

MINUTES
HERITAGE TRUST ADVISORY BOARD
SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF NAURAL RESOURCES
COLUMBIA, SC
RICHLAND COUNTY
AUGUST 2, 2012

MEMBERS PRESENT

Campbell Coxe (Chair)
Sonny King
Jake Rasor
Beth Grace
Joel Felder (for Gene Kodama)
Phil Gaines (for Duane Parrish)
Joann Zeise (for William Calloway)
Breck Carmichael (for Alvin Taylor)
Ken Rentiers
Jonathan Leader

OTHERS PRESENT

Herrick Brown
Kay Daniels
Julie Holling
Sean Taylor
Bert Pittman
Kathy Boyle
John Nelson
Tim Ivey
Emily Cope
Ken Prosser
Harry Shealy
Marvin Davant
Vivianne Vejdani

MEMBERS ABSENT

Randy Lowe
Henry Fair (Vice Chair)
Julia Krebs
Eric Emerson
James Hill (for Bobby Hitt)

Call to Order

Campbell Coxe called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone, and requested they introduce themselves.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Coxe asked if there were any changes, additions or deletions to the minutes from the February 2, 2012 meeting of the Heritage Trust Advisory Board (HTAB). *Dr. King made a motion that the Board approve the minutes of the February 2, 2012, meeting, as submitted. Mr. Carmichael seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously*

Flora Caroliniana: A new web portal for accessing the state's herbarium collections information

Bert Pittman, Botanist for the Heritage Trust Program, distributed a handout of species data for the world and South Carolina. Mr. Pittman gave a brief description of the job Herrick Brown is doing with the University of South Carolina managing collections.

Herrick Brown, Assistant Botanist for the Heritage Trust Program, gave the Board a presentation on the new web portal. He reported that Flora Caroliniana (<http://herbarium.biol.sc.edu/floracaroliniana>) is a new web site offered through the University of South Carolina's A. C. Moore Herbarium. The site is named in honor of the first regional North American flora to use the Linnaean system of taxonomy (Thomas Walter's work by the same name was published in 1788).

While Walter's flora listed a little over 1,000 plants found largely in what is now Berkeley County, South Carolina, modern botanists recognize more than 3,000 plant species that call South Carolina home. The Heritage Trust Staff tracks roughly 10% of these (approximately 300 species of interest – many of which are federally listed). Keeping track of this many species is a daunting task for any individual, particularly when many species look very similar and may require specialized diagnostic tools to properly identify.

By partnering with the state's two largest herbaria (at USC and Clemson), Heritage Trust staff can leverage their access to a network of specialists who can provide an expert review of vouchers collected through Heritage Trust survey activities. This review process is critical for the proper identification plants that are difficult to identify in the field.

The Flora Caroliniana web site provides quick and easy access to the final products of this review process and helps Heritage Trust staff in the formulation of land management recommendations. In addition, there are many other features offered through Flora Caroliniana which may prove useful to Preserve Managers and other agency activities. For instance, it is possible to create location specific species checklists based on voucher specimen information. The use of such checklists can provide a quick way for land managers to familiarize themselves with those plant species that have been documented by previous collections from a particular property. Names in each checklist are linked to images of preserved specimens and live plant images. Access to such images via a web enabled mobile device may also prove exceedingly useful for field identification. Finally, an important feature recognizes sensitive species' information by masking locality details and only reveals 'county level' occurrence data.

The Conservation Bank

Marvin Davant, Executive Director of The Conservation Bank, updated the Board on their recent activities. Mr. Davant reported that the agency hadn't received any documentary stamp funds since 2008 but they had managed to survive through the legislative process with provisos. At the end of the budget year in 2008, \$7 million was owed on previous commitments on projects that the Board had already approved. That has now been paid down to approximately \$2

million and should be paid off this year. The Conservation Bank Act has been extended through 2018 by the Legislature and will be back at full funding. Very excited about the 19 new projects they have on the horizon, he stated that since 2004 The Conservation Bank has partnered with The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources on protecting 54,362 acres for a total of \$17,400,000 in funding. He reported that The Conservation Bank now has projects in 37 counties totaling 163,000 acres, and has committed or expended funds slightly over \$85 million since 2004 at an average cost of \$522 an acre. Mr. Davant also commented that he is very pleased with the working relationship between the two agencies. South Carolina is a very special place and he stated he is glad that we are all working together to save these properties.

Review and Approval of FY 14 Natural Areas Management Budget

Tim Ivey, Chief of Wildlife, reviewed the many activities that have been conducted on the preserves under his management which included many field trips, exotic vegetation control, mowing, prescribed burning, remarking and painting property boundaries and posting signs. He reported that he has a 33% vacancy rate and that he has no heritage preserve management staff in Region 3 and he hopes to fill those vacancies next year. Mr. Ivey then presented his budget request for FY14.

Review and Approval of FY 14 Cultural Areas Management Budget

Sean Taylor, archaeologist with the Heritage Trust Program, reported on the activities that have been conducted this past year on the 17 cultural preserves under his management which totals 3,600 acres across the entire state. Mr. Taylor credited Brian Long with the upkeep of these preserves. He is “on the ground” taking care of all the maintenance of these preserves. He has expended approximately 50% of last year’s funds. He reported that the Kolb site was another successful event this year. Approximately 400 people visited the site during those two weeks in March. Mr. Taylor then presented his budget request for FY14.

Updates & Comments

Ken Rentiers, deputy director for DNR’s Land and Water Division, distributed the revenue statement and stated that it is showing an upward trend. This is the best report we have had in the last four years. He also distributed a budget request for FY 14 for the Heritage Land Trust Fund.

Dr. Leader made a motion to approve the Natural Areas, Cultural Areas, and Heritage Land Trust fund budgets for FY 14. Mr. Rasor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Coxe stated he hoped the upward trend continues. For the last five years Heritage Trust has been sitting in neutral and he wants the program to grow and stated that we need to be out looking for properties to acquire in the future.

Mr. Rentiers reported it was a much better budget year for all state agencies. The Land, Water and Conservation Division received some significant funding for computer water modeling. With these funds we will be able to monitor eight major basins (Pee Dee, Catawba, Broad, Saluda,

Santee, Salkehatchie, Edisto and Savannah) in a joint project with DHEC. The project will start with the Pee Dee. DHEC is going to use this modeling program to administer the new surface water withdrawal permitting program. This will give them minimum flow standards to protect wildlife and critical habitat. It should have a positive impact on SCDNR's habitat protection efforts. Mr. Rentiers stated that he will keep the Board apprised of this project.

Executive Session

At this time, Dr. King made a motion that the Board hold an Executive Session to discuss contractual and legal matters. Mr. Rasor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Return to Regular Session

Dr. Leader made a motion that the Board return to regular session. Mr. Rasor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Dr. King made a motion that Heritage Trust acquire the 75 acres adjoining the Aiken Gopher Tortoise Heritage Preserve in Aiken County. Mr. Rasor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Rasor made a motion to approve to accept a donation of approximately 25 acres adjoining Lewis Ocean Bay Heritage Preserve in Horry Count. Dr. Leader seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Heritage Trust Advisory Board will be held Thursday, November 1, 2012, at 10:00 a.m. at the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources in Columbia.

Adjourn

There being no further business to be brought before the Board at this time, Mr. Rentiers made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Dr. King seconded the motion, the motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned.

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