

1                                   **FOREVER WILD LAND TRUST**  
 2                                   **PUBLIC LISTENING SESSION**  
 3                   **5 Rivers Delta Resource Center**  
 4                                   **Spanish Fort, Alabama**  
 5                                   **February 20, 2014**

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10                                   **SOUTH DISTRICT**

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15                                   Proceedings taken before Tracye  
 16 Sadler Blackwell, Certified Court Reporter, ACCR  
 17 No. 294, and Commissioner for the State of Alabama  
 18 at Large, at 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center, 30945  
 19 Five Rivers Boulevard, Spanish Fort, Alabama, on  
 20 Thursday, February 20, 2014, commencing at  
 21 approximately 6:07 p.m.

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23                                   \* \* \* \* \*

1 PANEL MEMBERS:

- 2 Ms. Patti Powell, State Lands Director
- 3 Mr. Chris Smith, State Lands Manager
- 4 Ms. Jo Lewis, Natural Heritage Section Chief

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9 MS. POWELL: Good evening, everybody. We've  
10 still got a couple of people signing in,  
11 but I'm going to go ahead and start with  
12 just some introductory remarks while  
13 they're signing in. Hopefully we'll get  
14 everybody out before you get rained on,  
15 but I'm not going to make any real  
16 promise on that.

17 But I want to welcome everybody.  
18 I'm Patti Powell. I'm the director of  
19 the State Lands Division of the  
20 Department of Conservation and Natural  
21 Resources. I want to welcome you on  
22 behalf of the department as well as our  
23 Commissioner, Gunter Guy.

1           We're here tonight in relation to  
2           the Forever Wild Land Trust program.  
3           That is the State of Alabama's  
4           land-acquisition program. Our role in  
5           that as the State Lands Division on  
6           behalf of the Department of Conservation  
7           is to serve as administrator for the  
8           program. The program is really led by a  
9           15-member board. Our division and other  
10          divisions in the department, which  
11          include Wildlife and Freshwater  
12          Fisheries, Marine Resources, State  
13          Parks, and Marine Police -- I hope I  
14          didn't skip anybody -- all do assist  
15          with the effort of administering the  
16          program.

17          But we're here tonight as a second  
18          public listening session that we're  
19          hosting at the board's request. And  
20          what they would like to get is some  
21          input seeking ideas from the public both  
22          through these public listening sessions  
23          and also through commenting on our

1 Website, which Chris will detail in a  
2 minute, comments from the public on what  
3 they would like to see as part of the  
4 board beginning to look at a long-range  
5 planning process. And Chris will tell  
6 you more about that too. But that's why  
7 we're here.

8 And, again, we very much appreciate  
9 you coming. I am getting a bit of a  
10 complex. The first meeting we held was  
11 in Huntsville, Alabama, on a night that  
12 the temperatures dipped into the single  
13 digits, and I come down here, you know,  
14 on the drive down I get blown away. So  
15 I'm beginning to think I have a black  
16 cloud following me, but, again, we'll  
17 try to ...

18 We will have a very short PowerPoint  
19 that Chris Smith, who's State Lands  
20 manager for the State Lands Division --  
21 that he will walk through. It's a very  
22 brief, very broad overview of the  
23 Forever Wild program. I suspect many of

1           you are familiar with it, but for those  
2           who are not, we wanted to give some  
3           context to why we're here and what we're  
4           asking and what the board has asked us  
5           to go talk to the public and take  
6           comment on. After that, we will take  
7           any public comments anybody wants to  
8           make. We've had folks sign up, and so  
9           we'll turn to that.

10           The department has other  
11           opportunities for public comment. This  
12           program, the Forever Wild program, has  
13           four meetings a year. We had one in  
14           February. There will be one coming up  
15           in June, September, and then December.  
16           Each of those meetings are public  
17           meetings that include a built-in period  
18           of public comment. There's an  
19           opportunity to comment. Those are  
20           during the weekdays on Thursdays.

21           We also have opportunities through  
22           the broader department in our advisory  
23           committee meetings. The first one of

1           those for this year actually comes up  
2           March 1st. That one will be in  
3           Montgomery at the Department of  
4           Agriculture Auditorium. I honestly  
5           haven't been there before, but it's  
6           right by -- fairly close to the State  
7           Capitol, I'm told. Don't take my word  
8           on that. Please check that out on the  
9           Website and be sure.

10           But those meetings provide a period  
11           for public comment. That meeting,  
12           again, March 1st in Montgomery. That  
13           meeting starts at nine, but those  
14           seeking to sign up for public comment,  
15           you'll need to be there and signed up by  
16           8:30. So I wanted to pass that along.

17           These meetings -- although we have  
18           other opportunities for public comment,  
19           the board asked us to do these for a  
20           couple of reasons: One, do these at  
21           night to give another opportunity. The  
22           advisory board meetings for the  
23           department are held on Saturday. So

1           this is another type of opportunity for  
2           people to come. And, secondly, although  
3           we often get a lot of feedback at those  
4           meetings, they really wanted us to ask  
5           the specific question of, you know,  
6           looking long range what would be your  
7           comments to the board on developing a  
8           long-range plan.

9           The board will develop a draft  
10          plan. That will then come back out for  
11          public comments, and there will be a  
12          second series of meetings. And I'm not  
13          taking away Chris' thunder. He'll cover  
14          all of that. But I kind of want to give  
15          you context for what will be going on  
16          tonight.

17          We do have a court reporter here,  
18          Tracye, who will be taking down  
19          everything. We did that so that --  
20          obviously, with a 15-member board of  
21          representatives across the state,  
22          they're not all going to be able to  
23          attend these meetings. We wanted to be

1           sure that in addition to the comment  
2           summary-type information that we will  
3           give them that they have access to  
4           actually everything that was said,  
5           exactly how it was said. So we have  
6           included a court reporter who will be  
7           taking down everything.

8           Every now and then if I ask you to  
9           slow down or take a moment -- or you may  
10          hear from Tracye -- it's just so that  
11          she can get all that taken down for our  
12          board. So I just wanted to mention  
13          that.

14          I think what we're going to do is  
15          I'm just going to go ahead and let Chris  
16          come up and run through the overview.  
17          At that point we will turn it over for  
18          any comments anyone has. Thank you.

19          MR. SMITH: All right. Good evening. And I  
20          just want to begin with echoing what  
21          Patti said and thank all of you for  
22          taking time out of your evening and  
23          coming and participating in this public

1 listening session.

2 You know, I'm going to spend maybe  
3 about 10 to 15 minutes. I've got a  
4 PowerPoint presentation with about 15  
5 slides. And I'm going to just give a  
6 brief overview of the Forever Wild Land  
7 Trust program's -- its purpose, its  
8 process, how it's funded, and give a  
9 program status update of, you know, the  
10 acreage that has been purchased in the  
11 first 21 years of its existence and then  
12 talk about why we're here tonight and  
13 about getting some input and comment on  
14 the long-range planning that the Forever  
15 Wild Land Trust Board of Trustees is  
16 hoping to put together.

17 So I'm going to go ahead and begin  
18 with the PowerPoint. It just kind of  
19 talks about some really brief general  
20 information about the Forever Wild Land  
21 Trust program. The Forever Wild Land  
22 Trust program is a land-acquisition  
23 program with a purchase of -- with a

1           purpose of purchasing land for the use  
2           of a nature preserve, recreation area,  
3           state park, or wildlife management  
4           area.

5           The program is funded with a portion  
6           of the interest earned off the Alabama  
7           Trust Fund. There is a  
8           15-million-dollar cap annually. And  
9           there is also a stewardship fund that is  
10          funded by 15 percent of the appraised  
11          value of each acquisition that is made.  
12          And that stewardship fund is set aside  
13          in a separate interest-bearing account,  
14          and annually we have a budget to provide  
15          for the maintenance and restoration  
16          actions and different stewardship  
17          activities on the Forever Wild  
18          properties that are purchased.

19          To illustrate a little bit more how  
20          the funding works, revenue from the  
21          offshore gas leases come into the  
22          Alabama Trust Fund, and there's  
23          distributions annually that go out to

1 various entities. Ten percent goes to  
2 the counties within the state, ten  
3 percent to municipalities. 70 percent  
4 goes to the general fund. And then ten  
5 percent comes to fund the Forever Wild  
6 Land Trust program.

7 And, like I said, there is an annual  
8 15-million-dollar cap. So, in other  
9 words, if ten percent that's earned in  
10 interest is more than 15, only  
11 15 million will come to fund the Forever  
12 Wild Land Trust acquisition program.  
13 Once the land is purchased, it is titled  
14 to the Alabama Trust Fund. So it is  
15 essentially natural resource money that  
16 is purchasing more Alabama natural  
17 resources and that land.

18 The program was created in 1992 with  
19 the passing of Constitutional  
20 Amendment 543, and then again it was  
21 reauthorized during the general election  
22 in November of 2012. And, as Patti  
23 said, there's a 15-member board of

1 trustees that are appointed by the  
2 Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker  
3 of the House, Alabama Commission on  
4 Higher Education. And these board  
5 members rotate out serving four- and  
6 six-year terms. They represent  
7 different varieties of the population.  
8 There's requirements of some being, you  
9 know, from the environmental,  
10 conservation, and business communities.

11 To date, in the first 21 years of  
12 the Forever Wild Land Trust program's  
13 existence there's been 104 tracts  
14 purchased totaling 240,000 acres.  
15 213,000 of those acres, or 88.5 percent,  
16 are within the WMA system, or the  
17 wildlife management area system.

18 To give you some examples of what I  
19 mean by that, down here in the south  
20 district -- and to elaborate on that a  
21 little bit, the program has divided the  
22 state into three districts. There's the  
23 north, central, and south. And in the

1 south district the WMAs are the Upper  
2 and Lower Delta, Perdido, Barbour  
3 County, which is located in Barbour  
4 County, Grand Bay Savanna Community  
5 Hunting Area over in south Mobile  
6 County, and the Lowndes County WMA  
7 located in Lowndes County. All of those  
8 are in the WMA system, and some of them  
9 are -- a good portion of them were  
10 purchased with Forever Wild funds.  
11 Like, for example, the Upper Delta and  
12 Lower Delta WMA was purchased with  
13 Forever Wild funds that were supported  
14 with federal land-acquisition grant  
15 monies to help further that Forever Wild  
16 dollar.

17 17,840 acres, or 7.7 percent, of the  
18 overall land purchased at this point are  
19 in non-WMA/nature preserve/recreation  
20 areas that offer hunting. Examples of  
21 that down here in the south district  
22 would be the Red Hills Forever Wild  
23 Complex and tracts which is located in

1 Monroe County, the Splinter Hill Bog  
2 Complex and tracts which is located in  
3 northern Baldwin County, the Old Cahawba  
4 Prairie tract which is located west of  
5 Selma in Dallas County, and the Lillian  
6 Swamp Complex and tracts which is  
7 located over in Mobile -- excuse me --  
8 Baldwin County near Lillian.

9 There's been 725 acres purchased at  
10 this point, or less than one percent,  
11 that have been additions to existing  
12 state parks. And there's been almost  
13 9,000 acres purchased that are what we  
14 call non-WMA parks or nature  
15 preserves/recreation areas. Examples of  
16 that down here in this region: There's  
17 been several tracts purchased that have  
18 become additions to the Weeks Bay  
19 National Estuarine Research Reserve.  
20 There's been an addition to Blakeley  
21 Historic State Park. Those are examples  
22 of what I mean by a non-WMA/recreation  
23 area. It does not allow hunting.

1           This slide shows kind of a breakdown  
2 of the acreage within the various  
3 districts. Although it's not equal, you  
4 can see there has been -- and it's not  
5 by design -- you know, a fairly good  
6 distribution of the different  
7 percentages or acreage purchased within  
8 the different districts.

9           To learn more about the Forever Wild  
10 program or Forever Wild tract  
11 information, type of hunting or the  
12 rules associated with the  
13 non-WMA/recreation area/nature preserve  
14 that allow hunting or the rules and  
15 permits and maps for the different WMAs  
16 that have Forever Wild properties  
17 associated with them, if you go to the  
18 Outdooralabama.com Website and follow  
19 the various links, you can find that  
20 information.

21           If you're interested in particular  
22 about Forever Wild lands, you click on  
23 the Forever Wild link, which is located

1           on the right-hand side of the opening  
2           page of Outdooralabama.com. And that  
3           will carry you to the  
4           Alabamaforeverwild.com Website.

5           And on this slide I've circled the  
6           interactive map, and the reason I did is  
7           because about two years ago we launched  
8           an interactive map both on the Forever  
9           Wild Land Trust Website and the  
10          Outdooralabama.com Website. That is a  
11          great tool to find out information  
12          about, of course, the Forever Wild  
13          properties and different recreation or  
14          hunting or trails, different  
15          opportunities you find on those  
16          properties, but also the different  
17          conservation lands, you know, that the  
18          Department of Conservation has within  
19          the WMA system as a whole.

20          This is an example of the  
21          interactive map that I'm speaking of.  
22          And, you know, if you were to click on  
23          that on the Website and you put your

1 cursor over one of the tracts  
2 highlighted in orange or red, you know,  
3 a box will pop up and tell you, hey,  
4 this is the Red Hills tract. And there  
5 will be different options to click on a  
6 different link to look at the hunting  
7 opportunities or recreation  
8 opportunities and that kind of thing.

9 Now, why we're here tonight, the  
10 Forever Wild Land Trust Board of  
11 Trustees passed a resolution -- passed a  
12 resolution to develop some long-range  
13 planning. In particular, the board  
14 passed a resolution to develop the  
15 initial five-year plan that would be  
16 updated at five-year increments  
17 thereafter. That plan is to outline  
18 goals of future acquisitions of lands,  
19 to outline anticipated activities on  
20 currently held trust lands, and to  
21 provide for anticipated activities of  
22 the board itself.

23 And, Patti, if there's anything that

1           you feel like adding as I'm talking  
2           about the resolution and why we're here  
3           tonight, please help me out.

4           Additionally, the board resolved  
5           that farmland will not be a primary  
6           acquisition focus, especially lands in  
7           active row crop production or livestock  
8           pastureland, that purchases of land  
9           leases will be a low priority, to  
10          implement a public education initiative  
11          to better communicate about the program  
12          benefits and tract information, and to  
13          also post the board minutes on the  
14          Alabamaforeverwild.com Website. So that  
15          is why we're holding these various  
16          public listening sessions across the  
17          state in the different districts is to  
18          assist the Forever Wild Land Trust Board  
19          of Trustees in putting together a  
20          long-range planning document.

21          So to help, I guess, maybe  
22          illustrate some suggestions of what the  
23          board is looking for -- and certainly

1           this is not meant to, you know, direct  
2           anybody to comment on a particular  
3           thing. But some of the comments we do  
4           have -- and online at the  
5           Alabamaforeverwild.com Website there is  
6           a page where you can comment through  
7           e-mail. You know, and some of the  
8           comments we've received at this point  
9           are, you know, purchasing land in all  
10          the various counties within the state or  
11          purchasing land for a particular use,  
12          activities, you know, managing land with  
13          more recreational trail opportunities or  
14          more wildlife-viewing or bird-watching  
15          opportunities. That's some of the  
16          feedback that we're receiving so far  
17          through the Website, and that's, I  
18          guess, the -- we're trying to get  
19          feedback like that on these very topics  
20          to help put this draft document  
21          together.

22                 And this is a screen shot of the  
23                 Alabamaforeverwild.com Website. And

1           you'll notice on the right-hand side  
2           there's a -- you just click on that link  
3           and you can submit any comment -- and,  
4           of course, as many comments as you  
5           have -- to assist with the development  
6           of this long-range plan.

7           And that's all I have. Just a brief  
8           overview. I think we'll -- we're going  
9           to go into the public comment period.  
10          We'll call your name. If you'll come up  
11          and state your name so that, you know,  
12          the court reporter can get that. And  
13          we'll just kind of go from there. And,  
14          you know, if -- I'm not sure exactly how  
15          many people have signed up, but if we --  
16          we might have to limit the time, but,  
17          you know, we can always circle back  
18          after everybody has had an opportunity  
19          to continue on.

20          MS. POWELL: And I will mention a couple of  
21          things, Chris.

22                 And Chris did a great job, so I  
23          wasn't going to interrupt him.

1           I will go ahead and say for some --  
2           I know for some organizations who often  
3           do long-range planning, I'm going to let  
4           you know, you know, up front this is  
5           probably a little different when we use  
6           the word long-range planning.

7           The Forever Wild program is really a  
8           grassroots nominations program. The  
9           nominations come in from the public.  
10          It's also dedicated to confirming that  
11          any parcel nominated, before we spend  
12          any time on it, has been presented -- or  
13          is owned by a willing seller. By  
14          willing seller, I mean not necessarily  
15          that they want to let the program  
16          acquire the land, but they're willing to  
17          have it at least be considered in the  
18          program. If we can't confirm that, then  
19          the tract doesn't move forward at all.

20          So I say all that to say, what that  
21          means, we really never know when we'll  
22          get a tract nominated, when it may come  
23          in, whether or not the seller will

1           actually want to have their tract  
2           considered by the program. And so we  
3           don't know what we're going to get, when  
4           we're going to get it, or how much money  
5           the program has at that time to even  
6           purchase any particular tract of land.

7           So I don't know -- I'm not sure if  
8           planning in the traditional sense is  
9           really what we're doing. But what the  
10          board can do and does want and we've  
11          been tasked with is how to try to do  
12          some long-range planning. And a lot of  
13          that can go to what's important to you,  
14          what factors do you want the board to  
15          consider in looking at tracts and  
16          whether to acquire them, what do you  
17          want to see as activities on those  
18          tracts.

19          So I think, you know, at this point  
20          that any feedback would help in  
21          developing, again, a draft document that  
22          will come back out for public comment.  
23          It will be a five-year -- initially a

1 five-year plan that would then be  
2 updated in five-year increments going  
3 forward. So there will be another --  
4 again, another set of meetings once  
5 there is some type of document drafted.  
6 That's our task, to try to figure out --  
7 have a long-range plan for this type of  
8 program.

9 And I was remiss in a couple of  
10 things. One, Chris talked about the  
11 board members. I did too. I failed to  
12 say that our Commissioner, Gunter Guy,  
13 because of his position as Commissioner  
14 of the department, serves as the chair  
15 of the board of trustees for the  
16 program. So I did want to mention  
17 that.

18 I also failed to introduce Jo Lewis,  
19 who serves as chief of our Heritage  
20 section. So I wanted you to know who  
21 else besides the two of us was sitting  
22 up here.

23 Let's see if there's anything else.

1 Did you mention the multi-use -- I'm  
2 sorry. I was making a note.

3 I will mention again that the  
4 program looks at acquiring land for four  
5 purposes, just to kind of run back  
6 through that. It's for nature  
7 preserves, to provide recreational  
8 opportunities, specifically to add  
9 acreage to WMAs, or if the tract has  
10 enough acreage within itself, it can be  
11 entirely a new WMA. The same concept  
12 with state parks, either adding acreage  
13 to state parks perhaps so you can add  
14 trails or other activities or just a  
15 buffer due to encroaching development,  
16 or, again, if there was enough acreage,  
17 it could be an entirely new state park.

18 Those four purposes are why -- are  
19 how the land is evaluated, what type of  
20 land acquisition qualifies. Once  
21 acquired, our job is to manage it under  
22 a multi-use philosophy. And let me give  
23 you an example of that.

1           A tract might have a very sensitive  
2           habitat on it. That might be one of the  
3           reasons that they consider it a valuable  
4           acquisition by the board. However, that  
5           doesn't mean that nothing else happens  
6           on that tract. Jo Lewis and the Natural  
7           Heritage section in connection with our  
8           folks that work on the trails, as an  
9           example, work together to route, you  
10          know, a horseback trail around the  
11          sensitive area.

12           So we are charged with making as  
13          much use as possible, providing as much  
14          public access as possible. And that's  
15          why in looking at the percentages you  
16          see such a high percentage of multiple  
17          use, such as for hunting, on so many of  
18          the tracts. So that is how we approach  
19          the management of the tracts.

20           I'll also mention -- you saw a  
21          reference to -- you notice the board  
22          didn't give us a lot of specifics in the  
23          resolution. The only specifics they

1 gave us were the ones Chris mentioned  
2 relating to not putting a high priority  
3 on crop -- row cropland, pastureland,  
4 and not putting a high priority on land  
5 leases. I wanted to explain that  
6 reference a little bit.

7 The program did enter into some very  
8 long-term 90-plus-year leases related to  
9 some WMA acreage. As several of you in  
10 here would know, I know, from advisory  
11 board meetings, that the WMA system is  
12 largely a voluntary system. We went  
13 through a period, especially during the  
14 economic downturn, when folks were  
15 withdrawing their acreage from the  
16 system. One way to curb that was on a  
17 couple of opportunities that were  
18 presented to enter into 90-plus-year  
19 leases to try to secure that and  
20 hopefully maybe eventually even secure  
21 it in fee, I mean, actually purchase.  
22 But it was, again, an effort to preserve  
23 some dwindling WMA acreage. So that's

1           what that reference was to. And that's  
2           not to say -- WMA is still a priority,  
3           but the board wants to try to, when  
4           possible, acquire it fully, not just a  
5           lease. So that's that reference.

6           I wanted to explain those couple of  
7           things. It may be more than you wanted  
8           to hear. But, anyway, we'll go into  
9           public comment. And as Chris said, I  
10          think we have a manageable number. So  
11          I'm just going to call out the names.

12          For those who do attend the advisory  
13          board meetings, they're usually -- the  
14          comments there are usually limited to  
15          three minutes. I'm not going to do that  
16          tonight. I would just ask everybody,  
17          you know, to try to say what you need to  
18          say. If I do interrupt you, it's solely  
19          to ask you to loop back around to get  
20          through everybody in case some folks  
21          need to leave, because our main charge  
22          is to try to get as many comments in as  
23          possible.

1           For anybody who does want to leave  
2           or needs to leave at any point, in  
3           addition to commenting on the Website or  
4           mailing in a comment, as we've noted up  
5           here, we also have a couple of computers  
6           here tonight if you'd rather do that  
7           while you're here. If you'll step out,  
8           somebody will assist you with what.

9           So, finally, after promising you  
10          we'll get to public comment, I'm just  
11          going to call in the order that I've  
12          got. If you would, when you get up,  
13          please do state your name for the court  
14          reporter. If you are here as an  
15          individual, let us know that. If you're  
16          here actually representing an  
17          organization of some type in addition to  
18          being here as an individual, if you  
19          would, just let us know that so we'll  
20          have a record of that also.

21                 Art Dyas.

22                 And I'll apologize in advance for  
23                 any names that I destroy.

1 MR. DYAS: Good evening. Thank you very much  
2 for the opportunity to be here. My name  
3 is Art Dyas. Actually, I'm here tonight  
4 representing myself. I'm on the board  
5 of the Coastal Land Trust, but I'm not  
6 here on that -- for that purpose.

7 I've got a couple of questions to  
8 start off, but first I'd like to say  
9 thank you for everything that all of you  
10 have done for the state of Alabama  
11 through the Forever Wild program.  
12 Excuse me. I had an opportunity 21  
13 years ago to serve on the committee that  
14 helped write the enabling legislation,  
15 and it was a really big deal back then.  
16 And special thanks to all of the board  
17 members because I don't think their pay  
18 is real high in their high-paying  
19 extracurricular endeavor. And so we  
20 certainly appreciate everything that  
21 they do on behalf of Forever Wild and  
22 for the state of Alabama too. I've got  
23 a couple of questions, and then I've got

1 a comment or two.

2 When our state legislature  
3 removed -- I would say borrowed, but I'm  
4 not sure that it borrowed the money from  
5 our oil and gas trust fund. Did that  
6 have an impact on the amount of dollars  
7 that will now come to Forever Wild, or  
8 is the 15-million-dollar cap still able  
9 to be attained?

10 MS. POWELL: Yes. We receive ten percent --  
11 for those who may not know, although  
12 Chris touched on it -- of the proceeds  
13 that go into the Alabama Trust Fund, and  
14 those proceeds are basically offshore  
15 gas proceeds from leases -- offshore gas  
16 leases. Once that goes in the Alabama  
17 Trust Fund, the interest is then  
18 distributed in a manner of ways. Ten  
19 percent of that interest is made  
20 available to the Forever Wild program,  
21 but it is capped every year at  
22 15 million.

23 And, frankly, no, it would not

1           affect that. I think for a few years  
2           the economy affected a little bit how  
3           the interest has performed, but we have  
4           been pretty much getting that  
5           five million -- excuse me -- 15  
6           million -- if I said five, it's 15 --  
7           15-million cap. There's nothing by  
8           design that should impact the program.  
9           Actually, some of the language in  
10          another -- well, an amendment likely  
11          will keep us at the 15 million.

12       MR. DYAS: Which is also the process -- and I  
13       guess it goes -- now, talking long-term,  
14       the legislature also indicated that  
15       there may be another one of those  
16       principal withdrawals in the near  
17       future. Would another third of the  
18       trust fund removed have a further impact  
19       on the program?

20       MS. POWELL: I'll be honest. I don't know  
21       what percentage, for example, a  
22       reduction of -- or withdrawal from the  
23       trust itself would then so reduce the

1 interest that it would reduce the  
2 15 million. I really -- I really  
3 haven't done a calculation. I'm not  
4 really familiar with the additional  
5 legislation you're speaking of. All I  
6 can tell you is, as we sit, we do not  
7 have a real concern as we sit. I  
8 can't -- not knowing what the  
9 legislature through some statutory  
10 provision or through another  
11 constitutional amendment -- which is  
12 really what -- I believe a  
13 constitutional amendment would be  
14 necessary. But, in any event, to answer  
15 your question --

16 MR. DYAS: Don't know yet?

17 MS. POWELL: -- I don't know. And it's,  
18 obviously, something we get questioned  
19 on. But there is no concern coming out  
20 of anything that's happened so far.

21 MR. DYAS: In the initial enabling legislation  
22 I do not remember an article that  
23 provided for the opportunity for the

1 Forever Wild Board to sell any acreage  
2 out of Forever Wild. However, now I  
3 understand that that is in the enabling  
4 legislation. Did that come in on the --  
5 a year ago, or did -- was that actually  
6 put in --

7 MS. POWELL: The language that is there is in  
8 the original constitutional amendment.  
9 And I apologize. I don't know that I  
10 can quote it to you exactly, but it does  
11 require a supermajority of the board.  
12 And other -- other criteria --

13 MR. DYAS: Yeah.

14 MS. POWELL: But the language that is there  
15 would be a little tough to hit likely,  
16 but it does not rule it out. But it's  
17 in the original -- what passed in 1992.

18 MR. DYAS: Well, we all know that the  
19 legislature took the enabling  
20 legislation 21 years ago and decided in  
21 the 11th hour and 59th minute that they  
22 would make some adjustments to it, one  
23 of those being that any money generated

1 off Forever Wild lands went back to the  
2 general fund, which is a -- now, back --  
3 over to my main point.

4 The concern that I've got, and  
5 especially this last go-around and 21  
6 years ago, had to do with Forever Wild  
7 lands. Really, when we talked about it  
8 way back when, it had nothing to do with  
9 what I perceive now as a preservation  
10 organization. Now, granted it works  
11 with walking trails and it works with  
12 bird watching and it works with hunting  
13 in some instances, but that's not the  
14 entire realm of multiple-use  
15 objectives.

16 I happen to have had an opportunity  
17 when the state bought -- the Forever  
18 Wild program bought the Upper Wildlife  
19 Management Area, I took it on myself --  
20 I did the timber evaluation for that  
21 acquisition, and I took it on myself to  
22 write a management plan, a hardwood  
23 management plan that dealt with the

1 removal of some of the timber to  
2 encourage the development of the more  
3 desirable species on that large tract of  
4 land. I came to find out that that one  
5 was put on a shelf and never paid  
6 attention to.

7 In -- throughout the state -- Chris,  
8 can you tell me, does the Forever Wild  
9 program actually manage properties via  
10 some kind of forestry management program  
11 through prescribed burning or timber  
12 removals? Because I don't see it  
13 happening down here.

14 MS. POWELL: Let me interject one comment for  
15 folks that may not be as familiar with  
16 some of the tracts and timber, and then  
17 I will turn it over to Chris because he  
18 knows many more of the specifics than I  
19 do.

20 Let me explain to some here that the  
21 timber management -- any harvest from  
22 the property is related to, just what  
23 you're getting to, the management of

1           certain habitats, certain restoration  
2           activities, certain types of habitats  
3           we're trying to bring back. It is not  
4           harvested for revenue-generation  
5           purposes. So I just -- for some of you  
6           who may not be familiar with that  
7           distinction of this program, I did want  
8           to mention that.

9           And, Chris, yes, why don't you  
10          address the specifics.

11         MR. SMITH: There are a lot of properties, in  
12           particular down here in the southern  
13           district, that have prescribed burn  
14           programs. You know, over -- just to  
15           give you some examples, the Perdido WMA,  
16           which is one of those properties that --  
17           and I failed to mention when I was  
18           talking about that multi-use. But  
19           Perdido is a perfect example of that.  
20           And we're currently in the process of  
21           implementing canoeing trails on the  
22           Perdido River with three different  
23           accesses to the river. The Alabama

1           Hiking Trail Society has partnered with  
2           us in developing a hiking trail, and  
3           we're also in the planning stage of  
4           putting in some horseback trails. Along  
5           with it, there's the hunting and  
6           there's -- I can't sit here and tell you  
7           the number of acres, but I think this  
8           year there's about 800 acres that have  
9           been burned on the Perdido tract  
10          prescribed fire. That's one of the  
11          Forever Wild properties that we've got a  
12          huge restoration program going. That  
13          one in particular is geared toward  
14          restoring the sandhill community --  
15          longleaf-sandhill community.

16                 Up at the Clearwater tract you were  
17                 just talking about, there was a pine  
18                 plantation there. You know, recently  
19                 that has been -- some of that has been  
20                 thinned. Some of that has been  
21                 clearcut, not to generate any money or  
22                 anything like that, but to convert that  
23                 habitat that is also an upland sandhill

1           community -- to convert that to a  
2           longleaf pine habitat. No doubt, once  
3           that's established, prescribed fire will  
4           become an important aspect of that  
5           acreage right there where that's  
6           happening.

7           So as far as, you know, the -- all  
8           of the properties have a management  
9           plan, and we have a forester on staff  
10          that -- you know, he evaluates the  
11          forest stands on these properties, and,  
12          you know, over time that is implemented,  
13          whether it's converting a loblolly pine  
14          plantation to, you know, native  
15          habitat.

16          Another example down here in this  
17          area is the Red Hills property. You  
18          know, that property -- a good portion of  
19          that was clearcut when Forever Wild  
20          bought it. Some of that -- you know,  
21          we -- it was pine plantation before it  
22          was cut. You know, we -- as a  
23          habitat-management practice, our

1           forester and our land stewardship  
2           officers who manage that are converting  
3           some of that back into hardwood habitat,  
4           so -- and, actually, that's on the slate  
5           in that area I'm talking about to be  
6           burned this spring.

7                        So I don't know if that's answering  
8           your question, but --

9           MR. DYAS:  It does.  And I appreciate it.  I  
10           guess I feel like -- is there an issue  
11           with generating revenue just to -- well,  
12           to accomplish an objective, but to  
13           actually generate the revenue?  I  
14           mean ...

15           MS. POWELL:  I think that the distinction  
16           would be the primary management purpose  
17           of why we are working with this land,  
18           you know, generated from the purposes of  
19           the program, which is not the primary  
20           purpose of which to generate revenue.  
21           Revenue is generated.

22                        I think what I would say is, for  
23           example, it may be that your comment

1           that you want to make for the board is  
2           your view is that the program should  
3           look more toward that. I mean, you see  
4           what I'm saying? I mean, I think  
5           that's -- if that's --

6       MR. DYAS: No. I'm just saying I don't think  
7           that's --

8       MS. POWELL: No, no.

9       MR. DYAS: I don't think that's a negative.

10      MS. POWELL: I don't think it's a negative,  
11           but I did want to make the distinction  
12           between -- you know, and I do want to  
13           wrap this up and maybe -- I know -- I  
14           think you may have talked to Galen  
15           Grider, our forester, before, but we  
16           can, I think -- and some information may  
17           have even been provided. We can dig  
18           back into all that.

19           But the reason I make that  
20           distinction is sometimes when folks see  
21           us taking timber action on the tracts  
22           they do not understand that it really  
23           is -- you know, we are trying to -- I

1 mean, the purpose of it is to get to  
2 another purpose, I mean, what are we  
3 accomplishing, you know, whether it's  
4 back to longleaf or it's some other  
5 purpose. There is -- there is a  
6 management -- there is a management  
7 plan, but that is not solely to generate  
8 revenue.

9 Revenue generation is by no means a  
10 negative, but it's not the primary  
11 management, as opposed to taking it out  
12 of the Forever Wild context and to some  
13 other trust lands that our division  
14 manages for other agencies. The primary  
15 purpose of that management is generation  
16 of revenue.

17 Now, at the same time you want to  
18 perpetually generate revenue. So if you  
19 don't take care of the land, you're not  
20 going to be able to do that. Okay. So  
21 it's never -- it can't travel by  
22 itself. But that is work we do for  
23 other agencies such as education and

1           mental health, and we manage -- the  
2           State Lands Division, not Forever Wild.  
3           I'm using that as a distinguishing  
4           factor.

5           The other distinguishing factor I  
6           would mention, too, kind of on the other  
7           end of the spectrum, you know, I've had  
8           some questions -- there are some  
9           different management philosophies by  
10          some different federal agencies that --  
11          I often hear it termed nature is  
12          nature. You know, for example, if you  
13          have a bug, you don't treat the bug.  
14          You know, we don't -- that is not our  
15          philosophy. We do manage the land and  
16          take care of the land.

17                 So if you don't mind, I'm --

18         MR. DYAS: That's fine.

19         MS. POWELL: Unless there's another comment --

20         MR. DYAS: No. I'm good.

21         MS. POWELL: Okay. Thank you very much.

22         MR. DYAS: Thank you very much.

23         MR. RAINES: I think you're calling the people

1           to make comments in reverse order of how  
2           they signed up.

3           MS. POWELL: Probably because that's how it  
4           was handed to me as they came in. Is  
5           that -- do you need to go, Ben? I'll  
6           let you --

7           MR. RAINES: I've got a sick family at home,  
8           so I came early to get to --

9           MS. POWELL: Okay. Come on up and talk into  
10          the microphone so Tracye can hear you,  
11          Ben, and I'll -- nobody minds if Ben  
12          goes next, I don't think.

13          MR. RAINES: I appreciate it.

14          MS. POWELL: A sick family member, that's the  
15          ticket to the front of the line. Is it  
16          a young family member or --

17          MR. RAINES: No. It's a 17-year-old and my  
18          wife, so --

19          MS. POWELL: So you do need to get home.  
20          Please go ahead.

21          MR. RAINES: My name is Ben Raines. I'm here  
22          representing the Weeks Bay Foundation.  
23          We are also a land trust.

1           First I want to applaud Forever  
2 Wild. I have been a long fan of the  
3 program, and it's done great things. We  
4 need to buy a lot more land in Alabama.  
5 The one thing I worry about, having gone  
6 to some of the Forever Wild meetings, is  
7 I worry the board is developing coastal  
8 fatigue and they feel like maybe they've  
9 bought enough land down here on the  
10 coast.

11           I would just say we only have  
12 54 miles of coast in Alabama. Most of  
13 it's privately owned. And this is some  
14 of our most valuable land in terms of  
15 recreation value and what it means to  
16 the rest of the state. So I would say  
17 that, you know, in terms of diversity of  
18 creatures and diversity of habitats,  
19 those should always be key in Forever  
20 Wild's mind when they purchase  
21 properties, and some of the best places  
22 in the state are down here. So, you  
23 know, don't get tired of the coastal

1           counties.

2           And I would also say the notion of  
3           buying land in every county, while it's  
4           appealing in the idea of giving -- you  
5           know, putting stuff near everybody,  
6           Alabama is one of the richest states in  
7           the country, but not every county in  
8           Alabama is particularly rich. There are  
9           certain portions of the state that are  
10          much, much richer in terms of what the  
11          habitat looks like in its mountains and  
12          rocks and things like that and the  
13          creatures that live there. So I would  
14          encourage Forever Wild to continue  
15          focusing on diversity of creatures and  
16          habitat and trying to get the best we've  
17          got to offer, not a piece in every  
18          county.

19          And I just want to applaud Forever  
20          Wild. I will say we have four percent  
21          of our land protected right now. We had  
22          about three-and-a-half percent when  
23          Forever Wild started. So we've got a

1 long way to go. Florida right next door  
2 has 20 percent of its land protected.  
3 So if we can get some really big  
4 purchases.

5 I would also encourage Forever Wild  
6 to lobby the state to be one of the  
7 groups that handles the RESTORE Act and  
8 NFWF money coming from the BP oil  
9 spill. You know, we've already got a  
10 mechanism in the state designed to rate  
11 properties and decide the best  
12 purchases. That seems like one of the  
13 smartest ways that we could spend that  
14 BP windfall, use our great land trust to  
15 pick out what we should buy.

16 That's all I've got. Appreciate  
17 it.

18 MS. POWELL: You're welcome. And, Ben, I do  
19 want to say, obviously, I mean, we're  
20 administrator for the board and not the  
21 board, so I don't -- I try not to speak  
22 on their behalf. But I will certainly  
23 be sure they understand your concern of

1 coastal fatigue, but for a long time the  
2 south district actually, you know, did  
3 have the most acreage. So I don't think  
4 it's -- I really -- I don't think  
5 that's -- but we will -- we will put  
6 that forward and thank you.

7 MR. RAINES: Well, the one thing I would say  
8 to that, you know, we bought this huge  
9 hunk of land in the Delta. And it's  
10 great land. It's wonderful we have it.  
11 But it's only a portion of the habitats  
12 that are down here. And so we don't  
13 want to miss out -- you now, Splinter  
14 Hill is a great example. It's one of  
15 the richest spots in the state, so ...

16 MS. POWELL: Thank you, Ben.

17 MR. RAINES: All right. Thank y'all.

18 MS. POWELL: Thanks for letting me pick on  
19 you.

20 I apologize if I'm going in reverse  
21 order. I no longer know what the order  
22 is. If anybody else has a sick family  
23 member, speak up, and I'll put you in

1 front.

2 Dean Monks.

3 MR. MONKS: Hello. My name is Dean Monks.

4 I'd also like to say thank y'all for the  
5 preservation of land and the things that  
6 you've done. But the biggest complaint,  
7 I guess -- I'm kind of going in a  
8 different direction than everybody  
9 else. I don't know what everybody else  
10 is here for.

11 But my complaint is you've basically  
12 eliminated all camping facilities  
13 throughout all of the Delta, Perdido,  
14 everywhere. There's nowhere to camp out  
15 anymore on the rivers since y'all have  
16 acquisitioned all these lands. And I  
17 would just like to know what the  
18 long-term plan is for --

19 MS. POWELL: And by camp, do you mean  
20 hunting-camp type, or do you mean  
21 overnight --

22 MR. MONK: Overnight camping with your family,  
23 recreational camping. You've basically

1 eliminated that in the -- and I'm  
2 speaking now -- say, the Perdido tract.  
3 You've totally eliminated all camping in  
4 the Perdido tract except for one place,  
5 which is up on Highway 112. Well,  
6 nobody wants to stay up there. They  
7 want to stay down on the river.

8 I'm 57 years old, and I've been  
9 camping in all these deltas my whole  
10 life until y'all bought this -- bought  
11 these lands out. And you eliminated our  
12 camps. You eliminated our houseboats.  
13 And you've eliminated basically  
14 everywhere we can go camping in the  
15 Delta and go catfishing or anything like  
16 that. So that's my public comment on  
17 the direction y'all are going with that.

18 MS. POWELL: Okay. Thank you.

19 MR. SMITH: I appreciate your comments, sir.

20 And, you know, there are limited areas  
21 on the WMAs to camp right now. I will  
22 say on Perdido we are in the process of,  
23 I would say, making some road

1 improvements going back to the river on  
2 the Perdido WMA all geared toward three  
3 access points that are going to be right  
4 at the river to provide for, you know,  
5 camping. We're going to be putting in  
6 some screened-in camping platforms on  
7 the landing in three different locations  
8 so when you float down the river you can  
9 spend the night there.

10 So you are correct. Right now the  
11 only place you can camp is at the  
12 check-in station on the WMA. And, you  
13 know, one of the reasons -- and I'm not  
14 saying this is an excuse or the greatest  
15 reason in the world, but sometimes in  
16 some areas where a lot of that camping  
17 happens, you know, we have a lot of  
18 management issues, a lot of damage done  
19 to the property. And so, you know, we  
20 try to manage that access in those  
21 different areas, and that's where we're  
22 heading to. Within the Delta we're in  
23 the process of expanding the canoe

1 trail, camping platforms, and land-based  
2 campsites, you know, down to this  
3 5 Rivers location.

4 So I know that might be frustrating  
5 to have some of that eliminated, but we  
6 are working toward improving that.

7 MR. MONKS: Well, if you're going to --

8 MS. POWELL: I'm sorry. Could you step up to  
9 the microphone?

10 I'm sorry. I want to be sure the  
11 court reporter can -- or just stand  
12 there so she can hear you.

13 MR. MONKS: I think she can probably hear me.

14 MS. POWELL: That's fine.

15 MR. MONKS: I mean, if your objective is to  
16 have managed camping areas in the Delta,  
17 then that's not going to work. I mean,  
18 I -- if that's -- if that's what you're  
19 trying to move towards. I mean, why  
20 don't you just open the Delta up to camp  
21 out wherever you want like we used --  
22 like we have forever?

23 That's the way it is in Florida on

1           Escambia River and over in there. You  
2           can camp out anywhere you want, so ...

3           MS. POWELL: Okay. Thank you.

4                       Larry Wise.

5           MR. WISE: It did get reversed.

6           MS. POWELL: So maybe I'll correct it after  
7           this.

8           MR. WISE: I wasn't sure that I was -- this  
9           was the right time to bring it up,  
10          but --

11          MS. POWELL: You can bring up anything at any  
12          time.

13          MR. WISE: The only thing I wanted to ask for  
14          is more dog-hunting days on the -- and  
15          especially south of 65. The -- that  
16          land, we're not allowed to dog-hunt it  
17          at all, and it's -- I grew up there as a  
18          boy hunting that. That's all it's  
19          fitting for is dog hunting. That's all  
20          I want.

21          MS. POWELL: Thank you very much.

22                       Bo Presley. You might repronounce  
23          it for me.

1 MR. BO PRESLEY: Yeah. My name is Bo  
2 Presley. Just touching on what  
3 Mr. Larry said, more dog-hunting days.  
4 Like can we hunt the Perdido River  
5 tract? Will you give us dog-hunting  
6 days down there as adjacent to more days  
7 on the Upper Delta? And like why as far  
8 as opening up all of the Upper Delta on  
9 dog days and not just the back portion  
10 of it like it used to be?

11 MS. POWELL: And those are some crossover  
12 issues into, you know, WMA and the  
13 Conservation Advisory Board regulations  
14 and various things. But I hear --  
15 certainly hear what you're saying, and  
16 we'll, you know, present that to the  
17 board as a type of, frankly, activity  
18 that you would like to see increased.

19 MR. BO PRESLEY: Yeah. Like closing the rifle  
20 range up there on dog days and opening  
21 up everything, you know, instead of just  
22 half of it. Thank you.

23 MS. POWELL: Thank you. Sorry about the name.

1 Susan Morrow.

2 MS. MORROW: I'm Susan Morrow, and I'm the  
3 vice-president of the Alabama Dog  
4 Hunters Association. And I'm here to  
5 thank y'all for the Forever Wilds.  
6 They're beautiful. We enjoy hunting in  
7 them.

8 We would like to see more dog days  
9 increase because on the Forever Wild  
10 tracts is a lot of land. And that is  
11 where we can run our dogs and we don't  
12 interfere with anybody else. And dog  
13 hunting has been around for a very long  
14 time. It's our heritage and our right.

15 And we would also like to see dog  
16 hunting for hogs opened up on these  
17 Forever Wilds. Because there are hog  
18 problems there. I'm not saying that  
19 this would eliminate it, but this would  
20 help. And with the combination of  
21 trapping, hunting the hogs --

22 At certain times, now. I'm not  
23 saying all the time.

1           -- hunting the hogs with the dogs  
2           and then maybe -- very seldom are you  
3           going to walk up on a hog. But in the  
4           Delta it can happen at times because  
5           there are so many hogs there. And up in  
6           Lowndes County there is an awful lot of  
7           hogs.

8           So we would like to see more dog  
9           days because it is big tracts of land.  
10          And if you will look at the numbers,  
11          there are a lot of hunters that show up  
12          for dog hunts. And down here in the  
13          south dog-hunting clubs are not as  
14          predominant as they used to be, and  
15          nowadays it takes a mother and a daddy  
16          working. And if you want to get your  
17          kids out -- and kids love dog hunting --  
18          you've got to go to the Forever Wild  
19          management areas and places like that.  
20          Because, let's face it, we can't afford  
21          these leases to have a place to dog  
22          hunt. There are some clubs, yes, but  
23          the lease -- the membership is

1           outrageous for a family if you have two  
2           or three kids. And you want to get your  
3           kids out and let us enjoy our Forever  
4           Wild. And we would like for y'all to  
5           look at this because it is such big  
6           acreage.

7           And I don't think -- you can ask  
8           Mr. Barnett. I think we're pretty good  
9           at doing our job. Now, but as in  
10          everything -- you have good and bad in  
11          every walk of life, and we cannot -- you  
12          know, we do not uphold bad dog hunters  
13          by no means. And we do try to police  
14          ourselves. But you're going to have  
15          good and bad.

16          So, you know, I'd like for y'all to  
17          look at that, too, because I know that  
18          it has been -- I have met with Mr. Chuck  
19          Sykes. I have talked with Gunter Guy.  
20          I have talked with the advisory board.  
21          And I know that one of the concerns for  
22          opening up hog hunting with dogs is that  
23          they're so scared that somebody is going

1           to catch a hog and take it out and  
2           transplant that hog somewhere else.  
3           Well, that has happened forever. If  
4           they do do that, then they need to be  
5           arrested.

6           We have told all our hog hunters --  
7           I mean, hog hunting has gotten to be a  
8           very big sport. You use different types  
9           of dogs. It is not like dog deer  
10          hunting by no means. Hog hunters are  
11          not going to have a dog that will run  
12          anything but a hog, and deer hunters  
13          like to have nothing but dogs that run  
14          deer, but that does not always happen.

15          But we would like for Forever Wild,  
16          since it is down here and it is a huge  
17          chunk of land that we can turn our dogs  
18          loose on -- and we thoroughly enjoy it,  
19          and I thank y'all for letting us do  
20          that -- we would like for y'all to look  
21          at giving us more dog days so we can get  
22          out with our kids, our grandkids and do  
23          and enjoy the way we like to hunt.

1           Thank y'all.

2           MS. POWELL: Thank you, Susan. And, Susan, I  
3           anticipate you will probably be at the  
4           advisory board meeting.

5           MS. MORROW: I will.

6           MS. POWELL: Certainly, you know, I would  
7           cross-reference having been here --

8           MS. MORROW: I will.

9           MS. POWELL: -- you know, tonight at this  
10          meeting. Thank you very much.

11          Roger Guilian.

12          Y'all are waiting for me to mess up  
13          now. You might want to restate that,  
14          I'm sure.

15          MR. GUILIAN: I will. I appreciate it very  
16          much. My name is Roger Guilian. I'm  
17          going to try to raise this microphone a  
18          little bit.

19          Ms. Tracye, that's spelled  
20          G-U-I-L-I-A-N.

21          I want to thank y'all for having  
22          this meeting and for giving us the  
23          opportunity to speak. I want to thank

1 Chairman Guy, chairman of the committee,  
2 Commissioner Guy, and the other members  
3 for considering all of our comments.

4 I'm addressing the board and the  
5 staff here as well as the audience  
6 tonight on behalf of the Alabama Chapter  
7 of the National Wild Turkey Federation.  
8 I'm one of 18 statewide at-large  
9 directors that make up the board of the  
10 Alabama Chapter of the National Wild  
11 Turkey Federation. And I'm here tonight  
12 to ask the Forever Wild Board to  
13 consider continuing and enhancing the  
14 use of public lands acquired through the  
15 Forever Wild Land Trust program for the  
16 purpose of public hunting. So I want to  
17 talk just a couple of minutes about some  
18 reasons not only to continue what it's  
19 been doing but to enhance that as well.

20 In the hopes that the board will  
21 consider what the Alabama NWTF Chapter  
22 has to say, I would like to point out a  
23 couple of things.

1           The Alabama State Board of the NWTf  
2           is the steward and the manager of a  
3           state Superfund of dollars that are  
4           raised by local NWTf chapters around the  
5           state of Alabama. Our charge as the  
6           stewards of that money is to use that  
7           fund for habitat improvement and to  
8           support both legislation and action to  
9           enhance public-hunting opportunities.  
10          That's one of the main things that our  
11          board does with our money.

12           And we've had a long-standing  
13          partnership, a very healthy partnership  
14          with the Alabama Department of  
15          Conservation and Natural Resources, the  
16          Lands Division, and the Wildlife and  
17          Freshwater Fisheries Division. We have  
18          spent over our board's history --  
19          20-something-year history, we've spent  
20          almost a quarter-of-a-million dollars  
21          donating money to the state and the  
22          Lands Division and Wildlife and  
23          Freshwater Fisheries for

1 land-acquisition purposes, either paying  
2 for appraisals for tracts or outright  
3 purchasing the tracts and then  
4 immediately deeding it over to the state  
5 to add onto existing WMAs or to help out  
6 with purchases.

7 We also provide money to the  
8 Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries  
9 Division to assist them with their  
10 habitat improvement goals and the work  
11 that they do. This past August we gave  
12 almost \$55,000 to the state so they  
13 could go out and purchase equipment and  
14 attend seminars for wildlife and habitat  
15 improvement.

16 My good friend Art Dyas brought up  
17 management of these lands. And I'd just  
18 like to point out, since he raised that  
19 issue, that the state chapter of the  
20 NWTf provided more than \$7300 just for  
21 prescribed burn equipment alone because  
22 there was a lot of burn activity that  
23 was being anticipated in the Barbour

1 WMA.

2 So I say all that in the hopes that  
3 the board will listen to what its  
4 partner, the NWTF, would like to ask,  
5 and that is to continue and to enhance  
6 public-hunting opportunities on lands  
7 that are acquired outright or lands that  
8 are augmented through the Forever Wild  
9 Land Trust program.

10 Ms. Morrow immediately preceded me,  
11 and she said it best when she brought up  
12 families and children getting into  
13 hunting. Hunting has so many opponents  
14 nationwide now. We are, it feels like,  
15 an extreme minority. And if we do not  
16 bring up new generations of hunters and  
17 sportsmen and sportswomen, then our way  
18 of life is going to die out. And you  
19 can go on Websites of anti-hunting  
20 groups, and they will say we just have  
21 to wait for these people to die off  
22 because nobody is coming along to  
23 replace them. There's only about

1           12 million hunters in the U.S. right  
2           now, and the National Wild Turkey  
3           Federation is trying to recruit new  
4           hunters. And there are a lot of other  
5           groups and there are people like  
6           Ms. Morrow and her family and friends  
7           doing the same thing. We can't do that  
8           if people don't have a place to go  
9           hunt. That's crucial.

10           Most Alabamians cannot afford to  
11           join hunting clubs. They cannot afford  
12           to lease land. They cannot afford to  
13           join some nice place where they can go.  
14           And an even smaller fraction of  
15           Alabamians can afford to buy land. And  
16           without public access to land, then  
17           people are going to go do some other  
18           competing interest that's vying for  
19           their attention. And we've got an  
20           obligation, if we expect people to  
21           continue with this tradition, to give  
22           them a place to do it. And so I would  
23           ask the board to consider enhancing what

1           it's already doing in terms of providing  
2           public access to hunting. And there's a  
3           really, really good reason for that.

4           I've heard recently about some  
5           Forever Wild acquisitions or lands being  
6           used for bike trails and parks and  
7           things like that. Those are noble  
8           purposes, no question about it. But  
9           unlike bike trails and things of that  
10          nature, thanks to the Pittman-Robertson  
11          Act, every time someone goes and buys a  
12          hunting license or a bow or some arrows  
13          or a shotgun or a rifle or some .22  
14          bullets or some dove loads, federal  
15          dollars are coming back to the State of  
16          Alabama because of the Pittman-Robertson  
17          Act. And you can leverage  
18          hunting-related dollars to come back to  
19          the state. And that doesn't happen when  
20          you buy a bike tire.

21          So while those are noble  
22          activities -- and I'm not trying to  
23          dissuade the board from considering

1           them -- when the board looks at a  
2           long-term -- long-range plan every five  
3           years, please consider keeping hunting  
4           at the forefront of the purpose for  
5           these lands.

6                     Same with fishing. The  
7           Dingell-Johnson Act does the same thing  
8           with marine resources, restoration.  
9           When you buy fishing tackle, federal  
10          money comes back to the state for  
11          restoration of waters, for marine  
12          education, marine safety.

13                    So all of these -- all of these  
14          activities are crucial, and it can't  
15          happen without public dollars. So I  
16          appreciate the opportunity to speak,  
17          again, on behalf of my fellow board  
18          members with the National Wild Turkey  
19          Federation Alabama State Chapter.

20                    On a personal note, I would like to  
21          ask the board to consider finding a  
22          way -- and I'm not educated in this the  
23          way Art is. But I would like the board

1 to look at turning some of this habitat  
2 over into longleaf and managing it in  
3 such a way to try to bring back some  
4 quail population. We've got to get some  
5 early successional grasses growing in  
6 this place so families can go out and  
7 hunt birds and get behind dogs and shoot  
8 birds. Right now that's a rich man's  
9 game, and that's not right. A lot of  
10 hunting is getting that way with the  
11 price of land.

12 So Forever Wild is a wonderful  
13 program. We commend y'all. We thank  
14 y'all. We ask that you continue to keep  
15 hunting at the forefront of the Forever  
16 Wild program. And I thank you very much  
17 for this opportunity to speak.

18 MS. POWELL: Thank you. And we will certainly  
19 pass that along to the board. I think  
20 that the percentage of the tracts that  
21 are open for hunting currently that  
22 Chris discussed -- and, Chris, that --

23 MR. SMITH: 88 percent.

1 MS. POWELL: -- like 88.5 percent, indicates  
2 the board's appreciation of that  
3 activity. And I would say overall the  
4 various activities that provide not  
5 only -- that, you know, can provide both  
6 public access while, you know, providing  
7 opportunities for economic impact to the  
8 surrounding communities, that those  
9 are -- and those go hand in hand -- that  
10 that is, you know, a wonderful thing.

11 Next we have Hank Caddell.

12 MR. CADDELL: Hello. Good evening. I'm Hank  
13 Caddell. I'm the secretary/treasurer of  
14 the Alabama Coastal Heritage Trust. And  
15 I would like to leave our brochure with  
16 you so you can see more about us. We  
17 were created about 20 years ago, and we  
18 focus on preserving endangered beach and  
19 dune habitat. And I think here again we  
20 hear the theme about access for the  
21 average citizen.

22 Alabama has wonderful and fabulous  
23 beach and dune systems, but the patterns

1 of development have foreclosed a great  
2 majority of that to the average  
3 six-pack -- average -- I'm sorry -- to  
4 Joe Sixpack, to the average citizen,  
5 okay, to go down -- and all you have to  
6 do is go down there and try to go to the  
7 beach. There are limited and restricted  
8 areas where you can do that.

9 I recently vacationed at Pawleys  
10 Island, South Carolina, and I saw that  
11 the state of South Carolina has for  
12 every half-mile or quarter-mile  
13 guaranteed access points with parking  
14 along their beach. They have open  
15 beaches and they have access.

16 Alabama has a small coastline, a  
17 fabulous and beautiful -- much more  
18 beautiful than anything I saw in South  
19 Carolina. And we've been working to set  
20 aside and preserve -- our organization  
21 has preserved about 50 acres on the Fort  
22 Morgan peninsula, much of which has been  
23 added to the Bon Secour Wildlife Refuge

1 down there. And we built an endowment.

2 We were pleased to help keep the  
3 Blakeley Park area afloat while it was  
4 getting -- finally got money from you  
5 guys and they burned their mortgage.  
6 About 10, 15 years ago we were -- helped  
7 them keep it afloat with some grants  
8 before that happened. We're very much  
9 attune to that.

10 What I would like to ask and suggest  
11 as far as the plan goes for the  
12 long-range plan is that you have an item  
13 to look at beach and dune systems.  
14 They're very endangered. It comes and  
15 goes as to the opportunity to acquire  
16 these properties.

17 Patti, you know that they can be  
18 pricey.

19 But the one that Ben Raines and I  
20 were -- we're working hard to advocate  
21 is the Gulf Highlands tract, which is a  
22 fabulous, marvelous beach and dune  
23 system and probably the last large tract

1           that can be put into public hands in  
2           Alabama. And there's a convergence of  
3           factors that's helping us now, which you  
4           may not have really thought of this.

5           But Ivan and Katrina came along and  
6           slapped down the development hopes down  
7           there. It sort of was a reality check  
8           for those that -- maybe snowbird  
9           developers that would come down thinking  
10          this is the most fabulous place in the  
11          world. Then you get blasted with a  
12          hurricane. And we are in hurricane  
13          alley for sure. It's not if, but when  
14          are you going to have a major  
15          hurricane.

16          You can go to the NOAA Website and  
17          get a printout of the tracks of  
18          hurricanes going back 250 years. The  
19          Alabama coastline -- we picked a zip  
20          code in the middle of the Alabama  
21          coastline. It looks like a pile of  
22          spaghetti. You can't even see the  
23          coastline. These hurricanes are on the

1 way. They're coming. The area is  
2 fragile. It's not really suited for the  
3 urban beach that we so often construct.  
4 So we construct a beach that looks like  
5 New Jersey after the storms come and  
6 then they build sea walls, et cetera.

7 So we hope that the long-range plan  
8 considers this and also considers the  
9 priciness of this property and that  
10 Forever Wild can partner with others to  
11 try to acquire some of this property.  
12 My organization, they like to partner --  
13 The Nature Conservancy is there. We  
14 work with them.

15 Another backhanded good thing that's  
16 happened has been the BP oil spill,  
17 because there's a ton of money in the  
18 pipeline coming down the row on that.  
19 The major part of it --

20 And, Patti, when you get back to  
21 your office, you're going to find a fax  
22 that I sent out to you today. I would  
23 have hand-carried it if I had known you

1           were going to be here.

2           MS. POWELL: I'm everywhere.

3           MR. CADDELL: All right. Okay. But we're  
4           pointing out that -- I think this is  
5           correct -- the money could be three to  
6           five years down the road because BP is  
7           going to appeal this thing. The lawsuit  
8           is not even over, and BP is -- and there  
9           are numerous issues that -- they're  
10          going to be fighting for years appealing  
11          the designation of whether they were  
12          willful or negligent or all of the  
13          above. That all determines how much  
14          civil penalty there is. And that's  
15          going to be hung up for a long time,  
16          so -- but those funds are out there, and  
17          we would like to ask Forever Wild to  
18          partner -- partner with others,  
19          including some of these funds. Let's  
20          get our foot in the door and let's save  
21          and preserve some beach and dune access  
22          and habitat.

23                   And the one site that we're trying

1 really hard to call to everyone's  
2 attention is the Gulf Highlands. It is  
3 prime habitat for the endangered sea  
4 turtle, the beach mouse. And the beach  
5 mouse never asks -- it's a very shy  
6 species. It never asks to be in the  
7 spotlight like it is. I'm sure it  
8 didn't and it wouldn't have. But,  
9 ironically, that's what we depend on to  
10 save a lot of this habitat. Because  
11 it's endangered and it is -- the beach  
12 mouse thrives where there's an absence  
13 of human civilization. And so that's  
14 naturally going to be sort of a canary  
15 in the coal mine as far as whether  
16 you've got a natural system.

17 But I -- so we ask that Forever Wild  
18 be attune -- put beach and dune systems  
19 into your plan, be attune to partnering,  
20 and also be attune to a little -- and to  
21 better access for the four-million  
22 citizens of Alabama, not all of whom are  
23 going to be able to afford \$300 a night

1 to come down to the wonderful new Gulf  
2 State Lodge and Hotel at Gulf State  
3 Park.

4 So I will hand off our brochure  
5 and --

6 MS. POWELL: And, Hank, for the benefit of  
7 some who may not be as familiar -- and a  
8 question I have while you're here -- I  
9 think that the tract -- the Gulf  
10 Highlands tract -- and correct me -- has  
11 been -- y'all have estimated that at  
12 about a 30- to 35-million-dollar tract?

13 MR. CADDELL: That's right. It's way out of  
14 your annual budget and --

15 MS. CAROL ADAMS DAVIS: That's what the owner  
16 is asking for it.

17 MR. CADDELL: That -- no. Well, that is what  
18 we think the Yellow Book appraisal will  
19 be. And that's a whole different topic,  
20 but --

21 MS. POWELL: And I don't want to go too far  
22 down that road. I just -- for some here  
23 who are not as -- have not heard you

1 speak on that before, I wanted to  
2 mention it. I assume the partnering  
3 concept would be -- would be, though,  
4 eventually to be taken out. So the  
5 program would eventually need to  
6 purchase over time perhaps the  
7 purchase. You're not talking about  
8 partnering and owning part of it and the  
9 program owning part of it, are you?

10 MR. CADDELL: Well, but, see, if Forever Wild,  
11 for instance, could put some money  
12 together or partner with some of the  
13 NFWF money or some other of the money  
14 that might be on the way.

15 MS. POWELL: Okay. And I will -- this is an  
16 opportunity to bring up another point  
17 that Chris touched on.

18 With the program, when Forever Wild  
19 acquires a tract, it is acquired at  
20 appraised value, not greater than  
21 appraised value. There are actually two  
22 appraisals done to be sure that that  
23 is -- the first appraisal is a good

1 appraisal. If the second appraisal is  
2 more than ten percent outside of that,  
3 we do a third appraisal to try to figure  
4 out to be sure we're not paying more  
5 than the true value.

6 Under the program, under the law, we  
7 cannot acquire a tract unless at the  
8 time we acquire that tract the program  
9 also has enough money to place  
10 15 percent of appraised value into the  
11 stewardship account with the idea that  
12 if this is a self-sustaining program,  
13 that we don't acquire things we do not  
14 have the money to manage and we don't  
15 ask for more money, that this is a  
16 self-sustaining program.

17 And I will say one nut that would  
18 have to be cracked in partnering with  
19 NFWF or RESTORE would be that enough  
20 money would also be available to  
21 provide, you know, support for the  
22 property.

23 And then let me clarify one thing

1           that you said, Hank, because I don't  
2           want to confuse anybody here that might  
3           also cross over into -- because I see  
4           some familiar faces -- into the various  
5           public meetings that they've had related  
6           to the oil spill, whether it's NRDA,  
7           RESTORE Act, or NFWF.

8           Hank is very right, that I am sure  
9           that BP would -- will continue to  
10          fight. There is always a chance of a  
11          settlement. The Clean Water Act fine  
12          that you mentioned, those would be what  
13          flowed through the RESTORE Act to send  
14          some money to the Gulf. And, actually,  
15          you're right. We have no idea how long  
16          that could take. Like with any lawsuit,  
17          it could go on for many years.

18          However, due to some prior  
19          settlements, there is already money that  
20          has been deposited into the RESTORE Act,  
21          and there are several things that have  
22          to occur before any of that can actually  
23          flow out, first of which would be some

1 treasury -- final treasury regulations  
2 that by the RESTORE Act's provisions  
3 itself must become final before anything  
4 can happen. We are many, many months  
5 from that point.

6 But I mention that to say that  
7 cannot be appealed. That money is set,  
8 and once various things are provided  
9 for, that -- and that's not the  
10 end-amount money, but it's an initial  
11 money from some early settlement with  
12 some early responsible parties that will  
13 ultimately become available. We're not  
14 there yet, but -- so the whole thing  
15 will not be held up. There is some  
16 money that will flow. So I just wanted  
17 to clarify that.

18 MR. CADDELL: Can you tell us -- you may be  
19 talking about the settlement with  
20 Transocean.

21 MS. POWELL: There are -- there's some money  
22 that's in NFWF due to some criminal suit  
23 settlements between Transocean and BP,

1           the criminal money. That's in NFWF.  
2           But the other money I'm talking about I  
3           do believe was Transocean that has  
4           already come through settlement that's  
5           allocated to the program and will be  
6           flowing without further appeal.

7           MR. CADDELL: Can you tell us how much?

8           MS. POWELL: I can give you -- the reason I  
9           can tell you off the top of my head is  
10          because I know. To the Federal Council,  
11          the body that was named under the  
12          statute to have access to money, that  
13          will be 246 million, I believe. That's  
14          going to the Federal Council.

15          MR. CADDELL: And it's already there?

16          MS. POWELL: It is --

17          MR. CADDELL: Relatively speaking.

18          MS. POWELL: It is there. It is hung up  
19          because of the statutory provisions that  
20          must be met before any of it can be  
21          accessed.

22                    Yes, it's already there and would  
23          not be subject to further appeal. There

1 is additional monies that would come  
2 through allocated to each state -- I  
3 don't mean to get off on the oil spill  
4 because not everybody wants to hear  
5 about it. But it would go to the state,  
6 to the Alabama -- to the council here in  
7 Alabama.

8 But I just wanted to clarify that  
9 not all of that is subject to appeal.  
10 Obviously, the largest settlement  
11 that -- or litigation that would result  
12 from BP ultimately could be Exxon Valdez  
13 and go on for 20 years. Who knows. But  
14 there is some money already there.

15 MR. CADDELL: And I know with only 15 million  
16 a year -- which it sounds like a lot,  
17 but it's not really a lot. The beach  
18 and dune is pricey. That's why I'm  
19 saying let's possibly look at  
20 partnering, help get our foot in the  
21 door on some of it, get some commitments  
22 and help us find the other money.

23 MS. POWELL: And I just want to clarify to the

1 crowd that it still would be -- that  
2 partnering would be a temporary helping  
3 us secure the land until it could be  
4 further purchased by --

5 MR. CADDELL: Thank you.

6 MS. POWELL: Okay. Thanks, Hank. And I  
7 didn't mean to digress in the oil  
8 spill.

9 The last person I've got that has  
10 signed up is Deborah Jessup.

11 MS. JESSUP: Yes. I'm representing myself  
12 tonight, but I have been on the Baldwin  
13 County Environmental Board -- Advisory  
14 Board and also work with NEP.

15 I'm here just to -- I have nothing  
16 against all you hunters. I appreciate  
17 your hobby and your sport. But I also  
18 want us to remember the word "wild" in  
19 Forever Wild. And it's protecting  
20 lands. It's protecting landscape for  
21 the animals and the critters that live  
22 on that land. So there has to be a  
23 balance there.

1           But what I particularly wanted to  
2           emphasize tonight was my love and  
3           appreciation of wetlands. And, of  
4           course, we have a lot of the land down  
5           on the Delta that is -- a lot of it  
6           pretty inaccessible to many people. But  
7           I have appreciated the wetlands and land  
8           down off Perdido Bay, off Rushing  
9           River. We've canoed up through that  
10          area. And I don't know how available  
11          any of that land might be. I know a lot  
12          of it's owned by the Barbers. But a lot  
13          of it, if it is undevelopable as living  
14          land, could perhaps -- I'd like Forever  
15          Wild to look into that area and see if  
16          they wouldn't be able to purchase more  
17          of that marshland. Thank you.

18       MS. POWELL: Thank you.

19       MR. SMITH: What was the name of that, the  
20               marshland?

21       MS. POWELL: I'm sorry. Deborah, could you  
22               step back up for a second?

23               Chris had a question. I want to be

1           sure everybody can hear it.

2           MS. JESSUP: Oh, I didn't say my name. My  
3           name is Deborah Jessup.

4           MR. SMITH: What was the name of that  
5           marshland you were talking about on the  
6           Perdido River?

7           MS. JESSUP: Well, there are two rivers that  
8           kind of come off Perdido Bay. And one,  
9           of course, is the Perdido, but the other  
10          is Rushing River. And Rushing River is  
11          not very long. It's much shorter. But  
12          it is -- unless I remember completely  
13          wrong, it's Rushing River. Rushing  
14          River is the one that has the  
15          marshland. And then when you -- and  
16          then all along you just see this  
17          beautiful -- just sort of wild feeling  
18          as you paddle through there. And it  
19          won't be there forever unless we protect  
20          it.

21          MR. SMITH: Yes, ma'am. Thank you.

22          MS. JESSUP: Thank you.

23          MS. POWELL: And I will take this opportunity

1           just to briefly say we've talked before  
2           about this being a nomination-driven  
3           program. Anybody that has a particular  
4           tract of land that they want to nominate  
5           to the program to be considered, that  
6           sounds like a fancy word, but really  
7           it's an e-mail, a letter, or clicking on  
8           the Website and sending us the  
9           information. Now, we will confirm  
10          willing-seller status, again, before  
11          anything proceeds, but you do not have  
12          to be an owner to nominate a property.

13                 And next I will say anybody that did  
14          not sign up but would like to speak, if  
15          you want to come to the microphone --  
16          and I will just so we have a record --  
17          Jo, would you get some more sheets so --

18       MR. OLLIE PRESLEY: Patti, I'd like to say  
19                 something if you don't mind.

20       MS. POWELL: Yes, sir. I told him he could go  
21                 and you can be second. I pointed to  
22                 him.

23                 And for y'all, because I do not have

1 a card, please do state your name and  
2 before you get out of here just sign one  
3 so I have it for Tracye also. Thank  
4 you.

5 MR. COX: I'm Allen Cox, and I'm a real estate  
6 developer in a lot of environmentally  
7 sensitive areas. But Dr. Bronner got me  
8 on this board years ago, the Alabama  
9 Trust Fund, to get all of y'all  
10 started. So I've been aware of y'all  
11 over the years, but -- and, secondly,  
12 The Nature Conservancy named me their  
13 conservationist of the year back in 2006  
14 or '7 because of all the land I got  
15 donated down in Fort Morgan and  
16 Highlands and stuff in the coastal  
17 areas.

18 But the main thing I wanted to say  
19 for the people of Alabama, what I would  
20 like y'all to really consider, please  
21 try to acquire adjoining or near acreage  
22 land so you can make something for the  
23 people of Alabama, whether it's the

1 hunting or the bike paths or anything  
2 else. Don't spread it out to where  
3 people can't go and enjoy a day. If you  
4 put it six places in one county, people  
5 can't enjoy it. They need to have as  
6 much of it as adjoined as you can. All  
7 the land in the west that the National  
8 Park System and everyone has, it's large  
9 tracts, so you can have multiple use one  
10 day. You could have bike paths. You  
11 could have hunters. You could have  
12 people camping on it. But if you make  
13 small tracts scattered all over the  
14 place, it's never going to be able to --  
15 there's going to be people arguing about  
16 the use of it every Saturday. I'm  
17 serious. And I really hope y'all  
18 consider like buying adjoining or closer  
19 land so the people of Alabama can use  
20 it. If you have -- and, plus, it's  
21 going to cost a lot more money to manage  
22 ten tracts in a county versus two. You  
23 can have the same security people at the

1 two tracts and you would have to have  
2 ten times as many at ten tracts.

3 So costwise it makes a big  
4 difference to y'all over the years. So  
5 I really wish your board in your  
6 long-term plan would actually sit down  
7 and talk about that, the difference  
8 between having so many multiple tracts  
9 versus larger tracts or close tracts so  
10 the people of Alabama could have varied  
11 uses on a Saturday afternoon rather than  
12 everything having to be argued which  
13 Saturday is going to be here and which  
14 Saturday is going to be there.

15 And then it's going to take a ton of  
16 administration from y'all's end to run  
17 it day to day to make sure the camps  
18 aren't being torn up. If they're all in  
19 two miles of river front versus ten  
20 different places, you could have two  
21 people monitoring one rather than 40  
22 people having to go to 20 of them.

23 So please start looking at the land,

1           the contiguous or adjoining, where you  
2           can have multiple uses in one area and  
3           not -- let's not end up with 2,000  
4           tracts and never getting to figure out  
5           what to do with them. I'm serious.

6           Thank you.

7           MS. POWELL: Thank you. If you would, just  
8           get with Jo and just, if you don't mind,  
9           fill that out.

10                  Yes, sir. You're up.

11           MR. OLLIE PRESLEY: My name is Ollie Presley.  
12           What I'd like to talk about is the  
13           hunting of the Upper Delta. I know that  
14           the dates is already set each year to  
15           hunt in the Delta. But you don't, I  
16           don't, Ms. Susan don't, nobody here  
17           controls Mother Nature. We walk in that  
18           Delta one Friday. Nine foot of water  
19           Saturday. It's closed. There goes our  
20           dog -- our hunting. Why can't it -- the  
21           board bring it up to let the state  
22           warden on that tract set another date or  
23           another two or three days for dog

1            hunting after the high water is gone  
2            instead of it still all open stalk  
3            hunting?

4            Give the dog hunters a chance. I  
5            don't think there's a game warden in  
6            that Delta up there that will say he has  
7            any trouble out of dog hunters because  
8            we try to help him every way we can,  
9            reporting violations and everything  
10           else. So we can't control the  
11           floodwaters.

12        MS. POWELL: And I will pass that along to  
13            Commissioner Guy. And I think that is  
14            another matter that the Conservation  
15            Advisory Board and also Wildlife and  
16            Freshwater Fisheries Division has some  
17            regulation issues. But I will pass that  
18            on to the Commissioner. And, also, for  
19            those who might be at the advisory board  
20            meeting, that is also an example of what  
21            I would call a cross-over comment.

22        MR. OLLIE PRESLEY: Thank you, ma'am.

23        MS. POWELL: Yes, sir. Come on up to the

1 microphone.

2 MR. PARKER: My name is Knox Parker, and I'm a  
3 hiker and a paddler and a cyclist. I'm  
4 not a hunter, and I'm the lousiest  
5 fisherman in the room.

6 Some of the things that -- some of  
7 the comments I've heard today -- is  
8 there a provision in the works or in  
9 there to have people operate -- set up  
10 training for various activities such  
11 as -- let's pick on the turkey hunters.

12 If I went out there, I would have no  
13 idea what to do or how to do it. The  
14 only people who are going to learn to  
15 turkey hunt or hog hunt or whatever are  
16 people in the families where that's  
17 going on. Other people could be  
18 interested. I'm picking on the hunters,  
19 but this could be paddlers or cyclists,  
20 mountain bikers or whatever. You've got  
21 to start somewhere, and if it's not  
22 already in your family, you're not going  
23 to get it. And I want to make sure that

1           there's a provision for working with  
2           groups to set up training opportunities.

3       MS. POWELL:   And I don't really think that  
4           there's a specific provision, you know,  
5           either way in the law as it is.   But  
6           that is an example of something that is  
7           a request to the board that you want to  
8           see.   We do have certain programs -- not  
9           to the extent that you're talking  
10          about -- that are providing  
11          youth-hunting opportunities, youth  
12          fishing.   There's -- the Department of  
13          Conservation has a "Becoming an Outdoor  
14          Woman" program, or BOW, B-O-W, program.  
15          We have used some of our Forever Wild  
16          acreage to contribute to helping the  
17          women learn to hunt, helping the youth  
18          learn to hunt, as well as hunts for  
19          those with physical disabilities.

20                 So that concept is there, not to the  
21                 extent that you're talking about.   And I  
22                 don't believe it's ever crossed outside  
23                 of -- well, it has.   And something from

1 "Becoming an Outdoor Woman" could be  
2 photography. It could be -- you know, I  
3 mean, it could be many different --  
4 fishing, many different things.

5 But, Chris, I don't know if you want  
6 to add anything.

7 But I do understand the comment, and  
8 I think that's exactly the type --

9 MR. PARKER: Yeah. You know, how many  
10 different activities can go on and who  
11 would -- there are people out there that  
12 would partner with you --

13 MS. POWELL: Exactly.

14 MR. PARKER: -- to run the education stuff to  
15 get more people into the -- into what  
16 they're doing.

17 MS. POWELL: And that would be a partnering  
18 scenario that -- Chris, I don't know  
19 if -- you may not know, but if you --

20 MR. SMITH: Yeah. There isn't a provision in  
21 the amendment or the guidelines of the  
22 program to do that. But we do have a  
23 lot of that happening.

1           To give you an example, with the  
2           Alabama Hiking Trail Society that I  
3           mentioned that are working on the  
4           Perdido WMA and on various tracts, you  
5           know, if you were interested in learning  
6           about hiking or backpacking or camping  
7           and that kind of thing, you know, they  
8           always welcome to have people join their  
9           chapters and help participate. And they  
10          have training programs at their annual  
11          conferences about these various  
12          activities. Also, say, like you  
13          mentioned mountain biking. There's a  
14          big mountain-biking track up in Anniston  
15          or Calhoun County. And the local  
16          mountain-biking organizations are the  
17          same way. They encourage -- so they do  
18          offer training and opportunities to  
19          learn those activities. It's not  
20          necessarily part of the Forever Wild  
21          Land Trust program's provisions, but  
22          those activities are happening as things  
23          that are happening on Forever Wild

1           lands. Thank you.

2           MS. POWELL: Yes, sir. Come on up.

3           MR. KISER: Good evening. My name is Anthony  
4           Kiser, and I'm speaking on behalf of  
5           the -- just the underprivileged. I want  
6           to just ask the question for Forever  
7           Wild, in your long-term planning is  
8           there anything -- or could you consider  
9           anything in the way of -- let's say in  
10          our urban communities where we can  
11          perhaps consider something like the  
12          gentleman just mentioned.

13                 Even in our decaying communities,  
14          perhaps if we laid aside small tracts --  
15          like even five acres would go a long  
16          way -- to maybe have things like walking  
17          trails or biking trails or, you know,  
18          the basketball goals or maybe a place  
19          where they could teach the  
20          underprivileged, you know, skills as far  
21          as planting certain things, farming  
22          skills, maybe orchards where -- nice  
23          fruit trees or nuts, all kind of things,

1           like a garden, if you will, right in our  
2           underprivileged communities. Or maybe  
3           set up classes in these small tracts  
4           where they can be taught certain things  
5           like archery and certain things that  
6           they may not be familiar with.

7           And I know the name Forever Wild,  
8           but I think when we teach -- human  
9           beings -- I know that many of you in  
10          this room have a very good track record  
11          for the love for animals, but the  
12          greatest -- God's greatest creation, the  
13          human being, if we can preserve that and  
14          give them a sense of nature, it creates  
15          a calm and a peace so the whole earth  
16          benefits overall.

17          So I know if we could concentrate on  
18          some smaller tracts maybe in some of the  
19          urban communities, I'd like to see that,  
20          especially teaching, you know, like  
21          grape orchards and beautiful things like  
22          that and teach them the difference in  
23          flowers and stuff like that. Maybe you

1           can consider something like that in your  
2           long-range plan too.

3                     And, also, it's beautiful the job  
4           you guys are doing and thank you so  
5           much, Patti and everyone.

6           MS. POWELL: I haven't seen another hand, but  
7           let me ask. Anybody else?

8           MR. BO PRESLEY: I want to --

9           MS. POWELL: Come up to the microphone.

10          MR. BO PRESLEY: -- touch on one more thing.

11                     We can talk about all the dog days  
12          on the management area and everything,  
13          but the dog hunters right now are  
14          fighting an issue in Montgomery of  
15          putting Baldwin County on a permit  
16          system, and that would affect the  
17          management area if it passes. There  
18          will be no dog hunting on the management  
19          area. Is that true?

20          MS. POWELL: I'm going to have to tell you I  
21          don't know. I mean, since that -- I  
22          mean, the regulations and what relates  
23          to hunting on the WMAs, although Forever

1 Wild contributes to the acreage, the  
2 regulations, the administration of those  
3 tracts are still within the department  
4 regulations through the Wildlife and  
5 Freshwater Fisheries Division and issued  
6 through the department. And I'll be  
7 honest with you. State Lands -- I  
8 honestly don't know the details of  
9 that. I'm sorry.

10 MR. BO PRESLEY: Thank you.

11 MS. POWELL: Yes, Susan. Come on up.

12 MS. MORROW: I forgot to mention that we would  
13 also like to see some of the roads  
14 opened up in the Forever Wild. The  
15 gates stay locked, but the roads are  
16 heavily traveled. But it's not by us.  
17 So we understand that you can't just go  
18 anywhere in there, and there is a lot of  
19 roads that has been traveled -- not that  
20 we want to go in there and tear them up  
21 or anything, but to go in there to get  
22 our kill or to drive in there to turn  
23 our dogs loose.

1           There's a lot of gates that stay  
2           closed and especially if you look at the  
3           Lowndes County management area. They --  
4           if you go up there and you kill  
5           something, you better have a bike, a  
6           cart or something to bring it out  
7           because you're not going in there any  
8           other way. You're going to walk. As  
9           the words of Mr. Jaworski, if you're  
10          going to hunt in there, he wants you to  
11          really hunt, sort of like Boone and  
12          Crockett and things like that. So that  
13          would help out a whole lot with the dog  
14          hunters or even with the stalk hunters.  
15          Thank y'all.

16       MS. POWELL: Anybody else? Anything else?

17       MR. ALLEN: I'd like to say something.

18       MS. POWELL: Come up to the microphone, if you  
19                would.

20       MR. ALLEN: I came here tonight really just to  
21                kind of listen and --

22       UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Who are you?

23       MR. ALLEN: My name is John Allen. I grew up

1 in the Black Belt, and a lot of people  
2 know that that part of Alabama is an  
3 underprivileged area. And I think our  
4 main problem today is that, you know,  
5 we've got a great resource, but I think  
6 we need to somehow improve getting the  
7 word out. You know, this is a great  
8 program. It's been around for a long  
9 time, but I've never heard about it  
10 really until the past five years. I did  
11 live out of state for a little while.  
12 But I think that if we don't, you know,  
13 somehow promote our youth, whether if  
14 it's in an urban area or it's in a rural  
15 area -- because a lot of times everybody  
16 is viewing this, you know, as hunting is  
17 bad or this is bad or maybe -- like the  
18 gentleman said earlier, maybe having  
19 more access.

20 So I don't know how many people are  
21 employed by y'all. I know y'all work  
22 with all different departments of the  
23 state, but really somehow helping maybe

1           the youth and the older crowd more.

2           Thanks.

3           MS. POWELL: And I would encourage you and  
4           anyone else that -- and one of the  
5           things the board also mentioned in the  
6           resolution was an effort to increase  
7           public awareness of the tracts. That  
8           was the reason for the development of  
9           the new Website. It was the reason for  
10          the development of the interactive map  
11          on the Website. I would very much  
12          encourage all of you -- and, actually,  
13          that map will show you more than Forever  
14          Wild properties. But, nonetheless, I  
15          would encourage you to go on and look at  
16          that map.

17                 I will say it is somewhat of a  
18          challenge. There is some tension  
19          between us spending money to get the  
20          word out that's sometimes criticized,  
21          you know, is that really how we should  
22          be spending the money.

23                 We do believe it's important to

1 spend some resources on getting the word  
2 out as it's a public-access program.  
3 You know, part of public access is the  
4 public being aware of the tracts and the  
5 opportunities offered on the tracts.  
6 But I would encourage you, in addition  
7 to speaking tonight, to also enter any  
8 comment along those lines on the  
9 Website. That helps us demonstrate that  
10 the public does want us to be able to  
11 communicate more about the program and  
12 get the word out. And if that does cost  
13 some money, then maybe that's a very  
14 good use of the money for a  
15 public-access program. Because that is  
16 something that sometimes there are  
17 divergent opinions on.

18 Anyone else have a comment?

19 MR. OLLIE PRESLEY: Patti, that gentleman was  
20 saying awhile ago about having somebody  
21 to show them what to do. I don't think  
22 there's a dog hunter nowhere -- if him  
23 and his family come up there and ask,

1           they'll take them hunting. Because  
2           there's no greater privilege in the  
3           world than seeing your grandkids, your  
4           kids, or anybody kill a deer in front of  
5           a dog. You can look at the faces.

6           MS. POWELL: Thank you.

7                     Anything else?

8                     I do want to say a couple of  
9           things. One, I really do -- I know  
10          people thank you for coming to meetings  
11          all the time. I do want to extend my  
12          appreciation for a couple of reasons.  
13          One, I know it is taking time away from  
14          your family and other things that you  
15          have to do and probably a risk of  
16          getting rained on. So I appreciate it.

17                    But I will tell you, even when you  
18          come to a meeting like this and even if  
19          you complain, that's okay because that  
20          shows that you're interested in the  
21          program and you care about it and  
22          indicates the value of the program and  
23          you trying to get it, you know, where

1           you want it. So, quite sincerely, even  
2           a complaint is appreciated. It's when  
3           we have these meetings and no one comes  
4           that we're bothered, not when people  
5           come. And even if they're upset with  
6           us, that's -- that's okay.

7           And I also think tonight is a very  
8           good example, you know, for the history  
9           of the program, how this program came to  
10          be way back in, I guess, 1992. Several  
11          different independent groups  
12          representing different interests prior  
13          to that time had tried many occasions to  
14          get through the legislature some type of  
15          program focused on land acquisition. It  
16          never worked because those interests  
17          were going after only their own.

18          Forever Wild finally was successful  
19          in what I call a great experiment.  
20          Because when I talk about the supporters  
21          of the program and who really were the  
22          founders of the program, talk about who  
23          was at the table, it included folks such

1 as Audubon and NRA sitting next to each  
2 other striving to get the same program  
3 passed, TNC, AWF, I mean, very  
4 seriously, divergent groups who had  
5 before this tried to do it themselves  
6 and proved they couldn't. That is why  
7 we do have the strong commitment in  
8 trying to achieve, you know, multiple  
9 use of these tracts.

10 But this program is an example of an  
11 experiment that worked, that shows that  
12 groups that normally maybe don't travel  
13 together hopefully can find a way to all  
14 take advantage of the program. So when  
15 we hear divergent views or even  
16 complaints, again, that's okay. I mean,  
17 we appreciate you coming.

18 We'll be around for a while if  
19 anybody has any additional questions.  
20 Again, the Website is  
21 Alabamaforeverwild.com. Again, for  
22 those of you that are used to going to  
23 Outdoor Alabama, you can access it from

1           there. Just click on the Forever Wild  
2           words on the side. But I would  
3           encourage everybody to go.

4                    Again, your comments tonight will be  
5           taken as official comments. So if you  
6           have any additional thoughts, please do  
7           enter them in the Website. And, again,  
8           we'll see you for another round of  
9           meetings once we get a draft document up  
10          and out. Thank y'all very much.

11                           (Session ended at approximately  
12                           7:42 p.m.)

13                           \* \* \* \* \*

14                           REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

15                           \* \* \* \* \*

16   STATE OF ALABAMA:

17   MONTGOMERY COUNTY:

18                    I, Tracye Sadler Blackwell, Certified  
19   Court Reporter and Commissioner for the State of  
20   Alabama at Large, do hereby certify that I reported  
21   the foregoing proceedings of the Forever Wild Land  
22   Trust Public Listening Session on February 20,  
23   2014.

