
15 not too excited about having people
16 wandering back and forth onto their
17 property or having certain uses of that
18 piece that's not compatible with the
19 upscale golf course that they're
20 operating.

21 So those are my two questions which
22 are perhaps more technical staff
23 questions than for Graham.

1 MS. McCURDY: Sure. As to the city, we've had
2 conversations with the mayor. The mayor
3 was very supportive of the activities
4 and the acquisition. I think if this
5 moved forward that portion of the
6 acquisition, if made, would be focused
7 more on a recreational use that isn't a
8 hunting use that would conflict with the
9 golf course as much as any city
10 restrictions. Simply it would be a --
11 it's more due to thinking -- as with any
12 property where we're looking at what's
13 adjacent to us, that side of the road,
14 especially as you get into the golf
15 course area, would -- we would
16 anticipate would be more of a general
17 rec.

18 Now, I don't know the specific city
19 restrictions as to firearms, but mainly
20 because we would not have intended to
21 have allowed hunting right by the golf
22 course line. As to the RSA, I'm not
23 sure if Commissioner has had any

1 conversations. The mayor represented he
2 has, but I don't know that specifically.

3 But any type of -- if there was a
4 hunting aspect added as part of
5 recreation to the tract, we would not
6 place it adjacent -- either in the
7 finger or adjacent to the RSA acreage.
8 But there could be trails headed that
9 direction. But quite honestly there
10 probably would not be a lot that we
11 would place in the finger that sticks
12 down. As with any property -- with any
13 property, that creates some issues.

14 MR. SATTERFIELD: How many acres is that
15 piece? Do we know?

16 MS. McCURDY: 80.

17 MR. SATTERFIELD: 80 acres.

18 Has there been any discussions with
19 either the city or the RSA for them to
20 buy that piece of property in
21 partnership with Forever Wild to help
22 this transaction take place?

23 MS. McCURDY: We have not received any offer

1 from the city. And, again, I do not
2 know -- other than the mayor's
3 conversations with RSA -- and I would
4 hate to represent that. I think that is
5 certainly -- as with any acquisition, if
6 there's an interest from the board in
7 either limiting the acreage or limiting
8 the amount of money going toward
9 acquisition of a nomination, that can be
10 handled in a motion which we would then
11 follow up on, if you want to, or you can
12 simply direct staff, you know, that
13 that's -- you know, to look in further
14 to that. But we have not had direct
15 conversations with RSA, but we would
16 obviously be sensitive to the management
17 of the tract as we would with any
18 adjacent landowner.

19 MR. SATTERFIELD: Do we have any other tracts
20 that we've acquired for Forever Wild
21 that this created a similar situation
22 within the city limits of a particular
23 municipality?

1 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Sure. Springville.

2 MS. McCURDY: No. Because we wouldn't -- we
3 wouldn't allow -- we wouldn't plan a use
4 that would conflict with any local
5 government requirements or regulations.

6 So, for example, we would not -- a
7 tract would not, you know, be managed
8 as -- if hunting is the issue or
9 whatever the -- normally, as you said,
10 hunting would be more where you would
11 have the restrictions due to the
12 firearms and the, you know, use therein.
13 But, no, we've never had a claimed
14 violation or a problem because we
15 wouldn't manage it in violation.

16 MR. SATTERFIELD: Well, Commissioner mentioned
17 he thought we maybe had an arrangement
18 with Springville.

19 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: You asked -- I may have
20 misunderstood your question. I thought
21 your question was have we ever purchased
22 any property in the city limits of a
23 town.

1 MR. SATTERFIELD: That was my question.

2 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: I don't know about
3 Springville. That just came to mind
4 that it might have been in the city
5 limits of Springville, but --

6 MS. McCURDY: I think we've got the park --
7 our acquisition in Dothan includes
8 acreage within the city of Dothan. I
9 believe Coldwater Mountain includes
10 municipal acreage, so yes. But, for
11 example, Coldwater Mountain and Dothan
12 are managed multiple use, but the
13 primary use is probably biking and
14 those -- extensive work from, you know,
15 biking groups that have come in and
16 helped and the cities that have helped.
17 So yes. But, again, we wouldn't --
18 it's never been a conflict because we
19 haven't engaged in an activity in
20 violation of local laws.

21 MR. SATTERFIELD: Well, I guess what I'm kind
22 of getting to is whether or not we need
23 to have any discussions beforehand with

1 the city to see what their uses are and
2 have some kind of an idea about what
3 kind of an agreement there might be
4 worked out for the use and development
5 of that -- particularly that particular
6 piece with the city and how it might be
7 used before we get too far --

8 MS. McCURDY: And we --

9 MR. SATTERFIELD: -- get too much further
10 along the tracks.

11 MS. McCURDY: Staff can do that. The mayor
12 has offered support in any form he can
13 provide it, including assisting with
14 management and gates and things like
15 that. It's just that obviously he can't
16 offer what's not in his jurisdiction,
17 so -- but those conversations have been
18 had with the mayor.

19 But we can certainly look into -- I
20 just -- would you be interested in
21 looking into just any restrictions the
22 city might have on that finger and that
23 would be your interest?

1 MR. SATTERFIELD: Well, I think I would
2 personally like to know what the city --
3 what impacts it would have for that
4 being within the city limits, what
5 restrictions that might place on the
6 property or the use of the property in
7 being able to work into the overall
8 Forever Wild program of multiuse and how
9 it would fit into the rest of the piece.

10 MS. McCURDY: And we can certainly do that.
11 Recreation in general would not be an
12 issue.

13 But go ahead if you -- Chandler just
14 mentioned something in my ear.

15 MR. GRAHAM: Yeah. I mean, if the 80 -- if
16 what we're calling the finger is an
17 issue, we could eliminate that from the
18 transaction. There's been interest in
19 the past when the golf course was
20 developed to acquire that 80 acres. I
21 don't know the history of that, but it
22 never got done. Personal conversations
23 with the mayor of Greenville, you know,

1 he mentioned that RSA still had an
2 interest in that 80 acres. And we have
3 followed up on that and had no feedback
4 from anybody over there. Now, some of
5 y'all may be better connected with those
6 folks and could see that through.

7 But the landowner would be more than
8 willing to eliminate that 80 acres and
9 just retain that 80 acres to -- you
10 know, whether she sells it or donates it
11 to RSA or whatever. But I guess what
12 I'm getting at is let's not let this
13 80 acres hinder, you know, the larger
14 project here.

15 MR. SATTERFIELD: Well, that's a good option.

16 MR. GRAHAM: Yes, sir.

17 MR. SATTERFIELD: I hadn't heard that option
18 discussed, and I think that's something
19 maybe perhaps for us to consider if
20 she's willing to take that 80 acres out
21 of the nomination.

22 MR. GRAHAM: Yes, sir. And, you know, as far
23 as the city of Greenville -- I mean, I'm

1 not from Greenville. I don't have
2 any -- I don't vote in Greenville. But
3 my conversation with the mayor is that
4 this is -- he's very excited about the
5 potential for this project. So if that
6 answers any of your concerns about ...

7 MR. HORN: Bill, and that is the case what
8 Chandlar just mentioned and what Patti
9 alluded to. The mayor -- and this
10 doesn't address your concerns about
11 restrictions and covenants and so forth.
12 But the mayor and the city council have
13 been very aggressively supportive of
14 Forever Wild buying this land, you know,
15 including the 80 acres. So they're in
16 full agreement -- not that that
17 addresses all of your concerns, but they
18 are on board with this.

19 MR. SATTERFIELD: So if they could -- well, I
20 guess it's really up to the landowner to
21 decide whether or not she would want
22 to -- be willing to exclude that from
23 the purchase, and then that takes us out

1 of the middle of that if that could come
2 about.

3 MR. GRAHAM: Yeah. I mean, exactly. Yeah.
4 We'd be willing to, let's just say,
5 absorb that 80 acres and figure out what
6 to do with it down the road if y'all are
7 willing to take the other 4200 in your
8 program. Again, we're happy to make --
9 to work with y'all in any way to make
10 this work. We've got a very flexible
11 seller here.

12 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you, sir.

13 MR. GRAHAM: Thank y'all.

14 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: The next speaker is
15 Clem McNeill on the Perdido WMA-McNeill
16 Addition, Tab 4-B, page 18. 4-B, page
17 18.

18 Yes, sir. Go ahead.

19 MR. McNEILL: I'm here to -- I just have a
20 small piece of property that I want to
21 see if Forever Wild would be interested
22 in buying. It's surrounded by Forever
23 Wild, and it -- mine is 23.4 acres. And

1 I just would like to go ahead and sell
2 it, you know.

3 I've had -- my dad had it, and then
4 he left it for me. And I hunt on it
5 pretty regular. But it's kind of like
6 me and everybody else. Because it's
7 just such a small piece, you know, so I
8 just decided to sell it. And it's
9 actually down Nims Fork Road. And it's
10 actually the house place -- the
11 homestead of the Nims people that lived
12 on my property there, and there's the
13 old house that fell in there.

14 I talked to Chris Nix and Phillip
15 Peterson. They work in the management
16 area. And I have an 8-acre field in the
17 back that's cleared off. I used to
18 plant watermelons on it but don't do
19 that anymore. But, anyway, they are
20 interested in getting it to have a bird
21 field for kids, for youth.

22 So, anyway, I was just here to bring
23 it to your attention, you know. And so

1 I think y'all would probably like to
2 have it because the land all the way
3 around mine belongs to Forever Wild.

4 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you, sir.

5 MR. McNEILL: I have the deed, but I don't
6 guess you -- you probably don't need to
7 look at the deed or anything.

8 MS. McCURDY: If you've got a copy. Is that a
9 copy or your original?

10 MR. McNEILL: No. That's the original. Can
11 you copy it?

12 MS. McCURDY: Not here. But if you would like
13 to get a copy to -- Jo will get with you
14 at a break and --

15 MR. McNEILL: Okay. That's all.

16 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you, sir.

17 The next speaker is Will Joslin on
18 the preservation of public lands. It's
19 not on a particular nomination.

20 MR. JOSLIN: Morning.

21 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Morning.

22 MR. JOSLIN: My name is Will Joslin, and I am
23 an avid outdoorsman, hunter, fisher, and

1 shooter. I'm also a member of
2 Backcountry Hunters & Anglers, a public
3 land advocacy group with chapters in 45
4 states, including this one, made up of
5 more than 40,000 hunters and anglers who
6 enjoy and appreciate this nation's
7 public land opportunities.

8 I've been asked to represent the
9 Southeastern Chapter of Backcountry
10 Hunters & Anglers in expressing our
11 gratitude for the excellent and valuable
12 work you do for Alabama. I, my fellow
13 Backcountry Hunters and Anglers members,
14 and all outdoorsmen and women who
15 utilize Alabama's public wildlife
16 management areas appreciate the land
17 acquisition efforts of the Forever Wild
18 program, particularly those for
19 inclusion within wildlife management
20 areas and those with hunting provisions.
21 I've personally made use of quite a few
22 of those both for consumptive and
23 nonconsumptive use like hiking, camping,

1 and occasionally getting out and sitting
2 in a deer stand.

3 We appreciate the Forever Wild
4 Board's effort in working cooperatively
5 with the Alabama Department of
6 Conservation and Natural Resources
7 Division of Wildlife and Freshwater
8 Fisheries to utilize Forever Wild funds
9 for state matching to federal
10 Pittman-Robertson funds. Forever Wild
11 funds matched with Pittman-Robertson
12 funds are essential to Alabama's land
13 acquisition efforts which provide the
14 state's citizens additional public land
15 and fishing opportunities. We commend
16 you for a job well done in your support
17 of outdoor recreation.

18 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you, sir. Thank
19 you very much for taking the time to
20 come today.

21 MR. JOSLIN: Thank you for offering me the
22 opportunity.

23 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir.

1 Our next speaker is Kirt Stokes.
2 He's not speaking on a particular tract.

3 Yes, sir.

4 MR. STOKES: Good morning. I basically just
5 had a question, if it's feasible for --
6 when you put the minutes up for the
7 people who aren't able to attend these
8 meetings, is there any way that y'all
9 could include like a copy of the maps
10 that y'all are referring to when y'all
11 say page this and tab this or whatever
12 so that we can have a visual of what
13 y'all are working on?

14 Basically that was it.

15 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Okay.

16 MR. STOKES: Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you.

18 Our next speaker is Mr. Chris
19 Oberholster on the Saginaw Swamp. It is
20 not on the short list currently, but it
21 has previously been on the short list.
22 So I don't have a page or a tab for you.

23 Yes, sir.

1 MR. OBERHOLSTER: Good morning. I really
2 appreciate the opportunity to come and
3 say a few words about Saginaw Swamp.

4 As the Commissioner referenced, it
5 was one of the top-scoring in the nature
6 preserve category for a full cycle, I
7 think. And so I think it's just rotated
8 off of that list unless you as a board
9 ask for it to be reactivated or remain
10 on that active list. I don't know if
11 it's -- I think it's four board meetings
12 perhaps without action and then it falls
13 off unless you ask for it to remain.

14 But it's basically 160 acres at the
15 Shelby County Airport exit off of I-65,
16 big wetland and, you know, marsh and
17 swamp mostly, some uplands. And it's --
18 I work for Alabama Audubon, which is an
19 outdoor conservation and bird --
20 appreciation and birdwatching and
21 conservation organization. So it's
22 become a very popular stop on the
23 Alabama Birding Trails network that's

1 run by the University of Alabama Center
2 for Economic Development. And so this
3 has become a very popular site.

4 On the adjoining property in the
5 city of Alabaster they have a city park,
6 Limestone Park. This piece is in
7 unincorporated Shelby County, so it's
8 not part of the city's jurisdiction.
9 But the hope is -- and Alabama Audubon
10 stands ready to assist financially
11 with -- and with volunteer efforts --
12 but financially with grants or other
13 funding to partner with Forever Wild in
14 the event that Forever Wild buys it like
15 we have done on the adjoining city park
16 property where we've actually built --
17 helped with funding to build wildlife
18 observation decks and plantings for
19 wildlife and so on.

20 So I'm happy to answer any questions
21 if there are any at this time.

22 MR. SATTERFIELD: Who owns the property now,
23 Chris?

1 MR. OBERHOLSTER: It's a private landowner.

2 She lives in Missouri. And I've talked
3 with her and I've also talked with
4 her -- a friend of hers who does some
5 legal work here in Alabama for her.

6 MR. SATTERFIELD: Okay. Again, a staff
7 question: Once a property falls off the
8 list like this, it's no longer active.
9 Now, does it -- to be renominated back
10 again, doesn't that have to come from
11 the landowner?

12 MS. McCURDY: Actually this property did not
13 roll off due to the lack of board action
14 like we talk about.

15 You know, the short list is a living
16 list. As we get in more nominations, it
17 just so happened that there was another
18 nomination that scored higher, and so
19 this happened to move out of the top
20 three temporarily. It could be next
21 meeting it's, you know, back up and back
22 in the top three and back on the short
23 list.

1 So there's really no action required
2 by the landowner here and really nothing
3 the board can do other than -- because
4 of the scoring, just see if it rolls
5 back up.

6 If there is a specific offer of
7 assistance, either acreage donation,
8 value donation, or something like that,
9 I don't -- I'll check back. In my
10 memory I'm not sure we have anything
11 specific. If you have anything
12 specific, that increases a nomination's
13 score and might reposition it to where
14 it could roll back, although it might
15 roll back naturally. But this isn't one
16 of the ones that rolled off due to
17 nonaction.

18 MR. OBERHOLSTER: Okay. Thanks for correcting
19 me.

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you, Chris.

21 MR. OBERHOLSTER: Okay.

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: That was our last
23 speaker that I had a green slip of paper

1 for. Is there anybody that wishes to
2 make public comment that didn't fill out
3 a green slip or got here a little late?

4 (No response.)

5 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seeing none, that will
6 end our public comment period. Thank
7 you all.

8 By regulation, appraised values are
9 confidential during periods of
10 negotiation. Accordingly, in order to
11 discuss tract appraisal values, the
12 board will need to go into recess for an
13 Executive Session.

14 Is there a motion for the board to
15 now recess to attend an Executive
16 Session?

17 MR. JONES: So move.

18 MR. HORN: Second.

19 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Moved by Mr. Jones and
20 seconded by Mr. Horn.

21 As I call your name, if you're in
22 favor of going into Executive Session,
23 please say "aye". If not, please say

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"no."

Chris Blankenship, yes.

Mr. Holloway?

MR. HOLLOWAY: Yes.

CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Horn?

MR. HORN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Jones?

MR. JONES: Yes.

CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Oates?

MR. OATES: Yes.

CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Powers?

DR. POWERS: Yes.

CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Runyan?

MR. RUNYAN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Saloom?

DR. SALOOM: Yes.

CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Satterfield?

MR. SATTERFIELD: Yes.

CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Sims?

DR. SIMS: Yes.

CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Valentine?

DR. VALENTINE: Yes.

CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Wright?

1 MR. WRIGHT: Yes.

2 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. It is
3 unanimous by all present. We will be
4 now in Executive Session. It is 10:41.
5 We hope to return by a little bit after
6 11.

7 (Recess for Executive Session was
8 taken at approximately 10:41 a.m.
9 and the meeting was called back to
10 order at approximately 11:17 a.m.)

11 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: We are returning from
12 Executive Session at 11:17.

13 You want to talk about the financial
14 data, Ms. McCurdy?

15 MS. McCURDY: I will. And I'll try to do the
16 same. I'm going to remind everybody to
17 speak in your microphones. It is a big
18 room. I'll try to be an example maybe.

19 For the benefit of the public, I'm
20 Patti McCurdy. I am director of the
21 State Lands Division. And this is the
22 portion of the meeting each time where
23 we run through sort of a financial

1 update on the status of the program both
2 in general and as to potential money
3 available for additional motions and
4 acquisitions by the board.

5 As I always say -- everybody hears
6 me say it every time -- it's like a
7 checkbook. I have to keep up with the
8 checks we have written. They may not
9 have been cashed yet, but they're
10 obligations of this program that reduce
11 the amount of money we have available to
12 spend. So our cash balance doesn't look
13 as high once you take away those
14 obligations.

15 In the trust fund account we have
16 approximately, as far as a cash balance,
17 just over \$28.5 million. I'm going to
18 run through the properties that have
19 been motioned for the staff to work to
20 close. They're in various stages of
21 closing or acceptances of offers, but
22 they're all obligations right now of the
23 program.

1 And these include: The Cahaba River
2 Mohon-Tract, Bibb County. Red
3 Hills-Parris Trust Addition, Monroe.
4 Skyline WMA-Crow Mountain Addition,
5 Jackson County. Blackwater River South
6 Tract, Baldwin County. D'Olive Bay,
7 Baldwin County. Monte Sano State
8 Park-McCombs Addition, Madison. And Red
9 Hills-Brown Schutt Trust Addition in
10 Monroe.

11 If you subtract all those
12 obligations, you have just over
13 \$20 million available for activity --
14 for purchases. However, at each meeting
15 we also have to talk about spending
16 authority pursuant to state budgetary
17 procedures.

18 And so your spending authority for
19 this meeting is about \$17.7 million,
20 just a little over that. And so as you
21 make motions, if you make motions later
22 for acquisitions, the staff will work to
23 be sure that we're keeping you within

1 where you need to be. But if sometimes
2 we say hang on, it's because we're doing
3 math. And they don't let me do math.
4 You know, I trust staff with that. But
5 we'll keep you within that, but you
6 really only have authority to take
7 action on just over \$17.7 million for
8 acquisition.

9 I'm sorry. Any questions on that?

10 (No response.)

11 MS. McCURDY: The properties that we have
12 closed in this current fiscal year for
13 the state -- the fiscal year -- the new
14 fiscal year started October 1st. The
15 tracts that have closed -- we also would
16 note at this point if there were offers
17 made that were declined, but so far
18 we've got just properties that have
19 closed.

20 And that's Beaverdam Swamp has
21 closed. Cahaba River-Savage Creek Tract
22 closed. Red Hills-Flat Creek Phase I,
23 Red Hills-Flat Creek Phase II, and Red

1 Hills-Section 2. So those have all --
2 those have all closed -- fully closed --
3 deeds recorded, fully closed.

4 Any questions before I move to the
5 stewardship fund?

6 (No response.)

7 MS. McCURDY: All right. This is 2-B of your
8 packet. That was 2-A. I should have
9 said. This is 2-B and from your green
10 folder.

11 Our budgeted spending authority
12 connected to the stewardship fund is
13 \$1.5 million for this fiscal year. To
14 date we've only spent a little over
15 \$280,000. Obviously we're early in the
16 year, so that number will go up. We so
17 far, though, feel that the actions we're
18 aware of that need to be taken will be
19 able to be handled in that \$1.5 million.
20 So I don't have any issues to present.
21 Everything so far is going fine. That
22 leaves the balance of budgeted spending
23 authority just over \$1.2 million.

1 The net assets as of September 30
2 were just over \$36 million, net assets
3 as of December 31, 2019, just over
4 \$37 million.

5 We have continued to work with the
6 treasurer's office. Treasurer McMillan
7 has been very helpful in preparing the
8 additional information that is in your
9 tabs as Tab C. But that's where we
10 stand on the stewardship fund.

11 Any questions on that fund?

12 (No response.)

13 MS. McCURDY: All right, Commissioner. Are
14 you ready for us to move on?

15 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, ma'am.

16 MS. McCURDY: All right. We will be moving
17 into the grants status report. I just
18 want to say today that in addition to
19 Doug speaking -- oh, I'm sorry. I
20 skipped our appraised nominations.

21 Thank you, Doug. That's why Doug is
22 here. He keeps me in line.

23 In Tab 3-A -- I thought it moved

1 really fast. I just thought I was being
2 efficient.

3 Tab 3-A. We also each meeting
4 review the appraisals that we have
5 actually received in our office and have
6 reviewed, and I want to go through
7 those. Those would be the tracts that
8 would be available for a motion for
9 second appraisal and proceed to purchase
10 in some form.

11 And those are the Cedar Creek SOA
12 Addition, Dallas County. Cedar Creek
13 SOA --

14 And that's special opportunity area
15 for those who may not be familiar.

16 -- Cedar Creek SOA-Elm Bluff
17 Addition, Dallas County. Coldwater
18 Mountain-Young Addition, Calhoun. Red
19 Hills-Baucom Addition, Monroe. Red
20 Hills-Flat Creek Phase III, Monroe
21 County. Thigpen Hill, Butler County.

22 We also just at the literal end of
23 the day yesterday received in hand also

1 the appraisal for the Prairie Grove
2 Glades Tract. We have not obviously had
3 fully an opportunity to go through our
4 usual process on that review, but it is
5 in hand.

6 Taking all of the appraisals that
7 are on hand and available, in round
8 numbers you're getting close to about
9 \$16 million. So as usual, we are always
10 interested in -- and that's not
11 including potential other properties off
12 the short list. So as usual, we've got
13 a lot more on the plate than we have the
14 ability to purchase.

15 And one more appraisal that we have
16 in hand that I failed to mention is
17 actually an appraisal that was obtained
18 and provided by the Wildlife and
19 Freshwater Fisheries Division, Chuck's
20 division. That's to the Portland
21 Landing SOA-Gilmore Addition. And we
22 did get that one in plenty of time to
23 review and approve, and it's potentially

1 available for adoption by the board.
2 But that was not one motioned by the
3 board. It was performed by a contract
4 appraiser and fully reviewed by staff.

5 There are a few appraisals that are
6 still in the works but have not been
7 received. Those include the Coldwater
8 Mountain-Oxanna Addition, Locust
9 Fork-Palmer Tract, and the Weeks Bay
10 Reserve-Snook Addition.

11 Any questions on that?

12 (No response.)

13 MS. McCURDY: All right. I'm sorry. We'll
14 now move into the grants status. I was
15 going to just alert you -- Doug will
16 walk through it for everybody. But in
17 addition to Doug speaking today, we have
18 Chuck Sykes speaking on some
19 Pittman-Robertson opportunities and also
20 providing some update on the SOAs or
21 special opportunity area usage that I
22 mentioned before.

23 And then we also have Will Brantley

1 here from the Forestry Commission. You
2 might remember Will spoke during public
3 comment about a potential opportunity to
4 partner with the Forestry Commission and
5 also talked a little bit about the
6 Forest Legacy Program. We haven't used
7 one of those grants in a while, so he
8 thought -- and I agree -- it's probably
9 a good opportunity for a little bit of
10 information on that program. The board
11 members may not be as familiar because
12 it has been a little while.

13 So I will turn it over to Doug.

14 MR. DEATON: Next I'll move into the grant
15 updates section. This information is
16 found in Tab 5-B.

17 While you're turning to 5-B, I just
18 want to mention for the board and those
19 attending the meeting today that both --
20 that DCNR staff, both State Lands
21 Division and Wildlife and Freshwater
22 Fisheries Division, routinely try to
23 find grant opportunities that we can use

1 to further the Forever Wild dollar, and
2 at each meeting we give an update to the
3 board.

4 As noted in the memo provided, staff
5 has submitted grant applications for
6 both RLA and HCP Section 6 funding
7 through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
8 Service. These funds, if awarded, will
9 be applied to the Red Hills-Brown Schutt
10 Trust nomination and the Red Hills-Flat
11 Creek Phase III nomination. I'll do a
12 quick overview of each of those tracts.
13 As I say, we're in Tab 5-B.

14 The first tract is the Red
15 Hills-Flat Creek Phase III. It's
16 approximately 2700 acres. We've applied
17 for \$4.98 million. We're still waiting
18 on that award. If that award does come
19 in, the funding that will cover the
20 \$4.98 million will be deeded to Wildlife
21 and Freshwater Fisheries. The balance
22 will be deeded to the Forever Wild Land
23 Trust. That tract today is on the

1 appraised list and is available for a
2 motion for a second appraisal and
3 proceed to purchase without grant funds
4 or you can also make the motion
5 contingent upon receiving grant funds.

6 The next tract is the Red
7 Hills-Brown Schutt Trust Addition. It's
8 just over 2100 acres located in
9 Monroeville. And it has a potential
10 funding amount of \$4 million. And a
11 couple of meetings ago the board
12 motioned to proceed to purchase
13 contingent upon grant funds. We're
14 still waiting to hear on that grant fund
15 award. We haven't heard. We're hearing
16 good things that we're going to get it,
17 but we have not received an official
18 letter stating that we have. So that's
19 still in limbo until we hear back.

20 Are there any questions on the Red
21 Hills tracts?

22 (No response.)

23 MR. DEATON: Okay. Next is our NOAA grant of

1 Weeks Bay Reserve-Snook Addition. At
2 the August meeting we indicated that we
3 had received a NOAA grant to be applied
4 towards this tract. Since that time
5 we've been able to use those grant funds
6 to leverage another addition that has
7 also provided benefit to the Weeks Bay
8 Reserve down there in Baldwin County.
9 So those funds aren't available at this
10 time. They're no longer available for
11 that tract although staff is actively
12 seeking other opportunities and other
13 grant potential to be applied to that
14 tract.

15 Are there any questions about that?

16 (No response.)

17 MR. DEATON: The next is -- I'll give a quick
18 update on Pittman-Robertson Wildlife
19 Restoration funds. You'll notice on the
20 second page of the grant memo there are
21 three tracts that Wildlife is offering
22 to partner with Forever Wild to acquire.
23 These tracts would be additions to the

1 current Cedar Creek and Portland Landing
2 SOA programs in Dallas County. And
3 Wildlife is offering a 75/25 split.
4 75 percent will be deeded to Wildlife.
5 25 percent will be deeded to Forever
6 Wild.

7 All three have appraisals available
8 today for the board's review and
9 consideration. The third page of the
10 memo has motion language that's provided
11 if the board chooses to take any action
12 today on those tracts.

13 You'll also notice on the last few
14 pages of the memo we've provided a few
15 maps that show the splits, what those
16 will potentially look like. Of course,
17 we'll have to have appraisal work to do
18 the splits, but those are -- it gives an
19 idea of what those will be.

20 As a benefit, Chuck Sykes is going
21 to come up and talk to you guys about
22 the SOA program and the opportunities
23 that I just mentioned.

1 Are there any questions for me
2 regarding any of the information I've
3 covered?

4 (No response.)

5 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: I just want to say
6 thank you to you and the staff and the
7 Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries staff
8 that work so hard to try and find
9 leveraging opportunities for us to
10 stretch the Forever Wild dollars and do
11 some good work in our state. So thank
12 y'all for all the work y'all do in
13 trying to bring those federal dollars to
14 Alabama.

15 Next will be Chuck Sykes to expand a
16 little bit on the SOA program and
17 provide some information that I think
18 will be very helpful and informative.

19 MS. McCURDY: And I'll just note that we knew
20 it might be hard to see on the screen.
21 So Chuck's presentation is Memo 5-C, and
22 Will Brantley's will be right after that
23 in 5-D. So you've got all the slides

1 that Chuck will be showing on the screen
2 facing to the audience.

3 MR. SYKES: First of all, thank y'all for
4 allowing me to speak on this. I was
5 actually giving a similar presentation
6 in Birmingham one night and Board Member
7 Satterfield was in the audience and
8 asked me if I would give this to the
9 entire board. And reflecting back,
10 there's quite a few board members that
11 were not here or are not fully aware of
12 how all of this got started with Forever
13 Wild partnering with Wildlife and
14 Freshwater Fisheries to secure these
15 lands.

16 So I'm going to try to run through
17 this pretty quick. I know we've got a
18 full agenda. I'll be around afterwards
19 if y'all have questions or I'll stick
20 around and try to -- try to make this as
21 fast as possible.

22 Basically Wildlife and Freshwater
23 Fisheries comprises four sections. It's

1 our wildlife section, our fisheries
2 section, our law enforcement section,
3 and then our admin section. And our
4 mission is pretty simple. It's manage,
5 protect, conserve, and enhance wildlife
6 and aquatic resources for the state of
7 Alabama for now and for the future.

8 Our funding is derived from two
9 sources. That's the sale of hunting and
10 fishing licenses and the federal excise
11 tax dollars, Pittman-Robertson with
12 hunting and Dingell-Johnson with fishing
13 that goes along with it. We don't
14 receive money from our general tax fund.
15 So increasing hunting and fishing
16 participation is critical to us
17 performing our mission.

18 The slide that you see there was
19 actually from a presentation that I gave
20 the board in December of 2015 when this
21 first came about. And the Commissioner
22 thanked Drew for his participation
23 earlier. I want to take a minute to

1 thank him as well. When I first
2 started, I knew nothing about state
3 government or our processes. So I was
4 like a child. I was just asking "why"
5 all the time. And when it came to
6 purchasing land, I sat down with Drew
7 one day, being our forester, and said
8 why are we not utilizing Forever Wild as
9 match. And through quite an elaborate
10 process I found out why and it's because
11 we had never done it before. That
12 wasn't up to Drew. That was up to his
13 supervisors.

14 But long story short, we went to
15 Atlanta. We met with Mike Piccirilli
16 with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services who
17 administers these grants for us and
18 found out how we needed to go about
19 doing it properly to fulfill what we
20 needed to on our federal audits, met
21 with Patti and her staff to find out
22 what we needed to do to fulfill the
23 Forever Wild requirements. That's how

1 this got started.

2 Our objectives in the beginning were
3 pretty simple: Purchase inholdings if
4 they became available in our current WMA
5 system and then if properties became
6 available in underserved areas that
7 would be our target.

8 And I want to make clear we don't go
9 out looking for property. This is a
10 willing seller program that is
11 nominated. However, we can choose where
12 to put our money, and we chose to fill
13 in gaps and then also in underserved
14 areas that's where we would dedicate our
15 funding.

16 Our first step was in Autauga. Back
17 in the day Autauga had a very robust WMA
18 that was up around 7,000 acres with
19 Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries owning
20 a small 370-acre tract in the center of
21 it. Over time with land bases changing
22 the Autauga WMA disappeared. My staff
23 wanted to try to put it back together,

1 and by working with Forever Wild,
2 Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries spent
3 almost \$12 million and Forever Wild
4 spent almost \$4 million in 15 months to
5 establish -- to re-establish the Autauga
6 WMA. Now that property is just a little
7 over 8,000 acres and receives tremendous
8 usage with its proximity to the
9 Montgomery area.

10 Our next target was to spend money
11 in underserved areas, and we were
12 afforded the opportunity to purchase the
13 Cedar Creek property in Dallas County.
14 As you'll see from the map, it was in an
15 area that we had designated that there
16 was virtually no public hunting in that
17 area. And growing up in west Alabama, I
18 knew the potential of what Dallas County
19 had to offer for our public hunting.
20 It's as good as it gets in the state.

21 So we jumped at that opportunity to
22 partner with Forever Wild. It was a
23 phased purchase on Cedar Creek where

1 Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries
2 utilized about \$12.5 million of our
3 Pittman-Robertson funds. Forever Wild
4 spent just a little over 4, and we made
5 that acquisition. As Doug mentioned and
6 y'all see in your packet, we hope to add
7 that additional acreage this year in
8 which roughly \$5.5 million will come
9 from Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries
10 and roughly \$2 million will come from
11 Forever Wild.

12 The second property purchased
13 through this partnership was the
14 Portland Landing SOA where we utilized
15 roughly \$16 million of our Wildlife and
16 Freshwater Fisheries Restoration funds
17 and Forever Wild spent roughly
18 \$5.5 million to purchase Portland
19 Landing.

20 So let me explain a little bit more
21 about what a special opportunity area is
22 or an SOA. Our typical WMAs are 15-,
23 20-, 30-, 40-, some even 50- or 60,000

1 acres. So we can afford to open the
2 gates and let the public have carte
3 blanche, come in and hunt and enjoy
4 yourself.

5 With these tracts being the size
6 that they are, we felt like in order to
7 ensure that everyone received a good
8 hunt when they showed up we needed to do
9 some things different. We needed to
10 manage them differently. So we broke
11 down each of these properties into 3- to
12 500-acre units. And we made an online
13 registration system where hunters could
14 go online, they could look at the dates
15 when hunts were offered on each
16 property, and they could register to
17 hunt. If they were selected for deer or
18 turkey hunts, then and one partner had
19 basically a 3- to a 500-acre hunting
20 club for the duration of that hunt. For
21 waterfowl and small game the guests went
22 up.

23 We didn't invent the wheel here.

1 They've been doing this out west for
2 decades where you apply for different
3 units in different states. We just took
4 what had worked out there and applied it
5 to Alabama.

6 Right now we have Cedar Creek SOA
7 which is roughly 6500 acres. We have
8 Portland Landing SOA which is roughly
9 8700 acres. Those are both joint
10 ownerships between Forever Wild and
11 Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries.

12 Forever Wild purchased Uchee Creek
13 SOA in Russell County. It's roughly
14 4700 acres. It is sole ownership by
15 Forever Wild, but it is in the special
16 opportunity system. And then Wildlife
17 and Freshwater Fisheries has two
18 properties in Clarke County, Fred
19 T. Simpson and Upper State Sanctuary,
20 that we have 100 percent ownership of.

21 We have another small SOA up in
22 Jackson County called Crow Creek. It's
23 roughly 400 acres in Stevenson. That is

1 mainly a waterfowl SOA, and that's a DOT
2 mitigation area.

3 So we took the SOA concept that we
4 developed working with State Lands and
5 Forever Wild and now we're applying it
6 to other properties that can offer
7 specialized hunting opportunities for
8 our hunting public.

9 There was a couple of reasons why we
10 wanted to do it. One was to provide a
11 new experience for our current public
12 land users, but for me, more
13 importantly, it was to try to entice new
14 users to utilize our public land.

15 I was fortunate growing up. I was
16 able to hunt private property. I didn't
17 have to hunt public land. In coming
18 into this job there's a big stigma out
19 there that public land is unsafe, not
20 well managed, and the game is not
21 plentiful or of a quality that people
22 want to hunt. That's not the case, but
23 still perception is reality in a lot of

1 cases.

2 So breaking these properties up
3 where a hunter knows that there's only
4 going to be him and his hunting partner
5 on 500 acres, that's more in line with
6 what the typical hunting club member can
7 wrap their head around or what a
8 private -- somebody like myself.

9 I feel like I'm a pretty good
10 hunter. I could go to Skyline, 60,000
11 acres. I could probably find a place to
12 hunt and kill a deer, but I would take a
13 chance if I got there at eight o'clock
14 that Raymond was going to be there at
15 seven o'clock and I was going to miss my
16 opportunity. So it's a little
17 intimidating.

18 Now, put yourself in a novice
19 hunter's position getting a map of a
20 60,000-acre tract of land and trying to
21 figure out what to do and how to do it.
22 I think we were losing a lot of people.
23 So now if I'm a private land hunter and

1 I've heard all of the stigmas, I can get
2 my 400 acres or 500 acres and I know I'm
3 the only person there. So it gives me
4 that opportunity to stick my toe in the
5 water on public hunting.

6 If I'm a novice hunter, I've got the
7 confidence that I've only got to learn
8 400 acres rather than 40,000. It's got
9 boundaries marked clearly all the way
10 around it, so I'm not going to get lost
11 and nobody else is going to come in
12 there. It's basically mine.

13 So it has been an incredible program
14 for us. This year we had a little over
15 3,000 individuals who submitted
16 registrations for 78 different hunting
17 opportunities that yielded 439 permits.
18 And as I said earlier, the permit
19 holders, if it's during turkey, you
20 bring one guest. If it's small game,
21 you can bring six. If it's waterfowl, I
22 think you can bring three or four.

23 We thought that we were knocking it

1 out of the park, but we wanted to make
2 sure. So we sent out a survey last year
3 to participants who had received and
4 hunted on the SOAs because, believe it
5 or not, we've gotten quite a bit of
6 criticism. Nothing we do goes without
7 the naysayers.

8 One of the biggest things that we
9 heard was nonresidents should not be
10 allowed to hunt on our SOAs. Well,
11 nonresidents buy hunting licenses. They
12 buy guns and ammunition. They put forth
13 money just like residents do. So one of
14 our questions was how many nonresidents.
15 Only 7 percent nonresidents hunted the
16 SOAs. So we were giving them the
17 opportunity, but despite what the
18 Facebook warriors thought, they weren't
19 overrunning the place.

20 88 percent of the hunters rated
21 their SOA experience as either good or
22 excellent. We don't do anything and get
23 an 88 percent good or excellent rating.

1 More than 65 percent stayed in local
2 hotels, campgrounds, or bed and
3 breakfasts. We are constantly getting
4 asked to put campgrounds on our SOAs
5 where people can come camp. That was
6 not one of the reasons why we wanted to
7 do this. We wanted to bring -- we
8 wanted to bring some revenue to these
9 local economies. So we're not doing
10 that, and people are staying and
11 spending money in these areas.

12 15 percent had never hunted a piece
13 of public land. So we were
14 accomplishing that goal. We were
15 getting new participants. And 30
16 percent hadn't hunted it in several
17 years.

18 At the meeting that Mr. Satterfield
19 was at I asked this question and
20 probably 80 percent raised their hand
21 that they had hunted a public piece of
22 property in their life. And I said, all
23 right, how many has done it in the past

1 20 years? None.

2 It don't really count that when you
3 were in college you went to Tuskegee
4 National Forest and hunted for an
5 afternoon or when you were at Alabama
6 you went to Oakmulgee and hunted one
7 afternoon. So we were actually
8 accomplishing many of the goals that we
9 had set out.

10 And this was another big stat.
11 71 percent indicated that they would
12 drive up to 200 miles to hunt one of
13 these SOAs where our traditional surveys
14 that we've been doing for 50 years said
15 they would only drive 50 miles to hunt a
16 WMA.

17 So people are seeing the value in
18 the management and in these properties.
19 Right now the biggest critics we have
20 are the people that don't get drawn. If
21 you get drawn, it's the best thing in
22 the world. If you don't get drawn, it's
23 rigged and it's a bad program.

1 I'm not going to go through these.
2 I just included some of the responses
3 that we got. Typically -- and I'm the
4 same way. I have to do a lot of
5 surveys, and when they put that box at
6 the end "do you have any other
7 comments," I just hit "submit" and go on
8 about my business.

9 I think we had 10 or 15 pages of
10 comments that came in. To me, that
11 tells me that people are passionate
12 about what they're doing if they're
13 going to take time not only to fill out
14 the survey but they're going to issue
15 additional comments. I would say 99.5
16 of them were positive. And I think I
17 added one in here that was negative that
18 said I didn't see any deer, the weather
19 was terrible, it was an awful hunt, but
20 thank you, I'd come back again. So, you
21 know, I'll take that as one of the
22 negatives.

23 Another thing that we do on these

1 SOAs in addition to our public hunting
2 is we have an adult-mentored hunting
3 program. Again, we make our budget by
4 people buying hunting licenses and
5 buying hunting and fishing equipment.
6 And over the past five years, according
7 to the 2016 U.S. Fish and Wildlife
8 Service National Survey, we have about
9 two million less hunters than we did
10 five years ago. That's pretty alarming.

11 So we're trying to do our best to
12 recruit that next generation of hunters.
13 And what we have found by examining our
14 programs and by looking at nationally
15 what a lot of states are doing --
16 forever we've been taught take a kid
17 hunting and fishing, it's our future. I
18 can remember that from when I was a kid.
19 Y'all, it's not working. Otherwise, we
20 wouldn't be down two million hunters.
21 So we are targeting 19-year-olds and up
22 now with our adult-mentored program.

23 And, look, I'm not saying don't do

1 kids' programs. They're great. Take a
2 kid. They hunt. They have a good time.
3 However, if their mother and daddy
4 doesn't have the finances nor the desire
5 to help them foster that, you may get
6 them in ten years. We can't wait ten
7 years. We need it now. So we're going
8 after this older group, late onset
9 hunters.

10 And I'm not going to go through all
11 of the stats. But the median age of our
12 applicant is 42. We had a group of ten
13 at Portland Landing last weekend. I
14 made it a point to go up and ask all of
15 them why they were at this event.
16 Without fail it's I work with people who
17 hunt, I hear them talking about hunting
18 and nobody has asked me to go, so I'm
19 wanting to learn where I can participate
20 in conversations at work.

21 That's a gut check to me as a hunter
22 to know that there are people that I
23 work with, go to church with, go to

1 kids' events with that are wanting to
2 learn but maybe I just haven't given
3 them that opportunity.

4 So this program has been
5 outstanding. It continues to grow. We
6 have a waiting list to get on, and we
7 utilize this property to help us
8 accomplish that.

9 And you can see the pictures from
10 some of the events. We have had every
11 shape, size, color, gender, background,
12 everything from people with gauges in
13 their ears and tattoos from one end to
14 the other one to alternative lifestyles
15 and everything in between. And when
16 they come to the camp, they are just a
17 hunter and they are treated as just a
18 hunter.

19 And the response that we're getting,
20 again, has been overwhelmingly positive
21 from them, but it's also one of the best
22 things that we've done for our staff
23 because our staff actually gets a "thank

1 you" without there being a "but" at the
2 end of it, which is typically what we
3 get. That's a great program, but you
4 should have done it this way. With
5 these participants it is a great program
6 and thank you very much and I appreciate
7 the opportunity.

8 We're following these people through
9 the next few years, and right now we've
10 probably got between an 85 and a 90
11 percent rate of them carrying through to
12 the next year. That's unheard of.

13 We had one gentleman that went to a
14 one-day event this year. He showed
15 up -- it was actually at Skyline. He
16 showed up in a Ford Mustang. In order
17 to qualify for these three-day events at
18 Portland, you have to go to a one-day
19 event. He came in just regular street
20 clothes and a Ford Mustang to the first
21 one. When he showed up at Portland last
22 week, he had a brand new Tacoma that he
23 had traded his Mustang for. He had a

1 whole new set of camo. He had a new
2 rifle, scope, binoculars, rubber boots,
3 and probably a \$400 Yeti cooler sitting
4 in the back of his truck. I'm sorry.
5 That's who we need. I'll take a kid
6 hunting, but a kid can't spend \$40,000
7 in about a month to help the system.

8 So thank y'all for what you're
9 doing. Thanks for partnering with us
10 and taking a chance. I think we have
11 knocked it out of the park. And we did
12 not pay the Backcountry Hunter and
13 Angler guy to come in and talk about
14 that today, but I'm glad he did because
15 that proves that we're -- that's the
16 diehards that are appreciating it. Now
17 we've got the adult-mentored hunters
18 that are appreciating it as well. So
19 we're cutting a wide swathe. Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any questions or
21 comments for Chuck?

22 Mr. Satterfield.

23 MR. SATTERFIELD: Chuck, you are aware, I

1 know, that other states sometimes have a
2 point system and a priority system so
3 that people that don't get drawn this
4 year somehow get thrown back into the
5 mix next year with a greater probability
6 of getting chosen next year. Are you
7 doing anything like that, or is it --

8 MR. SYKES: Yes, sir. We have a preference --

9 MR. SATTERFIELD: -- they just start over
10 every year?

11 MR. SYKES: We have a preference point system,
12 yes, sir. On all of our draw-style
13 hunts we have preference points, yes,
14 sir.

15 MR. SATTERFIELD: Okay.

16 DR. SALOOM: So are these units drawn by one
17 person for the entire season or --

18 MR. SYKES: No, sir. It's just for the
19 duration of the hunt. If it's a
20 Thursday through Sunday hunt --

21 DR. SALOOM: Specific dates.

22 MR. SYKES: -- you and Russ have that for that
23 period of time. Then we'll let that

1 unit sit idle for a couple of hunts, and
2 then we'll let another group -- so we're
3 constantly rotating around where the
4 people that hunt this weekend, they're
5 getting the same opportunities that the
6 people who hunted over the weekend did.

7 DR. POWERS: What's the percent success for
8 getting a permit?

9 MR. SYKES: For our alligator draws it's
10 probably six years. If you apply for
11 six years, you'll get one. These it's a
12 lot higher. I don't know exactly, but I
13 can get you the number.

14 DR. POWERS: What's limiting the success rate?
15 Personnel or property?

16 MR. SYKES: Well, as far as the SOA program,
17 the more land we have the more units we
18 have the more people we can have. So
19 that's what's limiting.

20 What's limiting on the
21 adult-mentored hunting program is
22 there's not enough time and not enough
23 staff to get to everybody that wants to

1 come.

2 MR. WRIGHT: Chuck, on that mentored program,
3 do you get outside people? Do you get
4 outside people to -- like myself, for
5 example?

6 MR. SYKES: Yes, sir. We will -- anybody that
7 wants to hunt. We've actually had some
8 members from U.S. Fish and Wildlife
9 Service come in to see what we were
10 doing on property that they helped
11 administer the grant for and came and
12 participated with us as mentors. So,
13 yes, sir, we will take anybody.

14 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Do you mean to hunt or
15 to help with the hunt?

16 MR. WRIGHT: To help with the hunt.

17 MR. SYKES: Yeah, to help with the hunt. Oh,
18 no. We can definitely use all of the
19 mentors we can because right now it's my
20 staff.

21 And I do want to make one more
22 comment because I understand that we
23 have acquired quite a bit in Dallas

1 County. So I do want y'all to know that
2 we're not going out looking. We have
3 landowners that come to us. As far as
4 I'm concerned we're pretty set.

5 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: With what you have --
6 you're pretty set with what you have
7 nominated --

8 MR. SYKES: If we can -- yes. If we can move
9 forward with them, it closes in a bunch
10 of gaps on Cedar Creek and Portland
11 Landing. We should be in good shape.

12 MR. WRIGHT: So you think the Cedar Creek -- I
13 mean, the Dallas County SOA area will be
14 complete after --

15 MR. SYKES: As far as I'm concerned, yes, sir.
16 We're closing in the gaps. We were
17 happy the way it was, but y'all can see
18 the maps. When those properties became
19 available, it closed in some pretty big
20 gaps.

21 Yes, sir.

22 MR. HOLLOWAY: Chuck, how do you recruit for
23 the mentorship program, and do you have

1 a waiting list?

2 MR. SYKES: We have a waiting list on the
3 mentored hunts. It's all online. We do
4 a lot of social media outreach, a lot of
5 article and radio/TV outreach. We're
6 working in the colleges around the
7 state. So, yes, sir, we have a --
8 there's a tremendous need for it.

9 We've had people come as far as from
10 New Jersey and south Florida to hunt.
11 This is not just for Alabama residents.
12 We had seven states apply for an
13 adult-mentored hunt last year.

14 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir, Mr. Wright.

15 MR. WRIGHT: One more question, Chuck. On the
16 Dallas County SOAs, you have 33 units;
17 correct?

18 MR. SYKES: Yes, sir.

19 MR. WRIGHT: Are all those units used in one
20 year?

21 MR. SYKES: Oh, yes, absolutely.

22 MR. WRIGHT: How many times is each unit used?

23 MR. SYKES: I would have to go back and look

1 at the breakdown, but I would say each
2 unit is three to four times per year
3 during deer season and probably three
4 times during turkey season and a couple
5 of times during small game.

6 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you.

7 MR. SYKES: Yes, ma'am.

8 DR. SIMS: I just wanted to thank you for the
9 information. You mentioned new board
10 members. I've been around a while, and
11 this is so helpful in understanding.
12 Thank you for the work you do.

13 MR. SYKES: Thank you. Yes, ma'am.

14 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: And I would like to
15 make a public declaration that it is a
16 random draw system because I did not get
17 drawn for the SOA hunts this year. But
18 I have a preference point. I'm hoping
19 that next year I will have some success
20 as I sign up for the SOA turkey hunt.

21 MR. SYKES: Thank y'all.

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you.

23 Next is a presentation from Will

1 Brantley with the Alabama Forestry
2 Commission concerning the Forest Legacy
3 Grant Program.

4 MR. BRANTLEY: Good morning, Board,
5 Commissioner. Thank you for the
6 opportunity to be here.

7 As the Commissioner said, I wanted
8 to -- this follows a presentation I made
9 at your last meeting in Gulf Shores, I
10 think, in November. And from that
11 meeting, kind of like Chuck just
12 indicated, it occurred to us that this
13 Forest Legacy Grant Program was not a
14 program that the current members of this
15 board had probably had any experience
16 with. So we thought it might be useful
17 to come and just provide a very short
18 presentation about what it is, talk
19 about some of the history of the
20 interactions between the Forever Wild
21 Land Trust and this program, and talk
22 about a couple of opportunities that
23 might be coming down the road.

1 Before I jump into that, though,
2 just a little bit about who we are. I
3 think most everybody knows the Alabama
4 Forestry Commission. Rick Oates is our
5 state forester. We're a standalone
6 agency; although, at one time we were a
7 division of the Department of
8 Conservation and Natural Resources. So
9 we've got a long, close working
10 relationship with that organization.

11 But we work primarily with the
12 state's 23 million -- private forest
13 landowners who own 23 million acres of
14 forestland.

15 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Can you speak up just a
16 little bit, Will, please?

17 MR. BRANTLEY: Yes.

18 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: I'm sorry. Thank you.

19 MR. BRANTLEY: It wasn't even on. I'm so
20 sorry.

21 But we work primarily with the
22 state's forest landowners. There's
23 about 23 million acres of forestland

1 around the state, and we provide
2 programs to help them manage their land.

3 In addition to that, we also manage
4 several state forests. We have about
5 16,000 acres of state forest scattered
6 around the state. Those are all public
7 lands. They're accessible to the
8 public. They're working state forests.
9 We produce income off of them. We
10 harvest timber. And because of that we
11 engage in grant programs like this
12 Forest Legacy Program because we want to
13 expand that landowner base, that state
14 forest base.

15 So this is a program that has been
16 around -- gosh, it probably started in
17 the early 1990s. But it's essentially a
18 conservation program designed to protect
19 private forestland and keep forests as
20 forests. That's kind of a theme you're
21 going to hear. We want to keep forests
22 as forests, and making sure we conserve
23 these lands in such a way that they

1 remain forests is really the goal of the
2 Forest Legacy Program.

3 So in the state of Alabama the
4 Alabama Forestry Commission -- we
5 administer the program. Throughout the
6 nation all of the state forestry
7 programs administer it. We have worked
8 with a number of partners over the
9 years, including the Department of
10 Conservation, the Forever Wild Land
11 Trust, non-governmental organizations
12 like The Nature Conservancy and The
13 Conservation Fund, just to name a few.

14 So the way the program works, if we
15 receive a grant for a particular
16 potential acquisition, the federal
17 government portion will be 75 and
18 then -- 75 percent which needs to be
19 matched by a 25 percent non-federal
20 piece.

21 If you look on the slide -- and this
22 is in your packets. If you look on the
23 slide -- it would be slide number

1 three -- it sort of shows what's going
2 on from a national perspective. You can
3 see where these projects are scattered
4 throughout the country.

5 It's a little dated. It's about --
6 I think it's through the end of the 2018
7 fiscal year.

8 But you can see in Alabama the
9 projects are kind of concentrated in the
10 southwest portion of the state, the ones
11 we've done in the past, and the
12 northeast portion of the state. You
13 will also see on that same map in all of
14 the states -- but if you look in
15 Alabama, you'll see little green areas.
16 Those are our focus areas. We are
17 governed by in this program an
18 assessment of need document that was
19 produced back in, I think, 2000 that
20 sort of guides what we do, guides the
21 areas that we look at. And it's got
22 broad distribution around the state.
23 You'll see the areas we can work in. So

1 we've got a lot of flexibility with
2 projects we might be able to consider.

3 If you look at the next slide, what
4 have we done in the state of Alabama?
5 And you will see that from 2002 to 2010
6 there was a flurry of activity with this
7 Forest Legacy Program. There were eight
8 tracts of land that were acquired
9 through this program, and the Forever
10 Wild Land Trust served as the
11 non-federal matching partner in each of
12 those instances. So there is a rich
13 history of working together as partners
14 and providing additional public lands.

15 And there was not much activity
16 until fairly recently with this program.
17 So that's really the reason we wanted to
18 come speak to the board and remind the
19 board about the history of this program
20 in the state and make you aware that it
21 certainly is a potential opportunity for
22 y'all to leverage your dollars and make
23 them go further.

1 The last acquisition was completed
2 in 2010. In 2017 we received two
3 grants -- well, we received one grant
4 for a potential project on the next
5 slide in Escambia County on some land
6 adjacent to one of our state forests,
7 the Little River State Forest. We
8 received a grant to acquire a
9 conservation easement from the
10 landowner. And in 2018 we received a
11 second grant that would have allowed us
12 to have acquired conservation easements
13 from the landowner.

14 For a variety of reasons the
15 conservation easement concept did not
16 work out, but the grants were changed to
17 fee simple acquisitions. The landowner
18 was on board with that. The state was
19 on board with that.

20 And so where we sit today is we are
21 the recipients of two federal grants.
22 We have them. They're already approved.
23 And we are diligently moving forward

1 with acquiring this property.

2 This property that you see -- we
3 call it the Little River Addition. I'm
4 sorry. I just lost my train of thought.

5 But we're moving forward with this
6 property. It has been nominated to the
7 board. It was nominated in between the
8 last meeting that I came to and this
9 meeting. You have not seen it yet on
10 any kind of list because we have
11 proceeded ahead with the -- we have to
12 get an appraisal of the property through
13 our grant program. We have started that
14 process.

15 MS. McCURDY: I hate to interrupt. I will say
16 actually it is --

17 MR. BRANTLEY: Oh, I'm sorry.

18 MS. McCURDY: We did get everything in time to
19 score for the short list. So if you'd
20 like to look, it is Tab 4-B, page 13.

21 We were able to get through that.

22 MR. BRANTLEY: I'm sorry. I misspoke.

23 MS. McCURDY: No. That's okay.

1 MR. BRANTLEY: So it is on your list.

2 We have moved forward with starting
3 the appraisal work on the property. We
4 have to acquire an appraisal. We are
5 going to make that appraisal available
6 to the Department of Conservation, to
7 the Forever Wild Land Trust for their
8 use if they're interested.

9 But this is a rather unique
10 property. It's 28-, almost 2900 acres.
11 You can see on your map that's in your
12 packet that it -- the dark green is the
13 existing -- it would be slide five. If
14 you look at slide five on the
15 presentation, the dark green is the land
16 that the Forestry Commission already
17 owns. The light green would be the
18 addition to that land.

19 So it's a very unique -- it's got
20 some real great attributes. It's right
21 for longleaf pine restoration. It's
22 right for gopher tortoise habitat
23 improvements. There's all sorts of good

1 conservation values to this property.

2 And so we are moving forward with
3 it, and we hope to come back to the
4 board at the next meeting with an
5 appraisal, with more information about
6 the process and the tract of land.

7 MS. McCURDY: And I just -- I wanted to note
8 that one reason -- well, first of all, I
9 appreciate the Forestry Commission
10 pursuing the appraisal, but they're also
11 working through it because there are
12 some very, very specific requirements.
13 It's the most structured appraisal
14 process requirement pursuant to the
15 Forest Legacy piece. Forestry is
16 working through that. They are staying
17 in communication with us to be sure that
18 we can, if the board chooses, work off
19 the same appraisal.

20 But in this scenario our process
21 isn't the complicated one. It's the
22 grant requirements for the federal money
23 to move pursuant to the appraisal. It's

1 very specific. So we're working with
2 the Forestry Commission. I just wanted
3 to explain why they're pursuing that.
4 But we are staying in very close
5 contact. Will has done a great job of
6 keeping us in the loop. So we're
7 working together.

8 MR. BRANTLEY: Yeah. Thank you. And that's
9 correct. It is an overly complicated
10 process. We actually have to hire an
11 appraiser to appraise the property, but
12 we first have to hire a review
13 appraiser. Federal Yellow Book
14 standards, you know, require that
15 there's a set of instructions given to
16 an appraiser. And so we have to
17 actually hire two appraisers to appraise
18 one tract of land. And this is outside
19 of the normal Forever Wild process.

20 So we have instigated/initiated that
21 process, and that is underway now. We
22 anticipate that work would be completed,
23 you know, sometime in hopefully maybe

1 late April, early May. But that is
2 ongoing. So that's kind of the current
3 project we're looking at.

4 I guess kind of moving forward and
5 thinking ahead, we submitted a grant
6 application to Forest Legacy for the
7 FY21 funding cycle for a project in the
8 Red Hills area. I know the board has
9 done a lot of focus in the Red Hills
10 area. And so we do not yet know if we
11 have received that funding, but we
12 will -- certainly if we do, you will see
13 us back talking to you folks potentially
14 looking for a partnership there.

15 And obviously we think this is going
16 to be a program that's going to be
17 viable going forward, and congress
18 continues to fund it. So we see it as a
19 great -- much like some of the other
20 public funding programs that have
21 matched and partnered with Forever Wild,
22 we see it as a great partner as well.

23 So with that, I think -- well, I'm

1 done. So if there's any questions, I'd
2 be happy to address them.

3 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thanks, Will. Any
4 questions?

5 Mr. Wright.

6 MR. WRIGHT: Could you elaborate a little bit
7 on the mystery worm pond? I'm not
8 familiar with that.

9 MR. BRANTLEY: Sure. And I will tell you from
10 the get-go I don't know why they call it
11 that. But it is basically a limestone
12 cypress sink. It's just this
13 beautiful -- in fact, the pictures -- if
14 you back up one, the pictures that are
15 in your slide packet come from a site
16 visit to that site.

17 But it's -- if there's somebody here
18 that knows why it's called that. I
19 can't tell you that. But it's just
20 about a 40-acre limestone cypress pond,
21 and it's really -- it's beautiful. It's
22 incredible.

23 MR. WRIGHT: Is this in the interior of the

1 property, or is this --

2 MR. BRANTLEY: It's actually -- it's actually
3 on the edge of the property.

4 MR. WRIGHT: So it's accessible?

5 MR. BRANTLEY: Yes, it is accessible. We just
6 parked on the road and walked into it.
7 So it was very easy to get to.

8 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. Thank you,
9 Will.

10 MR. OATES: If I could just add, Commissioner,
11 we appreciate the opportunity to work
12 with the Forever Wild Board on this
13 grant and these opportunities because I
14 think it's a great way to leverage
15 Forever Wild's money and these grants.

16 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir. Thank you
17 very much.

18 All right, Jo. Short list.

19 MS. LEWIS: Good afternoon. I'm Jo Lewis,
20 and I'm going to run through the short
21 list.

22 We're looking at Tab 4. There are
23 three subtabs in Tab 4, A, B, and C.

1 4-C is all of the currently active
2 nominations. 4-B is the maps and
3 narratives. I know I'm going backwards.
4 And 4-A is the alphabetical list and the
5 table list of the nominations.

6 My usual spiel is the short list is
7 comprised of nominations that scored the
8 three highest scores in each category of
9 use in each geographic district.
10 Hypothetically there may be 36. Due to
11 some categories of use not having any
12 nominations that furthered their portion
13 of our mission and some nominations
14 short-listing in more than one category
15 of use, we have -- oh, I forgot to
16 count -- approximately 15 --

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: 13.

18 MS. LEWIS: How many?

19 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: 13.

20 MS. LEWIS: 13. Sorry.

21 -- 13 nominations on the short list
22 at this time. They fall in ten
23 different counties, and they vary in

1 size from 23 acres to 3,900-plus acres.
2 And they're scattered pretty much
3 throughout the state from some in
4 Madison County to some in -- like this
5 one in Escambia County.

6 So I'm going to run down the list,
7 which is Tab 4-A, but if you would like
8 to flip through the section 4-B, that's
9 the sequence that they're occurring in.
10 And Ashley is going to run the
11 PowerPoint for the audience to see maps
12 of each of these.

13 So we have Briar Lake in Baldwin
14 County; Coldwater Mountain-Andrew
15 Addition in Calhoun County; Coosa
16 Wildlife Management Area-Hatchet Creek
17 Addition in Coosa County.

18 I'm sorry. I said -- well, Calhoun
19 County for the Coldwater Mountain.
20 Coosa County for the Coosa
21 County-Hatchet Creek.

22 D'Olive Bay Addition in Baldwin
23 County; Hobbs Island in Madison County;

1 Little River State Forest Addition in
2 Escambia County; Penitentiary Mountain
3 in Shelby County; Perdido Wildlife
4 Management Area-McNeill Addition,
5 23 acres in Baldwin County; Portland
6 Landing Special Opportunity Area-Gilmore
7 Addition in Dallas County; Shelby
8 Crossroads in Shelby County; Sipse
9 River Swamp-Mill Creek Addition in
10 Tuscaloosa County; Walls of
11 Jericho-Bradford Addition, Jackson
12 County; and Yates-Porter Addition,
13 Elmore County.

14 If you'd like to see what category
15 of use and district they're in, that's
16 available on the next page.

17 I'd be happy to address any
18 questions about the nominations and see
19 if I have an answer.

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any questions for Jo?

21 (No response.)

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: No questions. Thank
23 you, Jo.

1 MS. LEWIS: Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Now we'll move into the
3 general discussion. For our new board
4 members, this is where we -- generally
5 there are motions made for either first
6 or second appraisals during this portion
7 of the meeting. With that, I'll open
8 the floor for any general discussion.

9 MS. McCURDY: And just let me remind everybody
10 it is a little difficult to hear,
11 please, if you need to move your mics
12 forward or bend them down. And Tracye
13 is having to take down everything, so I
14 want her to be able to hear.

15 MR. RUNYAN: Mr. Chairman?

16 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir, Mr. Runyan.

17 MR. RUNYAN: I would like to make a motion for
18 a second appraisal and move to close on
19 the Red Hills-Baucom Addition.

20 MR. OATES: Second that.

21 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. So the
22 motion was made by Mr. Runyan for a
23 second appraisal and move to purchase on

1 the Red Hills-Baucom Addition. That was
2 seconded by Mr. Oates.

3 Any discussion on that nomination?

4 (No response.)

5 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All those in favor
6 please say "aye."

7 (All board members present respond
8 "aye.")

9 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any opposed?

10 (No response.)

11 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: None opposed. Motion
12 carries.

13 MR. JONES: Mr. Chairman?

14 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Jones.

15 MR. JONES: I would like to make a motion for
16 the staff to proceed with a second
17 appraisal and purchase of Option A on
18 the Thigpen Hill property minus 80
19 acres, the 80-acre tract that we
20 previously discussed.

21 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Hold on. Let me make
22 sure I understand what we're asking
23 here.

1 MS. McCURDY: And let's look at -- pull up the
2 memo on that one, which is Tab 5-H.

3 And I think, just to clarify for the
4 record, the option that's referenced as
5 the map has set forth -- I'm sorry --
6 Option A --

7 MR. JONES: Option A, yes.

8 MS. McCURDY: -- and as described in the memo,
9 a phased purchase over two fiscal years.

10 I'm sorry. Repeat --

11 MR. JONES: I did not state that.

12 MS. McCURDY: Okay. Then let's just be clear
13 on the motion.

14 MR. JONES: Okay. I want to make a motion for
15 the staff to proceed with a second
16 appraisal and purchase of Option A.

17 MS. McCURDY: Is there -- I think you want --

18 MR. JONES: Okay.

19 MS. McCURDY: -- a phased --

20 MR. JONES: Well, phase the southern --

21 Phase I. Excuse me. That's correct.

22 MS. McCURDY: Okay. So proceed with Phase I,
23 Option A, minus the --

1 MR. JONES: Phase I of Option A, yes.

2 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Let me make sure that I
3 state your motion correctly so we make
4 sure we get the second correct.

5 So your motion is that we would
6 proceed for second appraisal and move to
7 purchase Option A, Phase I --

8 MS. McCURDY: Phase I only.

9 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: -- on the Thigpen
10 Hill --

11 MR. SATTERFIELD: Only; right?

12 MR. JONES: Yes.

13 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: -- on the Thigpen Hill
14 property. Is that --

15 MR. JONES: Yes. Minus the 80 acres that is
16 next to the golf course. I don't know
17 if that's --

18 MR. SATTERFIELD: 80 acres within the city
19 limits of Greenville, I think.

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: And is there a second?

21 MR. HOLLOWAY: Second.

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by
23 Mr. Holloway.

1 So let me -- before we have a
2 discussion, I want to make sure
3 everybody knows what we're discussing on
4 that probably because it is a little
5 complicated.

6 So the motion is to proceed with
7 second appraisal and proceed to purchase
8 on Option A, Phase I, of the Thigpen
9 Hill property minus the 80 acres that is
10 bounded by the Retirement Systems of
11 Alabama property --

12 MS. McCURDY: Within the city of Greenville.

13 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: -- within the city
14 limits of Greenville. Is that a
15 correct --

16 MR. JONES: Yes.

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: -- synopsis of your
18 motion?

19 MR. JONES: Yes.

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: And the seconder agrees
21 with that?

22 MR. HOLLOWAY: Yes.

23 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. Any

1 discussion on that?

2 Mr. Runyan.

3 MR. RUNYAN: Now, is this for purchase of
4 everything except the 80 acres but we're
5 doing it in two fiscal years?

6 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: No, sir. This motion
7 would be to purchase -- if you're
8 looking on the memo, the blue area on
9 the memo, minus the little finger that
10 sticks down into the property that's in
11 the city limits that's adjacent to the
12 Retirement Systems of Alabama property.
13 That's from Memo 5-H.

14 MR. RUNYAN: So this is for Phase I of
15 Option A?

16 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir.

17 MR. OATES: With no commitment for --

18 MR. SATTERFIELD: Well, that was going to have
19 to be part of the discussion, wasn't it,
20 that --

21 (Multiple speakers.)

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Let me recognize you
23 for Tracye's benefit with everybody

1 speaking at one time. Let me do that.

2 So Mr. Oates.

3 MR. OATES: That's just for one phase, not an
4 option for the second phase. We're not
5 purchasing the second phase.

6 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Satterfield.

7 MR. SATTERFIELD: And I think to clarify, to
8 go forward with this purchase now,
9 Phase I, does not in any way obligate
10 Forever Wild to ever go forward with the
11 purchase of Phase II. That's a separate
12 decision required by a separate vote at
13 a separate time; right?

14 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir. It would
15 take a -- that would be another motion
16 that would be required from the board.

17 MR. SATTERFIELD: Right. And also, then, to
18 clarify, if this passes to exclude that
19 80 acres, it will require an adjustment
20 in the appraisal --

21 MS. McCURDY: We will confirm whether or not
22 it does. There are times where we are
23 able to do calculation of acreage into

1 the appraised value, just a per-acre
2 value. We need to review our appraisal
3 and double-check with the appraiser, and
4 if there's nothing -- no variation
5 within that acreage that would, you
6 know, make it be a different value. So
7 the staff will have to confirm that, but
8 we certainly would not proceed above
9 appraised value as reflected with the
10 subtraction of the 80 acres.

11 MR. JONES: And while, again, that correctly
12 identifies, you know, my motion, I would
13 like to state for this board it makes
14 sense that at some point later we
15 obviously would want to address --

16 MR. SATTERFIELD: Reconsider Phase II.

17 MR. JONES: Yeah, reconsider Phase II.

18 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir.

19 DR. SALOOM: Is this for -- this motion on the
20 table right now is for a second
21 opinion -- I'm sorry -- for a second
22 appraisal to purchase. Is that correct?

23 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: And move to purchase,

1 yes, sir.

2 DR. SALOOM: And move to purchase. That
3 doesn't -- there will be another vote in
4 terms of purchasing it later on after
5 the second appraisal or --

6 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: No, sir. It would be a
7 second appraisal and then move forward
8 to purchase as long as the second
9 appraisal comes in within the parameters
10 allowed under our program.

11 DR. SALOOM: I got you. Thank you.

12 MS. McCURDY: And that's the normal --
13 normally when you make a motion, that is
14 our sort of routine motion for the
15 second appraisal and proceed to
16 purchase.

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any other discussion on
18 this motion?

19 (No response.)

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. Seeing no
21 discussion, let me state it one more
22 time to make sure since we've had some
23 discussion that everybody knows what

1 they're voting on.

2 This is the motion for second
3 appraisal and proceed to purchase on the
4 Thigpen Hill property, Option A,
5 Phase I, with the removal of the
6 approximately 80 acres that is in the
7 city limits of Greenville adjacent to
8 the Retirement Systems of Alabama
9 property.

10 All those in favor please say "aye."

11 (Dr. Saloom abstaining with the
12 remainder of the board members
13 present responding "aye.")

14 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any opposed?

15 (No response.)

16 DR. SALOOM: Had one abstain.

17 MS. McCURDY: And I want to confirm --

18 Commissioner, I just want to be sure we
19 had --

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: We had --

21 MS. McCURDY: -- all "ayes" and one "nay" -- I
22 mean, one abstention.

23 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: We had all "ayes" and

1 one abstention. The one abstention is
2 Dr. Saloom has abstained from voting.
3 All the rest were noted as approving the
4 motion.

5 All right. Any other motions under
6 general business?

7 DR. VALENTINE: Commissioner?

8 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Valentine.

9 DR. VALENTINE: I would like to make a motion
10 for second appraisal and purchase of the
11 Red Hills-Flat Creek Phase III
12 contingent upon receipt of the grant
13 funding award.

14 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. Motion on
15 Red Hills-Phase III. That would be a
16 second appraisal and move to purchase
17 contingent on receiving the grant,
18 approximately \$4.98 million in grant
19 funding. Is that correct?

20 DR. VALENTINE: It is.

21 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Is there a second?

22 MR. HOLLOWAY: There's a second.

23 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by

1 Mr. Holloway and motioned by
2 Dr. Valentine.

3 Any discussion on that?

4 (No response.)

5 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seeing no hands, all
6 those in favor say "aye."

7 (All board members present respond
8 "aye.")

9 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any opposed?

10 (No response.)

11 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: None opposed. Motion
12 carries.

13 MR. HOLLOWAY: Mr. Chairman?

14 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Holloway.

15 MR. HOLLOWAY: I would like to move to the
16 short list if I could.

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir.

18 MR. HOLLOWAY: I'd like to make a motion to
19 request a first appraisal of the Shelby
20 Crossroads property.

21 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. The motion
22 was to move for a first appraisal on the
23 Shelby Crossroads property, 684 acres in

1 Shelby County. Is there a second?

2 DR. POWERS: Second.

3 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by Dr. Powers.

4 Any discussion?

5 MR. HOLLOWAY: Mr. Chairman, the county has
6 informed me and has stated that they
7 realize that it's a recreational area
8 and that they would --

9 MS. McCURDY: I'm sorry. Tracye is having
10 trouble hearing. Just speak up a little
11 bit.

12 MR. HOLLOWAY: The county realized that area
13 is purchased by the Forever Wild Board
14 for recreational area.

15 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you, sir.

16 So a motion for a first appraisal on
17 the Shelby Crossroads property.

18 Mr. Satterfield, do you have a
19 question?

20 MS. McCURDY: That's Tab B, page 21.

21 MR. SATTERFIELD: No.

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. All those
23 in favor say "aye."

1 (All board members present respond
2 "aye.")

3 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any opposed?

4 (No response.)

5 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: None opposed. Motion
6 carries.

7 DR. POWERS: Mr. Commissioner, could I move
8 for a -- make a motion for a first
9 appraisal for Perdido-McNeill Addition?

10 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. Dr. Powers
11 has moved for a first appraisal for the
12 Perdido-McNeill Addition. Is there a
13 second?

14 MR. WRIGHT: I'll second it.

15 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by Mr. Wright.
16 Any discussion on this motion?

17 (No response.)

18 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All those in favor say
19 "aye."

20 (All board members present respond
21 "aye.")

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any opposed?

23 (No response.)

1 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: None opposed. Motion
2 carries.

3 MR. JONES: Mr. Chairman, I would like to make
4 a motion.

5 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes.

6 MR. JONES: I make a motion to accept the
7 appraisal provided by Wildlife and
8 Freshwater Fisheries Division as
9 approved by State Lands Division staff
10 as Forever Wild's first appraisal for
11 the Portland Landing SOA-Gilmore
12 Addition and to proceed with second
13 appraisal and purchase of this
14 nomination contingent upon the Wildlife
15 and Freshwater Fisheries Division's
16 funds at a match of three to one.

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. So the
18 motion is to accept the Wildlife and
19 Freshwater Fisheries provided appraisal
20 for the Portland SOA-Gilmore Addition
21 and move for a second appraisal and move
22 to purchase on that property contingent
23 upon Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries

1 providing 75 percent of the cost and 25
2 percent coming from Forever Wild.

3 Do I have a second?

4 MR. SATTERFIELD: Second.

5 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by
6 Mr. Satterfield.

7 Seconded by Mr. Satterfield. Are
8 there any questions or discussions on
9 that?

10 (No response.)

11 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. All those
12 in favor please say "aye."

13 (All board members present respond
14 "aye.")

15 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any opposed?

16 (No response.)

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: None opposed. Motion
18 carries.

19 MR. HOLLOWAY: Mr. Chairman?

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir, Mr. Holloway.

21 MR. HOLLOWAY: I'd like to make a motion to
22 move for a first appraisal for the Red
23 Hills-Baucom Addition.

1 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: I think we -- we did
2 that one, yes, sir.

3 MR. HOLLOWAY: Okay. Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir.

5 MS. McCURDY: Again, that is currently
6 Tab 3-B, page 8, for Baucom. So we do
7 have the first appraisal on that one.

8 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any other discussion or
9 motions?

10 MR. HORN: Mr. Chairman, I would move that we
11 make a motion for staff to proceed with
12 a second appraisal and purchase of the
13 Cedar Creek Special Opportunity Area
14 Addition nomination contingent upon the
15 Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries
16 Division providing a three-to-one match.

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: So that -- to make sure
18 I'm clear, that's the Cedar Creek SOA
19 Addition?

20 MR. HORN: Yes.

21 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: The 1853 acres.

22 MR. RUNYAN: Second.

23 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by -- who was

1 the seconder?

2 MR. RUNYAN: By me.

3 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by Mr. Runyan,
4 motioned by Mr. Horn.

5 Any questions or discussion on that?

6 (No response.)

7 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All those in favor
8 please say "aye."

9 (All board members present respond
10 "aye.")

11 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any opposed?

12 (No response.)

13 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: None opposed. Motion
14 carries.

15 MR. SATTERFIELD: Mr. Chairman?

16 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir,
17 Mr. Satterfield.

18 MR. SATTERFIELD: I make a motion for staff to
19 proceed with a second appraisal and
20 purchase of the Cedar Creek SOA-Elm
21 Bluff Addition nomination contingent
22 upon the Wildlife and Freshwater
23 Fisheries Division providing funds of

1 the three-to-one match.

2 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. We have a
3 motion.

4 MR. JONES: Second.

5 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by Mr. Jones,
6 motioned by Mr. Satterfield for second
7 appraisal and move to purchase on the
8 Cedar Creek SOA-Elm Bluff Addition,
9 955 acres, contingent upon the Wildlife
10 and Freshwater Fisheries Division
11 providing 75 percent of the cost and
12 that Forever Wild Board provide 25
13 percent of the cost of the property.

14 Any questions?

15 MR. OATES: Could I ask Patti how much money
16 we've spent before we keep going like
17 drunken sailors?

18 MS. McCURDY: If you will give us just a
19 minute. We're just looking for an
20 approximate amount of money if all of
21 the second appraisals went through.

22 About 9.5. And that's not Patti
23 math.

1 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. All those
2 in favor say "aye."

3 (All board members present respond
4 "aye.")

5 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any opposed?

6 (No response.)

7 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: None opposed. Motion
8 carries.

9 Sorry. Give me just a second. I
10 want to make sure that I catch up.

11 MS. McCURDY: And, Commissioner, I hate doing
12 this because I don't want to feel like
13 I'm highlighting anything. I just want
14 to make sure we had clear communication.

15 On the Red Hills-Baucom Addition, we
16 do have the first appraisal. If there
17 was -- Mr. Holloway, if there was any
18 further motion -- I just want to
19 clarify. We already have --

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: It was motioned -- that
21 was the first one motioned by
22 Mr. Runyan --

23 MS. McCURDY: It was motioned. I'm sorry.

1 Okay. I missed it. Doug got it.

2 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: -- and seconded by
3 Mr. Oates to move for a second
4 appraisal --

5 MS. McCURDY: That's fine.

6 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: -- and move to
7 purchase.

8 MS. McCURDY: Doug got it. I didn't. Thank
9 you.

10 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Sure. Thank you.

11 All right. Any other discussion or
12 general board -- general discussion or
13 board business?

14 (No response.)

15 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. Thank you.
16 We'll move to number 7 in our agenda,
17 miscellaneous reports.

18 Doug, on Tab 5-E, report on
19 scheduled revisions to appraised
20 nominations or short list.

21 MR. DEATON: Thank you, Commissioner.

22 The next item is found in Tab 5-E.
23 Tab 5-E relates to a process adopted by

1 the board for staff to automatically
2 remove stale nominations found on either
3 the short list or the appraised
4 nominations list and stale meaning any
5 short list nomination or appraised
6 nomination that has not received any
7 board action as defined by the process
8 set by the board.

9 As noted in the memo, at this time
10 we only have one tract that has met that
11 criteria as rolling off. If the board
12 is okay with that, nothing needs to
13 happen. If you do decide for that to
14 stay, I would need some indication from
15 the board.

16 (No response.)

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seeing no hands, I
18 think we're okay. We can move to the
19 next item, 5-F.

20 MR. DEATON: Tab 5-F, management plan
21 approvals. As required by
22 Amendment 543, management plans must be
23 developed within one year after the

1 acquisition of a tract. Some tracts
2 require new management plans whereas
3 those acquisitions that are adjacent to
4 current ownership can be rolled into
5 management plans that have been
6 approved.

7 Today we have ten tracts. I'm going
8 to cover those ten tracts and hopefully
9 have you guys make one motion at the
10 end.

11 The first tract is the Barbour
12 County WMA-Leak Creek Addition, seeking
13 approval to add to the existing Wehle
14 Tract Management Plan.

15 Next is the Big Canoe Creek-Epps
16 Addition, St. Clair County, seeking
17 approval to add to the existing Big
18 Canoe Creek Management Plan.

19 Next is the Coldwater
20 Mountain-Sarrell Addition, Calhoun
21 County, seeking approval to add to the
22 existing Coldwater Mountain Complex
23 Plan.

1 Next is the Freedom Hills
2 WMA-Robbins Addition and Burgess Swap,
3 Colbert County, seeking approval to add
4 to the existing Freedom Hills,
5 Lauderdale, Riverton WMA Complex
6 Management Plan.

7 The Grand Bay Savanna-Little River
8 and Richard Addition, adding that to the
9 Grand Bay Savanna Complex Management
10 Plan.

11 The Guntersville State Park-Smith
12 Cemetery Addition, Marshall County,
13 asking to have that added to the
14 Guntersville State Park Additions
15 Management Plan.

16 The Tannehill-Ayers Addition,
17 seeking approval to add that to the
18 existing Tannehill Land and Ridges Tract
19 Management Plan.

20 And the final one is the Weeks Bay
21 Reserve-Meadows Phase III, seeking to
22 add to the existing Weeks Bay Reserve
23 Complex Management Plan.

1 And there's some motion language
2 provided in the memo if somebody would
3 like to make that motion.

4 DR. SALOOM: I move that we adopt these
5 management plans, approve them -- or the
6 board approves the State Lands Division
7 proceeding with the inclusion of tracts
8 into existing management plans, as set
9 forth in the memorandum dated
10 February 6, 2020, attached to this
11 memorandum.

12 MR. HOLLOWAY: Second.

13 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: The motion was made by
14 Dr. Saloom, seconded by Mr. Holloway to
15 incorporate these ten properties into
16 existing management plans as outlined in
17 the memo dated February 6th.

18 Is there any discussion?

19 (No response.)

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All those in favor say
21 "aye."

22 (All board members present respond
23 "aye.")

1 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any opposed?

2 (No response.)

3 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: None opposed. Motion
4 carries.

5 Thank you, Doug.

6 MS. McCURDY: I think we've covered -- there
7 are a few items in the packet we've
8 covered in the other sections of the
9 meeting.

10 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Okay.

11 MS. McCURDY: I could answer any questions or
12 if anybody wants to ask me any
13 questions, but I was just going to move
14 to the items that hadn't been discussed
15 or handled earlier.

16 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right.

17 MS. McCURDY: So I'm actually going to move to
18 Tab 5-I. This is the memo regarding the
19 annual willing seller confirmation.
20 I'll give the board a minute to get
21 there.

22 As background -- we had noted this
23 at the last meeting but were not able

1 really to cover it. As background,
2 every year staff -- and by staff I mean
3 Jo -- works hard to send out letters to
4 all landowners that have nominations on
5 the active nomination listing, meaning
6 they haven't -- they haven't
7 progressed -- they're on the active
8 nominations listing -- to be sure that
9 they want to remain a willing seller.
10 Again, this program is -- that's the
11 foundation of this program.

12 We do that once a year. If the
13 letter does not come back or if the
14 landowner indicates they do not want to
15 be considered, then those are removed
16 from our process because we no longer
17 have a willing seller.

18 So we initiated that process as
19 usual this year with a requested date of
20 return of responses as of January 15th,
21 and so far we have 11 nominations that
22 have been removed because of the lack of
23 a willing seller confirmation.

1 But one thing we did a little
2 different this year -- because we
3 weren't able to cover this at the last
4 meeting -- we held off on mailing out
5 those confirmation letters to landowners
6 whose nominations had zeroes or, as
7 staff calls it, zeroed out, meaning they
8 didn't hit a score in any of the four
9 categories under the Amendment 543,
10 being nature preserve, recreation, state
11 park, or WMA acreage.

12 So in the past historically as long
13 as the nominator had confirmed in their
14 willing seller confirmation that the
15 zeroed-out nomination -- that they still
16 wanted it to be considered it was
17 allowed to remain on the listing.

18 What we are proposing as a new
19 process is to -- as we go to do the
20 willing seller confirmation each year,
21 if there is any nomination that has
22 zeroed out -- again, has a zero in all
23 four categories -- that has remained

1 zeroed out for a year as of when we
2 start that process, instead of asking
3 for willing seller confirmation, we
4 would like to be able to express our
5 appreciation for the nomination interest
6 in the program but inform them that
7 their nomination failed to achieve a
8 score in any of the four categories and
9 therefore is being removed from the
10 list.

11 This is a shift, and so we wanted to
12 discuss that with the board, get board
13 approval to handle it that way. And the
14 reason I've used a year, that is to make
15 sure we haven't missed anything. If the
16 landowner has information that is
17 valuable that they simply didn't know to
18 provide, it gives us a little bit of
19 time to work with that landowner. But
20 after a year, if nothing has happened,
21 we would like to remove it. But I'll
22 open that up for board question,
23 discussion, comment.

1 If there's agreement and no
2 discussion, we've provided a motion in
3 the memo. But I do want to be sure
4 you're okay with us telling folks their
5 nomination has basically been removed
6 from consideration.

7 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you. Would you
8 like to have a motion?

9 MS. McCURDY: I would like a motion just
10 because this would be completely new and
11 is removing a nomination.

12 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Wright.

13 MR. WRIGHT: I'd like to make a motion to
14 approve the staff, as part of the annual
15 willing seller confirmation letter
16 process, to begin notifying landowners
17 that any nomination submitted more than
18 a year prior to initiation of the
19 process which has failed to achieve a
20 score in any of the evaluation
21 categories will be removed from the
22 active nomination listing.

23 MR. HOLLOWAY: Second.

1 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by

2 Mr. Holloway.

3 Any discussion on that? I think it
4 seemed like everybody understood it.

5 (No response.)

6 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All those in favor say

7 "aye."

8 (All board members present respond

9 "aye.")

10 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any opposed?

11 (No response.)

12 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: None opposed. Motion

13 carries.

14 MS. McCURDY: The last item I think that staff

15 has for today -- unless the board has

16 anything else -- is Tab 5-K. This is

17 the annual report that is submitted each

18 year by law.

19 And I believe this was in your green

20 folder. We normally have to put it in

21 the green folder because the submittal

22 date falls after the packet. It's the

23 green folder, but it's 5-K.

1 This is a copy of the annual report
2 and cover letter Commissioner signed and
3 submitted, as required by law, to
4 Governor Ivey, Lieutenant Governor
5 Ainsworth, and Speaker of the House Mac
6 McCutcheon.

7 This report each year gives
8 information on the board members that
9 have served in the fiscal year time
10 frame. There's always some crossover on
11 that. It describes -- or provides the
12 dates when we had the board meetings,
13 describes what has been -- what types of
14 activities take place at the board
15 meetings, that we do offer each time the
16 opportunity for public comment. It
17 gives some information just on the
18 number of nominations we've received,
19 we've tracked, the acquisitions during
20 that fiscal year, the management plans
21 that were approved and implemented
22 during the fiscal year, and then gives
23 just -- frankly, it's a very brief

1 listing on page 8 of some of the
2 activities that have occurred on the
3 property -- we try not to list
4 absolutely everything -- but to give an
5 idea of the work that's been done to
6 provide public access, be it through
7 hunting, be it through trail
8 development, just-- and then certain
9 land management activities that take
10 place, some prescribed fire and
11 reforestation as examples of some of the
12 land management work that we do.

13 It also includes a listing of the
14 nominations in Appendix A that are
15 currently pending. It provides some
16 financial information similar to -- a
17 little more detail but in summary form
18 similar to what is presented at this
19 meeting.

20 I'm not going to go through all
21 that. We've had a lot of information
22 presented today, and I know we're
23 running a little long. But the report

1 is also posted on our website for the
2 public's viewing.

3 But if there are any questions on
4 the report or anything else -- that's
5 all staff has. So, Commissioner, unless
6 you or the board have anything else, I
7 think we're done with our items.

8 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. Thank you.

9 Any questions you have about the
10 annual report after you review that,
11 feel free to give me or Patti or Doug a
12 call with any questions you have.

13 We need to approve the minutes from
14 the August 8th meeting that we had in
15 Kellyton, Alabama. We did not approve
16 those at the last meeting.

17 So do I have a motion to approve the
18 minutes from the August 8, 2019,
19 meeting?

20 MR. OATES: So move.

21 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Moved by Mr. Oates.

22 MR. HORN: Second.

23 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by Mr. Horn.

1 Any changes, discussions, edits,
2 deletions?

3 MR. HOLLOWAY: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

4 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir.

5 MR. HOLLOWAY: In that I was not a member at
6 that time, I'm going to abstain from
7 that vote.

8 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Okay. Thank you, sir.

9 Mr. Holloway will abstain from voting on
10 the approval of the minutes. Everyone
11 else on the board --

12 DR. POWERS: As will I.

13 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: And Dr. Powers.

14 All those in favor of approving the
15 minutes say "aye."

16 (Mr. Holloway and Dr. Powers
17 abstaining with the remainder of
18 the board members present
19 responding "aye.")

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Let the record reflect
21 that Mr. Holloway and Dr. Powers
22 abstained. All others approved.

23 We also need to approve the meetings

1 from the November 7, 2019, meeting at
2 the Lodge at Gulf State Park.

3 Do I have a motion to approve those
4 minutes?

5 DR. SALOOM: So move.

6 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Moved by Dr. Valentine.

7 MR. HOLLOWAY: Second.

8 DR. VALENTINE: I can't because I was not
9 there.

10 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Oh, I'm sorry. I
11 thought that was -- oh, Dr. Saloom. I'm
12 sorry.

13 Sorry, John.

14 It was seconded by Mr. Holloway,
15 motioned by Dr. Saloom.

16 All right. Any additions,
17 deletions?

18 MR. RUNYAN: I wasn't there, so I'm going to
19 abstain.

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right.

21 DR. VALENTINE: I have to as well.

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Russ Runyan is going to
23 abstain.

1 MR. SATTERFIELD: A lot of us were not there.
2 Didn't have a quorum.

3 MS. McCURDY: I think if we had several
4 members missing but had the opportunity
5 to review and don't have any corrections
6 that they could still -- if they would
7 like could still be part of the vote. I
8 just want to be sure we can approve --
9 that we have the votes to approve it.

10 MR. SATTERFIELD: You can still vote on the
11 minutes whether you're there or not.

12 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: So we didn't have a
13 quorum present. So anybody that was not
14 present can still vote to approve the
15 minutes as long as they don't -- if they
16 would like to participate.

17 MS. McCURDY: Yes.

18 DR. POWERS: Commissioner?

19 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes.

20 DR. POWERS: Was I appointed by then?

21 MS. McCURDY: Yes. You were unable to attend
22 but appointed.

23 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: So with that in mind,

1 are there any abstentions before we
2 vote?

3 (No response.)

4 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seeing none, all those
5 in favor of approving the minutes from
6 the November 7th, 2019, meeting please
7 say "aye."

8 (All board members present respond
9 "aye.")

10 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any opposed?

11 (No response.)

12 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: None opposed. Minutes
13 are approved.

14 The next meeting will be May 7th.
15 We do not -- I don't guess we have a
16 location determined for that meeting at
17 this time.

18 MR. JONES: I see Mr. Lein is out there, and
19 he suggested that Monte Sano State Park
20 would be a good place to meet.

21 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Well, we'll take that
22 into consideration. We're looking at
23 some other additional properties and

1 will provide a location very shortly so
2 everybody can make plans.

3 Do I have a motion to adjourn?

4 MR. HORN: So move.

5 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: So moved by Mr. Horn.

6 All those in favor say "aye."

7 (All board members present respond
8 "aye.")

9 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: We are adjourned.

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(Proceedings adjourned.)

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

* * * * *

STATE OF ALABAMA:

MONTGOMERY COUNTY:

I, Tracye Sadler Blackwell, Certified Court Reporter and Commissioner for the State of Alabama at Large, do hereby certify that I reported the foregoing proceedings of the Forever Wild Board Meeting on Thursday, February 6, 2020.

The foregoing 143 computer-printed pages contain a true and correct transcript of the proceedings held.

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

This 2nd day of June 2020.

Tracye S. Blackwell, CCR, RPR
ACCR No. 294
Expiration date: 9-30-2020
Certified Court Reporter
and Commissioner for the State
of Alabama at Large