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MINUTES OF THE
FOREVER WILD BOARD MEETING
ALABAMA ACTIVITY CENTER
Montgomery, Alabama
February 4, 2021

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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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Proceedings taken before Tracye
Sadler Blackwell, CCR, RPR, ACCR No. 294, and
Commissioner for the State of Alabama at Large, at
the Alabama Activity Center, Montgomery, Alabama,
on Thursday, February 4, 2021, commencing at
approximately 10:00 a.m.

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1 BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

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3 Commissioner Christopher M. Blankenship, Chairman
4 Mr. David Wright
5 Mr. Raymond B. Jones, Jr.
6 Mr. William "Bill" Satterfield
7 Mr. Rick Oates
8 Dr. Patricia Sims
9 Dr. Lori Tolley-Jordan
10 Dr. Salem Saloom
11 Dr. James B. McClintock
12 Dr. Sean P. Powers
13 Mr. Jack Darnall
14 Dr. John Valentine
15 Mr. Reginald N. Holloway
16 Dr. A.M. "Jay" Neumann, Jr.
17 Mr. James "Mickey" Childers

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17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Good morning. Welcome
18 to the February Forever Wild Board
19 Meeting. I'm Chris Blankenship, the
20 Commissioner of the Department of
21 Conservation and Natural Resources.
22 I'll call the meeting to order.

22

23

And I'll call the roll. If you're
here, just indicate that you're present

1 to make sure we have a quorum.

2 Chris Blankenship is here.

3 Jack Darnall?

4 MR. DARNALL: Here.

5 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Holloway?

6 MR. HOLLOWAY: Here.

7 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Raymond Jones?

8 MR. JONES: Here.

9 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Powers?

10 DR. POWERS: Here.

11 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Saloom?

12 DR. SALOOM: Here.

13 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Sims?

14 DR. SIMS: Here.

15 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Tolley-Jordan?

16 DR. TOLLEY-JORDAN: Here.

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Valentine?

18 DR. VALENTINE: Here.

19 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Wright?

20 MR. WRIGHT: Here.

21 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Mickey Childers?

22 MR. CHILDERS: Here.

23 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. McClintock?

1 DR. McCLINTOCK: Here.

2 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Neumann?

3 DR. NEUMANN: Here.

4 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Satterfield?

5 MR. SATTERFIELD: Here.

6 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: And Rick Oates?

7 MR. OATES: Here.

8 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: We have perfect
9 attendance today. Thank you all for
10 being here today. Glad to see a full
11 board. We do have a quorum.

12 I'd like to express our appreciation
13 to the Alabama Activity Center for
14 assistance in making this facility
15 available. In our neverending quest to
16 find a meeting space large enough to
17 provide social distancing but have good
18 enough acoustics that we can do
19 business, we're going to try this
20 facility. And so far it seems to be
21 okay.

22 Can everybody on the board hear okay
23 compared to the last few meetings that

1 we've had? Any issues with hearing?

2 (No response.)

3 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Great. I'd like to
4 introduce two of our new board members,
5 Dr. Jay Neumann from Fairhope. If
6 you want to say just a little bit about
7 your background and ...

8 DR. NEUMANN: Yeah. I'm Jay Neumann from
9 Baldwin County, Point Clear. I'm an
10 ear, nose, and throat surgeon and have a
11 wife, Alison, and three boys.

12 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Good to have you. Good
13 to have you on the board.

14 And then we have Mr. Mickey Childers
15 from north Alabama. Mr. Childers.

16 MR. CHILDERS: Yes, sir. Thank you. I live
17 in Morgan County, Alabama. Our family
18 farm is up there. We were previously in
19 the dairy business, but now in row crops
20 (inaudible) and forestry. And I've got
21 a family, a wife and three children
22 (inaudible). Thank you for the
23 opportunity to serve on this board. I'm

1 looking forward to working with

2 (inaudible.)

3 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you. And we also
4 have Mr. Reginald Holloway back with us.
5 And we presented him a very nice
6 certificate at the last meeting to end
7 his service from his appointment, and
8 he's been reappointed. So I'm very glad
9 to have you back on the board.

10 Any other -- I don't know that we
11 have any other elected officials or
12 special guests here.

13 I did have the opportunity to give a
14 presentation on the Forever Wild program
15 at the Alabama Forestry Association
16 Policy Summit last week at The Grand
17 Hotel. Board Member Rick Oates was
18 there as well. Answered some questions
19 from the legislative attendees and
20 others at the meeting. Just wanted to
21 share that we do have opportunity from
22 time to time to promote the program or
23 answer questions about the program in

1 between meetings, and I'll try and share
2 those with you as we meet.

3 I guess that moves us into the
4 public comment period. So just a
5 reminder that the public comment -- try
6 and keep your comments to three
7 minutes -- I think there's a timer
8 there -- so that we make sure everybody
9 has the opportunity to speak.

10 And so for the new board members,
11 when I call a speaker, if they're going
12 to speak on a particular property, I'll
13 try and give you the tab and page number
14 for that property and give you a chance
15 to find that before they speak so that
16 we can all be on the same page with what
17 they're advocating about.

18 So our first speaker is Jerry Joe
19 Ingram on the Mill Creek property,

20 Tab 3-B, page 8. 3-B, page 8.

21 MR. INGRAM: Is it okay if I take my mask off
22 to speak?

23 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir.

1 MR. INGRAM: Commissioner Blankenship and
2 Board, I thank y'all very much for
3 giving me this chance today to talk.

4 For those of y'all who don't know
5 me, my name is Jerry Joe Ingram. I'm a
6 real estate broker with National Land
7 Realty. I live not too far from here
8 over in Lowndes County, Alabama, and we
9 have offices all over the state.

10 Just kind of to start things off, I
11 don't know how many of y'all have seen
12 the documentary on Jim Martin and how he
13 got the money and all that for Forever
14 Wild, but it was a great documentary.
15 And I vaguely remember 1992. I was a
16 lot younger than I am now. But I kind
17 of remember when Forever Wild was
18 getting started off and what a legacy
19 that has been.

20 The boards before y'all that have
21 made decisions to use monies -- and
22 y'all today -- I know y'all get
23 presented with a lot of properties, and

1 it's got to be a tough decision to weed
2 through these and try to make the best
3 decisions and be the best stewards that
4 y'all can be. And I've always admired
5 the job of this board and the
6 seriousness that y'all take.

7 I'm here today on behalf of Mill
8 Creek. Mill Creek is 4,505 acres
9 located in Lee County about 12 miles
10 outside of the Auburn/Opelika area.
11 It's kind of located in a little pocket
12 of Lee County that's very densely
13 populated but is very close to a major
14 metropolitan area.

15 And Lee County is really expected
16 over the next few years to grow to be
17 one of the top three or five fastest
18 growing counties in the state of
19 Alabama, and there's something to be
20 said to putting the money where the
21 growth is to an extent. I know y'all
22 make decisions a lot more broader than
23 just business decisions. A lot of it

1 has to do with conservancy in nature and
2 preservation.

3 But this is a -- it's very unique in
4 Lee County to find a property of this
5 size. There's not many left. And I
6 think with all the growth that's coming
7 to that area, I really see that property
8 kind of being a multi -- you know,
9 possibly a multi-recreational-type
10 property in the future.

11 You know, you're making decisions --
12 you know, buying properties today for
13 use and enjoyment, but 60 years from now
14 when we're gone, it will be interesting
15 to see how those land uses go. And you
16 think investing in a county that's got
17 positive growth -- which a lot of the
18 counties -- really a majority of the
19 counties in Alabama have negative growth
20 right now as more people go into major
21 metropolitan areas and stuff.

22 And so a couple of points, though,
23 on the property: Of all three

1 districts, the central district, which
2 this property is located in, is your
3 most underutilized district for
4 properties that you currently have.
5 There's 13 in this district. The north
6 has got 15, and the south has got 18.
7 So I do see a little underuse maybe in
8 this area if you go off of that.

9 And I think that's really about all
10 I've got to say on it. If y'all have
11 any questions, I'll be glad to answer
12 anything the best I can.

13 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right.

14 MR. JONES: Mr. Chairman?

15 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Jones.

16 MR. JONES: I notice there's four outparcels
17 or outholdings within this property. Is
18 that correct?

19 MR. INGRAM: Yeah. It's divided by some
20 county roads.

21 MR. JONES: Okay. What are those four
22 outparcels?

23 They look to be houses. Is that

1 correct?

2 There's two right in the center of
3 the property -- or not the center but --

4 MR. INGRAM: Oh, yeah. They're not really
5 outparcels. There's a county road that
6 goes down through there. So they're not
7 technically out -- they're not like
8 landlocked or anything like that.

9 That's an actual county road that goes
10 through there.

11 MR. JONES: Well, that's not quite -- that's
12 not how it appears to me. Does it to
13 you?

14 MR. SATTERFIELD: No. There's still -- we
15 would still consider those outparcels.

16 MR. INGRAM: Okay.

17 MR. SATTERFIELD: Because they're --

18 MR. JONES: They're inholdings.

19 MR. SATTERFIELD: They would be within the
20 proposed purchase area, it looks to me
21 like.

22 MR. INGRAM: Well, they, you know --

23 MS. McCURDY: Jerry, are you just saying

1 they're not landlocked --

2 MR. INGRAM: They are not landlocked.

3 MS. McCURDY: -- but they are inholdings?

4 They are inholdings. They are not
5 landlocked inholdings.

6 MR. INGRAM: And they're just individual
7 property owners.

8 MR. JONES: Okay.

9 MR. SATTERFIELD: Are they owned and utilized
10 by hunting clubs? Do you know?

11 MR. INGRAM: I know one of them is a farm
12 actually. A guy has a farm there on one
13 of them.

14 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you, sir.

15 Our next speaker is Chandlar Graham
16 on Thigpen Hill-Phase II, Tab 3-B, page
17 11. 3-B, page 11.

18 MR. GRAHAM: Good morning. First I just
19 wanted to thank the board for their
20 willingness to work with us on this
21 project. And we've completed the
22 Phase I acquisition. Our client is
23 excited that y'all have chosen to work

1 with her in accomplishing her goals and
2 y'all's goals as well.

3 So today I'm here just to ask that
4 y'all would move forward with a second
5 appraisal and purchase of the final
6 phase, Phase II. I believe it's roughly
7 2400 acres or so.

8 And I'm here if there are any
9 questions but just wanted to say thanks
10 and ask that y'all would continue to
11 move forward to complete this process.

12 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any questions?

13 (No response.)

14 MR. GRAHAM: Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you, Chandlar.

16 Our next speaker is Al Johnson on
17 Dallas County SOA access.

18 Mr. Johnson, will you just make sure
19 that microphone is on when you come up.
20 Had a little bit of trouble -- I think
21 we're having a little bit of trouble
22 hearing.

23 MR. JOHNSON: My name is Al Johnson. I'm from

1 Camden, Alabama. I appreciate you
2 allowing me to speak today, and I
3 appreciate what you do in representing
4 me and all other Alabamians.

5 And I have thoroughly enjoyed
6 Forever Wild properties for many years
7 now. Next door to us are the Red Hills
8 tracts, and they're amazing. If you
9 haven't been, I strongly urge that you
10 go and explore that property. You would
11 never believe you were in Monroe County,
12 Alabama.

13 So I was so excited when I heard
14 that we were going to have some more
15 public property just north of me in
16 Dallas County. And when they came
17 online and the signs were put up and the
18 land lines were marked, I began
19 exploring because it appeared to me that
20 it was okay to do so as long as I didn't
21 have a gun, a bow, a dog. I wasn't
22 trapping.

23 And so I explored the properties.

1 They're beautiful, as I imagined, and --
2 but I came to understand that it may not
3 be okay for me to do so, so I
4 discontinued. May have gained 10 or 15
5 pounds because I'm not out walking
6 around out there.

7 And so I'd like to ask you two
8 specific questions pertaining to these
9 properties that are not clear to me
10 based on my research. One is, are these
11 properties, Portland Landing and Cedar
12 Creek -- are they public lands? And
13 number two, will we allow access for
14 foot travel? Can I go for a walk and go
15 see what's out there? Is that legal or
16 is it not?

17 So I would just like for you to
18 answer those two questions when you can,
19 whether it's today or I have my cell
20 phone number and my email address
21 listed.

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Sure. I appreciate the
23 questions. Chuck Sykes and Keith

1 Gauldin -- if you'll just talk with them
2 maybe during the executive session
3 recess to answer some of those questions
4 about those specific tracts.

5 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you so much.

6 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you.

7 MR. CHILDERS: Sir, what property was he
8 talking about?

9 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: It was not -- this was
10 not one that's under consideration for
11 the board. These are on previously
12 acquired properties in Dallas County
13 that he was asking about access for.

14 MR. CHILDERS: Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir.

16 The next speaker is Brooks Wall on
17 the Hollins WMA Addition. That is
18 Tab 4-B, page 9. 4-B, page 9.

19 MR. WALL: Thank you so much, guys, for
20 allowing me to speak today. I think I
21 was at the last meeting and spoke, but I
22 figured the more I talk the more you
23 hear it and maybe the more chance I have

1 of somebody considering this property in
2 the future.

3 Coosa and Clay County, Alabama, over
4 the last 15 years has lost about 25,000
5 acres of public land to hunt through
6 different organizations removing this
7 land from WMAs. And the property that
8 I'm talking about today was one of those
9 properties in the Hollins Wildlife
10 Management Area that was removed two
11 years ago.

12 It's around 1800 acres. And at this
13 point my clients would like to sell that
14 property. We would love for Forever
15 Wild to look at that property and get it
16 back in the hands with you guys where
17 the public can enjoy that again.

18 The unique part of this property is
19 the fact that with it being in the WMA
20 for years, the biologists and the other
21 workers there, they already know the
22 land intimately. They created many of
23 the roads, food plots. They know the

1 boundary lines already. And so this
2 would be a very easy transition back
3 into public use and into the wildlife
4 management area.

5 Also, adjoining landowners -- it's
6 been in the management area, so all the
7 adjoining landowners know of this
8 property. You don't have to worry about
9 acquiring new property and having
10 adjoining landowners that have issues
11 with the public being right next to
12 their property lines. This is
13 established. So that would be a benefit
14 to this property.

15 This property also is very diverse.
16 It's got 12 different timber types on
17 this property, a lot of planted longleaf
18 for biodiversity, different age classes,
19 anywhere from old growth mountain
20 longleaf to 21-year-old thin longleaf,
21 some 11-year-old and some three-year-old
22 plantations. So we've already got a lot
23 of biodiversity that goes well with what

1 you guys are looking for.

2 Also, you know, Clay County --
3 prices of land around there is pretty
4 cheap compared to some areas, especially
5 more urban areas. So this would be an
6 area you could probably get this
7 property appraised for a lot cheaper
8 than some of the properties around urban
9 areas and get a lot more bang for your
10 buck as far as the amount of acreage you
11 can buy for the price.

12 The Pinhoti Trail is going to be
13 right next to this property. It may
14 even be a good alternative place for the
15 Pinhoti Trail to come through as it goes
16 down through Flagg Mountain in Coosa
17 County. And there will probably be a
18 lot more foot traffic coming into these
19 areas when that is officially done over
20 time.

21 The perennial creek that goes
22 through this property leads directly
23 into the Weogufka Creek which, if y'all

1 know about Weogufka Creek, does have
2 endangered species in it. So it would
3 be nice to have this property to -- for
4 water quality -- to keep water quality
5 up in the future.

6 And my time is about up, so that's
7 all I will say for now. I just hope
8 that you will consider moving forward
9 with maybe a first appraisal. Thank you
10 so much.

11 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any questions?

12 (No response.)

13 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you, sir.

14 Our next speaker is Chris
15 Oberholster on the Saginaw Swamp.
16 That's Tab 4-B, page 21. 4-B, page 21.

17 Hey, Chris. Good morning. Go
18 ahead.

19 MR. OBERHOLSTER: Good morning. I'd just love
20 to offer a brief update on the Saginaw
21 Swamp project.

22 As many of you'll recall, there was
23 some discussion about the project --

1 this proposed project at the last board
2 meeting in Pelham. During that
3 discussion a key question that emerged
4 was -- by several board members was the
5 degree of support for the project from
6 the local jurisdiction in question,
7 which is Shelby County. It's in
8 unincorporated Shelby County.

9 So subsequent to that last board
10 meeting, I have worked with several
11 folks, including the former mayor of
12 Alabaster --

13 Which is the city that adjoins this
14 property but does not include this
15 property but who's interested in this
16 project.

17 -- and with Mr. Holloway on board to
18 arrange several -- several things. One
19 was a site visit of the site with
20 Mr. Holloway and senior officials from
21 Shelby County just so that they could
22 evaluate the project and see what the
23 prospects and the potential was for

1 Shelby County. It was a very positive
2 feeling to that field trip, that site
3 visit, very -- basically the conclusion
4 was that this was very well suited to
5 just a minimum of upgrading of some of
6 the existing access to make it very
7 accessible to the public.

8 And that was followed more recently
9 by a meeting with the county manager,
10 Chad Scroggins. Mr. Scroggins, as many
11 of you will be familiar with, has been a
12 key partner -- lead partner on several
13 projects with Forever Wild and some of
14 his senior staff. And at the conclusion
15 of that meeting, Mr. Scroggins stated
16 that we could count on his full
17 support -- on Shelby County's full
18 support on this project, including the
19 offer of in-kind support, and he would
20 follow that up with a letter of support,
21 which is not in hand yet. But he said
22 explicitly that it would be fine to
23 share the information of his full

1 support. So I'm happy to answer any
2 questions beyond that.

3 The only other update I have is that
4 the head of the Alabama Birding Trails,
5 Joe Watts, who works -- this is a
6 partnership that is run by the
7 University of Alabama's Center For
8 Economic Development. He has stated his
9 support and will follow up with a letter
10 of support as well. He believes this is
11 a really good site that would make a
12 good addition to this project, which
13 is -- the birding trails are supported
14 by Alabama Department of Tourism and
15 DCNR.

16 I'm happy to answer any questions.

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any questions?

18 (No response.)

19 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you, Chris.

20 The next speaker is Mr. Clint Payne.
21 And this is concerning a land purchase
22 for a water meter adjacent to one of the
23 properties. Tab 5-C is his request.

1 Tab 5-C.

2 Give everybody just a second to find
3 that.

4 All right, Mr. Payne. Thank you.

5 MR. PAYNE: Good morning. My name is Clint
6 Payne, and I'm from Anniston, Alabama.
7 I am in the process of building a
8 campground to serve the cyclists that
9 come to Coldwater Mountain to use the
10 mountain-biking trails.

11 When I first started planning the
12 campground, I checked with the city
13 about utilities, and everything was a
14 go. Power was no problem. I had road
15 frontage. And they even quoted me a
16 price to run the water line to set the
17 meter to my property.

18 Continuing further as things moved
19 on, when I was ready to do that, I
20 checked back with the city engineer, and
21 they had failed to check the elevation
22 that my property was on. So they would
23 not set a meter at that elevation.

1 So what I'm asking is for -- is to
2 purchase a small parcel, a
3 15-foot-by-15-foot parcel, from Forever
4 Wild at the bottom of the hill from my
5 camp. From that 15-by-15 parcel, I
6 would ask for an easement -- an
7 underground easement to run a water line
8 to my property and a booster pump,
9 electrical to a booster pump, if needed.
10 I'm not convinced that I wouldn't have
11 water, but they're required to set it at
12 that level because it would provide 25
13 PSI.

14 So that is my request. I know it's
15 a little different coming here and
16 asking y'all to buy property from you.
17 I know that y'all are not in the
18 business of selling property. You're in
19 the business of acquiring it.

20 I'm here to answer any questions
21 that you have about the purchase or any
22 other information I can provide.

23 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Wright.

1 MR. WRIGHT: You said it would be -- you might
2 have to put a pump in. Is there
3 electrical there where you're going to
4 want to put a pump?

5 MR. PAYNE: There is electrical. There's an
6 actual power pole on the
7 15-foot-by-15-foot parcel. And I would
8 have some power at the camp where I can
9 run a line down the same --

10 MR. WRIGHT: You can come either way.

11 MR. PAYNE: I can provide power to that.

12 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Powers.

14 DR. POWERS: I guess this is more a question
15 for you or Patti. Are we allowed to
16 sell Forever Wild property?

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: We can.

18 Mr. Jones.

19 MR. JONES: Patti, how does -- I'm sure staff
20 is -- I know we talked about this a lot
21 at the last meeting, what staff's
22 recommendations are coming back from
23 this.

1 MS. McCURDY: Yes. We've done an analysis of
2 the area both as to the 15-by-15-foot
3 fee-simple purchase request -- it's not
4 going to impact access to the tract.
5 And then the easement that then flows up
6 from there is along the edge of the
7 tract. So it's really not -- we don't
8 see it creating an issue either as to
9 access or the disturbance being
10 ecologically an issue based upon the
11 location.

12 So we have no objection to the
13 structure and believe we have now,
14 working with Mr. Payne as well as the
15 city, gotten the request to the minimum
16 needed. So I don't think there's any
17 excess to this request. It's the
18 minimum needed to serve the property.
19 And I think there's a chance that this,
20 you know, could in the future also serve
21 the visitors to the tract potentially.

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: To give the staff
23 direction on this, would you need a

1 motion during general discussion to do
2 that, or what would we need?

3 MS. McCURDY: Yeah. In general discussion.
4 And then I think I saw a question from
5 Dr. McClintock.

6 But to answer this question, yes.
7 In general discussion we could -- a
8 motion could be made at that time. The
9 memo also includes a motion in line with
10 the request if the board wants to do
11 that, or if you want to alter it, we can
12 alter it. I'll help with the wording of
13 the motion at that time if there's any
14 change to that.

15 And was there a question?

16 DR. McCLINTOCK: Yeah. I was just curious how
17 many cyclists a year would be at the
18 campground (inaudible) --

19 MS. McCURDY: Hold on. Is your microphone on?

20 DR. McCLINTOCK: Yeah, it is.

21 MS. McCURDY: Repeat your question so that --

22 DR. McCLINTOCK: How many -- there we go.

23 How many cyclists a year would come

1 Lanier. He's going to discuss a land
2 purchase request in Tab 5-D. Tab 5-D.
3 This is in the Yates Lake Forever Wild
4 property, Tab 5-D.

5 And you'll find -- and 5-D is a
6 letter from Mr. Lanier and then a map of
7 his request and some pictures that he
8 provided as well.

9 Yes, sir. Go ahead.

10 MR. LANIER: Thank you, Commissioner. First
11 of all, I want to thank you,
12 Commissioner Blankenship, and each one
13 of you for serving on the Forever Wild
14 Board of Trustees. As you know, I'm
15 here to ask -- I'm on the Board of
16 Directors of the Cherokee Ridge Alpine
17 Trail Association, or either we call it
18 CRATA just for short.

19 We, CRATA, see the need for a remote
20 hiker information outpost, and adjacent
21 to this outpost we propose to erect a
22 fire lookout tower as a viewing platform
23 that will be one of the most scenic

1 views in the state. Incorporated in the
2 outpost building is going to be some
3 space for trail equipment, material, and
4 nonprofit administrative office space.

5 In partnership with Forever Wild and
6 Alabama Power Company, CRATA has built
7 26 miles of footpath trails on it
8 located in four different locations.
9 Three of those locations are within a
10 mile of each other.

11 CRATA has built a reputation for
12 providing quality trails for public
13 enjoyment that are some of the most
14 scenic in the state, and it's been
15 recognized by the Alabama Trails
16 Commission as one of the most successful
17 trail 501(C)(3) nonprofits in the state.
18 CRATA has also been recognized
19 nationally for outstanding hiking
20 trails.

21 Now, we recognize that Forever Wild
22 may have concerns if the CRATA
23 organization ceased to exist. At the

1 CRATA January 27 board meeting, a
2 resolution was passed that if CRATA
3 fails to complete the proposed building
4 projects within ten years or if CRATA
5 fails to exist at any time, this
6 property will revert back to Forever
7 Wild as a donation and be so stated on
8 any purchase agreement and any resulting
9 deed.

10 We have been successful -- you might
11 want to ask about this fire tower. Our
12 trail association owns Smith Mountain.
13 Alabama Power Company deeded it to our
14 association. On top of it is the
15 highest elevation on Lake Martin. It's
16 a 90-foot fire lookout tower. We have
17 restored it. It's open to the public.
18 It's ten times safer now than it was
19 when it was new. And it has been
20 unbelievable the people that have
21 visited this site. And we can replicate
22 this same thing down at Yates at the WMA
23 there.

1 And I'll be happy to answer any
2 questions that you may have.

3 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you, Mr. Lanier.

4 I appreciate you affording me the
5 opportunity last year to meet you up at
6 Smith Mountain. And I appreciate the
7 tour there up the fire tower and then
8 the time that we were able to spend in
9 December at the Yates Lake property
10 looking at some of these -- this project
11 and some other ideas. And thank you for
12 your group's work in helping construct
13 those trails and to improve the access
14 for these Forever Wild properties in
15 your area. So I just wanted to say
16 thank you for your time publicly as we
17 spent a couple of days together up
18 there.

19 Any questions from the board?

20 Mr. Wright.

21 MR. WRIGHT: I hear that the property would
22 come back to Forever Wild if your
23 organization were to dissolve, but what

1 about the liability -- and this may be a
2 question for Patti -- what about the
3 liability for that fire tower or -- is
4 Forever Wild going to have to accept
5 that liability?

6 Because it's not just a piece of
7 property. It's a piece of property with
8 a fire tower on it.

9 MS. McCURDY: You go ahead and answer, and
10 I'll answer after you, anything you want
11 to add.

12 MR. LANIER: Okay. Now, I don't know about
13 the liability for the state, but I do
14 know there is a state law that if you
15 use your property not for profit and you
16 allow the public to be on it, there's
17 very limited liability on it. You've
18 got to create a hazard for it to be a
19 liability.

20 And, of course, with us, we are a
21 nonprofit private company. And I don't
22 know what the liability -- if it was to
23 come back to the state, I don't know

1 what the liability would be on that, if
2 you would let some other organization
3 have it or you could take it down. You
4 could always sell to the fire college if
5 you did take it down.

6 But I don't think that we're going
7 away. And I know that the fire tower is
8 safe because we had a \$20,000
9 engineering restoration plan given to us
10 when we restored the Smith Mountain Fire
11 Tower by a structural engineer. So
12 it's -- and I know that it's ten times
13 safer now than it ever was when it was
14 new and the state had it.

15 MS. McCURDY: And, Commissioner, it depends
16 on -- you know, Jennifer Weber from our
17 Legal section -- I'm a lawyer, but I
18 (inaudible) -- if you want any more
19 details on potential -- the potential in
20 context with state ownership.

21 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. Jennifer.

22 MS. WEBER: So just looking at the fire tower,
23 is there a specific concern that you

1 have? Just with the structure?

2 MR. WRIGHT: Could you take your mask off?

3 MS. WEBER: Is there a specific concern that
4 you have? The liability related to the
5 structure?

6 MR. WRIGHT: Yeah. I mean, the structure is
7 there.

8 MS. WEBER: Right.

9 MR. WRIGHT: So what if somebody climbs up
10 there and --

11 MS. WEBER: Right. So that would be no
12 different than really our other
13 recreation parks. You know, we have
14 bridges and things that people, you
15 know, potentially --

16 MR. WRIGHT: Whether the state owns it or
17 whether a partner owns it?

18 MS. WEBER: Right. Potentially. And we could
19 discuss that in more detail maybe
20 outside of this discussion, but I don't
21 really see from my review a greatened
22 risk.

23 MR. WRIGHT: Okay. That's all I wanted to

1 know. Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. Dr. Saloom.

3 DR. SALOOM: Thank you very much for your
4 comments, and I just have a curiosity
5 question. Have you-all identified the
6 fire tower yet that you're going to move
7 to this site, or is there a fire tower
8 on this site?

9 MR. LANIER: Yes. We -- there is no fire
10 tower on the site. We do have a fire
11 tower located in Bloomingdale, New York.
12 It's owned by a guy named David Banner
13 who owns a fire tower restoration
14 company. He -- we contracted with him
15 when we rebuilt the Smith Mountain Fire
16 Tower.

17 This tower is on the ground under
18 4 feet of snow right now, and he is
19 willing to sell it to us. It's a good
20 tower. He sent me pictures of it. I
21 have some of the pictures in my
22 briefcase.

23 DR. SALOOM: I know David well, and he's done

1 some work with us. You've got a good
2 person overseeing this restoration.

3 MR. LANIER: Yeah.

4 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Oates.

5 MR. OATES: I don't want to take away from his
6 property or his tower he's trying to
7 sell you, but we do have several that we
8 are trying to get rid of for the
9 Forestry Commission here in Alabama
10 rather than going up to New York to get
11 one. So I guess I would just ask you to
12 have some conversations with us before
13 you go off and buy one from New York.

14 MR. LANIER: Well, the reason that I -- I
15 don't think you have any LS-40s in the
16 state that's available.

17 MR. OATES: I have no idea what we have, but
18 I know we have fire towers.

19 MR. LANIER: I'm familiar with that myself.
20 David Bannon has been to Alabama and
21 bought some fire towers from you, I
22 think, in the past. But the one that we
23 want is the LS-40 just like we have at

1 Smith Mountain. Because we have a
2 \$20,000 engineering plan for that one,
3 and so we hate to have to put up another
4 one. Plus, this one, the LS-40, is so
5 much easier for people to climb. And
6 you've got short stairs with several
7 different landings for people who don't
8 want to climb all the way to the top.

9 MR. OATES: The one at Smith Mountain was one
10 of ours as well.

11 MR. LANIER: Do what?

12 MR. OATES: The one at Smith Mountain was one
13 of our fire towers. So if it's the
14 same, we probably have some more of
15 those around, I would guess. But,
16 anyway, we can talk about it.

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Powers, I think I
18 saw your hand.

19 DR. POWERS: Yeah. I guess I have a general
20 question. I'm a little concerned, too,
21 about selling parcels of our property.
22 And it's more a question, I guess, for
23 Patti.

1 Is the only way we can do this is to
2 sell them? Can we lease these? Because
3 if we lease them, it seems to remove
4 some of the uncertainty about if his
5 organization dissolves. But, I mean,
6 what does dissolve mean? I guess you
7 would legally have to dissolve. What if
8 they just stop participating and never
9 do officially dissolve?

10 So really with both of these issues,
11 can we lease or give certain rights to
12 them so we can still retain control?

13 MS. McCURDY: In answer to the question, yes,
14 the board has the latitude to lease or
15 sell property. I'll let Mr. Lanier
16 answer -- a lot of times when there's a
17 significant and physical investment, you
18 know, folks may not want to risk the
19 loss of that to a lease. But there is
20 lease opportunities and long-term lease
21 opportunities -- just any type of
22 instrument would be available to the
23 board. So that's the answer to what can

1 be done. I'll let Mr. Lanier pick up
2 from there.

3 MR. LANIER: Well, I was told that Forever
4 Wild could not have even a barn on their
5 property, and that's -- I was told that
6 they could sell us the property, but we
7 couldn't just go out and build on it,
8 build a building or put up a tower. So
9 that's why we asked to purchase the
10 property.

11 MS. McCURDY: And, Mr. Lanier, it is correct
12 that there would have to be a type of
13 transfer -- a very formal type of
14 transfer to allow that type of
15 construction, and the Forever Wild
16 dollars, for example, could not go to
17 build the structure you're talking about
18 for your headquarters.

19 The ground transaction -- and I'll
20 confer more with Legal. But I'm not
21 aware of any reason why the ground
22 transaction could not be either a
23 purchase or a lease. So I'm not aware

1 of why that would not be a possibility
2 other than most folks that approach us
3 who would want to do that type of
4 infrastructure development want the fee
5 simple. But we can certainly talk about
6 the different structures. Mr. Lanier
7 and CRATA are open to that if that's
8 what the board wants.

9 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Satterfield.

10 MR. SATTERFIELD: Mr. Lanier, this looks like
11 a really nice project you're proposing,
12 and I'd like to know a little bit more
13 about the visitors center, how you
14 operate the visitors, the locations, how
15 you would intend to operate this one.
16 In other words, it looks like a pretty
17 nice place. And I'm curious about the
18 budget that you have to build, operate,
19 and maintain it, whether or not you're
20 going to have employees there who are
21 going to be staffing it on a regular
22 basis.

23 How do you -- how do these visitors

1 centers operate? Could you educate a
2 little bit about that?

3 MR. LANIER: Okay. We would not have any
4 employees. They would be volunteers.
5 We're all volunteers. None of us get
6 paid on anything. But we do have a lot
7 of friends of CRATA.

8 And we also have been able to secure
9 funding from several different places.
10 We just -- three years ago we had a
11 Recreational Trails grant for an
12 approximately \$100,000 graphic
13 educational display up at Smith
14 Mountain, which is as fine as you're
15 going to see in a national park. We
16 ended up raising \$50,000 ourselves on a
17 fundraiser. We got the grant for
18 88,000, and we ended up paying like
19 10,000 as our -- as part of our -- of
20 the 80/20 match, so -- and when we built
21 it -- when we restored the tower in the
22 beginning, we raised \$53,000 then. We
23 restored it for 30.

1 We have lots of capability in our
2 organization from engineers to people
3 who can build. We also have several
4 people who have donated pretty large
5 sums of money to our trail association.
6 We also have the head of the Turner
7 Foundation on our board of directors,
8 and we've gotten -- well, I can't tell
9 you how much, but we have several
10 thousand dollars from the Turner
11 Foundation.

12 MR. SATTERFIELD: So do you have a budget and
13 do you have a time line on your plans
14 for when you would do these two
15 projects, the visitors center and the
16 fire tower? Are we talking about a
17 year, two or three years? What's the
18 time line and how are you going to fund
19 it?

20 MR. LANIER: Well, we -- we -- before we even
21 build the visitors center and the fire
22 tower, we're putting up a bridge -- a
23 historic bridge across the Chanahatchee

1 Creek. That should be done this year,
2 depending on the engineering that
3 Commissioner Blankenship has stated that
4 the State would provide.

5 But we do not have the time line for
6 installing the visitors center and the
7 tower, but we do have a budget for the
8 tower. I know exactly what it's going
9 to cost me. The business center, we
10 propose to get a grant for that.

11 MR. SATTERFIELD: I guess, then, that raises
12 the question to me that if we deal with
13 this soon and authorize the purchase of
14 the sale of this property to the trails
15 association, would it be wise to have a
16 clause in there that is a reverter so
17 that if for some reason over the next
18 two, three, however many years it takes
19 to actually complete the projects, if
20 those don't actually materialize, then
21 that land reverts back to Forever Wild?

22 Have we ever -- have we ever gotten
23 involved in working out the details of

1 something like that? Because we --
2 we're talking about a substantial amount
3 of time involved in this project.

4 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Correct. And I think
5 he offered that in his comments.

6 MR. LANIER: I offered that, sir. I can read
7 it to you again if you want me to.

8 I say we recognize that Forever Wild
9 may have concerns if the CRATA
10 organization ceases to exist. At the
11 CRATA January 27 board meeting, a
12 resolution was passed that if CRATA
13 fails to complete the proposed building
14 projects within ten years of the
15 purchase of the property or if CRATA
16 ceases to exist at any time as a
17 nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, the
18 property will revert back to Forever
19 Wild as a donation and be so stated in
20 any purchase agreement made with Forever
21 Wild and any resulting deed.

22 So we can put it in the deed that it
23 will revert.

1 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: So to kind of finish up
2 this conversation, I think -- it seems
3 like the board would like to see maybe
4 some more financial information, a
5 budget or some additional information to
6 show that this could be a viable
7 project; if the board decided to
8 transfer the property or sell the
9 property, that it could be a -- could
10 have some opportunity for success. Am
11 I -- would more information be helpful
12 on that?

13 MR. JONES: Mr. Chairman?

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

15 MR. JONES: A suggestion: I would get staff
16 to work with this organization and come
17 up with a legit purchase and sale
18 agreement that outlines all of these
19 different things in there -- this
20 verbiage in there, then report back to
21 the board, and then we can decide
22 whether we want to go forward with that
23 or not.

1 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. Fair
2 enough. We'll do that. We'll work with
3 you, Mr. Lanier, on that.

4 MR. LANIER: Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. That was
6 the last public speaker. Now it's time
7 where we'll move into executive session.

8 By regulation, appraisal 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 a recess for
13 an executive session. Is there a motion
14 for the board to now recess to attend
15 the executive session?

16 MR. OATES: So moved.

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Moved by Mr. Oates. Is
18 there a second?

19 MR. DARNALL: Second.

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by
21 Mr. Darnall.

22 As I call your name, please state
23 your position on the motion to recess by

1 saying -- if you're in favor, say "aye."

2 Chris Blankenship, aye.

3 Jack Darnall?

4 MR. DARNALL: Aye.

5 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Holloway?

6 MR. HOLLOWAY: Aye.

7 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Jones?

8 MR. JONES: Aye.

9 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Powers?

10 DR. POWERS: Aye.

11 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Saloom?

12 DR. SALOOM: Aye.

13 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Sims?

14 DR. SIMS: Aye.

15 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Tolley-Jordan?

16 DR. TOLLEY-JORDAN: Aye.

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Valentine?

18 DR. VALENTINE: Aye.

19 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Wright?

20 MR. WRIGHT: Aye.

21 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Childers?

22 MR. CHILDERS: Aye.

23 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. McClintock?

1 DR. McCLINTOCK: Aye.

2 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Neumann?

3 DR. NEUMANN: Aye.

4 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Satterfield?

5 MR. SATTERFIELD: Aye.

6 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Oates?

7 MR. OATES: Aye.

8 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. We are now
9 in recess for executive session. It's
10 10:47. We hope to be back in 20 to 25
11 minutes.

12 **(Recess for executive session was**
13 **taken at approximately 10:47 a.m.**
14 **and the meeting was called back to**
15 **order at approximately 11:13 a.m.)**

16 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: We are back from
17 executive session and back into regular
18 session at 11:13. We'll move to agenda
19 item number 5, and that begins with our
20 financial data.

21 I think I also would like to point
22 out that on Tab 5-I is the Forever Wild
23 Board of Trustees annual report that we

1 provide to the Lieutenant Governor and
2 the legislature. It just is a good
3 synopsis of all the activities of the
4 last year. So that is one of --
5 hopefully you've had a chance to read
6 that since you got your packet, but if
7 not, I hope that you'll take some time
8 to look back over some of the good work
9 that you-all did and the staff has done
10 over the past year.

11 So Ms. Powell -- or Ms. McCurdy.

12 MS. McCURDY: All right. And for the benefit
13 of the public attending today, during
14 this section of the meeting I will run
15 through what we call various program
16 status reports. Some are financial
17 reports and some reflect our efforts on
18 securing grant funds.

19 So for the board, we're in Tab --
20 I'll begin in Tab 2, Tab 2-A. And I
21 want to first start updating the board
22 as to tracts that have been previously
23 motioned for second appraisal and

1 purchase that we were working on and
2 combine that update with a financial
3 update to let you have an idea of how
4 much money you've got to work with.

5 The current cash balance in the
6 account is about \$22.6 million.

7 The properties that we are working
8 on getting toward closing are: Cedar
9 Creek SOA-Elm Bluff Addition, Dallas
10 County; Red Hills-Parris Trust Addition,
11 Monroe County; Cedar Creek SOA Addition,
12 Dallas County; and MTD-The Cutoff Tract,
13 Baldwin County.

14 When we look at both the Forever
15 Wild cost of acquisition as well as the
16 15-percent figured off the full
17 appraised value, regardless of the
18 Forever Wild cost portion, we have the
19 15 percent that we calculate and is
20 transferred with each purchase to the
21 stewardship account, which is a
22 long-term account that provides money to
23 assure that we are able to take care of

1 the properties perpetually. When we add
2 all that together and subtract it from
3 the current cash balance, you currently
4 have an encumbered balance/uncommitted
5 balance of about \$19.5 million.

6 Any questions on that information?

7 (No response.)

8 MS. McCURDY: All right. I would like to just
9 run through and review for you the
10 tracts that we have closed or either
11 were not able to close in this fiscal
12 year. The fiscal year -- new fiscal
13 year started October 1. So let me give
14 you those updates.

15 The Coldwater Mountain-Young
16 Addition, the offer on that property was
17 declined by the landowner. So that will
18 not be available.

19 D'Olive Bay, Little River State
20 Forest Addition, Perdido WMA-McNeill
21 Addition, and Thigpen Hill Option A
22 Phase I, all of those are fully closed
23 into the program.

1 Any question on those closings?

2 (No response.)

3 MS. McCURDY: All right. We'll then move to
4 the next item, 2-B, which is an update
5 to the board of the expenditures that
6 have occurred to date from the
7 stewardship fund that I mentioned.

8 We had an approved budgeted
9 authority for this fiscal year of
10 \$1.5 million. To date we have spent
11 just under \$250,000 of that. We are
12 entering the time of year when there
13 will be a lot more on-the-ground
14 activities. So that will start
15 declining, but we still believe we are
16 fine within that budgeted authority and
17 can accomplish what we need to
18 accomplish this year for the board.

19 You will also see reflected our
20 usual update as to net assets for the
21 stewardship fund. As of December 31st,
22 2020, that value was \$44.9 million,
23 almost 45, and that is up from the

1 September 30, 2020, net assets value of
2 just over \$42 million.

3 Following that in a little more
4 detail in Tab 2-C is the standard report
5 we get from the Treasurer's office that
6 the Commissioner has been working on
7 with them.

8 Any questions on the stewardship
9 fund status?

10 (No response.)

11 MS. McCURDY: All right. And, Commissioner,
12 if you have none, I will move on into --
13 the next item is an update for the board
14 and the public as to tracts where we
15 have -- the board previously motioned
16 for a first appraisal. And so I want to
17 report on the status of all of those
18 tracts that received that motion from
19 the board and let you know which
20 appraisals we have in or not and give
21 you that information.

22 So we're on Tab 3-A. The
23 properties, as I mentioned, that have

1 received first appraisals and that we
2 have some level of appraisal information
3 back in at this point are as follows:
4 Coldwater Mountain-Carroll Addition,
5 Calhoun County; Coldwater Mountain-McVey
6 Addition; Coldwater Mountain-Oxanna
7 Addition; D'Olive Bay Addition; Joe
8 Wheeler State-Park Page Branch Addition;
9 Oak Mountain State Park-Belcher Lake
10 Addition, Shelby County --

11 I'm sorry. I left off some of the
12 counties.

13 -- Mill Creek, Lee County; Shelby
14 Crossroads, Shelby County; Thigpen Hill
15 Option A Phase II in Butler County.

16 Now, I will note that of those
17 properties, while there is some
18 information available, there are a few
19 of those that do not have the final
20 report to us or have not been delivered
21 in time to have them reviewed for you
22 today. So let me note those.

23 We are still waiting on the final

1 report on the D'Olive Bay Addition. We
2 are still waiting on the final report --
3 but we are days from it, I believe -- on
4 the Oak Mountain State Park-Belcher Lake
5 Addition.

6 And then the -- an additional
7 property, the D'Olive Bay-Barnhill
8 Addition, that was motioned by the
9 board, but we were not able to actually
10 initiate that appraisal. That's the
11 only motioned appraisal -- I'm sorry.
12 It has now been initiated but not in
13 time to receive it back. So I guess
14 what I'm saying is that's the only one
15 that I really have no feedback to the
16 board on, but we should have it by the
17 next meeting.

18 As the board may know, after you
19 motion for a first appraisal, staff then
20 works with the landowner to try to get
21 the deed information for sure, and then
22 if there are any easements or leases or
23 anything else that might impact the

1 value of the property, we do our best to
2 gather all that information on the front
3 end so that the resulting appraisal is
4 accurate and we don't have to go back to
5 the appraiser later and update or spend
6 more money on additional appraisal work.
7 So we try to have that together before
8 we initiate the appraisal. And we were
9 delayed in getting all that we need on
10 Barnhill, and we're still working with
11 that landowner.

12 But all that having been said, the
13 feedback I can give the board is that
14 just for those properties, the rough
15 valuation would be over \$17 million. So
16 that's what you currently have in the
17 hopper that you're evaluating. So the
18 \$19 million isn't as high as it seems
19 like but -- that we talked about before.

20 So any questions from the board on
21 appraised nomination list information?

22 (No response.)

23 MS. McCURDY: If there are no questions on

1 that information, then I would direct
2 the board to -- I'll give you a minute
3 to get there -- but Tab 5-A.

4 This is where at each meeting we
5 take this time to update the board and
6 the public on various efforts that have
7 been underway to find some form of
8 leveraging money for the Forever Wild
9 Board's dollar. Sometimes that's on a
10 partnership basis. Sometimes that is
11 grant-based. It can be many different
12 types of leveraging.

13 But we are always trying to look out
14 for that. The board can acquire any
15 property it desires without such
16 funding, but we like to let the board
17 know if we think we're on the trail to
18 some grant funding. So I want to run
19 through the status of the various tracts
20 that are benefiting from some type of
21 leverage purchase.

22 A brief update on the previously
23 nominated tracts that are in closing

1 that I mentioned before, Cedar Creek SOA
2 Addition and Cedar Creek-Elm Bluff
3 Addition. Both of those tracts are
4 benefiting from partnership with DCNR's
5 Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries
6 Division.

7 Director Chuck Sykes and his
8 division receives Pittman-Robertson
9 funding from the federal government that
10 he then at times will come to the board
11 with offers of partnership with Forever
12 Wild dollars. That grant program
13 requires a state-sourced match for those
14 grants for 25 percent of the value.
15 So Chuck's division wouldn't be able to
16 take advantage of those funds but for
17 that type of state source, which really
18 is just the Forever Wild program.

19 So we partner with them a good bit,
20 and those two tracts are in closing
21 previously motioned by the board and
22 moving along fine. I just wanted to
23 remind everyone that those are

1 benefiting from PR funds.

2 The MTD-The Cutoff Tract is in the
3 initial stages of us gathering and
4 reviewing due diligence on that tract.
5 That seems to be going fine, but we are
6 still gathering the due diligence such
7 as the environmental assessments that we
8 do as one example. So we'll continue to
9 update the board.

10 But that tract will benefit from the
11 National Coastal Wetlands Conservation
12 Grant Program granted from the U.S. Fish
13 and Wildlife Service. And on that
14 grant, the end benefit -- the leverage
15 benefit will be 52 percent of the
16 tract's appraised value. So, again,
17 that one seems to be moving forward
18 fine.

19 To update you as to potential
20 partnership or leveraging opportunities
21 of the appraised-list nominations, the
22 tracts on Tab 3-A: The Mill Creek
23 Tract, which you heard discussed, this

1 is a tract that Director Sykes has
2 offered for his division to partner with
3 Forever Wild on a 75/25 valuation split,
4 Forever Wild providing 25 -- in this
5 case I think it's 25.3 percent of
6 funding. And that funding will match
7 Chuck's -- now, the resulting acreage,
8 the value acreage, Chuck's -- the
9 Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries
10 Division would be titled to DCNR,
11 Department of Conservation, and then
12 obviously the Forever Wild portion of
13 acreage would be titled to Forever Wild.
14 But they will be managed together.

15 I'm going to stop for just a second
16 on that one and see if there are any
17 questions on Mill Creek or, Chuck, if
18 there's anything you wanted to --
19 additional information you wanted to
20 give.

21 Questions for Chuck?

22 MR. WRIGHT: Yes.

23 MS. McCURDY: Mr. Wright.

1 MR. WRIGHT: These questions --

2 MS. McCURDY: Wait. Get to the mic a little
3 closer. I'm sorry.

4 MR. WRIGHT: I think these questions would be
5 for Chuck.

6 MS. McCURDY: Okay.

7 MR. WRIGHT: Someone brought it up earlier
8 in -- well, Mr. Johnson when he was
9 here. Are you trespassing on SOA land
10 when you just go out there?

11 MR. SYKES: The way Mill Creek has been
12 blocked up with Wildlife and Freshwater
13 Fisheries and Forever Wild, Forever Wild
14 has road frontage where people -- if the
15 board decides to put trails, whatever
16 they want to do, they've got an access
17 that won't impact -- negatively impact
18 the SOA.

19 Now, as far as the others go, Keith
20 has already met with Mr. Johnson. I'm
21 not the legal staff that needs to say
22 whether it's illegal or not. I think
23 there could be accommodations made on

1 the Forever Wild acreage. On our
2 acreage is different.

3 MR. WRIGHT: On your acreage, you're going to
4 have to check --

5 MR. SYKES: On the Forever Wild acreage and
6 the Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries
7 acreage -- I can't tell you legally if
8 you're trespassing if you step foot on
9 Forever Wild. On Wildlife and
10 Freshwater Fisheries, if you're not
11 hunting, unless we set aside special
12 opportunities for you to do that, yes,
13 sir.

14 But, again, Keith has already talked
15 to Mr. Johnson, and I think some
16 concessions can be made.

17 MR. WRIGHT: All right. The Mill Creek is in
18 an underserved area; correct?

19 MR. SYKES: Yes.

20 MR. WRIGHT: The closest thing to it would be
21 Russell County, which is still an SOA --
22 I mean, another SOA, Uchee Creek.

23 MR. SYKES: And Barbour County, which is a

1 WMA.

2 MR. WRIGHT: Which is a WMA. How far is it
3 down to Barbour County?

4 MR. SYKES: It's probably 30, 45 minutes.

5 MR. WRIGHT: Okay. Not very far.

6 So fish ponds that's on SOA
7 property, have they been utilized by the
8 public?

9 MR. SYKES: Can they or will they?

10 MR. WRIGHT: Both. Can they or will they?

11 MR. SYKES: We have in our plans to use those
12 for adult-mentored fishing
13 opportunities. And I'm not saying that
14 we can't make arrangements for a fishing
15 weekend or something.

16 MR. WRIGHT: Okay. I think that answers my
17 questions there. But my concern is the
18 SOA in Lee County is not going to serve
19 Lee County residents other than someone
20 that goes through your randomly drawn
21 computer system. So we're only serving
22 just a few people. That's my only
23 concern.

1 I like your SOAs. I'm not against
2 them. They are a good situation.

3 MR. SYKES: For our new members that may not
4 understand what the SOA program is --
5 all right. Can you hear me now?

6 The SOA program is basically -- what
7 we do is we take smaller tracts of land
8 that we acquire with the assistance of
9 Forever Wild. We'll break, say, a 5,000
10 acre piece of property down into units,
11 anywhere from 3- to 500 acres. And you
12 go online and you register to be able to
13 hunt that piece of property.

14 If you are selected, you and one
15 partner during deer and turkey season --
16 small game hunts you can take three --
17 you get one of those units. That is
18 your hunt. That is your place that
19 nobody is going to be there but you.

20 So we're managing them completely
21 different from a typical WMA where it's
22 a high-volume atmosphere. This is a
23 low-volume, low-pressure, higher-quality

1 hunt. So that's basically what an SOA
2 is.

3 And I understand your point, yes,
4 sir. We can't guarantee that only Lee
5 County residents are going to be able to
6 hunt Mill Creek SOA. However,
7 underserved community is more than just
8 hunters. Underserved community may be
9 the gas stations and the restaurants and
10 things that's around that area that
11 we're bringing people in. So if you're
12 just looking at strictly hunting, I
13 can't guarantee you how many Lee County
14 residents are going to be there, but I
15 can tell you we'll be bringing business
16 into all the area, all the little
17 communities around that area.

18 MR. WRIGHT: Well, I support your SOA
19 completely, but I cannot support an SOA
20 over there.

21 MR. SYKES: I understand.

22 MR. WRIGHT: That's just where I stand.

23 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Jones.

1 MR. JONES: Chuck, what about when it's not
2 deer or turkey season? How are those
3 lands managed?

4 MR. SYKES: Right now the SOAs are managed by
5 us, and that's when we're doing
6 roadwork, habitat work, and things like
7 that. We haven't had an issue so far.
8 Apparently now we're fixing to with
9 public access. So we will make
10 accommodations as long as it's not
11 during turkey season or deer season or
12 when we've got small game hunts. We can
13 make some arrangements.

14 We have been working through this
15 which is why now the Mill Creek has
16 Forever Wild properties where there is
17 easy road access where you're not having
18 to go through the middle of the property
19 and go back to a hiking trail. So this
20 program is evolving. We knew it would.
21 So we're making the necessary
22 adjustments as we go.

23 MR. CHILDERS: Commissioner?

1 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Childers.

2 MR. CHILDERS: Do you manage all the SOAs in
3 the state?

4 MR. SYKES: Yes, sir.

5 MR. CHILDERS: How many acres of SOA do you
6 have under your management?

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: 15.

8 MR. SYKES: 15,000.

9 MR. CHILDERS: How many participants total
10 take part in that 15,000 acres in a
11 year?

12 MR. SYKES: I'll get your information. I
13 presented the board with all of this at
14 the last meeting. I can give you --

15 MR. CHILDERS: Oh, I'm sorry.

16 MR. SYKES: Yes, sir. I can give you that
17 whole breakdown of everything.

18 MR. CHILDERS: I probably can get it from
19 Patti if it's a matter of record.

20 MS. McCURDY: Oh, absolutely.

21 MR. SYKES: I can get it for you, yes, sir.

22 MR. CHILDERS: Thank you.

23 MR. WRIGHT: Chuck, I thought that Dallas

1 County has 21,000.

2 MR. SYKES: 15,000 is not correct.

3 MR. WRIGHT: No.

4 MR. SYKES: Cedar Creek and Dallas is about
5 16,000. Then you've got Uchee Creek.

6 It's probably closer to 20- or 25,000.

7 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. Thank you.

8 MS. McCURDY: Ready to move on?

9 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes.

10 MS. McCURDY: All right. So in addition to
11 Mill Creek, we also have the Oak
12 Mountain State Park-Belcher Addition
13 that is a property on the appraised
14 nomination list, but we are pursuing
15 grant funding with the help and the lead
16 of the Alabama Forestry Commission,
17 Mr. Oates and his staff.

18 And under that program, that is a
19 U.S. Forest Service grant program,
20 Forest Legacy, and has a similar 75/25
21 percent valuation share. And so we have
22 been working with the Forestry
23 Commission to be sure that the appraisal

1 process necessary, should that grant
2 award come through, works with the
3 Forever Wild appraisal process.

4 And we've been trying to work those
5 together, and we're, as I said, close to
6 having a final award of that. I can
7 give the board more information at the
8 next meeting on exactly what the split
9 would look like. As you saw, similar to
10 the Mill Creek map that's attached to
11 5-A, we'll give you the map that shows
12 sort of the final split.

13 Under that grant, the 75 percent
14 value acreage will be titled to DCNR
15 State Parks Division there next to Oak
16 Mountain State Park. We're also going
17 to benefit from acres that the State
18 Parks Division will be purchasing that
19 will give a continuity to the larger
20 tract and also in effect reduce the
21 amount that the Forever Wild Board would
22 have to contribute from the original
23 footprint of the original nomination.

1 So that's an example of a partnership
2 opportunity from State Parks.

3 Yes, sir, Dr. McClintock.

4 DR. McCLINTOCK: Is that a single owner that
5 owns all that land (inaudible) --

6 MS. McCURDY: And I think Tracye -- did you
7 get that?

8 I think the question was if it was a
9 single owner for the acreage for that
10 nomination and, yes, it is.

11 DR. McCLINTOCK: Does that owner have a
12 foundation?

13 MS. McCURDY: Be sure your microphone is on.
14 You may have a faulty mic. I'm sorry.

15 DR. McCLINTOCK: Does the owner have a
16 foundation? Does the family have a
17 foundation? Have we looked into whether
18 they might gift some of that land to
19 offset the price?

20 MS. McCURDY: We always do discuss with
21 landowners the possibility of an acreage
22 donation as an example. This family has
23 not -- this landowner has not yet

1 volunteered that. But, you know, I
2 think, too, we are still at a stage
3 where we are working on getting a final
4 appraisal and continuing discussions.
5 But at this point there's been no such
6 offer of a contribution, so to speak.

7 MR. McCLINTOCK: Okay. Thank you.

8 MS. McCURDY: Any additional questions?

9 (No response.)

10 MS. McCURDY: All right. Moving along, as I
11 mentioned, the D'Olive Bay Addition, we
12 don't quite have the final version of
13 that appraisal report. But that
14 addition would also benefit from the
15 National Coastal Wetlands Conservation
16 Grant Program and would provide a
17 52-percent leverage on the appraised
18 value for that tract.

19 And the same opportunity is
20 available to the D'Olive Bay-Barnhill
21 Addition. Again, however, we do not
22 have that report back yet.

23 We also have a short-list

1 nomination, Styx River Wetlands. That
2 tract is -- we have applied for the U.S.
3 Fish and Wildlife Service National
4 Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant
5 Program on that one also. We had
6 initially had an indication that we
7 would hear something in January. We
8 have not yet -- there hasn't been an
9 award announcement for that cycle of the
10 program. So we really don't know
11 anything. But, again, we hope to know
12 something soon. Although I will say,
13 sometimes with an administration change,
14 those type of announcements might drag
15 out a little bit. But we'll keep the
16 board updated on that.

17 So any additional questions as far
18 as grant opportunities?

19 (No response.)

20 MS. McCURDY: Okay. Then what we'll do next
21 is if you could turn to Tab 4-A of your
22 packet. At this time of the meeting we
23 will run through the tracts that have

1 made the short list and therefore, if
2 the board desires, are available for a
3 motion for a first appraisal.

4 Each nomination is confirmed as
5 having a willing seller and is scored in
6 four categories: Nature preserve,
7 recreation, state park acreage, or WMA
8 or SOA type acreage. The tracts are
9 scored under each of those four
10 categories.

11 They then compete with each other in
12 the northern, central, and southern
13 districts of the state as the Forever
14 Wild law divides those districts. So
15 they compete against each other in the
16 district. And the nomination must score
17 at least in the top three of one of the
18 four categories in a district to make
19 the short list.

20 A lot of times you'll have a tract
21 that might score in multiple categories
22 just due to its features. So the number
23 of tracts we have on the short list will

1 vary with each meeting. It's also a
2 living list, so to speak. So by the
3 next meeting, if we have a new
4 nomination that scores and beats out a
5 current tract, a new nomination could
6 knock off a current short-list
7 nomination.

8 But I'm going to run through -- I
9 know we're running a little long, so I'm
10 going to just run through the list of
11 short-list nominations. If a board
12 member has a question, please just stop
13 me. If I'm not looking up, please just
14 speak up where I can hear it.

15 The tracts that are currently on the
16 short list: Coldwater Mountain-Andrews
17 Addition; Coosa County WMA-Hatchet Creek
18 Addition; Cypress Creek Tract; Hollins
19 WMA Additions; Lowndes WMA-Fuzzell
20 Addition; Minamac Wildflower Bog;
21 Natural Bridge Park; Patsaliga Creek,
22 Perdido Headwaters-Brushy Creek; Saginaw
23 Swamp; Sedgefield Tract; Sipse River

1 Swamp-Wilson Addition; Styx River
2 Wetlands; Walls of Jericho-Bradford
3 Addition; and Walls of Jericho-Woodall
4 Addition.

5 If anybody had a question and I
6 missed you, please speak up.

7 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Holloway.

8 MR. HOLLOWAY: Mr. Chairman, would it be
9 appropriate at this time to make a
10 motion?

11 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: I think we can make the
12 motions in general discussion, the next
13 section of the agenda. If there's no
14 questions on --

15 MS. McCURDY: I mean, that's it. I think
16 we're ready for that segment actually.

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. We'll move
18 to general discussion. Do you have a
19 motion?

20 MR. HOLLOWAY: Yes, I do, Mr. Chairman. I
21 would like to make a motion for staff to
22 proceed with a first appraisal for
23 Saginaw Swamp.

1 DR. McCLINTOCK: I'll second that.

2 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. So the
3 motion by Mr. Holloway is for a first
4 appraisal on the Saginaw Swamp property,
5 160 acres in Shelby County. That is
6 seconded by Dr. McClintock.

7 Is there any discussion on that?

8 MR. SATTERFIELD: Mr. Chairman?

9 MS. McCURDY: Tab 4-B, page 21.

10 MR. SATTERFIELD: This is Saginaw Swamp?

11 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir.

12 MS. McCURDY: Yes, sir.

13 MR. SATTERFIELD: I hate to disagree with my
14 friend Mr. Holloway, but I would just
15 reiterate the same concerns that I
16 raised last time in the last meeting
17 about this piece of property. I think
18 it is not really suitable for Forever
19 Wild property. I think that either the
20 county or the city would do a better job
21 of protecting it, and I think we have
22 other higher-priority tracts in Shelby
23 County that we should be focusing on.

1 And so for that reason, I'll still raise
2 my opposition to proceeding with this
3 appraisal process on this property.

4 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. Thank you,
5 sir.

6 MR. HOLLOWAY: Mr. Chairman?

7 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Holloway.

8 MR. HOLLOWAY: I'm only requesting to get a
9 first appraisal at this time.

10 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir.

11 MR. SATTERFIELD: I'm sorry. I didn't hear
12 that.

13 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: He just said that they
14 were just requesting the first appraisal
15 on the property.

16 MR. SATTERFIELD: I know. I know.

17 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Jones.

18 MR. JONES: Mr. Chairman, my only problem with
19 getting a first appraisal is it seems
20 like there's a lot of opposition to
21 this, and I would hate to see us spend
22 dollars -- you know, that's going to
23 cost us 5- or \$6,000 just to get an

1 appraisal. And if it's something that,
2 you know, we feel like we're going to
3 buy, I'm all for that, but I would
4 resist getting a first appraisal simply
5 on -- there seems to be a lot of
6 opposition.

7 MR. HOLLOWAY: Mr. Chairman?

8 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Holloway.

9 MR. HOLLOWAY: What seems to be the
10 opposition?

11 I heard what Mr. Satterfield said.
12 Is there any other opposition?

13 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Mr. Childers, do you
14 have a comment or a -- I think I saw
15 your hand.

16 MR. CHILDERS: Not to that subject. But my
17 question is, is this a standalone
18 property? Do we have any other
19 properties adjoining this or in
20 connection with this?

21 MS. McCURDY: No, sir, we do not, not
22 currently.

23 MR. CHILDERS: Do we have anything close to

1 it?

2 MS. McCURDY: We have several properties in
3 Shelby County.

4 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any other discussion?
5 Dr. Saloom.

6 DR. SALOOM: Yeah. In further discussion on
7 this, wasn't this the piece of property
8 that had some wetlands that had been
9 filled in or sold adjacent to this
10 property and it has significant amount
11 of wetlands inside this property with
12 the railroad to the west and that we had
13 some concerns about those messing the
14 wetlands up?

15 MS. McCURDY: I'm sorry. What was the last
16 part about the wetlands?

17 DR. SALOOM: I'm sorry?

18 MS. McCURDY: Your last comment about the
19 wetlands was a little muffled. We
20 couldn't hear.

21 DR. SALOOM: I thought there was some
22 discussion regarding imposing more
23 problems on that wetlands.

1 DR. McCLINTOCK: Yeah. I recall at our last
2 meeting we discussed there was a risk
3 that the wetlands would be filled in
4 eventually (inaudible) --

5 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: So, Dr. McClintock,
6 just to make sure the court reporter
7 heard, the discussion at the last
8 meeting was if this property is
9 developed, those wetlands might be
10 filled in -- was the discussion that was
11 at the last meeting.

12 All right. Well, I think after a
13 good discussion -- I think we should
14 take a vote on -- so the motion on the
15 table is to move for a first appraisal
16 on the Saginaw Swamp property, the 160
17 acres. If you're in favor of that,
18 please raise your hand.

19 (Hands raised in favor.)

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: One, two, three, four,
21 five.

22 And if you're opposed, please raise
23 your hand.

1 (Hands raised in opposition.)

2 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: One, two, three, four
3 five.

4 MS. McCURDY: We would need nine votes --

5 MR. CHILDERS: I would like to abstain,
6 please.

7 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir. Mr. Childers
8 would like to abstain.

9 DR. SIMS: (Inaudible.)

10 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Ma'am?

11 DR. SIMS: So would I abstain.

12 MS. McCURDY: Dr. Sims said she would also
13 like to abstain.

14 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Since the motion did
15 not carry with nine affirmative votes,
16 the motion fails.

17 All right. Any other -- Mr. Jones.

18 MR. JONES: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make a
19 motion to move for a second appraisal
20 and purchase of the Thigpen Hill Tract
21 Option A Phase II.

22 MR. SATTERFIELD: I second that motion.

23 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by

1 Mr. Satterfield.

2 So the motion by Mr. Jones and
3 seconded by Mr. Satterfield is for a
4 second appraisal and move to purchase
5 the Thigpen Hill Option A Phase II
6 property.

7 MS. McCURDY: And that's Tab 3-B, page 11, if
8 anyone needs help.

9 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any discussion on that,
10 questions?

11 (No response.)

12 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All those in favor say
13 "aye."

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

16 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any opposed?

17 (No response.)

18 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: None opposed. The
19 motion carries.

20 Dr. Powers.

21 DR. POWERS: I'd like to make a motion to
22 proceed with second appraisal and
23 purchase of the Mill Creek Tract

1 contingent upon Wildlife and Freshwater
2 Fisheries Division providing the funds
3 at approximately a three-to-one match.

4 MR. SATTERFIELD: I second that motion.

5 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Motion by Dr. Powers
6 and seconded by Mr. Satterfield to move
7 for a second appraisal and move to
8 purchase on the Mill Creek property
9 contingent upon Wildlife and Freshwater
10 Fisheries Division providing
11 approximately a three-to-one match.

12 Any discussion or questions on that?

13 Jack.

14 MR. DARNALL: This is the property that has
15 the enclosed two pieces, the parcel and
16 all that kind of stuff. I'm curious as
17 to -- and this may not be for me to ask
18 a question. But what does that mean
19 when there's captive property in that?
20 Does this owner -- does he have a
21 private forest around it?

22 I know that's presumptuous, but I'm
23 just not -- I don't have the tenure on

1 the board for that.

2 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Sure. We deal with
3 this on a lot of the properties that
4 have some inholdings and, you know, we
5 work with those property owners or
6 landowners to manage around them. And a
7 lot of times -- you know, just as an
8 aside, a lot of times those inholdings
9 end up being closed in. They decide --
10 the people decide they would like their
11 property to be a portion -- a part of
12 the Forever Wild or Wildlife and
13 Freshwater Fisheries property.

14 Seeing no other hands, all those in
15 favor of moving for a second appraisal
16 and move to purchase on the Mill Creek
17 property, please say "aye."

18 (All board members excluding
19 Mr. Wright respond "aye.")

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any opposed?

21 (Mr. Wright raises hand.)

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: One opposed,
23 Mr. Wright.

1 All right. Motion carries with one
2 negative.

3 DR. SALOOM: Is this an appropriate time to
4 address Mr. Payne's request?

5 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir.

6 DR. SALOOM: Okay. I make a motion that the
7 board approve staff proceeding with the
8 sale of a 15-by-15 foot area and
9 granting of the associated 15-foot-wide
10 pipeline right of way to Clint Payne as
11 described in the memo dated
12 January 26th, 2021, pursuant to the
13 condition that Mr. Payne pays the
14 necessary appraisal and survey costs in
15 addition to paying the appraised value
16 of the interests in land to be
17 transferred.

18 MS. McCURDY: And that's Tab 5-C for any board
19 members looking for that.

20 MR. OATES: I'll second that.

21 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by Mr. Oates.

22 I won't reread the motion. I think
23 it was pretty clear.

1 Is there any discussion on that, any
2 questions?

3 MR. SATTERFIELD: I've just -- for matter of
4 information, Patti, I just have a
5 question.

6 When we do these transactions like
7 this, where do those funds go? Do they
8 just go back into Forever Wild, or do
9 they go into the general fund?

10 MS. McCURDY: These funds actually go back
11 into Forever Wild.

12 MR. SATTERFIELD: Unlike the timber. The
13 timber purchase price, that goes into
14 the general fund; right?

15 MS. McCURDY: Correct.

16 MR. SATTERFIELD: Because these are already
17 acquired Forever Wild lands, this money
18 comes back into Forever Wild?

19 MS. McCURDY: Right. Because the timber is
20 revenue generated off the land and this
21 is a transfer of an interest.

22 I'm looking at Jennifer to confirm.
23 But, yes, that -- well, I don't know.

1 Hold on. Let me see Jennifer. That may
2 be -- we'll confirm. We'll confirm.

3 MR. SATTERFIELD: Okay.

4 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Does that information
5 matter for the vote?

6 MR. SATTERFIELD: Oh, no. I was just asking
7 for clarification --

8 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. I just
9 wanted to make sure.

10 MR. SATTERFIELD: -- because I just had never
11 asked the question before.

12 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Sure.

13 All right. So all those in favor of
14 selling the 15-by-15 parcel and the
15 right of way to Mr. Payne, please say
16 "aye."

17 (All board members present respond
18 "aye.")

19 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any opposed?

20 (No response.)

21 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: None opposed. Motion
22 carries.

23 MR. McCLINTOCK: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to

1 make a motion for the second appraisal
2 of the Joe Wheeler State Park-Page
3 Branch Addition.

4 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right.

5 Dr. McClintock made a motion for a
6 second appraisal and move to purchase on
7 the Joe Wheeler State Park-Page
8 Addition. Is there a second?

9 DR. TOLLEY-JORDAN: Second.

10 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by

11 Dr. Tolley-Jordan.

12 Any discussion on that?

13 (No response.)

14 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. All those
15 in favor say "aye."

16 (All board members present respond
17 "aye.")

18 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any opposed?

19 (No response.)

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: None opposed. The
21 motion carries.

22 All right. I don't see any other
23 hands.

1 MR. JONES: One more.

2 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: One more. Mr. Jones.

3 MR. JONES: Mr. Chairman, I would like to
4 motion a first appraisal on the Hollins
5 WMA Addition in Clay County.

6 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Is there a second?

7 MR. OATES: Second.

8 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by Mr. Oates.

9 This is a motion for first appraisal
10 for the Hollins WMA --

11 MS. McCURDY: And that's in Tab 4-B, page 9.

12 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: -- in Clay County.

13 Clay County. Any questions about that?

14 (No response.)

15 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All those in favor,
16 please say "aye."

17 (All board members present respond
18 "aye.")

19 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any opposed?

20 (No response.)

21 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: None opposed. The
22 motion carries.

23 DR. SIMS: Mr. Chairman?

1 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Yes, ma'am.

2 DR. SIMS: I make a motion for staff to
3 proceed with a second appraisal and
4 purchase of the Oak Mountain State
5 Park-Belcher Lake nomination contingent
6 upon the Forest Legacy grant being
7 awarded and providing funding at
8 approximately a three-and-one match.

9 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Before I accept the
10 motion, we just have the valuation. We
11 have not had -- staff has not had a
12 opportunity to review the full
13 appraisal. Would you be okay if we just
14 held that until the next meeting to
15 ensure that the first appraisal has been
16 done according to the standards and is
17 appropriate?

18 DR. SIMS: Yes, sir.

19 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Would that be okay with
20 you, ma'am?

21 DR. SIMS: Yes, sir.

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Thank you.

23 All right. Thank you-all. Now

1 we'll move into the miscellaneous
2 reports.

3 MS. McCURDY: And we will be moving around in
4 Tab 5.

5 So to continue with a few things
6 that administratively -- at this section
7 I will bring up requests that maybe have
8 been made in writing if someone is not
9 here to discuss with the board or
10 certain administrative motions that are
11 necessary.

12 So if you'll start with Tab 5-E, I
13 had mentioned at a previous meeting we
14 were gathering some additional
15 information on this request. But the
16 North Alabama Electric Cooperative has
17 requested a utility line easement along
18 a road that runs through the
19 James D. Martin-Skyline WMA Crow
20 Addition in Jackson County.

21 Tab 5-E contains a little bit of a
22 map, but basically they're trying to
23 deliver power to a new residential home

1 that's being constructed nearby. Their
2 easement request is actually in the form
3 of following the line of poles which
4 actually crisscross the road. That is a
5 technique that they have begun using
6 that they believe lessens the impact to
7 the land and the timber that would be
8 taken with that configuration. So that
9 is something that the North Alabama
10 Electric Co-op has begun implementing.
11 As 5-E details, the request is for a
12 15-foot easement on both sides of the
13 line of the path of those poles.

14 Now, to give some history to the
15 board, the Co-op actually began some
16 work before realizing that a portion of
17 the area was owned by Forever Wild.
18 Once they discovered that, they came to
19 us, informed us of what they had done,
20 and asked what process they needed to
21 follow to actually get permission and an
22 easement from us. They have compensated
23 the program for, once again, the timber

1 damage, and the timber proceeds will go
2 into the general fund as Mr. Satterfield
3 has remarked.

4 Let me interject here,
5 Mr. Satterfield. We did confirm --
6 Legal did confirm -- I was correct --
7 that the revenue off of a sale or an
8 easement and transfer of land does stay
9 in the program, but timber revenue goes
10 to the general fund.

11 But, anyway, they paid us for that
12 damage. They have already given us a
13 check for that. We have estimated the
14 additional timber damage, and in both
15 cases it's less than approximately \$700.
16 The first amount was just over \$600.
17 The second amount we anticipate -- but
18 will follow up and confirm -- was just
19 over \$500.

20 So the Co-op has agreed to pay for
21 the appraisal costs that are necessary,
22 because we must transfer it at appraised
23 value, and any other costs associated,

1 you know, with the transfer. So
2 anything else that we need, they've
3 agreed to pay those costs.

4 And so if the board has any
5 questions, I will answer them. I can
6 tell you that both my State Lands
7 Division and Chuck's division from a WMA
8 standpoint have evaluated the request --
9 the location of the request and do not
10 see an impact to either recreation or
11 habitats on the WMA. So the staff has
12 no objection. But I wanted to bring the
13 request to the board in light of the
14 need for them to proceed with home
15 construction -- or for the resident to
16 proceed with home construction.

17 Any questions?

18 (No response.)

19 MS. McCURDY: If the board approves that
20 request, as with the others, I'll need a
21 board motion on that. You do not have
22 to, but if you agree with proceeding, I
23 will need a board motion.

1 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Dr. Saloom.

2 DR. SALOOM: I move that we approve that
3 proceeding with granting an easement
4 related to James D. Martin-Skyline WMA
5 requested by the North Alabama Electric
6 Cooperative as described in the memo
7 dated January 26, 2021.

8 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Is there a second?

9 MS. McCURDY: And that would be -- would you
10 like to continue with conditioning that
11 upon the expenses being paid by the
12 Co-op?

13 DR. SALOOM: Yes. Pursuant to the condition
14 that North Alabama Electric pays for
15 appraisal cost and the value of any
16 impacted timber in addition to the
17 appraised value of the interest to be
18 transferred.

19 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. Is there a
20 second?

21 MR. DARNALL: Second.

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by
23 Mr. Darnall.

1 I'll go ahead and read that just to
2 make sure everybody was able to hear.
3 The motion is for the board to approve
4 the staff proceeding with granting an
5 easement related to the
6 James D. Martin-Skyline WMA requested by
7 North Alabama Electric Cooperative as
8 described in the memo dated January
9 26th, 2021, pursuant to the condition
10 that North Alabama Electric pays for the
11 appraisal cost and the value of any
12 impacted timber in addition to the
13 appraised value of the interest to be
14 transferred.

15 So are there any questions on that?
16 Everybody clear on the motion?

17 (No response.)

18 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seeing no hands, all
19 those in favor say "aye."

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

22 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any opposed?

23 (No response.)

1 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: None opposed. The
2 motion carries.

3 MS. McCURDY: And then the next item is your
4 Tab 5-F. This is a standard request for
5 a motion and approval we bring to the
6 board when it's time to approve
7 management tracts. The law requires the
8 board to adopt at least an initial
9 management plan -- and it can be amended
10 over time -- but we do have to prepare a
11 management plan within a year of
12 acquisition of each tract that the
13 program requires. We bring these
14 requests to the board in advance of that
15 in case you have questions.

16 But for this meeting, I will now go
17 through the tracts that we need to talk
18 about. Sometimes we are amending an
19 existing management plan either because
20 it's an addition to a current tract or
21 it's an acquisition of a tract in the
22 area of another tract where it makes
23 sense to manage them under the same

1 management strategy. So let me run
2 through those.

3 For today the tracts -- we have
4 several Red Hills tracts that were
5 recently closed. The Red Hills
6 Complex-Baucom Addition, Flat Creek
7 Phase III Addition, and Brown Addition,
8 all in Monroe County. The board's --
9 the staff's recommendation would be for
10 these tracts to be added to the Red
11 Hills Complex Management Plan. And my
12 staff and Chuck's staff worked together
13 on the management plan that is attached
14 to 5-F for those tracts.

15 Other tracts that we need to address
16 include Portland Landing SOA-Gilmore
17 Addition in Dallas County. Management
18 tract for -- excuse me. Management plan
19 for that tract was developed by the
20 State Lands Division and the Wildlife
21 and Freshwater Fisheries Division and is
22 attached to 5-F.

23 The next property is the Monte Sano

1 State Park-McCombs Addition, Madison
2 County. We worked with the State Parks
3 Division on that management plan.

4 We then, the board will recall,
5 executed a land swap at the -- connected
6 to the Blakeley Historic State Park.
7 It's not one of our state parks, but a
8 State Historic Park that had Forever
9 Wild acreage. And we worked with
10 Blakeley to swap some acreage to allow
11 them to do some developments of cabins
12 that would provide some lodging at that
13 tract and enhance the usage of that
14 tract and utilization of that acreage.

15 As a result of the work on that
16 swap, we -- staff actually recommends
17 both development of a Blakeley Addition
18 Tract Plan and an amendment of the
19 Mobile-Tensaw Delta Complex Management
20 Plan. And we worked on that one with --
21 also with Chuck's division.

22 But, again, all of those plans are
23 attached to 5-F. I can answer any

1 questions the board might have at this
2 time.

3 I would note -- let me also mention,
4 the Red Hills tracts will be coming
5 under WMA management. As you may
6 recall, several meetings back when we
7 first began discussing the Red Hills
8 tract, Chuck and the Wildlife and
9 Freshwater Fisheries said that they
10 would begin managing that tract as a WMA
11 once a certain amount of acreage had
12 been acquired. That will begin when the
13 next regulations come out. So that
14 split will be approximately June.

15 Is that right, Chuck?

16 So we'll be probably coming back
17 with another amendment, but we do need
18 to get this amendment in place to meet
19 the one-year requirement. So that's why
20 you'll be hearing back again about the
21 Red Hills before too long.

22 If the board approves these
23 management plan actions, there's a

1 motion in Tab 5-F, and I would need a
2 board motion on that.

3 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Is there anybody that
4 is willing to make the motion to approve
5 these changes or additions to the
6 management plan as detailed --

7 DR. SIMS: Mr. Chairman?

8 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: I think Dr. Sims -- if
9 you could read that, that would be
10 great.

11 DR. SIMS: The board approves the State Lands
12 Division proceeding with the inclusion
13 of the Red Hills-Baucom Flat Creek Phase
14 III, Brown, Gilmore, and McCombs
15 Additions into an existing management
16 plan and management plan revision for
17 the Blakeley Addition Tract and
18 Mobile-Tensaw Delta Complex as set forth
19 in the memorandum dated February 4,
20 2021.

21 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: So the motion was by
22 Dr. Sims. Is there a second?

23 DR. NEUMANN: Second.

1 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by
2 Dr. Neumann.

3 I think everybody was able to hear
4 that. If you're in favor of adding
5 these management plans as motioned,
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. The
12 motion carries.

13 MS. McCURDY: And just a couple of quick
14 updates. Neither of these require any
15 board action. But they were discussed
16 at prior meetings, and so I wanted to
17 give a couple of those updates.

18 One, on the Coosa WMA-Hatchet Creek
19 Addition, we had mentioned we
20 anticipated a Coosa County Commission
21 meeting that that tract might be
22 discussed at. It was brought up and
23 discussed by the commission. They were

1 very appreciative of Forever Wild's
2 interaction and communication with them
3 on the nomination. But just on a
4 support vote by the commission, the vote
5 actually failed, and so the tract did
6 not gain support. It was a support vote
7 to gain support from the commission.
8 I wanted to update the board on that.

9 At our last meeting we had some
10 discussion in relation to the -- it was
11 prompted by the Shelby Crossroads
12 nomination, but it -- an offer of
13 support from Shelby County for some type
14 of vehicle-riding trail amenity at that
15 park and the willingness of the county
16 to assist in the event that the board
17 would agree to that activity on the
18 tract.

19 And so the board asked for some
20 information about other such trails
21 since Forever Wild does not currently
22 have that activity on any of its tracts.
23 I did confirm and talk with Shelby

1 County. They currently are not
2 operating any such trail. So there
3 really wasn't experience with it on
4 their end.

5 Our State Parks Division, Greg Lein,
6 is here today. He had -- he's got two
7 state parks where they are working on
8 providing that offering to meet the
9 demand for that activity. One is Buck's
10 Pocket. That trail has not been really
11 in operation since June of last year, so
12 we don't have much of a track record
13 there. I will -- and then Lakepoint
14 will be -- State Parks is currently
15 working on developing such a trail, what
16 they call an off-road vehicle trail.

17 So we really don't have a lot of
18 track record. I think that a couple of
19 the distinctions in the state parks
20 would be that those are staffed tracts.
21 They do have staff present. They have
22 staff present at Buck's Pocket that
23 takes the user fee. There's a \$10

1 vehicle fee that's collected there.

2 So State Parks really doesn't have a
3 lot of track record as to what that fee
4 relates to in connection with what are
5 obviously higher maintenance costs for
6 such a trail or the staff time connected
7 to that. Also, for Forever Wild, that
8 type of revenue generated would be
9 back -- that is the type of revenue that
10 would go back to the general fund, not
11 back to the program.

12 So I don't -- staff really doesn't
13 have at this time, I don't think, enough
14 of a track record as to the department
15 offering it. Again, Shelby County did
16 not (inaudible). So I think that we
17 would not recommend the activity be
18 implemented on the Crossroads tract at
19 this time. Although, having said that,
20 we could certainly do more work if the
21 board desires or look at another tract.

22 One site-specific aspect of the
23 Shelby County Crossroads that might

1 become problematic is adjacent to Shelby
2 County Crossroads are the historical
3 iron works properties. The Historical
4 Commission is currently doing some work
5 on site at those. That could create
6 both an issue as to being awarded a
7 Recreational Trails Program grant or
8 potential limitations we might encounter
9 if we did get a grant.

10 So I -- again, but we are happy to
11 do any more work if you want us to
12 pursue some type of agreement with
13 Shelby County. If you become interested
14 in that or have a different tract you
15 want us to do a specific analysis on, we
16 can do that. But I wanted to provide
17 that update. And I'll be sure Greg Lein
18 keeps us informed as to how, you know,
19 things progress at the state park
20 tracts.

21 Any questions on that or any other
22 directions to staff?

23 (No response.)

1 MS. McCURDY: If none, Commissioner, I
2 believe -- let me look at staff. Unless
3 there's something else, I think we've
4 covered what had not been previously
5 brought to the board's attention.

6 Unless there's other requests from the
7 board or something you want from staff,
8 I think I'm done.

9 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. Thank you.

10 The next order of business is
11 approval of the minutes from the
12 November 5th meeting. Is there a motion
13 to approve those minutes?

14 DR. McCLINTOCK: So move.

15 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: So moved by
16 Dr. McClintock.

17 MR. SATTERFIELD: Second.

18 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by
19 Mr. Satterfield.

20 Any corrections, additions,
21 notations? Anything from the minutes?

22 (No response.)

23 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: All right. All those

1 in favor of approval of those minutes,
2 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 The next meeting is scheduled for
10 May the 6th. We've have requests from a
11 couple of the board members to maybe
12 have that in the Huntsville area, north
13 Alabama. But we'll talk with the staff
14 and see what arrangements we can make
15 for the next meeting.

16 So I hope that the acoustics were
17 better here today and that everybody was
18 more pleased with the ability to
19 participate in the meeting. And so
20 we'll obviously try and find something
21 again that meets these same things. And
22 hopefully by May we'll be in maybe an
23 even better place when it comes to

1 COVID.

2 MS. McCURDY: One note -- I'm sorry -- I
3 forgot to mention. In your green folder
4 you'll have your travel sheet that you
5 record your travel. If you would, just
6 leave that on the table. We'll collect
7 it. I'm sorry.

8 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: So do we have a motion
9 to adjourn?

10 DR. SALOOM: So moved.

11 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: And a second?

12 (Multiple board members respond
13 "second.")

14 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Seconded by many.

15 All those in favor say "aye."

16 (All board members present respond
17 "aye.")

18 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: Any opposed?

19 (No response.)

20 CHAIRMAN BLANKENSHIP: None opposed. We are
21 adjourned. Thank you.

22 (Meeting adjourned at approximately
23 12:10 p.m.)

1 * * * * *

2 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

3 * * * * *

4 STATE OF ALABAMA:

5 MONTGOMERY COUNTY:

6 I, Tracye Sadler Blackwell, Certified
7 Court Reporter and Commissioner for the State of
8 Alabama at Large, do hereby certify that I reported
9 the foregoing proceedings of the Forever Wild Board
10 Meeting on February 4, 2021.

11 The foregoing 112 computer-printed pages
12 contain a true and correct transcript of the
13 proceedings held.

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

17 This 20th day of April 2018.

18
19
20 _____
21 Tracye S. Blackwell, CCR, RPR
22 ACCR No. 294
23 Expiration date: 9-30-2021
Certified Court Reporter
and Commissioner for the State
of Alabama at Large