

STATE OF ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF  
CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

The Lodge at Gulf State Park  
Gulf Shores, Alabama

May 4, 2019

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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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Proceedings taken before Tracye  
Sadler Blackwell, Certified Court Reporter, ACCR  
No. 294, and Commissioner for the State of Alabama  
at Large, at the Lodge at Gulf State Park, 21196  
East Beach Boulevard, Gulf Shores, Alabama, on  
Saturday, May 4, 2019, commencing at approximately  
9:01 a.m.

1 BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

- 2 Mr. Joseph Dobbs, Jr., Chairman,
- 3 Commissioner Christopher M. Blankenship
- 4 Deputy Commissioner Patrick D. Moody, Department of
- 5 Agriculture & Industries
- 6 Dr. Gary Lemme
- 7 Mr. Patrick Cagle
- 8 Mr. Raymond Jones, Jr.
- 9 Mr. Grady Hartzog
- 10 Mr. Ben C. Stimpson, Jr.
- 11 Mr. Gary Wolfe
- 12 Mr. Tim Wood
- 13 Mr. Greg Barksdale
- 14 Mr. Brock Jones

11 \* \* \* \* \*

13 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Welcome everyone to the  
 14 second Conservation Advisory Board  
 15 meeting on this day, May the 4th of  
 16 2019. Glad you're all here today.  
 17 Hello to the usual participants and  
 18 welcome to our first-time participants.

19 Susan, good to see you. Avery, good  
 20 to see you here.

21 I'd like to recognize this morning  
 22 Representative Stringer from here in  
 23 Mobile County and Representative Steven

1           McMillan as well from here in Mobile.  
2           We're glad to have you with us here  
3           today. Thank you.

4           Ms. Jones set us up pretty well, and  
5           this lodge is fabulous. We've got a  
6           wonderful view here. So let's have a  
7           productive meeting with good dialogue  
8           today.

9           I'm going to ask Avery Bates to give  
10          the invocation for us.

11         MR. BATES: This is an honor. It's good to be  
12          here with y'all. Let's all bow.

13                 Dear Father, we thank you for today.  
14                 We thank you for the bounty of the sea  
15                 and the land, Lord. We do pray for our  
16                 leaders, Lord, that each one of them  
17                 will rule justly, Dear Heavenly Father,  
18                 under the fear of God as it says in thy  
19                 Word. We pray, Lord, that we'll be  
20                 always respectful of you and our fellow  
21                 man, Lord.

22                 We thank you, Lord, for this state.  
23                 Thank you, Lord, for the many blessings

1           that we have with the bounty of the sea  
2           and the land. We pray, Lord, that  
3           you'll be with us in this chronic waste  
4           disease that's going through many  
5           states, Lord. We pray it will stay away  
6           from them.

7                     We pray, Lord, for the oyster  
8           industry that's in critical straits. We  
9           pray for these men, each one of them,  
10          Lord, that you'll truly use and guide  
11          them, give them understanding, Lord, of  
12          the fellow man and the things that  
13          they're judging and making regulations  
14          for. Continue to be with us every day,  
15          Lord, in this state.

16                    We thank you, Lord, for our  
17          Governor. We thank you, Lord, for our  
18          President. We pray that you'll give  
19          them wisdom and direction, Dear Heavenly  
20          Father, and any laws that's passed,  
21          it'll be for the good of the whole state  
22          and it will continue to be a blessing,  
23          Lord, to our next generation.

1           Let us not be proud. Humble us.  
2           Use us to honor in thy glory and truly,  
3           Lord, let this next generation prosper  
4           from the decisions we make here today  
5           and in the future. God bless America.  
6           God bless Alabama. And we love you,  
7           Lord. Continue to use us. In Christ's  
8           name we ask it. Amen.

9           CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Amen. Thank you very much,  
10          Avery. Thank you.

11          Let's have our Pledge. And I'm  
12          going to ask Brock Jones, our Board  
13          member, to lead us in the Pledge of  
14          Allegiance this morning.

15   (Pledge of Allegiance recited.)

16          CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you. Be seated.

17          On our agenda as well, something  
18          that we've been doing for the last  
19          several years, is the Sportsmen's  
20          Pledge. It's a pledge that rings true  
21          to what we all believe is the purpose of  
22          forward-minded research management. And  
23          those of you that would like this

1 morning, please recite it along with us.  
2 There were some on the table as you came  
3 in. If you have it, fine. If not,  
4 we're going to as a board recite that.  
5 And Dr. Gary Lemme is going to lead us  
6 in that this morning.

7 Dr. Lemme.

8 DR. LEMME: Thank you.

9 The Sportsmen's Pledge was first  
10 written by John H. Wallace, Jr., State  
11 Game/Fish Commissioner in 1908. I think  
12 it is as appropriate today as it was  
13 then. Let's recite it.

14 Since the State in its sovereign  
15 capacity occupies the attitude of  
16 guardian and custodian of the people's  
17 welfare, it is therefore the duty of the  
18 State by enactment of appropriate  
19 legislation to endeavor to extend  
20 adequate protection to those resources  
21 in which the people have collectively a  
22 natural right. Wise and discreet  
23 individuals who feel no inclination to

1           make assaults on nature's storehouse  
2           should have their rights protected by  
3           the enactment of strong laws to restrain  
4           the hands of the wanton and reckless  
5           whose vandalism would annihilate every  
6           visible thing of fin, fur, or feather to  
7           gratify their savage instincts.

8           CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, Dr. Lemme, very  
9           much. That's important.

10                  Mr. Secretary, do we have a quorum  
11           today?

12           COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: We do.

13           CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you.

14                  So the first piece of business are  
15           our minutes, the minutes of March 9th,  
16           2019. I know our Board has read them.  
17           Are there any corrections to be noted?

18                  (No response.)

19           CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Being no corrections, the  
20           Chair approves the minutes as written.

21                  I'm going to ask each Board member  
22           to -- you don't have to stand to do  
23           this, and we won't do our district

1 reports today. But if each of you,  
2 starting at the end with Mr. Barksdale,  
3 would give us your congressional  
4 district, please -- your name and  
5 congressional district.

6 MR. BARKSDALE: My name is Greg Barksdale.

7 I'm with District 4.

8 MR. BROCK JONES: Brock Jones, District 7.

9 MR. WOOD: Tim Wood, District 7.

10 MR. STIMPSON: Ben Stimpson, District 1.

11 MR. RAYMOND JONES: Raymond Jones,

12 Congressional District 5.

13 MR. WOLFE: Gary Wolfe, District 1.

14 MR. HARTZOG: Grady Hartzog, District 2.

15 DR. LEMME: Gary Lemme, Director of the  
16 Alabama Cooperative Extension System.

17 MR. CAGLE: Patrick Cagle, District 2.

18 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: And I'm Chris

19 Blankenship, Commissioner of the

20 Department of Conservation.

21 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Joey Dobbs, District 6.

22 To everybody here today, please get  
23 to know your congressional district



1           representatives. Their districts are  
2           defined in the *Digest*. There are *Digests*  
3           on the table. Their contact information  
4           is in there as well. These are the  
5           gentlemen I hope that you contact with  
6           ideas and issues and programs as it  
7           relates to the Department of  
8           Conservation and Natural Resources and  
9           its divisions: Marine Resources, State  
10          Lands, State Parks, and Wildlife and  
11          Freshwater Fisheries.

12                 The directors of those divisions  
13                 I've mentioned and their adjuncts are  
14                 here today. And they all work very hard  
15                 and work with great people that are  
16                 passionate about their jobs and are  
17                 looking out for the future of our  
18                 resources. Thank them every chance you  
19                 get.

20                 Commissioner Blankenship, who  
21                 directs these divisions with help from  
22                 Deputy Commissioner Ed Poolos, is going  
23                 to provide us an update since our last

1 meeting and introduce our special  
2 guests.

3 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Good morning.

4 There are certain legislators and  
5 different individuals that are really  
6 supportive of the work that we do in the  
7 Department of Conservation and in our  
8 State Parks. Representative Steve  
9 McMillan is one of those people.

10 Representative McMillan has been  
11 extremely active on the Joint  
12 Legislative Committee on State Parks.  
13 He's been very instrumental in the  
14 leadership on the Gulf State Park  
15 project that helped make this whole  
16 hotel and conference center possible.

17 And so every year there's a group  
18 that we present Eagle Awards to  
19 different individuals that have been  
20 supportive of our State Parks. And so  
21 at this time I'd ask Representative  
22 McMillan to come up front with Greg  
23 Lein, our State Parks Director.

1           The Eagle Awards are just a small  
2           token of appreciation to recognize the  
3           work that's been done to support the  
4           State Parks, and it is our honor to  
5           present to Representative Steve McMillan  
6           the Eagle Award for this year in 2019.  
7           Thank you, sir.

8           MR. McMILLAN: Don't ever ask an elected  
9           official if they'd like to say anything.  
10          I'll be very brief.

11          There are probably several people  
12          that are as deserving or perhaps even  
13          more deserving than me of this award,  
14          but nobody appreciates it more. I just  
15          outlived everybody. Thank you.

16          COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: As I said,  
17          Mr. McMillan has been a great supporter,  
18          and I'm sure he'll continue to do that  
19          for many years.

20          I do have a few brief comments I'd  
21          like to make. One, I'd like to  
22          recognize Patrick Moody who's at the  
23          end. Patrick Moody is the Deputy

1 Commissioner for the Department of Ag  
2 and Industries, and he's here sitting in  
3 for Commissioner Rick Pate who's unable  
4 to be here today. And Patrick won't be  
5 voting. He's just a proxy for Mr. Pate  
6 today.

7 We're glad to have you here,  
8 Patrick, way down there at the end.  
9 Good to see you.

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MOODY: Good to be back  
11 with y'all.

12 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: I do have a couple  
13 of updates for the Board on things that  
14 have happened in the Department.

15 The first thing I'd like to do is  
16 recognize Amy Hunter. I hope  
17 Ms. Hunter has made it and is not caught  
18 up in traffic somewhere. She is our  
19 Deepwater Horizon Coordinator. So a lot  
20 of the work that's being done in  
21 recovery from the oil spill is taking  
22 place, and Amy is coordinating that.

23 And I don't see her here this

1 morning. She must have gotten caught up  
2 in traffic trying to get down here  
3 today. So when she gets here, I will  
4 point her out to you all.

5 This hotel, the Lodge and Conference  
6 Center -- Chandra Wright, who is  
7 Director of Sustainability and Education  
8 for the hotel, is here. She can talk a  
9 whole lot more about it. But I will say  
10 that this is the only hotel in the world  
11 that meets all of the sustainability  
12 requirements that this hotel has. We  
13 have LEED Gold and SITES Platinum. If  
14 you went to the restaurant last night  
15 and you got what you thought was a piece  
16 of hay in your drink, that is a  
17 biodegradable straw.

18 So there are multiple things that  
19 are being done here to make this  
20 facility to have the least amount of  
21 footprint as possible and to be  
22 extremely sustainable for the  
23 environment.

1           I hope that while you're here today  
2           you'll have a little bit of a chance to  
3           visit the Interpretive Center, which is  
4           down next to the Pavilion. That will be  
5           the first Certified Living Building in a  
6           state facility or government facility in  
7           the country. So that means that it  
8           produces more electricity and produces  
9           more water and natural resources than it  
10          uses. It will produce at least  
11          105-percent electricity compared to what  
12          we use down there.

13           So it is a model -- this whole  
14          complex is really a model of  
15          sustainability for the environment. And  
16          so it's very beautiful, but a lot of the  
17          things that you'll see around here that  
18          may be a little odd for most hotels that  
19          you're used to seeing -- a lot of that  
20          is to make it as environmentally  
21          friendly as possible. So thank you all  
22          for taking the time to be here.

23           And Chandra Wright -- I saw Chandra

1 earlier. If you want to know anything  
2 about the sustainability elements, ask  
3 her. She can tell you stuff that you  
4 did want to know and that you probably  
5 didn't want to know.

6 Amy Hunter is our Deepwater Horizon  
7 Coordinator for the Department. So I  
8 wanted the Board to meet Amy and see  
9 Amy.

10 There are a couple of things that  
11 have happened since our last meeting.  
12 Red snapper management, which we talk a  
13 lot about with the Board, we've been  
14 under an exempted fishing permit in  
15 Alabama for 2018 to 2019 that gave the  
16 State the ability to manage the red  
17 snapper fishery. That was a temporary  
18 measure. We were looking for -- through  
19 the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management  
20 Council to be able to extend that State  
21 management moving forward.

22 In April that was approved by the  
23 Gulf Council and has been transmitted to

1           the Secretary of Commerce. And so the  
2           State of Alabama along with the other  
3           Gulf states will be managing the red  
4           snapper season for the private  
5           recreational fishermen beginning in 2020  
6           and going forward.

7           So I would like to commend Kevin  
8           Anson and Scott Bannon on their work to  
9           make that a permanent reality. So thank  
10          you very much.

11          And while we're talking about the  
12          Marine Resources Division and the  
13          management in the state, the Monterey  
14          Bay Aquarium has a watch list. It's  
15          called Seafood Watch. And most of the  
16          top-end restaurants around the country  
17          and many hotel chains, big box stores  
18          like Walmart, Target, they look at that  
19          watch list to decide what products  
20          they're going to carry either in their  
21          store or serve in their restaurant. If  
22          something -- there are three different  
23          categories: There's avoid. There's a



1 good alternative. Then there's an  
2 approved. That's the green.

3 Because of the very good management  
4 in the state of Alabama for the crab  
5 fishery here, Alabama is going to be the  
6 only -- the update comes out on Monday.  
7 Alabama is going to be the only state in  
8 the Gulf whose blue crab fishery is  
9 going to be considered a good  
10 alternative. All the other states in  
11 the Gulf and up the Atlantic Seaboard is  
12 going to be considered avoid.

13 So I really would like to commend  
14 Marine Resources Division and the  
15 regulations that were put in place  
16 several years ago to help protect  
17 diamondback terrapins and some of the  
18 other nursery areas in our rivers. And  
19 so because of that, Alabama is going to  
20 have what I consider to be an advantage  
21 over those other states and open up some  
22 markets for us that maybe we would not  
23 have had without the good work that's

1           being done by the Department of  
2           Conservation.

3           So I always like to point out  
4           something that I think is of interest to  
5           the Board that sets us apart from other  
6           states. And so that should come out on  
7           Monday.

8           I want to give a quick legislative  
9           update. That was asked at the last  
10          meeting if we would give an update on  
11          our legislation that affects the  
12          Department. I think you have that in  
13          your packet. I'll make this very brief.

14          The bills are grouped -- if there's  
15          a house bill and a senate bill that are  
16          the same or companion bills, those are  
17          grouped together.

18          The first one, HB 190 and Senate  
19          Bill 81, those are both bills that would  
20          allow us to implement some parking  
21          regulations like at the Beach Pavilion  
22          here and in other Wildlife Management  
23          Areas, different areas in our state

1 parks, for us to be able to enforce some  
2 parking regulations there. That one has  
3 been introduced, and we have a  
4 substitute bill that should be ready  
5 this week. After consultation with  
6 several legislators and the Alabama  
7 Administrative Office of Courts to make  
8 that bill better, we'll have a  
9 substitute that will be introduced  
10 hopefully this week.

11 House Bill 344 and Senate Bill 209  
12 by Senator Holley is a bill that would  
13 establish a three-day saltwater fishing  
14 event license. It would establish a  
15 special reduced-fee saltwater fishing  
16 license for disabled veterans and would  
17 provide a check-off option when you buy  
18 your license if you'd like to donate an  
19 extra dollar for saltwater fisheries  
20 management.

21 This matches what we already had for  
22 freshwater. This was an oversight from  
23 when that legislation was passed in the

1 late -- in 2008-2009. This brings the  
2 saltwater in line with freshwater. And  
3 that has passed both the house and the  
4 senate and has been transmitted to the  
5 Governor for her signature.

6 House Bill 395 and Senate Bill 167  
7 removes antiquated statutory  
8 requirements for commercial fishing gear  
9 where it had to have people's personal  
10 identifying information -- social  
11 security number, address -- on the gear  
12 that they leave out for trapping and for  
13 commercial freshwater fishing. We  
14 didn't think as a Department that that  
15 was in the best interest of our  
16 constituents to have their personal  
17 information floating around out in a  
18 river somewhere.

19 So we're working with the  
20 legislature to be able to issue them  
21 some type of number that identifies them  
22 but without their personal information.  
23 And that has passed the house, and

1 another version has passed the senate.  
2 So now we need to get -- one of those  
3 versions that have passed the house and  
4 the senate need to pass the other house  
5 and senate.

6 House Bill 481 and Senate Bill 314  
7 are companion bills. We've made several  
8 regulation changes over the years to  
9 protect our state from the introduction  
10 of CWD. One of those includes not being  
11 able to bring live cervids into our  
12 state.

13 Previously we also had where you  
14 couldn't bring carcasses back from  
15 states that were CWD positive. Last  
16 year or, I guess, year before last we  
17 changed that to where you just couldn't  
18 bring carcasses back from any state,  
19 which I think has proven over the last  
20 two years to be a prudent decision on  
21 behalf of you and the Department with  
22 the positives being found in Tennessee  
23 and Mississippi during the hunting

1 season. If we didn't have that in  
2 place, then there's a great possibility  
3 that those could have led to  
4 difficulties here.

5 So one thing that was missing is  
6 that zoos, circuses, pet shops, petting  
7 zoos -- there was no prohibition on them  
8 bringing cervids into the state. They  
9 could have been in Missouri or Arkansas  
10 or somewhere yesterday at a fair and  
11 then brought back into our state. And  
12 so we've asked -- we're working with the  
13 legislature to try and pass something  
14 that would further protect our state by  
15 not allowing cervids to come into our  
16 state with petting zoos or circuses or  
17 anything like that. That bill has  
18 passed committees in both of the houses  
19 but has not been taken up in either  
20 chamber.

21 And then House Bill 511 and Senate  
22 Bill 97, the House Bill is sponsored by  
23 Representative Stringer who is here

1           today. This updates our penalty section  
2           on our Wildlife Management Areas. The  
3           penalty section was set in 1939 and has  
4           not been updated since then. This  
5           brings the penalty section in WMAs into  
6           the current Class C misdemeanor regime  
7           that all of our other violations in the  
8           Department fall under. And the senate  
9           version has passed the senate and has  
10          passed the house committee and hopefully  
11          will be on the -- we can get that on the  
12          house calendar to pass sometime in the  
13          next couple of weeks. So it's just one  
14          step away from passing.

15                 A couple of other bills that just  
16                 might be of interest. I have one here,  
17                 House Bill 5, that would be a check-off  
18                 for the State Parks. It's been assigned  
19                 to a committee but has not had any  
20                 movement.

21                 House Bill 107 by Chip Brown would  
22                 authorize the Department of Public  
23                 Health to issue permits for oyster

1           gardening, oyster aquaculture under --  
2           or for recreational use -- it would make  
3           them have to provide an address or  
4           contact information so that they could  
5           be given information about the dangers  
6           of consuming shellfish in those areas  
7           and during the summer months. And that  
8           has been given a favorable report on the  
9           committee, and it is on the calendar for  
10          Tuesday in the house to be debated.

11                 House Bill 335 by Representative  
12          Wadsworth would provide an exemption for  
13          licensing for a high school fishing  
14          team. We've been able to work with the  
15          representative and our Conservation  
16          Officers Association, I think, has  
17          worked with them to try and find the  
18          ability to sponsor some of those  
19          students on some of the fishing teams.  
20          But we feel like that part of the  
21          education of the fishing teams is to  
22          explain what a fishing license fee --  
23          what that goes for. It provides the



1 boating access and other things. So  
2 that bill has not moved.

3 There's a couple of other ones on  
4 here, two by Senator Holley that he has  
5 agreed to carry over those bills. We  
6 were able to find a resolution to those  
7 issues that he had. And one of the  
8 bills was not necessary because we  
9 already have that ability for disabled  
10 hunters to have a reduced-cost license.

11 Senate Bill 66 authorizes the taking  
12 of whitetail deer or feral swine by  
13 means of bait. That has passed both the  
14 house and the senate and has been  
15 transmitted to the Governor for  
16 signature.

17 And then Senate Bill 215 by David  
18 Sessions is a bill that concerns the  
19 disposition of dredging material from  
20 ship channels, and that does have some  
21 effect on us. The Department is named  
22 in that bill as having some  
23 responsibilities. That bill was given a

1 favorable report in the senate  
2 committee, and it is pending being  
3 placed on the calendar for voting in the  
4 senate.

5 There's a lot of legislation that's  
6 going on. Charlanna Skaggs and Ed  
7 Poolos, our Deputy Commissioner and our  
8 General Counsel, are doing a very good  
9 job of coordinating the legislation that  
10 affects the Department, and we're more  
11 than halfway through the legislative  
12 session. And when the session ends, I  
13 will send the Board a synopsis -- an  
14 updated synopsis of this with what  
15 passed and what didn't and what  
16 transpired throughout the session.

17 Are there any questions on that?

18 MR. HARTZOG: Chris, I have one question.

19 On Holley's bill on the  
20 rattlesnakes, he decided to carry that  
21 one over?

22 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir.

23 MR. HARTZOG: Okay. I understood there was a

1 lot of concern by the gopher tortoise  
2 folks because of the possibility of  
3 having them assigned to a different  
4 endangered species classification  
5 because of the methods in taking those  
6 rattlesnakes might affect the gopher  
7 tortoises. Is that the Department's ...

8 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: So there was a  
9 misunderstanding, I think, with Senator  
10 Holley and some of the people in that  
11 area on what was needed for them to  
12 continue to have the Rattlesnake Rodeo  
13 and to do that sustainably and something  
14 that doesn't unduly affect the  
15 rattlesnake population.

16 And so we were able to talk with the  
17 City of Opp, and then we have a meeting  
18 coming up with them for a longer-term  
19 resolution on what we need from them to  
20 be able to show the educational benefits  
21 and then what is happening -- the  
22 disposition of the snakes that are a  
23 part of the rodeo. Because it does --

1           the rattlesnake -- eastern diamondback  
2           rattlesnake and the gopher tortoise do  
3           use -- and indigo all use a very similar  
4           habitat. And so what happens with all  
5           of those species has a chance to impact  
6           the others.

7           So if there's something that's put  
8           in place -- for instance, if the  
9           rattlesnake is listed as a threatened or  
10          endangered species, that could have a  
11          big impact on forestry operations and  
12          other things that happen. So we're  
13          diligently working with the Fish and  
14          Wildlife Service to ensure healthy  
15          populations of all three of those  
16          species that you mentioned.

17         MR. HARTZOG: Well, like I said, the main  
18          concern I heard was from the gopher  
19          tortoise folks and the timber industry  
20          down there, because if the gopher  
21          tortoise gets reclassified, I think  
22          there's a -- isn't the division zone for  
23          that, Chuck, right there around in the

1                   Conecuh Forest?

2           DIRECTOR SYKES: We're doing everything we can  
3           working with U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
4           Service, and I think the Commissioner  
5           has convinced Senator Holley that  
6           everything is going to be okay on our  
7           end. One more meeting and we'll have  
8           all that put to bed. So we're in good  
9           shape.

10          MR. HARTZOG: All right. Thank you.

11          COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: And as you'll  
12           recall from several years ago, some  
13           regulations and different things were  
14           put in place on how -- some methods that  
15           were being used to catch those  
16           rattlesnakes that was not  
17           environmentally friendly was changed by  
18           the Department. And since then I don't  
19           think what you're -- that was a problem  
20           before with the gopher tortoises and the  
21           things that use those burrows that I  
22           don't think is as much of an issue now  
23           because of regulations that were put in

1           place to change the method of harvest.

2       DIRECTOR SYKES:   Correct.

3       MR. HARTZOG:   All right.  Thank you, guys.

4       COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP:  I guess that's all  
5           I've got.

6       CHAIRMAN DOBBS:  Very good.

7       COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP:  Thank you,  
8           Mr. Chairman.

9       CHAIRMAN DOBBS:  Yes, sir.  Thank you.  Thank  
10           you, Commissioner.

11               We're very quickly going to run  
12           through with the Directors and say that  
13           Colonel Bannon's son is at a baseball  
14           playoff today.  We hope that he  
15           prevails, and we wish him luck.

16               Standing in his stead today is  
17           Assistant Director Kevin Anson.  He's  
18           going to provide us some insight into  
19           their programs and some pending  
20           activities and some of the new  
21           regulations.

22               Kevin.

23       CHIEF ANSON:  Yes, sir.  Thank you.

1           So we have some regulations that we  
2           have offered or some proposals related  
3           to -- some regulation changes related to  
4           southern flounder and spotted sea trout.

5           So we've had some assessments that  
6           were conducted independently through  
7           some professors at University of South  
8           Alabama for both species, and both  
9           indicated that here recently both  
10          species are in decline. And the spotted  
11          sea trout is in the least amount of  
12          decline, but it has shown in the last 5  
13          to 7 years that its breeding stock is  
14          not at a sustainable level.

15          So we've suggested implementing a  
16          slot limit size for capture on that  
17          species. Currently there is not. But  
18          that slot limit ranges from 15 inches to  
19          22 inches with one fish that would be  
20          allowed to be captured or kept above  
21          that size. Currently the size limit is  
22          14 inches.

23          The other recommendation related to

1 spotted sea trout or speckled trout is  
2 implementing a reduction in the bag  
3 limit from ten fish to six fish. And  
4 there is no -- this is all for  
5 recreational. There's currently no  
6 commercial capture harvest of that fish  
7 because it's a gamefish.

8 And then southern flounder, which is  
9 under a little bit more critical  
10 designation according to the assessment  
11 results -- but we've implemented a size  
12 limit change on that. We're suggesting  
13 one to go from 15 -- to go to 15 inches  
14 from 12 inches currently. The fish --  
15 about 25 percent of the females will be  
16 mature at 12 inches, but just under  
17 50 percent will be mature at around  
18 14 inches -- 14 to 15 inches, so -- and  
19 then we've implemented a bag limit  
20 change on it as well from ten fish  
21 recreationally to five fish.

22 And I can't think of the last thing.  
23 We're going to suggest a daily



1 commercial bag limit/possession limit of  
2 30 fish per person -- or 30 fish per  
3 vessel.

4 I noticed looking at the data after  
5 the assessment came out -- we looked at  
6 our licensing information and our  
7 landings information, and there was a  
8 large increase in the amount of  
9 commercial hook-and-line licenses that  
10 were sold around 2009, 2010. We  
11 associated that partly due to the BP oil  
12 spill. Some folks would have purchased  
13 those to try to claim a designation as a  
14 commercial fisherman for some  
15 reimbursement and such. But the number  
16 of commercial licenses had remained  
17 relatively high after that period, but  
18 the amount of landings that are coming  
19 in associated with that gear and those  
20 fishermen have been relatively low  
21 compared to the other traditional forms  
22 of commercial harvest, which are  
23 gillnet, trawls.

1           So all of the landings associated  
2           with the commercial hook-and-line  
3           license need to be reported, but looking  
4           at our commercial trip ticket  
5           information did not indicate that. So  
6           we're trying to constrain some of that  
7           harvest because we felt like a lot of  
8           folks were using that to catch those  
9           fish and use them for recreational  
10          purpose rather than commercial. So we  
11          thought that that could help curb some  
12          of that harvest with that license.

13       CHAIRMAN DOBBS: If that's everything, are  
14          there any questions from the Board?

15       MR. CAGLE. Mr. Chairman?

16       CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Cagle.

17       MR. CAGLE: I want to commend the Marine  
18          Resources Division for all the work  
19          y'all have done to -- you know, when  
20          y'all first came out at the last meeting  
21          and shared with us y'all's concerns, you  
22          let us know that you were going to  
23          have -- that you were going to put some

1 things in place so that you could reach  
2 out to as many of the user -- to as much  
3 of the user groups as possible, and  
4 y'all really went above and beyond.

5 I really commend the Department for  
6 putting so much effort into that and  
7 helping folks understand the need for  
8 change. It's not just another rule  
9 change, but here's the issue, here's  
10 some options we're considering, listen  
11 to their feedback, and really doing your  
12 best to get it out there. I commend  
13 your efforts for that.

14 CHIEF ANSON: Thank you. Appreciate it.

15 And there was one other thing,  
16 Mr. Dobbs.

17 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Please.

18 CHIEF ANSON: The other thing that we've asked  
19 for approval for is implementation of a  
20 Gulf Reef Fish Endorsement that's a cost  
21 of \$10 per recreational fisherman and  
22 then \$200 for -- essentially \$200 for  
23 charter boats or commercial fishermen

1           too. And that's to do two things.

2                     Primarily it's to give us a better  
3           accounting of who is actually going  
4           offshore and taking part of the reef  
5           fish harvest. Currently we just have a  
6           license that's sold. There's no  
7           designation as to what type of fishing  
8           that person will do with that license.  
9           So it will give us some more information  
10          as to -- to identify the universe of  
11          those anglers, and we can contact those  
12          and ask them questions and such about  
13          their fishing behavior and such.

14                    Then the other part of that is to  
15          increase a little bit more revenue for  
16          us. We've been funding some fishery  
17          independent sampling of our offshore  
18          reef zones since 2011 utilizing a  
19          variety of sampling gears including a  
20          side-scan sonar, ROV, and then  
21          vertical-line and bottom-longline  
22          sampling. That's conducted through  
23          Dr. Sean Powers at University of South

1 Alabama and the Sea Lab folks. And  
2 that's all been funded through other  
3 federal sources.

4 Here as of late, the National Fish  
5 and Wildlife Foundation is distributing  
6 money back to the states from the fines  
7 that are associated with the BP oil  
8 spill. Those monies are ending as of  
9 this year essentially. And so this  
10 would be an opportunity for us to try to  
11 gain some additional funding to support  
12 that research.

13 Some of the benefit of that research  
14 area is to provide information directly  
15 into the federal stock assessment which  
16 is used for establishing a quota -- the  
17 Gulf-wide quota in the red snapper  
18 fishery. And we also gather other  
19 information on gray triggerfish and  
20 greater amberjack and such. And we're  
21 hoping that the amendment that was  
22 recently passed that Commissioner  
23 Blankenship mentioned will provide some

1 additional opportunities for the states  
2 to gain more access or at least manage  
3 the fisheries out there of their states,  
4 and this would be an integral program in  
5 that.

6 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Hartzog.

7 MR. HARTZOG: Two questions: First one, on  
8 the recommendation for the changes both  
9 for commercial and recreational on the  
10 flounder, do we have any estimates of  
11 the total pounds taken by commercial  
12 versus recreational?

13 CHIEF ANSON: We do. I would say off the top  
14 of my head that it would be  
15 approximately 20-percent commercial,  
16 80-percent recreational.

17 MR. HARTZOG: Second question: Refresh my  
18 memory. Weren't we going to start a new  
19 hatchery program for the flounder?

20 CHIEF ANSON: So we have begun that. We  
21 started collecting broodstock of  
22 southern flounder last year, and we'll  
23 be trying to spawn those fish this

1           coming winter when they would normally  
2           spawn in the December, January time  
3           period. That species of fish, other  
4           researchers have found it takes a long  
5           time to acclimate and to get them to  
6           feel comfortable in spawning in a  
7           captive situation. So we're hoping that  
8           we'll have successful spawning this  
9           coming winter.

10       MR. HARTZOG: Weren't we shooting just for  
11           75,000 release? Was that the figure I  
12           remember?

13       CHIEF ANSON: 50 to 60 is what we would  
14           eventually like to get to, yes. The  
15           assessment -- one of the results of the  
16           assessment indicated that approximately  
17           400,000 6-inch flounder are recruited  
18           under good conditions, good spawning  
19           naturally. So we don't want to  
20           introduce too many fish that would kind  
21           of corrupt the gene pool, if you will.  
22           So we target it around 50 to 60,000 --

23       MR. HARTZOG: And we think we'll be able to

1                   achieve that?

2           CHIEF ANSON: We hope to, yes.

3           MR. HARTZOG: Okay. Thank you.

4           CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Any other questions from the  
5                   Board for Kevin?

6           MR. HARTZOG: Thank you, Kevin.

7           CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, Kevin. Thank you  
8                   very much.

9                   Ms. Patti McCurdy from State Lands,  
10                   do you have anything for us today?

11          DIRECTOR McCURDY: Mr. Chairman, I do not. If  
12                   there are any questions from the Board  
13                   today, I'll be happy to address those,  
14                   but I don't have anything I need to ...

15          CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Are there any questions of  
16                   Director McCurdy from the Board?

17                   (No response.)

18          CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Fair enough. Scot-free.

19          DIRECTOR McCURDY: So far.

20          CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you.

21                   Director Lein. The lodge -- thank  
22                   you. This has been wonderful. What a  
23                   great experience for all of us. It's



1           just top shelf. The food was wonderful.  
2           The staff was great. We just had a  
3           wonderful time. Anything that you'd  
4           like to add today?

5           DIRECTOR LEIN: Good morning. Thank you,  
6           Mr. Chairman.

7                     I would just like to say that things  
8           are really good in the Parks system  
9           right now. There's a lot of work that  
10          we've wanted to do to take care of our  
11          facilities, undertake the maintenance  
12          that we lacked the resources to  
13          undertake years ago. That's happening.  
14          There's a lot of progress happening.

15                    It was 14 -- 15 years ago was the  
16          last time this Board was able to meet at  
17          the Lodge at Gulf State Park. And  
18          having this facility now, we feel whole  
19          again. And there's a lot of progress  
20          going on. Things are very positive.

21                    And I would just say to the public,  
22          you know, if you want to help the State  
23          Parks system, get out and use your State

1           Parks system. That's how you help the  
2           Parks system. Use it. Thank you.

3           CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you. You've been  
4           smiling at every meeting we've been at  
5           together in the last few months, so  
6           congratulations. I'm glad all is well.  
7           Very good.

8           DIRECTOR LEIN: Thank you.

9           CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Director Sykes, do you have  
10          anything to add besides what's in our  
11          packets?

12          DIRECTOR SYKES: No, sir, I do not.

13          CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Are there any questions for  
14          Director Sykes from the Board?

15                            (No response.)

16          CHAIRMAN DOBBS: No questions from the Board.  
17          All right.

18                    I would like to remind everybody to  
19                    please download the latest *Outdoor*  
20                    *Alabama* app for Game Check and  
21                    participate not only for deer and turkey  
22                    but also for snapper. Realize that  
23                    what's happened with exempted fishing

1           permits is because of that, because of  
2           us controlling and understanding and  
3           knowing how many fish we catch. It's  
4           very important.

5           The same thing goes with deer and  
6           turkey. Please participate. It's the  
7           law, and it makes a huge difference.

8           And also buy a license. Please buy  
9           a license whether you're fishing,  
10          hunting, trapping, commercially or  
11          recreationally. Please buy your  
12          license. That helps. That's how the  
13          Department is funded.

14          The next part of our meeting is  
15          the -- the next agenda item is the  
16          public commentary. This is a very  
17          important part of our program. We've  
18          got eight speakers today. We'll move  
19          through that.

20          I'm going to ask everyone that comes  
21          to the podium today -- I want you to  
22          please -- and everyone in the  
23          auditorium -- please be respectful.

1 Reserve your comments for outside of the  
2 hall. No applause. No outbursts during  
3 the question-and-answer period.

4 I'm going to ask each Board member  
5 to refer to the Chair for the floor.  
6 And I'm going to ask the speakers to not  
7 engage directly or, as Ms. Tracye says,  
8 overspeak. And the reason I ask is  
9 because she's got a small button and it  
10 sends an electric charge to me and I  
11 then have to stop everything and regroup  
12 so that she gets a permanent record for  
13 our minutes. So help me. Don't let me  
14 get zapped.

15 Ms. Jones is going to hold time on  
16 the speakers. Everyone has three  
17 minutes. I reserve the right to give  
18 you a few more moments to make a  
19 specific point. Please don't ramble,  
20 but let's make a specific point. And,  
21 again, let's be courteous and  
22 considerate of the folks that are  
23 speaking.

1                   And we're not going to use the ready  
2 chair since we only have eight speakers.  
3 Is that okay?

4                   Our first speaker today is Mr. Jimmy  
5 Jimmerson.

6       MR. JIMMERSON: Good morning. I think that  
7 most of you have seen me before. I  
8 think this is about the third year that  
9 I've been here to present to you.

10                  We're still -- I'm from Cleburne  
11 County in northeast Alabama. We're  
12 still asking the Board to approve that  
13 we can move the 10 days from the end of  
14 the season to the beginning of the deer  
15 season. We've worked very diligently  
16 with the Department of Conservation  
17 biologists, have shot many does, and  
18 we've tested and all the facts are in.

19                  And the main thing that I've kind of  
20 been -- I hear is that there's other  
21 areas in the state that they're having  
22 the same problem. And I think they're  
23 wanting to wait until all those areas

1           can be done at the same time. But if we  
2           go ahead and do what we've been asked to  
3           do and show that the facts are showing  
4           that the deer do rut early, why not go  
5           ahead and allow Cleburne County because  
6           of the facts that we've got and then  
7           when these other areas of the state come  
8           to you, all you got to do is say, well,  
9           we've got a list of things that's got to  
10          be done, Cleburne County has done those  
11          things, it's all factual and ...

12                 Just let us go ahead and start the  
13          program. And that's all I've got unless  
14          somebody has got any questions.

15   CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, Mr. Jimmerson.

16                 Are there any questions for  
17          Mr. Jimmerson?

18                         (No response.)

19   CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you for coming to us.

20                 We always enjoy you being here. Thank  
21          you.

22   MR. JIMMERSON: Thank you.

23   CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Our next speaker --

1 MR. HARTZOG: Mr. Chairman?

2 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: I'm sorry. Mr. Hartzog.

3 MR. HARTZOG: Not a question for

4 Mr. Jimmerson, but a question for Chuck.

5 I think at the last meeting

6 because -- I mean, I know some states

7 that's got 30 different zones in it.

8 And, remember, I think I threw out a

9 suggestion. Since we've got a

10 three-buck limit anyway, would it be

11 easier for the State to do a statewide

12 and just move the 10 days earlier, still

13 leave the February the 10th? Has the

14 State looked at that possibility of

15 doing that and that way we don't have to

16 worry about gerrymandering this part of

17 the county?

18 Because my county is one of the

19 counties that was affected. As you

20 know, we've got three different distinct

21 DNAs, you know, in Barbour County. Have

22 we -- I think I brought it up at the

23 last meeting for us to possibly look at

1           the -- just go ahead and giving, like  
2           Mr. Jimmerson, his 10 days up front and  
3           still have the February the 10th and  
4           hunt your rut when you got your rut.  
5           Have we looked at that, or would that  
6           be ...

7           DIRECTOR SYKES: Yes. Anything is possible.  
8           We've looked at it. As Mr. Jimmerson  
9           said, the data is there. We've got it  
10          in your county too. It's just whether  
11          you want to add 10 more days to the  
12          front. That's up to y'all.

13                 We've got the data. You can hunt  
14          from October 15th to February the 10th.  
15          So however we need to do it, all we just  
16          need is direction on what needs to  
17          happen.

18          MR. HARTZOG: What would --

19          CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Hartzog, we've been  
20          through this several times, and I'm  
21          tickled to go through it again, but  
22          let's do this. Let's form a -- if you  
23          want to, let's form some sort of



1 guidelines. Let the Board talk about  
2 that or send that to the Board and then  
3 to staff for their review, and then  
4 we'll vote on it at the next meeting.  
5 We'll hash it out then.

6 MR. HARTZOG: That's fine.

7 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Is that acceptable?

8 MR. HARTZOG: Yes, sir.

9 DIRECTOR SYKES: Absolutely.

10 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Okay. Thank you.

11 Thank you, Mr. Jimmerson.

12 Our next speaker today is Mr. Corey  
13 Baxter.

14 MR. BAXTER: Appreciate it. I want to first  
15 say that I'm for dog hunting and I  
16 support all types of dog hunting,  
17 whether it be deer or squirrel or  
18 rabbit. I appreciate all you guys, and  
19 I know that we may not necessarily agree  
20 on everything. But we're all Americans  
21 and we're all here in this country and  
22 we enjoy different types of wildlife or  
23 whatever it may be. And I respect you

1 for that and I appreciate you taking the  
2 time to listen to us and respect our  
3 method of hunting as well.

4 And I noticed as we started this  
5 meeting today we started with the Pledge  
6 of Allegiance, you know. And there's  
7 one word towards the end of the Pledge  
8 of Allegiance that's "liberty". And I  
9 just was thinking over there. So what  
10 is liberty?

11 The state of being free within  
12 society from oppressive restrictions  
13 imposed by authority on one's way of  
14 life.

15 You know, and as somebody that deer  
16 hunts with dogs, I do everything in my  
17 power that I can possibly do to control  
18 those dogs at every part of my hunting,  
19 even to the point that I've invested  
20 \$4,000 in the Garmin GPS tracking  
21 system. My goal is to never have one of  
22 my dogs on somebody else's property. I  
23 don't know of anybody that I hunt with

1           that wants their dog on somebody else's  
2           property. I don't know of anybody that  
3           I hunt with that wouldn't do anything in  
4           their power to keep that dog from  
5           getting on someone else's property.

6           And as we move forward -- dog  
7           hunting has progressed over the last 10  
8           years dramatically. Me as a dog hunter  
9           and the people that I hunt with, we have  
10          taken great lengths to improve the way  
11          that we hunt, to respect stalk hunters  
12          and landowners that are all around us,  
13          and for the most part I think we do a  
14          really good job.

15          And as we work hard to improve, it  
16          is something that I would like to see  
17          that the restrictions not increase upon  
18          the way that we hunt. As we are  
19          invested into this, I ask you to not  
20          impose more restrictions on us. They  
21          don't help.

22          The restrictions -- if somebody is  
23          going to break the law, they're going to

1 break the law. And I'm going to tell  
2 you, if you're breaking the law, if  
3 you're hunting on somebody else's land,  
4 if you're turning dogs loose on somebody  
5 else's land, I'll turn them in. I don't  
6 want to be categorized in the same  
7 sentence as somebody that is an outlaw  
8 dog hunter.

9 Just as I drove over here, I noticed  
10 I'm doing 55 miles an hour. I'm obeying  
11 the speed limit. Somebody comes flying  
12 past me doing 70. Thank God they don't  
13 shut down the highways, you know, and  
14 regulate driving.

15 And you may say, well, he's  
16 overreacting. Well, I'm not really  
17 overreacting because there's counties in  
18 our state of Alabama that's already  
19 been --

20 MS. JONES: Time.

21 MR. BAXTER: Just give me 30 seconds maybe?

22 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: 30 seconds.

23 MR. BAXTER: -- that have been closed. I

1 don't want to see my counties closed in  
2 the future.

3 I'm for regulations as far as  
4 putting penalties on people who break  
5 the law, but even with a \$4,000 tracking  
6 system they fail. You lose service. A  
7 collar breaks. There is room for error.

8 So as you make your regulations, I  
9 ask you to think about that, and let's  
10 work together to try to make it better  
11 for everybody, not just one or two.  
12 Appreciate it.

13 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Hold on, Mr. Baxter.

14 Are there any questions for  
15 Mr. Baxter from the Board?

16 (No response.)

17 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you very much.

18 MR. WOLFE: Mr. Chairman?

19 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Yes, Mr. Wolfe.

20 MR. WOLFE: What's your feelings on the permit  
21 system?

22 MR. BAXTER: The permit system in itself does  
23 a better job of -- instead of shutting

1 down a whole county because of a few, it  
2 shuts down that particular area, which  
3 still affects a lot of people.

4 So as far as a permit system is  
5 concerned, it will never affect me  
6 because the people that I hunt with obey  
7 the law. So I would rather -- if it  
8 came down to losing my right in that  
9 county to hunt or being on a permit  
10 system, then I would have to say that I  
11 would be for the permit system in  
12 general.

13 But the dog encroachment law is --  
14 and I know Mr. Chuck Sykes says it's not  
15 double jeopardy. And in his -- I've  
16 read his report where it says that it --  
17 willfully and knowingly turning a dog  
18 loose on somebody else's property, well,  
19 that's against the law in the first  
20 place. And I'm not going to willfully  
21 and knowingly turn a dog loose on  
22 someone else's property.

23 So if it's comes to the encroachment

1           and a permit system, unlike the permit  
2           system that affects, just say, the  
3           county that we hunt in, it will only  
4           affect that small portion instead of the  
5           whole county, which is fair. I mean,  
6           and I -- if that's what we got to do to  
7           keep from losing the whole county, well,  
8           then, let's penalize the ones that are  
9           doing wrong.

10           And the more that we can do that --  
11           just like somebody -- which I know --  
12           for trespassing. Let's not shut down  
13           the county because three people were  
14           trespassing illegally in that county.  
15           Let's penalize the people who were  
16           trespassing, not shut the whole county  
17           down.

18           Appreciate the question.

19           MR. WOLFE: Thank you.

20           CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Baxter, I think that we  
21           all share your sentiment, and that's  
22           what the dog encroachment rule is  
23           intended for. It's not for the people

1           that obey the law. It's for the people  
2           that don't. Just please remember that.  
3           There's no double jeopardy in that.  
4           Thank you.

5                     The next speaker is Mr. Wade  
6           Buckner.

7           MR. BUCKNER: He almost hit on what I was  
8           talking about, but the only problem I  
9           see with it is -- between the permit law  
10          and the encroachment law is that if  
11          you're running a Garmin and a GPS that  
12          dog is considered on a leash. Why isn't  
13          the leash law of, say, our county good  
14          enough for that?

15                    That's my main question.

16                    Or in the permit system you're  
17          taking a group of people, but there's no  
18          other law that we have that takes a  
19          group of people and fines a group of  
20          people. It only fines the person that  
21          does wrong. And that's where -- that's  
22          where I'm getting confused on this,  
23          because you're stacking up laws here.



1           You got a leash law that was made who  
2           knows when, then you have a permit law,  
3           and now you got an encroachment law.

4                     And I'm surrounded by dog hunters.  
5           I have private land that is not  
6           dog-hunted. And so far the only people  
7           that have been encroaching on it have  
8           been still hunters. And I've caught  
9           them, got them on camera, and, you know,  
10          told them not to do it again.

11                    And that's where I'm -- that's what  
12          I'm trying to get people to look at and  
13          think about it is we're stacking up laws  
14          here, but we're not accomplishing  
15          anything. You know, why can't we come  
16          to a solution where there's only one law  
17          that handles this instead of trying this  
18          law, trying that law, trying this law,  
19          but not getting rid of a law that is  
20          void anymore. That's all I have to say  
21          about it.

22          CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you.

23                    Are there any questions for

1 Mr. Buckner?

2 (No response.)

3 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, Mr. Buckner.

4 At this point if we can maybe clear  
5 up some of this -- we only have a few  
6 more speakers.

7 Chief Weathers, if you don't mind  
8 speaking to the issue of the dog  
9 encroachment rule, the leash laws, and  
10 the lack of overlap.

11 CHIEF WEATHERS: So to address the Board and  
12 clear up some questions for everybody in  
13 the audience, the last speaker brought  
14 up the State's dog leash law.

15 The State of Alabama adopted a dog  
16 leash law 50 or 60 years ago. It's a  
17 State criminal law. It has to be  
18 ratified by the county commission in  
19 each -- it's a State law, but it does  
20 not become law in a county until the  
21 county commission adopts it, so to  
22 speak.

23 In my mind it is the absolute --

1 well, not the absolute worst way, but it  
2 is a terrible way to deal with the dog  
3 hunting issues. I worked about 15 years  
4 in a county that had adopted the State  
5 leash law, and though it was not  
6 routine, it did occur where dog hunters  
7 would allow a dog to get on private  
8 property. The landowner would call the  
9 sheriff's department. And the way this  
10 issue was handled was typically the  
11 landowner would catch the dog. The  
12 sheriff's department would come out.  
13 They would take the dog to the pound.  
14 They would issue a warrant for the  
15 hunter. He would be arrested and  
16 jailed.

17 It is different groups of people who  
18 do not understand hunting and they do  
19 not certainly understand dog hunting  
20 using a State criminal law to address a  
21 hunting issue, and it's a bad, bad way  
22 to deal with it. I would not like -- I  
23 think there are about 11 counties in the

1 state that have ratified/adopted that  
2 particular State leash law. It's bad  
3 news for all involved. It's using a  
4 sledgehammer to kill a gnat. It's not  
5 the right way.

6 The permit system is good. It has  
7 worked for several decades in this  
8 state. It doesn't address every issue.  
9 It is not perfect. No solution is going  
10 to be perfect. The permit system is  
11 another example of a broad, you know,  
12 sort of a shotgun approach at fixing  
13 problems where the absolute vast  
14 majority of dog hunters -- the absolute  
15 vast majority of areas in the state  
16 where dog hunting occurs are not  
17 problems. We hear nothing about them.  
18 It is particularly certain areas or  
19 certain groups that it's a repetitive  
20 thing. It shifts around a little bit  
21 here and there, but generally speaking,  
22 when you look back, it's certain areas  
23 and certain people.

1           The dog encroachment addition to the  
2 dog hunting law, I think, is a  
3 common-sense way to deal with it. We  
4 don't have to restrict those dog hunting  
5 clubs anymore. We don't have to take  
6 their land away from them. We can be  
7 specific to a member.

8           Under the current guidelines when a  
9 club's member allows a dog to get on a  
10 neighboring landowner or whatever the  
11 violation is, it's the entire club that  
12 is punished, not that member. The dog  
13 encroachment regulation allows us to  
14 ticket that specific member and stay  
15 away from the club, not take land away  
16 from the club. It's the least  
17 intrusive. It truly is holding that  
18 individual responsible for their actions  
19 and not punishing the larger club.

20           Even the club that we get complaints  
21 on, the vast majority of the club causes  
22 no problems. It will be a few people in  
23 that club that repetitively just want

1 to -- they just don't take -- they're  
2 not going to spend \$4,000 on collars  
3 like our previous speaker is spending,  
4 if that makes sense.

5 I think in my mind it's less  
6 intrusive than putting more counties on  
7 the permit system, absolutely less  
8 intrusive than shutting down entire  
9 counties, and a much better solution  
10 than arresting -- physically arresting  
11 and jailing people who lose control of a  
12 dog.

13 And the encroachment subset to the  
14 existing regulation allows for a  
15 warning. It's not a first offense and  
16 you get a ticket. So the people who are  
17 doing it right, who are using a tracking  
18 collar -- like the previous speaker  
19 said, yeah, service gets interrupted.  
20 Collars get damaged. They fall off,  
21 batteries go out, that sort of thing.  
22 It provides for that.

23 An officer comes out and it's only a

1 Conservation officer. It keeps your  
2 police officers and your deputies who  
3 don't understand these issues -- it  
4 keeps them out of it. It's literally a  
5 game warden that walks up and addresses  
6 this issue. And we know collars get  
7 broken. We know there are issues. We  
8 use GPS ourselves. At different places  
9 they work better than others.

10 So if that all makes sense, that's  
11 sort of it in a nutshell.

12 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: It makes perfect sense to me,  
13 and I think it's very viable.

14 Are there any questions for Chief  
15 Weathers about these two issues,  
16 specifically the dog encroachment issue?

17 Mr. Cagle.

18 MR. CAGLE: In your mind with the dog  
19 encroachment rule, what is -- you get a  
20 warning the first time if someone  
21 catches a dog on their property that's  
22 escaped. The second time how is that  
23 handled?

1 CHIEF WEATHERS: Well, could the person  
2 receive a ticket on the second offense?  
3 They certainly could. Is it mandated  
4 that they will? Absolutely not.

5 If it is a reception -- if that  
6 individual hunter has GPS collars, if  
7 they are making every effort to contain  
8 those dogs -- our officers use good  
9 discretion. We give warnings a lot of  
10 times. It is not our intent to write a  
11 bunch of tickets. Our funding isn't  
12 generated by that. It just gives us the  
13 ability.

14 We have places where officers are  
15 called out day after day after day. The  
16 counties aren't on the permit system.  
17 There is no ratification of the State's  
18 leash law. There is no -- currently  
19 there is no dog encroachment. The  
20 landowners who are calling our officers  
21 out, they just have to -- they have to  
22 endure it, and it leads to -- it leads  
23 to some bad things, like what occurred



1 in Clay County this past year.

2 I'm happy to say -- to report to the  
3 Board that the individual who killed the  
4 dog has been indicted in Clay County.  
5 The district attorney chose to indict.  
6 And I think he goes to trial in late May  
7 or June, I think.

8 So dog encroachment should give some  
9 options to that, but it's not mandatory  
10 that on the second call that the  
11 individual will get a ticket.

12 MR. CAGLE: And you and I discussed it some,  
13 but the way you've expressed it to me,  
14 would you agree, that this gives your  
15 officers a tool to address these  
16 problems rather than just leaving it --  
17 you know, that third time you're going  
18 to write a ticket obviously. At that  
19 point I think you've identified someone  
20 that -- you've identified a problem.

21 CHIEF WEATHERS: Sure.

22 MR. CAGLE: And then it gives your officers a  
23 tool to try to address it rather than

1           just saying, you know, there's nothing  
2           else we can do.

3           CHIEF WEATHERS: It gives us, like you say, a  
4           tool that can put out these fires and we  
5           don't have these festering, smoldering  
6           issues like what happened in Clay County  
7           where someone takes a firearm and kills  
8           another man's dog. That should not have  
9           happened, should never happen. There  
10          should be a tool in place to mitigate  
11          the problem long before it gets to that.  
12          And that wasn't the first interaction  
13          there. You know, we arrested that man  
14          before snaring dogs.

15                 So it would be a good tool. And I  
16                 think it would lead to having to put  
17                 fewer counties on the permit system in  
18                 the future and fewer instances where we  
19                 take away land from those permitted  
20                 clubs. We can go after those  
21                 individuals.

22                 And to address the first speaker who  
23                 gave the analogy of speeding and not

1           shutting down the highway, it would be  
2           that analogy if there was no way to  
3           write that person doing 70 miles an hour  
4           a ticket. But we can. We can choose  
5           not to write the person doing 55 miles  
6           an hour, and that person who flies by  
7           can be written a ticket. We don't have  
8           that tool right now to go after that  
9           individual. It's just not there.

10       MR. CAGLE: And one more thing. What would be  
11       the overlap or the -- on a county that's  
12       on a permit, how would -- if the dog  
13       encroachment rule is approved, how would  
14       that interaction be as far as -- you  
15       know, there's concerns that you would be  
16       penalized twice for the same offense.

17       CHIEF WEATHERS: Right. The way we look at it  
18       is that it gives the club a tool that  
19       they really don't currently have, or at  
20       least they can stand on regulation if  
21       they choose to use the tool. If you're  
22       a club member and you get a ticket for  
23       violating this dog encroachment rule,

1           you put the -- conceivably put the whole  
2           club at risk of having their dog  
3           hunting, you know, taken away for that  
4           particular block of land. They can in  
5           their bylaws write in if you're  
6           convicted of this, you cannot apply for  
7           club membership the next year. It gives  
8           them that tool.

9           On our end, if we can go after the  
10          individual and stop that problem, we're  
11          going to be much less likely to take  
12          land away from a dog hunting club, which  
13          to be dead honest is an exceptionally  
14          rare occurrence in its current state.  
15          We usually give warning letters for  
16          years, multiple years, before we  
17          actually start sort of carving out  
18          portions of the club that are causing  
19          problems.

20          So, you know, we're not taking away  
21          a lot of land to begin it, and we  
22          certainly would not take away more. We  
23          would take away less, so to speak.

1 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: All right. Thank you.

2 MR. WOLFE: Mr. Chairman?

3 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Wolfe.

4 MR. WOLFE: When you talk to someone -- when  
5 you walk in that first time and you  
6 confront him and then the second time  
7 and then the third time, at any point do  
8 you contact that -- do you have contact  
9 with the club?

10 What I'm getting at is if you go out  
11 and catch somebody and you get on them  
12 but they don't say anything to the  
13 club --

14 MR. WEATHERS: We can. It's pretty common  
15 when the counties that are on permit  
16 system -- when they send in their  
17 applications for the previous year that  
18 our local officers communicate with  
19 them. They send in maps. They send in  
20 club membership listings, that sort of  
21 thing. That would be the time to say,  
22 okay -- and we do already -- okay, we  
23 arrested two or three members last year

1           for whatever it happens to be. That's  
2           typically when the warning letter would  
3           be generated. In the future, really no  
4           change there. Those club presidents,  
5           whoever is the administrator of the  
6           club, would know that this person has  
7           received a ticket.

8           MR. WOLFE: So the main thing, they're  
9           notified and they understand what that  
10          club member is doing --

11         CHIEF WEATHERS: Not a surprise.

12         MR. WOLFE: -- and not blindsiding them?

13         CHIEF WEATHERS: Right. And that's already  
14          going on too. You know, it's going on  
15          right now. So that would not be a  
16          change.

17         CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Any other questions from the  
18          Board for Chief Weathers?

19                                 (No response.)

20         CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you. Very well spoken.  
21          We appreciate that. I hope that cleared  
22          up for some of the attendees that  
23          there's not double jeopardy.

1 All right. Our next speaker is  
2 Brady Hovater.

3 Brady Hovater?

4 Brady is not here.

5 Next speaker is Susan Morrow.

6 MS. MORROW: Good morning. I think everybody  
7 knows who I am. I'm Susan Morrow, and  
8 you know I stand for dog hunting. I  
9 stalk hunt also. But my problem with  
10 this encroachment thing is if you can't  
11 catch the bad dog hunters now, how are  
12 you going to catch them with  
13 encroachment? How is that going to  
14 work?

15 I don't see how it's going to work  
16 if you can't catch them now. If you  
17 could catch one or two of the bad dog  
18 hunters and -- they would set an  
19 example. The other ones would start  
20 toning down. But it seems to me the dog  
21 hunters keep being discriminated against  
22 because y'all keep putting more and more  
23 on us.

1           The good dog hunters, just like  
2           Corey Baxter -- me and him has hunted  
3           together forever, and he knows what it  
4           takes. I know what it takes. And the  
5           majority of your dog hunters here knows  
6           what it takes. But we're the ones that  
7           will be penalized because, believe it or  
8           not, there's people out there that will  
9           get our dogs and they will hold them.  
10          And they're going to call the game  
11          warden because they have told us they  
12          will do this. This is what they want.  
13          But keep in mind, they're landowners,  
14          but dog hunters are landowners too.

15                 And I think that if you could have a  
16                 couple of these dog hunters that's  
17                 turning loose on other people's property  
18                 or not doing it the right way -- if you  
19                 could catch them -- and I don't see how  
20                 the encroachment is going to help you  
21                 there. It's going to help the landowner  
22                 because they're going to have our dog if  
23                 they can get it. Believe it or not,



1           they will pick our dog up from anywhere  
2           because they want dog hunting stopped.

3                   And I know it's a problem. It's  
4           always an issue. But I promise you, if  
5           you put the encroachment in place and we  
6           start -- don't get any of the bad dog  
7           hunters caught, the good dog hunters,  
8           they're going to quit. Your license  
9           sales is already down, and there's a lot  
10          of dog hunters that that's all they do.  
11          And it's not so much about the harvest.  
12          It's about working with the dogs. And  
13          it's great for the kids.

14                   So I would ask you to really look at  
15          this. Is it going to help the good dog  
16          hunters or is it going to help the bad  
17          dog hunters? Because if they're going  
18          to break the law, they're going to break  
19          the law anyway. And I haven't even seen  
20          one that has been caught. That I would  
21          like to see. We hear about complaints.  
22          Complaints can be a phone call.

23                   The last meeting we had one

1 landowner --

2 MS. JONES: Time.

3 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Go ahead. Make a point.

4 MS. MORROW: -- one landowner, and when that  
5 meeting was over, that landowner come  
6 outside and told us he had us right  
7 where he wanted us. And that's not  
8 fair.

9 So I would ask y'all to please look  
10 at it. If you don't know how the good  
11 dog hunters are working, I invite you to  
12 come and go with one and see how hard we  
13 work. Everybody tries to catch the  
14 dogs. And you know it has went way  
15 down. So I would ask y'all to please  
16 look at that. Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, Susan. Thank you  
18 for always being here.

19 Any questions for Ms. Morrow from  
20 the Board?

21 (No response.)

22 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you.

23 Our next speaker is Mr. Bobby Pack.

1 Bobby Pack.

2 MR. PACK: Good morning, committee. My name  
3 is Bobby Pack. I'm the Alabama Dog  
4 Hunters Association Mobile Chapter  
5 President.

6 I've been dog hunting my whole life.  
7 I've had any kind of dog you could think  
8 of from a squirrel dog to a rabbit dog  
9 or to a deer dog. I've hunted all over  
10 Alabama. Hunted in California and South  
11 Carolina. I've lived several places in  
12 my life.

13 I've had short-running dogs like  
14 they're talking about that stay on the  
15 property. I've had long-running dogs  
16 that you'd run all day long. I've had  
17 them all. Like Corey Baxter -- he's a  
18 friend of mine. I've hunted with Corey  
19 for years. We've invested all the money  
20 we can on a dog. There's nothing else  
21 we can do besides what we're doing now  
22 to stop a dog. We have them tone-broke.  
23 We have them whistle-broke. You call or

1           whatever.

2           We've hunted all over this country.  
3           We -- and lower Alabama counties like  
4           Mobile and Washington is the thickest  
5           part of the state, if anybody knows  
6           that. We -- dog hunting is our -- to me  
7           it's the capital of dog hunting in the  
8           lower part. People down here dog-hunt  
9           not just deer. They hunt with  
10          everything.

11          The shooting the man was talking  
12          about a minute ago about the guy up in  
13          north Alabama, that was a coon dog. Had  
14          nothing to do with deer dogs.

15          We've had deer dogs killed in Mobile  
16          County this year. I spoke with House of  
17          Representative Springer. We're going to  
18          get together this off-season and try to  
19          come up with a bill to protect the dog  
20          from being shot, make it a felony crime  
21          to be shot while -- with a tracking  
22          collar on them.

23          Getting back to what the other guy

1 was talking about, the encroachment law  
2 is not double whatever. Why do we need  
3 a permit system if you enhance the  
4 encroachment law?

5 I was on the permit in Choctaw  
6 County with Hebron Hunting Club. We got  
7 13,000 acres. We never had a complaint  
8 in three years. They told us after  
9 three years we'd get off of it. We  
10 couldn't get off of it.

11 I'm at a club in Baldwin County with  
12 Cooper Matthews, a big landowner. We  
13 been on that thing for three years. We  
14 never have a complaint, never. We're  
15 still on the permit system.

16 So, you know, you was talking  
17 about -- like the dog encroachment, if  
18 we get on it, how you ever going to get  
19 off of it? It's going to make a law  
20 where we have it from now on.

21 Oh, another thing about the dogs.  
22 If a stalk hunter shoots a deer, the  
23 first person he wants to call is a dog

1           hunter. Well, to me, if you pursue a  
2           deer, chase a deer or anything with a  
3           dog, you're considered a dog hunter.  
4           Well, these stalk hunters are calling  
5           people over there to bring dogs on their  
6           property that they don't want them no  
7           other time on their property, but they  
8           want you to come find a deer for them,  
9           which is fine. But that guy  
10          automatically ought to become a deer  
11          hunter -- he's a dog hunter.

12                    One more thing.

13                    I lost my train of thought. But,  
14                    anyway, to me he becomes a dog hunter.  
15                    And 85 percent of the stalk hunters will  
16                    call a dog hunter before it's over it.

17   MS. JONES: Time.

18   MR. PACK: One more second, please.

19   CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Pack, make a point,  
20                    please.

21   MR. PACK: All right. My point is, is that  
22                    they're doing it in these counties that  
23                    are closed. They're doing it in these



1 MR. PACK: Like Mississippi has got one.

2 Florida has got one. Tennessee --

3 MR. WOLFE: But in Alabama right now if I kill  
4 a dog and I'm caught --

5 CHIEF WEATHERS: Well, that's what happened in  
6 Clay County.

7 MR. WOLFE: I'm referring to Clay County.

8 CHIEF WEATHERS: Yes. And that was a dog deer  
9 hunter. You're talking -- there were  
10 two incidences. One was a coon dog  
11 killed. The one we're talking about was  
12 a dog deer --

13 MR. WOLFE: Right. Deer.

14 CHIEF WEATHERS: -- hunting dog. And he was  
15 charged with felony cruelty to animals.

16 MR. WOLFE: That's felony. That's already on  
17 the books.

18 MR. PACK: What we're talking about is like a  
19 hunting dog or --

20 MR. WOLFE: It doesn't make a difference what  
21 kind of dog it is. If you kill a dog in  
22 Alabama, that's a felony.

23 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Any other questions from the



1 Board?

2 (No response.)

3 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Pack, thank you very  
4 much.

5 MR. PACK: Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Our next speaker is Mr. Ed  
7 Thomas.

8 MR. THOMAS: Good morning. I'd like to thank  
9 the Board for listening because we've  
10 driven five hours to speak for three  
11 minutes.

12 I represent a group of about 30 men  
13 from the Piney Woods/Ivory Mountain  
14 area. We'd like to -- basically we  
15 would like to have our hunting ground  
16 back. It was pulled from us without  
17 notice, without permit, without warning,  
18 the ground we've hunted for 50 years.  
19 We feel it's been unfairly taken from  
20 us.

21 We're mostly a disabled group of men  
22 who cannot hunt in the mountain land of  
23 Cheaha. We've had no tickets or no

1           problems with the game warden, no  
2           violations. The only complaints are  
3           from wealthy landowners that our dogs  
4           come through their property. And this  
5           has not been a problem until recently.

6           A man by the name of Mr. Richard  
7           Sprayberry, who owns Mountain View  
8           Plantation, a game preserve, started big  
9           game hunts with Alabama deer. We found  
10          some of his stands on national forest  
11          land. National forests are set aside  
12          for the recreation of the people -- for  
13          the American people. And we feel that  
14          we've been discriminated against and  
15          railroaded out of the interest of a few  
16          individuals who profit off the game of  
17          the state of Alabama.

18          Mr. Tony Shears is with me today.  
19          He started the camp in Piney Woods in  
20          1970 when you had to go get permits from  
21          the national forest to even camp there.  
22          Since then it's been designated a  
23          camping area. And it's been a tradition

1           for the first 9 days of every deer  
2           season that we would all get together,  
3           these 30 men -- us and our families get  
4           together and go over there and camp,  
5           cook, eat, socialize, and hunt a little.  
6           But we didn't get to enjoy that last  
7           year. And we kindly ask this Board to  
8           reconsider taking our land from us.

9           We discussed this matter with a  
10          federal attorney, and his advice to us  
11          was to first try to talk to the Board as  
12          we are doing today. Please do not deny  
13          us the privilege for dog hunting in  
14          Ivory Mountain and Piney Woods any  
15          longer. And we thank y'all for your  
16          time and listening to us today.

17         CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you.

18                 Are there any questions from the  
19                 Board?

20                         (No response.)

21         CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, Mr. Thomas, very  
22                 much for coming down here. Appreciate  
23                 you making the trip.

1                   Our last speaker today is Mr. Avery  
2                   Bates.

3           MR. BATES:   Listening at them laughing.  I  
4                   don't blame them.

5                   I'm Avery Bates, Vice President of  
6                   Organized Seafood Association, long-time  
7                   commercial fisherman, and fed thousands  
8                   of people and my family fed millions of  
9                   people really over the years.

10                  Some of these bills and regulations  
11                  is going to devastate your restaurants.  
12                  I've talked to Pumpkin Simms, Lighthouse  
13                  people.  They're kin to me.  All the  
14                  restaurants I'd say.  And Pumpkin said  
15                  that's one of my main fish, the  
16                  flounder.  Couldn't say speckled trout  
17                  because that's a gamefish.

18                  And when you put these people on 30  
19                  fish a day, you're putting them out of  
20                  business, that flounder fisherman.  And  
21                  then you've taken other fish away from  
22                  them.  Like you've already took speckled  
23                  trout and redfish.  When a business

1           can't sell the product and they want  
2           them, then they have to go to other  
3           countries. Therefore, they lose the  
4           market here. Then they have to go to  
5           Mexico. Canada ships them in from all  
6           over, free trade agreement thing.

7                     These people is hard-working  
8           Alabamians that's getting good fresh  
9           flounder -- wonderful thing that stuffed  
10          flounder. Have you ever had a stuffed  
11          flounder?

12                    But some of these 30-fish limits,  
13          when recreational fishermen are catching  
14          80 percent of them and they're just  
15          slipped down to five when we don't have  
16          actually but ten true gillnet commercial  
17          flounder fishermen and the other few  
18          that's gigging -- and I say few because  
19          a couple of hundred is nothing when you  
20          consider hundreds of thousands of  
21          recreational fishermen taking five fish.  
22          You could bring that down to two fish  
23          and give the commercial fishermen three

1 times, four times that much per day or  
2 even five times that much per day, who  
3 is feeding the people of this state.  
4 And not only the people of the state,  
5 they are a business.

6 Let me tell you, Solomon was pretty  
7 wise. I sure wish the agricultural man  
8 was here. You know what Solomon said in  
9 Proverbs 11:26?

10 He that withholdeth corn, the people  
11 shall curse him, but he -- but blessings  
12 shall be upon the head of him that sell  
13 it. That goes for fish too. If nobody  
14 has any fish to eat, you better watch  
15 out. You're going to get a lashing of  
16 the tongue from the people that can't  
17 enjoy it. So let's make these odds just  
18 and fair. If you're taking 80 percent  
19 of them, let's give the people of  
20 Alabama the chance to enjoy that fish.

21 Some of the other things that's come  
22 up, too, that still worries me about  
23 some of these bills, especially on

1 Bill 107 -- this is the oyster farming.  
2 This bill here still worries me about  
3 the National Shellfish Sanitation  
4 Program.

5 MS. JONES: Time.

6 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Go ahead.

7 MR. BATES: This bill here, when you have to  
8 adhere to water temperature of getting  
9 oysters out of the water in one  
10 hour from taking it, if you put anybody  
11 up there in brackish and saltwater, the  
12 enforcement of that -- if you have an  
13 oyster that's not controlled  
14 temperature-wise, the Vibrio that we  
15 have in the summertime magnifies. And  
16 this fellow that has a pier that brings  
17 up oysters and gives them to his  
18 neighbor, when it hits the paper, it'll  
19 say oysters in the state of Alabama have  
20 Vibrio in them. What happens to the  
21 honest, good hard-working people like  
22 down in Grand Bay like the Zerlins and  
23 so many more.

1           This is people that work hard. And  
2           we have many every day that will lose  
3           their business over one bad individual  
4           dying from Vibrio. It will go through  
5           the public. And that will ruin Rose's  
6           business. It'll ruin Troy Cornelius'  
7           business. It will ruin everybody's  
8           business because of the publicity about  
9           bad oysters.

10           So this bill needs to have some  
11           enforcement behind it. The Board of  
12           Health is supposed to be on board, but  
13           it says nothing in that bill that will  
14           truly, truly protect the people with  
15           just some Tom, Dick, and Harry out there  
16           catching oysters and not having to  
17           adhere to the same stringent regulations  
18           and procedures that each and every other  
19           one that sells to the public. Be  
20           careful with what you do.

21           Thank y'all very much.

22           CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, Avery.

23           Any questions for Mr. Bates?



1 Mr. Commissioner.

2 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Thank you, Avery.

3 I did want to let you know that I --  
4 that after you were here at the meeting  
5 in March we have talked with  
6 Representative Brown about this bill,  
7 have made suggestions to him on how we  
8 think we could alleviate some of these  
9 concerns. He agreed to make those  
10 changes.

11 Now, it was in committee last week,  
12 and I have not seen the bill that came  
13 out of committee. It's on the calendar  
14 for this week. But I assure you that I  
15 will look and review that bill before  
16 Tuesday to make sure that those concerns  
17 that you have are addressed in the  
18 legislation.

19 MR. BATES: It's just not my concerns alone.

20 It's my concern, don't get me wrong.

21 But all these legitimate fishermen  
22 that's held to stringent, stringent laws  
23 that's handed down through the FDA,

1           they're trying to keep the public with a  
2           good healthy product.

3                     Now, if Mr. Whoever down the --  
4           that's in a brackish and salty area, if  
5           he's not held to that standard, just  
6           that he wants to have that own product,  
7           I'm worried about what bad publicity or  
8           people dying that don't handle their  
9           product -- and it's their product. But  
10          that will hit the fan if something is  
11          not done to manage -- and I mean  
12          enforcement-wise -- to manage that  
13          oyster from killing somebody.

14          COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir. And I  
15          understand your concerns and the  
16          concerns of the industry, and we are  
17          working to address that with the  
18          sponsor.

19          MR. BATES: All right. Well, think about this  
20          flounder. The people that's catching 80  
21          percent, the recreational, the people  
22          that's feeding the restaurants or  
23          selling to the restaurants -- let's

1           consider Alabamians enjoying good  
2           healthy-caught fish, not 30 fish per  
3           fisherman. That's such -- that's like  
4           giving a dog one bone a month.

5           CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, Avery.

6                     Any more questions?

7                             (No response.)

8           CHAIRMAN DOBBS: That's the last of our  
9           speakers, and that ends the public  
10          commentary portion of our meeting.  
11          Thank you all for being here.

12                     Our next agenda item is unfinished  
13          business. One thing that I'll strike  
14          off the list is the synopsis of the  
15          effective legislations that we've been  
16          updated on and you've got in your  
17          package.

18                     Is there any other unfinished  
19          business? Are there any questions to  
20          staff that we don't have an answer to?

21                     Mr. Jones.

22          MR. RAYMOND JONES: Mr. Chairman, thank you.

23                     Where are we on the semen

1           importation that we discussed at the  
2           last meeting? Do we have an update on  
3           that from the staff on CWD?

4           DIRECTOR SYKES: Yeah. Our staff has looked  
5           at it. We've looked at it for the past  
6           couple of years. There's just nothing  
7           in the literature right now. It's  
8           assumed it's a bodily fluid. It's like  
9           urine, saliva, feces, semen. But as far  
10          as going to a scientific paper and  
11          saying there's a direct correlation  
12          between CWD and semen being transferred  
13          from one deer to another, it's just not  
14          there right now.

15          MR. RAYMOND JONES: All right. Thank you.

16          CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Any other questions?

17                                 (No response.)

18          CHAIRMAN DOBBS: No further unfinished  
19          business -- I have one question.

20                                 The turkey study program, that's  
21          going to be with us in September, about  
22          then?

23                                 Thank you.

1                   So we come to the next portion of  
2                   our meeting, which will be any new  
3                   business for this meeting.

4                   Is there any new business or  
5                   announcements?

6                   Mr. Cagle.

7                   MR. CAGLE: I have a motion to approve -- I  
8                   want to make a motion to approve all the  
9                   requests for regulation changes, seasons  
10                  and bag limits proposed by the Marine  
11                  Resources Division and, if it's okay, to  
12                  take it all as one motion.

13                  CHAIRMAN DOBBS: I don't have a problem with  
14                  that. Is that okay with you Kevin,  
15                  Mr. Commissioner, Charlanna?

16                  Okay. So we have a motion on the  
17                  floor. I won't read it again. We all  
18                  know what it is.

19                  Is there a second?

20                  MR. RAYMOND JONES: Excuse me. Clarification.

21                  Is this just the Marine Resources?

22                  CHAIRMAN DOBBS: This is Marine Resources.

23                  MR. RAYMOND JONES: Okay. Second.

1 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: I'm sorry. Let's hit it  
2 again.

3 It's Marine Resources' seasons and  
4 bag limits and the changes thereto which  
5 affect what Kevin spoke to us about  
6 earlier.

7 MR. RAYMOND JONES: Second.

8 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: We have a second.

9 Is there any discussion?

10 (No response.)

11 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: There's no discussion. We'll  
12 take a vote on this. This will be by  
13 "ayes" and "nays."

14 So all those in favor of accepting  
15 Patrick Cagle's motion, please say  
16 "aye."

17 (All board members present respond  
18 "aye" with Department of  
19 Agriculture & Industries Deputy  
20 Commissioner Patrick Moody not  
21 voting.)

22 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Those opposed?

23 (No response.)

1 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: None opposed. Motion  
2 carries.

3 Any other new business or motions?

4 MR. RAYMOND JONES: Mr. Chairman?

5 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Jones.

6 MR. RAYMOND JONES: I'd like to make a motion  
7 to approve the season and bag limits and  
8 all changes for the Wildlife and  
9 Freshwater Fisheries Division.

10 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: So noted. And I have that  
11 here and you have it in your packets.  
12 We had that discussed at last meeting --  
13 or reviewed at last meeting  
14 individually.

15 We have a motion before the floor.

16 Is there a second?

17 MR. CAGLE: Second.

18 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Second by Mr. Cagle.

19 Is there any discussion?

20 MR. HARTZOG: Just one question.

21 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Hartzog.

22 MR. HARTZOG: As to Fisheries, where on our  
23 checklist here it says remove the black

1           bass limit on the Demopolis Reservoir,  
2           remove the limit totally?

3           CHIEF NICHOLS: The length limit.

4           DIRECTOR SYKES: It's a length limit.

5           MR. HARTZOG: Okay. Well, the way it's --  
6           okay. The way it read, it just said  
7           remove the black bass limit. It didn't  
8           say length limit, so that's -- okay.

9           CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Are you okay with that,  
10          Mr. Hartzog?

11          MR. HARTZOG: Yeah. Yeah, I'm fine.

12          CHAIRMAN DOBBS: All right. We have a second.  
13          We've had discussion.

14                    Any further discussion?

15                            (No response.)

16          CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Let's vote on this one again,  
17          please, the same way.

18                    All those in favor of accepting the  
19                    seasons and changes in bag limits for  
20                    Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries,  
21                    please signify it by saying "aye."

22                            (All board members present respond  
23                            "aye" with Department of



1                   Agriculture & Industries Deputy  
2                   Commissioner Patrick Moody not  
3                   voting.)

4           CHAIRMAN DOBBS:  Any opposed?

5                   (No response.)

6           CHAIRMAN DOBBS:  The "ayes" have it.

7                   Any additional motions or business  
8                   today?

9           MR. STIMPSON:  Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make  
10                   a motion.

11           CHAIRMAN DOBBS:  Mr. Stimpson.

12           MR. STIMPSON:  I'd like to make a motion to  
13                   add the dog deer hunting encroachment  
14                   rule as stated in the attached  
15                   regulation beginning with the 2019-2020  
16                   hunting season.

17           CHAIRMAN DOBBS:  Very good.  We have that  
18                   motion for the dog encroachment --

19           MR. HARTZOG:  Second.

20           CHAIRMAN DOBBS:  We have a second from  
21                   Mr. Hartzog.

22                   Is there any discussion?

23                   (No response.)

1 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: If there's no discussion had,  
2 let's bring that for a vote.

3 All those in favor of enacting the  
4 dog encroachment regulation as will be  
5 attached -- and we'll give it to  
6 Ms. Blackwell for the record -- please  
7 signify that by saying "aye."

8 (All board members present respond  
9 "aye" with Department of  
10 Agriculture & Industries Deputy  
11 Commissioner Patrick Moody not  
12 voting.)

13 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: All those opposed?

14 (No response.)

15 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: The "ayes" have it.

16 Any other motions?

17 MR. CAGLE: Mr. Chairman?

18 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Cagle.

19 MR. CAGLE: I want to make a motion that we  
20 approve the Gulf Reef Fish Endorsement  
21 proposed by Marine Resources Division.

22 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: All right. There's a motion  
23 on the floor to propose the Gulf Reef

1 Fish Endorsement, the fee which helps  
2 fund continued research and will keep  
3 getting us our exempted fishing permits.

4 Is there a second?

5 MR. WOLFE: Second.

6 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Wolfe. Thank you.

7 Is there any discussion?

8 (No response.)

9 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: There being no discussion,  
10 let's vote on that.

11 All of those in favor of the  
12 endorsement, please signify by saying  
13 "aye."

14 (All board members present respond  
15 "aye" with Department of  
16 Agriculture & Industries Deputy  
17 Commissioner Patrick Moody not  
18 voting.)

19 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Any opposed?

20 (No response.)

21 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: No opposition. The "ayes"  
22 have it. The motion carries.

23 Mr. Wolfe.

1 MR. WOLFE: Mr. Chairman, I make a motion to  
2 the Board to place Talladega and Clay  
3 Counties on the dog deer hunting permit  
4 system effective the hunting season of  
5 2019-2020.

6 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you very much.

7 There's a motion on the floor. Is  
8 there a second?

9 DR. LEMME: Second.

10 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Second. Dr. Lemme.

11 Is there any discussion regarding  
12 the motion?

13 DR. LEMME: Mr. Chairman, would the permit  
14 system apply to public lands such as a  
15 national forest and the private lands of  
16 the county?

17 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: It applies to everything that  
18 you cannot permit in public lands --  
19 permits issued on public lands.

20 DR. LEMME: So it deals with private lands,  
21 then?

22 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Yes, sir.

23 DR. LEMME: Okay.

1 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Any further discussion?

2 There's a motion before the Board to  
3 place Talladega and Clay Counties on the  
4 dog deer hunting permit system beginning  
5 with the 2019-2020 season. We'll vote  
6 on this, please.

7 All those in favor, let it be known  
8 by saying "aye."

9 (All board members present respond  
10 "aye" with Department of  
11 Agriculture & Industries Deputy  
12 Commissioner Patrick Moody not  
13 voting.)

14 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: All those opposed, let it be  
15 known by saying "nay."

16 (No response.)

17 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: The "ayes" have it. The  
18 motion carries.

19 Is there any other business before  
20 us today? Any other motions?

21 MR. CAGLE: Mr. Chairman, I have one more  
22 motion I want to make.

23 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Cagle.

1 MR. CAGLE: And I want to make this motion and  
2 explain it some. I'll ask for a second,  
3 and then I'm going to invite a motion to  
4 table this so that we can review this  
5 one more year.

6 This motion I want to make is to  
7 establish a limited catch-and-release  
8 artificial bait trout fishing zone on  
9 the more difficult portions to access of  
10 the Sipsey River beginning October 1 and  
11 ending February 28th of each year.

12 So limited to just the less popular  
13 fishing times, to make an artificial  
14 catch-and-release zone in the  
15 three-quarter-mile area that's the  
16 hardest to reach. In the motion I've  
17 got some more specifics as far as GPS,  
18 but since we're not going to vote on it,  
19 I won't go through all that.

20 What I seek to do is -- you know,  
21 the Department has been really good at  
22 doing the research. It's clear it's a  
23 put-and-take fishery. I still think

1           there is a way to make each user group  
2           get a little of what they want. No one  
3           is ever going to get everything of what  
4           they want without affecting the rights  
5           of the others.

6           You know, it's a 12-mile-long  
7           fishery. There are some areas that are  
8           a little harder to access. And I want  
9           us to just keep doing that hard work.  
10          It's probably the hardest part of this  
11          job, I believe, is to find a way to  
12          accomplish as many user group goals at  
13          once without impeding on the other.

14          Again, I put some specifics out  
15          there. I want to work with the  
16          Department if there's any  
17          counterproposals, any modifications. So  
18          at this time I would ask for a second  
19          and then invite a motion to table so  
20          that we could address this at the first  
21          meeting next near.

22          CHAIRMAN DOBBS: All right. There's a motion.  
23          Is there a second?

1 MR. WOLFE: Second.

2 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: We have a second.

3 DR. LEMME: Mr. Chairman, I would move that we  
4 table this motion until the first  
5 meeting of 2020 allowing the Department  
6 to come back with their assessment and  
7 any further recommendations.

8 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Is there a second?

9 MR. CAGLE: I'll offer the second.

10 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: We have a second.

11 Shall we vote on the motion or just  
12 call it up or down?

13 Let's vote.

14 DR. LEMME: We need to vote on the tabling.

15 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: That's what we're going to  
16 vote on is to table -- the motion to  
17 table the motion; okay?

18 All right. So that's what our vote  
19 is. This is the vote on the motion to  
20 table the motion until next meeting;  
21 correct?

22 So all of those in favor of what I  
23 just said, please signify by saying



1 "aye."

2 (All board members present respond  
3 "aye" with Department of  
4 Agriculture & Industries Deputy  
5 Commissioner Patrick Moody not  
6 voting.)

7 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Are there any opposed?

8 (No response.)

9 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: The "ayes" have it. The  
10 motion carries. It will be tabled until  
11 the next meeting, which is specific.

12 Okay. Thank you.

13 Is there any other business or  
14 announcements from anyone?

15 (No response.)

16 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Okay. Very good. I'll end  
17 it now, or do you want to just -- you  
18 want to gable the meeting closed?

19 COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Well, I'd like  
20 to -- first I'd like to thank Ms. Betsy  
21 Jones and Wanda and Beau for all their  
22 work getting this set up down there.  
23 Having a meeting this far outside of

1           Montgomery is a little bit of a  
2           logistical challenge. Thank you very  
3           much for the work to get that done and  
4           to have everybody here.

5           David Rainer wrote an article last  
6           week in his column that was about the  
7           use of dogs in the Department of  
8           Conservation and Natural Resources.  
9           Particularly last week it was with the  
10          Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries  
11          Division and how those dogs are used in  
12          enforcement.

13          Today we do have -- the Marine  
14          Resources Division has the dog here,  
15          Gaines, and Officer Cox. So at this  
16          time if I could get you to walk up here  
17          with Gaines.

18          This is a program that was started  
19          several years ago and has been very  
20          effective at deterring violations,  
21          finding violations, deterring future  
22          violations, and also as a public  
23          relations tool for the Department. And

1 he has been -- he's extremely popular.  
2 We have two, one in Mobile County and  
3 one in Baldwin County. And so as many  
4 of you read David's article every week  
5 and since we had one of the dogs here, I  
6 wanted you to be able to see that. And  
7 thank you very much.

8 And then our next Forever Wild Board  
9 Meeting is this Thursday in Greenville  
10 at 10 a.m. if there's anyone that's  
11 interested in attending the next  
12 quarterly Forever Wild Board Meeting.

13 Thank you, sir.

14 CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you.

15 Let me add my thanks to Betsy and  
16 Wanda, Tracye, Beau, everybody that  
17 comes and helps to put this together.  
18 It's very time-consuming.

19 If there are no additional  
20 announcements, the date and the time of  
21 our next -- I'm sorry. Mr. Hartzog.

22 MR. HARTZOG: Well, I want to be called out of  
23 order. Mr. Gary Wolfe offered me \$20 so

1           that if she would push the "shock"  
2           button --

3                           (Crowd response.)

4           CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you. All of you please  
5           have safe travels home, certainly to the  
6           gentleman who came from five hours.  
7           This Department, as I said before,  
8           touches our lives in a lot of ways.

9                           Thank you very much for being here.  
10           The date and time of our next meeting  
11           will be announced next year. Thank you  
12           very much.

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(Meeting adjourned at  
approximately 10:37 a.m.)

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

\* \* \* \* \*

STATE OF ALABAMA:

MONTGOMERY COUNTY:

I, Tracye Sadler Blackwell, Certified Court Reporter and Commissioner for the State of Alabama at Large, do hereby certify that I reported the foregoing proceedings of the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Advisory Board Meeting on May 4, 2019.

The foregoing 108 computer-printed pages contain a true and correct transcript of the proceedings held.

I further certify that I am neither of kin nor of counsel to the parties to said cause nor in any manner interested in the results thereof.

This 15th day of June 2019.

/s/ TRACYE SADLER BLACKWELL

ACCR No. 294  
Expiration date: 9-30-2019  
Certified Court Reporter  
and Commissioner for the State  
of Alabama at Large