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MINUTES OF THE
FOREVER WILD BOARD MEETING
HUNTSVILLE MUSEUM OF ART
Huntsville, Alabama
June 25, 2015

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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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Proceedings taken before Tracye
Sadler Blackwell, Certified Court Reporter, ACCR
No. 294, and Commissioner for the State of Alabama
at Large, at the Huntsville Museum of Art, 300
Church Street, Huntsville, Alabama, on Thursday,
June 25, 2015, commencing at approximately
10:08 a.m.

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1 **BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

- 2 Mr. N. Gunter Guy, Jr. Commissioner
- 3 Dr. Gary Hepp
- 4 Dr. Patricia G. Sims
- 5 Dr. Warren Strickland
- 6 Mr. Leo Allen
- 7 Mr. Charles E. Ball
- 8 Mr. Russell A. Runyan
- 9 Mr. Horace H.Horn, Jr.
- 10 Dr. Michael Woods

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14 COMMISSIONER GUY: If I could have everyone's
 15 attention, I'd like to call our meeting
 16 of the Forever Wild Board for June 25,
 17 2015, to order. Welcome, everybody, to
 18 the city of Huntsville. It's great to
 19 be here, and we look forward to a good
 20 meeting.

21 At this time it's necessary to call
 22 the roll of our board members to assure
 23 ourselves that we have a quorum. So if

1 you would answer when I call your name
2 if you're present, I would appreciate
3 it.

4 Dr. Warren Strickland?

5 DR. STRICKLAND: Present.

6 COMMISSIONER GUY: Dr. Patricia Sims?

7 DR. SIMS: Present.

8 COMMISSIONER GUY: Mr. Ball?

9 MR. BALL: Present.

10 COMMISSIONER GUY: Dr. Hepp?

11 DR. HEPP: Present.

12 COMMISSIONER GUY: Dr. Woods?

13 DR. WOODS: Present.

14 COMMISSIONER GUY: Mr. Allen?

15 MR. ALLEN: Here.

16 COMMISSIONER GUY: Mr. Runyan?

17 MR. RUNYON: Here.

18 COMMISSIONER GUY: Mr. Horn?

19 MR. HORN: Here.

20 COMMISSIONER GUY: Mr. Ellis?

21 (No response.)

22 COMMISSIONER GUY: Mr. Porter?

23 (No response.)

1 COMMISSIONER GUY: Dr. Valentine?

2 (No response.)

3 COMMISSIONER GUY: Mr. Pate?

4 (No response.)

5 COMMISSIONER GUY: Mr. Cauthen?

6 (No response.)

7 COMMISSIONER GUY: Dr. Lawton?

8 (No response.)

9 COMMISSIONER GUY: Including myself, we have
10 nine members, so we do have enough for a
11 quorum and we can proceed with business
12 today. So thanks to everybody who is in
13 attendance today. And I know that
14 others who did not make it had told us
15 that they were having some problems with
16 schedules and that kind of thing, and we
17 appreciate them letting us know.

18 All right. So at this time we'll
19 proceed with a few items of business.

20 The first thing I would like to do
21 is -- at the last meeting we introduced
22 a couple of our new board members,
23 Mr. Runyan on my left and Mr. Ball to my

1 right. And this is their second
2 meeting. But we did not have the
3 pleasure of having our other newest
4 board member with us last time, but he
5 is here today. And that is Mr. Horace
6 Horn.

7 MR. HORN: Thank you.

8 COMMISSIONER GUY: Horace, glad to have you
9 with us. Glad to have you on the board.
10 I know you'll be a valuable asset to us
11 and appreciate you coming up here today.
12 I know you had some scheduling
13 conflicts, so we appreciate that very
14 much.

15 MR. HORN: Thank you. Glad to be here.

16 COMMISSIONER GUY: So with that, I would also
17 like to recognize -- ask the board if
18 they want to recognize any special
19 guests or if they have any special
20 messages they want to discuss at this
21 time.

22 Dr. Strickland.

23 DR. STRICKLAND: Mr. Chairman, in behalf of

1 the Forever Wild Board of Directors, I
2 would like to extend my sincere
3 appreciation to Sarah Gessler and Lil
4 Parton. They both are responsible for
5 allowing us to enjoy this beautiful
6 venue. The Huntsville Museum of Art is
7 something we're very proud of, and, you
8 know, it's a special place. And we
9 certainly appreciate them giving us the
10 opportunity to be here.

11 COMMISSIONER GUY: I'd like to give them a
12 round of applause.

13 Any other messages or recognition of
14 guests?

15 (No response.)

16 COMMISSIONER GUY: I would also like to thank
17 Dr. Strickland and Dr. Sims for actually
18 putting this meeting together up here
19 for us. I always enjoy -- we always
20 enjoy an opportunity to come to
21 Huntsville. And I really appreciate all
22 the work y'all put into putting this
23 together and being great hosts. So

1 thank you very much.

2 DR. STRICKLAND: It's our pleasure.

3 COMMISSIONER GUY: Thank you.

4 All right. With that, I would like
5 to at this time ask -- as I call your
6 name for those who wish to speak to the
7 board, I will ask you to come up to the
8 microphone, and we'll hear from the
9 public. I'll do my best to get your
10 names right. If I don't, I apologize in
11 advance.

12 And, secondly, I want to remind
13 everybody, as I do, that we have a court
14 reporter here. And her job is to take
15 down what we say so we can post those
16 minutes as required by law. Try to
17 speak as slowly as you can so she can
18 take that down. And we need to try not
19 to talk over each other so that she can
20 also get what we are saying.

21 So the court reporter is right here.
22 If she gives me one of those nasty
23 looks, then I might stop you. So Tracye

1 and I have known each other for a long
2 time, and I know what those looks are.
3 So bear with me if I ask you to slow
4 down or repeat what you said, just
5 because she has done that to me.

6 Okay. So with that, Shane Ellison.

7 MR. ELLISON: Good morning.

8 COMMISSIONER GUY: Good morning.

9 MR. ELLISON: Good to see you all again. I'm
10 bringing you this project for the second
11 time, thankfully. This is a City of
12 Gadsden project that's approximately 80
13 acres on Hinds Road adjacent to the city
14 park, Noccalula Falls Park, which is one
15 of the state's top tourist attractions.
16 I'm sure most of you have heard about it
17 before.

18 I'll point out again -- hopefully
19 you can see from there. This is the two
20 tracts, the two 40s here, which is
21 virtually adjacent to the park. And
22 the -- for lack of a better word, the
23 squiggly lines you see are mountain-bike

1 trails, which are intentionally squiggly
2 because that's the way that they're laid
3 out.

4 But we have almost four miles of
5 mountain-bike trails. We have two miles
6 of ADA compliant handicap-accessible
7 walking trails there at the park. And
8 they actually connect with this property
9 via a small two-lane road, especially a
10 gravel road, that is in itself an
11 attraction for walkers and for
12 mountain-bikers. And so there is no
13 problem with connecting the two
14 properties. Actually, our goal is to
15 acquire -- the city to acquire
16 everything in between so that it could
17 be basically one large parcel, one large
18 tract.

19 And so there's a lot of -- a lot of
20 things going on, a lot of synergy there
21 at the park right now. We've even been
22 able to take advantage of what was
23 previously a landfill and have an event

1 that hosted about -- called the
2 "Barbarian Challenge" that hosted about
3 750 individuals this weekend on an old
4 landfill. So we've been very successful
5 in reusing nearby properties.

6 So my understanding is that the
7 first appraisal has been completed.
8 Maybe the process has gone further than
9 that. But just to remind you the
10 importance of this project to, I think,
11 the city and the state and just ask you
12 to continue to support this project. Of
13 course, if you have any questions, I'd
14 be glad to answer them.

15 COMMISSIONER GUY: Any questions for
16 Mr. Ellison?

17 And I think we have another speaker,
18 I believe, on this.

19 MR. ELLISON: Michelle Reynolds, I believe,
20 will be speaking about the terrain and
21 the wildlife or the plant center located
22 on the property.

23 COMMISSIONER GUY: Why don't we just hear from

1 Ms. Reynolds, and then there may be
2 questions for either one of you maybe.

3 MR. ELLISON: Thank you.

4 COMMISSIONER GUY: Thank you, sir.

5 MS. REYNOLDS: Hi. First thing, I want to
6 thank you for all that you do to protect
7 Alabama's rich biodiversity and to
8 provide -- procuring land to provide
9 educational opportunities -- I mean,
10 opportunities for all Alabamians to
11 enjoy.

12 I hike and I kayak and ride my bike
13 and botanize and bird-watch on a lot of
14 the properties, so I thank you.
15 And in my inspiration, I write stories
16 and try to weave Alabama's ecology into
17 my stories, and so I appreciate that.

18 I'm here on behalf of the Alabama
19 Plant Conservation Alliance. It's an
20 alliance of colleges and botanists and
21 scientists and citizens -- concerned
22 citizens and native plant enthusiasts
23 like myself. And we help protect wild

1 native plant populations like the
2 Boynton's Oak. And the Boynton's Oak is
3 a population of oak trees, the rarest
4 oak tree in Alabama. Out of 40 species
5 of oaks in Alabama, the Boynton's Oak is
6 the only species that grows only in
7 Alabama. And there's a good population
8 of the Boynton's Oak on the Hinds Road
9 Rock Outcrop. The location was the type
10 locality.

11 The first specimen was taken in 1901
12 where the plant was described as an
13 unusual oak plant. This tree is smaller
14 than others, and it grows on the thin
15 soils of the sandstone glades. And the
16 glades where the bedrock is at or near
17 the surface is a harsh environment, cold
18 and wet in the winter, hot and dry in
19 the summer.

20 And all along Lookout Mountain, from
21 DeSoto State Park to Little River
22 Canyon, all the way down to the
23 Noccalula Falls Park and Hinds Road Rock

1 Outcrop, are open sunny patches and --
2 open sunny patches in a sea of trees.
3 And so in these glades are rare plant
4 communities. There are succulents like
5 elf-orphine and Fameflower and prickly
6 pear that grows on the rock outcrops and
7 orchids, like fringed orchids and
8 ladies' tresses and bell bignonia and a
9 lot of other rarities and oddities that
10 grow on the rock outcrop. And there are
11 a lot of people that go and seek out
12 these plants.

13 It would be super awesome if
14 there -- if the City of Gadsden could
15 connect their acreage of Noccalula Falls
16 Park to the 80-acre tract of Hinds Road
17 Rock Outcrop and keep on developing
18 their trails through that connectivity
19 up to the 80 acres and -- so people can
20 walk and ride their bikes to go see
21 these rare occurrences in beautiful
22 Alabama. It's something to celebrate.

23 And Gadsden already sees this great

1 impact. It enjoys the benefits of the
2 economic impact that the natural
3 surroundings -- with Lookout Mountain
4 and Coosa River and Noccalula Falls. So
5 I hope that you will support Alabama
6 Plant Conservation Alliance and the
7 Boynton's Oak committee of that
8 alliance. And I ask for your support
9 and further action to acquire this
10 property. Thank you very much.

11 COMMISSIONER GUY: Thank you, ma'am.

12 Does anybody have any questions
13 about that particular -- about anything
14 Ms. Reynolds asked or from Mr. Ellison?

15 (No response.)

16 COMMISSIONER GUY: All right. Thank y'all
17 very much.

18 Brian Rushing. Brian.

19 MR. RUSHING: Thank you, Commissioner. Good
20 morning. My name is Brian Rushing. I
21 work with the University of Alabama
22 Center for Economic Development. And we
23 work in support of initiatives of the

1 Alabama Trails Commission among which is
2 the Wiregrass Rail Trail, which is a
3 corridor currently owned by CSX that
4 would connect Andalusia to Geneva,
5 43-and-a-half miles.

6 And I just wanted to give an update
7 on this project. This is one project
8 that has been on your short list for
9 some time. But we are putting the
10 pieces together really to be in a
11 position to be able to ask you to move
12 forward with appraisal on that corridor.

13 We're currently securing operations
14 and management commitments from all of
15 the counties and municipalities along
16 the corridor, and we're almost done with
17 that. And we're in the process of also
18 answering a few questions regarding the
19 railbanking process for State Lands
20 staff. So we anticipate by the
21 September meeting -- by your meeting in
22 September we will have all of this
23 squared away and will be able to come to

1 you for a respectful request to move
2 forward with a first appraisal on the
3 corridor.

4 This is really an exciting project
5 to be involved with. We think it's
6 going to be transformative for the
7 Wiregrass region of Alabama. And so we
8 thank you for your consideration of the
9 project. And we will be back in
10 September with probably a large
11 contingent of supporters in south
12 Alabama when you're down there, so ...

13 COMMISSIONER GUY: Any questions of
14 Mr. Rushing?

15 (No response.)

16 COMMISSIONER GUY: Brian, I have a question.

17 I know that, you know, we've talked
18 about this before, and I really
19 appreciate you working with the Lands
20 Division staff to help clarify some of
21 the issues that we've had, you know,
22 everything from legal issues to
23 maintenance issues and things like that.

1 And so I very much appreciate that
2 because we -- I think the better
3 informed we can be, that certainly will
4 help us in our decision-making.

5 And, you know, as just one board
6 member, if there is a way that you could
7 put together maybe a package on that at
8 some point -- not to try to make it too
9 much -- but it could -- it could be
10 beneficial to the board members to
11 understand what the whole -- you know,
12 we hear pieces and parts, but we haven't
13 really heard about the whole.

14 And, then, I also have a separate
15 question that I would like for you to
16 work with the staff on and, that is, I
17 know there are some other trails of this
18 kind, you know, in the state and how
19 those have worked compared to this one
20 so that we can compare apples to apples
21 or apples to oranges and understand what
22 we're doing there.

23 So, anyway, I know you've been

1 working with the staff, and I appreciate
2 that very much. But I know that -- I
3 think it would be -- I believe it would
4 be beneficial to the board to maybe see
5 something in writing or maybe just a
6 paper on it of some kind.

7 MR. RUSHING: Sure. Sure.

8 COMMISSIONER GUY: I don't want to make you go
9 to a lot of work, but -- at least I'm
10 speaking -- you know, I know it would be
11 helpful to me because there's some
12 issues -- bridges out -- you know, are
13 there any bridges or, you know, trestles
14 that are not there anymore, how do we
15 address those kind of things,
16 maintenance issues and private-property
17 issues. You know, I just don't know
18 enough about what has happened in other
19 places and how that's worked and how
20 this might happen. I think it would
21 be --

22 MR. RUSHING: And we will have that packet to
23 you well in advance of the September

1 meeting.

2 COMMISSIONER GUY: Okay. Thank you, sir.

3 Does anybody else have any
4 questions?

5 (No response.)

6 MR. RUSHING: Thank you.

7 COMMISSIONER GUY: Jerry Bynum.

8 MR. BYNUM: Good morning. I'm the president
9 of the Cherokee Ridge Alpine Trail
10 Association, CRATA. We're a 501(c)(3)
11 in east-central Alabama, primarily Lake
12 Martin.

13 Our board members are with us today.
14 Outstanding individuals. Most are
15 retired, all with the common denominator
16 of the love of the outdoors, love of the
17 land, outdoor recreation, outdoor
18 education. We're primarily
19 footpath-only hiking, but we also dabble
20 in history and forestry and other
21 subjects that all relate to the Forever
22 Wild properties.

23 While we're on outstanding people,

1 we have really enjoyed Chris and Doug.
2 They are not only thorough in what they
3 do, but they're very professional in
4 every aspect of what they do. We
5 appreciate you guys. You do a great
6 job.

7 COMMISSIONER GUY: Thank you.

8 MR. BYNUM: We have had a relationship with
9 Alabama Power. We have 17 miles of
10 trail that we developed and currently
11 maintain on Lake Martin. We also have
12 10 acres of property that the power
13 company donated to us. On top of that
14 property is Smith Mountain Tower, a
15 1940s fire tower that we completely
16 rebuilt. We did a local fund-raiser,
17 raised about \$80,000 and rebuilt that
18 tower, and now it's a destination/point
19 of interest for people. If you have not
20 been there, would love for you to go and
21 see it. We're really proud of it, and
22 people around the lake and around the
23 area come to see the views of Lake

1 Martin.

2 We're excited about the possibility
3 of the Yates-North property. We've been
4 working with Doug and Chris. We've
5 walked all through the property. The
6 problem we experienced after looking at
7 it was the basically what we would
8 consider trailhead area and also a
9 connector to Lake Martin. The property
10 in question not only is on Lake Yates,
11 but it connects across to Martin to
12 natural, undeveloped property.

13 You know, they just completed the
14 Martin relicensing, and when that goes
15 through, technically that connector will
16 put organizations like us -- give us an
17 opportunity to connect both of the
18 trails. And we're real excited about
19 that.

20 Their properties there are regulated
21 by the Federal Energy Regulatory
22 Commission. So they're basically going
23 to be that way, technically, for 40

1 years through the relicensing. And it's
2 not quite Forever Wild. We wish it were
3 Forever Wild. We love Forever Wild.
4 It's just a great thing.

5 The property, 370 or so acres, I'm
6 not going to say has old-growth longleaf
7 pine, but it has some very old longleaf
8 pines just as Smith Mountain does. We
9 cored those at 243 years. You know,
10 it's a high hilly area. That's pretty
11 much what this power company property
12 is. It's been there. It also has a
13 history that we enjoy. The two railroad
14 tracks that came in to build Lake Martin
15 go right through this property in
16 question.

17 So what we would like to do is to
18 turn an area -- that area is similar to
19 Smith Mountain. At one point it was an
20 access for people to get in onto the
21 shoreline with vehicles, and basically
22 shoreline management with the power
23 company had a big problem with that.

1 They were tearing up shoreline, and
2 then, also, it was a big dump area.

3 So when we came in, we kind of moved
4 the bad folks out and hopefully
5 encouraged the people who are hikers and
6 outdoor enthusiasts to use the property.
7 And that's exactly what's happened. And
8 it has done -- it's been tremendous
9 beyond our dreams with the number of
10 people and the locations they come from
11 to utilize that property.

12 Here it's the same thing. Right now
13 if you drive down below Martin Dam, you
14 drive down in that area, there's a lot
15 of trash. It's right next to your
16 property. What we would like to do is
17 add this property, clean it up. We have
18 support committed already from Lake
19 Martin Resource Association, CRATA, from
20 other entities in addition to us.

21 So we're excited about cleaning up
22 and adding a new trailhead, adding some
23 historical information for people to

1 enjoy, and basically create a win, win,
2 win. So that's what we're here for.

3 And thank you for your consideration.

4 COMMISSIONER GUY: Any questions?

5 MR. BYNUM: Richard Beyer is with me, county
6 engineer for Elmore County.

7 COMMISSIONER GUY: Okay. We'll get him up.

8 Remind me. How many acres is this?

9 MR. BYNUM: I think it's 370, isn't it?

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Approximately 370.

11 COMMISSIONER GUY: All right. Thank you.

12 Any other questions of Mr. Bynum?

13 (No response.)

14 COMMISSIONER GUY: All right. So if Mr. Beyer
15 can -- Mr. Beyer.

16 MR. BEYER: Good morning.

17 COMMISSIONER GUY: Good morning.

18 MR. BEYER: My name is Richie Beyer. I'm the
19 county engineer for Elmore County and on
20 behalf of the Elmore County Commission
21 am here to speak in support of CRATA's
22 request.

23 We have been working with Chris as

1 well and Doug on some different issues
2 with the remaining property that you
3 have in addition to what is being asked
4 to be added. But we're the ones who get
5 to maintain the county road that bisects
6 your 5,000-plus acres you already have
7 in your inventory.

8 And as you heard Jerry saying, that
9 the -- there's areas of that road that
10 are very beautiful and there's areas
11 that are abused with dumping. We have a
12 stretch that runs mainly through your
13 property that has had to be closed off
14 because of four-wheel-drives and
15 destruction. And we are trying to work
16 a plan out with the Lands Division on a
17 way to turn all that into something
18 that's very positive.

19 And the county commission is very
20 supportive of this. They're supportive
21 of the additional lands and those
22 opportunities for additional -- not only
23 trailhead, but additional boat launch on

1 the Yates Lake. And I would just ask
2 that y'all support that and know that
3 the county commission is very supportive
4 of working together with the Lands
5 Division and CRATA to be able to make
6 this a very positive thing for Elmore
7 County.

8 We had a recreational plan that --
9 study that was done and wrapped up
10 about -- I guess it was about 12 months
11 ago. And this was one of the two top
12 areas of the county that were being
13 looked at to facilitate additional
14 recreational trails and recreational
15 opportunities in our county. We're very
16 fortunate. We've got the lakes and
17 rivers and some very beautiful terrain
18 in our county. And the commission is
19 doing what they can to try to promote
20 those areas as much as possible and this
21 being one of the centerpieces in the
22 county. So thank you for your time.

23 COMMISSIONER GUY: Any questions?

1 (No response.)

2 COMMISSIONER GUY: Thank you, Mr. Beyer.

3 And I am told that Mr. Beyer was
4 recognized as the 2014 National Rural
5 County Engineer of the Year. So
6 congratulations on that.

7 Charles Yeager. Charles.

8 MR. YEAGER: Thank you, Commissioner.

9 COMMISSIONER GUY: Good morning.

10 MR. YEAGER: My name is Charles Yeager, and I
11 have the honor of managing Forever
12 Wild's Turkey Creek Nature Preserve in
13 Pinson, Alabama. As the manager, I
14 provide day-to-day maintenance,
15 security, and direct the environmental
16 educational programs for school groups
17 and the public.

18 Since our last update to the board,
19 our program has continued to improve the
20 experience provided to our visitors by
21 providing parking and changing stalls,
22 handrails, as well as continued work on
23 a 3.2-mile multiuse trail addition that

1 we expect -- or hope to begin
2 construction on by the end of the year.

3 The impact of these efforts can be
4 seen through the steady increase in
5 visitor traffic each year. In the last
6 12 months over 93,000 visitors have
7 passed through our gates.

8 Our programming has also grown in
9 popularity over the last year. In just
10 the 2015 calendar year we have hosted 56
11 school groups totaling almost 3,000
12 student participants. Our public
13 programs have reached over 5,000. And
14 we have also hosted 262 participants in
15 service projects to improve the preserve
16 and decrease maintenance costs.

17 As we move forward with the second
18 half of the calendar year, we have an
19 exciting mix of new education and public
20 programming. Coming up next month we
21 will host our 6th annual summer festival
22 called "Float your Boat" which annually
23 draws over 1200 visitors. And later in

1 the year we have a free invasive species
2 workshop planned as well as an
3 orienteering workshop.

4 The success of the Turkey Creek
5 Nature Preserve has been possible due to
6 a string of amazing partners such as
7 State Lands, the Freshwater Land Trust,
8 the City of Pinson, and
9 Birmingham-Southern College. This year
10 we have been able to add a new partner
11 to the list. The recently incorporated
12 Friends of Turkey Creek Nature Preserve
13 has taken on the challenge as a
14 community-developed and led organization
15 to provide volunteer and fund-raising
16 support for our operation all in an
17 effort to help develop a long-term
18 mechanism for sustainable -- for a
19 sustainable operation.

20 Thank you for giving me this time to
21 provide this update. I hope that if you
22 have not already visited the Turkey
23 Creek Nature Preserve you will take the

1 time to stop by sometime soon. I would
2 be honored to share its wonders with you
3 and some of the potential it holds.

4 Thank you.

5 COMMISSIONER GUY: Any questions?

6 (No response.)

7 COMMISSIONER GUY: Charles, I always want to
8 thank you because you do such a good job
9 of not only giving us updates on Turkey
10 Creek, but, also, I know you put a lot
11 of effort into it. So I commend you for
12 that.

13 Did you say that 93,000 visitors
14 have passed through your gates?

15 MR. YEAGER: Yes, sir.

16 COMMISSIONER GUY: Pretty impressive.

17 MR. YEAGER: Thank you, sir. Thank you very
18 much.

19 COMMISSIONER GUY: Marie Bostick.

20 MS. BOSTICK: Good morning. I'm Marie
21 Bostick. I'm the executive director of
22 the Land Trust of North Alabama. And
23 welcome to Huntsville. We're very, very

1 pleased to have you with us in this part
2 of the state this month. Hopefully,
3 despite the heat, you'll be able to get
4 out and see some of our beautiful lands
5 before you have to head back.

6 The Land Trust does have a property
7 that we would like for you to consider
8 that we have nominated. It's my
9 understanding it is on our agenda later
10 on the short list for potential
11 first-appraisal action, so we would
12 appreciate your consideration of that.

13 To tell you just a little about the
14 property, it is adjacent to Monte Sano
15 State Park. It is actually in two
16 tracts. The largest tract is 130 acres.
17 It's located on the eastern side of the
18 state park. The property is generally a
19 sloping land. It has rocky slopes of
20 limestone. It's very shallow soils,
21 predominantly an upland hardwood forest
22 and vegetative cover, mostly oaks and
23 hickory, a little scattering of maple,

1 sassafras, persimmon, and our Eastern
2 Red Cedar, so pretty typical forested
3 land for Madison County.

4 It also has two named caves on the
5 property, O'Shaughnessy Pit and Doug
6 Hill Pit, and two very popular trails
7 that go across the property. One of
8 them is called Flat Rock Trail, which is
9 a very popular mountain-biking trail,
10 and the other one is Warpath Ridge Trail
11 which originates in Monte Sano State
12 Park that was originally built in 1960s
13 by Boy Scouts. And so this trail is
14 part of that same historic route that
15 came out of the state park and went down
16 across the property that we've
17 nominated.

18 The other tract, as I mentioned, is
19 about 4 acres. It's typically the same
20 type of terrain as the previously
21 described. It is on the western side of
22 the state park, again, adjacent to the
23 state park. So all of the property is

1 adjacent to the state park property.

2 The Land Trust has a great group of
3 volunteers, and we also have staff that
4 can help maintain and manage properties.
5 We've had a great relationship with the
6 state park over the years with trail
7 connectivity and trail maintenance. We
8 would hope to continue that and offer
9 whatever assistance we could to the
10 state park if this was included in the
11 state park properties.

12 We have had over 1300 hours of
13 volunteer hours just in trail
14 maintenance and management last year in
15 the Huntsville area. And I have lots of
16 good folks here with me today, board
17 members and volunteers, that have come
18 to support -- if they could just raise
19 their hands, that would be great. Lots
20 of people coming out to help us with
21 this project.

22 We also have a great relationship
23 with State Lands. Through the Forever

1 Wild program, about a decade ago we were
2 fortunate enough -- y'all acquired some
3 property on the north end of Green
4 Mountain known as the Certain Tract.
5 And we manage that property going by the
6 management plan established by the State
7 Lands Division and have been really --
8 they have been great to work with. And
9 we hope that they feel the same way
10 about us. But that's been a great
11 relationship. So we certainly stand
12 ready to support in any way we can any
13 management or maintenance activities on
14 any of those properties.

15 One other thing that I'd just like
16 to mention that I understand is not
17 being really considered in deliberation
18 of this property. But just so you have
19 kind of the big picture of what we're
20 trying to do here in regards to the
21 properties surrounding the state park,
22 we would hope that this transaction
23 could occur, and then we are in

1 negotiation with another landowner north
2 of this property that also abuts the
3 state park that has two trails that goes
4 through the property that are, again,
5 widely used by mountain-bikers and
6 hikers, Flat Rock -- another portion of
7 Flat Rock, and also the Keith Trail.
8 And we're hoping that we'll be able to
9 leverage funds from this transaction
10 into the purchase of that property to
11 create another -- well, another safety
12 net, if you will, for trails that are
13 currently being used by the public that
14 are not really open to the public and,
15 also, another buffer for the state park
16 system.

17 So, again, we appreciate your
18 consideration, and we'll be happy to
19 answer any questions you might have.

20 COMMISSIONER GUY: Any questions for
21 Ms. Bostick?

22 DR. STRICKLAND: Could I ask --

23 COMMISSIONER GUY: Dr. Strickland.

1 DR. STRICKLAND: And so there are two tracts.

2 There's a 130-acre tract --

3 MS. BOSTICK: Yes, sir.

4 DR. STRICKLAND: -- which is on the east side?

5 MS. BOSTICK: Yes, sir.

6 DR. STRICKLAND: And there's a 4-acre tract --

7 MS. BOSTICK: On the west --

8 DR. STRICKLAND: -- on the west side?

9 MS. BOSTICK: -- just below --

10 DR. STRICKLAND: And what's -- what is the

11 terrain of the 4-acre tract? Is it

12 forested as well?

13 MS. BOSTICK: It's forested as well, yes, sir.

14 Same typical species, mostly oaks and

15 hickory. It's a parcel that we

16 acquired. It is not adjacent to any

17 other Land Trust property. Since it is

18 adjacent to the state park, that's why

19 we nominated it.

20 DR. STRICKLAND: And you said there were two

21 caves. Is there any activity in the

22 caves? I mean, are they public-use

23 caves?

1 MS. BOSTICK: They are not open to the public.
2 They are known by the Speleological
3 Society, and they monitor and maintain
4 them. And they do go down on occasion
5 on guided trips.

6 DR. STRICKLAND: And my next question, the
7 swap, where is that property and how
8 many acres?

9 MS. BOSTICK: The property is another 130
10 acres. It is north -- I'm not sure of
11 the name of the road it comes off of.
12 It is at the northeast corner of the
13 state park.

14 DR. STRICKLAND: So it joins the state park?

15 MS. BOSTICK: It does join the state park.

16 DR. STRICKLAND: And it's forested as well?

17 MS. BOSTICK: Yes, sir.

18 DR. STRICKLAND: Are there trails?

19 MS. BOSTICK: Yes, sir.

20 DR. STRICKLAND: Okay.

21 COMMISSIONER GUY: Yes, sir.

22 DR. WOODS: What are the names of the
23 properties, these two?

1 MS. BOSTICK: The property that's been
2 nominated is the Monte Sano Mountain-Dug
3 Hill West addition.

4 COMMISSIONER GUY: And, Jo or Chris, so I was
5 a little confused. So is all of that --
6 are both of those, the 130 and the 4 --
7 are they in that nomination, that short
8 list? They're not separated out; right?

9 MR. SMITH: Considered one nomination.

10 COMMISSIONER GUY: It's considered one
11 nomination. Okay.

12 DR. STRICKLAND: I think it's 134; right?

13 COMMISSIONER GUY: And so how did they score?

14 MS. LEWIS: They're on the short list.

15 COMMISSIONER GUY: They scored --

16 MS. LEWIS: They scored well in three
17 categories of use.

18 COMMISSIONER GUY: All three categories --
19 three of the four?

20 MS. LEWIS: Three of the four.

21 MS. POWELL: Nature preserve, recreation, and
22 state parks. And it would be
23 abbreviated MSP on the short list you

1 have in Tab 5a. It says MSP-Dug Hill
2 addition.

3 COMMISSIONER GUY: But they're all in that one
4 nomination. So if there were to be --
5 there's no -- you don't have to separate
6 that out if you were to consider it?

7 MS. POWELL: No.

8 COMMISSIONER GUY: Thank you.

9 Does anybody else have any more
10 questions of Ms. Bostick?

11 DR. STRICKLAND: Marie, how long have you been
12 with the Land Trust?

13 MS. BOSTICK: Just over a year now.

14 DR. STRICKLAND: Over a year. Okay.

15 MS. BOSTICK: Yes, sir.

16 DR. STRICKLAND: Thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER GUY: Thank you, ma'am.

18 Andrew Schock.

19 MR. SCHOCK: Good morning. I'm Andrew Schock.

20 I'm with The Conservation Fund. And I
21 want to speak to you this morning about
22 Terrapin Hill. It's a project that is
23 on your recreation category short list

1 because it supports the Pinhoti Trail.

2 The Pinhoti Trail is a long-distance
3 foot trail in Alabama that covers 170
4 miles to the Georgia border. From there
5 it travels on to the southern terminus
6 of the Appalachian Trail. So a person
7 can start in Coosa County, Alabama, walk
8 on the Pinhoti Trail, and after about
9 six months end up at Mount Katahdin,
10 Maine.

11 In the packet that I handed out, if
12 you'll look at the second page, you'll
13 see a couple of photographs. The
14 photograph on your left was taken about
15 a mile in from the terminus of the
16 Pinhoti Trail, the terminus being in
17 Coosa County near Weogufka.

18 If you look at -- this is Mike
19 Leonard in the photograph. If you look
20 to the right of Mike Leonard, you'll
21 see -- or behind Mike Leonard, you'll
22 see Weogufka Creek. He's about 200 feet
23 above the creek on a bluff. To the

1 right of the creek is one of the
2 properties The Conservation Fund has
3 that we'd like to offer to Forever Wild.
4 We call it the Kaul property, K-A-U-L.

5 And then if you look over to the
6 left and up in the background, you'll
7 see a slight rise there. That's the
8 Stewart property. That's also owned by
9 The Conservation Fund, and we would like
10 to offer that to Forever Wild.

11 Both of those properties, if not
12 protected, would destroy the view shed
13 of -- or could -- the view shed could be
14 destroyed of this longest trail that
15 begins in Coosa County, Alabama. So
16 they're critical to maintaining the
17 Pinhoti Trail.

18 The Pinhoti Trail has been developed
19 by volunteers in Alabama, primarily the
20 Alabama Hiking Trail Society, but the
21 southern terminus was developed by State
22 Lands Division in partnership with The
23 Conservation Fund from a grant that we

1 received from the Kaul Foundation.

2 The other photograph shows the
3 shelter that State Lands built. It's
4 approximately two miles in on the trail
5 past where that bluff is. If you keep
6 going about two miles, you'll find
7 this -- this overnight shelter. It's
8 far enough in that you don't get the --
9 you know, what I call the six-pack
10 hikers. But it's there, so it's
11 accessible.

12 There's a nice picnic table in front
13 of it now. You can carry a picnic in.
14 It's also good when you start a
15 long-distance hike to be able to stop
16 not terribly far in and be able to kind
17 or readjust things and maybe, you know,
18 spend the night. Typically you don't
19 get started, it seems, until sometime in
20 the afternoon. So it's nice to have
21 this spot where you can stop and
22 reorganize and be able to spend the
23 night.

1 On the third page, the crosshatched
2 area on that map shows land that Forever
3 Wild purchased in 2012 from The
4 Conservation Fund to actually establish
5 the southern terminus of the Pinhoti
6 Trail. You all acquired that property
7 at a 34-percent discount from its market
8 value because we were able to bring some
9 donated dollars to the table that we
10 were able to, in essence, pass that
11 value on to you all.

12 The red line shows the approximate
13 trail location. And it's not accurate,
14 but it shows generally that it winds its
15 way through that crosshatched property
16 on page 3. And there is a black arrow
17 that points to the right, to the east.
18 That's the direction of that photograph
19 showing where the two tracts that The
20 Conservation Fund owns are located, the
21 Kaul tract and the Stewart tract. So
22 you can see the proximity to the lands
23 that are currently owned by the State of

1 Alabama as well as where the trail is.

2 And then the horseshoe -- blue-line
3 horseshoe creek that runs through the
4 middle that touches these tracts, that's
5 Weogufka Creek. Weogufka Creek, while
6 scenic, also is important in its own
7 right because there are several
8 important species, some shiners and
9 things, that live in that creek. So it
10 needs some -- to insure the watershed
11 protection itself.

12 On page 4 there is another map.
13 That map zooms a little bit from a
14 higher altitude and shows you the third
15 tract The Conservation Fund is bringing
16 before you today, and that is the RMS
17 property. Its design is primarily
18 for -- the design of that -- the
19 configuration of that, you see, is
20 relatively long and skinny. It's
21 primarily for getting the Pinhoti Trail
22 off the highway so you're not walking
23 along an automobile path. You're

1 walking in the woods. And that trail
2 would -- it would remove about eight
3 miles of trail off the road and put it
4 in the woods, and this is -- as we are
5 working to get this trail into the
6 Talladega National Forest.

7 The trail exists on the ground.
8 It's marked. You can walk the trail, as
9 I said, from Coosa County, Alabama, to
10 Mount Katahdin, Maine, but there are
11 sections that are on the road. And we
12 are endeavoring in this case to get it
13 off the road into the woods where it
14 should be. Certainly much better from a
15 hiking standpoint. It's also much
16 safer. So we will be coming back,
17 frankly, with other tracts in the future
18 that will help get it off the roads as
19 it winds its way into the national
20 forest at Rebecca Mountain near Hollins.

21 The last page in the packet shows a
22 summary of what The Conservation Fund is
23 able to offer to Forever Wild. All

1 these tracts are coming together in one
2 package. It's three separate tracts,
3 but it's all coming together in one
4 package.

5 And, again, because of generosity of
6 individual donors, in this case we're
7 able to offer these lands to you at a
8 54-percent discount over what The
9 Conservation Fund has bought them for.
10 So I'm hopeful that today you will
11 consider a first appraisal, and then we
12 can continue our discussions with the
13 Lands Division. So I'm here to answer
14 any questions.

15 COMMISSIONER GUY: Any questions?

16 Andrew, I have a couple while others
17 are looking, if you don't mind.

18 MR. SCHOCK: I don't.

19 COMMISSIONER GUY: Can you -- two things that
20 would be helpful to me just to -- I know
21 one of them may be very difficult to
22 answer.

23 Unlike Charles who has maybe -- he's

1 done a really good job of trying to
2 figure out the number of people that
3 come through. Do you have -- does The
4 Conservation Fund -- do we have any idea
5 about the use of this -- of the trails,
6 you know, like this?

7 MR. SCHOCK: I, unfortunately, don't have
8 numbers of total users. But, one, we
9 know that there are people who are
10 through hiking it. They're starting in
11 Alabama and going to Maine. And then
12 the day after the dedication ceremony of
13 the trail shelter, two gentlemen flew
14 from Canada into Birmingham and then
15 traveled down to Coosa County and spent
16 the night in Coosa County so they could
17 start hiking that trail to Maine.

18 So we know when you build these
19 things, when you have a place that's a
20 starting point -- in this case now,
21 because of your efforts, there's a
22 shelter there and a parking lot --
23 there's a shelter right at the parking

1 lot and then the shelter I showed you a
2 picture of. There's opportunities for
3 people to come and really start their
4 hike.

5 COMMISSIONER GUY: Okay. That's fair. And I
6 caught you off guard. So, you know,
7 anything y'all could provide, I think,
8 the board in these cases to just show
9 the amount of people that use these
10 trails and how they, of course, are
11 going to impact the local communities
12 and different things through either
13 staying there, purchasing food, you
14 know, recreating there, that kind of
15 thing, you know, would be helpful to us.

16 And then, lastly, to connect to
17 that, have you had an opportunity to
18 talk to the local governmental entities
19 there and kind of get a feel for their,
20 you know, position on this purchase?

21 MR. SCHOCK: We have not had a direct
22 conversation. The Alabama Hiking
23 Society has had some conversations with

1 them. I think, in fact, I shared with
2 Patti and Chris there was a brief
3 newspaper article that there is some
4 concern from the county about land
5 coming off the tax rolls.

6 But, you know, when you have a
7 unique long-distance trail like this, as
8 you said -- and I don't have the numbers
9 with me -- the economic opportunities
10 are tremendous. And if you don't pay
11 attention to hiking trails, you don't
12 understand how important and how unique
13 it is to have a long-distance trail. So
14 many trails -- and, I mean, I use
15 them -- you know, are three miles or
16 five miles, but this is -- in Alabama
17 it's 170 miles. So it draws people from
18 around the country.

19 COMMISSIONER GUY: I understand. So just work
20 with them, if you would, and make sure.
21 That's very helpful to us to make sure
22 that there's buy-in from everybody
23 involved, or at least we need to

1 understand what any problems might be
2 before we act. That would be helpful.

3 MR. SCHOCK: And, then, I'll also get the
4 economic -- or the use information.

5 COMMISSIONER GUY: Yeah. And I realize you
6 can't do it that specific, but just
7 generally, then, about the trail usage.
8 I know you have some of that
9 information. If you could get that to
10 us.

11 Next question.

12 Yes, sir, Dr. Strickland.

13 DR. STRICKLAND: So we're talking about a
14 total of 1600 acres and most of it's
15 forested?

16 MR. SCHOCK: Yes.

17 DR. STRICKLAND: Okay. Has it been timbered
18 or logged?

19 MR. SCHOCK: The piece that's the fairly long
20 and skinny piece, the RMS property to
21 the northeast, that has been timbered.

22 DR. STRICKLAND: How much? How many acres is
23 that?

1 MR. SCHOCK: It's 700 -- I'm sorry. No. I've
2 forgotten exactly. It's a little over
3 700 acres there -- I'm sorry. 1300
4 acres. I'm sorry.

5 The gray tract -- the gray tract on
6 page 4 is about 1334 acres.

7 DR. STRICKLAND: So most of that has been
8 logged?

9 MR. SCHOCK: That's been logged.

10 DR. STRICKLAND: How long ago?

11 MR. SCHOCK: Well, it's now -- I mean, it's
12 been cut, but now these trees are
13 growing back. I mean, it's been
14 reforested and so they're mature trees.

15 DR. STRICKLAND: Okay.

16 MR. SCHOCK: So the other two tracts, the one
17 that's shown in red and the other in
18 burnt orange, have not been logged for
19 at least a hundred years. They contain
20 200-plus-year-old longleaf pine as well
21 as -- it's a mixed longleaf
22 pine/hardwood forest. So they really
23 protect the integrity of the beginning

1 of the trail.

2 DR. STRICKLAND: And, again, the last -- you
3 said they're mature trees, the logged --
4 1300 acres that have been logged. Was
5 that ten years, 15 years ago?

6 MR. SCHOCK: Well, they vary in age. Some are
7 ten. Some are 20. So it was an
8 industrial forest.

9 DR. STRICKLAND: Okay.

10 MR. SCHOCK: So it varies in age depending on
11 the location.

12 DR. STRICKLAND: Thank you.

13 MR. SCHOCK: Thank you.

14 COMMISSIONER GUY: Any other questions?

15 (No response.)

16 COMMISSIONER GUY: Thank you, Andrew.

17 MR. SCHOCK: Thank you very much.

18 COMMISSIONER GUY: Connie Graham.

19 MS. GRAHAM: Hi. And thank you for inviting
20 me to speak today. I'm here to speak on
21 behalf of the Land Trust in support of
22 what they're requesting today. I am
23 with the City of Huntsville Urban

1 Planning Staff. I'm also the city
2 demographer. And one of the things that
3 our staff has been asked to do by our
4 mayor is a comprehensive plan for the
5 City of Huntsville.

6 And if you have not had the
7 opportunity to look at us on Websites or
8 wherever, if you haven't heard of us on
9 TV, it's called the "Big Picture." And
10 one of the things that we have done
11 during the "Big Picture" process is that
12 we have held focus groups and citizens
13 academy meetings. And one aspect that
14 we looked at was community -- and it's
15 because the community is craving this --
16 is the importance of parks and open
17 space.

18 Preserved land and parks are very
19 important to the people of Huntsville,
20 Madison County, and all areas, as you
21 just heard, but especially in our
22 urbanized areas. They act as a meeting
23 place for our community. They foster

1 community involvement and corresponding
2 pride in addition to providing an
3 opportunity to interact with people of
4 varying backgrounds and experiences.

5 They are accessible to all income
6 groups, particularly those who cannot
7 afford the cost of a getaway weekend.
8 They offer activities such as walking
9 and biking and unorganized activities,
10 providing accessible recreation
11 opportunities.

12 And one of the things that we looked
13 at was -- you know, we were talking
14 about -- somebody brought up, you know,
15 how much better they feel when they just
16 step out into a green space if
17 they're -- you know, even if they're at
18 work, and it doesn't matter how big that
19 space is. But we said what do you think
20 is happening in your brain when you
21 spend time outdoors.

22 And I found this great graphic. I
23 wish I had had the opportunity to bring

1 it today. It was a picture of a guy's
2 brain and it's cut in half. And on one
3 side the people are sitting in their
4 cubicals working, and then on the other
5 side people are outside laying on
6 blankets and there's trees and
7 everything.

8 But green space provides -- it
9 lowers stress levels, heart rates, and
10 blood pressures and improves metabolism,
11 respiration, and cognitive functions.
12 And it also provides longer attention
13 spans. And according to the National
14 Trails Training Partnership, most
15 communities view environmental quality
16 and fitness as the most important
17 factors influencing their personal
18 health.

19 Walking has consistently been the
20 most popular physical activity for all
21 ages over the past several years. Most
22 people would like to walk more than they
23 currently do, and open space and parks

1 can provide this opportunity. There is
2 evidence that improved biking and
3 walking facilities mean greater
4 participation by citizens.

5 Physical inactivity is one of the
6 four major risk factors of coronary
7 heart disease. Physical inactivity is a
8 contributing factor for Type 2 diabetes.

9 Huntsville has 65 city-run parks,
10 and that's just a little over 3,000
11 acres. You know, it's generally
12 regarded that one-quarter of a mile from
13 one's home is a comfortable walking
14 distance for most people. Well, when we
15 looked at the stats, only 75 percent of
16 Huntsville's population -- or 75 percent
17 of Huntsville's population did not live
18 within a quarter of a mile from a
19 designated open space.

20 So we need to get that percentage
21 down. And, you know, I believe what
22 Marie and the Land Trust has put on the
23 table here today is very important to

1 the citizens of our community. And I
2 thank you again.

3 COMMISSIONER GUY: Thank you, ma'am.

4 Any questions for Ms. Graham?

5 (No response.)

6 COMMISSIONER GUY: Let me just say thank you.

7 You know, an outsider looking in, I
8 think the city of Huntsville is very,
9 very progressive, a very
10 forward-thinking city, and I thank you
11 for what you do for it.

12 MS. GRAHAM: Thank you very much. Like Marie,
13 I hope that you have an opportunity to
14 get out and visit some of our sites
15 while you're here. Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER GUY: Thank you, ma'am.

17 Janice Barrett. Is that right? Or
18 Janice Barrett. Is it Janice?

19 Good morning.

20 MS. BARRETT: Good morning. My name is Janice
21 Barrett. Janice, yes. And I am
22 outreach coordinator for Wild South.
23 And on behalf of Wild South, I want to

1 thank the board for the great work you
2 do and for all the -- just for the great
3 program that Forever Wild is. And for
4 all the lands that have been protected
5 because of this program, we're very,
6 very grateful.

7 Our organization, Wild South, is a
8 nonprofit organization, and we work to
9 protect forests and ecosystems
10 throughout the Southeast. We work
11 mainly on public lands, do a lot of work
12 on national forests throughout the
13 Southeast. Our main office is in
14 Asheville, North Carolina, and our
15 Alabama office is in Lawrence County
16 close to Bankhead National Forest.

17 We are an advocacy and stewardship
18 organization, so we do a lot of -- a lot
19 of work to actually protect our
20 wilderness areas, national forests, some
21 of the most valuable ecosystems in the
22 Southeast. And some of the ways that we
23 do that is through our Volunteer

1 Wilderness Ranger Program. We have --
2 since 2011 have trained volunteers to be
3 Wilderness Rangers in both wilderness
4 areas in Mississippi, Linville Gorge
5 area in -- Linville Gorge Wilderness in
6 North Carolina, and in Sipsey
7 Wilderness, Cheaha Wilderness, and
8 Dugger Mountain Wilderness in Alabama.

9 And, in addition, we just started a
10 new Ranger program outside of wilderness
11 areas beginning last March. So we now
12 train volunteers to be Wilderness -- to
13 be Rangers in the Turkey Creek Preserve
14 and in Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve.

15 And we also have special agreements
16 with the Forest Service to do trail
17 maintenance. In the Sipsey Wilderness
18 we maintain 15 miles of hiking trails.
19 And outside of the wilderness areas we
20 do other projects. We partner with the
21 Forest Service in the Bankhead to do
22 ecosystem restorations. We pick up a
23 lot of trash and basically just do

1 whatever needs to be done to protect our
2 public lands.

3 And this morning I would like to
4 extend Wild South resources to Forever
5 Wild so that we can open a conversation
6 about stewardship on Forever Wild lands
7 where they're needed. This is -- some
8 of the Forever Wild lands are some of
9 the most valuable special lands in
10 Alabama, and they deserve special care.
11 And we are just available to work with
12 you on that however, providing
13 volunteers and training. We would just
14 like to open a discussion about that.

15 And we, on behalf of Wild South,
16 also would like to support the
17 nomination of the tracts that were
18 mentioned by Marie Bostick and also for
19 all the reasons that Connie Graham
20 mentioned here in Huntsville.

21 So are there any questions?

22 (No response.)

23 COMMISSIONER GUY: Thank you, Ms. Barrett.

1 Appreciate it very much.

2 MS. BARRETT: Thank you. And I would like to
3 offer you my card.

4 COMMISSIONER GUY: Okay. Thank you.

5 All right. Mary Anne Swanstrom.

6 MS. SWANSTROM: Good morning.

7 COMMISSIONER GUY: Good morning.

8 MS. SWANSTROM: I'd like to again welcome you
9 to Huntsville and hope you do have an
10 opportunity to go and enjoy our trails
11 and see some of the lands.

12 I'm president of our chapter of
13 SORBA-Huntsville. We are a chapter of
14 IMBA, the International Mountain Biking
15 Association. And so we were actually
16 the first in the state to become a part
17 of this organization.

18 I have a few notes. If you don't
19 mind, I will refer to them.

20 We were founded in -- no -- how
21 about 2004 and -- with just a few
22 members and now we are over 200. Our
23 primary focus, our mission, is trails

1 advocacy and also the promotion of our
2 sport. And I'm here in support of Marie
3 Bostick, the Land Trust, and Monte Sano
4 State Park.

5 Our chapter is -- we're stewards.
6 We are caretakers of trails there. When
7 there are trees down, when there are
8 portions that are unsustainable and
9 being eroded, our volunteers come in and
10 they work very hard to restore these
11 trails so that many users can enjoy
12 them. We have thousands of hours over
13 the last 11 years of work to improve our
14 trails on Monte Sano. And so I wanted
15 to make you aware of that, that there
16 are volunteers that are committed to our
17 trails and to our lands here.

18 Also, just so you're also aware, we
19 have -- currently have a series going on
20 that's a Time Trial Series. We bring
21 hundreds of folks every week up to Monte
22 Sano to enjoy the trails and have
23 fellowship and also make them aware of

1 what we have to offer and also to get
2 them involved as volunteers and as
3 stewards as well.

4 Let's see if there was anything --
5 oh, we committed about \$6,000 of our
6 chapter's funds. And we don't raise a
7 lot of money, so this is a really
8 important investment for us. Last
9 December we held a four-day intensive
10 Trail Master certification course, and
11 we certified nine of our own members.
12 One of them is a structural engineer.
13 We have various folks in various
14 capacities of occupations that bring
15 their talents. We had one of the Land
16 Trust stewards, Brandon, who came and
17 took the course with our members as well
18 as three members of the local running
19 club, Huntsville Track Club.

20 And so with 13 of these folks
21 certified, they're able to go and
22 further train other trail users and
23 volunteers to help continue the work of

1 creating more sustainable trails, to
2 reroute those that need attention, and
3 to help continue the work that we do up
4 here on Monte Sano as stewards and as
5 caretakers of these trails.

6 So just to let you know, we're in
7 support of Marie Bostick's proposal and
8 hope that you will give it
9 consideration. And we will be here.

10 Thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER GUY: Thank you.

12 Any questions for Ms. Swanstrom?

13 (No response.)

14 COMMISSIONER GUY: Thank you, ma'am, very
15 much.

16 So that is all of the green slips I
17 had for those who wanted to speak unless
18 I missed somebody that had signed a
19 green slip.

20 So I'm going to read this like I
21 usually do: By regulation, appraisal
22 values are confidential during periods
23 of negotiation. Accordingly, in order

1 to discuss tract appraisal values, the
2 board will need to go into recess for an
3 Executive Session.

4 Is there a motion for the board now
5 to recess to attend to an Executive
6 Session?

7 MR. ALLEN: So move.

8 DR. STRICKLAND: So move.

9 COMMISSIONER GUY: By Dr. Strickland.

10 Is there a second?

11 MR. ALLEN: Second.

12 MR. BALL: Second.

13 COMMISSIONER GUY: Leo, a second. I'll give
14 Leo the second on that.

15 So as I call your name, I need you
16 to indicate your position on this motion
17 to recess by indicating "aye" or oppose,
18 "nay."

19 Dr. Strickland?

20 DR. STRICKLAND: Aye.

21 COMMISSIONER GUY: Dr. Sims?

22 DR. SIMS: Aye.

23 COMMISSIONER GUY: Mr. Ball?

1 MR. BALL: Aye.

2 COMMISSIONER GUY: Dr. Hepp?

3 DR. HEPP: Aye.

4 COMMISSIONER GUY: Dr. Woods?

5 DR. WOODS: Aye.

6 COMMISSIONER GUY: Mr. Allen?

7 MR. ALLEN: Aye.

8 COMMISSIONER GUY: Mr. Runyon?

9 MR. RUNYON: Aye.

10 COMMISSIONER GUY: Mr. Horn?

11 MR. HORN: Aye.

12 COMMISSIONER GUY: And Guy, aye.

13 So at this time I'd like to notify
14 those that are here that we will take
15 approximately a 20-minute break, so
16 almost about 11:30. We'll try to return
17 at least by 11:30 from our Executive
18 Session, and we'll resume the meeting at
19 that time. Until we return we are in a
20 recess.

21 **(Recess for Executive Session was**
22 **taken at approximately 11:07 a.m.**
23 **and the meeting was called back to**

1 **order at approximately 11:34 a.m.)**

2 COMMISSIONER GUY: At this time I would like
3 to call our meeting back to order. And
4 next on the agenda is some reports on
5 the program. And we'll start with
6 Mr. Chris Smith.

7 MR. SMITH: All right, Commissioner. Thank
8 you.

9 The first bit of information I'm
10 going to cover is located in Tab 2.
11 That's our current financial
12 information.

13 As of today, the current balance of
14 the Forever Wild Land Trust program
15 right now is 27.5 million roughly, a
16 little bit more than that.

17 We currently have 11 nominations
18 that are in closing within our legal
19 department and going through the
20 different processes of closing. And
21 they include the Riverton Community
22 Hunting Area-Hog Hollow nomination,
23 which is 507 acres in Colbert County;

1 the Riverton Community Hunting Area-RMK
2 nomination, which is 20 acres in Colbert
3 County.

4 We have the Heron Bay nomination,
5 which is 487 acres in Baldwin County.
6 We are continuing with the Forever Wild
7 Land Trust swap with the Natural
8 Resources Group up in Colbert County.

9 The Pritchett tract, which is 400
10 acres in Covington County. The DeSoto
11 State Park-Steward Gap nomination, 253
12 acres in Dekalb County. Guntersville
13 State Park-Stubblefield Mountain
14 nomination, 636 acres in Marshall
15 County. The Lillian Swamp nomination,
16 689 acres in Baldwin County. Weeks Bay
17 Reserve-Swift Number 2 Meyer addition,
18 29 acres in Baldwin County. The Walls
19 of Jericho-Estillfork addition, 72 acres
20 in Jackson County. And, finally, last,
21 the Yates Lake-Guy addition, 123 acres
22 in Elmore County.

23 Again, those are all nominations

1 that the board has motioned to purchase
2 and the second appraisals have come in
3 and they've moved on to closing within
4 our legal department -- legal section
5 within our department.

6 We have three nominations that are
7 continuing in the negotiation phase.
8 These are nominations the board has
9 motioned to purchase -- get a second
10 appraisal and purchase, and they're
11 still being -- there are still
12 negotiations going on with the
13 landowner. And they include the Big
14 Canoe Creek Preserve nomination, which
15 is 381 acres in St. Clair County; Turkey
16 Creek Nature Preserve-Shepherd addition,
17 which is 242 acres in Jefferson County;
18 and the Skyline WMA-Little Coon Creek
19 addition, which is 1,143 acres in
20 Jackson County.

21 Considering the adjustments
22 associated with those actions, there is
23 an unencumbered balance of \$19,372,000.

1 And the current capital spending
2 authority that remains in FY15 that
3 would end September 30th is 16.4
4 million. So you have roughly 16.4
5 million that could be used toward
6 purchase or capital spending of
7 acquiring land.

8 On the next page we'll see a list of
9 the different nominations that closed in
10 the previous fiscal year and the current
11 fiscal year. During our current fiscal
12 year, which is FY15, there's been three
13 nominations that have made it through
14 the closing process and have become
15 Forever Wild Land Trust holdings, and
16 they include -- they are the Sipsey
17 River Swamp-Pruett tract, 274 acres in
18 Tuscaloosa County; Perdido River
19 WMA-Barnhill tract, 191 acres in Baldwin
20 County; and the Grand Bay Savanna-Drake
21 addition, which is 120 acres in Mobile
22 County.

23 Okay. If you'll turn to the next

1 page, you'll see a report on the
2 stewardship fund expenditures. We have
3 a budget authorization of \$1 million for
4 FY15. Currently there's been roughly
5 \$313,000 that has been spent toward
6 maintenance and habitat management and
7 reforestation projects. And there
8 remains roughly \$686,000 left to be
9 spent or that we could spend in the
10 remaining portion of our fiscal year.

11 And just to mention, you know, this
12 is the time of year when a lot of the
13 expenditures happen after hunting season
14 is over and wildlife management areas
15 and different recreation tracts have
16 maintenance done and different things
17 happening. So a lot of money in
18 reforestation projects are ramping up
19 with site prep and burning coming up
20 this fall. So there will be a lot of
21 that spent over the next few months
22 between now and the next meeting and
23 then into the fall.

1 Okay. In Tab 3 I'll go over the
2 different appraised -- appraisals that
3 have been done on nominations that the
4 board had motioned to get the first
5 appraisal. I'm just going to list
6 those.

7 They include the Autauga WMA-Oak
8 Grove addition, which was -- which is
9 1,339 acres in Autauga County; the
10 Autauga County -- or Autauga WMA-Old
11 Kingston addition, 1,412 acres, also in
12 Autauga County; and the Autauga
13 WMA-Poseys Crossroad addition, 1,537
14 acres in Autauga County.

15 There's the Byrnes Lake nomination,
16 which is 2,952 acres in Baldwin County;
17 the Coosa WMA-Hancock Phase III
18 nomination, which is 877 acres in Coosa
19 County; the Hinds Road Outcrop
20 nomination, 80 acres in Etowah County;
21 Indian Mountain-Simmons addition, 520
22 acres in Cherokee County; the Natural
23 Bridge tract, which is 1200 acres in

1 Covington County; the Old Cahawba
2 Prairie addition, 1,505 acres in Dallas
3 County; Pintlala Creek nomination, 601
4 acres in Lowndes County; Post Oak
5 Flat-Shiflett addition, 290 acres in
6 Jackson County; and the Splinter Hill
7 Bog-North addition, 511 acres in Baldwin
8 County.

9 Again, those are the nominations
10 that the board had motioned to get a
11 first appraisal on.

12 So if there's not any questions,
13 then I'll move into the grant --

14 COMMISSIONER GUY: Any questions on financial
15 data or overview of appraised
16 nominations?

17 (No response.)

18 COMMISSIONER GUY: Okay. Thank you, Chris.
19 Go ahead to grants.

20 MR. SMITH: Yes, sir. I would like to mention
21 to the new board members and then for
22 the benefit of those attending the
23 meeting today that the Department of

1 Conservation and Natural Resources
2 staff, both the State Lands Division and
3 Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries
4 Division, routinely try to find
5 federal-aid/grant programs, Land
6 Acquisition programs in which some of
7 these nominations that we receive would
8 fit to help further that Forever Wild
9 dollar. And so at each meeting we give
10 a report just to update the board
11 members and the public about different
12 stages of some of these grant programs.

13 Currently we have two nominations
14 that were awarded federal support
15 through the National Coastal Wetlands
16 Grant program. And those are
17 nominations that made it through the
18 process. The board has initiated
19 purchase, and they're in the closing
20 phase -- two of them are in the closing
21 phase, and one of the tracts associated
22 with -- there's two tracts associated
23 with one proposal and one tract with

1 another one. Closing has already
2 occurred on one of those properties and
3 the other two are in the final stages of
4 closing.

5 So there's no action that the board
6 needs to take, but this is just to
7 update the board that we have those.
8 And they're associated with the Heron
9 Bay Wetlands -- or Heron Bay nomination,
10 487 acres in Mobile County that I
11 mentioned earlier that is in the closing
12 process, and the Lillian Swamp
13 nomination, which is 689 acres in
14 Baldwin County, again, that I mentioned
15 earlier was in the closing process.

16 So once those close, we will
17 finalize the paperwork associated with
18 reimbursement. Both of those grant
19 programs have around a 75/25
20 federal-to-state match. So once those
21 close and we finalize the paperwork,
22 we'll be getting 75 -- roughly 75
23 percent of the value of those properties

1 that will come back into the Forever
2 Wild Land Trust program.

3 And another thing I'd like to
4 mention is we routinely look at
5 nominations as they come in to see if
6 they fit these different programs. And
7 I think that we've discussed with the
8 Wildlife section, in particular the
9 nongame unit, about maybe moving forward
10 on one of the nominations that's on your
11 short list for a fall submission within
12 the Habitat Conservation Planning Grant
13 program, which is an Endangered
14 Species/Section 6 program, and that is
15 for the Red Hills-Parris tract. So
16 hopefully this September I'll be
17 updating that we have moved forward with
18 that and submitted a proposal in support
19 of that nomination.

20 And that's all I have. I think
21 Chuck was going to come up and update
22 the board on the Wildlife Sport Fish --
23 Wildlife Sport Restoration grant

1 program.

2 COMMISSIONER GUY: Thank you, Chris.

3 Mr. Sykes.

4 MR. SYKES: Thank you, Commissioner.

5 As one of the previous speakers
6 said, Chris is very thorough, so he has
7 covered most of everything that I needed
8 to talk about.

9 But in the theme of grants, I just
10 wanted to -- especially for the new
11 board members that may not be familiar
12 with it, my staff has been working with
13 State Lands and also with U.S. Fish and
14 Wildlife Service for the past year and a
15 half to try to be able to utilize
16 Forever Wild money to match with our
17 Pittman-Robertson Sport Fish -- Wildlife
18 and Sport Fish Restoration dollars with
19 a three-to-one match. So basically if
20 Forever Wild puts up \$1, we can match it
21 with \$3 of the money that the sportsmen
22 in Alabama have put into that fund for
23 us to use for wildlife management and

1 habitat acquisition.

2 In February I presented the board
3 with our plan of our immediate need. We
4 were -- we were wanting to put together
5 the old Autauga WMA that had been broken
6 apart over the past 15 or 20 years. The
7 three nominations that were made, the
8 first appraisals are already in. So I
9 thank the board for asking for first
10 appraisals at the February board
11 meeting.

12 Our staffs have been working
13 together with that split. Once the
14 appraisals are in, those figures are
15 together and good, and we're in the
16 process now of finalizing with U.S. Fish
17 and Wildlife out of Atlanta to make sure
18 during the audit process everything is
19 done correctly. So we are -- we are
20 ready to move forward with that as far
21 as Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries
22 with our PR dollars.

23 And since the last meeting, we have

1 for our 2016 grants -- there's a
2 short-list nomination in your packet
3 that will further add to that Autauga
4 WMA that we're trying to put back
5 together, the Joffre tract.

6 That's sort of it in a nutshell, and
7 I'll be happy to answer any questions.

8 COMMISSIONER GUY: This is which tract?

9 MR. SYKES: The Joffre. Thank y'all.

10 MS. POWELL: It's on the short list, Tab 5a.

11 COMMISSIONER GUY: I'm sorry.

12 Okay. Any questions for Mr. Sykes
13 about the funds from the U.S. Fish and
14 Wildlife -- Pittman-Robertson is what I
15 call it -- funds in this particular
16 case?

17 (No response.)

18 COMMISSIONER GUY: All right. Thank you,
19 Chuck.

20 Next on my list is Ms. Lewis for
21 nomination short-list update. Jo.

22 MS. LEWIS: Good morning. For the sake of the
23 audience, I'm Jo Lewis. I work with the

1 State Lands Division. I'm going to
2 present to the board our tract
3 evaluation this morning.

4 We have provided to the board, each
5 board member in their packet of
6 information, information about all 87
7 active Forever Wild nominations. That
8 is in a list report in Tab 5c. I'd like
9 to go through the Tab 5 portion of the
10 packet, which will include -- the same
11 information that's in your packet is in
12 the PowerPoint.

13 Tab 5a contains what we call the
14 short list, which is the top-three
15 current highest-scoring nominations in
16 each category of use in each district.
17 Therefore, the maximum number of
18 short-listed nominations would be 36.
19 Normally nominations that score well in
20 one category often score well in the
21 other categories of use, and therefore
22 it will reduce the overall numbers.

23 Today we have 25 tracts on the short

1 list. They vary in size from 3 acres to
2 over 2,000 acres, and they're scattered
3 throughout the state from Baldwin County
4 to Jackson County. 16 different
5 counties are represented on the list,
6 and the nominations are arranged
7 alphabetically by their full nomination
8 name, which can be somewhat confusing
9 when we use abbreviations. That list is
10 provided, as I say, in Tab 5a.

11 Behind Tab 5a is a more table-like
12 version of it so that one can see which
13 were the top-nine nature preserves,
14 recreation areas, state parks, and
15 wildlife management areas and how they
16 are for each district. It's the same
17 information, but the alphabetical list
18 is condensed.

19 Then we also provide a packet of
20 information with a narrative and map of
21 each of the 25 nominations that are on
22 the short list.

23 And then Tab 5c is the final list of

1 all nominations that have willing
2 sellers. So I'm going to run through
3 the list.

4 We have the Autauga WMA-Joffre
5 addition, which is showing on the
6 screen. That's 1,285 acres in Autauga
7 County.

8 COMMISSIONER GUY: Can I stop you there?

9 MS. LEWIS: Yes.

10 COMMISSIONER GUY: I meant to ask Chuck.

11 You can answer from there, if you
12 would, so that Tracye can hear you. But
13 that matches up with those other three
14 parcels is what you're saying there?

15 MR. SYKES: It does.

16 COMMISSIONER GUY: And it's on the short list,
17 so it has been nominated.

18 MR. SYKES: That's correct.

19 COMMISSIONER GUY: But it fits into the
20 plan --

21 MR. SYKES: Yes, it's in that overall plan.

22 Some of these landowners had
23 stipulations that they could only sell

1 up to 1500 acres a year. So in the
2 overall plan we had to break down some
3 of those larger landowners. And we've
4 got 1500 acres in the 2015 acquisition
5 process, and then this would fall into
6 the 2016.

7 COMMISSIONER GUY: Okay. But this encompasses
8 division of the -- of the Wildlife and
9 Freshwater Fisheries' division as it
10 relates to putting back this old WMA?

11 MR. SYKES: The old WMA, yes, sir, that's
12 correct.

13 COMMISSIONER GUY: All right. Thank you.
14 Sorry, Jo.

15 MS. LEWIS: No problem. By chance, that also
16 scored well in the nature preserve
17 category and the recreation category.
18 So this nomination short-listed in three
19 categories.

20 The next alphabetical one is the Big
21 Canoe Creek-Bettis addition, which is
22 197 acres in St. Clair County. Coon
23 Gulf-Heard addition, which is a 40-acre

1 tract in Jackson County. Deer Head
2 Cove-Low Gap, which is 280 acres in
3 Dekalb County. DeSoto State Park-French
4 addition, which is about 3 acres in
5 Dekalb County.

6 DeSoto State Park-Jones addition,
7 which is about 10 acres in Dekalb
8 County, which is in multiple parcels,
9 but they're all adjacent to that portion
10 of the state park.

11 Emauhee Creek Lake in Talladega
12 County, which is 915 acres. We have the
13 Hope Hull tract, which is 472 acres in
14 Montgomery County. Laguna Cove, which
15 is 53 acres in Baldwin County. Lurleen
16 State Park-Roebuck addition, which is
17 70 acres in Tuscaloosa County. Locust
18 Fork-Palmer tract, which is 2,000 acres
19 in Blount and Jefferson Counties.

20 This is Monte Sano State Park-Dug
21 Hill West addition, which is 134 acres
22 in Madison County, which is two separate
23 parcels but, again, both adjacent to the

1 state park.

2 MTD, which is Mobile-Tensaw Delta,
3 Pine Log Creek addition, which is 4,300
4 acres in Baldwin County. Mobile-Tensaw
5 Delta-Simmons addition, which is 300
6 acres in Baldwin County. Perdido
7 Wildlife Management Area-Freise
8 addition, 47 acres in Baldwin County.

9 The Red Hills-Parris Trust addition
10 tract, which is 305 acres in Monroe
11 County. Shell Banks Bayou, which is 25
12 acres in Baldwin County. Skyline
13 Wildlife Management Area-Pole Branch
14 addition, 111 acres in Jackson County.
15 Skyline Wildlife Management Area-Threwer
16 Point addition, 40 acres in Jackson
17 County.

18 Tannehill-Ayers addition, which is
19 328 acres in Jefferson County which is
20 adjacent to the Forever Wild holding.
21 Terrapin Hill, which is 1,533 acres in
22 Coosa County. Weeks Bay Reserve-Sunset
23 Shores addition, which is about 3 acres

1 bring up at this time. So I'm going
2 to -- I'm going to open it up for any
3 board discussion.

4 Anybody have any motions or other
5 discussions?

6 DR. STRICKLAND: Mr. Chairman, Commissioner?

7 COMMISSIONER GUY: Yes, sir. Dr. Strickland.

8 DR. STRICKLAND: I would like to make a motion
9 for first appraisal of the Dug Hill West
10 addition, 134 acres that consists of two
11 parcels, one of 130 acres on the west
12 side of Monte Sano State Park and the
13 4 acres, the second parcel, on the west
14 side. It's east and west side.

15 COMMISSIONER GUY: All right. I have a motion
16 for first appraisal on the MSP-Dug Hill
17 West addition. Do I have a second?

18 DR. WOODS: Second.

19 DR. SIMS: Second.

20 COMMISSIONER GUY: Got a second from Dr. Sims.

21 Any discussion on the motion?

22 (No response.)

23 COMMISSIONER GUY: All in favor of the motion

1 say "aye".

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

4 COMMISSIONER GUY: All opposed?

5 (No response.)

6 COMMISSIONER GUY: Motion carries for first
7 appraisal.

8 DR. WOODS: I would like to make a motion for
9 first appraisal on Terrapin Hill in
10 Coosa County.

11 COMMISSIONER GUY: All right. So I have a
12 motion for -- by Dr. Woods for Terrapin
13 Hill.

14 Dr. Woods, is that what it was?

15 DR. WOODS: Yes.

16 COMMISSIONER GUY: In Coosa County?

17 DR. WOODS: Yes.

18 COMMISSIONER GUY: All right. Do I have a
19 second?

20 DR. HEPP: I second it.

21 COMMISSIONER GUY: Dr. Hepp, second.

22 Any discussion on the motion?

23 (No response.)

1 COMMISSIONER GUY: All in favor of the motion
2 say "aye."

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

5 COMMISSIONER GUY: All opposed?

6 (No response.)

7 COMMISSIONER GUY: Motion carries.

8 MR. BALL: Mr. Chairman?

9 COMMISSIONER GUY: Yes.

10 MR. BALL: I would like to make a motion for
11 the Locust Fork-Palmer tract in Blount
12 and Jefferson Counties.

13 COMMISSIONER GUY: By Mr. Ball. Which one
14 again, Mr. Ball?

15 MR. BALL: The Locust Fork-Palmer tract.

16 COMMISSIONER GUY: Locust Fork-Palmer tract in
17 Blount and Jefferson County, 2,000
18 acres. I have a motion for first
19 appraisal. Is there a second?

20 DR. WOODS: Second.

21 COMMISSIONER GUY: Second from Dr. Woods.

22 Any discussion on the motion?

23 (No response.)

1 COMMISSIONER GUY: All in favor of the motion
2 say "aye."

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

5 COMMISSIONER GUY: All opposed?

6 (No response.)

7 COMMISSIONER GUY: Motion carries for first
8 appraisal.

9 DR. WOODS: I'd like to make a motion on the
10 first appraisal for the Yates Lake-North
11 addition in Elmore County.

12 MR. BALL: Second.

13 COMMISSIONER GUY: Got a motion and a second
14 on the Yates Lake-North addition in
15 Elmore County.

16 Any discussion on the motion?

17 (No response.)

18 COMMISSIONER GUY: All in favor of the motion
19 say "aye."

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

22 COMMISSIONER GUY: All opposed?

23 (No response.)

1 COMMISSIONER GUY: Motion carries.

2 DR. SIMS: Mr. Chairman, I would like to make
3 a nomination for a second appraisal and
4 purchase the Post Oak Flat-Shiflett
5 addition, 290 acres in Jackson County.

6 COMMISSIONER GUY: Motion by Dr. Sims for the
7 Post Oak Flat-Shiflett addition in
8 Jackson County. Do I have a second?

9 DR. STRICKLAND: Second.

10 COMMISSIONER GUY: And a second by
11 Dr. Strickland.

12 Any discussion on the motion?

13 (No response.)

14 COMMISSIONER GUY: All in favor of the motion
15 say "aye."

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

18 COMMISSIONER GUY: All opposed?

19 (No response.)

20 COMMISSIONER GUY: Motion carries.

21 DR. HEPP: I'd like to move for a second
22 appraisal for the Autauga Wildlife
23 Management Area-Oak Grove addition.

1 COMMISSIONER GUY: All right. A motion for a
2 second appraisal on the Autauga WMA-Oak
3 Grove addition by Dr. Hepp. Is there a
4 second?

5 DR. SIMS: Second.

6 MS. POWELL: Second appraisal and proceed with
7 purchase on that.

8 COMMISSIONER GUY: Okay. We go through this
9 every time. So is it --

10 MS. POWELL: I think if you just -- I'm sorry.
11 A motion to proceed with purchase really
12 infers a second appraisal, so I think
13 you could say both. But please do
14 include to proceed with purchase in the
15 motion to clarify that we're not just
16 getting a second appraisal. We actually
17 have authority to close it.

18 COMMISSIONER GUY: All right. Okay. So I'll
19 take the blame. We do this, it seems
20 like, every time. I never -- I'm sorry.

21 So let's go back, then, to Post Oak
22 Flat. I would like to make sure it's
23 clear on the record since we did not say

1 motion for a second appraisal and
2 purchase, which I assume that's what you
3 wanted done, Dr. Sims?

4 DR. SIMS: Absolutely, yes, sir.

5 COMMISSIONER GUY: So, if we could, let's just
6 start back and open that up. And,
7 Dr. Sims, would you go ahead and restate
8 your motion for the Post Oak
9 Flat-Shiflett addition. A motion for
10 second appraisal and purchase?

11 MS. POWELL: And to proceed with purchase.

12 DR. STRICKLAND: So move.

13 COMMISSIONER GUY: And a second by
14 Dr. Strickland on the second one.

15 All right. Let's do that again. So
16 all in favor of that motion for a second
17 appraisal and to proceed with purchase
18 say "aye".

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

21 COMMISSIONER GUY: All opposed?

22 (No response.)

23 COMMISSIONER GUY: Okay. Motion carries.

1 DR. SIMS: Mr. Chairman, I would like to move
2 for a second appraisal to purchase the
3 Hinds Road Outcrop-Miles, 80 acres.

4 COMMISSIONER GUY: And let me stop you before
5 you -- would you hold that because I
6 want to go back to the one by Dr. Hepp
7 on the Autauga WMA-Oak Grove addition
8 first.

9 So with that motion --

10 DR. HEPP: I would move for a second appraisal
11 and proceed to purchase the Autauga
12 WMA-Oak Grove addition.

13 COMMISSIONER GUY: All right. So I have a
14 motion for a second appraisal and to
15 proceed with purchase. Do I have a
16 second?

17 DR. WOODS: Second.

18 COMMISSIONER GUY: Second by Dr. -- is that
19 Dr. Woods?

20 DR. WOODS: Yes.

21 COMMISSIONER GUY: Have a second on the
22 motion.

23 Any discussion?

1 (No response.)

2 COMMISSIONER GUY: All in favor of the motion
3 please say "aye."

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

6 COMMISSIONER GUY: All opposed?

7 (No response.)

8 COMMISSIONER GUY: Motion carries.

9 All right, Dr. Sims.

10 DR. SIMS: I move for a second appraisal to
11 purchase Hinds Road Outcrop-Miles, 80
12 acres.

13 MR. BALL: Second.

14 COMMISSIONER GUY: And proceed with purchase?

15 DR. SIMS: Proceed with purchase.

16 COMMISSIONER GUY: Okay.

17 MR. BALL: Second.

18 COMMISSIONER GUY: And a second by Mr. Ball.

19 Any discussion on the motion?

20 (No response.)

21 COMMISSIONER GUY: All in favor of the motion
22 say "aye."

23 (All board members present respond

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"aye.")

COMMISSIONER GUY: All opposed?

(No response.)

COMMISSIONER GUY: Motion carries.

DR. HEPP: I would like to move for a second appraisal and proceed to purchase on the Autauga WMA-Old Kingston addition.

COMMISSIONER GUY: Have a motion. Is there a second?

DR. STRICKLAND: Second.

COMMISSIONER GUY: Second by Dr. Strickland.

Any discussion on the motion?

(No response.)

COMMISSIONER GUY: All in favor of the motion say "aye."

(All board members present respond "aye.")

COMMISSIONER GUY: All opposed?

(No response.)

COMMISSIONER GUY: Motion carries.

DR. HEPP: I'd also like to make a second appraisal and proceed to purchase the Autauga WMA-Poseys Crossroads addition.

1 COMMISSIONER GUY: There's a motion and is
2 there a second?

3 DR. WOODS: Second.

4 DR. STRICKLAND: Second.

5 COMMISSIONER GUY: A second by Dr. Strickland.

6 All in -- any discussion on the
7 motion? Excuse me.

8 (No response.)

9 COMMISSIONER GUY: All in favor of the motion
10 say "aye."

11 (All board members present respond
12 "aye.")

13 COMMISSIONER GUY: All opposed?

14 (No response.)

15 COMMISSIONER GUY: Motion carries.

16 Any other discussion or motions?

17 (No response.)

18 COMMISSIONER GUY: Chuck, can I ask just -- on
19 that other Autauga County, do you need
20 this motion if somebody was
21 interested -- because I don't know -- in
22 order to get it closed within the next
23 year now?

1 MR. SYKES: The Joffre tract will be in our
2 2016 that we can start working on as
3 soon as the appraisals come back on
4 this. I guess if somebody wanted to
5 make that motion, it's appropriate.

6 DR. STRICKLAND: So I'll make a motion, yes.

7 COMMISSIONER GUY: Okay.

8 DR. STRICKLAND: Mr. Chairman, I would like to
9 make a motion for first appraisal for
10 Autauga WMA-Joffre addition, which is
11 1285 acres.

12 COMMISSIONER GUY: That's correct. In Autauga
13 County; is that right?

14 DR. STRICKLAND: Autauga County.

15 COMMISSIONER GUY: All right. There's a
16 motion. Is there a second?

17 DR. WOODS: Second.

18 COMMISSIONER GUY: All right. Second.

19 Any discussion on the motion?

20 (No response.)

21 COMMISSIONER GUY: Just so -- I'm -- on my
22 discussion, so that would, then, join in
23 with this other and you would shoot for

1 next year for that to then get the
2 Pittman-Robertson monies?

3 MR. SYKES: That's correct.

4 COMMISSIONER GUY: All right. Very good.

5 DR. STRICKLAND: Mr. Chairman, this is a first
6 appraisal.

7 COMMISSIONER GUY: That's right. First
8 appraisal. Just for first appraisal.

9 DR. STRICKLAND: Just wanted to clarify.

10 COMMISSIONER GUY: So we have a motion and a
11 second. All in favor of the motion say
12 "aye."

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

15 COMMISSIONER GUY: All opposed?

16 (No response.)

17 COMMISSIONER GUY: Motion carries.

18 MR. BALL: Mr. Chairman, I have a request for
19 another first appraisal.

20 COMMISSIONER GUY: Mr. Ball.

21 MR. BALL: I don't think we've done this one
22 yet. Big Canoe Creek-Bettis, 197 acres,
23 St. Clair County.

1 COMMISSIONER GUY: Okay. So a motion for a
2 first appraisal on Big Canoe
3 Creek-Bettis in St. Clair County; right?

4 MR. BALL: Yes, sir.

5 COMMISSIONER GUY: It's on the short list.

6 Is there a second?

7 DR. SIMS: Second.

8 COMMISSIONER GUY: Second by Dr. Sims.

9 Any discussion on the motion?

10 (No response.)

11 COMMISSIONER GUY: All in favor of the motion
12 say "aye."

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

15 COMMISSIONER GUY: All opposed?

16 (No response.)

17 COMMISSIONER GUY: Motion carries.

18 DR. SIMS: Mr. Chairman, I would like to move
19 for a first appraisal on Skyline-Pole
20 Branch addition in Jackson County.

21 COMMISSIONER GUY: All right. By Dr. Sims, a
22 motion for a first appraisal on Skyline
23 WMA-Pole Branch addition. Is there a

1 second?

2 DR. STRICKLAND: Second.

3 COMMISSIONER GUY: Dr. Strickland.

4 Any discussion on the motion?

5 (No response.)

6 COMMISSIONER GUY: All in favor say "aye."

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

9 COMMISSIONER GUY: All opposed?

10 (No response.)

11 COMMISSIONER GUY: Motion carries.

12 MR. BALL: Mr. Chairman, I'm sorry. I have
13 one more.

14 COMMISSIONER GUY: All right. Mr. Ball.

15 MR. BALL: I'd like to propose a first

16 appraisal on Lake Lurleen State

17 Park-Roebuck addition, 70 acres in

18 Tuscaloosa County.

19 COMMISSIONER GUY: All right. I have a motion

20 for a first appraisal on Lake Lurleen

21 State Park-Roebuck addition. Is there a

22 second?

23 DR. STRICKLAND: Second.

1 COMMISSIONER GUY: Second by Dr. Strickland.

2 Any discussion on the motion?

3 (No response.)

4 COMMISSIONER GUY: Greg?

5 MR. LEIN: Yes, sir.

6 COMMISSIONER GUY: I'm sorry. Could you
7 remind me about that one, Lurleen State
8 Park-Roebuck addition, 70 acres?

9 MR. LEIN: This nomination has been before the
10 board for several years. I believe it's
11 located in the southeastern quadrant of
12 the park close to the entrance. It
13 would be an addition to the park. And
14 it's short-listed for quite a while.
15 The score is a moderate score in the big
16 scheme of things for the nominations
17 that apply to the state-park category.

18 COMMISSIONER GUY: Is it timber or is it open
19 land? Do you remember?

20 MR. LEIN: I believe -- it is timbered. Most
21 of the land around the park is timbered.
22 Some of it's been recently cut.

23 In the criteria in which we score

1 these nominations, this one is not one
2 where it would secure like new access to
3 the park. This is a park with a large
4 lake, and one of our challenges there is
5 vehicular access to the other side of
6 the lake which we don't have right now.
7 That's something that other staff have
8 been working on is developing some
9 nominations that would improve access to
10 that part of the park.

11 But, you know, there just aren't --
12 there are not often circumstances where
13 we have nominations of property against
14 our parks. And this is one of those
15 that's been there for a while, but it's
16 never been a big priority.

17 COMMISSIONER GUY: So just remind me. And I
18 apologize. I just wanted to remember
19 what the vision was for this 70 acres.
20 I see it's 2011, so I was trying to
21 remember.

22 MR. LEIN: Yes, sir.

23 COMMISSIONER GUY: Because that was right when

1 I got on this board and I just don't
2 remember it at all.

3 MR. LEIN: The biggest benefit of this is that
4 it would just add space to the park
5 where the trails could be expanded.
6 There has been a significant increase in
7 mountain-biking-trail development at
8 this park and financial benefits to the
9 park through that kind of recreational
10 traffic. So it's not a bad nomination,
11 and obviously it made it on the short
12 list.

13 COMMISSIONER GUY: Thank you.

14 MR. LEIN: Yes, sir.

15 COMMISSIONER GUY: And, Dr. Ball, it's a first
16 appraisal only, so --

17 MR. BALL: Yes.

18 COMMISSIONER GUY: I just couldn't remember
19 what it was for. So I appreciate you
20 allowing me to ask about that because I
21 couldn't -- I just couldn't remember
22 what -- 70 acres is relatively small,
23 but I didn't remember what the vision

1 was.

2 So were there any other questions
3 about that besides me? I apologize.

4 (No response.)

5 COMMISSIONER GUY: All right. So we have a
6 motion, and I think we have a second,
7 don't we?

8 DR. STRICKLAND: Yeah, I seconded it.

9 COMMISSIONER GUY: A second.

10 Any other discussion on the motion?

11 (No response.)

12 COMMISSIONER GUY: All in favor of the motion
13 say "aye."

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

16 COMMISSIONER GUY: All opposed?

17 (No response.)

18 COMMISSIONER GUY: Motion carries.

19 Okay. Hearing no other discussion
20 by any board members, we'll move out of
21 that category, absent an objection, and
22 move into some miscellaneous reports at
23 which time -- are we good with all the

1 nominations in y'all's mind, Mr. Lawyer,
2 Mr. Attorney for the board?

3 MR. LOCKLIER: I'm sorry?

4 COMMISSIONER GUY: You're good with all the
5 nominations? I didn't have any other --
6 any problems?

7 MR. LOCKLIER: Good.

8 COMMISSIONER GUY: All right. So I'll move to
9 draft five-year plan update from -- it
10 looks like Ms. Powell even though it
11 says Chris Smith here, so we will
12 substitute Ms. Powell.

13 MS. POWELL: I couldn't miss an opportunity to
14 come to the microphone, so I jumped in
15 front of Chris.

16 No. I just wanted to -- we wanted
17 to give a brief update. At the last
18 meeting we talked about trying to get
19 back with all the members and be sure we
20 had all the board member either comments
21 or suggested revisions for sort of the
22 staff starting point of the draft
23 five-year plan. We did -- just about a

1 week ago got in the last board member
2 comment.

3 I want to thank you for all those
4 who gave comments. They were very
5 substantive and very helpful to us.

6 And so we are just about finished
7 incorporating the last set of comments
8 we received. So what we're going to do
9 after that is, now that we have all the
10 comments back, do one final circulation
11 through various divisions, mine, State
12 Parks, Wildlife and Freshwater
13 Fisheries, Marine Resources, just to see
14 if we see anything additional that we
15 think the new comments spark.

16 Then the next step would be to get
17 back to you. We hope we'll be close to
18 a draft that would then go out for
19 public comment. But we, of course,
20 would want to bring that draft back to
21 you one more time so that you could see
22 all the other comments from your fellow
23 board members that have been

1 incorporated, make any final tweaks to
2 that, and then, you know, I'm excited to
3 say we'll be ready to take that out for
4 public comment.

5 And we can discuss more of that at
6 the next meeting exactly what steps, if
7 we're going to do public meetings again.
8 But at a minimum, of course, we would
9 have it on our Website and have some of
10 our other groups that have offered to
11 post it on their Website gather public
12 comment.

13 So -- but, anyway, the next step
14 would be, I'm excited to say, to finally
15 get a final draft back for your
16 consideration for approval to move to
17 public comment.

18 COMMISSIONER GUY: Any questions for
19 Ms. Powell?

20 MS. POWELL: Any questions on that?

21 (No response.)

22 MS. POWELL: Great. Thank you very much.

23 COMMISSIONER GUY: Thank y'all for working on

1 that, I know, between a lot of other
2 things, so I appreciate it very much.

3 And thanks to the board for their
4 comments. They're very valuable to us.

5 Next, Chris, management plan for
6 board approval.

7 MR. SMITH: Yes, sir. We have five recently
8 purchased tracts that need the formal
9 management plan approval. Four of these
10 properties are located adjacent to
11 already existing Forever Wild Land Trust
12 holdings. And we have reviewed these
13 properties and their management
14 objectives, and they're complementary to
15 the already board-approved management
16 plans.

17 So our recommendation would be that
18 the board adopt these management -- the
19 management of these properties to fall
20 under the previously approved management
21 plan. And I will list those tracts and
22 the management plans I'm speaking of.

23 One of the recently purchased

1 properties is the Sipseyp-Pruett tract.
2 This is located in Tuscaloosa County and
3 is complementary and would fall into the
4 management plan of the Sipseyp River
5 Swamp Forever Wild Land Trust complex.

6 A second property is the Walls of
7 Jericho-Hurricane Creek addition. This
8 is located in Jackson County, and it's
9 adjacent and complementary to the
10 management plan approved for the Walls
11 of Jericho tract. And so our
12 recommendation would be to just add that
13 property to the Walls of Jericho
14 management plan.

15 A third property is the Perdido
16 River WMA-Barnhill addition. This is a
17 property -- an inholding located within
18 the Perdido Wildlife Management Area.
19 And our recommendation would be to just
20 add the management plan for management
21 of this property to the already-approved
22 Perdido WMA management plan.

23 And the final one of these

1 properties that are adjacent to the
2 existing is the Grand Bay Savanna-Drake
3 addition. This is an inholding within
4 the Grand Bay Savanna Community Hunting
5 Area located in Mobile County. Our
6 recommendation would be to just add the
7 management of this property or fold it
8 under the already-approved management
9 plan of the Grand Bay Savanna Forever
10 Wild property.

11 And then we have the Cahaba -- or
12 the Shelby County-Cahaba Park addition,
13 which is -- it is adjacent to other
14 Forever Wild properties, the Cahaba WMA,
15 which is part of the lease -- the
16 long-term lease for recreation rights.
17 But, you know, this property was
18 purchased with the intent to be managed
19 alongside and adjacent to Shelby County
20 Park.

21 We have been working with Shelby
22 County and discussing with them
23 partnering together in different

1 management. And so we developed a
2 separate management plan and submitted
3 that to you in your packet of
4 information for your consideration. And
5 we would need a motion from the board to
6 adopt this management plan associated
7 with the Shelby County Park addition as
8 well as folding these other tracts into
9 these existing management plans.

10 COMMISSIONER GUY: Okay. Do you want me to
11 try to state that motion?

12 So the way I see it is, I guess the
13 first motion is -- and I will state
14 it -- is a motion to include recently
15 acquired Forever Wild tracts within
16 existing management plans, and those are
17 the Sipsey-Pruett tract to be added to
18 the Sipsey River Swamp management plan,
19 the Walls of Jericho-Hurricane Creek
20 addition to be added to the Walls of
21 Jericho tract management plan, the
22 Perdido River WMA-Barnhill to be added
23 to the Perdido River-Longleaf Hills

1 tract management plan, and the GBS-Drake
2 addition to be added to the Grand Bay
3 Savanna tract management plan.

4 MR. SMITH: You got it.

5 COMMISSIONER GUY: Is that --

6 DR. STRICKLAND: So move.

7 COMMISSIONER GUY: Is there a second?

8 DR. SIMS: Second.

9 MR. BALL: Second.

10 COMMISSIONER GUY: Any discussion?

11 (No response.)

12 COMMISSIONER GUY: All in favor of the motion
13 say "aye."

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

16 COMMISSIONER GUY: All opposed?

17 (No response.)

18 COMMISSIONER GUY: The second motion is to add
19 the newly acquired Cahaba River-Shelby
20 County Park addition -- excuse me -- to
21 adopt a management -- a formal
22 management plan for the newly acquired
23 Cahaba River-Shelby County Park

1 addition. Is that an appropriate
2 motion?

3 MR. SMITH: Yes, sir.

4 DR. STRICKLAND: So move.

5 COMMISSIONER GUY: Is there a second?

6 DR. SIMS: Second.

7 DR. WOODS: Second.

8 COMMISSIONER GUY: Is there any discussion?

9 (No response.)

10 COMMISSIONER GUY: All in favor of the motion
11 say "aye."

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

14 COMMISSIONER GUY: All opposed?

15 (No response.)

16 COMMISSIONER GUY: Awesome. Anything else?

17 MR. SMITH: That's it, Commissioner. That
18 completes our reports of the
19 miscellaneous as well as the other
20 financial report.

21 COMMISSIONER GUY: Thank you.

22 Ms. Powell or other staff members,
23 are there any other reports --

1 miscellaneous reports or other business
2 that needs to come before the board that
3 I've missed?

4 MS. POWELL: No, sir.

5 COMMISSIONER GUY: So there is a list of
6 tentative meeting dates for the board's
7 consideration on Tab 6, I believe it is.
8 So our next meeting date, Ms. Powell,
9 will be September 17th?

10 MS. POWELL: That's correct.

11 COMMISSIONER GUY: Approximately September --
12 it would be September 17th barring any
13 problems?

14 MS. POWELL: Yes. Unless there's a need to
15 change that or if there's a different
16 motion by the board.

17 COMMISSIONER GUY: And I will make the
18 suggestion to everyone that we are
19 considering probably returning to the
20 Dothan area. They have asked us a
21 number of times to come back. Certainly
22 we're open to other suggestions of the
23 board members. But we indicated to them

1 when we went the last time for the first
2 time that we would come back, and I
3 think we've tentatively been trying to
4 get back there. So we thought that
5 might be a good opportunity in September
6 to go there.

7 But if there are any other
8 suggestions about that meeting or about
9 the December meeting, if you would,
10 please contact Ms. Powell, Ms. Lewis,
11 Mr. Smith, or anybody else about your
12 suggestions there. Is that okay?

13 Are there any questions about the
14 meeting dates?

15 You might put those on your
16 calendar.

17 DR. STRICKLAND: That was September ...

18 MS. POWELL: 17th.

19 COMMISSIONER GUY: 17th is the next one. And
20 then the last one of this calendar year
21 is December 10th.

22 And then February 4th is always the
23 one that we have in Montgomery and then

1 June 23rd. That's as far as we have
2 gone.

3 And then, lastly, I need approval of
4 the minutes of December 18, 2014. Is
5 there any -- is there a motion -- well,
6 first of all, are there any editions or
7 corrections to the minutes of
8 December 18, 2014?

9 MS. POWELL: Commissioner, I'm sorry.

10 COMMISSIONER GUY: Yes, I'm sorry.

11 MS. POWELL: After all the praise we've
12 received, we, of course, have a typo.
13 That's not the right date. So give me a
14 minute.

15 COMMISSIONER GUY: No problem. No problem.

16 MS. POWELL: It would be February 5th. And
17 that's what was circulated in your
18 packets. So I'm sorry. We just didn't
19 correct the date.

20 COMMISSIONER GUY: Thank you. I was just
21 reading it. I'm sorry.

22 MS. POWELL: No. It was on us. That's on us.

23 COMMISSIONER GUY: No problem.

1 Are there any editions or
2 corrections to the minutes of
3 February 5, 2015, that's in your
4 package?

5 (No response.)

6 DR. STRICKLAND: Motion for approval.

7 COMMISSIONER GUY: All right. So I hear --

8 I've got a motion for approval of those
9 minutes. Do I have a second?

10 MR. BALL: Second.

11 DR. SIMS: Second.

12 (Brief interruption by court
13 reporter.)

14 COMMISSIONER GUY: Dr. Strickland, a motion
15 for approval. Second I'll just call on
16 Dr. Sims.

17 And all in favor of the motion say
18 "aye."

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

21 COMMISSIONER GUY: All opposed?

22 (No response.)

23 COMMISSIONER GUY: Unless there's more --

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other business that I'm unaware of, we stand adjourned. Thank y'all very much.

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

* * * * *

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

* * * * *

STATE OF ALABAMA:

MONTGOMERY COUNTY:

I, Tracye Sadler Blackwell, Certified Court Reporter and Commissioner for the State of Alabama at Large, do hereby certify that I reported the foregoing proceedings of the Forever Wild Board Meeting on June 25, 2015.

The foregoing 118 computer-printed pages contain a true and correct transcript of the proceedings held.

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

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This 13th day of August 2015.

Tracye Sadler Blackwell
ACCR No. 294
Expiration date: 9-30-2011
Certified Court Reporter
and Commissioner for the State
of Alabama at Large