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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; Sedgfield 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