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MINUTES OF THE
FOREVER WILD BOARD MEETING
REID STATE TECHNICAL COLLEGE
EVERGREEN, ALABAMA
THURSDAY, AUGUST 1, 2024 10:00 a.m.

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

PROCEEDINGS TAKEN BEFORE: JAMIE MCCRACKEN
Certified Court Reporter
State of Alabama
ACCR #451

1

2 BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

3

COMMISSIONER CHRIS BLANKENSHIP

4

MS. KAREN STANLEY

5

DR. SALEM SALOOM

6

DR. HEATHER HOWELL

7

MR. JIMMY PARNELL

8

DR. SEAN POWERS

9

MR. JACK DARNALL

10

MR. JAKE HARPER

11

MR. RICK OATES

12

MR. RAYMOND B. JONES, JR.

13

DR. JOHN VALENTINE DR. BRIAN KEENER

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1 (WHEREUPON, the Board meeting
2 was called to order and
3 proceedings commenced at
4 10:00 a.m.)

5 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Good
6 morning. Good morning and welcome to
7 the August 1st Forever Wild Land
8 Trust Board meeting. I'm
9 Commissioner Chris Blankenship. I'm
10 glad to see people here. And as I
11 call the roll, please let me know
12 you're here so we can make sure we
13 have a quorum.

14 Chris Blankenship is here.
15 Mr. Darnall?

16 MR. DARNALL: Here.

17 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Mr.
18 Harper?

19 MR. HARPER: Here.

20 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Mr.
21 Jones?

22 MR. JONES: Here.

23 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Dr.

1 Keener?

2 DR. KEENER: Here.

3 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Mr.

4 Oates?

5 MR. OATES: Here.

6 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Mr.

7 Parnell?

8 MR. PARNELL: Here.

9 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Dr.

10 Powers?

11 DR. POWERS: Here.

12 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Dr.

13 Saloom?

14 DR. SALOOM: Here.

15 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Dr.

16 Valentine?

17 DR. VALENTINE: Here.

18 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Dr.

19 Howell?

20 DR. HOWELL: Here.

21 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Good

22 to see you. I had not seen you this

23 morning.

1 Ms. Stanley.

2 MS. STANLEY: Here.

3 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: And
4 Mr. Childers?

5 (No response.)

6 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Dr.
7 McClintock?

8 (No response.)

9 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Dr.
10 Neumann?

11 (No response.)

12 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Mr.
13 Parnell?

14 MR. PARNELL: I already -- Yeah,
15 I'm here.

16 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: I
17 want to make sure you're here. I
18 have you on here twice and Ms.
19 Stanley twice. I apologize. All
20 right.

21 We do have a quorum. I'd
22 like to express our appreciation to
23 Reid State Technical College and Mary

1 Ray, the public relations lead
2 specialist, and Dr. Saloom for
3 assisting us in meeting in this
4 space. I appreciate the work that
5 our community colleges do around the
6 State. I've enjoyed talking with
7 Jimmy Baker, their Chancellor, on
8 multiple occasions about the programs
9 that they have. Just met with some
10 of their staff when I was in
11 Tuscaloosa this week at the
12 Governor's Tourism Conference about
13 hospitality and food and beverage
14 training that they have for -- for
15 skills, that they are very helpful
16 for us in our State parks and
17 facilities, and plus all the other
18 work credentials that they are using
19 to help people all over the State and
20 put them to work in industries and
21 trades that we really need.

22 So, I thank them for
23 allowing us to use this facility here

1 in Evergreen.

2 And as far as I know, this
3 is probably the first time we've ever
4 met in Evergreen. So, this is a nice
5 place and we thank them for the work
6 that they do and letting us meet here
7 today.

8 We're at the part for the
9 Public Comments. We do have a few
10 speakers this morning. A reminder
11 that there's a three-minute time for
12 the speaking. When you come up to
13 the podium, if you'll give me just a
14 minute, I'll read out what tab and
15 page this is on in our book so that
16 all of the Board members can find it
17 and look at it while you're speaking
18 so they're familiar with what you're
19 talking about.

20 Our first speaker is Bob
21 Henderson on the West Fowl River
22 Property, that is tab 3-B, page 8;
23 3-B, page 8.

1 MR. HENDERSON: Good morning. I
2 appreciate your time. I'm here to
3 talk about the West Fowl River
4 Property. This is property that
5 Forever Wild --

6 (Brief interruption.)

7 MS. MCCURDY: Sorry. It was
8 working when we started.

9 MR. HENDERSON: Good morning.
10 I'm Bob Henderson. And I'm here for
11 the West Fowl River Property. This
12 is property that Forever Wild owns
13 land next to. It's an
14 environmentally sensitive property
15 that -- where the Fowl River goes
16 into the Mobile Bay. It has a
17 natural bog, longleaf forest, and
18 riparian rights. This is property
19 that I think would be -- would do
20 well to be preserved and protected.
21 And we would appreciate your
22 consideration.

23 Thank you for your time.

1 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Thank
2 you, sir. Any questions? All right.
3 Thank you. The next speaker is
4 Chandler Graham on Davidson Creek,
5 2-A, tab 5 -- 2-A and it's also tab
6 5-D. Hang on a second. So, the 2-A,
7 so this is a property that you have
8 motioned for second appraisal, and in
9 the process, there was some request
10 made by the landowner; that is in the
11 memo on 5-D. Two places in the book;
12 does that make sense? Anybody got
13 questions on that?

14 All right. Go ahead,
15 Chandler.

16 MR. GRAHAM: Good morning. So,
17 I'm Chandler Graham with Larson
18 McGowin, representing the -- the
19 owners here, the sellers, and wanted
20 to just be present if there's
21 questions about the timber
22 reservation that they've proposed. I
23 understand, puts a little wrinkle in

1 the transaction and would've been
2 better if we had made this known on
3 the front end. However, once this
4 made it up through their investment
5 committee, this is -- this idea got
6 thrown in the mix, and so, it got
7 pushed back down.

8 And so, we're just trying
9 to work a deal here. And I'm just
10 here if you have questions about what
11 they're asking or how we would
12 implement it on our end. I know
13 y'all are well versed in this subject
14 but if you have questions, I'll be
15 around.

16 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Thank
17 you, sir. The next speaker is Chad
18 Hoffman. The next speaker is Chad
19 Hoffman, Cooper Branch Tract 4-B,
20 page 7; 4-B, page 7.

21 Go ahead, sir.

22 MR. HOFFMAN: Good morning. My
23 name is Chad Hoffman. I'm the

1 Program Director at Coosa
2 Riverkeeper. I had the privilege to
3 visit the Cooper Branch Tract with
4 Dr. McClintock, who could not be here
5 today. But I believe that he shared
6 some of his -- some of the unique
7 qualities of the Cooper Branch Tract
8 with all of you. The Cooper Branch
9 Tract is about 898 acres located in
10 Shelby County, Alabama. It's home to
11 a diverse range of native species
12 including multiple species of pine
13 and oak. Boynton oak was a new one
14 to me that I had the privilege to
15 learn about while visiting the
16 property.

17 There are various native
18 wildflowers scattered throughout, as
19 well as ferns covering large portions
20 of the understory. There are
21 limestone outcroppings providing
22 valuable habitat to many, many
23 species.

1 The property has
2 established trails and roads
3 throughout with access from public
4 roads and space to provide parking.

5 The Cooper Branch Tract has
6 access to multiple ridge tops with
7 spectacular views. On the east side
8 you face Talladega County with use of
9 the Appalachian foothills towards
10 Flagg Mountain. There's also a cabin
11 with 180-degree view open space,
12 similar to that of the King's Chair
13 Overlook. I understand that, the --
14 that structure is now part of the
15 Forever Wild formula. But I believe
16 there's opportunity for education
17 about solar energy and water
18 reclamation. It is also an
19 opportunity for bird viewing
20 overlook. I also believe that there
21 is opportunity for the structure to
22 not be included in the purchase.

23 On the western side, you're

1 greeted by the southwest portion of
2 Oak Mountain State Park, less than a
3 mile-and-a-half away. The proximity
4 to this state park provides ample
5 opportunity for trail connections.

6 This highlights the duality
7 of the tract of being both of the
8 Coosa and Cahaba River watersheds.
9 The eastern side drains to Cooper
10 Branch, a tributary to Yellowleaf
11 Creek of the Coosa River. The
12 western side drains to Peavine Creek,
13 a tributary to the Cahaba River and
14 up -- upstream of Peavine Falls at
15 Oak Mountain State Park.

16 With Metro Birmingham's
17 footprint encroaching rapidly, the
18 opportunity to have a positive impact
19 in both watersheds from one tract
20 cannot be understated. If it's not
21 protected, it most certainly will be
22 developed.

23 Thank you for providing me

1 the opportunity to provide my
2 support. I'm happy to answer any
3 questions. I'm also here with some
4 representatives that may be better
5 able to provide any answers as well.
6 Thank you.

7 DR. SALOOM: And thank you for
8 your presentation. Can -- Are you at
9 liberty to explain a little bit about
10 the -- the tract of land between Oak
11 Mountain and the Cooper Branch to the
12 north, is that -- is that privately
13 owned? Is that being developed or --

14 MR. HOFFMAN: Was that towards
15 the Belcher Tracts? I'm -- I may not
16 know enough about that but Drew Nix,
17 who should be speaking after me,
18 might know more about that.

19 Yes, sir?

20 MR. POWERS: And maybe this is a
21 question for the director over the --
22 the small rectangles in there, are
23 those private holdings that aren't

1 included?

2 MS. MCCURDY: I'm going to show
3 him the map that we --

4 MR. POWERS: Because I don't see
5 any roads to those rectangles.

6 MS. MCCURDY: The rectangles
7 should reflect, from the information
8 we were provided, out parcels where
9 you see those rectangles, what's in
10 the middle is an out -- being not --
11 not acquired by --

12 MR. POWERS: I got you. I was
13 just wondering why they're there, I
14 mean. And is there roads to those
15 out parcels?

16 MR. HOFFMAN: I -- I don't know
17 enough to answer that question.

18 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: The
19 next speaker is on the same tract, he
20 can probably address that.

21 MR. HOFFMAN: Thank you all for
22 the opportunity.

23 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Next

1 speaker is Drew Nix on the same
2 property, Cooper Branch.

3 MR. NIX: Hey. I'm Drew Nix.
4 I'm here representing the seller,
5 basically to answer any questions.
6 It's a very unique tract. I had the
7 opportunity to take Chad and Dr.
8 McClintock out here, would extend the
9 invitation to any of y'all that want
10 to go look at it. You just get in
11 contact with me, we'll try and ride
12 and look on it. It's accessible by
13 car. We can carry a UTV and load you
14 up, take a look at it.

15 The rectangular piece that
16 you're talking about on the map, is
17 it towards the --

18 DR. POWERS: There's a few of
19 them.

20 MR. NIX: There is one that is
21 to the furthest west, is a five-acre
22 out parcel that is actually owned by
23 Shelby County; they have a water

1 tower system there that supplies a
2 lot of stuff. It has some existing
3 easements for piping. They have
4 access on the road that comes up
5 through there, and they actually
6 maintain that road to get access to
7 the water tower.

8 There's two more parcels in
9 there that we spoke about at the last
10 time -- at the last meeting. And the
11 owner had deeded those to his son,
12 but he has since bought them back to
13 create it where there's not an
14 easement problem for y'all.

15 MS. MCCURDY: So -- If y'all
16 don't mind me asking a question.

17 So, Drew, are you saying
18 that the nomination would now include
19 an additional acreage?

20 MR. NIX: Yes, ma'am.

21 MS. MCCURDY: Okay. So, anyway,
22 we were not aware. So, that's fine.
23 I just -- If it would -- it would

1 leave only the County out parcel that
2 we're seeing far to the west; is that
3 correct?

4 MR. NIX: Yes, ma'am.
5 Approximately five acres on that
6 tower side.

7 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Any
8 questions? All right. Thank you,
9 Drew.

10 MR. NIX: Thank y'all.

11 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: The
12 next speaker is Kyle Lybarger --
13 sorry I butchered that -- on the
14 Morgan Hollow Property, 4-B, page 17;
15 4-B, page 17, Morgan Hollow.

16 MR. LYEBARGER: So, yeah, my
17 name's Kyle Lybarger. I -- I'm with
18 the Native Habitat Project. And we
19 do a lot of conservation work in
20 North Alabama. Last year we set out
21 to do some work on some highly
22 conservative areas of the State and
23 we focused on Moulton Valley. It is

1 very underrepresented, as far as
2 public lands goes. It's 420,000
3 acres. And there's only 180 acres of
4 public prairie. And so, within that
5 area, we wanted to focus on
6 threatened ecosystems and we wanted
7 to focus on federally endangered
8 leafy prairie clover. Tennessee has
9 more than half of their populations
10 of leafy prairie clover protected and
11 Alabama has zero.

12 So, we tried to raise some
13 awareness about leafy prairie clover
14 and the public was -- was really,
15 really behind this effort. We ended
16 up selling over 7,000 leafy prairie
17 clover T-shirts. We raised \$100,000
18 to purchase one of these populations
19 and so we bought 23 acres of this
20 original Morgan Hollow Tract and a
21 conservation buyer bought 320 acres
22 next door.

23 So, this original

1 1,200-acre property had seven of the
2 eight populations in the State on it.
3 So, most of the leafy prairie clover
4 populations existed on this property.
5 We acquired three of them. There's
6 four left and -- including the
7 largest population of it, which is
8 right in the middle of Morgan Hollow
9 Tract. And so, it's a really, really
10 conservative species that also has
11 some very high quality prairies and
12 limestone glades in that area.

13 We then -- This -- This
14 property borders Bankhead and it
15 drops off into the Moulton Valley.
16 There's some cool history about this
17 area. Youngtown, it was formerly
18 known as Egypt, and these limestone
19 knobs that these leafy prairie clover
20 plants depend on, are scattered
21 throughout the Moulton Valley right
22 there. These are fragments of the
23 Cumberland Plateau. And these knobs

1 have their pyramid shape out in this
2 flat prairie and this is why that
3 town was historically called Egypt,
4 really cool region.

5 A lot of -- It's a hub for
6 a lot of Native American trails. The
7 highland -- or the high -- The High
8 Town Path is on the southern border,
9 and that goes along the Tennessee
10 Divide separating two watersheds, the
11 Cumberland Plateau from the -- from
12 the Highland Rim. And so, that was a
13 major Native American trail.

14 And then on the west side,
15 you have the Cullman Motorway, which
16 is an Indian Trail, game trail, lots
17 of history on it. And the Brazzel
18 Creek Trail, which was part of the
19 underground railroad and a trail for
20 Native Americans, too, when they were
21 forced out of Alabama.

22 Right through the
23 smack-dab-middle you have the Moulton

1 fork of the Byler Road, which is also
2 very historical and a historic game
3 path.

4 So, really cool area. Lots
5 of diversity. The public really
6 wants this place supported and we're
7 hoping Forever Wildlife can do the
8 same.

9 So, appreciate it.

10 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Thank
11 you. The next speaker is Janice
12 Barrett on the same -- same property.

13 MS. BARRETT: Good morning.
14 Thank you for this opportunity to
15 speak. I am Janice Barrett and I am
16 Education and Outreach Coordinator
17 for Wild Alabama. And we are a
18 nonprofit forest protection
19 organization based in Lawrence
20 County. I am also native of Lawrence
21 County and live on our family farm,
22 which is about ten minutes away from
23 the Morgan Hollow Tract that -- at

1 Youngtown that we would love to
2 encourage the Board to protect as
3 Forever Wild land.

4 I hope that you all
5 received the letter I sent expressing
6 Wild Alabama's support of this
7 project. As Kyle mentioned, the -- a
8 portion of this southern boundary of
9 this property is -- borders the
10 Bankhead National Forest. And I
11 walked -- I walked that boundary
12 yesterday on the National Forest
13 observing the landscape on the
14 private land side and was really
15 struck by the diversity of -- the
16 topographical diversity of this piece
17 of land.

18 So, it starts in the -- in
19 the Moulton Valley down in the
20 limestone swales of grasslands down
21 at Youngtown. And rises up -- up the
22 slope into Upland Hardwood Forest in
23 the sandstone topography as it

1 approaches the Bankhead National
2 Forest boundary.

3 And once you're at the
4 boundary, you go up just a short
5 distance through the National Forest,
6 you come to the top of ridge, which
7 is the Continental -- the East West
8 Continental Divide for the Tennessee
9 River watershed and the Black Warrior
10 River watershed.

11 And then you cross over
12 that ridge and you drop down into the
13 Black Warrior River watershed where
14 the topography is these deep,
15 beautiful sandstone canyon with cove
16 hardwood forest in re-licked Eastern
17 hard -- Eastern Hemlock forest.

18 So, this -- The -- The
19 purchase of this tract of land at
20 Youngtown by Forever Wild would
21 provide a continuity of landscape
22 diversity through two public lands
23 and across two really significant

1 watersheds in Alabama.

2 So, we really appreciate
3 you considering voting yes to protect
4 this land, to extend our public lands
5 in Alabama to grassland prairie and
6 keeping it Forever Wild.

7 So, thank you very much.

8 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Thank
9 you. Our next speaker is Dwayne
10 Estes on the same tract. Is there
11 anyone that wanted to speak that did
12 not have an opportunity to fill out
13 the -- a green slip or didn't know
14 you needed to? If you'll just raise
15 your hand. This is last the speaker
16 that I have a green slip for.

17 I don't see any. All
18 right. Go ahead, sir.

19 MR. ESTES: Good morning. I'm
20 coming down today, about seven hours
21 away from Tennessee. I hope y'all
22 don't hold that against me. But I'm
23 here to speak on behalf of the Morgan

1 Hollow Tract in Lawrence County. My
2 name's Dwayne Estes, I'm the
3 Executive Director and cofounder of
4 the Southeastern Grasslands
5 Institute, which is based just north
6 of Nashville with Austin Peay State
7 University in Tennessee.

8 We cover a 24-state
9 geography from New York to Texas and
10 Missouri to Florida. Alabama's one
11 of the states that we represent. And
12 a lot of people don't realize that
13 Alabama historically had a lot of
14 grassland and ecosystems of many
15 kinds, Pine savannas, prairies,
16 glades, barrens, open oak woodlands,
17 et cetera. We recently really tried
18 to highlight this in an article
19 coming out a couple weeks ago in the
20 New York Times and a recent article
21 last month in Forbes Magazine to talk
22 about the importance of southern
23 grasslands.

1 The Morgan Hollow Tract
2 represents a unique opportunity to
3 really preserve a lost part of
4 Alabama's cultural heritage and its
5 natural heritage. People have spoken
6 already about the endangered prairie
7 clover. I'm going to speak to you
8 about just a couple other of its
9 attributes.

10 One, the cultural story of
11 parts of -- the grassland part of
12 Alabama is largely unknown. And, as
13 I mentioned, it's just now starting
14 to get out to the national states.
15 For example, when Andrew Jackson went
16 to -- to battle the Creeks in the War
17 of 1812, you know, his -- he and his
18 men mentioned crossing the eastern
19 outskirts of the Moulton Valley and
20 talking about the once open -- wide
21 open prairie. Early settlers in 1826
22 still noted the bison trails that
23 were evident in Moulton Valley, you

1 know, 30 years after they'd already
2 disappeared in the 18-teens, 1820s.

3 So, the Moulton Valley is
4 special because it's -- it's only
5 about a hundred thousand acres
6 smaller than Great Smoky Mountain's
7 National Park. But, yet, there's
8 only about 200 acres of public lands
9 in the valley. And as someone who
10 grew up in -- six miles north of the
11 Alabama line, I'm not sure you could
12 call me an honorary Alabamian, if
13 that even works for a Tennessean.
14 But I do consider myself to be the
15 nearest thing to that.

16 And growing up on a private
17 farm, I had the -- the privilege of
18 being able to explore hundreds of
19 acres as a child. But I also grew up
20 in an extremely dysfunctional home
21 where nature was my refuge. And the
22 only reason I was able to make
23 anything of myself today is because

1 nature saved me and I was able to get
2 out. But a lot of children don't
3 have a 250-acre farm roam across and
4 thousands of other acres of adjacent
5 private property.

6 So, for these Forever Wild
7 tracts, they're immensely important
8 to people in urban, suburban, and
9 rural landscapes where children and
10 many people need to seek nature and
11 natural -- natural connection to be
12 okay and to be able to heal, both
13 from a physical and mental
14 perspective. And so, the Moulton
15 Valley's an amazing opportunity
16 because historically it was so rich
17 in these savannas and prairies and
18 glades that are now 99 percent gone.
19 And I urge you to support the Morgan
20 Hollow project.

21 Thank you.

22 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Thank
23 you, sir. That's all of the public

1 comment that we have. By regulation,
2 appraisal values are confidential
3 during periods of negotiation.
4 Accordingly, in order to discuss
5 tract appraisal value, the Board will
6 need to go into recess for an
7 Executive Session. Is there a motion
8 for the Board to now recess to
9 Executive Session?

10 MR. HARPER: Second.

11 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Moved
12 by Mr. Darnall, seconded by Mr.
13 Harper.

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

19 Chris Blankenship, aye.
20 Mr. Darnall?

21 MR. DARNALL: Aye.

22 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Mr.
23 Harper?

1 MR. HARPER: Aye.

2 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Mr.

3 Jones?

4 MR. JONES: Aye.

5 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Dr.

6 Keener?

7 DR. KEENER: Aye.

8 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Mr.

9 Oates?

10 MR. OATES: Aye.

11 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Mr.

12 Parnell?

13 MR. PARNELL: Aye.

14 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Dr.

15 Powers?

16 DR. POWERS: Aye.

17 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Dr.

18 Saloom?

19 DR. SALOOM: Aye.

20 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Dr.

21 Valentine?

22 DR. VALENTINE: Aye.

23 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Dr.

1 Howell?

2 DR. HOWELL: Aye.

3 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Ms.
4 Stanley?

5 MS. STANLEY: Aye.

6 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: We
7 are now in Executive Session and in
8 recess. It is 10:23. We hope to
9 return in about 20 minutes. Thank
10 you.

11 (Executive Session.)

12 (Board meeting resumed at
13 10:48 a.m.)

14 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: 10:48
15 and we are back from Executive
16 Session. We'll pick back up on the
17 agenda on -- on number 5 with
18 financial data and overview.

19 Ms. McCurdy.

20 MS. MCCURDY: All right. Thank
21 you, Commissioner. I'm going to run
22 through, as usual, your tab 2-A, the
23 more updated version was in your

1 green folder. I'm going to run
2 through the tracts that are in some
3 form of closing process review due to
4 motions by the Board for us to pursue
5 acquisition. And so, I'm going to
6 give you a little status update on
7 those. It also then relates to the
8 amount of money that you have that is
9 not encumbered by future
10 acquisitions. So, you kind of know
11 what you've got to work with. So...

12 The current balance in the
13 acquisition fund is roughly 37
14 million but we're going to have to
15 take into account what we're already
16 working on.

17 You'll see on your list Bon
18 Secour River Wetlands Addition: Due
19 to the -- That was in the closing
20 process, discovered that a reduction
21 in acreage was going to be necessary
22 based upon the title opinion and --
23 that returned on that one. And so,

1 at the last meeting, the Board had
2 asked to go ahead with the appraisal
3 to update the valuation based upon
4 that acreage reduction but wanted to
5 hold until they had an opportunity to
6 consider that further. So, that one,
7 I do not have an amount next to it
8 because you have, sort of, put that
9 one on hold.

10 Heron Bay Wetlands

11 Addition, Mobile: That property was
12 a hundred percent donation and that
13 one is almost fully transferred.

14 Next we have the Lillian
15 Swamp Blackwater Addition in Baldwin
16 County; Sipsey River Swamp-Brownville
17 Addition, Tuscaloosa County: Both of
18 those tracts are in circulation for
19 the final approval committee memos,
20 which is -- includes the Governor and
21 the Speaker.

22 So, that's en route. And
23 so, those should close as soon as we

1 get that back. So, those should be
2 closed by -- you see this -- at our
3 next meeting.

4 The tracts that are still
5 under negotiation, meaning we're
6 still doing -- having to do some work
7 on before we fully implement the
8 closing process is: Davidson Creek,
9 you have a tab 5-D memo on that and
10 you had a speaker related to the
11 seller now requesting a timber
12 reservation and we'll be talking
13 about that a little bit later in the
14 meeting.

15 And then we are still
16 working on the Red Hills, section 23,
17 that is one of the PR opportunities
18 but moving along fine.

19 Taking all of that into
20 consideration, as far as your
21 available unencumbered balance that
22 we're not holding at this point, is
23 just over 27 million.

1 On the second page of tab
2 2-A is just where we keep our running
3 list of projects, their status.
4 These are any tract you said -- you
5 motioned for us to attempt to proceed
6 to closing on, is listed.

7 So, for this year we have
8 closed the Lake Guntersville State
9 Park; John Moss Mountain Addition;
10 Oak Mountain State Park Belcher
11 Addition, phase two.

12 We had landowner decline
13 offers on both Skyline WMA-Fowler
14 Cove Addition, and most recently, the
15 Red Hills Swift Addition, and that
16 was due to -- Red Hills was the most
17 receipt and that was dissatisfaction
18 with the offer and a disagreement on
19 appraisal value on that one. So, we
20 were not able to get that one done.

21 Are there any questions on
22 the tab 2-A financial overview?

23 If not, I'll move on to the

1 Stewardship Fund. And speak up. If
2 I don't see you, raise your hand
3 please.

4 Tab 2-B, and also related
5 to tab 2-B, tab 2-C is the
6 Stewardship Fund information we
7 present at each meeting for the
8 benefit of the public who may be here
9 and not familiar. For any acreage
10 acquired by the Forever Wild Program
11 that we hold title to, in order to
12 ensure future ability to maintain the
13 land, we are required to transfer 15
14 percent of the appraised value into a
15 separate account and we call it our
16 Stewardship Account. And so, that is
17 there for the perpetual management of
18 all of the acreage.

19 So, I'm going to run
20 through where we are for this year's
21 expenditures based upon the authority
22 provided by the Board, the amount
23 given to us to spend within this

1 fiscal year was \$2.5 million. As you
2 will see, we are -- we're doing fine,
3 we still have a million left. This
4 is the time of year where, toward the
5 end of fiscal year where that -- a
6 lot gets moving, and that -- you will
7 see that go down but we are fine.

8 At the -- We also provide
9 information that we get in
10 conjunction with the Treasurer --
11 State Treasurer's Office as to the
12 value of the -- the net asset value
13 of our account.

14 And so, tab 2-C is what's
15 provided by the Treasurer's Office.
16 And the Treasurer's Office, each
17 time, gives you more detailed
18 information. But for the last report
19 through June 30, the net asset value
20 of the account is \$47.4 million. Any
21 questions on the Stewardship Account?

22 All right. We'll now move
23 on to tab 3. I will now run through

1 the tracts that you have previously
2 motioned for staff to get an
3 appraisal on.

4 So, always, at this point,
5 I tell you where we are on that and
6 anything that's been motioned I'll
7 cover -- previously, I'll cover at
8 this time. So, the appraisals that
9 we have in hand that would be
10 available for a Board action include
11 following:

12 Black River SOA, Clapper
13 Addition, Baldwin County; Cathedral
14 Caverns State Park, Gurley Drive
15 Addition, Marshall; Freedom Hills
16 WMA, Sutton Hill Addition, Colbert;
17 Historic Blakeley State Park, Pye
18 Addition, Baldwin; Upper Delta WMA,
19 Stiggins Lake Addition, Baldwin; and
20 the West Fowl River Tract in Baldwin
21 County.

22 We also were able to
23 complete the update appraisal, as I

1 mentioned, for the Bon Secour River
2 Wetlands Addition Tract. Taking all
3 of that into consideration, including
4 the Stewardship transfer that would
5 be necessary, you're approaching \$6.5
6 million in appraised values.

7 I do need to update the
8 Board. You had previously motioned
9 on one tract, the river -- excuse me,
10 not river -- Red Hills Beaver Creek
11 Tract in Monroe County. And when we
12 -- after your motion, as we normally
13 do, I sent the letter to the
14 landowner requesting all the deed
15 information, easement, encumbrance
16 type information. And at that time,
17 after some discussion, we were
18 informed that the landowner wanted to
19 pursue a different option that was
20 available to him and he has now --
21 has that tract under contract. He
22 was able to move forward and did so,
23 understandably.

1 So, that tract we,
2 obviously, did not appraise. But I
3 wanted to put it down so you would
4 know it didn't just disappear.

5 So, that's where we are on
6 appraisals. Any questions on
7 appraisal status?

8 All right. We have no more
9 questions, Commissioner, I will move
10 on to the grant status update that's
11 tab 5-A memo in your packet. I
12 wanted to just run through, we do
13 every meeting, where we are as to
14 grant or leveraging opportunities in
15 relation to our tracts. We've
16 already mentioned as to the
17 nominations that are or had been in
18 the closing process: The Bon Secour
19 River Wetlands Addition, that tract
20 is benefiting from a National Coastal
21 Wetlands Conservation Grant program
22 funding opportunity. And we are able
23 to obtain about 69 percent of grant

1 funding -- grant funding covered
2 about 69 percent of the land value.
3 That grant's also providing some --
4 covering some expenses of fire lane
5 installation and some initial
6 prescribed burn and initial trail
7 development.

8 We also, Red Hills, Section
9 23 Addition that's in closing, again,
10 that is a Pittman-Robertson
11 opportunity that Wildlife presented
12 for a 20 -- 75/25 split -- valuation
13 split. And then we'll each own --
14 the program Forever Wild will hold
15 title to its acreage and Wildlife
16 will use the grant funds to acquire
17 and hold title to their acreage.

18 Of the nominations that are
19 under appraisal: The Blackwater
20 River SOA, Clapper Addition, also has
21 been presented by Wildlife as a
22 Pittman-Robertson partnership
23 opportunity.

1 Of our shortlist
2 nominations, the Dugdown Mountain
3 Corridor is an opportunity that the
4 Alabama Forestry Commission pursued
5 to get an award of US Forest Service
6 program funds. I think the last
7 update, the appraisal work, which, as
8 the Board will recall, we did the one
9 earlier, that the Forest Service is a
10 -- has a quite complex process but I
11 think it's underway and going fine.

12 Any update, Mr. Oates?

13 MR. OATES: I believe we expect
14 it next week sometime.

15 MS. MCCURDY: That's I -- we
16 just couldn't quite get it across the
17 finish line for this one. So, we'll
18 have that for our next meeting.

19 And then we're still
20 working on two additional grants. We
21 also pursue grants that help us with
22 land management or habitat or
23 recreational efforts. And so, we're

1 still working on the Little River
2 Canyon, Hancock/TNC Addition Tract
3 using National Fish and Wildlife
4 Foundation funding. We're working
5 there to support establishment of a
6 short leaf pine forest on 375 acres.
7 We're now moving in, here in the next
8 few months, to herbicide application
9 and then we'll move on to planting
10 seedlings. That should be -- the
11 seedlings we're looking at December
12 through March, somewhere in there.

13 Still working on, with the
14 benefit of Gulf of Mexico Energy
15 Security Act funding, or GOMESA
16 funding, that Commissioner was able
17 to work with the Governor on to
18 provide and that will benefit
19 enhancements: New shelters; new
20 stops; as well as some enhancements
21 to the old shelters and some improved
22 ADA access along both the Mobile
23 Tensaw Delta Bartram canoe trail and

1 the Perdido River Trail. Not all
2 those improvements are on Forever
3 Wild acreage but several of them are.

4 So, that's the -- where we
5 are with grant opportunities and the
6 tracts that might have some leverage
7 opportunities.

8 Any questions?

9 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Any
10 questions from the Board?

11 (No response).

12 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: I do
13 have one comment I'd like to make, if
14 there's no questions. Just as a
15 matter of interest for the Board, the
16 Board has made investments, pretty
17 hefty investments in the Perdido
18 River area. I shared a map with the
19 Board, I guess, probably almost two
20 years ago now of work that we were
21 doing department-wide and how the
22 Forever Wild program fit into the
23 acquisitions along the Perdido River.

1 Yesterday we closed on 449-acre piece
2 along the Perdido and Styx Rivers.
3 Then there's another piece off of
4 that map that we shared that we've
5 acquired using some Deepwater Horizon
6 Oil Spill funds that were provided to
7 us by the Federal Historic Council.

8 So, I just -- even though
9 it's not a grant opportunity, it does
10 leverage some work that has already
11 been done by this Board as we
12 continue to do work in that Perdido
13 River area. Thank you.

14 MS. MCCURDY: Any questions
15 before we move into the short list
16 nomination?

17 Okay. If you will, look at
18 tab 4. For the benefit of the
19 public, for each nomination that we
20 receive that we then confirm as a
21 willing seller nomination, we then
22 score each nomination across four
23 categories showing potential for a

1 nature preserve: A general
2 recreation area, and that's
3 recreation of any type which could
4 include hunting; or use as WMA-SOA
5 opportunity that is dedicated to
6 public hunting but also may have
7 other recreational opportunities.
8 And then as -- those could be
9 additions to WMAs or SOAs or new
10 ones. Similarly, if it might provide
11 a worthy addition or a new state
12 park, so those four categories. Then
13 each nominations competes within the
14 three districts that are established:
15 The North, Central, and Southern.

16 Nomination has to score as
17 the top three, sort of like at the
18 Olympics, you gotta get a medal in
19 your district in at least one
20 category to make the short list. So,
21 we always have a varying number of
22 short list nominations.

23 But I want to run through

1 now the ones that are currently
2 available to the Board for motions
3 for first appraisal or other work or
4 questions for staff.

5 So, if you'll look at 4-B,
6 I'm going to just run through that.
7 Each one you have a short description
8 and a map. As always, you may need
9 to speak up, let me know if you have
10 a question. I may not see you.

11 So, the first tract is the
12 Bennett Creek Tract. And that is
13 approximately 2,174 acres crossing
14 both Mobile and Washington Counties.
15 We have run into an additional
16 concern on this one related to public
17 access. It appears that the public
18 road stops about 20 feet before our
19 property. We've been not able to
20 clarify that. The landowner says
21 that they can provide information to
22 us on that but they have not yet.

23 And so, that one's going to

1 have to be on hold for now because of
2 further investigation into that issue
3 because it's scored as a recreation
4 opportunity. So, I've got to be able
5 to get the public there.

6 The Bon Secour River, Cook
7 Road Addition, that's approximately
8 19 acres in Baldwin County.

9 The Cooper Branch Tract,
10 approximately 898 acres in Shelby
11 County, although I understand today
12 there will be a few more acres added
13 to that so your map that shows the,
14 sort of, three rectangles would have
15 only the west most triangle owned by
16 the County; but we didn't have that
17 information. So -- but you can tell
18 from your map, roughly.

19 The Dugdown Mountain
20 Corridor Tract, approximately 1,984
21 acres in Cleburne County.

22 Dunnavant Valley Oaks,
23 approximately 1,633 acres crossing

1 both Shelby and Jefferson County.

2 The Freedom Hills WMA,
3 Sugar Camp Branch Addition,
4 approximately 240 acres in Colbert
5 County.

6 The Hales Spring Tract,
7 approximately 18.8 acres in Jefferson
8 County.

9 I do want to stop for a
10 minute. I'll give a more detailed
11 report in the -- when we get to
12 miscellaneous. But I, after the
13 meeting -- last meeting, met in
14 person with Hoover -- the City of
15 Hoover and we've been continuing
16 discussions. City of Hoover is
17 directly coordinating with the
18 Friends of Shades Mountain Group,
19 several of whom were here last time.

20 So, I'll cover that in
21 miscellaneous. But we are still
22 investigating and trying to establish
23 that we would be able to have safe

1 parking, if Forever Wild were to
2 acquire the tract, and the other
3 acreage was not, itself, developed
4 more for trails and trailheads.

5 So, we're working on that
6 but we've had very -- very productive
7 meetings and very productive
8 communications on that one, so.
9 We'll discuss that with the tab 5
10 item.

11 Morgan Hollow,
12 approximately 850 acres in Lawrence
13 County. This would be Wildlife -- no
14 PR funds but Wildlife, upon
15 acquisition, would manage this one
16 consistent with the adjacent Black
17 Warrior Wildlife Management area that
18 they manage, that Federal land that
19 you'll see on your map.

20 Mount Vernon Tract,
21 approximately 609 acres in Mobile
22 County. This is another one that we
23 -- I am still waiting on confirming

1 information from the landowner
2 regarding public access. And when I
3 say "public access," I -- obviously,
4 I'm talking to the public, we would
5 have access as a landowner as staff
6 we needed to manage it but I -- we've
7 got a concern that's arisen on that
8 one as to legal public access. So,
9 we're working on that one.

10 We have Weeks Bay Reserve,
11 Holly Addition in Baldwin County,
12 approximately 125 acres. This tract
13 is adjacent to a wetland mitigation
14 bank that is privately owned. That
15 bank is set to transfer to ADCNR,
16 actually my division's Weeks Bay
17 Reserve in 2028. However, until that
18 transfer occurs, we no longer really
19 have public road frontage, that was
20 removed by the landowner and until
21 that bank transfers in 2028, we would
22 not be able to access through the
23 current Weeks Bay Reserve acreage.

1 But it -- you know, it did score as a
2 -- having a nature preserve value.
3 So -- but we are -- we know our
4 access on that is -- standalone
5 access would not come until 2028.

6 And then have the Weeks Bay
7 Reserve, White Addition,
8 approximately 46 acres in Baldwin
9 County. This tract has no dedicated
10 public access but it is adjacent to
11 land owned by the Department of
12 Mental Health that State Lands
13 Division manages both. I always do
14 want to point out any access issues,
15 you know, to the Board. So...

16 Any questions on any of
17 those shortlist nominations or the
18 shortlist process itself? Anything I
19 can help the Board with?

20 (No response).

21 MS. MCCURDY: Okay. Being none,
22 Commissioner, I'm going to hand it
23 back to you for general discussion.

1 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Thank
2 you. General discussion is the
3 portion of the meeting where motions
4 are made if there is interest in any
5 of the Board members in moving for a
6 first or second appraisal on any of
7 the properties that were mentioned on
8 tab 3-A or on tab 4 of the shortlist.

9 Considering Dr. Keener is
10 new and it's his first meeting, I
11 promised him that I would try and go
12 slow during this part even though, as
13 you know, I like to be efficient. So
14 I'll probably go a little slower
15 today just to make sure everybody's
16 able to follow because it is a little
17 intimidating on a first meeting, I'm
18 sure.

19 So, Dr. Saloom.

20 DR. SALOOM: I'd like for
21 Forever -- to move that Forever Wild
22 -- a motion to move that Forever Wild
23 make -- have a first appraisal on the

1 Morgan Hollow Tract in Lawrence
2 County.

3 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP:
4 Second?

5 DR. HOWELL: Second.

6 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: I
7 will -- the motion was made by Dr.
8 Saloom, seconded by Dr. Howell on the
9 -- for a first appraisal on the
10 Morgan Hollow property in Lawrence
11 County.

12 MR. JONES: Question.

13 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Mr.
14 Jones.

15 MR. JONES: Patti, you said
16 DCNR's going to manage this property.
17 I notice that it touches the
18 federally owned acreage there but I'm
19 assuming the road is the reason that
20 was cut off, the -- the hunting area
21 was cut off; it was that --

22 MS. MCCURDY: Well, I mean,
23 there is road --

1 MR. JONES: I'm just -- You --
2 You have hunting access here,
3 Wildlife management access.

4 MS. MCCURDY: Correct.

5 MR. JONES: And then you have
6 this road coming through but you have
7 land that is not part of the -- the
8 hunting access.

9 MS. MCCURDY: You mean the green
10 part --

11 MR. JONES: Yes.

12 MS. MCCURDY: -- that's owned
13 federally but not part of the --

14 MR. JONES: So, will it -- will
15 the WMA access continue across that
16 road now?

17 MS. MCCURDY: It will -- With
18 this acquisition, it would continue
19 across the road into this tract --

20 MR. JONES: And take into
21 consideration this whole tract.

22 MS. MCCURDY: Yes.

23 MR. JONES: Okay.

1 MS. MCCURDY: But let me -- I
2 want to confirm because --

3 Chuck, I am correct about
4 that? I mean, that was what my staff
5 -- Okay.

6 MR. JONES: I just wanted to
7 clarify.

8 MS. MCCURDY: That's right. And
9 so, where you see the WMA, it's just
10 one of the examples where Wildlife
11 manages Federal land for the benefit
12 of hunting in Alabama. So, yes,
13 there would be that connection.

14 MR. JONES: Thank you.

15 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Any
16 other discussion or questions on that
17 property?

18 (No response).

19 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: So,
20 the motion is for a first appraisal
21 on the Morgan Hollow property in
22 Lawrence County.

23 All those in favor, please

1 raise your hand.

2 (Board members raising
3 hands).

4 MS. MCCURDY: Eleven, Mr.
5 Parnell withholding.

6 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Is
7 there a --

8 MS. MCCURDY: Oh, I'm sorry. I
9 had everybody, right? Yeah. So,
10 that would be eleven.

11 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP:
12 Eleven. Eleven affirmative, motion
13 carries.

14 Dr. Powers?

15 DR. POWERS: I would like to
16 move for a second appraisal and
17 purchase of the West Fowl River
18 Tract.

19 MR. HARPER: Second.

20 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: There
21 is a motion by Dr. Powell and was
22 seconded by Mr. Harper on the -- for
23 second appraisal and move to purchase

1 on the West Fowl River Tract in
2 Mobile County.

3 Any questions or
4 discussion?

5 (No response).

6 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: All
7 those in favor, please raise your
8 hand.

9 (Board members raising
10 hands).

11 MS. MCCURDY: You have eleven.

12 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: The
13 motion carries. Thank you.

14 MR. JONES: Mr. Chairman.

15 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Mr.
16 Jones.

17 MR. JONES: I'd like to move for
18 a second on the Freedom Hills WMA,
19 Sutton Hill Addition.

20 MR. OATES: Second.

21 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: It's
22 seconded. Motion made by Mr. Jones,
23 seconded by Mr. Oates for a second

1 appraisal and move to purchase on the
2 Freedom Hill -- Freedom Hills WMA,
3 Sutton Hill Addition, the 17 acres.
4 Any questions or discussion?

5 (No response).

6 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: All
7 those in favor, please raise your
8 hand.

9 (Board members raising
10 hands).

11 MS. MCCURDY: All right. We
12 have unanimous.

13 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: The
14 motion carries. Dr. Powers.

15 DR. POWERS: I'd like to move
16 for a second appraisal and purchase
17 of the Upper Delta WMA Stiggins Lake
18 Addition.

19 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Is
20 there a second?

21 (No response).

22 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: No
23 second. Thank you. Any other --

1 MS. STANLEY: Mr. Chairman, just
2 because I was not on the Board in
3 2022 when the Dugdown Mountain
4 Corridor was nominated, can anybody
5 just kind of explain how we got all
6 the way to number five of the
7 meetings and no activity.

8 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Sure.
9 So, that one is the one that Mr.
10 Oates and the Alabama Forestry
11 Commission are getting a forest
12 legacy grant for that. They are
13 having the appraisal done now. And
14 they will have that for the next
15 meeting but we were able -- to take
16 action, we've just not been able to
17 take action until the appraisal is
18 finished on that property.

19 MS. STANLEY: So, it doesn't get
20 removed or if a motion is needed to
21 keep it in play while they get the
22 appraisal, I'm willing to make that.
23 I just noticed it's at number five,

1 we're at the fifth meeting.

2 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Yes,
3 ma'am. Okay. With you mentioning
4 that, it will stay on, that's all we
5 need.

6 MS. STANLEY: Thank you.

7 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Thank
8 you. All right. The one -- Before
9 we move into the miscellaneous
10 reports, there's something that I
11 wanted to cover, it's on tab 5-E,
12 5-E. If you'll recall, about three
13 meetings ago I mentioned the
14 opportunity that we thought we had in
15 the department to use
16 Pittman-Robertson funds to make
17 acquisitions with using Forever Wild
18 land as the match. In the Barbour
19 WMA, we have the opportunity to
20 acquire property adjacent to that WMA
21 with 100 percent federal dollars by
22 adding the usual deed restriction for
23 a portion of the adjacent property

1 that's owned by Forever Wild.

2 So, the best -- the easiest
3 way to explain it is that Forever
4 Wild has already acquired that
5 property. We're able to leverage the
6 funds that Forever Wild has already
7 spent, with no additional cash on
8 behalf of Forever Wild and use 100
9 percent Pittman-Robertson dollars to
10 purchase that acreage. And then
11 we'll just put -- we'll have to
12 encumber a portion of the Forever
13 Wild property that equates to 33
14 percent, a third of what the value of
15 the land acquisition using the
16 federal dollars to be able to make
17 that acquisition.

18 So, that -- I mentioned
19 that about, I guess, two or three
20 meetings ago, that this was a
21 possibility.

22 I've had some discussions
23 with Board members between then and

1 now on how it would work. This is
2 the first opportunity that we've had
3 to do this, and that is tab 5-E.
4 That is a short explanation of a
5 somewhat longer memo. Glad to answer
6 any questions or talk about that.
7 But I think this is a good
8 opportunity to add some public
9 hunting land for the State with no
10 cash to come from the Forever Wild
11 program leveraging an investment that
12 you've already made.

13 Mr. Jones.

14 MR. JONES: I'd like to make a
15 motion for the Board to approve the
16 staff proceeding with efforts to
17 record a deed restriction a portion
18 of the Leak Creek Addition as set
19 forth in the memo dated August 1,
20 2024, contingent upon the Wildlife
21 and Freshwater Fisheries Divisions
22 securing Pittman-Robertson funding
23 for its purchase of the Wyecott

1 Addition tract.

2 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Is
3 there a second?

4 DR. POWERS: Second.

5 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: It's
6 seconded by Dr. Powers, I think is
7 who I heard first.

8 Any questions about that?
9 I know this is the first time we've
10 done something like -- first time
11 we've done this particular thing.
12 It's very similar to what we're done
13 using Forever Wild as match but it's
14 just with no additional funding.
15 So...

16 (No response).

17 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: All
18 right. All those in favor, please
19 raise your hand.

20 (Board members raising
21 hands).

22 MS. MCCURDY: That will be
23 unanimous, Commissioner.

1 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: All
2 right. Thank you. The motion
3 carries.

4 I will say we like to be
5 leaders in Alabama. From what we can
6 understand, this is the first time
7 that something like this has been
8 done nationwide to take advantage of
9 some opportunity that we found. We
10 would like to be groundbreakers here
11 in Alabama. So, I'm very thankful
12 for your support and for our Wildlife
13 Freshwater Fisheries and our State
14 Land staff as we worked through this
15 and the opportunities on that. And
16 maybe we'll have some other
17 opportunities to do that moving
18 forward, and, as well, other states,
19 be able to utilize this same type
20 system with resources that they have
21 in their states to provide more
22 access for the public. Thank you.

23 All right. Take it away on

1 the rest of the tab 5 reports.

2 MS. MCCURDY: Sure. Tab 5-B,
3 and this goes to, actually, Ms.
4 Stanley's question, we present each
5 time at the meeting which nominations
6 without a request by a Board member
7 otherwise would roll off.

8 And so, this time we have
9 no shortlist nominations and we will
10 record the desire to just keep
11 Dugdown on, Ms. Stanley, until that
12 gets -- we're able to -- the Forest
13 Service process is -- is its own
14 thing. So...

15 And so -- but the -- what
16 will roll off this time, again, would
17 be Cathedral Caverns State Park,
18 Gurley Drive Addition; Historic
19 Blakeley's State Park, Pye Addition
20 both appraised nominations.

21 So, without a specific
22 request, you will not see those in
23 your packet next time.

1 All right. So, I'm just
2 going to run through, as I normally
3 do, a few things that have come up
4 and just confirm that there are no
5 questions. On some of these, I do
6 need Board motions. I will tell you,
7 some of these are just Board -- you
8 know, Board decision.

9 The first -- The next memo
10 is tab 5-C, which runs through the
11 last meeting on Bon Secour River --
12 excuse me -- Bon Secour Wetlands
13 Addition in Baldwin County where we
14 had the acreage reduction. We've now
15 completed the appraisal. Now that we
16 have that appraisal in, the Board --
17 it is available to the Board, if you
18 would like to make a motion to get it
19 back on the closing list and get it
20 closed. It is -- We -- you know,
21 that would get it back in the process
22 but that is if you want us to pursue
23 that to closing, I will need a motion

1 from the Board as set forth in the
2 memo.

3 I'm happy to answer any
4 questions on that. I know it came up
5 earlier.

6 MS. STANLEY: Mr. Chairman, I
7 move for the Board to approve staff
8 proceeding with efforts to close Bon
9 Secour Wetlands Addition consistent
10 with the reduced acreage as described
11 in the memo dated August 1, 2024.

12 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Thank
13 you. Is there a second?

14 DR. HOWELL: Second.

15 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: It's
16 seconded by Dr. Howell. I think
17 we've had good discussion on that;
18 any questions, though?

19 DR. SALOOM: Question.

20 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Yes,
21 sir, Dr. Saloom.

22 DR. SALOOM: When that happens
23 in the past, historically, in terms

1 of reserving the timber rights, is
2 there any stipulation that we need to
3 know about or guard against in terms
4 of -- the remaining property that's
5 -- that's cutover?

6 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Sure.
7 That's the different -- different
8 tract. This is the one where the --
9 we already own some of the acreage
10 that was included in the original
11 nomination. So, we will --

12 MS. MCCURDY: The Davidson Tract
13 is your -- we're coming up on that
14 one here in a second.

15 DR. SALOOM: I apologize.

16 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: All
17 right. All those in favor, please
18 raise your hand.

19 (Board members raising
20 hands).

21 MS. MCCURDY: You have eleven,
22 Commissioner.

23 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: The

1 motion carries. Thank you.

2 MS. MCCURDY: So, perfect
3 timing, tab 5-D. This is the
4 Davidson Creek Tract that we had the
5 speaker on earlier that the landowner
6 has requested a timber reservation.
7 The staff has reviewed that timber
8 reservation request. We did not have
9 concerns from a land management
10 perspective and any interruption in
11 recreation would be temporary on the
12 tract.

13 And so, where we are --
14 where we are on this is, after that
15 evaluation so we could bring to you
16 our -- our conclusion -- you know
17 what? If you want to move forward
18 with the timber reservation, that is
19 a revision to your nomination, we'll
20 need to go back and have the
21 appraisal officially updated to
22 reflect what will occur, which is a
23 reduction in value of the tract

1 because we're no longer, you know,
2 including the timber and then go back
3 to the landowner at that point.

4 This is another example of
5 where we can update the appraisal and
6 move forward to closing, if that's
7 your motion; it's a -- also can get
8 that work done, bring it back to you
9 and decide what you want to do. But
10 that's the status.

11 So, I -- Mr. Harper has a
12 question but did that -- You had a
13 different question about, do we --

14 DR. SALOOM: Yeah, my question
15 was, is that, historically, when
16 timber is reserved by the landowner
17 and Forever Wild purchases the
18 property for -- and that timber
19 reserve for "X" number of months or
20 years, is there anything that we need
21 to guard against in terms of that
22 timber being cut and how that land is
23 going to be left or is it a moot

1 point?

2 MS. MCCURDY: No. We work -- We
3 work with the landowner and both
4 review how and when they intend --
5 their plan for that timber removal.
6 And our staff follows that and, you
7 know, they -- and ensure that -- you
8 know, we'll document that they will
9 have to return the property, you
10 know, like any -- any action on the
11 property, whether it's a permit to
12 cross, they're going to have to
13 return the property back, you know,
14 in the good condition when they're
15 done with the harvest.

16 So, we will have that in
17 writing with them, and we'll be
18 monitoring that on the ground.

19 DR. SALOOM: Okay. Thank you.

20 MS. MCCURDY: Yes, Dr. Howell.

21 DR. HOWELL: What kind of timber
22 stand are we talking about? Is it,
23 like, an older timber stand or is it,

1 like, loblolly or --

2 MS. MCCURDY: I will defer to
3 Chandler to be sure. But it is -- It
4 would be fine with us to be able to
5 conduct reforestation in a planned
6 habitat manner, so another reason we
7 do not have an issue with it.

8 To remind the Board, even
9 if we -- if we kept the timber, how
10 that works, again, if there's
11 revenue, that goes to the general
12 fund on timber, not back into the
13 program. We don't factor that into
14 our evaluation but -- because --
15 might be a good time to remind
16 everyone of that. We look at it
17 from: Is it damaging the property;
18 is it hurting the end result use for
19 the property; is it messing up
20 access? There's going to be
21 inevitable periods where there's
22 disruption but can we get the timber
23 out, is there a route out without

1 damaging the property, what are the
2 road, et cetera.

3 But as to the exact nature
4 of the timber stands, Chandler. I
5 apologize. We have that information
6 but I did not commit that to memory.

7 MR. GRAHAM: Yeah, the standing
8 question is a mature loblolly pine
9 plantation, it's been managed
10 standard forestry practices but it's
11 no hardwood, other than Volunteer.
12 And it's a good opportunity -- It
13 would be a good longleaf conversion
14 project. So...

15 MS. MCCURDY: And I will say
16 with that reservation, so that would
17 lower the appraisal value but the --
18 Forever Wild will have, you know, the
19 Stewardship Fund to use for
20 reforestation but you have a lower
21 appraisal value but you'll have some
22 additional reforestation expenses.

23 Now, obviously, we don't

1 have the appraisal updated but I
2 believe that -- you know, the
3 decrease in the appraisal will be
4 more than our increased expenditure
5 reforestation.

6 Mr. Harper, I'm sorry. Let
7 me come back to you.

8 MR. HARPER: My only question
9 was, the reduced acreage, did he not
10 have deeds for the 81 acres?

11 MS. MCCURDY: Oh, it's not --
12 they're not taking out the acreage.
13 The acreage will stay the same.
14 We're -- It is simply a reservation
15 of timber rights, yes, sir.

16 MR. JONES: But it's only part
17 of the timber, right?

18 MS. MCCURDY: Yes. If you'll
19 look at 5-D, the area -- the general
20 area within which the activity would
21 occur is in green.

22 MR. OATES: We will be
23 responsible for reforestation.

1 MS. MCCURDY: Yes. Yes, we
2 will. And right now we're fine. You
3 know, we did hit a period at one time
4 where we had too much -- a lot going
5 on and was a little bit of a
6 financial stress. We're okay right
7 now. We've gotten past those large
8 ones and we're okay, if -- if you
9 want to do it.

10 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Mr.
11 Jones?

12 MR. JONES: The area outside of
13 the green area, has it already been
14 timbered; what condition is it in?

15 MS. MCCURDY: I mean, there has
16 been some timber management on that.
17 But the current condition is -- for
18 our usage, recreational usage, is
19 very good.

20 Chandler, you want to --

21 MR. GRAHAM: Yeah. What area?

22 MS. MCCURDY: Again, the
23 question being this reservation is

1 what's in green but there has been
2 other timber action on other --

3 MR. GRAHAM: Yeah, it's been
4 managed through private forest
5 ownership. So, there has been timber
6 cut. The tract has some topography.
7 So, most of the pine plantations up
8 on the ridge top and really pretty
9 mature hardwood, that's in the lower
10 areas.

11 And so, the only thing
12 that's been harvested on any of it's
13 been the pine. But there's still a
14 considerable amount of timber on the
15 tract.

16 MR. JONES: Okay.

17 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Dr.
18 Powers.

19 DR. POWERS: So, Patti, a couple
20 things: One, how does -- has this
21 ever happened before where we've gone
22 this far into negotiations and
23 they've said wait?

1 MS. MCCURDY: Honestly, I don't
2 -- I don't recall that. It is -- You
3 know, we commonly do -- the request,
4 it is usually earlier.

5 DR. POWERS: But I've never seen
6 it at --

7 MS. MCCURDY: Right, at this
8 stage.

9 DR. POWERS: -- being brought up
10 at this --

11 MS. MCCURDY: And so, to my
12 understanding from talking with
13 Chandler, is when things got serious,
14 when we were actually talking offer
15 and acquisition, that they realized
16 the strategy on the timber management
17 and revenue and investment purposes
18 of that.

19 MR. POWERS: I mean, so, they're
20 banking that they get more money than
21 your appraiser reduces the property
22 for.

23 MS. MCCURDY: Well, I think that

1 -- that they will -- in the end -- I
2 think there are two things in the
3 end, control the management of the
4 timber and their revenue thereof.
5 But here, what was not -- honestly, I
6 didn't understand from what the
7 landowner had -- our contact had told
8 us until just this week, Chandler
9 provided some extra information and
10 that this really became a hierarchal
11 authority to close the deal decision.
12 And once it hit there, it was, like,
13 wait that's inconsistent with what we
14 need to do with the timber.

15 So, yes, it is unusual. I
16 get it. We don't have a problem with
17 the reservation but, yes, it was --
18 the timing would have been easier on
19 the front end.

20 DR. POWERS: No, I'm just -- I
21 mean, ultimately, they're banking --

22 MS. MCCURDY: Yes.

23 DR. POWERS: -- they can do more

1 than --

2 MS. MCCURDY: Yes.

3 DR. POWERS: -- than the
4 appraisal is for a small section. I
5 feel more confident with your comment
6 that we know that it's loblolly, that
7 it's not anything we're worried
8 about. But it seems like we got
9 conformation with that. And so,
10 finally, how does it affect your ten
11 percent rule; will this --

12 MS. MCCURDY: Yes. It
13 establishes a -- we will have to go
14 back to the --

15 DR. POWERS: So, if this after
16 the -- you modify the second
17 appraisal, I assume, or do you have
18 to go through two appraisals again or
19 only if their modification is more
20 than ten percent?

21 MS. MCCURDY: Yes. Well, we'll
22 go -- It just resets. This will
23 become the initial first appraisal

1 value that will still have to be
2 confirmed.

3 DR. POWERS: And then we cover
4 that cost.

5 MS. MCCURDY: Yes.

6 DR. POWERS: So, we're to pay
7 the cost of two new appraisals.

8 MS. MCCURDY: The work that
9 we're going to have to have done, an
10 estimate from the appraisers but it's
11 in the -- I think he said 2,500
12 range. I mean, we haven't retained
13 him to do it because y'all haven't
14 told me. But that was the estimate
15 we were given.

16 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Dr.
17 Saloom.

18 DR. SALOOM: I don't want to
19 belabor this too long. However, in
20 the appraisal, the first -- second
21 appraisal, was there a timber cruise
22 done on this tract and how much of a
23 timber cruise was done on that so we

1 know that -- those type of --

2 MS. MCCURDY: Enough of the
3 timber cruise was done. You know, we
4 would not act as the appraiser to
5 tell you what that -- the valuation
6 impact this would have on that. But
7 I will say, looking at it ourselves
8 and, again, this -- we get into
9 appraisal values and evaluations that
10 are, you know, confidential, but your
11 net -- you would have a net -- I
12 believe the program would have a
13 significant net gain at taking down
14 the -- taking out the timber value,
15 lowering the acquisition price and
16 your reforestation cost would -- you
17 would have a net -- a monetary net
18 gain. That doesn't mean you do it,
19 but of significant monetary net gain
20 to the program.

21 Now, I will also say, we
22 don't know that the landowner will be
23 happy and accept the offer, you know,

1 at that point.

2 So, that is a gamble. I
3 mean, I hate to say "gamble," but, I
4 mean, we're almost starting over on
5 this, so to speak.

6 DR. SALOOM: So, we have a
7 timber cruise on that property as the
8 appraisal.

9 MS. MCCURDY: Yes, sir.

10 DR. SALOOM: And now we're going
11 to get another timber cruise on the
12 --

13 MS. MCCURDY: No. The appraiser
14 has indicated -- I think he can work
15 with the information that he has to
16 -- and he'll verify that but he would
17 -- I think the expenses of the
18 appraisal are nothing compared to
19 what you would have with a whole new
20 timber cruise, I believe it is in the
21 2,500 range to finalize the work we
22 need to have done to update --

23 DR. SALOOM: So, the appraiser

1 has -- the appraiser has those
2 already plotted out and he's -- can
3 pull that out and make that final
4 decision --

5 MS. MCCURDY: Yes, he --

6 DR. SALOOM: -- in terms of how
7 much timber value on there.

8 MS. MCCURDY: Yes, because of
9 the initial timber cruise. Now, he
10 will need to go back out on site
11 because it's not -- it's not a full
12 cruise. It's to be sure the
13 delineation of the area in relation
14 to the timber cruise that was done.

15 DR. SALOOM: I'm good as long as
16 we are satisfied that, that's going
17 to be a ballpark timber cruise rather
18 -- because if it's mature loblolly,
19 it could have more poles on that than
20 what we had in the initial appraisal
21 or have we had that concern?

22 MS. MCCURDY: That is why the
23 appraiser will have to do an exact

1 review. And it's -- because it's not
2 as simple, he is going -- there is
3 going to be a charge for that
4 specificity and, you know, confirming
5 that. But, yes, it will be -- just
6 -- I hate to say -- I don't want to
7 say starting over but it's -- it's
8 just as he would confirm valuation
9 for a reservation if he had known on
10 the front end. It just won't be as
11 much work because of the work done on
12 the front end.

13 DR. SALOOM: Do we need a
14 motion?

15 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Yes,
16 sir.

17 MS. MCCURDY: And there is a
18 motion on the -- on the memo. But,
19 again, you need to distinguish or
20 confirm with me that, upon that
21 revised work, you do want us to get
22 back to trying to close this, or if
23 you want us to come back with the

1 appraisal and you make another
2 decision.

3 So, my motion would be --
4 is the grander, you know, I guess,
5 proceed on to purchase but you can
6 limit that if you just want the
7 appraisal. So, I had to give you
8 something.

9 DR. SALOOM: I'd like to make a
10 motion.

11 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Yes,
12 sir, Dr. Saloom.

13 DR. SALOOM: I move that the
14 Board approve staff obtaining an
15 updated appraisal to reflect the
16 timber reservation and proceeding
17 with purchase of the Davidson Creek
18 Tract as described in the memo dated
19 August 1, 2024.

20 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Is
21 there a second?

22 MS. MCCURDY: Okay. So, in that
23 --

1 MS. STANLEY: I have a motion.
2 I move that the Board approve staff
3 obtaining the updated appraisal but
4 come back to us before proceeding
5 with purchase.

6 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Is
7 there a second?

8 DR. POWERS: Second.

9 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: It's
10 seconded by Dr. Powers. So, the
11 motion is for the staff to go back,
12 talk to the appraiser, get the -- a
13 new appraisal with the timber
14 reservation and bring that back to
15 the Board at the next meeting. Any
16 questions on that?

17 MR. OATES: One question, Patti.
18 After that, will we have to do
19 another appraisal or will that -- if
20 the Board moved to close after that
21 without another appraisal?

22 MS. MCCURDY: We would -- We
23 would need to confirm that value.

1 So, you're not really talking another
2 full appraisal but, yes, we would
3 have to have the confirmation and the
4 revised nomination to proceed.

5 MR. OATES: How much more will
6 that cost?

7 MS. MCCURDY: I -- How about
8 this --

9 MR. OATES: Never mind, that's
10 --

11 MS. MCCURDY: No, no, no, no,
12 no. It's a valid question. The
13 other -- I mean, there are two
14 options: You can set a limit on what
15 we're to spend or we can ask the
16 landowner to bear that expense.

17 MR. PARNELL: I'd like to
18 propose a friendly amendment that
19 would include that wording that the
20 landowner would pay the cost for all
21 appraisals from this point forward.

22 DR. POWERS: I second that
23 amendment.

1 MS. STANLEY: I accept that
2 friendly amendment, however, I do
3 think the procedure is it has to
4 stand on its own for a vote.

5 MS. MCCURDY: Yes. So, it would
6 be just to vote on --

7 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: So,
8 this -- a friendly amendment, if the
9 first -- you agree to that and the
10 seconder agrees to that.

11 DR. POWERS: I agree to that.

12 MS. STANLEY: I do.

13 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Both
14 the first and the second agree to
15 that amendment. So, it is to -- for
16 the staff to obtain an updated
17 appraisal reflecting the timber
18 reservation with the understanding
19 that the landowner pay for that
20 appraisal. Is that clear?

21 MS. STANLEY: And come back to
22 the Board --

23 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: And

1 come back to the Board with the
2 information before proceeding to any
3 other action.

4 MR. HARPER: But if the
5 landowner refuses for that appraisal,
6 we just -- will we drop the
7 nomination?

8 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Well,
9 we'll bring that information back to
10 you at the next meeting and then you
11 can decide what to do from there.

12 All those in favor, please
13 raise your hand.

14 (Board members raising
15 hands).

16 MS. MCCURDY: Unanimous,
17 Commissioner.

18 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: The
19 motion carries. Thank you.

20 MS. MCCURDY: All right. So,
21 let's just keep -- we'll keep moving
22 through the packet. If you'll now
23 look at tab 5-F. At this meeting we

1 have two -- management plan of two
2 tracts that need to be incorporated
3 into management plans. As you recall
4 from prior meetings, we are required
5 to have a management plan in place
6 within year of acquisition. I try to
7 bring these to you one -- with one
8 meeting to spare, in case you have
9 questions or concerns.

10 But, today, the two that
11 need to be addressed are Guntersville
12 State Park, John Moss Mountain
13 Addition and Oak Mountain State Park,
14 Belcher Lake, phase two Addition.
15 Those would both be proposed as
16 amendments to existing management
17 plans that we have worked on with
18 State Parks as to both of those.

19 If the Board has any
20 questions, I'll address that. If
21 there are no questions, I will need a
22 motion, a formal motion approving the
23 management plans.

1 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Dr.
2 Powers.

3 DR. POWERS: I'd like to make a
4 motion to the Board -- the Board
5 approves the State Lands Division
6 proceeding with the inclusion of
7 Gunter'sville State Park, John Doss
8 Mountain Addition, and Oak Mountain
9 State Park, Belcher, phase two
10 Addition, into existing management
11 plans as set forth in the memorandum
12 dated August 1, 2024.

13 DR. SALOOM: Second.

14 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: It's
15 seconded by Dr. Saloom. All those in
16 favor, please say "aye."

17 (Board members saying "aye").

18 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: All
19 right. The motion carries.

20 MS. MCCURDY: All right. Thank
21 you. If you'll now look at the next
22 memo, 5-G. We've had, as we do from
23 time to time, a private landowner

1 request for an easement. This
2 request involves the Bon Secour Swift
3 Tract. In 5-G you will see an
4 attached map of the area. For this
5 request, the landowner would like the
6 easement so that they can build a
7 boardwalk for their private
8 recreational access to water. The
9 easement would be about 20 feet by
10 365 feet long. It would extend, if
11 you'll look at the map, from Mr.
12 Kruk's property, across ours, and
13 then once it crossed, the desire is
14 to -- and that boardwalk would be on
15 pilings -- but then, at the end, for
16 a dock to be built as it hits the
17 creek, Shutts Creek on the map.

18 As with any easement
19 request that is presented, before we
20 bring it to you -- and we bring all
21 of them to you -- we did a review of
22 this one. This one is little
23 different from some of the others

1 you've seen. This is not road access
2 to a house or road access to
3 something or like a utility easement
4 to provide utilities to a residence,
5 it's really just for their private
6 recreational access.

7 So, our concerns relate to
8 trying to manage, including burning
9 on the tract with the structures
10 there and then potential user
11 conflict with the general public.
12 So, we really are not recommending
13 this easement. I always give you our
14 recommendation. However, we can work
15 with the landowner and -- if the
16 Board wants -- and pursue an easement
17 with a lot of conditions, insurance,
18 liability --

19 MR. HARPER: Yeah, liability was
20 my question.

21 MS. MCCURDY: And so, I'm
22 opening up for discussion and I --
23 with the Board. And if the Board

1 does not want to take any action, you
2 do not have to. But if you want to
3 approve the easement, I'm going to
4 need a motion.

5 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Dr.
6 Powers?

7 DR. POWERS: So, Patti, I guess
8 this is definition. This doesn't
9 seem to be an easement, this is a
10 take, right? I mean --

11 MS. MCCURDY: Well, an easement,
12 in effect, if it's access -- I mean,
13 is granting of a right.

14 So, they would pay -- It
15 would be like any of our standard
16 easement requests. They would have
17 to pay for the survey, the appraisal,
18 and then the appraised value of the
19 interest -- I'm sorry. I forgot --
20 it's been a while since we've had
21 one, that was on me.

22 So, they're willing to do
23 all of that.

1 So, it can be done. I
2 mean, we can meet the requirements.
3 But this would be a very complex and
4 -- you know, when we burn or the
5 public sees private use, it would be
6 a new -- it'd be a bit of a new move
7 by the Board, a new precedent for
8 that.

9 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Mr.
10 Jones.

11 MR. JONES: I think this sets a
12 terrible precedent, personally. And
13 do you need a motion from us to
14 reject this?

15 MS. MCCURDY: No. I just need a
16 motion if you want me to pursue it.

17 MR. JONES: Okay.

18 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Dr.
19 Saloom.

20 DR. SALOOM: My concern is what
21 happens 40 years from now, who's
22 going to maintain that structure and
23 is Forever Wild liable when they're

1 rotten boards and stuff like that and
2 -- and free access to the public?

3 MS. MCCURDY: I mean, we would
4 certainly require them to carry
5 insurance, et cetera. But I can't
6 enforce in the -- if there is an
7 injury to the public while they're on
8 our acreage, yes, we would have
9 exposure.

10 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: It
11 doesn't sound like there's any
12 interest from the Board in moving
13 forward on that.

14 So, hearing none, give
15 everybody pause for a second. No
16 interest?

17 (No response).

18 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: All
19 right. Thank you.

20 MS. MCCURDY: Okay. Thanks.
21 But I do want you to know, we bring
22 everything to you that the public
23 asks us to. Moving forward, the next

1 thing is kind of a thick -- you've
2 got a binder clip, it's tab 5-H.
3 This is the meeting every year that
4 we bring -- I bring forward an update
5 on -- although we haven't completed
6 the fiscal year, we're pretty close,
7 but update of the activities that the
8 staff has been engaged in. There's a
9 lot that goes on behind the scenes
10 that really is not seen.

11 And so, I'm always
12 struggling, I don't want to take too
13 much time but I do want to run
14 through them a little bit, just
15 briefly.

16 I divide them up in a
17 manner -- I mean, we're working
18 together, it's our division. And let
19 me say, it's not just State Lands.
20 Obviously we're getting a lot of
21 support from Wildlife and Freshwater
22 Fisheries Division and also from
23 State Parks. But this is detailing

1 what my staff is working on and
2 coordinating.

3 So, I try to break it up in
4 case you have a special interest, you
5 can more quickly go there.

6 But I want to just run
7 through. The first memo is what I
8 call Stewardship report. And that's
9 really information on some of the
10 base land management activities that
11 we do, whether it's prescribed fire
12 or herbicide application, whatever
13 we're doing, you know, one thing
14 that's a focus, obviously, is habitat
15 restoration and management. I can
16 tell you over -- as of when we did
17 the memo anyway, we've had about --
18 approximately 12,180 total acres that
19 have been burned this year.

20 And we are in current state
21 of planning for this some growing
22 season burns that we'll be moving
23 into here when we get to September,

1 October of an additional 2,100 acres.
2 This has been accomplished with the
3 cooperation of various partners,
4 also. You have an example in the
5 North District at Freedom Hills with
6 the Department of Interior and the
7 National Park Service in cooperation
8 and working together there.

9 We've worked a lot with
10 the, obviously, Wildlife Freshwater
11 Fisheries Division helping us, the
12 Nature Conservancy, that is a lot
13 acreage and more acreage to come but
14 we're both improving habitats with
15 those prescribed burns, as well as
16 from some of our tracts, reducing the
17 intense land management, sort of that
18 hands on management that is necessary
19 and seeing very good results,
20 especially, you know, in the native
21 grasses and shifting of some of those
22 burns schedules.

23 But I just want to commend

1 my guys, about as hard work that --
2 as everybody on the Board knows, is
3 impacted by weather, never quite goes
4 as you plan, when you plan.

5 And so, they do a great job
6 with that.

7 We also, as I mentioned, do
8 herbicide applications, example, you
9 know, cogon grass is always an issue,
10 aquatic species, invasive species are
11 an issue. I give in there an example
12 given of one tract, Splinter Hill
13 Bog, where the management that we
14 have done since 2016, has reduced the
15 amount of the solution necessary from
16 -- I think it was 6,500 to -- now
17 down to about less than a thousand.

18 And so, we are seeing
19 progress but it is continuing work,
20 as everyone knows.

21 We have -- We plant food
22 plots. We do waterfowl impoundments.
23 We've actually also installed some

1 flashboard risers to help manage
2 water levels on one of our tracts.
3 They're always focused on recreation,
4 maintaining the trails, the access
5 points, the parking lots, the roads.
6 You can imagine the road work that
7 goes on.

8 And then we're also -- new
9 acquisitions, obviously, where we
10 have surveys and then marking of
11 boundaries. And then maintaining the
12 painting on those boundaries, there's
13 a lot of work that goes into that.
14 And just general maintenance on the
15 tract. We're also -- you know, we
16 talk a lot about feral swine but, you
17 know, we're also removing beavers and
18 nutria on these tracts.

19 And then they do assist and
20 help me with evaluations, both as to
21 all these types of requests as to
22 access and timber reservations, et
23 cetera, but also research request

1 that we get: Is it research we
2 should allow; what's the process; is
3 there any impact to the property of
4 that research?

5 So, I want to thank those
6 guys. That's led by my Chief of
7 Enforcement, Jeremy Doss; all my
8 enforcement officers are APO
9 certified, they have a very unique
10 role in that they are -- some days
11 they're -- they may be on a tractor.
12 I mean, they're doing active land
13 management, burning, in addition to
14 protecting the public and being sure
15 that at our recreational areas, that
16 the public's there to enjoy, that
17 they're able to enjoy it without
18 issues from others who may have
19 different ideas.

20 So, anyway, I want to
21 compliment them on that. You can
22 read in detail, but that's why I call
23 Stewardship.

1 I then give you some quick
2 -- Oh. Yes, sir, Dr. Powers.

3 DR. POWERS: I just want to say,
4 I was fortunate enough to go out
5 recently with two of your enforcement
6 officers and -- and -- including
7 Chief Doss. And it was just amazing
8 the job that they do. Not only do
9 they -- are they Conservation
10 Enforcement Officers but they're
11 biologists. They go out there, take
12 the land. You know, Commissioner
13 Blankenship was with me and they were
14 showing us some of the upper Delta
15 lands that they own and it was -- I
16 was just shocked at -- and truly
17 impressed, and then learned more in
18 that day, than I've learned in long
19 time about the lands, the management,
20 the cultural resources.

21 And after they finished
22 touring with us, they also saved this
23 young lady's life who was in a

1 horrible boating accident. We had
2 some Marine Enforcement Officers
3 there, the Conservation Lands
4 Officers there after they finished
5 getting rid of these politician
6 types, they responded to a call. And
7 -- And I don't know, Commissioner
8 could add -- this young lady would
9 be, not with us, if it wasn't for
10 those guys. So, it was truly, truly
11 impressive.

12 So, please pass on
13 everything I said to Chief Doss and
14 his staff --

15 MS. MCCURDY: He's here. So...

16 DR. POWERS: Oh, is he back
17 there? No, it was a remarkable --
18 remarkable.

19 MS. MCCURDY: Yeah, they really
20 did save her life. She had been
21 thrown from a boat and the propellor
22 struck both legs and arm and there's
23 amputation. And they arrived on

1 scene applying tourniquets. And so,
2 that is the breadth of what they do.

3 They also on my tracts,
4 walk up on homeless encampments that
5 you don't know are there while
6 they're just trying to manage the
7 property.

8 So, it's a -- you know,
9 they do a lot of good and have --
10 also help with education. I mean,
11 their -- their skill set, they're all
12 biologists for forest and their skill
13 set is -- and great with the public.

14 So, I want to commend all
15 of them.

16 Ms. Stanley.

17 MS. STANLEY: Yes. Director
18 McCurdy, were you going to to over
19 the education and public outreach? I
20 want to commend that group because I
21 personally feel that with all of the
22 land that we conserve and the
23 millions of dollars that we spend, if

1 the public doesn't know about it,
2 nobody gets to enjoy it.

3 So, I want to commend it.
4 And I want to encourage the increase
5 of public outreach because there is
6 no way that the average citizen has
7 an understanding of how much the
8 State does for our citizens.

9 And so, people who are
10 familiar with wildlife, the rural
11 areas, may know about it or if it's
12 near to them, they may take advantage
13 of it. But I do encourage us to do
14 more outreach to, especially kids in
15 the urban core, as we might say, who
16 live in a concrete jungle, and to
17 look at the application of our
18 funding to provide bus tours, field
19 trips, because it won't happen if we
20 don't do it.

21 MS. MCCURDY: And we do have
22 some -- you know, some restrictions
23 on how we -- what money and how we

1 can do, you know, but we do stretch
2 that as we can. And I will say, too,
3 you know, this -- the education
4 efforts range from, you know, young
5 kids, all the way through the -- to
6 adult mentoring that we do. But
7 also, take a second to say, the --
8 the Campus Conservation program, the
9 collegiate level, we are, I think,
10 visiting at West Alabama next week to
11 get some participation and get some
12 of those students included, as well
13 as developing that with the
14 University of South Alabama.

15 So, we're also continuing
16 -- our Tuskegee students will be
17 coming to my Weeks Bay Reserve, I
18 think in September -- August or
19 September, but they're coming there.

20 And that's really their
21 first exposure to that sort of
22 coastal and estuarine ecology. And
23 so they're very, very excited about

1 that. And we're -- They'll be able
2 to stay at the dorm we have there.

3 And so, we're -- we're
4 excited about expanding those
5 programs as well.

6 So, thank you for that.

7 Any other questions on that
8 one?

9 (No response).

10 MS. MCCURDY: The next memo
11 really just gives you some -- little
12 bit of quick facts in a consolidated
13 manner related to the, what, 392
14 miles of trail of all types that
15 we're maintaining on various tracts.
16 And then some of the access projects
17 that we continue to work on. Again,
18 acquisition is -- acquiring acreage
19 is great but if I cannot get the
20 public there, and if I get them there
21 with nowhere to park, we haven't
22 really done much.

23 So, I want to commend our

1 recreation section. And also falls
2 under Chief Doss but also crosses
3 into some other areas, we have
4 equipment operators and various ones
5 that help, forester that helps with
6 that group a lot.

7 So, the next report you
8 have is what we call our Natural
9 Heritage Section. And Jo Lewis --
10 that you deal with so much on the
11 Board with activities, really the
12 coordination and processing of your
13 packet, of the nominations, of the
14 mapping effort, involves a lot of
15 people, aided greatly by Ashley
16 Peters, who is the GIS whiz. And I'd
17 say more about it, but I'd probably
18 say it wrong. So, I just don't want
19 to make her nervous.

20 But in this one I'm going
21 to kind of detail, too, the -- the
22 work that goes on from a inventory
23 standpoint, the -- the plants

1 species; the other habitat specie
2 information that goes into our
3 Natural Heritage database. This is
4 used by -- not just researchers but
5 by -- on a practical level by those
6 who are wanting to proceed with
7 development in an area needing to
8 understand what might be in that
9 area.

10 It's also very valuable in
11 helping us work toward our efforts to
12 delist species, to get them off the
13 endangered list, which is -- is great
14 for the species. But it's also great
15 for Alabama in lifting some
16 restrictions in some areas so that --
17 maintaining that is helpful for that
18 purpose also.

19 You will see a lot of the
20 efforts, you know, noted in here of,
21 again, inventorying those species,
22 keeping up with them. A lot of the
23 outreach also happens. Jo

1 coordinated our booth at the Eco Wild
2 Expo in Mobile, just as one example.
3 I mean, several staff members helped
4 but if we need a booth somewhere or
5 getting information out, they're very
6 helpful. And, again, keeping up with
7 all the willing seller letters,
8 confirming that, the process, the
9 research requests, we had 27 -- or
10 had 27 research requests just this
11 year from others to utilize our
12 tracts. So, that's always an
13 intensive analysis.

14 And so, I gave a specific
15 report as to the Barnett Lawley Field
16 Trial area because that's often of
17 interest. So far this year, we've
18 had 30 sporting dog events; eleven
19 physically disabled deer hunts;
20 eleven youth deer hunts; six duck
21 hunts; and two dove hunts. And, you
22 know, you've got the children and the
23 parents coming to those; the

1 physically disabled opportunities
2 there are very important.

3 The dog events, I have
4 detail -- you know, have detailed
5 some of those. Again, I won't take
6 -- I won't take time to run all
7 through that but I did want to note
8 that in your green folder, I've added
9 a schedule of events in the field
10 trial area. Again, it -- those dates
11 could shift, so check with us but if
12 you would like to attend any of those
13 events or see how much is going on.

14 We are excited and I can
15 now tell you -- it was not supposed
16 to be public -- but we have garnered
17 two national events, which we've had
18 before, but these are both
19 significant: The AKC is going to
20 host the 2025 National Gun Dog
21 Championship there, that is a 13-day
22 event scheduled in January, moving
23 in, really, the first of February.

1 We're also going to have
2 the 2025 National Vizsla Gun Dog
3 Championship. That will be in -- in
4 February. So, we're excited for that
5 recognition and having all those dogs
6 there. That will be going on while
7 we're still doing all of the hunting
8 programs, providing the Audubon type
9 of bird watching field trips and, so,
10 birding trails. There's all sorts of
11 native grass and other habitat
12 restoration going on at the tract and
13 that's why we're actively
14 coordinating our burning.

15 I do want to very
16 compliment Chief Doss and also Brae
17 Buckner, my manager there. This
18 property requires very specific
19 management across the acreage. And
20 it is complex to offer as many dog
21 opportunities as we can while we're
22 still providing everything else we're
23 doing. So, I want to thank them.

1 But, again, you can look at.

2 And we have some exciting
3 news, I guess, too, on the new event
4 center among other improvements at --
5 camp hookups and horse barn
6 improvements. But I think we have a
7 reconstruction meeting Monday, so
8 I'll go ahead.

9 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Just
10 as a matter of interest, we talked
11 about the new event center that we're
12 going to build at the Forever Wild
13 Field Trial area, about
14 two-and-a-half million-dollar project
15 funded with funds from Innovate
16 Alabama, the Legislature and some
17 other funds. Signed the contract on
18 that last week. I think Ed Poole,
19 who's our Deputy Commissioner,
20 actually signed the contract. And
21 pre-construction meeting is -- is
22 coming up --

23 MS. MCCURDY: Monday.

1 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: --
2 and so we're ready to get going on
3 the construction there, excited about
4 that.

5 MS. MCCURDY: And I gave you the
6 schedule of events. But if you just
7 want a general tour of the grounds
8 and learn how we -- what we do there
9 and how we do it, please let us know.
10 That applies to any tract.

11 Mr. Darnall.

12 MR. DARNALL: What is the nature
13 of our relationship with the Hard
14 Away Hounds fox hunting group? Uses
15 it a lot.

16 MS. MCCURDY: They just are
17 close by.

18 MR. DARNALL: Okay.

19 MS. MCCURDY: And it's a good --
20 I'll be honest with you, they don't
21 have a lot of tracts that meet their
22 needs. For a lot of these groups,
23 not many -- not -- there's not many

1 opportunities where folks are
2 managing the tracts like we're
3 managing the field trial area.

4 And so, they come -- quite
5 frankly, probably would like to come
6 more but we have to schedule other
7 folks too. So -- but that's it,
8 nothing special --

9 MR. DARNALL: We just make it
10 available for them.

11 MS. MCCURDY: Yes. And they,
12 the dogs -- pay per dog event and
13 they're paying for some facilities.
14 It's not very expensive but, yes,
15 they do pay. And as long as it does
16 not -- again, we're constantly
17 juggling all types of events. We're
18 not going to just be a dog sporting
19 event facility. But so far, we're
20 juggling, but you'll see from the
21 schedule we're juggling. So...

22 The next report is specific
23 to our Wehle Land Conservation

1 Center. That is located in Bullock
2 and Barbour County. And, actually,
3 the map that you would have looked at
4 related to the PR opportunity for
5 Wildlife on the Wycott Addition that
6 we talked about earlier, it's all
7 right there.

8 We have State Lands acreage
9 that is also adjacent and encompasses
10 the structures on the property, but
11 Forever Wild acreage is the acreage
12 where there are not structures. But
13 we have a Conservation Center there.

14 We also host open trail
15 weekends there. We have horse
16 groups, equestrian groups that come
17 and camp over those weekends and
18 utilize the hookups and the paddocks
19 and then ride the trails there over
20 the weekend.

21 But there is also research
22 that goes on at that -- on that
23 tract. But if you'll look in the

1 memo, the usage by visitors and
2 school-age children in that area,
3 providing them guided and adult-led
4 access to outdoor recreation, be it
5 fishing, you know, any of these
6 opportunities, I'm really proud of
7 that.

8 We have an arrangement
9 where we have -- Auburn helps with
10 some educational programming there
11 for these students and trying to get
12 the students on the tract. But it's
13 very hands on and in an area that,
14 you know, we're really proud to serve
15 and be in.

16 I serve on the Bullock
17 Tourism Council and that is an area
18 that's always looking to bring more
19 people and improve the economic
20 advancement of that area and a great
21 community, great community effort.

22 And so, I'm very proud that
23 we can be a part of that. It's also

1 been used in the Collegiate
2 Conservation Campus program, has a
3 dorm facility where those students
4 have been able to stay.

5 So, I'll let y'all look
6 through that but I did want to
7 highlight as a separate facility.
8 Again, it's right there adjacent to
9 the Barbour WMA.

10 The next -- The final one
11 in that tab is our Forest Management
12 Activities report. For this report
13 each year, I track back through the
14 various harvesting activities, be it
15 final cuts, thinnings, reforestation
16 activity, to give you an idea of both
17 what we did and what we tried to do.
18 Sometimes we're -- we don't get bids
19 on tracts or something doesn't work
20 out. But I've traced back through
21 the activity we discussed this year
22 last time -- or last time this year,
23 and you can kind of run through the

1 update on that. I will say, noting
2 on the reforestation work, we only
3 had one tract that really needed that
4 and that was Uchee Creek SOA in
5 Russell County. And that continues
6 to progress well and we think that,
7 you know, we're on target there for,
8 you know, survival that we were
9 looking for.

10 So, I'm happy to discuss
11 anything in particular but I'll let
12 you review that.

13 Before I move to the next
14 memo because I -- again, this is a
15 struggle every year, I know it's a
16 lot of information; are there any
17 questions on those activity reports
18 before I roll into next item?

19 Okay. And, again, I want
20 to thank my staff. I stand up here
21 and -- but they in the heat and
22 interact with the public a lot. And
23 I just -- I really want to thank

1 them, they do a great job
2 administratively, outreach, and land
3 management. I appreciate it.

4 So, if no questions, we'll
5 move to the next item, which is 5-I.
6 And what we do, again, annually at
7 this meeting, is we come to you with
8 an overview of what we anticipate are
9 going to be our timber activities
10 over this fiscal year. Obviously,
11 weather impacts us. Storms change
12 our plans. Monitoring of beetles
13 changes our plans. So -- but this is
14 our plan for the upcoming fiscal
15 year.

16 So, I've divided that into
17 thinning activities. Frankly, all of
18 our activities are normally to
19 improve the general wildlife habitat
20 and facilitate the use of prescribed
21 fire, and also reduce the likelihood
22 of problems, like this southern pine
23 beetle.

1 But I divided the
2 activities into thinnings; into
3 projected final harvests; and then at
4 the end, the planned reforestation
5 activities. These were concerned and
6 were included in the planning that we
7 did and you did in setting next
8 year's -- this upcoming fiscal year's
9 Stewardship budget. So, those were
10 planned for and they've been
11 accounted for.

12 But what we normally do is
13 ask for a fairly broad motion, not
14 knowing what might happen over a
15 fiscal year. I would -- I'll take
16 any questions but I do like to just
17 have a motion indicating there's not
18 a grand concern with our strategy.

19 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Is
20 there anybody that feels comfortable
21 making the motion that's included on
22 tab 5-I for the forest management
23 activities for this upcoming year?

1 Mr. Oates.

2 MR. OATES: I would move that
3 the Board authorizes the State Land
4 Division to implement or continue as
5 applicable forest management
6 activities for the FY 2025 fiscal
7 year as prescribed in the memorandum
8 dated August 1, 2024.

9 MR. JONES: Second.

10 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Secon
11 ded by Mr. Jones.

12 Thank you for the work
13 putting that together. Look forward
14 to some good forest management work.

15 Any other questions or
16 discussion?

17 (No response).

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

20 (Board members saying "aye").

21 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: The
22 motion carries.

23 MS. MCCURDY: And I will take

1 the opportunity to let everybody know
2 I do have a new employee, a new
3 forester, he's probably going to die
4 that I recognize him but, Noah
5 Runyan.

6 Noah, stand up. I mention
7 this so, if you get a call from
8 somebody named Noah Runyan, that's
9 who it is. So, I want to welcome
10 Noah onboard as an additional
11 forester.

12 All right. So, now let's
13 move on to tab 5-J. This is not so
14 much a -- I don't really need a
15 motion. It's really more in the
16 nature of an update. But I had
17 mentioned at the last meeting that we
18 would, as part of our feral swine
19 mitigation update, that we would
20 provide you with the information that
21 was sort of tracking the monitoring
22 and elimination of the hogs.

23 And so, taking the

1 information I said, we would collect
2 or we were collecting anyway but
3 would gather for you; that is, the
4 attachment.

5 So, between now and the
6 next meeting, just take a look at
7 that. And if there's a different way
8 you would like that presented, you
9 know, let me know. As a general
10 update, you know, we've continued
11 with -- and at this point of the
12 first phase of purchasing of cameras
13 and traps, have completed that on the
14 tracts noted.

15 I will say we now, yay,
16 have fully in place, fully executed,
17 fully State approved contract with
18 the provider to give us the option to
19 have contractual services to enhance
20 staff efforts. Now, that may range
21 from evaluation, monitoring,
22 planning, putting traps out,
23 retrieving, probably the A to Z,

1 whatever is needed in that effort.
2 And we will be looking at that on
3 some tracts, it's just an extra
4 effort on other tracts coordinating
5 the full effort. In looking at that,
6 the tracts that we are going to for
7 contractual services, from that
8 standpoint, our first initial phase
9 of that effort and putting that into
10 practice is going to be to the Little
11 River SOA in Escambia County; the
12 Thigpen Forever Wild Tract and
13 Thigpen SOA in Butler; and the Grand
14 Bay Savanna Complex in Mobile.

15 Now, there will be more but
16 we're trying to be sure we've got our
17 process for that in working with a
18 new contractor under control and
19 handled.

20 So, any questions from the
21 Board on that?

22 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: SOA

23 --

1 MS. MCCURDY: Hold on one
2 second. I went too fast, give me
3 just a second. Our Court Reporter is
4 catching up with me.

5 (Thereupon, a discussion was
6 held off the record.)

7 MS. MCCURDY: So, we'll move --
8 with nothing on that, we're going to
9 move -- keep moving forward. The
10 only additional item that you had in
11 your green folder was the field trial
12 schedule.

13 And then, finally, an
14 update on the Hale Springs
15 interaction that I mentioned that,
16 that shortlist nomination that I've
17 been working with the City of Hoover,
18 I will -- I had, again, a very good
19 meeting with the City of Hoover.
20 They are helping in guiding the
21 Friends of Shades Mountain in the
22 steps that need to be taken. Most
23 initially as a next step, they have

1 hired a engineering consulting firm
2 that is going to lay out for me where
3 we could put parking. And if that's
4 demonstrated as safe parking and
5 access on that tract, then we'll have
6 better information for the Board to
7 proceed. Although there is hopes of
8 future development adjacent to us,
9 I'm trying to ensure that if we are
10 left with a standalone tract, that is
11 has safe parking and access.

12 So, we met in person with
13 Hoover, had followup information this
14 week from Hoover including the
15 Friends of Shades Creek is going to
16 start providing Hoover a status
17 update.

18 And so, if you would look
19 at their -- the attachments to that
20 memo, you'll see, kind of, the work
21 they've done. They have also now
22 committed to meet with Jefferson
23 County because any parking along that

1 road, is going to have to be approved
2 through there, also, as well as the
3 City of Birmingham. And so, I think
4 they are following our request to
5 begin some coordination efforts.

6 But I'll take any
7 questions. But I will pass along,
8 the Friends group is still very
9 excited and supportive of the
10 nomination. But the City of Hoover
11 asked them not to just keep coming
12 and having, you know, 20 speakers for
13 y'all. But I want to continue to
14 note that, although, you did not hear
15 from them today, they are very
16 excited about this but they are
17 pursuing at their own time and
18 expense a solution.

19 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Thank
20 you.

21 MS. MCCURDY: That's all I have.

22 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: All
23 right. The next item is approval of

1 the meeting minutes from May 2nd.

2 MR. HARPER: I move to approve.

3 MR. PARNELL: Second.

4 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: It's
5 moved by Mr. Harper. Seconded by Mr.
6 Parnell.

7 All those in favor -- Any
8 corrections, changes, additions to
9 the minutes?

10 (No response).

11 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: I'm
12 seeing none, minutes are approved.

13 The next meeting will be
14 held --

15 MS. MCCURDY: We know we're in
16 the Huntsville area.

17 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: --
18 November in the Huntsville area, and
19 we're working on a facility.
20 Hopefully, we can find us a good
21 place that maybe we haven't met
22 before and that will be a good
23 opportunity for the Board to see some

1 of our other higher -- institutions
2 of higher education in the State.

3 I have one last item today:

4 Our State Parks Director Greg Lein,
5 who was also a very -- for a very
6 long time, was a -- worked in our
7 State Lands Division and was very
8 integral in the Forever Wild Program,
9 really, almost from the beginning.
10 Greg's pretty old, been with the
11 State Government a long time. But
12 Greg really has been a good friend to
13 the Forever Wild Program, has worked
14 diligently when he was with the State
15 Lands Division, not only on the
16 acquisitions but also on the
17 development of the different
18 properties around the State. And
19 then, as he's moved into a new role
20 several years ago in the State Parks
21 Division as their Director, he has
22 taken advantage, I think, of the
23 opportunities through Forever Wild

1 program to add to our parks, to
2 expand outdoor recreational
3 opportunities for our citizen in
4 partnership with Forever Wild. And
5 he is retiring before our next
6 meeting, so this is our -- this will
7 be Greg's last meeting as the State
8 Parks Director in the State of
9 Alabama.

10 So, I wanted to acknowledge
11 his contributions and present him
12 with a certificate on behalf of the
13 Forever Wild Board thanking him for
14 the work that he's done during his
15 time in State government. And I'm
16 sure he'll continue to be a supporter
17 of the program long into the future,
18 even though he's no longer -- will
19 not longer be with the Department of
20 Conservation.

21 So, Greg, can you come up?

22 MS. MCCURDY: So, while Greg is
23 coming up, I'll just tell you, he was

1 -- Greg was the Assistant Director of
2 State Lands when I came private
3 sector in -- back in '08. And I have
4 a great debt of gratitude to Greg for
5 telling me what to do when I got
6 there. So...

7 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Thank
8 you, Greg, for all your work. It's a
9 lasting legacy, no doubt.

10 So, with that, I won't even
11 sit down. I'll just make a motion to
12 be adjourned.

13 (Board members saying "so
14 moved").

15 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: All
16 right. We are adjourned. Thank you.

17
18
19 (WHEREUPON, the Board meeting
20 was adjourned at 12:16 p.m.)
21
22
23

1 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

2 STATE OF ALABAMA

3 TALLADEGA COUNTY

4 I, Jamie McCracken, Certified Court
5 Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of
6 Alabama at Large, certify on Thursday, August 1,
7 2024, that I reported the proceedings in the matter
8 of:

9 MEETING OF THE
10 FOREVER WILD BOARD MEETING
11 REID STATE TECHNICAL COLLEGE
12 EVERGREEN, ALABAMA

13
14
15 On the 1st day of August, 2024, that the
16 foregoing 135 computer-printed pages contain a true
17 and correct transcript of the hearing set out
18 herein.

19 I further certify that I am neither a
20 relative, employee, attorney or counsel of any of
21 the parties, nor am I a relative or employee of
22 such attorney or counsel, nor am I financially
23 interested in the results thereof. All rates

1 charged are usual and customary.

2 I further certify that I am duly licensed
3 by the Alabama Board of Court Reporting as a
4 Certified Court Reporter as evidenced by the ACCR
5 number following my name found below.

6 This 29th day of August in the year of
7 our Lord, 2024.

8

9

10

11

Jamie McCracken

Jamie McCracken, CCR
ACCR NO. 451 Exp. 9/30/24
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Commission Expires 11/14/27

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**COMMISSIONER
BLANKENSHIP:**
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