

**MINUTES
HERITAGE TRUST ADVISORY BOARD
MAY 1, 2008
CONGAREE BLUFFS HERITAGE PRESERVE
CALHOUN COUNTY**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Campbell Coxe (Chair)
Henry Fair (Vice Chair)
Julia Krebs
Beth Grace
Sonny King
Jake Rasor
Rodger Stroup
Fritz Hamer (for William Calloway)
Gene Kodama
States Clawson (for Joe Taylor)
Irvin Pitts (for Chad Prosser)
Breck Carmichael (for Mike McShane)
Steve de Kozlowski (Interim)

OTHERS PRESENT

Barry Beasley
Ken Prosser
Kay Daniels
Julie Holling
Sean Taylor
Tim Ivey
Kathy Boyle
Bert Pittman
Buddy Baker
Lynn Quattro
Paul League
Joel Felder
Herrick Brown

MEMBERS ABSENT

John Frampton

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 to the minutes from the February 7, 2008 meeting of the Heritage Trust Advisory Board (HTAB). There were none and a motion was made to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Comments from the Director

Barry Beasley introduced Gene Kodama, the new State Forester for the SC Forestry Commission. He updated members on the Palmetto Fort easement and explained that the department was not going to release the wetland portion of the easement, but would examine the

release of an area containing three archaeological sites. Dr. Beasley said the owners have been asked by DNR to conduct additional archaeological testing.

Dr. Beasley noted that funding for the Conservation Bank is in jeopardy this year, which is a concern because they are an important partner with DNR in habitat protection. He stated that funds from the bank have assisted DNR in the purchase of four of six properties acquired this year.

Myrtle Beach State Park Easement

Irvin Pitts, representing the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism (PRT), stated that the park became a registered heritage site in 1988. He said the property comprises 312 acres and contains two rare plant communities, and habitat for sea turtles and bald eagles. Mr. Pitts noted the area of concern is a 136-acre maritime forest, which PRT would like to provide additional protection via a conservation easement. A motion was made for DNR staff to work with PRT and develop a conservation easement. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

A Natural Area Inventory of the Woodbury Tract

Bert Pittman described field work on the Woodbury property which focused on identifying unique natural community types, rare species, and methods to rapidly access thousands of acres of swamps, pocosins, bottomlands, and assorted upland woodlands. The study took two years.

Dr. Pittman explained the documentation methods and characterization of both natural and disturbed communities and noted that a unique set of wind, water, and terrestrial forces have shaped the natural and cultural landscape along the long peninsula of Britton's Neck.

Comparing older aerial photos with modern, digital quad photos, Dr. Pittman stated they were able to determine the nature and origin of "meadow" openings, various Carolina bay formations, old growth bottomlands, and marsh vegetation patterns. He added that the identification and mapping of significant natural areas, including environmental and historical factors, are important to ecological restoration.

Update on Region 3 Heritage Preserve Management Activities

Buddy Baker, DNR Regional Coordinator for Wildlife in Region 3, updated the board on management activities in the absence of Brett Moule. He explained the restoration work on a Carolina bay and depression meadow at Janet Harrison Heritage Preserve, and added they are converting upland areas to a longleaf pine ecosystem. Mr. Baker said staff is monitoring endangered plant populations on the property, including *Harperella*, which occurs on three sites in Saluda County, and only two dozen worldwide. He also discussed recent work transplanting Relict trillium on the Savannah Bluffs Heritage Preserve.

Report on 2008 Kolb Site Public Archaeology Project

Sean Taylor reported on the 12th annual Johannes Kolb archaeology project at the Great Pee Dee Heritage Preserve and stated that approximately 300 people visited the site over a two-week period. He explained that the main focus this year was on education, and said that evening lectures were given to visitors about the history of the project, including the formation of prehistoric pottery and stone tools. Mr. Taylor stated that a four-meter square was excavated in search of a Woodland period house, and post-holes for at least one structure were identified. He added that two significant finds included a Dalton point (approximately 10,500 years old Late Paleo Indian), and a spoon with the initials of an individual believed to be the granddaughter of Johannes Kolb.

Dr. Beasley presented an “On the Spot” employee award to Mr. Taylor and noted that he is the only archaeologist in the DNR and does a tremendous amount of work each day.

Update on State Wildlife Conservation Strategy

Lynn Quattro explained the purpose and scope of the DNR’s Wildlife Conservation Strategy. She stated that funding could be reduced if states cannot show progress from the use of State Wildlife Grant funds. Ms. Quattro said the plan has identified 1,240 priority species, 29 terrestrial habitats, and 13 watersheds across 5 eco-regions of the state, in addition to 800 marine species. She added that 1,526 specific conservation actions were identified and consolidated into eight conservation action areas, including education and outreach, habitat protection, evasive and nominated species, public land management, private land cooperation, regulatory action, survey and research needs, and urban and developing lands. Ms. Quattro stated that the implementation stage is now underway and that an update of the plan must be submitted to the US Fish and Wildlife Service by September 30, 2010.

Update on the Preserve Management Budget

Tim Ivey updated members on preserve management activities during the year and presented the proposed management budget for 2009 fiscal year.

Update on the Cultural Preserve Management Budget

Sean Taylor updated members on cultural preserve management activities during the year and presented the proposed management budget for the 2009 fiscal year.

Update on Active Projects/Budget Overview

Ken Prosser reported that the current balance in the Heritage Land Trust Fund was \$10.5 million. He stated that approved operational expenditures for the past fiscal year were \$2.3 million and current approved project commitments totaled \$2.2 million. Mr. Prosser noted that pending project commitments totaled \$325,000, and remaining funds after deductions for all expenditures and commitments was \$5.6 million.

Executive Session

HTAB entered Executive Session to discuss contractual issues.

Return to Regular Session

HTAB returned from Executive Session and a motion was made to approve the Heritage Land Trust Fund budget. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously. Additions to the budget included funds for preliminary work on a potential property acquisition on Jasper County and funds for a property acquisition in Lancaster County.

Other Business

Dr. Beasley reported that the overall relationship with the legislature was much approved this year and stated that the number of proposed bills was less than the previous year. Regarding changes for next year, Dr. Beasley noted that Senator Greg Gregory and Representative Billy Witherspoon, who chair committees that sponsor DNR legislation, were retiring.

Mr. Kodama briefly discussed the mission of the Forestry Commission and noted the importance of forest resources in South Carolina. He added that DNR is an important partner in habitat conservation.

Bert Pittman invited everyone to attend the first Rocky Shoals Spider Lily Festival on May 31, 2008 at Riverfront Park.

The next HTAB meeting will be held August 7, 2008, at the Department of Archives & History in Columbia. The November 5-6 meeting will be held at Bennett's Point in Colleton County.

Adjournment

No further business was brought before HTAB and the meeting was adjourned.

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