



ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION & NATURAL RESOURCES

LOCATION: Pelham Civic Complex & Ice Arena
500 Amphitheater Road
Pelham, Alabama

Date: May 18, 2024

Boggs Reporting & Video LLC
334.264.6227
info@boggsreporters.com
www.boggsreporters.com

Page 1

ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION & NATURAL RESOURCES

COPY

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION & NATURAL
RESOURCES BOARD MEETING taken before the Department
of Conservation and Natural Resources, and reported
by Elaine F. Bradley, Certified Court Reporter and
Commissioner for the State of Alabama at Large, at
Pelham Civic Complex & Ice Arena, 500 Amphitheater
Road, Pelham, Alabama, on Saturday, May 18, 2024,
commencing at 9:00 a.m.

Page 2

1 APPEARANCES
2 MEMBERS OF THE BOARD:
3 MR. JOSEPH DOBBS, JR., CHAIRMAN
4 MR. CHRIS BLANKENSHIP, COMMISSIONER
5 MR. RICK PATE, AGRICULTURE COMMISSIONER
6 MR. BROCK JONES
7 MR. RAYMOND JONES, JR.
8 MR. BEN STIMPSON
9 DR. J. MIKE PHILLIPS
10 MR. GRADY HARTZOG, JR.
11 MR. TIM WOOD
12 MR. GREG BARKSDALE
13 MR. GARY WOLFE
14
15 FOR THE ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND
16 NATURAL RESOURCES:
17 ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
18 AND NATURAL RESOURCES
19 64 N. Union Street, Room 474
20 Montgomery, Alabama 36130
21 BY: MS. CHARLANNA W. SKAGGS
22 Charlanna.skaggs@denr.alabama.gov
23

Page 3

1 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: If everybody
2 will take a seat, please.
3 Welcome to you all. Glad
4 you're all here. Nice crowd today.
5 This is our second
6 Conservation Advisory Board meeting
7 of 2024. It's here on May the
8 18th.
9 The Lord has blessed us with
10 fair weather today. There was a
11 question about that, but it looks
12 like it's -- it's going to be fine.
13 So, with that, I'm going to
14 ask Mr. Gary Wolfe to please lead
15 our invocation.
16 MR. WOLFE: Thank you.
17 Gentlemen, bow your heads.
18 (Invocation given.)
19 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Amen. Thank
20 you. Thank you, Gary.
21 I'm going to lead us in the
22 pledge in just a moment, but I want
23 to introduce Elaine Bradley. She's

Page 4

1 our new Court Reporter. She can't
2 see the Board.
3 So, I'm going to introduce
4 myself, Joey Dobbs. I'm the
5 Chairman. We talked earlier, and I
6 will introduce each Board Member as
7 they speak so that you can see
8 them. And we'll talk in a few
9 moments and the public comments
10 portion of our meeting. I'll give
11 you some further instructions
12 regarding her.
13 If you'll stand and join with
14 me --
15 (Pledge of Allegiance.)
16 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you.
17 Let me take one moment to say
18 thank you to Ms. McCullers who
19 signed you in and has been a big
20 part of this, always is; and Betsy
21 Jones, who manages our clock helps
22 manage this Board.
23 Thanks so much for all that

Page 5

1 you do, and to Deputy Director Ed
2 Poolos (sic) and the legal staff
3 there, that they're always a huge
4 part of getting this together.
5 Let's have a good meeting and
6 good dialogue.
7 I'm going to pass on the
8 Sportsmen's Pledge today in the
9 interest of time, and I'm just
10 going to ask, Mr. Secretary, do we
11 have a quorum?
12 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP:
13 Yes, sir, we have a quorum.
14 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: We have a
15 quorum. Thank you.
16 The minutes of the February
17 24, 2024, meeting are here. I know
18 all our Board has read them. Are
19 there any corrections to those
20 meetings -- to those minutes?
21 (No response).
22 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: There being
23 no corrections, the minutes stand

Page 7

1 MR. PHILLIPS: Mike Phillips.
2 I'm with the Cooperative Extension
3 System serving ex officio, as well.
4 MR. STIMPSON: Ben Stimpson,
5 District 1 from Mobile.
6 MR. RAYMOND JONES: Raymond
7 Jones, District 5 from Huntsville.
8 MR. BROCK JONES: Brock
9 Jones, District 6, Tuscaloosa.
10 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP:
11 Chris Blankenship, the Commissioner
12 of the Department of Conservation.
13 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you,
14 gentlemen. Thank you very much.
15 These are the folks in your
16 district -- the ones that are
17 representing your district are who
18 I would recommend any time you have
19 questions, comments -- good
20 questions and good comments -- to
21 please call and contact them. They
22 are your folks.
23 The directors of the

Page 6

1 approved. The Commissioner and I
2 will sign those and get them to Ms.
3 Jones.
4 If we can, I would like each
5 Board member today to stand and
6 introduce themselves and tell us
7 their Congressional district,
8 please, starting at the far end.
9 Mr. Wolfe?
10 MR. WOLFE: Gary Wolfe. I
11 live in Fairhope, Alabama, Baldwin
12 County, District 1.
13 MR. BARKSDALE: Greg
14 Barksdale, District 4.
15 MR. WOOD: Tim Wood from
16 Selma, District 7.
17 MR. HARTZOG: Grady Hartzog,
18 Eufaula, Alabama, District Number
19 2.
20 MR. PATE: Rick Pate. I'm
21 from Lowndesboro. I serve as -- ex
22 officio as Commissioner of
23 Agriculture and Industries.

Page 8

1 divisions of the Department of
2 Conservation & Natural Resources
3 are all here with their adjuncts,
4 too, and I'm going just to
5 recognize them. They don't have to
6 stand up.
7 Mr. Scott Bannon, from Marine
8 Resources; Mr. Greg Lein, from
9 State Parks; Ms. Patti McCurdy,
10 with State Lands; and Mr. Chuck
11 Sykes, with Wildlife and Freshwater
12 Fisheries. These are great folks,
13 and they're doing a wonderful job
14 for the State of Alabama.
15 Commissioner Blankenship,
16 will you provide us some updates
17 since our last meeting, please?
18 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP:
19 Yes, sir. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
20 I do have a report for the
21 Board. The first thing I would
22 like to recognize before we get
23 started is that we have -- one of

Page 9

1 our former Board members, Dr. Bob
2 Shipp, passed away this year. Dr.
3 Shipp was a very integral member of
4 the Board, especially following the
5 Deepwater Horizon incident and
6 provided good insight and expertise
7 to the Board during what was a very
8 tumultuous time in the State of
9 Alabama.
10 I know that's been almost --
11 it's been -- just 14 years ago in
12 April was the anniversary of that
13 incident. But during that time, as
14 we go further and further away from
15 it, it doesn't seem as bad now as
16 it was then, but it was definitely
17 a difficult time in the State of
18 Alabama and for the Conservation
19 Advisory Board and for the
20 Department as we were trying to
21 decide what to do.
22 We appreciate his expertise
23 in that along with -- along with

Page 11

1 representative. And then he was
2 selected overall.
3 And he works half for our
4 Marine Resources Division and half
5 for our Lands Division in
6 construction management. You know,
7 and as I was talking about,
8 shortly, at the end of my talk
9 about all the projects we have
10 going on with Deepwater Horizon and
11 construction projects as well as
12 GoMESA and a lot of other things on
13 the coast, Jacques really goes
14 above and beyond making sure those
15 projects are getting done. They're
16 getting done right. They're
17 getting done mostly on time and so
18 far on budget.
19 So, he is really an excellent
20 employee and is just kind of
21 indicative of all of the people
22 that we have that happen to have a
23 passion for the outdoors and a

Page 10

1 Red Snapper and a lot of other
2 things that he did during his
3 career outside the time of the
4 Board and for his insight when he
5 was on the Board.
6 I just wanted to memorialize
7 his passing before I get started
8 with my other comments.
9 On a more positive note, I
10 would like to recognize one of our
11 employees, Jacques Hollings.
12 Jacques was named the State
13 Employee of the Year last week.
14 Out of right around 30,000 state
15 employees, Jacques was recognized
16 by the State Personnel Department
17 as being the Employee of the Year.
18 We have great people in the
19 Department of Conservation. We had
20 several worthy individuals that
21 were nominated for that within the
22 Department, and then we put Jacques
23 forward as our Department

Page 12

1 passion for what they do at the
2 Department of Conservation.
3 So, I'm pretty tickled to
4 have our employee recognized out of
5 all State employees as the best.
6 And this is multiple times over the
7 last several years that we've had a
8 DCNR employee that's been a State
9 Employee Of The Year for the State
10 of Alabama.
11 So, that really is not a
12 one-time thing. It just kind of
13 continues the tradition of the
14 great people that we have working
15 for the Department.
16 I'll give a quick legislative
17 update. The legislative session
18 ended a couple weeks ago a little
19 early. Their last day they could
20 have met is Monday, but they went
21 ahead and finished, like, on May
22 the 7th.
23 We had a good session

Page 13

1 overall. There were a few bills
2 that passed that impacted the
3 Department of Conservation.
4 One of those was a Black Bass
5 Stocking Bill on the Coosa River.
6 In that bill, we -- the
7 Commissioner retained the right to
8 either -- to deny some of those
9 permits if our staff felt like
10 there was a biological or other
11 reason that would be detrimental.
12 That was, you know, a good outcome
13 from that bill.
14 The Seafood Labeling Bill
15 passed that would be helpful to our
16 seafood industry in the state by
17 restaurants and retailers having to
18 say where their seafood that they
19 are selling comes from, if it's a
20 domestic product or if it's
21 imports.
22 A Living Shorelines Bill
23 passed that may help incentivize

Page 15

1 That passing gave us that
2 express ability to do that under
3 some of our state-owned properties.
4 The first bill that passed in
5 the legislation session was a Dam
6 Safety Bill. It provides an
7 opportunity to voluntarily opt-in
8 to a Dam Safety Program.
9 Just as an aside for the
10 Board, maybe of interest, there are
11 34 dams in the State of Alabama
12 that are owned by the State
13 agencies. Thirty-two of those
14 belong to the Department of
15 Conservation and Natural Resources;
16 one belongs to the University of
17 West Alabama; and one to the
18 Alabama Forestry Commission.
19 So, this bill primarily
20 impacted us as opposed to any other
21 State agency where we were able to
22 work with the sponsor, allowing us
23 to voluntarily opt in to some of

Page 14

1 invasive -- more people on the
2 coast to use living shorelines or,
3 you know, less invasive shoreline
4 protection systems. It cuts in
5 half the -- what we receive for
6 those permits for the sand that's
7 dredged in front of those seawalls.
8 And hopefully that will get more
9 people to utilize them in more
10 environmentally friendly techniques
11 to protect their shoreline.
12 A bill passed dealing with
13 Geologic Pore Space. And I won't
14 go into a whole lot of detail on
15 this, because I'm probably not the
16 expert on that, but it does give us
17 the ability to lease State property
18 underground to store carbon dioxide
19 or other, you know, carbon
20 sequestration opportunities, along
21 with a lot of things for the public
22 landowners and private landowners,
23 as well.

Page 16

1 the provisions, and that would
2 allow us the opportunity for some
3 additional funding. Down the road,
4 we think we'll be able to do some
5 maintenance work on our dams and
6 facilities.
7 Speaking of budgets, the
8 general fund budget passed. The
9 budget for the Department of
10 Conservation this year is \$435
11 million. If you add in the \$15
12 million or so from the Forever Wild
13 Program, as the Department of
14 Conservation, we're managing about
15 \$450 million in the Fiscal Year '25
16 that's going to flow through the
17 Department, which is a pretty --
18 pretty hefty sum.
19 If you'll recall, last year
20 we got \$6 million in the general
21 fund for some work for shooting
22 ranges and for some work in the
23 Forever Wild Field Trial area in

Page 17

1 Hale County.
2 That was the first time in
3 any of our memories that we've ever
4 received any money from the State's
5 general fund. This year, the
6 budget passed with an additional \$6
7 million for us to use for some of
8 our State Lakes improvements and
9 other infrastructure improvements.
10 So, that's two years in a row
11 that we've been successful in
12 working with the Legislature to
13 acquire some additional funds for
14 some special infrastructure
15 projects.
16 There were some other bills
17 that either we were neutral on or
18 we were opposed to, including the
19 Dog Hunting Bill, a Fish
20 Consumption Bill, and some other
21 bills that we weighed in on with
22 Deputy Commissioner Ed Poolos,
23 General Counsel Charlanna Skaggs,

Page 19

1 underway or that will be underway
2 at low water in the fall. We
3 already have the permits, and we're
4 bidding those at Mt. Vernon,
5 McIntosh, McCarter's Ferry in
6 Choctaw County, a boat ramp in
7 Selma that multiple agencies and
8 entities are participating in that.
9 I think it's almost done. The
10 Chocolatta ramp on the causeway;
11 seven small ramps on Lake
12 Guntersville; Fosters Ferry and
13 Riverview in Tuscaloosa; Brown's
14 Creek in Guntersville; the Highway
15 77 ramp in Rainbow City; McFarland
16 Park in Lauderdale County. The
17 Claiborne Lock and Dam ramp is in
18 -- renovations are underway; we did
19 that. Cotaco Creek Morgan County;
20 the Weeks Bay Ramp and County Road
21 6 in Baldwin County; and hopefully
22 Billy Goat Hole on Dauphin Island
23 will be renovated this fall

Page 18

1 and our team.
2 We were able to -- those
3 bills did not pass. So, we didn't
4 necessarily have anything that
5 passed this year that was negative
6 towards the Department. And the
7 things that did pass, we were able
8 to work with them to get provisions
9 in there that -- pass those in the
10 best light for what our staff were
11 trying to do in doing good work.
12 So, thanks to our team for
13 legislative session successes this
14 year.
15 We've got boating access
16 projects that are underway. We've
17 got \$8 million from Innovate
18 Alabama to do some boating access
19 projects, and we're matching those
20 with some Department funds from --
21 really doing some innovative things
22 to do that.
23 We've got projects that are

Page 20

1 depending on permitting.
2 So, that's a lot of work
3 going on for boating access around
4 the state. And that's just the
5 2024 projects.
6 We have in 2025 an equal
7 number of projects that are in the
8 engineering and design phase now
9 that are nearing construction next
10 year.
11 Red snapper season opens on
12 May 24 for the four-day weekends
13 until the quota is met. Last week
14 we received a 72,000 pound increase
15 due to the work of our staff
16 pushing NOAA to use more recent
17 data from the Snapper Check
18 Program.
19 As you will recall, we
20 implemented that, I guess, almost
21 ten years ago now. And using that
22 data from Snapper Check was able to
23 get us a 12 percent increase in the

Page 21

1 quota for this year; not a lot, but
2 it's some.
3 The charter season was
4 announced by NOAA this week, and it
5 will run from June 1st to August
6 28th.
7 I'm going to read a list of
8 park projects that are underway or
9 that have been bid and will start
10 construction very soon: Gulf State
11 Park Pier; the Guntersville Golf
12 Course Cart Paths and Cabin
13 renovation; Desoto State Park pool
14 house and hotel room upgrades; the
15 Gulf State Park Pavilion; Meaher
16 Campground and cabin expansion and
17 store/admin building there and
18 entrance upgrades. The Monte Sano
19 CCC cabins will be updated. Wind
20 Creek will have new cabins built,
21 and about -- over half of the
22 campground will be renovated. Joe
23 Wheeler State Park, the lodge will

Page 23

1 sewer infrastructure at Oak
2 Mountain State Park.
3 So, I'm hoping many of you
4 will join us today right after this
5 meeting.
6 We have about 30 water and
7 sewer projects that are underway in
8 parks in partnership with ADEM. I
9 won't go through every single one
10 of those, but that is very critical
11 for us to update our
12 infrastructure, and we appreciate
13 ADEM's partnership on that.
14 The three largest projects
15 under the bond are almost finished
16 with design. The Lake Lurleen
17 State Park renovations, the Gulf
18 State Park campground expansion and
19 a new hotel at Cheaha will be bid
20 later this summer with construction
21 to begin in the fall of 2024.
22 We received \$1 million for
23 Oak Mountain State Park bike trails

Page 22

1 be updated. The Rickwood pool
2 house and ADA renovations are
3 taking place. And the lodge rooms
4 and modernization at Lakepoint
5 State Park and also the cottages
6 and the cabins were all refreshed
7 and renovated in 2023 and early
8 2024 there.
9 These are projects that have
10 been completed: Monte Sano
11 campground project; the Gulf State
12 Park cabins, the 20 cabins there on
13 Lake Shelby; the Joe Wheeler State
14 Park Day Use area and paving of the
15 -- all of the roads at Joe Wheeler
16 State Park. That was done in
17 conjunction with ADEM. The Gulf
18 State Park Romar Beach access.
19 And then today, we plan to
20 cut the ribbon on the Oak Mountain
21 State Park campground. That was a
22 \$13 million project to totally redo
23 that campground and the water and

Page 24

1 and \$1 million for the Coldwater
2 Mountain Forever Wild property bike
3 trails from Innovate Alabama to
4 really upgrade those and try and
5 get those up to a silver
6 designation. And so, those
7 projects will be underway later
8 this summer and this fall.
9 Recently we received about
10 \$110 million in GoMESA project
11 requests with a little more than
12 \$30 million available for GoMESA
13 projects this year. And we're
14 working through those projects now
15 with State Lands Director McCurdy
16 and her staff to review and make
17 recommendations to the Governor of
18 the projects that -- to award
19 funding for this year.
20 We really had a great
21 partnership with Academy Sports and
22 Outdoors. We thank Billy Pope for
23 what he's done in coordinating

Page 25

1 that.
2 A couple weeks ago, Academy
3 recognized our eight female
4 conservation enforcement officers
5 and the job that they do by
6 presenting them with gift cards for
7 use at Academy Sports and Outdoors
8 and then recognizing them at the
9 State -- I'm sorry -- at the SEC
10 Softball Championships in Auburn.
11 I appreciate that
12 partnership. They just this week
13 sent out a 20 percent off coupon
14 for all State Park users. Earlier
15 this year, they did a 20 percent
16 off for hunting licenses. And then
17 back in the summer, they did a 20
18 percent off for people who had
19 fishing licenses.
20 So, it's a good way for us to
21 provide benefit back to our license
22 holders, and I appreciate Academy
23 and their partnership.

Page 27

1 State park lakes where people can
2 use those, you know, if they're
3 uncomfortable swimming. We think
4 that will be very important for
5 safety for the people who use our
6 parks, and it will be a good
7 opportunity for our officers to
8 positively interact with the public
9 when they see somebody on the water
10 that needs a life jacket.
11 Instead of just writing them
12 a ticket and sending them on their
13 way, they will be able to give them
14 a life jacket and protect the
15 public. It will be a good thing.
16 I appreciate the Governor
17 doing this on that -- on Monday.
18 We've had a lot of, over the
19 last several years, requests for
20 hog hunters and coyote hunters
21 during gun deer season to be able
22 to do that. Some landowners really
23 want to use that as a tool during

Page 26

1 On Monday, Academy is
2 donating \$5,000 worth of life
3 jackets for our parks and for our
4 officers to be able to hand those
5 out and loan those out.
6 We've had quite a few
7 incidents at our State parks lakes
8 over the -- over several years.
9 And then when our officers are out
10 in the field, they will encounter
11 somebody that has life jackets, but
12 their life jackets may be at the
13 end of its useful life and may not
14 be very effective if they were to
15 have an incident.
16 So, with boating safety week
17 next week, the Governor will be
18 there on Monday when we accept
19 these life jackets from Academy
20 Sports and Outdoors and highlight
21 the importance of water safety.
22 So, we'll be able to have
23 some racks at our State lakes --

Page 28

1 that time of year.
2 So, we're going to do a pilot
3 project this fall to issue permits
4 to landowners for night hunting of
5 hogs and coyotes during gun deer
6 season when it's otherwise
7 prohibited.
8 The crop depredation permits,
9 that've been an issue, will still
10 be in place, but this will make it
11 a little easier for the landowners
12 to obtain -- no biologist would
13 have to go out and inspect the
14 property. It may allow landowners
15 to address problem areas not
16 associated with commercial farming
17 crops, but give our officers the
18 permitted property information that
19 they need to still be able to
20 address night hunting of deer and
21 other violations.
22 So, the property owners will
23 -- our officers will know who --

Page 29

1 which property owners have the
2 permit to allow them to do that.
3 So, that program will be
4 implemented over the summer and
5 available for the public before
6 deer season starts this year.
7 So, I want to give a quick
8 construction update. I wasn't
9 happy with the screen. You-all
10 were going to have to leave to go
11 down front if we were going to have
12 to do this as a PowerPoint. So, I
13 just got Betsy to print you-all a
14 copy of the PowerPoint.
15 I'm going to flip through
16 these real quick. I apologize to
17 the audience for not having the
18 ability to see these. This will --
19 You know, we talked a lot
20 about hunting and fishing and a lot
21 of the other stuff in the
22 Department, but I think the amount
23 of the construction projects that

Page 31

1 million in oyster restoration work
2 that will take place starting later
3 this year from the Deepwater
4 Horizon NRDA region-wide funds.
5 We're excited about that work that
6 Scott and his team will be able to
7 do.
8 So, just -- Then these are
9 some completed projects that I
10 think have a big impact for our
11 state. This is the Alabama State
12 Port Authority roll-on/roll-off
13 facility where we'll be able to --
14 they'll be able to export vehicles
15 or import vehicles and other
16 similar items out of the Port of
17 Mobile.
18 We replaced the ADEM's
19 coastal office. They just did the
20 ribbon cutting on that a few weeks
21 ago, a very nice facility for ADEM
22 down in Mobile.
23 The Mount Vernon Water

Page 30

1 are underway in the coastal area
2 with some of the Deepwater Horizon
3 funding might be of interest to
4 you.
5 Some of you get questions
6 about it now that a lot of these
7 projects are out of the engineering
8 and design phase into the
9 construction phase where people can
10 see what's happening, see actual
11 work going on. I just wanted to
12 brief you on a few of these
13 construction projects that are
14 underway.
15 On this first page, you can
16 see the -- all of those flags
17 represent the projects that are
18 underway on the coast with the
19 Deepwater Horizon funds.
20 The third page just kind of
21 shows you this \$950 million in
22 projects and \$176 million in
23 projects. We've got about \$7

Page 32

1 Treatment plant upgrades were
2 recently completed. The ponds
3 including the dredge material
4 disposal area was more of a water
5 quality project that will -- as
6 they dredge the Bon Secour Channel
7 on the Intracoastal Waterway. This
8 helps secure that material and keep
9 it from washing back in into the
10 waterways.
11 The Orange Beach North Sewer
12 Force main upgrades were completed
13 earlier this year.
14 Then the Gulf State Park,
15 we've talked a lot about the work
16 there at the lodge, the learning
17 camps and the interpretive center,
18 29 miles of trail, the beach and
19 dune enhancements and the
20 renourishment that just took place,
21 and then the cottages were
22 refurbished, a lot of work there.
23 People don't really associate

Page 33

1 the Department of Conservation very
2 much with building roads. I didn't
3 either. But on this ALDOT capacity
4 improvements, if you drive down
5 Highway 31 in Spanish Fort, down
6 Canal Road in Orange Beach or down
7 Highway 181 in Fairhope, you'll see
8 the new sections of those roads
9 that were expanded from two lanes
10 to either three lanes or five lanes
11 and other improvements that will
12 help move traffic on Coastal
13 Alabama. We managed those projects
14 in cooperation with ALDOT.
15 A lot of access improvements
16 of the Bon Secour National Wildlife
17 Refuge. And then the Canal Road
18 improvement, that was a separate
19 project than ALDOT. We did this
20 with Orange Beach, and this was in
21 Orange Beach, east of Highway 161,
22 all that work.
23 Gulf Coast Wildlife Rehab and

Page 35

1 Resources Division Office and Gulf
2 State Park. This ALDOT Project
3 Four will be a connector road that
4 goes in front of our Marine
5 Resources office and Claude Petet
6 Mariculture Hatchery and connects
7 to the new road where the new
8 bridge is going to be located.
9 Sewer upgrades in Fairhope
10 are underway. The Meaher Park
11 improvements, I mentioned that
12 earlier. You can't tell from the
13 size of the campground, but we're
14 adding cabins there and other
15 improvements at the park.
16 Northwest Satsuma Water and
17 Sewer Project, the Three-Mile Creek
18 Greenway Project is well underway.
19 There are multiple funding sources,
20 but the portion of it that we did,
21 you see the bridge that was put in
22 place to go up to -- to move the
23 trail from one side of Three-Mile

Page 34

1 Education Center is under
2 construction at Orange Beach. The
3 Gulf Coast Center for Ecotourism in
4 Gulf Shores is right there adjacent
5 to Gulf State Park and will be a
6 great addition to what we already
7 have at the learning campus at Gulf
8 State Park.
9 We will work in conjunction
10 with the City of Gulf Shores on
11 education -- on outdoor education
12 and sustainability work.
13 And then the ALDOT Project
14 Four in Gulf Shores, this is -- as
15 you may have seen recently in the
16 news about the bridges in Gulf
17 Shores and Orange Beach and that
18 the State is purchasing a toll
19 bridge -- I think Friday is the
20 last -- I think the State takes
21 possession of that on Friday.
22 They're building another
23 bridge that's close to our Marine

Page 36

1 Creek to the other.
2 And that -- for people that
3 aren't familiar with that area of
4 Mobile, Three-Mile Creek stretches
5 all the way from the University of
6 South Alabama all the way to the
7 Mobile River downtown.
8 So, this will be a greenway
9 that will -- where you will be able
10 to get on a bike or walk and go all
11 the way from South Alabama along
12 Three-Mile Creek all the way to
13 downtown Mobile. This is --
14 they're multiple partners in this
15 project.
16 Perch Creek Sanitary Sewer
17 Line Cured In Place Pipe, this one
18 --
19 I'll stop for just a second
20 on the Bayou La Batre Outfall
21 Extension. This project has been
22 in the works for about ten years.
23 Since I was down at the Marine

Page 37

1 Resources Division, we started this
2 trying to work with FDA to extend
3 the sewer of Bayou La Batre to
4 deeper water that will open up
5 multiple areas for the oyster
6 aquaculture industry.
7 They bid this -- finally were
8 able to bid it earlier this year.
9 The bids came back in within budget
10 and construction will be starting,
11 you know, in just a few weeks on
12 extending that outfall about four
13 more miles offshore.
14 So, the blue line is where
15 the outfall goes. Now, the yellow
16 line is where it will be extended
17 to, and that will open up all of
18 those areas close to shore for the
19 oyster aquaculture and for some
20 other oyster work that we can do.
21 That's a big deal. It's very big
22 for the burgeoning aquaculture
23 industry, and then just a list of

Page 39

1 see that engineered beach in the
2 corner. Do you see that there?
3 So, that is Bayfront Park.
4 This project runs from
5 Bayfront Park all the way down to
6 Cedar Point where we had the Cedar
7 Point Pier project.
8 If you see the -- in this
9 photo, you can see the rock --
10 breakwaters that are being built.
11 And then the next -- the next page,
12 inside of those breakwaters, we
13 have coordinated with the Corps of
14 Engineers on the deepening and
15 widening of the ship channel. They
16 are going to take material from the
17 ship channel and bring it down and
18 fill in behind those breakwaters
19 all the way up to the edge of the
20 road and then make some bayous and
21 estuary in there.
22 That will be good for fish
23 and crabs and shrimp. It's a very

Page 38

1 some other projects that we've done
2 in Bayou la Batre.
3 Bayfront Park in South Mobile
4 County is being renovated. You see
5 the beach on the right side of the
6 photo. Just kind of keep an eye on
7 that because the next line, that's
8 going to be an integral piece to
9 the next line, but we constructed
10 with -- in conjunction with Mobile
11 County that engineered beach there
12 at Bayfront Park. We're now doing
13 about \$6 million of shoreside work
14 for new bathrooms, pavilions,
15 boardwalks, and that construction
16 is underway now.
17 The biggest project that is
18 most visible that we get a lot of
19 questions about is the Dauphin
20 Island Causeway restoration
21 project.
22 If you'll look on the very
23 right side of that page, you will

Page 40

1 good project. It's moving a lot of
2 material -- a lot of material.
3 And then, the next page is
4 the Southern end of the project
5 from Heron Bay cutoff South. The
6 same thing to take place there.
7 See, only half of that cell
8 is filled. We only have enough
9 material that's available right now
10 from the deepening and widening to
11 do about half of that Southern
12 section. And so, the plan is to
13 permit -- we have permitted the
14 whole entire --
15 And when I say "we," that's
16 our project partner, Mobile County
17 -- permitted the whole entire cell.
18 And so that, as we have additional
19 dredging opportunities and
20 beneficial use opportunities in the
21 future, we can fill up all of that
22 to protect it.
23 And then this -- the first

Page 41

1 several are just conceptual
2 drawings. This is an actual aerial
3 photo of the work that's taking
4 place now that -- you can see where
5 that connects to the beach at
6 Bayfront Park.
7 And then Dauphin Island,
8 quite a few projects are underway.
9 Fifteen projects overall at Dauphin
10 Island, about \$100 million in
11 projects just on and around Dauphin
12 Island.
13 The one that was just
14 completed is East End Beach
15 renourishment project, a little
16 over -- about a million -- 1.2
17 million cubic yards of sand was put
18 on the beach on the east end of
19 Dauphin Island.
20 Next page is kind of just a
21 before and after -- I thought that
22 was pretty telling -- where you can
23 see what it looked like before and

Page 43

1 and fishing. And with the State
2 Parks work that's going on through
3 the Department of Conservation,
4 we're really making a difference
5 down in Coastal Alabama.
6 Does anybody have any
7 questions about any of that?
8 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Jones?
9 MR. JONES: How far is that
10 outfall extension?
11 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP:
12 Four miles.
13 MR. JONES: Four miles.
14 Okay. Wow.
15 MR. HARTZOG: You noticed Mr.
16 Avery smiled when you talked about
17 that one.
18 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: He
19 did. That has been a long time --
20 that sewer outfall project has been
21 a long time coming. That's taking
22 a lot of work with the FDA and
23 permitting agencies to be able to

Page 42

1 then after the beach renourishment.
2 You know, those houses were in the
3 water, the Dauphin Island Bird
4 Sanctuary. Audubon Bird Sanctuary
5 was in peril. The freshwater lakes
6 were about to be washed over from
7 the Gulf of Mexico.
8 With beach re-nourishment, it
9 has really added several hundred
10 feet of beach there. That type of
11 project like this is permitted
12 through our State Lands Division.
13 Any time we're using sand, a sand
14 resource, we permit that through
15 our State Lands Division. That was
16 a great project.
17 I know that was really just
18 scratching the surface on all the
19 work that Amy Hunter and her team
20 are doing in our Deepwater Horizon
21 section, but I thought it might be
22 of interest to you to see all of
23 the other stuff that's not hunting

Page 44

1 finally get that across the finish
2 line and bid and now construction
3 is about to start. I think we're
4 all very excited about that.
5 And then just a -- hitting a
6 couple of high notes on the season
7 and bag limits that I think -- from
8 the last couple days of comments.
9 One thing that, you know,
10 seems to have not gotten very much
11 press is the expansion that we've
12 done for alligator season around
13 the state. We do have a very
14 growing alligator population that
15 has allowed our staff to really
16 look at more opportunities for
17 hunters to expand some of the areas
18 where we can allow alligator
19 hunting and increase the number of
20 tags.
21 And so, the alligator season
22 areas are larger and we've had --
23 added some bonus tags this year to

Page 45

1 encourage people to take more
2 smaller alligators, not just to
3 wait for that one big one and then
4 end up not filling their tag at
5 all.
6 So, altogether, it's about
7 192 percent increase in the number
8 of tags for alligators that are
9 available this year, which is
10 substantial. I think that was
11 worth pointing out.
12 Then I have had quite a few
13 calls and comments over the last
14 few days about deer season. As all
15 of you know that have hunted in
16 Alabama, it -- deer season always
17 starts the Saturday before
18 Thanksgiving. That has been a
19 tradition in Alabama my whole life.
20 I don't know when it started, but
21 that's been the tradition in
22 Alabama my whole life.
23 We actually got married on

Page 47

1 that -- it opens that Saturday
2 before Thanksgiving and it closes
3 on February 10th. The way the
4 calendar is this year, Thanksgiving
5 is a little bit later. It was
6 earlier last year.
7 So, with that, we still have
8 the longest deer season and the
9 most liberal bag limit of any state
10 in the country and plenty of
11 opportunities to hunt deer. So, of
12 all the things we're doing in the
13 Department, it seems like in the
14 media they picked this up as a
15 negative, but we really do still
16 have the best deer season and
17 opportunity for hunters anywhere in
18 the country.
19 So, any questions? I've got
20 one more thing, but I want to make
21 sure there's no questions before I
22 move on to my last item.
23 Are we good?

Page 46

1 that day, and all of my kin people
2 let me know pretty quickly that
3 they're going to send a gift but
4 they weren't coming to the wedding.
5 That was the opening day of hunting
6 season and the Alabama-Auburn
7 football game. But --
8 So, this year, the way the
9 calendar rolls, last year opening
10 day of deer season was on the 23rd
11 of -- I'm sorry. Opening day of
12 deer season was a little bit
13 earlier because Thanksgiving was
14 earlier in the month of November
15 last year.
16 This year, it's the 28th, I
17 think it is, for Thanksgiving. So,
18 that means that the season opens a
19 little bit later. So, you -- then
20 we end on February 10th.
21 So, we're not -- the
22 Department is not taking away deer
23 hunting days. It's just the way

Page 48

1 (No response.)
2 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP:
3 All right. Thank y'all. Thank
4 y'all for letting me ramble on a
5 little bit. I enjoy the
6 opportunity to share with you.
7 The last item we have is,
8 again, recognizing one of the staff
9 members in the Department of
10 Conservation and the good job that
11 they did.
12 On February 7th, Carl and his
13 wife, Stacey, were returning to the
14 Grouse Camp boat launch after doing
15 a little fishing for the first time
16 since Carl's recent coronary bypass
17 surgery.
18 While Carl was attempting to
19 tie the boat to the dock with one
20 foot on the boat and one foot on
21 the dock, a strong wind pushed the
22 boat away causing him to fall into
23 the water. Stacey described the

Page 49

1 situation she found herself in with
2 Carl as helpless as she was unable
3 to assist him in any way.
4 Within a matter of seconds,
5 someone was lying on the dock and
6 grabbed Carl by the hood of his
7 jacket, pulling his head above
8 water, and gradually working to get
9 him around the boat dock and out of
10 the water to safety, thus saving
11 Carl from drowning in the 49-degree
12 water.
13 Not only was this person
14 pulling the weight of a heavily
15 clothed man submerged in water, but
16 he was also fighting against the
17 current that was trying to pull him
18 under the boat dock.
19 In Stacey's words, we told
20 him that God had sent him to save
21 Carl. And he told us that he
22 believed that, as well, because he
23 did not intend to even come to

Page 51

1 inside of us that kept telling us
2 to go do something, we might end up
3 in the place God wants us to be
4 from time to time. And just like
5 the officer was at the right place
6 at the right time, you know, that's
7 where he needed to be. Thank you.
8 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: The Lord
9 works in mysterious ways. Thank
10 you. Thank you for your report.
11 That was wonderful.
12 Also, today, we have -- I
13 told you we've got all the
14 directors. I don't think that
15 there are any reports or questions
16 or comments from any of them, but I
17 will ask.
18 Are there, Director Sykes?
19 MR. SYKES: No.
20 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Ms. McCurdy?
21 MS. MCCURDY: No.
22 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Greg?
23 MR. LEIN: No.

Page 50

1 Copeland's Ferry that day, but it
2 seemed like he just kept coming
3 that day anyway.
4 That someone who saved the
5 man from drowning was Conservation
6 Enforcement Office Chad Nalls
7 assigned to Walker County.
8 And today we would like to
9 recognize him for his heroic
10 actions of going above and beyond
11 the call of duty with this
12 Department of Conservation and
13 Natural Resources Lifesaving Award.
14 So, Officer Nalls and Chief
15 Weathers, will you join me at the
16 front.
17 (Applause.)
18 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP:
19 Congratulations! You did a good
20 job.
21 One last thing, Mr. Chairman,
22 I will say that I think if all of
23 us listened to that little voice

Page 52

1 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Okay. All
2 right. Well, thank you.
3 That concludes that portion
4 of our meeting. And we thank you
5 for all that you do.
6 The next portion of our
7 meeting will be public commentary.
8 That's very important to this
9 Board. I'm going to have some
10 specific instructions for you. We
11 have 12 speakers today.
12 Everybody -- the speakers are
13 allocated three minutes. The Chair
14 reserves the right to give someone
15 an extra moment to make a point or
16 to finish their describing an
17 issue.
18 So, I will ask you as you
19 come up to please -- to be
20 respectful. Reserve your comments.
21 No applause or anything. Save that
22 for outside in the hall.
23 Also, for the benefit of Ms.

Page 53

1 Bradley -- because she can't see
2 and it's hard to hear -- I ask that
3 you refrain from conversing with or
4 asking direct questions of the
5 Board members. Please refer to the
6 Chair. I'm the Chair. I will ask
7 the questions. I will direct you,
8 and she then will be able to record
9 it all perfectly and historically.
10 Again, let's be courteous and
11 -- to everybody that's there --
12 that comes up to speak.
13 We're only going to have one
14 microphone. I'm just going to ask
15 -- we'll have one speaker at a
16 time. So, our first speaker today
17 -- Ms. Jones is going to be holding
18 the clock that says three minutes.
19 She will at the two-minute-and-
20 something second, she will give you
21 a warning or the bell will ding.
22 So, our first speaker is Mr.
23 Brent Armstrong, III.

Page 55

1 Board felt about that in general
2 and, if anyone had any questions,
3 if there was any concerns I could
4 address, any sort of -- any
5 opposition to it or any data that
6 anyone any one -- any member of the
7 Board would want me to gather.
8 And you'll have to excuse my
9 nervous disposition again. But I
10 can, in general, speak at length
11 about any concerns that anyone
12 might have. And if there's any
13 data, things that needs to be
14 gathered, any numbers, any sort of
15 reports at all, I'm happy to do so,
16 and I will bring it to the next
17 meeting.
18 Unfortunately, Mr. Savoy was
19 unable to make it today. But I do
20 have some information for him that
21 he wanted me to gather. And in the
22 next meeting, I'll have that all
23 printed out for everyone to see.

Page 54

1 MR. ARMSTRONG: Good morning,
2 y'all.
3 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Speak in
4 that microphone a little better. I
5 can't hear you.
6 MR. ARMSTRONG: Yes, sir.
7 Can you hear me now?
8 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Yes, sir.
9 Thank you.
10 MR. ARMSTRONG: So,
11 spring-boarding off of what the
12 Commissioner was saying earlier, we
13 here in Alabama, we enjoy our
14 hunting and our fishing quite a
15 bit. There's a lot more to it than
16 that.
17 So, we -- myself and all of
18 us at the Native Pet Initiative are
19 taking our proposal to the Senate
20 to strike the species of raccoons,
21 opossums, skunks, foxes from
22 Section 220-2-26 of the Code.
23 And I was wondering how the

Page 56

1 So, I think that's pretty
2 much it overall, but I just wanted
3 to comment that, you know, I don't
4 have any -- anything against the
5 hunting or anything like that.
6 But, you know, there's just a lot
7 more to it than that.
8 There's a deep-rooted
9 tradition all across America for --
10 well, since before its inception.
11 We've even had a raccoon -- two
12 raccoons in the White House by two
13 1920s presidents. President Calvin
14 Coolidge and President Herbert
15 Hoover both had their own raccoons
16 that have walked in the White
17 House. And I don't think most
18 people here have had that
19 opportunity.
20 So, in closing, I just wanted
21 to extend my gratitude for y'all
22 having me here today and an
23 invitation to open up the debate

Page 57

1 with me. I'm shaking the whole
2 time I'm answering, but I'm happy
3 to help.
4 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you.
5 Hold your position one moment. Any
6 questions from any Board members?
7 (No response.)
8 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: There's no
9 questions. Thank you very much.
10 MR. ARMSTRONG: All right.
11 Thank y'all.
12 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: The next
13 speaker is Dallas Allen.
14 MR. ALLEN: Good morning.
15 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Good
16 morning.
17 MR. ALLEN: I would just like
18 to thank the Board for allowing me
19 to be here and stand before you.
20 So, I'm a big turkey hunter
21 in Alabama; I have been for years.
22 I know there's a lot of gentlemen
23 and ladies in this room that may be

Page 59

1 private lands to hunt.
2 I would like to let the State
3 know that there's a lot of desire
4 right now for an SOA type draw for
5 nonresidents.
6 I've spoken this last May to
7 the Board. We would keep hunter
8 satisfaction. There would be an
9 opportunity for nonresidents to
10 apply for a draw such as, you know,
11 taking their top three or four WMAs
12 and being drawn or selected from
13 one of those with the opportunity
14 of having a group draw where if
15 myself and my friend chose two
16 different WMAs or we selected two
17 different WMAs, we would have the
18 opportunity to accept via an
19 application of one specific WMA.
20 For instance, Choccolocco WMA
21 is one of the ones that gets the
22 hardest early season. There's a
23 flood of nonresidents, and it's

Page 58

1 upcoming or existing turkey hunters
2 who are just not pleased with the
3 way we're handling public lands
4 right now.
5 I am happy with the 1:00 p.m.
6 cutoffs, some of the things the
7 State's done, keeping fanning and
8 reaping illegal in the state.
9 I would just like to start
10 seeing the State look at
11 nonresident factors that us
12 residents have to play with every
13 spring. It's coming pretty rough
14 on everybody that we get out there
15 early season. We find our turkeys.
16 We have a lot of nonresidents flood
17 in those first 10 days to 14 days
18 causing a lot of frustration with
19 the residents.
20 You know, they're not getting
21 out there at 2:30, 3:00 in the
22 morning, the ones of us that we
23 don't have the luxury of having

Page 60

1 very irritating for us residents to
2 deal with the pressure that they
3 leave behind.
4 Also, along with
5 overcrowding, the frustration with
6 that, I would like to mention there
7 is -- all regulations and fines,
8 you know, for violations of those
9 game laws, \$100 for exceeding or
10 attempting to exceed a bag limit,
11 which that happens -- I think
12 there's many people in this room
13 that probably knows of someone that
14 tried to exceed the bag limit.
15 That violation should be hit a
16 little harder --
17 MS. JONES: Time.
18 MR. ALLEN: -- maybe hurt a
19 little harder. So, I would like to
20 see an increase from \$100 to \$1000
21 for those violations. Thank you.
22 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you.
23 Any questions from the Board?

Page 61

1 (No response.)
2 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: All right.
3 Thank you for coming up. Thank you
4 very much.
5 The next speaker is Brandon
6 DeSanto.
7 MR. DESANTO: Good morning,
8 everybody.
9 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Good
10 morning.
11 MR. DESANTO: I want to thank
12 you guys for having us. I'm going
13 to hit on pretty much the same
14 thing Dallas just said.
15 I primarily hunt public land,
16 and the season dates to me do not
17 make any sense right now. I travel
18 and hunt around the country, and I
19 don't think there's any other state
20 that actually staggers their season
21 from private land to public land.
22 If we're trying to -- if
23 we're trying to relieve pressure,

Page 63

1 MR. MYERS: I'd like to speak
2 about adding a quota-assisted draw
3 system for nonresidents for turkey
4 hunting on public land.
5 I spoke yesterday with Adam
6 Butler, the wild turkey coordinator
7 -- program coordinator for
8 Mississippi, and the success
9 they've had with their quota-draw
10 system for nonresidents to relieve
11 pressure the first two weeks of the
12 season for the residents, to give
13 the residents a little bit better
14 hunting experience early on in the
15 season when turkeys typically
16 gobble a little bit better.
17 They enabled that in 2021
18 after looking at data from 2017 to
19 2020 and looking at the increase of
20 nonresident hunting license sales,
21 it doubled with nearly about 40
22 years.
23 Because of that data, that's

Page 62

1 to me it would make sense that 90
2 percent of the state is private.
3 So, public and private opening at
4 the same time to spread everybody
5 out.
6 The only thing that I can see
7 that it would make any difference
8 in is revenue generation because
9 obviously nonresidents pay a little
10 more for license fees.
11 So, I would like to see the
12 dates open at the same time, and
13 that's pretty much all I have.
14 Thank y'all.
15 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Hold for
16 just one moment.
17 Any questions from the Board,
18 thoughts on that?
19 (No response.)
20 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you
21 very much.
22 The next speaker is Jacob
23 Myers.

Page 64

1 why they implemented their quota
2 system.
3 They give out roughly 1100
4 tags for the first two-and-a-half
5 weeks of the season. That kind of
6 eliminates some of that pressure.
7 And per personal survey data, just
8 by -- I've been talking to
9 individual hunters in Mississippi,
10 they seem to have had a lot of
11 success.
12 They're looking to add that
13 to the survey they're going to
14 release next month for this season
15 for public turkey hunters on the
16 overall hunting experience with a
17 little bit less pressure from
18 nonresidents early in the season.
19 It's extremely popular for at
20 least the last four or five years
21 for people to travel for turkey
22 hunting. They come to states like
23 Alabama who have earlier seasons

Page 65

1 than a lot of other states.
2 So, look to add something for
3 the first 10 days or 14 days of the
4 public land season in order to have
5 other states around us to open
6 their season to relieve pressure
7 for Alabama.
8 I've experienced a lot of
9 pressure and a lot of friends on
10 different parts of public land in
11 Alabama, and it's -- like opening
12 day this year, April 1st, on a
13 Monday, I was hunting Talladega
14 National Forest.
15 After hunting that morning, I
16 left at 9:00, I heard -- counted
17 fourteen trucks. Not a single one
18 was from Alabama. They were all
19 residents from Kentucky, Georgia,
20 Tennessee, Virginia, Ohio, and so
21 on.
22 So, this is something I think
23 would really help public land

Page 67

1 very much.
2 MR. MYERS: Thank you for
3 your time.
4 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: The next
5 speaker is Mr. Jimmy Stiles.
6 MR. STILES: Thank you.
7 Thank you for allowing me to
8 address the Board.
9 Again, I'm talking about
10 turkey hunting. I'd like to say
11 that I'm a PhD candidate in
12 Wildlife at Auburn. I run my own
13 environmental consulting and
14 education business.
15 But most important for this
16 group, I'm an avid turkey hunter.
17 I hunt literally every single day
18 of the Alabama turkey season.
19 And I'm here to talk to you
20 today about the disparity between
21 the opening of private land and
22 public land, particularly our
23 national forest and WMA lands here

Page 66

1 hunters in the state who don't have
2 an opportunity to lease land, join
3 a hunting club or purchase
4 property. It would help protect
5 the hunting for public landowners
6 in the state of Alabama for getting
7 that buffer, 10 to 14 days, at the
8 beginning of the season.
9 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you.
10 Any questions from the Board?
11 Mr. Grady Hartzog?
12 MR. HARTZOG: How many other
13 states have a nonresident draw like
14 Mississippi? Do you know?
15 MR. SYKES: I don't know the
16 number but it's quite a few.
17 MR. HARTZOG: Quite a few?
18 MR. SYKES: Uh-huh (positive
19 response).
20 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Any other
21 questions?
22 (No response.)
23 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you

Page 68

1 in Alabama.
2 I find it's a pretty
3 egregious problem and tends to
4 discriminate against those that
5 don't have the economic resources
6 to either have private land or
7 lease some sort of private land for
8 hunting.
9 It disproportionately impacts
10 our public land user base, and it
11 doesn't seem to accomplish the
12 objectives that it's set out to do.
13 One, it allows private land
14 hunters -- and I've seen this in
15 person -- an unfair advantage to go
16 out -- if they have private land
17 that adjoins the public lands, they
18 go out for an entire week and are
19 allowed to call the turkeys off of
20 our public land onto their private
21 land and hunt them.
22 It also sort of sets the
23 stage for the potential problems of

Page 69

1 poaching where these private
2 landowners can simply use their
3 land to, you know, step a few feet
4 onto the public land, hunt a
5 turkey, kill a turkey, jump back on
6 their land. It would make it very
7 difficult for a conservation
8 officer to actually catch them from
9 doing that.
10 And in our kind of era of R3
11 where we're supposed to be
12 recruiting and reactivating and,
13 you know, keeping people engaged in
14 the sport, I spend a lot of my
15 season taking people onto public
16 lands to introduce them to turkey
17 hunting.
18 And, one, I just got less
19 opportunity to do that after an
20 entire week, but, also, the people
21 that I take out tend to have --
22 they see that disparity, and they
23 have a poor opinion of how we

Page 71

1 time.
2 I would like to talk about
3 the proposed changes to Swan Creek
4 Management area. I've been
5 managing that management area since
6 I was able -- since I was able to
7 carry a gun. My dad was taking me
8 down there, and I was watching
9 birds when I was young. He was
10 hunting as soon as he was able to
11 drive. Now I have friends that
12 have kids that are coming up and
13 getting into hunting.
14 And I believe that a lot of
15 these changes that are proposed are
16 going to lessen the opportunities
17 rather than increase hunting
18 opportunities if we go to an SOA
19 style draw when hunting migratory
20 birds at Swan Creek.
21 So, they come through. They
22 leave. They're not staying there.
23 They do winter. You know, the

Page 70

1 manage our public land resources
2 here in the state.
3 And I hope that, you know,
4 moving forward we sync those dates
5 back together again, and we open up
6 the public and private land on the
7 same date every year.
8 Any questions?
9 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you.
10 Hold for one moment.
11 Any questions or comments
12 from the Board?
13 (No response.)
14 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you
15 very much.
16 MR. STILES: Thank you for
17 the opportunity.
18 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Our next
19 speaker is Mr. Hunter Baker.
20 MR. BAKER: Thank y'all for
21 having me. And for those of you
22 that didn't get the packet, I can
23 hand those out at the end of my

Page 72

1 Wildlife Refuge is right adjacent
2 to it. Again, they move. You've
3 got to have access when the time is
4 right.
5 Some of the issues that's
6 been brought up, the hunting
7 pressure, this was -- this has been
8 an increasing problem since the
9 removal of some of the permit
10 lines, which we're now proposing to
11 completely eliminate and go to
12 whatever system they implement.
13 It's increasing. People --
14 mainly people that are not hunting
15 the lines are causing the problems.
16 We don't have a solid solution to
17 this, but we think reinstating our
18 day so the people don't stack up on
19 top of each other every Friday like
20 they do throughout the entire
21 season would be a good -- a good
22 thing.
23 Implementing entry and exit

Page 73

1 times -- stricter entry and exit
2 times would allow birds to rest and
3 decrease pressure on the birds, you
4 know, before and after dark.
5 Motor restrictions -- a lot
6 of this is safety related. You
7 know, boat races in the mornings,
8 we think a smaller horsepower
9 restriction, say, 20-horsepower
10 motor like Arkansas has implemented
11 on some of their management areas
12 to eliminate some of the safety
13 risks to be imposed during the
14 waterfowl season.
15 I'm sorry. I lost my train
16 of thought there.
17 I go into a lot more detail
18 in, you know, the material I
19 provided -- I will provide. You
20 know, I strongly consider -- I
21 would appreciate strong
22 consideration of some of these
23 matters.

Page 75

1 Any questions from the Board?
2 (No response).
3 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Comments?
4 (No response).
5 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: All right.
6 Thank you very much.
7 MR. HUNTER: Can I provide
8 these to everybody who didn't get
9 them or can I do that later?
10 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: You
11 certainly may, yes. I think
12 everybody today has got one.
13 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP:
14 Give me one more.
15 MR. HUNTER: I don't think I
16 brought enough copies for everyone.
17 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you.
18 Our next speaker is Mr. Chip
19 Dillard.
20 MR. DILLARD: Thank you, Mr.
21 Chairman.
22 I just want to say how
23 excited I am to hear from

Page 74

1 A couple small questions I've
2 got: You know, if we go to
3 implement the new system, you know,
4 water management -- water
5 management practices, how those
6 will be affected, why are we only
7 making these changes to the Swan
8 Creek Management Area and not the
9 Mud Creek Management Area?
10 MS. JONES: Time.
11 MR. BAKER: And my final
12 question is: Why does the State
13 want to get rid of the permit line
14 system when those -- that has not
15 been the cause of a lot of the
16 issues. Thank you.
17 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Hold for
18 just a moment. And those
19 questions, we will pose to the
20 Department with the meeting
21 minutes. All that will be done.
22 And we will answer those questions
23 at the next Board meeting. Okay?

Page 76

1 Commissioner Blankenship about the
2 pilot program that they're going to
3 initiate this summer with the
4 coyote and hog night season with
5 permission -- permission --
6 granting permission to the
7 landowners. I would strongly
8 encourage y'all to look at
9 streamlining that process.
10 I worked with a landowner
11 this last winter, and it took over
12 two weeks to get a permit for a
13 specific property, and the permit
14 was only issued for a specific
15 field on that property for the
16 hogs. And there were hogs; they
17 run the property.
18 But I would just encourage
19 y'all to look at streamlining that
20 process of issuing that permit.
21 I'm not sure what would be
22 acceptable to the Board members, if
23 it was that property, if it took

Page 77

1 two weeks to get a permit to hunt
2 hogs at night or kill --
3 I am excited about that. I
4 really appreciate that.
5 That's pretty much it. I was
6 just excited to hear the news
7 today.
8 If there's anything I could
9 do to help with that pilot program,
10 I would be -- I'm available.
11 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you
12 very much. Any questions from the
13 Board?
14 (No response.)
15 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you,
16 Mr. Dillard.
17 MR. DILLARD: Thank you.
18 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: The next
19 speaker on the agenda is Mr. Don
20 Knight -- the venerable Mr. Don
21 Knight.
22 MR. KNIGHT: Old, old man.
23 I'm Don Knight from Anniston, and

Page 79

1 Quite frankly, the five days
2 would be during the week. You're
3 not going to have that many people
4 get out there and hunt, to be
5 honest with you.
6 But just some thoughts that
7 the Conservation Department and our
8 Board was willing to add those five
9 days to our season that's
10 available, I think it would go a
11 long way toward relationships and
12 getting along with everybody.
13 Now, another thing I want to
14 bring up to you is our clubs. I've
15 talked to many of our clubs this
16 year, our dog hunting clubs. And
17 we have so many clubs around this
18 state that are having to have
19 waiting lists. We can't get the
20 people in there.
21 We're having waiting lists,
22 which I think is a fantastic thing.
23 It's showing that the dog hunting

Page 78

1 I'm here about some dog hunting
2 issues.
3 Very briefly, because we've
4 been having some mighty good
5 seasons with the dog hunters, lots
6 of -- less problems. I think a lot
7 of things are really coming around.
8 And I think it's for a couple of
9 reasons. I'm going to give you one
10 of them here.
11 I thought I would just start
12 with asking, you know, our hunting
13 season -- our dog deer hunting
14 season ends earlier. Five days
15 would look real nice on the end of
16 ours, if you can just find a way to
17 get it done because, you know, it
18 would give us and a lot of our dog
19 hunters an opportunity to realize
20 that y'all are trying to work with
21 us -- and you are; we know you are.
22 Something like that could extend
23 and give them an opportunity.

Page 80

1 people are wanting to dog hunt,
2 especially with younger people.
3 We get the younger people in
4 there, if we can do something to,
5 you know, increase the clubs around
6 the state by increasing maybe some
7 of the permit systems on counties
8 that's not open-end, maybe we could
9 get a club or two in each one of
10 those counties or some of those
11 counties just to help these people
12 to have an opportunity to get out
13 there and hunt, dog hunt mainly.
14 But they are still hunting
15 right along with it, and I think it
16 would be a great opportunity to get
17 the youth involved in that -- if we
18 could just look at something like
19 that.
20 I mean, I know what we've
21 been doing. Believe me, I've been
22 at this for a long time, and I know
23 it would be hard to do. But if you

Page 81

1 can, take a look at that. We would
2 sure appreciate it because the
3 waiting lists are quite long.
4 But that also helps us a
5 tremendous amount. The waiting
6 list gives us the opportunity to
7 pick and choose who we want in our
8 clubs. Okay? It gives us a chance
9 to get rid of the old ones that are
10 trouble. The ones we have trouble
11 with, we can get rid of them
12 because we don't have to worry
13 about paying our lease. We've got
14 somebody waiting -- thank you --
15 we've got somebody waiting on that
16 lease or that spot to take it and
17 pay the money.
18 And that's -- I think it's
19 really a good thing coming on. And
20 I think that shows a lot of
21 progress that we've been making
22 over the years to try to -- to try
23 to get this dog hunting problem

Page 83

1 this year. I think I, myself, will
2 not be opposed to trying to give
3 the dog hunters a few more days,
4 you know, in next year's seasons.
5 I think they've shown their
6 willingness to comply and get their
7 clubs we're having problems with in
8 order.
9 So, like, I said. I didn't
10 have a single complaint where it
11 used to be Coffee County was -- I'd
12 get ten dozen calls, you know, a
13 week. So, anyway --
14 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you,
15 Grady. I think that the dog hunter
16 associations, the Wildlife and
17 Freshwater Fisheries, our
18 enforcement folks, have all worked
19 together as well as the landowners
20 to help solve this problem.
21 If you look around, there's
22 not many people here that are
23 complaining. We haven't had that

Page 82

1 straightened out.
2 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you,
3 Don.
4 MR. KNIGHT: I thank y'all
5 for killing that dog bill, too.
6 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Hold on just
7 one moment.
8 Any questions for Don?
9 (No response).
10 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you.
11 Don, hold one moment. Mr. Grady
12 Hartzog?
13 MR. HARTZOG: It's not a
14 question for Don. But, you know, I
15 don't have near the complaints dog
16 hunting that I had years ago. I
17 think the dog hunters have done a
18 tremendous job in straightening out
19 some of their problem clubs with
20 the new tracking collars and
21 everything else.
22 I think -- of course, we've
23 already printed the register for

Page 84

1 in several years.
2 So, it's -- everything is
3 working well right now.
4 MR. HARTZOG: Well, let's
5 reward them for doing a good job
6 maybe next year.
7 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: That's up to
8 Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries.
9 MR. KNIGHT: I would be glad
10 to meet with them at any time and
11 talk with them about it.
12 But all these clubs are
13 really making a difference, and I
14 think we can add some people to
15 hunting. Okay? Thank you.
16 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you,
17 Don.
18 The next speaker is Mr.
19 Phillip Slay.
20 MR. SLAY: I'm Phillip Slay,
21 Chambers County. I'm a -- I've had
22 a dog hunting permit since CH-2785,
23 1985. I've only had four

Page 85

1 violations on that dog running
2 permit since I've had it.
3 I'm here today to talk about
4 the turkey population and disease
5 population -- the diseases that are
6 hurting our turkey population and
7 our quail population.
8 A few years ago when the
9 State passed a law that you could
10 call "the Bucket Bill" and started
11 feeding corn, our turkey population
12 started going down because people
13 feed corn on top of the ground, got
14 all kinds of diseases. We can't
15 name all the diseases that the
16 turkey can get from that.
17 And also, when -- with that
18 problem, I can't -- you say you can
19 do what you want to on your own
20 land. I have neighbors that pour
21 out corn 365 days a year and just
22 -- the ground is covered. The
23 turkeys stay over there on their

Page 87

1 also, we're talking about raccoons
2 and opossums and all that kind of
3 stuff that have diseases, they eat
4 a world of turkey eggs. We've got
5 raccoons that will weigh 30 or 40
6 pounds.
7 And also, I'm a cattle farmer
8 and -- I still am a sheep producer,
9 and I would have had the -- I had
10 scrapie in my sheep -- Mr. Pate
11 knows about that -- and which is a
12 cousin to the chronic wasting
13 disease.
14 And we've got lots and lots
15 of problems in this feeding of
16 animals. The corn, it's been
17 detrimental on our quail
18 population.
19 You take a piece of corn that
20 big and it's been rained on and out
21 on the ground and a baby turkey
22 come up there and eat it, he's
23 going to choke and die.

Page 86

1 property, won't come to my
2 property.
3 And then when we have that --
4 we've got that problem. And back
5 years ago, I could hear 20 turkeys
6 gobbling in the morning time. You
7 don't hear them gobbling anymore.
8 They don't have to gobble. All
9 they have got to do is eat corn,
10 and wake up and do what turkeys
11 like to do and not go to a call.
12 But the true turkey hunters
13 are having a problem. And then
14 also, along the same problem with
15 the corn feeding and the game
16 cameras, it's a deadly combination
17 for the turkeys because people have
18 got game cameras out -- on their
19 telephone. Then they have got a
20 pulled-up turkey on the -- eating
21 corn, they are going to go run and
22 go kill it. That's not hunting.
23 We have that problem. And

Page 88

1 These neighbors that feeds
2 these turkeys all the time, he
3 comes up to me and says: I don't
4 never -- you killed all the
5 turkeys. I don't never have no
6 baby turkeys.
7 Well, you're killing all the
8 turkeys because you've got corn
9 poured out on the ground and game
10 cameras. It's not good.
11 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Hold right
12 there one moment.
13 Any questions from the Board
14 or comments?
15 (No response).
16 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you.
17 Thank you, Mr. Slay. We appreciate
18 those comments. Thank you.
19 Our next speaker is Mr. Lane
20 Stephens.
21 MR. STEPHENS: Thank you,
22 Chairman and Commissioner. My name
23 is Lane Stephens from Clinton,

Page 89

1 Florida. I'm here today
2 representing the Alabama State Dog
3 Hunter's Association. I would like
4 to back up to comments that Mr.
5 Knight made regarding the extension
6 of the season. That was my first
7 thing to talk about.
8 You know, if we had those
9 five days, it would go to Martin
10 Luther King Day this upcoming year
11 and allow folks to get back out one
12 last weekend to have their fun in
13 woods.
14 The second issue -- he kind
15 of mentioned on that, too -- is I
16 would strongly urge this Board and
17 staff to consider -- consider
18 looking at the reopening some of
19 these lands that have been closed
20 or counties that have been closed
21 by your decisions on direct permit
22 system and implement and include in
23 that permit system the deer dog

Page 91

1 It's also disheartening that
2 the same two or three people that
3 killed your regulation had a hand
4 in killing this legislation, two or
5 three people who were scared to
6 have rules put in place that would
7 make the unethical punished.
8 If you want to continue to
9 support people who are unethical,
10 that is wrong. And I have told
11 that to the legislators who
12 represent those people.
13 Am I angry? I'm a little bit
14 emotional. You know, it is like
15 banging your head against the wall
16 when two or three people in this
17 state who are wealthy can shut down
18 public consideration or something
19 to help people throughout the rest
20 of the state.
21 I will be happy to answer any
22 questions that you have.
23 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Hold there,

Page 90

1 trespass and the GPS and training
2 collar requirements as a part of
3 that system.
4 You know, we were here in
5 2018 or 2019, Commissioner
6 Blankenship, as an association to
7 support you when you proposed the
8 rule dealing with deer dog
9 trespassing.
10 The legislation that you
11 opposed this year that our
12 association put forward included
13 all of those things plus the
14 mandatory requirement of tracking
15 collars and correction collars in
16 exchange for opening up some of
17 these areas that have been closed.
18 It would be nice if we could
19 work together and not have to have
20 legislation filed. It's
21 disheartening to hear that the
22 agency worked against that without
23 asking us to have a compromise.

Page 92

1 Lane.
2 Anybody?
3 (No response).
4 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you.
5 We appreciate you coming always.
6 Our last speaker is Mr. Avery
7 Bates.
8 MR. BATES: I've gotten slow
9 in my old age.
10 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: I was going
11 to bring you the microphone.
12 MR. BATES: That happened
13 last time because I got stuck
14 behind a desk.
15 All right. My name is Avery
16 Bates, Vice President of Organized
17 Seafood Association. I've been in
18 the commercial fishing industry
19 most all of my life. I have ten
20 people in it. I want to keep them
21 fishing, oystering, shrimping,
22 crabbing, so y'all can eat good
23 healthy seafood.

Page 93

1 We love to work with you.
2 Chris, thank you for making
3 sure we had the knowledge of
4 increasing that outfall line. I've
5 been right there working for 10
6 years on that, and I hope it comes
7 to pass.
8 Now, the other things, we
9 need some better inspection. We
10 hope you get it.
11 Commissioner Pate, on safety
12 of our seafood, we just got a bill
13 passed so the public has the right
14 to know what they're eating,
15 whether it's Chinese or foreign
16 seafood.
17 Thank y'all for listening to
18 us. These bills are important.
19 These laws are important.
20 So, if you don't want to eat
21 catfish coming or shrimp come from
22 ponds that are polluted with
23 antibiotics and stuff, people want

Page 95

1 past.
2 It's a total concern. We do
3 not need to cover good bottoms out
4 there. We hope and pray we can get
5 some results back from what's
6 coming down the bay. Small oysters
7 smother to death from the silt.
8 So, we want good surveys made
9 and make sure that we place these
10 other oysters on good bottoms that
11 won't be covered up and that our
12 fishermen can oyster.
13 You know, one thing about
14 inspection, in our constitution,
15 Article One, Section Ten, Paragraph
16 Two, if you read that, one thing we
17 can charge these foreign countries
18 is for the inspection. We want
19 foreign countries to pay for the
20 bad products that's coming in here.
21 Thank y'all. If you can see
22 that we get help --
23 MS. JONES: Time.

Page 94

1 to know what they're feeding their
2 children. We're glad that deal was
3 passed.
4 We're glad that the Alabama
5 Wildlife Federation has contributed
6 to us, the oyster industry, and to
7 the people of this state and
8 environment some massive amounts of
9 money to us. They're going to
10 receive the cost of the stuff that
11 they put out there, 77 acres.
12 We thank y'all, as commercial
13 fishermen, for contributing to the
14 environment and to the commercial
15 oyster industry. We want the \$7
16 million of planting future oyster
17 reefs to be put in the right place.
18 We're so concerned about silt
19 come down the bay. I see they're
20 armoring the -- what we call the
21 Parkway from Alabama Fort down. We
22 have seen tons of silt come down
23 that bay and cover our reefs in the

Page 96

1 MR. BATES: -- to our
2 Constitution so you can get more
3 money, the State can get more money
4 so we can make sure this poison
5 product don't get to our public.
6 We need the seafood.
7 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you.
8 MR. BATES: Thank you, Chris.
9 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you.
10 Go ahead.
11 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP:
12 Mr. Avery reminded me, when you
13 look at pictures of that Dauphin
14 Island Causeway project, at the
15 very south end of that project at
16 Cedar Point, Director Bannon and
17 Mobile County Commission are
18 working to build a new boat ramp
19 there, right about four-hundred-
20 and-a-half million dollars funded
21 through GoMESA and through Director
22 McCurdy's division to build a new
23 area -- a boat launch there in a

Page 97

1 protected area so the commercial
2 fisherman can have a place to
3 launch right there at the reef.
4 So, that's coming in the
5 permitting process now and may be
6 under construction hopefully in --
7 later in 2024 or 2025 as long as
8 they get the Corps of Engineers
9 permits.
10 MR. BATES: This is lethal.
11 We've had some accidents that cut
12 on -- the lack of truly launching
13 from our commercial fishermen.
14 This will give some relief from
15 some of the problems we've had with
16 launching commercial vessels and
17 recreational vessels.
18 Thank you, Chris. We
19 appreciate that. Any extra
20 launches you can get in the area
21 would help not only recreation but
22 with commercial fishermen.
23 And thank y'all for all you

Page 99

1 problem has become a problem.
2 It wasn't at one point there
3 was a restriction, and there were
4 limits in place to a hundred, and
5 that didn't curtail the problem.
6 I think outright banning it
7 for a while is a good bandaid
8 solution, good short-term solution.
9 And it's going to put me out of
10 business, and that's okay. It's
11 not my day job.
12 My day job is a government
13 employee for Redstone Arsenal.
14 So, this is a more of a
15 help-out-the-community type thing.
16 I help out the charter captains. I
17 help out the local bait shops.
18 That's what I do. That's why I
19 started doing Guntersville Bait
20 Company, right?
21 I pay my taxes. I'm a
22 business owner. I have a business
23 license. I buy commercial licenses

Page 98

1 do for us. Keep both the
2 commercial and the recreational
3 fishermen working and playing.
4 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP:
5 Thank you, Avery. Thank you very
6 much.
7 We have one last speaker, Mr.
8 Bradley Lail.
9 MR. LAIL: Good morning.
10 Thank you for allowing me to speak.
11 So, my name is Bradley Lail.
12 I'm a retired U.S. Army captain. I
13 own Guntersville Bait Company.
14 And one of the things I
15 wanted to talk to you guys about
16 was the skipjack law that's coming
17 up.
18 I'm not against that at all.
19 I think the sale of skipjack needs
20 to be handled, and I think it's
21 gotten out of hand the past couple
22 of years. I've been in business
23 five years. And I think that the

Page 100

1 even though it's not required for
2 skipjack, which is one of the
3 things that I wanted to talk to you
4 about.
5 I presented some regulations
6 or legislation that could be
7 proposed in the future to try and
8 handle the situation a little bit
9 better, more comprehensive
10 solutions and perhaps get a handle
11 on it and reopen it at some
12 point -- right? -- because I assume
13 that the decision was made based on
14 science and the population.
15 I've noticed in the past five
16 years it's gone down tremendously.
17 I think that's due to over-
18 harvesting. I think there's a
19 multitude of problems that I think
20 have contributed to that. You
21 know, I sit behind the scenes.
22 And I wanted to come here to
23 give you guys, you know, credit for

Page 101

1 doing that.
2 The main thing that I wanted
3 to address was, if you place a
4 limit restriction for daily use
5 that is lower than a hundred,
6 consider the charter captains and
7 the tourism that you bring in for
8 trophy cat-fishing.
9 A hundred is a lot. That's a
10 lot for your average guy.
11 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Time.
12 MR. LAIL: All right. Sounds
13 good.
14 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Finish your
15 point. Take a moment.
16 MR. LAIL: If we could make
17 it either 40 or 50, that would
18 allow them a two-day limit so they
19 can catch bait because they won't
20 have somebody to buy it from now.
21 They can catch bait, have 20 for
22 the first day; 20 for the second
23 day; and then they go back and

Page 103

1 questions? On the left.
2 MR. LAIL: Yes, sir. Yes,
3 sir.
4 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP:
5 What you propose is fifty --
6 MR. LAIL: That's what you're
7 doing today?
8 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP:
9 We're proposing.
10 MR. LAIL: I wasn't sure.
11 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: We
12 made you happy on one thing.
13 We do appreciate what you
14 provided. It's very helpful.
15 Thank you.
16 MR. LAIL: Yes, sir. Any
17 time.
18 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you.
19 MR. LAIL: Thank you.
20 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: That
21 concludes our public comments.
22 Thank you-all.
23 The next order of business

Page 102

1 catch the next two days. Right?
2 They're not out of work too long.
3 So, that's one of the things
4 -- and for tourism, as well. Your
5 anglers come in on the weekends.
6 Right? They can catch bait, have
7 the weekend, go home.
8 So, just something to
9 consider when you're making the
10 laws in the future. Opening up
11 white bass, something like that,
12 would also help.
13 You know, if anybody needs
14 any assistance with this, like I
15 said, I've been a policymaker for
16 the U.S. Army for a long time,
17 still am. If you guys need any
18 assistance, I'm happy to lend a
19 hand.
20 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you,
21 Bradley.
22 MR. LAIL: Yes, sir.
23 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Any

Page 104

1 here today is unfinished business.
2 I think that most of the reports or
3 requests for information from the
4 last meeting have been complied
5 with and dealt with here, and there
6 are no more that I'm aware of, of
7 unfinished business.
8 The next portion of our
9 meeting is -- before the Board is
10 new business, and that generally
11 consists of any motions or
12 announcements.
13 Are there any motions before
14 the Board today?
15 Mr. Grady Hartzog.
16 MR. HARTZOG: Mr. Chairman,
17 25 years ago, the Barbour County
18 Youth Hunt was started, which has
19 been a great, great success, and
20 part of that success is due to the
21 game wardens that give of their
22 time and effort to put that on.
23 But, anyway, Pat Kott, who is

Page 105

1 the main person that started that
2 deal, her and her husband --
3 anyway, Roger died last week. Last
4 week at the funeral, there was a
5 ton of wardens there, and then he
6 had his memorial service at the
7 military there at Fort Mitchell,
8 and he was represented there also
9 by the game wardens.
10 I would like permission to
11 write a letter on behalf of this
12 Board commending Roger, send it to
13 Pat. And if the Board would
14 approve, I will draft the letter
15 and get the letter to Chris and
16 Joey to sign as chairman to
17 recognize Roger with all his
18 efforts and support he has for the
19 youth over the last 25 years.
20 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you.
21 I'll make a motion to approve that
22 resolution as Grady stated it and
23 ask for a discussion and/or second.

Page 107

1 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Any other
2 business before this Board? Mr.
3 Jones -- Mr. Raymond Jones?
4 MR. JONES: I would like to
5 make a motion to approve the
6 regulations, seasons and bag limits
7 for the 2024-2025 season as
8 proposed.
9 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: The motion
10 is before the Board to approve the
11 2024-2025 seasons and bag limits as
12 proposed.
13 MR. STIMPSON: Second.
14 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: We have a
15 second. Is there any discussion?
16 (No response).
17 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Seconded by
18 Mr. Ben Stimpson.
19 Any discussion?
20 (No response).
21 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: There being
22 no discussion, let's hold a vote.
23 All those in favor, please

Page 106

1 (No response).
2 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: There being
3 no discussion, a second?
4 MR. JONES: Second.
5 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Second by
6 Commissioner --
7 MR. JONES: By Raymond Jones
8 -- Raymond Jones.
9 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: May we have
10 a vote? All those in favor, raise
11 your right hands.
12 (Board members raising
13 hands).
14 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Any opposed,
15 like sign?
16 (No response.)
17 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: The ayes
18 have it, unanimous.
19 Thank you, Grady.
20 You're going to get that
21 done, and Chris and I will take it
22 from there.
23 MR. HARTZOG: Yes, sir.

Page 108

1 raise your right hand.
2 (Board members raising
3 hands).
4 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Any opposed,
5 like sign?
6 (No response.)
7 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: The ayes
8 have it. Motion carries.
9 Is there any other new
10 business before this Board today?
11 (No response.)
12 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Being that
13 there is no further business --
14 have you got anything?
15 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP:
16 Just one thing. Just a reminder to
17 the Board that if we can proceed
18 from here pretty quickly over to
19 Oak Mountain State Park to the
20 campground for the ribbon cutting
21 over there.
22 We are having a huge event
23 over there. There is the Xterra

Page 109

1 outdoor event at the same time.
2 So, when you get to the event, just
3 tell them that you're there for the
4 ribbon cutting or you can just pay
5 your \$5 dollars, whichever you
6 would prefer.
7 But we'll convene at the
8 campgrounds. I think there was a
9 map that was put on your place to
10 be able to find your way to the
11 campground site, and I look forward
12 to hosting y'all there.
13 The public is welcome, as
14 well, for the ribbon cutting for
15 the new campground at Oak Mountain
16 State Park.
17 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: And my
18 announcement is going to be,
19 everybody come if you can, and
20 certainly the Board will.
21 The date and location of our
22 next meeting will be announced --
23 to be announced. It will be on

Page 110

1 al.com -- or rather outdooralabama
2 and al.com.
3 Enjoy the day. Safe driving
4 going home. And this Department
5 touches your lives in a lot more
6 ways than you can ever imagine.
7 Thank you for being here.
8
9 (The Advisory Board Meeting
10 ended at 10:24 a.m. on May
11 18, 2024.)
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23

Page 111

1 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE
2 STATE OF ALABAMA
3 TALLADEGA COUNTY
4
5 I, Elaine F. Bradley, Certified Court
6 Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of
7 Alabama at Large, certify on Saturday, May 18,
8 2024, that I reported the proceedings in the matter
9 of:
10 ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF
11 CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES
12
13 IN RE THE MATTER OF:
14 ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
15 On Saturday, May 18, 2024, that the foregoing 110
16 computer-printed pages contain a true and correct
17 transcript of the meeting set out herein.
18 I further certify that I am neither a
19 relative, employee, attorney or counsel of any of
20 the parties, nor am I a relative or employee of
21 such attorney or counsel, nor am I financially
22 interested in the results thereof. All rates
23 charged are usual and customary.

Page 112

1 I further certify that I am duly licensed
2 by the Alabama Board of Court Reporting as a
3 Certified Court Reporter as evidenced by the ACCR
4 number following my name found below.
5 This 3rd day of June in the year of our
6 Lord, 2024.
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23

Elaine F. Bradley, CCR
ACCR NO. 354 Exp. 9/30/24
Certified Court Reporter and
Notary Public
Commission expires 11/14/27

(C) Copyright 2024, Boggs Reporting & Video. All rights reserved. No portion of this document may be reproduced without written consent of Boggs Reporting & Video.