

MINUTES
HERITAGE TRUST ADVISORY BOARD
COOK'S MOUNTAIN - RICHLAND COUNTY
NOVEMBER 7, 2013

MEMBERS PRESENT

Campbell Coxe (Chair)
Henry Fair (Vice Chair)
Jake Rasor
Eric Emerson
Bob Perry (for Alvin Taylor)
Sonny King
Julia Krebs
Ken Rentiers
States Clawson (for Bobby Hitt)

MEMBERS ABSENT

Beth Grace
Tom Patton (for Gene Kodama)
Phil Gaines (for Duane Parrish)
Dave Cicimurri (for William Calloway)
Jonathan Leader
Randy Lowe

OTHERS PRESENT

Julie Holling
Kay Daniels
Kathy Boyle
Bert Pittman
Sean Taylor
Debbie Winslow
Jen Konarski
Ken Prosser
Vivianne Vejdani
Greg Mixon
Paul League
Marc Crib
Jim McLeod
Larry Nates
Charles Broadwell
Susie O'Brian
David Thomas
Tom Milliken
Tombo Milliken
Larry Faulkenberry
Ken Mullis
John Green

Call to Order

Campbell Coxe called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone, and requested they introduce themselves. Chairman Coxe welcomed States Clawson, representative for The Department of Commerce, on his return to the Heritage Trust Advisory Board.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Coxe asked if there were any changes, additions or deletions to the minutes from the August 1, 2013, meeting of the Heritage Trust Advisory Board (HTAB). *Mr. Clawson*

made a motion that the Board approve the minutes of the August 1, 2013, meeting, as submitted. Mr. Rasor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Updates & Comments

Bob Perry, Director of Environmental Programs for DNR, reported that an article appeared in The State Newspaper announcing that Haile Gold Mine has acquired Cook's Mountain. He noted that HTAB has been given updates on the project at their last several meetings.

To date, Mr. Perry said a couple of issues remain outstanding. A draft of the groundwater modeling report has been provided to the Army Corps of Engineers, but has not been provided to the public for review. The Haile Gold Mine Mitigation Plan went out for public review on July 19, 2013, and Mr. Perry distributed a copy of a response letter from DNR to the Army Corps of Engineers. He explained a public comment period will be held and comments will be assembled by the Corps, followed by a likely record of decision in late June or July.

Mr. Perry stated much work has been completed by DNR regarding the project and Haile has put forth an outstanding mitigation plan that sets forth extraordinary high standards for mitigation in South Carolina.

Mr. Perry reported there are three land preservation components to the plan. The first is a 698-acre tract in Lancaster County known as Rainbow Ranch, which adjoins Forty Acre Rock Heritage Preserve. The tract encompasses a significant stretch of the Flat Creek tributary, which contains habitat for the endangered Carolina heelsplitter mussel.

The second component is Cook's Mountain, which consists of 1,132 acres, including 485 acres of wetlands, 28,292 linear feet of stream, and 10,289 linear feet of river frontage.

The final component is Goodwill Plantation, a 2,559-acre tract with 1,048 acres of wetlands, 30,706 linear feet of stream, and 29,560 linear feet of river frontage. The combined totals of these three tracts consist of 4,389 acres with 1,561 acres of wetlands and 118,361 linear feet of river frontages.

Mr. Perry said that Haile has proposed all three of these tracts be donated to DNR and protected as heritage preserves. In addition, a \$4.5 million endowment will be provided to DNR for maintenance and management of them. Further, \$4.9 million will be provided specifically for monitoring and enhancement of the heelsplitter, which is mainly found in Lancaster and York Counties.

Mr. Perry stated a malacologist would be hired by DNR to advance work associated with the heelsplitter and a monitoring phase would follow. The project would last for approximately 10 years.

Dr. Emerson asked if there was any money set aside for cultural resource surveys on the property. Mr. Perry replied that Haile has put forth the \$4.5 million endowment for maintenance and management of the site. When cultural resource surveys need to be done, they can be funded from this money or from other DNR funds. Chairman Coxe asked if there was any knowledge of what the surveys would cost and Mr. Perry stated that DNR archaeologist Sean Taylor has knowledge of the cost of comprehensive surveys. Mr. Perry stated that they do not foresee any significant ground disturbing activities on the property.

From a long-term management standpoint, Mr. Perry said DNR may want to cut the timber, de-bed, plug ditches, and convert areas back to a forested wetland. That would be a disturbing activity that would require more formal intensive work. Dr. Emerson asked if the money set aside would be sufficient to manage natural resources and to conduct cultural resource surveys. Mr. Perry noted a Memorandum of Understanding would be signed by the US Army Corps of Engineers, DNR, and the Department of Health and Environmental Control and will be referenced in everything that is done on the properties and will be followed in strict compliance. Mr. Perry also stated that any issues regarding cultural or natural resources will be addressed and appropriate funds would be supplied to move forward.

Chairman Coxe stated a concern of his, and the Board, is to remember their mission is to protect and manage both the natural and cultural resources of the State of South Carolina.

Ken Rentiers, Deputy Director of DNR's Land and Water Division, mentioned that he and Mr. Taylor had discussed the matter at length and some funds will be needed for archaeological survey work. If the current revenue stream into Heritage Trust continues, he said funds from this source may also be used to augment endowment monies. Mr. Perry added that timber revenue from the property will also provide revenue.

Mr. Perry said there are two potential routes to take should this plan come together. When Haile has all its permits in hand, they will transfer all three tracts to DNR. Ducks Unlimited has an easement on the acreage balance of Cooks Mountain and provides for extinguishment if mutually agreeable by the parties thereof (DU and DNR). Another way is to simultaneously transfer the lands into Heritage Trust and extinguish the easement so a protection instrument is on the property. It would include a portion on top of Cook's Mountain not protected by easement. In recent discussions within the conservation community, Mr. Perry said many feel a conservation easement should never be extinguished.

Paul League, Deputy Chief Counsel for DNR, stated the conservation easement with DU is limited, but it does allow for some development on the property. He added the current easement is more lenient than what would be allowed via dedication under Heritage Trust.

Updates and Comments

Mr. Rentiers thanked the staff for their dedication and distributed the most recent Heritage Trust revenue statement. He noted that income continues to increase, which will enhance efforts to do the survey work and other management efforts on heritage preserves.

Ken Prosser, Assistant Deputy Director of the Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries Division, reported on land acquisition activities during the past fiscal year. He explained that five properties were acquired comprising 1,533 acres. Mr. Prosser noted that all of the lands were donated to DNR and the cumulative value was \$3.9 million.

Chairman Coxe stated it is always good for the agency get these gifts of property, but the Board has to be mindful of the maintenance costs.

Mr. Taylor stated interviews for the new archaeologist position had been conducted, a candidate was selected and a start date of January 2, 2014 had been set. The candidate is a West Columbia native, graduate of USC and Manchester University in England. Besides field work, their primary job duty will be the development of public interpretive materials for cultural Heritage Trust properties. Mr. Taylor also mentioned a contract had been awarded to the Diachronic Research Foundation to conduct an archaeological survey of the 173-acre Bear Branch Heritage Preserve. The work is set to begin in December and will identify unknown archaeological sites, including the home site and industrial operations belonging to Benjamin Franklin Landrum. Landrum was the son of Rev. John Landrum and one of the primary developers of the alkaline glazed stoneware industry in the Edgefield District at the end of the 18th Century and throughout the 19th Century.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Heritage Trust Advisory Board will be held Thursday, February 6, 2014, at 10:00 a.m. at the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources in Columbia.

The meeting dates for 2014 are: February 6, May 1, August 7 and November 6. The time and locations are to be determined.

Adjourn

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

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