

MINUTES
HERITAGE TRUST ADVISORY BOARD
SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
RICHLAND COUNTY
AUGUST 7, 2014

MEMBERS PRESENT

Campbell Coxe (Chair)
Eric Emerson
Jake Rasor
Julia Krebs
Alvin Taylor
Ken Rentiers
States Clawson (for Bobby Hitt)
Terry Hurley (for Duane Parrish)
Jonathan Leader

MEMBERS ABSENT

Henry Fair (Vice Chair)
Beth Grace
Tom Patton (for Gene Kodama)
Dave Cicimurri (for William Calloway)
Sonny King
Randy Lowe

OTHERS PRESENT

Julie Holling
Kay Daniels
Sean Taylor
Kathy Boyle
Mareli Sanchez
Meg Gaillard
Herrick Brown
Ken Prosser
Emily Cope
Billy Dukes
Sam Chappellear
Achi Treptow
Paul League
Breck Carmichael
Bob Perry
Michael Small
Scott Speares
Hilary Morris

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 May 1, 2014, meeting of the Heritage Trust Advisory Board (HTAB). *Mr. Rasor made a motion that the Board approve the minutes of the May 1, 2014, meeting, as submitted. Mr. Clawson seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

South Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative Conservation Blueprint

Hilary Morris, manager of Blueprint User Support and Communications for the Cooperative, described the organization's partnership with federal, state, nonprofit, and private organizations and stated they were dedicated to conserving a landscape capable of sustaining the nation's natural and cultural resources for current and future generations. She demonstrated a tool that has been developed by the Cooperative called the Conservation Blueprint, which is a spatially-explicit, living plan that describes the places and actions needed to meet the Cooperative's shared conservation objectives in the face of future change.

Comments from the Director

Alvin Taylor, Director of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (DNR), reported to the HTAB that this year's legislative session went very well. Funding was appropriated for groundwater equipment and staff position(s) for hydrology and work is being done internally to fill some positions that have been vacant for the past few years. Mr. Taylor stated he is excited about the future land acquisitions Heritage Trust is working on and said the agency is collaborating on how to effectively manage cultural responsibilities on agency properties. Mr. Taylor added that DNR should be good stewards in land management and stated the agency had formed many partnerships to help with these activities.

Proposed FY 2016 Budget

Ken Rentiers, DNR Deputy Director of the Land, Water & Conservation Division, distributed all budgets and noted that an amendment had been made to the 2015 Cultural Areas Management Budget for an additional \$35,000 to improve access and stabilize a structure at Fort Frederick Heritage Preserve. He stated this project might not move forward in 2015, but wanted to have the funds available if needed.

Sean Taylor, DNR archaeologist, gave a brief presentation on Fort Frederick. He stated it is located in the Port Royal area of Beaufort County along the Beaufort River. The tabby fort was built in 1733 to protect the Town of Beaufort and plans for the site include stabilizing the fort, building a boat landing, and constructing a parking lot. Currently, access is only accessible through the Naval Hospital property, which makes it difficult for the public to reach. Mr. Taylor noted that a complete archaeological survey has been completed.

Mr. Rentiers reported a 23% increase in the Habitat Protection Budget. He explained the increase resulted from hiring a new staff member to assist Brian Long with management activities and to cover a 2% salary increase approved by the General Assembly for all state employees. Also, a new charge was added to the budget for new NatureServe software and for the replacement of a vehicle.

Cultural Heritage Preserve Management Budget

Mr. Taylor stated the entire Cultural Areas budget was spent in FY14. He reported on the activities conducted on 17 cultural preserves under his management, which total 3,687 acres across the state. Mr. Taylor recognized DNR archaeologist Meg Gaillard, and stated how helpful she has been since beginning work in January. Ms. Gaillard spoke briefly on a tracking system she is working on to account for the number of visitors at each preserve. Mr. Taylor then presented his amended budget for FY15 and the budget for FY16.

Review and Approval of FY 16 Natural Areas Management Budget

Billy Dukes, DNR Chief of Wildlife, reported that for the first time in the past seven years, Heritage Trust Management has been fully staffed. He introduced two of the new employees; Achi Treptow, Region 4 Heritage Preserve Coordinator and Michael Small, Regional 3 Heritage Preserve Coordinator. Mr. Dukes reported on the many activities staff has undertaken on 57 preserves this year and noted that approximately 66% of the FY14 budget has been expended. He noted the FY16 budget request represents a slight increase from last year.

Dr. Leader made a motion that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board approve all budget requests as presented. Dr. Emerson seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Updates & Comments

Mr. Rentiers reported that the revenue stream is doing well, but the bond debt will not be paid off until 2021, so the need to be cautious with spending is required.

Bob Perry, Director of Environmental Programs for DNR, reported that the Carter Stillely Wetland and Stream Mitigation Bank was approved by the Charleston District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It entailed the donation of 1,304 acres into Heritage Trust that will be an addition to the Waccamaw River Heritage Preserve.

Executive Session

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

Return to Regular Session

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

Dr. Krebs made a motion that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board approve the proposal to acquire 1,829 acres adjoining DNR's Liberty Hill WMA in Kershaw and Lancaster Counties. Dr. Leader seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Clawson made a motion that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board recommend that the Board of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources accept the proposal by The Hitchcock Foundation to add several parcels of land to the Hitchcock Woods Heritage Preserve. Dr. Leader seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Razor made a motion that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board approve the proposal that the Keystone Tract in Berkeley County, approximately 1,682 acres, be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve in accordance with the Boeing Company's plan to mitigate for impacts to waters of the United States at its North Charleston facility. Dr. Leader seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Razor made a motion to approve the proposal that the Rainbow Ranch Tract in Lancaster County, approximately 698 acres, and both the Cooks Mountain Tract, approximately 1,132 acres and the Goodwill Plantation Tract, approximately 2,559 acres in Richland County all be dedicated as Heritage Preserves in accordance with Haile Gold Mine's plan to mitigate for impacts to waters of the United States at its facility north of the town of Kershaw; Rainbow Ranch to be incorporated into the existing Forty-Acre Rock Heritage Preserve and Cooks Mountain and Goodwill Plantation to become the Wateree River Heritage Preserve. 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 6, 2014. The location is to be decided at a later date.

Adjourn

There being no further business to be brought before the Board at this time, Mr. Razor 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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