

MINUTES
HERITAGE TRUST ADVISORY BOARD
SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF NAURAL RESOURCES
COLUMBIA, SC
RICHLAND COUNTY
AUGUST 1, 2013

MEMBERS PRESENT

Campbell Coxe (Chair)
Henry Fair (Vice Chair)
Jake Rasor
Eric Emerson
Alvin Taylor
Ken Rentiers
Russell Hubright (for Gene Kodama)
States Clawson (for Bobby Hitt)

MEMBERS ABSENT

Sonny King
Julia Krebs
Randy Lowe
Beth Grace
Phil Gaines (for Duane Parrish)
Dave Cicimurri (for William Calloway)
Jonathan Leader

OTHERS PRESENT

Julie Holling
Kay Daniels
Kathy Boyle
Deanna Ruth
Sam Chappelear
Bert Pittman
Johnny Stowe
Breck Carmichael
Emily Cope
Ken Prosser
Barry Beasley
Harry Shealy
Herrick Brown
Brett Moule
Scott Spears
Billy Dukes
Stewart Grinton
Tim Ivey
Paul League
Johnny Evans
Bob Perry
Sean Taylor
Jason Johnson
David Kelly
Rob Perry

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 7, 2013, meeting of the Heritage Trust Advisory Board (HTAB). *Mr. Rentiers made a motion that the Board approve the minutes of the February 7, 2013, meeting, as submitted. Mr. Rasor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

Presentation

Director Taylor and Chairman Evans presented Deanna Ruth with a framed black bear print and a paperweight commemorating her service with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR).

Updates & Comments

Jason Johnson, South Carolina Director of The Conservation Fund, gave a brief update on the Liberty Hill project. He said Liberty Hill is a 3,500-acre property that contains 14 miles of frontage on the Catawba River. It was sold by Crescent Resources to Greenwood Development Company in 2006 for approximately \$27 million. Mr. Johnson stated he was hopeful it could be purchased for \$10.25 million. He added it is a wonderful opportunity to protect additional habitat along the Catawba River and expand lands already owned by the SCDNR.

SCDNR Director Alvin Taylor stated they have had a great working relationship with The Conservation Fund and noted all parties have a lot to be proud of by protecting these lands for future generations.

Waccamaw Mitigation Bank

Bob Perry, Director of Environmental Programs for SCDNR, stated a 754-acre tract adjoining Lewis Ocean Bay Heritage Preserve in Horry County tract has been donated to the SCDNR and it is now an approved mitigation bank. He said the business community in Myrtle Beach supported this project, as well as Representative Nelson Hardwick and the other members of the Horry County Legislative Delegation.

Paul League, Deputy Chief Counsel for SCDNR, stated the Memorandum of Agreement between the SCDNR, the Corps of Engineers, and DHEC was part of the mitigation banking instrument and will serve as a template for future projects that protect significant habitat at very little cost to the agency.

Haile Gold Mine

Mr. Perry explained that Haile Gold Mine was once an operational mine in Lancaster County in the mid-1850s. He said it is proposed for reopening by Romarco Minerals Incorporated and if approved, there will be substantial impacts to both wetlands and

streams in the area. Mr. Perry stated SCDNR has reviewed the mitigation plan and noted it was broad in scale, extremely fragmented, and involves 60 landowners and 84 tracts. As part of the plan, he said Romarco proposes to acquire three tracts that would be transferred to SCDNR. The first is a 698-acre parcel adjoining Forty Acre Rock Heritage Preserve. It includes part of Flat Creek, which provides habitat for the Carolina Heelsplitter, one of South Carolina's most endangered species. Mr. Perry said Romarco has also pledged \$4.9 million for obligation, augmentation, and monitoring.

The second tract entails the acquisition of Cook's Mountain on the Wateree River, which is approximately 1,132 acres. Mr. Perry said it is the highest point in Richland County and will offer tremendous opportunities for public use, outreach and education. The final tract, which is adjacent to Cook's Mountain, is known as Goodwill Plantation and comprises 2,959 acres. Mr. Perry explained the current landowner would retain a portion of the property, which harbors historic and cultural resources. He noted additional investigations would be needed to determine the full extent of cultural and archaeological resources on the site.

Mr. Perry said Romarco has pledged \$4.6 million to SCDNR to be held in trust and be paid incrementally and that \$1 million to be held up front for maintenance and management for all three of these tracts.

Mr. Perry reported that Romarco is in the process of refining the groundwater model for the project to accurately assess project impacts on groundwater, surface water and water quality. He noted the report should be completed in September.

Updates from Ken Rentiers

Ken Rentiers, Deputy Director of SCDNR's Land and Water Division, distributed the most recent Heritage Trust revenue statement and said the past couple of months show the best revenue since 2008. Mr. Rentiers also distributed a balance sheet for Heritage Trust showing expenditures in an updated format.

Mr. Rentiers reported the 2014 budget was adjusted for three new staff, including one for Heritage Preserve Management and two for Cultural Management. Also, additional funds were added for equipment purchases.

Dr. Emerson made a motion that the Board approve the amendments to the FY 14 budget and the FY 15 budget. Mr. Fair seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Rentiers reported this had been a very good budget year and the first in several years where there was not a major cut in proposed funding. He also commended the SCDNR Board for all their work and support.

Executive Session

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

Return to Regular Session

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

Dr. Emerson made a motion that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board approve the use of Heritage Trust funds to help acquire 1,628 acres adjoining the SCDNR's Heritage Tract WMA in Lancaster County. Mr. Clawson seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Emerson made a motion to approve the sale of approximately 0.12 acres of SCDNR land at Stevens Creek Heritage Preserve/WMA in Edgefield County to the South Carolina Department of Transportation. Mr. Rasor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Rasor made a motion to investigate a potential property acquisition in Lancaster County that adjoins Forty Acre Rock Heritage Preserve. Mr. Fair seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Rasor made a motion that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board authorize staff to proceed with the acquisition of land in Horry County from American Timberland as part of a mitigation bank. Mr. Fair seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Heritage Trust Advisory Board will be held Thursday, November 7, 2013, at 10:00 a.m. at Cook's Mountain.

Adjourn

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

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