STATE OF ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF
CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
ALABAMA AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRIES
RICHARD BEARD BUILDING
Montgomery, Alabama
February 28, 2015

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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 Alabama Agriculture and
Industries, Richard Beard Building, Montgomery,
Alabama, on Saturday, February 28, 2015, commencing
at approximately 9:02 a.m.

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BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Dan L. Moultrie, Chairman
Mr. N. Gunter Guy, Jr., Commissioner
Mr. John McMillan
Mr. Bill Hatley
Dr. Bob Shipp
Mr. Austin Ainsworth
Dr. Warren Strickland
Mr. Raymond Jones, Jr.
Mr. Grady Hartzog
Dr. Gary Lemme
Mr. Joseph Dobbs, Jr.
Mr. T.J. Bunn, Jr.
Mr. Jeff Martin

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CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: All right. The
February 28, 2015, meeting of the
Conservation Advisory Board will come to
order. I'd like to welcome everybody to
Montgomery, Alabama. The board is glad
that you're able to be here today. The
invocation will be given by Mr. Bill
Hatley.

Mr. Hatley.
MR. HATLEY: Let us pray.

Our gracious and eternal Heavenly Father, we pray that you will bestow thy richest blessings upon this meeting, upon each person gathered and this board. May our actions be pleasing in thy sight. For we ask in Jesus Christ's name and for his sake, Amen.

(Audience responds.)

CHAIRMAN MOULTERIE: Thank you, Mr. Hatley.

The next order of business is the introduction of the board members.

First I'd like to introduce our Commissioner of Conservation, Commissioner Guy.

Next I would like to introduce our Deputy Commissioner, Curtis Jones.

Next I'd like to introduce Alabama's Agriculture Commissioner, John McMillan.

COMMISSIONER McMILLAN: Dan, let me say that we've got the horse fair going on with about 400 horses up at the Coliseum. If
anybody's interested when you leave
here, it's a good event.

CHAIRMAN MOULTTRIE: Very good. Thank you.

Is there any -- is that free to the
public, or what is that --

COMMISSIONER McMILLAN: It's a minimum charge,
$5 or something, to get in gate.

CHAIRMAN MOULTTRIE: And that will be all day?

COMMISSIONER McMILLAN: And tomorrow too.

CHAIRMAN MOULTTRIE: Okay. Very good.

All right. And our other ex-officio
member here today is Dr. Gary Lemme from
the Alabama Extension Service.

Dr. Lemme, thank you for being here.

All right. Next I'd like to let the
district members of the board give their
name and what district they represent
starting with Mr. Ainsworth.

MR. AINSWORTH: Austin Ainsworth, District 4.

MR. BUNN: T.J. Bunn, District 7.

MR. MARTIN: Jeff Martin, District 3.

MR. JONES: Raymond Jones, Congressional
District 5.
DR. STRICKLAND: Warren Strickland,
    Congressional District 5.
MR. HARTZOG: Grady Hartzog, Congressional
    District 2.
DR. SHIPP: Bob Shipp, District 1.
MR. HATLEY: You've already been introduced.
CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: He doesn't have a
district, Mr. Hatley. Please just do
what you're asked to do.
MR. HATLEY: Why me, Lord. Yeah. Bill
    Hatley. I represent District 1.
MR. DOBBS: Joey Dobbs, District 6.
CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Very good. Thank y'all
    very much.

    All right. The next order of
business is the approval of the May 3rd,
2014, minutes. Are there any changes to
the minutes?

    (No response.)
CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Then, if no changes, the
minutes stand approved as read.

    The next order of business is the
DCNR departmental reports.
And, Commissioner Guy, I understand the reports -- we're going to cut them short, but there will be some presentations. But go ahead, Commissioner. You've got the floor.

COMMISSIONER GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate it.

Good morning, everybody, and thank you for being here.

The first order of business is just a little housekeeping. Many of you remember David Dean who was legal counsel for us, and he retired last year. And we have new counsel with us today, Greg Locklier, who is -- we're proud to have with the Department of Conservation. Greg is going to be a great asset to us.

Greg, if you would stand and just be recognized.

Thank you, Greg.

So we have a very good legal staff and are very appreciative of what they
do, particularly as it relates to board meetings and all the rules and regulations. And there's a lot of work that goes into that, so ...

Next we're going to have a couple of PowerPoints today just to try to assist everyone in understanding anything that has gone on last year or that may be going on this next year. And so the first person I want to call on is Director Chris Blankenship who will give a short PowerPoint presentation on some Marine Resources issues.

I think we're going to ask the board to move down so y'all can see it.

MR. BLANKENSHP: Good morning. I'm Chris Blankenship. I'm the director of Marine Resources for Alabama. And I want to give a quick presentation on the red snapper check that we did last year.

I appreciate the Advisory Board approving the mandatory red snapper reporting system at the meeting in May
of last year. Just want to give you an update on how that went, what the results were, and what we plan to do for 2015.

Just as a refresher of how we got to this point, the federal government sets the quota, the season for red snapper. We felt like that the information that they were using to set the season length was inaccurate, that it was overestimating the catch of red snapper for Alabama and other states. So in order to refute what they were collecting, we implemented this red snapper system where the people would have to report the catch when they came in so that we would have true numbers for the state of Alabama.

Per boat, when they came in from snapper fishing, they had to report what was caught on that boat. They could report via Smartphone app, online, through the toll-free telephone number.
And then for people that didn't --
weren't able to use any of those
methods, we had drop boxes set up at the
six coastal boat ramps that most
everybody uses, and they could use the
paper forms and drop off their
information on those forms. And we
collected those every day.

You know, we didn't ask for a lot of
information from them. We just asked
for information that we needed to be
able to accurately account for what was
being caught for red snapper off the
coast of Alabama. We asked for the
number of anglers on the boat, the
number of fish harvested, you know, kept
on that vessel, the number of fish that
were discarded dead, the vessel
registration number, the county of
landing, and whether it was a private
recreational trip or a charter --
charter trip.

So when they used the app, it took
less than five minutes. Usually took about two minutes to put that information in on the app. It was very minimal for the people to report the information.

And then our staff sampled the vessels during the state and the federal red snapper season, both our Enforcement section and our Fisheries section. When we encountered a vessel that had red snapper, that was recorded. And so then we were able to compare and get a percentage of compliance, percentage of the number of people. Then we would look back at those vessels and see if we had a corresponding report on that same day that matched up with our interactions in the field.

So here are the results. This is a little bit of a complicated table, but the top two lines are the ones that I really want to focus on. This is during the nine-day federal red snapper season.
We had, you know, several thousand reported number of anglers and fish. The landed fish per angler, the limit for red snapper is two fish per person. So on charter boats -- you see that middle column -- they pretty -- pretty much everybody got their limit that fished on the charter boat. They got their two fish per person. And the private anglers was 1.78 fish. So almost everybody gets their limit on snapper fishing because they're so plentiful.

The nonreporting factor is -- that is derived from the percentage of compliance. You know, if you have 50 percent of the people that reported, then that number would be two. So you would double the reported landings to get the actual landings. Does that make sense?

So another thing I want to point out is the mean weight, the average weight
of red snapper. Several years ago the average weight was around three pounds per fish. On the charter boats throughout the season it was almost 11 pounds per fish. Private anglers, the average weight was about 8.4 pounds. And those weights are derived from our staff at the dock measuring fish, weighing fish, you know, every day during the season. Those are not reported by the fishermen. Those are actual weights taken by our folks.

And then the bottom part was Florida had a state season and then Alabama -- we had a weekend season in the month of July. And so those are fish that were caught during that season. You can see there is -- as you get closer to shore in the state waters, both in Florida and Alabama, the average size was much smaller than what's caught further offshore. But the total estimated catch from our reporting system that we
collected was about 450 -- 450,000 pounds.

Just to kind of show you how people reported, we had a total of 2700 reports. 59 percent of them were done via the app. The 6 percent online -- the app and the on -- if you had a Smartphone and you went -- you couldn't get the app to work and you just did it -- went to the "Outdoor Alabama" Website on your phone and reported it, it all goes to the same place. The app just takes you to the same place that the Website does, so really you can add those two together. We had 65 percent of the people use their Smartphones or the app to report. 17 percent used the 1-800 number. And then 18 percent used the paper forms at the boat ramps.

This just kind of shows the frequency of the time of day that we got -- that people reported, you know, when the fish were being landed and
reported. That's the red -- the red lines in there. That's 24-hour time.
So you can see that we have kind of a -- most of it started around noon when
people would come back to the dock, but it lasted all the way, you know, until
ten, 11 o'clock at night. And a lot of those were charter boats that were
making -- making two trips a day. They'd come -- they'd make a morning
trip. They'd come in around noon. Then they'd take another crew out and come in
around eight or nine o'clock at night so they could make the most of the nine-day
season. And they can do that as long as they're taking different people on the charters.

And then the blue lines are our validations. Those are the times that we interacted with the public at the
boat ramps or on the water. And so they correspond pretty good with the amount
of the reports. So it shows -- we use
that to see what we need to do as far as varying, you know, our sampling methods at the dock and on the water to make sure that we're capturing enough and interacting enough with the people when they're coming back. And so, you know, we still -- we probably could pick up some of those really late night spots for this next year, for 2015, to make sure we're getting plenty of contacts.

And we use this -- this is just by -- we ask for the counties that help us with our patrols so that we can decide how to divide up the manpower and where to place people throughout the season. You can see that Baldwin County, you know, had a much higher number of charter reports compared to Mobile County and the same with the private anglers. So that will help us in 2015 as we, you know, maneuver our people around to get the most interaction, the most contacts.
So this is the slide that really shows the success of the program. The column on the far right is the federal data collection program where they estimated that we caught 1.2 million pounds of red snapper in Alabama during the nine-day -- well, during the -- all of the seasons. We estimate we caught 455,000 pounds. So when they use those catch rates to set the season length, if they're using two-and-a-half times the catch rate of what we think is really happening in Alabama, you know, in a nutshell, that makes the season about two-and-a-half times shorter than it should be. And so that's why our program was so important, and it really -- the program really showed what we thought it would, that they're overestimating the catch.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Chris, have y'all communicated that to the feds, and what was their response, please?
MR. BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir. We have met with them on several occasions. We started right after the season. You know, we're working with them on this trying to help calibrate their program. And they've been responsive.

We've had -- they're trying to figure out how to take the information from a small state like Alabama and be able to extrapolate that out or implement something like that in the other states, and if they can't do that, at least figure out how to take Alabama's data and use it, you know, for our state. And we're having continuing meetings with them, and they're going to continue to work with us in 2015 and help fund some of our data collection.

So plans for 2015. You know, continue the program just like it was where people report pretty much the same information. I really don't -- the only thing we're going to change and add to
the information we're asking them to report at this point is just whether they left from a public dock or a private dock. That's some information that we need to be able to see if there's a difference in catch rates or what's being reported from people that leave from a public boat ramp versus a marina or if they've got their boat at their house or something like that. So that's the only thing that we'll ask.

And the second bullet, you know, last year -- this was approved in May. The season started June 1st. So we had about three weeks to get the information out to the public, to do a PR push and to make sure that people knew that they had to report. Almost 80 percent of the charter boats were compliant. They reported -- which is a pretty good reporting rate. And about 50 percent of the private anglers reported. So we're hoping that this year, having more time
to get the word out, working with people
and for them to be able to see the
importance of the changes that happened
last year, how important it is to
report, that those compliance rates will
go up.

And then, also, we have -- we're
going to use -- we have cameras at all
of our -- there are six main boat ramps
that go out into the Gulf. We have
cameras and we record what launches
there, you know, a lot of information.
So we could do vessel counts.

So when we go back -- if we go back
to those other slides where there's that
discrepancy between the federal
government and Alabama, they were not
very responsive, honestly, to begin with
to our numbers. But when we said we
have video, we can count the number of
vessels that have launched, and when we
go back on those -- working with the
University of South Alabama, some of
their students, going back and counting those vessels, it corresponds within one percent of what our numbers showed from the reporting versus the federal data.

So you can have two data-reporting systems, but then when we have that video evidence to back up those numbers, that was pretty compelling. And that really changed our conversations with them. And so this year we're going to expand that and really use those numbers and that video to count those vessels. And, like I say, we're continuing to collaborate with the federal staff to compare the results and make improvements in their system and in our system but, more importantly, to be able to use that data next year and into the future.

And Kevin Anson, who's our chief biologist -- and Kevin did a good job of taking that data and putting the program in place so that we could analyze all
that data and come up with the landing
two numbers and the correction factors and
all that that you saw. You know, we may
be a small state here, but we've got
some pretty sharp people, and we have to
remind the federal government of that
pretty regularly. Just because we're a
state, that doesn't mean that our folks
are not pretty sharp and we can do a lot
of stuff here. Be glad to take any
questions.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Chris, I've got one quick
question. What was the biggest snapper
turned in?

I know everybody wants to know that.
What was the biggest snapper you heard
about?

MR. ANSON: Through our program it was
probably 25 pounds.

COMMISSIONER McMILLAN: Chris, what are other
Gulf states doing, similar type research
or --

MR. BLANKENSHIP: Other states are -- now that
we've done this program last year and
everybody saw the success that we have
now, all of the other states -- you
know, Texas was already kind of doing
their own thing. But Mississippi is
trying to implement a system very
similar to ours, and Florida is
implementing a system this year. It's
different from ours just because of the
geography of their coastline. You know,
we're able to do things in Alabama
because we have a small coastline. But
Florida is going to do something this
year to try and get their own
information as well.

COMMISSIONER GUY: Thanks, Chris.

And I just want to make a few
comments and that is this: You know,
red snapper fishing, of course, for our
Gulf -- our coastal counties here in
Alabama is a huge, important, you know,
part of what we are about. And it
greatly affects not only the economic
impact there in those coastal counties,
plus all over the state -- because there
are many, many people who enjoy fishing
for red snapper off our coast. And each
day we get in addition to that, you can
imagine how much that means when you
talk about people spending money down
there for gas, for food, for just
recreation, going down there on the
weekends, all that kind of thing.

I want to congratulate and really
thank Chris and Marine Resources
division for what they have done here.
As you can see, we have pointed out to
the federal government -- he's a lot
nicer than me -- that they are wrong in
what they are doing. They are missing
it.

When you miss those numbers -- and
if you go back -- I don't know if you
can go back. But if you go back to
those numbers and you see in a nine-day
season our information with much more
validation showed about 450,000 pounds of fish being caught and they showed over a million-point-two, that's huge in a nine-day season. So imagine how much they were missing it in a 40-day season.

Okay. What I'm most proud of is that the State of Alabama has taken the lead on this. And that's why I want to congratulate Chris and all the people that work for him. They have really worked very hard to get this program done, and everybody should be proud of them. Because, as you were asking, Commissioner McMillan, other states are following us because of this. And we have gotten the federal government's attention at least. They're not, you know, exactly changing their ways yet, but you can see a lot of action in Congress now by Congressman Byrne, who has really taken the lead on a lot of things. And it's all because of what Chris was able to do last season.
And so the important take-away is he
depends heavily on the information that
we get from the charter boat captains
and from the private fishermen. And we
very much appreciate them calling in
that information to us because it
provides the data that we need to show
that the federal government is not
getting it right and that we are better
managers of those resources than they
are. And that's just where it is.

But, Chris, I want to again say
thank you to you and the Marine
Resources division for taking the lead
on that and on -- just all about the red
snapper fishery in the Gulf. So I know
there's a bunch of people ...

All right. So now I want to call on
Director Chuck Sykes. And Chuck is
going to give a presentation on some
issues that are coming up for Wildlife
and Freshwater Fisheries.

MR. SYKES: Thank you, Commissioner.
Can y'all hear me without having to hold the microphone?

I'll try to talk up. I usually don't have a problem with it.

First and foremost, the February season extension, I think most people were satisfied with it. The reports that we got were overwhelmingly positive. We can't make everybody happy. We try as much as we can. But I want to give props to our biologists. You can see at the bottom they've taken over 3,000 deer in the spring and summer since '95 and about a thousand of them have been done in the past two years.

And you can ask Mike Bolton over there. He went and sat with me on a deer stand in June two years ago, and that's why he's so skinny now. He lost about 30 pounds that afternoon. It's not any fun getting out there and fighting mosquitos in 110-degree weather trying to get this data. But the data
that they got is what allowed us to work
with the hunters, give them what they
wanted in south Alabama and have that
February extension.

This year we are going to continue
our sampling process. We're going to
move up the state. But we are not
making any recommendations at this time
to change. We want to give it another
year or so and see how the resource is
going to handle this -- the extra ten
days in February. So for this year
we're recommending to the board no
changes; everything stay just like it
was last year.

We've got a few changes on our WMAs.
Those were three deer taken off WMAs in
Alabama. If anybody says you can't kill
a big deer on public land in Alabama,
they haven't hunted them yet. We killed
some outstanding deer this year.

We're adding some significant
acreages to quite a few of our WMAs.
We're going to add about 2,000 acres to Lowndes, over 9,000 acres to the Geneva State Forest WMA, and over 4200 acres in Autauga. We're trying to provide as much quality public-hunting access as we can.

Many of our WMAs, based on hunter requests and some of the success that we've had at Barbour and Skyline, we're going to break them up into zones and put antler restrictions on some of the zones where people will have a trophy area to hunt. And for those of you that just want to go shoot a deer, we'll have those areas too. Hunts will run simultaneously where anybody that wants to go hunting can. Part of the areas will be trophy-managed and part will be just go have fun.

We're going to try something this year as a pilot. We're going to have a couple of special opportunity hunts. In north Alabama we're going to have two
hunts, two WMAs, that are going to take place before the regular opening of gun season. Some of the areas up there rut early as indicated by all of our conception data. We're going to try it and see how that works. A couple of our WMAs in the southern portion of the state, we're going to have a special opportunity hunt during the closure in December.

We want y'all to take advantage of all the hard work that the guys are doing on the WMAs. There's some outstanding public property out there, so we're providing a couple of extra opportunities for y'all to enjoy it.

Some waterfowl changes on WMAs that we are recommending to the board for consideration. I think any of y'all that duck hunt realize the importance of sanctuaries and letting ducks rest, the same way with deer. So we're proposing in the Upper Delta, Mobile-Tensaw Delta,
W.L. Holland WMA, to stop all-day
hunting and bring it to one-half hour
before sunrise till noon. Should give
ducks time to rest and feed in the
afternoon, and it will provide a better
hunting opportunity for people when they
go.

Next year we would love to set a
rest area down in the open water between
the Causeway and the interstate. So
what we're going to do this year is we
will query duck hunters coming in and
out of the boat ramps down there to get
their opinion. The Advisory Board is
going to listen to public input. I
think it would greatly improve the
quality of the hunting if we provided
those ducks with a sanctuary where they
could rest and feed.

Every five years we get a chance to
set zones for migratory birds. The U.S.
Fish and Wildlife Service gives us an
opportunity to set zones. Right now we
have two waterfowl zones, Mobile and
Baldwin Counties and then the rest of
the state. Our biologists are
recommending that we go to one zone.
That gives us a little more flexibility
within the 60-day season if we choose to
do so. This would not be for this year.
This would be for next year. Just
something for the board and the public
to consider.

The same thing goes with dove zones.
We've got two zones now. From all
indications from the hunters and from
our staff, we would like to keep that
the same. But, again, this is just for
public comment next year and for the
board to consider.

Small game changes. We had quite a
few small game hunters come to the board
meetings last year when we extended the
season into February. They wanted some
days added. We looked at doing it the
first of March, but all of the biology
did not support it. We would have taken
a chance on having too many pregnant
females or ones that already had little
ones in the nest. So what we decided to
do is propose to the board to give small
game hunters 15 days in September. So
instead of it starting on October 1st,
squirrel and rabbit season would come in
September the 15th next year.

The alligator hunts, overwhelmingly
successful over the past couple of
years. I'm sure most of y'all know we
had the world record caught on one of
the hunts this year outside of Selma.

We've had quite a bit of conflict in
the Eufaula area over the past several
years. Despite what many people think,
most of Lake Eufaula is Georgia waters,
not Alabama waters. So we have been
working closely with the State of
Georgia, and what we decided to do was
break Eufaula off into a separate zone
this year. And you will have the
Eufaula lake and then you will have the
rest of the counties over there that you
can apply for tags in each of those
zones. We're going to run that season
concurrently with the Georgia season to
try to cut down on those user conflicts
between Alabama residents and Georgia
residents.

We've also instituted a
preference-point system. We cannot
guarantee that everybody that applies
for an alligator tag will get one. But
just an example, if you apply six years
in a row, you've got a greater than
80-percent chance of getting drawn for a
tag. Please don't ask me questions on
it, because IT has developed the formula
to do that, and I would have to get you
in touch with them to find out exactly
how it's done. But Keith has been
working on that for over a year trying
to get a quality preference-point system
together where everybody has the best
opportunity that they can to draw a tag
and enjoy the alligator hunting.

    Same as last year on Lake Eufaula,
we're going to institute an eight-foot
minimum where we're trying to protect
the females over there. Recruitment is
down. The eight-foot minimum protects
about 90 percent of the females.

    And you will be able to hunt during
daylight hours as well as nighttime
hours only on Lake Eufaula. We're
trying to mirror everything with Georgia
where we can cut down on those
conflicts.

    This is going to be an interesting
one. Feral hogs. Changed the
regulation last year where it is no
longer personal possession once you
catch one in an attempt to curb the
illegal transportation of feral swine.
I think most everybody in here agrees
we've got enough of them; they don't
need to be put in any other places.
When we did that, we had to change their status. And don't laugh, but pigs are now a game animal and a furbearer. The reason we did that is to make it legal for you to trap them and to sell their carcass if you want to, because there were a lot of people that were doing that, trapping pigs and selling them. Now you can legally do that.

We're also -- at the request of a lot of dog hunters, we are working with the Alabama Hog Dog Hunters Association on a limited permit system as a trial basis at the Lower Delta WMAs to see how effective they are at removing some hogs and open up to another user group. So we've been -- again, Keith Gauldin has been working closely with them to come up with an open-permit system on that where we can regulate. They're going to be gathering data for us, and we're going to be allowing them to go in and utilize that WMA.
Some miscellaneous changes that we have got this year, again, through requests of constituents. They presented to the board last year that there was some concern that people were circumventing the commercial angler license, getting a recreational license and running trotlines with several thousand hooks. Stan and Fisheries section researched it, proposed that we set a hundred-hook limit for recreational license, not commercial.

There's been some confusion. I talked to one of our senators yesterday. One of his constituents had gotten confused. This is actually protecting the commercial fishermen. So we're not limiting hooks on commercial fishing. It's only on recreational.

There will be a slight CPI increase on a license this year. It's going to be roughly 40 cents on an annual hunting license and about 20 cents on an annual
fishing license, and we would like the board to consider passing that.

This next slide I may need to hire Chris as a consultant for us. He had a lot better success on the reporting system than we did. I think there were two major factors. One of them is Chris and his staff did a great job with education, and the other one, it was mandatory. It wasn't voluntary.

Y'all can look at the numbers. Last year we had a little over 19,000 deer registered on Game Check two years ago. This year, even with the February extension in a third of the state, we had 3,000 less deer reported. 16,244 deer were checked in through Game Check. We probably killed that opening weekend statewide.

Just like Chris, everybody applauded his presentation because they were getting numbers that they could use to manage a resource better than the
federal government is doing. That's all we're asking for is the same numbers where we can do our job better. Please, talk to your friends, get them to comply. All it does is it makes us get the information we need where we can manage it better for you.

Now, I want to give some props to the Advisory Board. Progressive regulations over the past several years, they're working. Whether you agreed with them or not, they're working. Passage of the three-buck limit in 2007 stressed the importance of not killing everything that walked by just because you could. Hunters became more educated. They understood what it took for quality deer management. More big deer went down this year than any year that I've ever seen. Even though the weather wasn't great, the success was tremendous on people harvesting good deer.
The area definition. The world was coming to an end when the board passed the area definition. Baiting was going to be rampant. We were going to kill every deer in the state. Didn't happen. Baiting cases have not gone up. I talked with one officer in my office this week. Just as an example, personally he wrote eight baiting cases. The furthest distance was 11 yards.

You know, the board gave a blueprint of how to do it. It's easy, a hundred yards out of the line of sight, and you still have people that are abusing it. An outlaw is going to be an outlaw. But the board did a great thing with this.

The picture of that deer right there, that's a four-year-old that somehow got sick. He utilized a supplemental feeding program that was done legally.

That's what he turned into this year as a five-year-old. Without the
progressive regulations of a three-buck limit, area definition, that deer would have never made it through. That's a world-class deer grown in Alabama.

And the final slide, without the board listening to the recommendations of the Wildlife staff and the hard work involved just gathering conception data, that hunter would have never killed that deer on Monday, February the 2nd, in Lowndes County. I put a tape on him at 165 and a half. Y'all, that's as good an Alabama deer as you can ask for, free range and a happy hunter.

So I want to personally thank the board and thank our staff for getting out, getting the data that we need to present to the board, and y'all making the proper rules and regulations, so thank you.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Director Sykes, when we -- when the board passed the antler restrictions, it was thought the -- I
know Bill Gray and I talked about it and several of us on your staff talked about that. We thought the average age of a buck killed in the state of Alabama -- that 85 percent of the bucks killed in the state were a year-and-a-half old during that time period, thus that that was keeping us from killing deer like this. Is there any idea to know where we are on that right now or what that average age class may be now in the state?

MR. SYKES: Dan, I don't think we've got any hard data on it. But just talking to processors, talking to hunters, talking with our staff at WMAs, the age class is going up. You don't kill a 165-inch deer if he dies as a yearling.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: And the reports I get is that more people are killing bigger and better deer, which the age class has got to go up.

MR. SYKES: Absolutely.
CHAIRMAN MOULTTRIE: And that's the whole deal that we needed to have happen?

MR. SYKES: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN MOULTTRIE: The other question during your presentation that was good: How old would the world-record alligator be? What kind of age did that have on it?

MR. SYKES: No clue.

CHAIRMAN MOULTTRIE: No clue. Okay. Commissioner?

COMMISSIONER GUY: What was he, 14-feet long?

MR. SYKES: 15.

COMMISSIONER GUY: 15. And how much did he weigh?

MR. SYKES: 1,011 pounds.

COMMISSIONER GUY: The take-away from that is if you lose a decoy or something in a slough in the Alabama River, do not go in after it. Because he was caught in a slough down there below Selma; correct? And I don't know where he -- I know I used to ski in the river when I was younger. I would not do that again.
So I do just want to add, thanks for
giving Chuck and his staff a round of
applause. Because, again, they are
working very hard to try to do what's
needed for our constituents and for the
hunting public, and it is difficult to
balance a lot of those types of things.
But I think you can see that a lot of
good progress is being made.

I think the only thing that you
didn't mention, Chuck, was a new -- the
turkey research. I don't know -- did
you want to say something about that
just briefly or -- we're spending --

MR. SYKES: I can.

COMMISSIONER GUY: Why don't you just talk
about that, if you don't mind.

MR. SYKES: Yeah. There has been a decline in
turkey numbers throughout the Southeast
at all the meetings I go to with my
counterparts in the 13 southeastern
states. It's -- all of their research,
the data that they have, is showing that
their turkey numbers are declining.
There was no reason for us to think that
Alabama was in a vacuum and that
everything was good here. If they were
experiencing declines, we probably were
too.

So we are using some of our
Pittman-Robertson dollars that y'all
have provided by buying hunting licenses
and guns and ammunition, and we just
embarked on a five-year study with
Auburn University, about a
1.2-million-dollar study over the next
five years to try to get us some quality
information on the turkey population in
Alabama. It is a very aggressive study.
I hope they can accomplish it. They're
going to look at putting GPS units on
about 180 turkeys this spring in
different locations throughout the
state. Will be looking for predation
rates, nesting success, survivability.

It's going to give us some quality
information that we have never had.

Again, we've been working with deer
for a long time. We've got some good
information on them. We can always use
more. But turkeys have kind of been
overlooked. I'm a turkey hunter. I
wanted to make sure that we had plenty
of turkeys for me to hunt over the next
ten years and for all of y'all's kids
and grandkids to hunt as well.

So it's a -- it's a very aggressive
project, and hopefully next year we'll
have some good preliminary results.

COMMISSIONER GUY: And going back to what
Chuck said about reporting, we have that
available, too, on the Web, on your app,
and by phone. In order to help us
accomplish that goal, we really need
turkey hunters to call in their harvest.
That would help us out tremendously
because then we are learning where
turkeys are being killed. And we can
see trends in that and we can use those
numbers to compare to what all the other research is showing.

Because I think in a lot of cases what we hear is that the viability of turkey populations vary a good bit from location to location, Mr. Chairman. And so if people are calling in that information to us, then we can see where there might be problems in the state as opposed to other places in the state where there aren't problems, and we can compare those areas to each other and see why one might be better than the other.

So I would just encourage everybody that's a turkey hunter to take a -- you know, help us. Help us, like Chuck said. Call that in during the season. Let us know what you're harvesting and where you're harvesting it. It takes just a little bit of your time. We're trying to make that about as simple as we can. And we would greatly appreciate
that.
Yes, Chuck.

MR. SYKES: Just one more point going back to
Chris' presentation. I think a lot of
the misconception with deer and turkey
hunters is we want that information
where we can take something away from
them. You saw the data that Chris got.
It actually proved that you needed more.

So we're not trying to get that
information -- well, if I tell them I
killed five turkeys, they're going to
cut the limit, or if I tell them where I
killed three deer, they're going to say
we're killing too many. That's not the
case.

What Chris' information proved is
that y'all need more opportunity. If we
get that same information, it may show
that you need more opportunity. So
please don't look at it like we're
trying to take something away from you.
We need the information where we can
make the right decisions.

COMMISSIONER GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN MOULTREDIE: Thank you, Commissioner.

If the board would return to their seats.

All right. The next order of business is going to be the public hearing. When your name is called, please go to the microphone, give your name and subject you wish to speak on. I'll remind you that only one may speak at each time when you are called on and that any interference will not be tolerated.

The first speaker today is Hub Harrington. Mr. Harrington.

COMMISSIONER GUY: If anybody needs a chair --

CHAIRMAN MOULTREDIE: If y'all are in the back of the room, there are some chairs available if y'all want to come up.

MR. HARRINGTON: Hi, good morning. My name is Hub Harrington. I am from Indian Springs, Alabama, in Shelby County.
CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Speak into the microphone, Mr. Harrington. Is it on?
Yeah, there you go.
MR. HARRINGTON: Is it on? How about now?
CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: That's better.
MR. HARRINGTON: Got to get closer. Sorry.
Thanks.

I'm sorry. My name is Hub Harrington. I'm from Indian Springs in Shelby County, Alabama. I was a long time ago the first mayor of Indian Springs. We've lived there a long time. Most recently I'm a retired circuit judge from Shelby County.

So I'm here today on behalf of an organization called "Keep Oak Mountain Wild." I'm a lawyer. I can't say anything in three minutes. I didn't know the rules, so -- but I can follow the rules. When I get to my three minutes, I promise I'll sit down. I'll give it a whirl.

I'm here today because we support
Oak Mountain State Park. One thing we do not support about what's been proposed at Oak Mountain State Park is a large-scale, upscale hotel and convention center. It's supposed to have -- proposed to have 175 rooms and a 20,000-square-foot convention center.

Our contention is that this proposed project does not fit the definition of recreational enhancement. It's certainly not a conservation project. And we contend that it will be an economic disaster and potentially an environmental disaster. The entire concept is an affront to the personality and character of this park.

I know you all know where it is. Oak Mountain State Park is located in the north end of Shelby County. Shelby County has been the fastest-growing county in the state of Alabama for three decades. When I moved to the house I live in now, we could get on our horse
and ride it into the park. You
certainly can't do that today.

Today the park is surrounded by
subdivisions, shopping centers, heavy
traffic. It is completely surrounded.
It's an island. But it is a wonderful
island because it is a respite.
Serenity. It's natural. It does not
need to have the commercialization of a
resort-style hotel.

And the park needs to be upgraded.
It needs to be maintained. It needs to
have recreational and outdoor activities
enhanced. It does not need to become a
commercial entity.

The project is being put
together/proposed by the Shelby County
Commission, the City of Pelham, and the
State Park. The folks from Pelham and
Shelby County have stated publicly that
they intend for the park to be the
economic engine of Shelby County.

Our contention is that the park is
not an economic engine. It is for
serenity. Its value is recreational,
conservation, a respite from the
commercialization --

MS. JONES: Time.

MR. HARRINGTON: -- not money.

My three minutes. I told you I was
a lawyer. I was just getting started
good.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: That's all right. If you
can quickly --

MR. HARRINGTON: We have set up a Website
called "keepoakmountainwild.org." And I
brought you all a handout that discusses
the feasibility study that's been put
together by the county and the state.
And what we're here to ask -- and this
project will not work if you don't -- if
the state does not give the land for the
hotel to be built upon. So we would ask
you, please prevent that from happening
and please do not allow the park to
become a commercial entity. Save it for
the purpose for which it's designed.

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Thank you, Mr. Harrington.

The next speaker will be James Watkins.

MR. WATKINS: Good morning. My name is James Watkins. I live in Scottsboro, Alabama, in Jackson County. I'm here representing Mr. Mitch Allen who's unable to attend. He was the one supposed to give this speech this morning.

I gave each one of you a packet. There's a cover letter there from me, and that pretty well explains where we are right now as far as asking for your support in getting some regulations passed to limit the noise from airboats and limit the amount of light that can be used in these built-up areas on our lakes, especially Lake Guntersville.

In your handout there is a list of folks that attended this meeting in
July. Representative John Robinson had contacted me. He had numerous complaints of airboat noise and light and wanted to get a meeting of concerned citizens and residents around Lake Guntersville, especially in Jackson County.

The meeting was held on July 16th, and there's a list of folks that was there, that were attending, law enforcement, local government, and citizens. We discussed the rules and regulations -- oh, by the way, I'm a retired Marine Police officer. I was still working at the time this meeting was held. I've since retired.

But we discussed the laws and rules and regulations and the way the Marine Police division conducts sound -- checks the sound -- the 86 decibels on the airboats. The officer assigned to that post and myself conducted several -- numerous, numerous sound examinations
according to the law -- the regulation we've got, and they all met the properly muffled part of the regulation.

As I explained to Representative Robinson at the time, most of these noise problems we have are from the prop itself. If you've ever been to an airport and you heard an airplane crank up, you see what kind of noise you get. It's kind of bad at two, three o'clock in the morning, waking folks up. And these people are asking for your help in relieving some of the problems we've got in Jackson County, especially as far as noise and light distance for the airboats.

Oh, and by the way, these boats are not part of the tournament crowd. The tournament fishermen are given each time -- each year before they have a tournament a strip map of the lake, areas marked and highlighted to not be used after 10 p.m. at night. So it's
not just -- it's not the tournament fishermen. It's the "Joe Blow" guy that comes out during the week with his big airboat.

But if you'll help -- if you could give us some relief there, we certainly would appreciate it. Thank you.

MS. JONES: Time.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Mr. Watkins, is the main use of these airboats, do you think, bowfishing at night?

MR. WATKINS: Yes, sir, bowfishing. Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Bowfishing. Okay.

MR. WATKINS: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Very good. Any other questions from the board?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Thank you, Mr. Watkins.

MR. WATKINS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: The next speaker will be Slade Johnston.

MR. JOHNSTON: Good morning, my name is Slade Johnston. I'm from Sumter County,
Alabama, and I'm a junior at the
University of Alabama. I'm also the
president of our National Wild Turkey
Federation chapter at the University.

Today I'm representing our committee
as we seek the approval and support of
the Advisory Board for our nonresident
hunting license proposal. Each of y'all
should have a handout that is our
proposal. The purpose of this proposal
is to allow all nonresident students the
chance to purchase a hunting license at
resident prices that are
college-attending students in the state
of Alabama.

A little background on our
organization: Our NWTF chapter is a
nonprofit organization made up of UA
students from all over the nation.
We -- our primary goal is the
conservation of our wildlife. Currently
our committee consists of 122 members.
Out of that, about 30 percent are from
out of state. After surveying several members individually and the committee as a whole, we realized that it's a huge hindrance for the college-attending students from out of state that these nonresident prices are so high.

We've drafted a list of benefits and drawbacks for this proposal. Some of them are the encouragement to purchase from hunters who are hesitant due to high costs, therefore, increasing the volume of the total licenses purchased, discouragement for those who risk hunting illegally. And this will also bring money to like outdoor hunting stores within the state due to the students having to purchase their supplies in-state. A couple of the drawbacks are that the state could lose money from each individual purchase from the nonresidents and, also, that the students will have to have a way to prove enrollment when they apply for the
license.

There are several other states that are already currently providing this option for license purchase. Some of them in our region are Arkansas, Georgia, Tennessee, and Mississippi. This price change is significantly more reasonable when calculating the increase of nonresident to resident prices.

As shown in the handout in Table 1.1, the annual all game hunting license is 11-and-a-half times more than the resident hunting license. Then you can see in Table 1.2 that the annual all -- the freshwater fishing license is only 3.8 times more expensive for nonresidents.

This is a huge difference in license prices, and it's causing a large financial burden on out-of-state college hunters. Based on our research and analysis, allowing nonresident students to purchase a license at a resident
price will increase the volume of license sales and be far more beneficial than damaging for all parties.

We understand that this is a legislative matter and that we cannot do it with our resources alone. We are seeking the Advisory Board's approval and support to continue with this process.

Do y'all have any questions?

CHAIRMAN MOULTONIE: Commissioner Guy.

COMMISSIONER GUY: Yes. Mr. Johnston, thank you very much for this. I think it's an excellent idea. We will look at it. It's good that you're here today. I've actually seen this in some other states, and we've talked about it preliminarily. I think the biggest challenge might be the legislation.

MR. JOHNSTON: Okay.

COMMISSIONER GUY: But we could certainly -- and then I think the other thing is to make sure that we have the right
reciprocal agreements with other states so that it's a fair exchange between each state. And so I'll get with Director Sykes. And let us first look at that. And he has, obviously, directors in every other state that he can talk to and we can get a better understanding of that reciprocal agreement between the states.

I think it's a good idea. I think anything that we can do to encourage students and young people to be involved -- I think it's a great idea. So I want to thank you for bringing that to our attention. And we will seek your help if we go that route and can do that maybe next year or something. We'll have to work on it and make sure we get it right. But please -- please keep reminding us or come back to the board meetings. And when we get ready to do that, we will not only seek help from you, but I hope your counterparts at
Auburn and any other universities here in the state will also join in with you.

MR. JOHNSTON: Yes, sir. We'll have full support from our committees throughout the state.

COMMISSIONER GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Mr. Johnston, I appreciate you coming. We've talked beforehand on the phone. Excellent presentation. Excellent point. Thank you so much.

MR. JOHNSTON: Thank y'all for the opportunity.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: The next speaker will be Avery Bates.

MR. BATES: I was faster this time, wasn't I, Mr. Hatley? Flat ground.

MR. HATLEY: Sit down, Avery.

MR. BATES: My name is Avery Bates. I'm vice-president of Organized Seafood Association. It's always been a pleasure to face the board.

I want to invite y'all to the Seafood Bash on the 11th. And we're
going to have some farm-raised oysters
this year that are outstanding, the
Auburn sea grant, and then we're going
to have a number of our farmers that
produce the oysters. They're great.
Alabama produces some of the best
seafood in the whole country. In some
places we say the whole world.

But we want to maintain our seafood
bottoms. We had some things come up
last year with the outfall line in the
bayou. We either neglected to put the
outfall line in the proper place -- and
anytime that we lose oyster bottoms
because of possible pollution -- we've
seen it happen at Dauphin Island Bay.

Chris, interagency is so important,
as you know, just working with the FDA
and board of health.

We planted numbers -- so many
numbers -- thousands of barrels of
cultch in these areas. We can't afford
to let that outfall line stay where it
is. If it does, it's going to close
miles and miles of productive bottom.
We need to move this either with -- some
funding has got to be appropriated. I
don't know if it's going to be RESTORE
Act money that we can tap into. It
can't -- it can't be there because we've
got millions of dollars of upcoming
planted oysters by the farmers. And
we've got to have the state get behind
the seafood industry to try to get these
outfall lines moved away.

We've already got diagrams of where
the tide is running. They had them in
'03, 2003. We know where the possible
contamination is going. The FDA will
not allow us with the increased number
of people that's going to get online in
the future -- if it goes to two million
gallons through that pipe we're shut
down.

And right now we can live with what
we got, but it's got -- it's got to be
done through efforts of interagency coming together and solving this problem. It's happened in the past. We want to get this thing solved so we can keep our bottoms productive and not polluted. And it's important to the restaurants. It's important to everybody that receives our seafood that we keep these areas. It is productive bottoms -- it has been historically productive bottoms.

But we also want to thank Chris for keeping both sides of the Bay/Mississippi Sound open this year an extended period of time. Our fishermen was proud to see these areas open. Even though it wasn't that many oysters out there, they was able to glean a little day's work. And we're trying to improve our acreage, so --

MS. JONES: Time.

MR. BATES: -- thank you. And any questions on what I said?
And we have some problems with
Louisiana trying to tax us with some of
our business too. I want to get with
Chris on that.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Does the board have any
questions for Mr. Bates?

Grady, Mr. Hartzog.

MR. HARTZOG: Well, it's funny you talk about
the farmed oysters. Several of us were
talking in the coffee room beforehand.
It's my understanding that -- I think
that Bob said there were 14 additional
farmers that got permits to do the
farmed oysters, so we want to keep it
going.

MR. BATES: Yeah. We have our farmers really
worried about these bottoms that we --
they have planted. And riparian bottoms
is what they're using. And you see when
you invest a hundred thousand dollars
and numerous man-hours of work to all of
a sudden be reclassified prohibited from
harvesting oysters in these areas.
So it's a multimillion-dollar industry that's going to increase as the years go by because people want to get into this business. So let's keep it open. Let's keep the waters clean. Let's move these pipelines where the conditionally approved areas will grow, not decrease.

CHAIRMAN MOULTNIE: Thank you, Mr. Bates.

Commissioner McMillan.

COMMISSIONER McMILLAN: Are there any cost estimates on moving the outfall?

MR. BATES: There's several different people that say it's a million dollars a mile or even more than that. But we've got to get it out to -- to adequate -- I'd like to see it out in 15 foot of water.

We have the diagram of where the dye will go. They knew this years ago. But they always say the money shortage, they stopped it inshore at four or five foot of water.

FDA, David Wiggins, said it will not
work there, and he's proved it by the
dye check. So we must -- we must not
have another episode like we did in
Dauphin Island Bay. In other words, we
lost half of Dauphin Island Bay. We
don't want to lose all of Portersville
Bay, Grand Bay, and numerous other areas
down there.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Thank you, Mr. Bates.

MR. BATES: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: The next speaker will be
Kenny Ford.

MR. FORD: I'm sorry. I was misinformed when
I came down here this morning, so just
skip me.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Okay. The next speaker
will be Clarence Hamm. Mr. Hamm.

MR. HAMM: I'm Clarence Hamm from north
Alabama up in Colbert County, Alabama.

We fishermens up there are really
concerned about catfishing, trotlines,
you know, the populations of the fish
and the amount of the lines that we're
told that we might be facing up against
and the population of the size of the
fish. And how can commercial fishermens
make a living when we cut down on our
size and cut down on the number of our
hooks, you know. That's what I'm here
for today. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER GUY: Chuck, do you or Stan want
to address that just so we -- about the
hook limit?

    It doesn't apply to commercial;
correct?

MR. COOK: Yeah. As reported by Chuck
earlier, we are not reducing the number
of hooks for commercial anglers.

COMMISSIONER GUY: And let me just say the key
there is -- is to also help the
commercial anglers because we think
there were some commercial anglers who
were using the unlimited hook as
recreation when they should be
commercial. So it's actually going to
help the commercial fishermen by limiting the size on the recreational because then you've either got to choose -- you're either a recreational fisherman or you're a commercial fisherman and you need to be one.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Thank you. The next speaker is Jeffery Harvey.

Jeffery Harvey?

MR. HARVEY: We was misinformed.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Okay. The next speaker will be Mary Carole Jackson.

MS. JACKSON: I'm Mary Carole Jackson, and I'm here representing the Sipsey tailrace and trout anglers. The Sipsey Tailrace Trout Unlimited made many recommendations before the board in the past, and I believe several of our recommendations were probably misunderstood.

It was believed by some that we were trying to add regulations to the Sipsey
tailrace, Alabama's only year-round trout stream, to make it a country club and that -- that we were trying to make a flyfish-only section. This is not what we wanted at all.

What we're wanting to do is -- after the addition of seven angler access points in the last several years, the pressure to the fishery has increased, and so we're wanting a catch-and-release section in the first mile or so of the stream to increase the chances of anglers -- of all anglers being able to catch fish.

So as it stands, our proposal, which you have a copy of, actually suggests that we create the catch-and-release section and that it be a single-hook artificial-only section so that instead of what we were misinterpreted before -- this is not flyfish only. You can use a hair jig or, you know, single-hook rooster tail to catch the fish. But
where the fishery has increased, the
duration of the seven stairways, the --
this makes it where you can actually
access and have continuous and
consistent catch rates. So in the top
portion you could come down with your,
you know, grandfather or grandchild and
still be able to consistently catch
fish.

We have people from -- and we have a
book that is up there in front of you as
well -- I think Mr. Moultrie has it --
that shows that people are coming -- I
know this is unbelievable, but we have
19 people from -- in the last year 19
people from Australia, 11 from New
Zealand, 23 from Europe, 35 from Japan,
and 36 states represented coming just to
our trout stream. We're the closest
place to catch trout year-round from
Louisiana, south Mississippi, south
Alabama. The closest place is north
Georgia, Tennessee, and then middle of Arkansas. So we have anglers coming from all over to catch fish.

So I end up taking lots of -- I know this is surprising as well -- lots of children and women and introducing them to the sport. And what I see in the summertime is once the trout are stopped, people descend on the river and they -- they catch the fish, they leave, and then we're left with an exponentially more difficult area to catch fish. So that's --

MS. JONES: Time.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: I want the board to be aware. Ms. Jackson and her husband came to me and asked me about this. I think, Grady, you had looked at this last time. I think that it was perceived that they were trying to shut down a piece of the Little River, which is actually not what was going on. But I want to comment on some of the comments she made.
I have a copy of her actual logbook of who they take, and she was absolutely correct. When you go through this, there's Japan, Japan, Japan, Australia, California. It's from all over the world. People come and utilize this trout fishery that we provide. And I think it needs to be understood that what they're trying to do is enhance it and not to shut this area down.

So I'd like the board to relook at this. And I would like to call on -- Director Sykes, can you look at this and also make some recommendations of what could possibly be done, that this can enhance the fishing there, that this be looked at positively?

MR. SYKES: Absolutely.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Thank you very much.

Any other -- Grady.

MR. HARTZOG: Well, funny deal. I was with Matt Bowden last week, which is the Environmental VP, and under the
relicensing agreement, it's the Alabama Power that stocks. And we were talking about the trout fishery. I mean, it's just odd that we talked about it last week.

Stan, what is the status under that relicensing? Are they going to have to increase the amount of stockings, or did it stay status quo?

MR. COOK: A little bit of confusion on that, Grady. Alabama Power, because of our efforts --

MR. HARTZOG: Right.

MR. COOK: -- has been put in a position where they are helping us fund stockings.

MR. HARTZOG: Under the relicensing agreement, yeah.

MR. COOK: Their stocking effort goes along with a Fish and Wildlife agreement that we have, and basically it's resulted in doubling the amount of trout that have been stocked in that area.

There is no requirement above their
current contribution. They do a monetary contribution to us that grows by the CPI. So as that amount of money grows, if we're able, we can purchase more trout with that money.

MS. JACKSON: And can I add one thing?

DCNR has done a fantastic job getting us some amazing trout, bringing them from Westover Farms. We were getting them just from Dale Hollow in the trade. With the money they've spent it has been coming from Missouri trout, which are much larger and healthier trout. And they've done -- they really have done a fantastic job working with Alabama Power and -- to increase the -- what that fishery could be.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Commissioner Guy.

COMMISSIONER GUY: I just want to thank Ms. Jackson for her comments, but I did want to add -- you beat me to it. It's a nice problem to have because our Fisheries division does an unbelievable
job, as you just mentioned, working to
get all that -- all those fish stocked
over there and --
MR. JACKSON: Oh, they do a great job. They
really do.
COMMISSIONER GUY: That's overlooked a lot of
times. You know, those fish don't occur
there naturally. We've got to go and
work with folks and get those fish. And
it's a big -- it's a big economic
impact, I think, even for that area as
well over there.

So we'll certainly look at that and
work with you on that and let's see what
we can do. I know Stan -- we're always
talking about that. And thank you for
your comments.
MS. JACKSON: Thank you.
CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Ms. Jackson, you better
get this back from me or I'll lose it.
MR. JACKSON: Yeah. I was hoping -- I don't
want to lose that logbook.
CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Thank you very much.
Yes, Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Do trout reproduce? Do they die out?

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Stan, is there any reproduction whatsoever in these trout?

MR. COOK: No.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: No. All put-and-take,

Jeff.

All right. The next speaker is Jason Kellar.

MR. KELLAR: I'm Jason Kellar from Huntsville, Alabama. I'm a commercial fisherman.

And y'all had passed a big fish law a few years back that the catfish had to be 34 inches or smaller in order to keep them. And Arkansas had done the same law. Well, the other day Arkansas overturned that law because they found that it was not good for everything.

What it is, is a 34-inch catfish only weighs 18 to 22 pounds. We release so many of them that the river is before long going to have nothing but big fish
that we can no longer keep. So I was
going to ask if y'all would consider
overturning that law on the big catfish.
Thank you.
CHAIRMAN MOULTNIE: Thank you very much.
MR. JONES: Mr. Chairman?
CHAIRMAN MOULTNIE: Yes.
MR. JONES: Stan, I know we've done a lot of
work on the 34-inch-length catfish. Has
there been any more work done in the
Guntersville area?
MR. COOK: There has not been any additional
research done on that, but pretty much
the population dynamics that we depended
on making that decision from we don't
believe has changed since the last study
was done.
MR. JONES: Thank you.
CHAIRMAN MOULTNIE: Thank you, Mr. Jones.
The next speaker is Edward Whitmire.
MR. EDWARD WHITMIRE: Yes. I'm Edward
Whitmire. I'm one of the old-timers on
the lake up there now. Started fishing
in 1959. That's been a while ago.

So we got misled on the hook limit
that you mentioned a while ago because
somebody had told us they was going to
try to reduce our amount of hooks to
1,000 hooks per licensed fisherman. But
we got here and we see that's not the
case, so that's the reason we're here.

COMMISSIONER GUY: We appreciate you being
here. We're sorry that was confusing.

MR. EDWARD WHITMIRE: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER GUY: Thank you, sir. We tried
to get that information out,
Mr. Whitmire, as best we could because
we heard the rumors going. And we just,
you know, tried our best. I know
Director Sykes talked to a number of
people trying to get that out. So sorry
we couldn't have gotten that to you
sooner.

MR. EDWARD WHITMIRE: That's good. We're
happy that it's not happening.

COMMISSIONER GUY: Yes, sir.
CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: The next speaker is Danny Whitmire.

MR. DANNY WHITMIRE: Yeah. My name is Danny Whitmire, and I'm also with the fishermen's group here from north Alabama. And we all did get misled on the amount of hooks that we could fish on our commercial license.

But I also wanted to ask y'all to look at the gillnet issue where they closed it down on the Tennessee River last year. It's going to make a big dent in all the gamefish reproducing, whatever, you know, taking the buffalo and the carp and drum and all that out of the river with the gillnets. I think that if you open it back up it'll let everything go smooth.

So, like I said, I did get misled on the hook issue, but I wanted to, you know, run the gillnet thing by you.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Very good. Thank you, Mr. Whitmire.
MR. DANNY WHITMIRE: Be real appreciative if
you'd get it opened back up.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRE: Thank you so much.
The next speaker is Jessica Flowers.

MS. FLOWERS: Hi, good morning. My name is
Jessica Flowers. I'm from Baldwin
County. I'm here representing the
Alabama Hog Dog Hunters Association. I
am a hog dog hunter.

The first thing I want to talk about
is possibly opening back up hog dog
hunting at night. There were some
issues way back, and it was
misinterpreted somehow in the books.
And it's gotten to where we can't hunt
at night at all, period. And during the
heat and during the summer months it's
really hard for us to run dogs. And, of
course, this would exclude deer season
and turkey season.

But at night, you know, you're still
having farmer issues. You're still
having issues with landowners having hog
problems. So we would like for that to be considered and opened back up to night hunting.

Also, we would like for the board to consider opening up the WMA, as Mr. Sykes already talked about. We would like for that to be opened up to be able to hunt with a limited amount of hog hunters and also on a quota basis. We don't want it to be a free-for-all and everybody be out there, of course. You know, we want it to be a limited and structured environment.

And that's about it. I do want to say thank you to Keith and Mr. Chuck and everybody else that's helped us, you know, try to work on the WMA and try to get everything situated with it. And we appreciate y'all.

Any questions?

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Thank you very much.

Oh, Mr. Hatley.

MR. HATLEY: Ms. Flowers?
MS. FLOWERS: Yes.

MR. HATLEY: Where do you hog hunt primarily?

MS. FLOWERS: Primarily right now we're hunting private landowners. We hunt Mr. Billy Slaughter's property. We hunt the Howard property in Stockton. There's a few different areas that we hunt that we have to get it signed off on right now as far as, you know, landowner -- private landowners.

MR. HATLEY: But primarily it's in the Delta area?

MS. FLOWERS: It's close to it. As far as Mr. Slaughter's, yeah. He owns about 10,000 acres, and that's going to be up past Stockton area. And then the Howards' is right -- a little bit past Stockton area, too, but it's on the main road.

MR. HATLEY: There's some things I'd like to talk to you about after the meeting that you brought up.

MS. FLOWERS: Yes, sir.
MR. HATLEY: So -- because I've got some of
those same concerns that you do. So I'd
like to talk to you about that.

MS. FLOWERS: Right. We will.

MR. HATLEY: Thank you.

MS. FLOWERS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN MOULTON: Thank you, Ms. Flowers.

The next speaker is Lewie Helms.

Mr. Helms.

MR. HELMS: I'm old and slow. My name is
Lewie Helms. I'm from Headland,
Alabama. And I want to talk to y'all a
few minutes this morning about dove
hunting, which is my passion.

To start with, I want to -- I'd like
to make a few comments to Commissioner
Guy, Chuck Sykes, and Grady Hartzog.

CHAIRMAN MOULTON: Flip that microphone up,
if you will, please, sir. We're having
a hard time hearing you.

MR. HELMS: I would like to say thank you, you
fellows, the whole staff, for responding
in the last few years, especially under
your tenure, Commissioner Guy, that y'all -- it seems to me that -- seems to us in our area that y'all have responded to a lot of our issues down there when it comes to dove hunting. And what I'm talking about is interpretation of the regulations. We have -- we do a lot of youth hunts. We had problems in the past with interpretation of what's legal and what's illegal, and it has run real smooth the last couple of years -- two or three years.

And all I want to say to you is -- I was here in 2013 and talked about some issues like when kids could hunt, holidays, weekends, and also our late-season needs in south Alabama. And when I got the regulation in 2014, I could not believe it. I called Grady. I said, Grady, are you sure this is right?

Y'all had actually -- what we had asked for y'all had incorporated into
the regs and the dates. And I just want
to say I appreciate it.

And the last thing I want to say, in
60 years of hunting I think you've got
it just right. It don't need fixing.
Leave it like it is. Thank you, sir.

COMMISSIONER GUY: Thank you.

MR. HARTZOG: Dan?

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Yes.

MR. HARTZOG: I'd like to thank Mr. Lewie
because I do know Mr. Lewie does an
awful lot with the youth hunts down
there. He does a good job. He and I
talk pretty regular. So he does a good
job with looking out for the kids of the
state of Alabama.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: That's excellent. We
appreciate his comments.

Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER GUY: I'll just say this because
I was jumping on the feds about the
snapper fishing. But I will say on dove
hunting, Mr. Lewie, the U.S. Fish and
Wildlife Service has also worked with us, and they do get -- deserve some credit in this case because they have -- they are helping us get dove season right. And we should thank them as well, so thank you.

MR. HELMS: Well, we just -- it worked. We had a fantastic season. And I don't think you can do anything more for us unless you can deal with the weather.

COMMISSIONER GUY: We're working on that.

MR. SYKES: I need to make sure that everything is recorded. That's two speakers in a row that thanked us for doing something.

CHAIRMAN MOULTREDIE: I was going to comment on that, Director Sykes. That's the first time I remember two in a row.

MR. SYKES: Unbelievable.

CHAIRMAN MOULTREDIE: Okay. The next speaker is Ralph Mirarchi.

MR. MIRARCHI: Thank you. It's Mirarchi.

That's better -- it's been pronounced
"Marichmari" too. They thought I was Japanese for a while.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Dr. Ditchkoff told me to say that.

MR. MIRARCHI: Well, thank you for letting me take the opportunity to speak today. My name is Ralph Mirarchi. I'm a Professor Emeritus of Wild Science with Auburn University, but more importantly I'm a property owner in Lee County, Alabama. First off, I'm going to make it three in a row, Chuck. And I want to commend the Conservation Advisory Board and the Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries for many of the progressive moves that have been made in just the last few years with everything from buck harvest restrictions to the main point I'm going to mention or talk about today, which is coordinating the deer seasons with the peak rut. I think you've done a wonderful job, and I'd like to see it continue.
One of the things that -- or the main thing I want to briefly mention -- y'all have a handout packet that I provided to you. In that handout packet I have a map of Lee County which indicates where the current Zone B and Zone A deer-hunting seasons are located. My property and some of the people that I represent in that area are located in section 18 in the northwestern portion of Lee County as well. And as you can see, we're in Zone A, which is still on the January -- ending deer season January 31st.

The first figure that I provided there is a compilation of 30 years of data that I have collected on that property of frequency of sightings of branch-antlered bucks. And as you can see, from the beginning of the hunting season -- and we hunt all season long, to the very end -- this frequency increases dramatically and reaches its
peak during the middle of January. And, of course, the season ends January 31st while the rut is still in full peak.

The second figure in that packet indicates the size of the bucks, and the size of those observed and those killed increases as well during that period of time.

The third figure on there is a representation that I have made just of what -- if the frequency of sightings would be normally distributed what would -- it would look like extending on into February and into that late -- the February 10th hunting season. And you can see before it tapered off we would still have a peak --

MS. JONES: Time.

MR. MIRARCHI: -- of about ten days' worth of rutting.

So my point basically, in summarizing, is those of us in northwest Lee County would like to see that season
extended into February 10th because we have visual data to support that, 30 years' worth.

I have -- I just want to mention that I have been in contact with Director Sykes and with Bill Gray, the deer biologist, and they got in touch with me very promptly after they received this letter and indicated they will be glad to come out and do some sampling to verify these data as well, and I greatly appreciate that. And I hope that the board would see fit based on the recommendation from their staff to extend the hunting season in northwest Lee County into the February 10th deadline.

From a standpoint of law enforcement, I think it would be fairly easy to handle because it's just north and west of I-85. It would not affect the eastern portion of Lee County which does have a November rut.
CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Thank you very much, sir.

MR. MIRARCHI: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Until -- let's make this
point again that the board and
everybody -- until we get that data none
of that can be done or moved. So it's
important to us because everything we do
is going to be substantiated by the data
that Chuck and his staff provides us.

MR. MIRARCHI: I appreciate that and I
understand that. Being a research
scientist, I could see -- I could have
made this up. I didn't, but I could
have. So I understand that and will be
glad to work with y'all.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Thank you very much.

MR. MIRARCHI: Good job by the way. Really
appreciate it.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: The next speaker is Drew
Porter.

MR. PORTER: Good morning, everyone. I'm Drew
Porter.

First of all, I'd like to thank
y'all for giving us an opportunity to come, you know, down and voice our concerns and things.

And I want to talk to you today about the art of stalk hunting using man-drives. This is an age-old hunting process. You know, who hasn't done it, you know. You know, you hunt -- still hunt in the morning maybe and on the way out you and your dad, your brother, whatever, walk out a briar patch, you know. We've all done it, you know.

We really enjoy doing it, and there really hadn't never been any problems with it. And we came up to the Forever Wild land at the Old Cahawba Tract between Selma and Orrville this year, and just out of the blue, you know, there on the rule map it said that this practice was prohibited.

So we go to investigating a little bit, you know, and we talk to the game warden there, David Hopper. And we
figure out what's going on. You know, a
landowner had complained about he had
thought some people had got on his
place. And, you know, my point was how
many people are caught on other people's
places in a year tree-stand hunting.
You know, you give them a ticket and
send them on their way. You don't ban
tree-stand hunting in an area because of
it. You know, the laws are there for
that.

And we'd just like to see this type
of hunting to be able to remain in
Alabama. It's something that lots of
people really enjoy doing.

I talked with Patti Powell and her
people, and I think that that situation
down there is going to be rectified.
They've got some -- you know, some
things that they think they're going to
do to fix that and get that language
removed.

I don't know of anywhere else in the
state that it is illegal -- or
prohibited, should I say, to do
man-drives, and we would like to see it
to continue to be, you know, a legal
form of stalk hunting.

And we just appreciate, you know,
like I said, y'all giving us a platform
to speak on things. And I appreciate
Patti and them's group. They got back
to me about three weeks ago on this
and -- but I still wanted to come today
and just, you know, let you know that
this is a form of hunting that a lot of
people in our state enjoy and we enjoy,
you know.

You know, hey, we're human beings.
We can read where the land lines are.
If somebody gets caught breaking the
law, give them a ticket, but don't
punish everybody who's trying to do, you
know, the right thing and hunt
correctly, so --

CHAIRMAN MOULTONIE: Mr. Porter, I'm sure that
the concern was more from a safety
standpoint than it was anything else.

But, Ms. Powell, do you have any
comments on this?

MS. POWELL: I would like to thank Mr. Porter.
He did call my staff and express his
concerns. That always helps us to be
aware of the concerns and see what we
can do to begin addressing them.

Brief history. The Old Cahawba
Tract acquired in 2009, about 3,000
acres consistent with Forever Wild's
multiple-use theory of management, we
did open to open-permit public hunting
back in 2009 for that first '09-10
season. Shortly after that we did begin
to receive complaints from adjacent
landowners of trespassing, either
man-drive standers standing on their
land shooting in or saying that shots
were being fired onto their private land
shooting at deer.

As that continued, we investigated
those. It continued. We had posted some additional signs clearly saying specifically you are leaving public land, now entering private land. That did eliminate -- or reduce -- it didn't eliminate but did reduce some of the complaints. We continued to receive them on into the '13-14 season. We began to receive specific safety concerns that were presented to my staff.

As a result, this past season we did close for a period of evaluation that activity on that tract. That comes up for review at our meeting. We have a meeting each year normally after turkey season, but we'll be sure to schedule it this year prior to your next meeting. We could prevent our -- present our evaluation.

What we're hoping to do is reopen some portions possibly using some different boundaries internal to the
tract or creating some safety zones. But prior to your -- in your next meeting we should be able to give you an update. And we have been in communication with Mr. Porter, and we will keep that communication going.

So any questions?

MR. HARTZOG: So, Patti, that was the only tract that Forever Wild had that had that regulation on it?

Because I know we passed -- well, we usually pass a management plan on each tract, so --

MS. POWELL: Yes. And that one did. And, again, that was 2009 to the '13-14 season there were no restrictions. There's just this past season that we did implement sort of a halt for a season to further evaluate both the usage and the complaints and try to understand and try to evaluate how we could relieve the safety concerns but return the activity. And so we'll be
able to tell you more by your next --
we'll be sure and have our annual review
of our tracts before this next
meeting -- your next meeting.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRE: Thank you, Ms. Powell.

MS. POWELL: Thank you. And thank you,
Mr. Porter.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRE: The next speaker will be
Tony Boatwell.

Thank you, Mr. Porter.

MR. PORTER: Well, I just wanted to tell
y'all, you know, I'm an honorably
discharged infantry marine taxpayer.
And I just wanted to let y'all know
that, you know, we want to be able to do
the things right and be able to hunt
like -- you know, like we need to in our
state and just that we appreciate, you
know, everything that y'all do for us as
hunters. And thank you for your time.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRE: Thank you very much.

Tony Boatwell.

MR. BOATWELL: Hey, I'm Tony Boatwell. I dog
hunt in Baldwin County in the Rabon
Sportsman Hunting Club. And there's
some complaints supposedly about dog
hunting on the -- in the county.

And I talked to Mr. Hatley. I
talked to some of the game wardens
there. And some of the stories are a
little bit different. You know,
Mr. Hatley said there's a bunch of
complaints, and they said they got just
the normal regular complaints. And, you
know, I talked to a bunch of the
presidents from the other hunting clubs,
and none of them knew nothing about none
of the complaints. No one came to us
and told us about anything.

And I guess what I'm trying to say
is, you know, we can't make no
corrections if there's a problem if we
don't know about them. And, you know,
y'all can tell us something -- you know,
we can go talk to someone and tell them,
hey, y'all are doing wrong, y'all
straighten up. And if they don't
straighten up, then y'all can do
y'all's -- whatever the thing is with
the permit system if y'all have to, you
know. But that's all I have to say.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRE: Thank you.

The next speaker will be Jason Fox.

MR. FOX: How y'all doing? Good morning. We
appreciate everything y'all do for us,
and we appreciate the opportunity.

My name is Jason Fox. I'm from
Brantley, Alabama, which is in Crenshaw
County. And I'm here representing Dead
Run Hunting Club really this morning for
support of deer hunting with dogs,
running dogs, and mainly to support or
defend any issues that may be ongoing
with our club. And I don't have
anything directly to discuss. Mainly it
was if anyone had any complaints. Just
wanted to discuss that.

As Mr. Sykes said, there are outlaws
out there, and we would appreciate that
the entire state does not suffer from
the actions of some wrongdoers. Thank
y'all.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Thank you.

The next speaker is Clifton Smith.

MR. SMITH: All right. Good morning. I'm
Clifton Smith. I hunt at the Blue Sand
Bed Hunting Club. We also -- it's been
brung to our attention that there's a
lot of complaints going around about dog
hunting.

We -- we have not received no
complaints. We haven't heard about no
complaints. We haven't had no game
warden come to us and present us with
any complaints. If there's any
complaints, if y'all know anything about
any, y'all let us know. We can see what
we can do to make it better. Without
knowing what it's about, you know, just
hearsay, what can we do?

Do any of y'all know anything about
any complaints?

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: The board has received more complaints on dog hunting this session than, I think, any session I've seen in the last 12 years. Whether or not your section, I don't know that.

MR. SMITH: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: But what we need to do is make sure that you communicate with your representative from your area, and then those complaints -- I assure you every one of those letters is mailed -- or letters or comments is taken by each board member and all of them very responsibly look at those. And so those complaints will be echoed back through either the enforcement officers or these meetings.

But there is a multitude of complaints. I'll go ahead and assure you of that. But I don't know if they're from your area or not.

Mr. Hatley, this is in your area,
I believe.

MR. HATLEY: Yeah.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Have you had complaints?

MR. HATLEY: I'd like to talk about that at a later time. But, yes, I certainly have.

But I'll be glad to talk with you about it too.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Okay. Thank you very much.

Okay. The next speaker will be Randy Barefoot.

MR. BAREFOOT: I'm Randy Barefoot from Covington County, and I'm here -- first off, I'm not here to complain about dog hunting. I'm here because we have a dog-hunting club in Covington County that is taking advantage of all the landowners around their club.

Our county is actually split. Highway 84 splits our county. And north of 84 they have to permit dogs. They still can run dogs, but they have to permit them. South of the county, wide
open. And I have not talked to one
person that has a complaint north of 84.

And all of our neighbors around --
we're landowners there. I've got
y'all -- I give everybody a map. There
should be a map there that just shows --
shows our property and our neighbor's
property there.

This club, they have probably --
it's around 4,000 acres leased from
Rayonier and from Dixon Corporation
there. And the way -- if you look at
your map, the way our property lays in
there, the green line there is a paved
highway, and we're kind of in a wedge.
The hunting club has us on the west and
on the south, and then the highway has
us, I guess, on the east and north. And
they use that highway to cut their dogs
off.

And they -- I've called the game
wardens -- I mean, I've talked to our
local game warden there, Patrick Norris.
He's doing an outstanding job. Every

time I call him he's going down there,
going down there, but his hands are
tied. Because these guys know that as
long as he's not catching them turning
their dogs out on me or shooting a deer
on me there's nothing he can do; right?

And I've talked with the --

Rayonier. I've talked to Dixon. I
talked with Mr. Hartzog last year. I
think -- and you may talk to that
hunting club and they'll probably say,
oh, we haven't had any complaints. Oh,
I've heard the -- you know, a dog can't
read signs, all that garbage.

The reason a lot of people aren't
complaining, I think everybody's give up
because we haven't been able to get
anything done. And we have -- we can't
hunt. We can't hunt at our private
property.

And I'm not against dog hunting. I
think everybody ought to be able to hunt
the way they want to hunt and the way
they enjoy to hunt as long as it's
within the law. But when our rights are
being taken away -- this past season --
I'm sorry -- '14 season, I went and
actually talked to a couple of the dog
hunters, and two different guys told me
I'm sorry that your land lays the way it
lays; we love to dog hunt; we're going
to do it; and when dog season goes out,
you can start hunting your property
again. I was told that out of their
mouth. And you can't tell me that's
right when I can't hunt my own piece of
property --

MS. JONES: Time.

MR. BAREFOOT: -- that I own because of
somebody else. That's -- we need
y'all's help, please. Help us get the
permit system. They can still dog hunt,
but it'll force them guys to care a
little bit. Thank y'all.

CHAIRMAN MOULTNIE: Thank you, Mr. Barefoot.
The next speaker is James Cunningham.

MR. CUNNINGHAM: Good morning, members of the board, Mr. Chairman. As you said, my name is Caleb Cunningham. I'm from Washington County, Alabama.

Before you is a packet that I have prepared. I have actually been one of the people encouraging people to send you these letters. They keep telling me anecdotes and stories, and I wanted to focus on facts when I came to y'all today.

This practice of dog hunting has long plagued Alabama and been banned but in the small minority of states. There's an old saying that the freedom to swing your arm stops where my nose begins, and unfortunately that's not the case when you allow dog hunting. Property owners have long been defenseless against rampant trespassing and damages caused by dog hunters.
MR. MARTIN: Excuse me. Will you speak in the microphone, please.

MR. CUNNINGHAM: Yeah. I'm sorry.

The hunters often say that it's a tradition and they should be allowed to continue their tradition. I say that property rights are an even more important tradition that we should protect.

Further, in the modern era of smaller and smaller hunting parcels, it's a dangerous and risky practice. Dog hunters often shoot deer that are running, making dangerous shots that cripple and maim deer or could strike people. They or their animals indiscriminately cross onto others' properties thwarting the efforts of still hunters and harassing game not on their property.

In the seven states that allow dog hunting it is unpopular. Georgia has recently done a study that only 39
percent of hunters are in favor of allowing dog hunting deer to continue. South Carolina found only 3.3 percent of hunters are dog hunters. It is illustrious of the problem of dog hunting that such a small population can cause this many problems.

Further, a lot of hunters and nonhunters alike find the practice barbaric, inhumane, both for the dog and the deer. As hunters, we are the gross minority of individuals, and we have to be cognizant of how we appear to these people or else we could lose their trust.

Included in your packet is a memorandum and an order from a federal court case in Louisiana. The United States Forest Service did obtain numerous complaints as you have and did their own study -- complaints, reported problems such as personal property vandalism, livestock harassment,
personal confrontations, shots being
fired across roads, road damage, blocked
roads, and that's just getting started.
And that's sworn deposition testimony in
your packet.

And based on the complaints and its
research, the U.S. Forestry Service
decided to ban dog hunting. It
interfered with recreational land use.
It was against public safety. It
created social issues and had negative
economic impacts. Of particular note,
the U.S. Forestry Service found that
there were more still hunters after they
banned dog hunting.

You will also find an interesting
article -- and the director was speaking
about turkeys. Dogs are one of the
greatest predators of turkeys -- and
it's located in the table there for your
reference purposes -- as a lot of times
these dogs escape, are abandoned at the
end of deer season, and they become
feral.

The researchers in that article also found that the mere presence of dogs deters use and habitation of wildlife.

MS. JONES: Time.

MR. CUNNINGHAM: I respectfully ask that you review the materials I provided. And if you have any questions, I'll be glad to answer them. But I know after you review those materials you'll believe as I do and move towards banning this practice.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Thank you, Mr. Cunningham.

The next speaker is Dewayne Flowers.

MR. FLOWERS: I'm just here today to ask y'all for y'all's help to put Halls Fork on the permit system because of the dog problem we have down there, turning dogs loose, running across everybody's property, and that's all I'm here for today.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: And you're in Bay Minette, Alabama?
MR. FLOWERS: Yes.

CHAIRMAN MOULTON: Okay. Very good. Thank you, Mr. Flowers.

The next -- per our standing rules that there's only ten speakers on each subject, I randomly selected three out of the -- we're not going to allow more to speak against dog deer hunting than to speak for dog deer hunting. Because there were 13 against dog deer hunting, I randomly selected three: Clarence Herring, Jim Roberts, T.J. Thompson.

If any of the other speakers would like to give up their time for one of those three to speak, that will be fine, but right now I'm going to go by them and if someone at the end wants to give up their time to speak. But there's not going to be more speak against dog deer hunting than speaks for it.

Yes, sir.

MR. THOMAS: Sir, I was told to come up here and voice my opinion. I don't think
that's right. It don't matter if it's a hundred or two. Everybody ought to have their right to talk.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRE: That's correct, but --

MR. THOMAS: I got some ideas that them other fellows didn't say that I think would help the --

CHAIRMAN MOULTRE: Yes, sir. But we have these standing rules that we go by, and that's why I'm giving y'all the chance to get together on who you'd like to have speak.

What's your name, please, sir?

MR. THOMAS: My name is Joe Thomas. My name is down yonder to speak.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRE: Okay. Well, then, you're on to speak; right?

MR. THOMAS: Well, you just said they wasn't going to speak on dog hunting no more.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRE: Jim Roberts, T.J. Thompson, and Clarence Herring.

MR. THOMAS: My name is Joe Thomas. I was going to talk about the dog --
CHAIRMAN MOULTONIE: Oh, no. You're T.J.

Thompson?

COMMISSIONER GUY: No. He was going to get to

speak.

MR. THOMAS: No. I'm Joe Thomas.

(Audience responds.)

CHAIRMAN MOULTONIE: We'll, we're still not

going to abandon our standing rules.

We're going to do what we have.

Okay. Clarence Herring, we're going
to go by you. If there's somebody who

will give you their spot later, then you
can speak for them. But the next

speaker will be Doug Kaiser.

MR. KAISER: My name's Doug Kaiser from Atmore

in Escambia County. My concern is about

the abuse of the habitual deer dog
trespass in my community.

The sheet that I gave y'all is the

list of some of the people in my

community that I went around, they

signed it. And they also had a --

wanted me to, you know, represent them
here today with their complaints as well
as mine, and that's the trespassing,
endangered livestock, neighboring dogs
missing or run over from the speeding
traffic that goes by. Some were afraid
of being shot as well.

I'm here today for your help. I
have gone through the game wardens.
I've gone through the local law office.
I cannot get help in getting my own
private landowner rights to be seen
because I feel like I'm being overrun.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Thank you, Mr. Kaiser.

The next speaker will be Randy

Mr. Marshall, before you speak, the
Commissioner just noted that the three
people, Mr. Herring, Mr. Roberts,
Mr. Thompson, if you'll submit your
comments in writing to us, we will make
sure that the board gets those from your
area. I'm sorry you're not able to speak
today, but we'll take those in writing and
look at those appropriately.

All right, Mr. Marshall. Go ahead.

MR. MARSHALL: Good morning. My name is Randy
Marshall. I'm from Monroe County.

I am a landowner. My adjacent land
neighbors, they lease land, a thousand
to 1500 acres. I've owned my property
for five years. Progressively it's
gotten worse. We've had -- I hate to be
a broken record, but we've got -- we've
got a problem with dogs. We've caught
the dogs. We've taken them to the
owners. Very little support.

Basically, you know, the dog can't read.
We've all heard it all.

We are on a strict management
program. We are a trophy club. I can
give you deer pictures February 14th
that deer -- that dogs are running
through our property. I am a bowhunter.

I carry my bow through January and
February. Opening day of bow season,
the dogs.

And, again, I don't -- I want people to understand -- I think the first hunting trip I ever did was a dog-hunting trip. And it was fun. We had a good time. I believe if this -- what I'm asking for is Monroe County to be put under a permit system. And I believe what the regulations are is you've got to have 2500 contiguous acres.

With that being said, I believe someone can be effective with that. What we have is about 240 acres that dogs are being put on, and they're through there in about two-and-a-half minutes. So with that being said, now the dogs are venturing off onto us.

I've sent emails. I've actually talked to Mr. Hatley. I greatly appreciate the response and just for him to talk to me.

We've actually talked to game
wardens. I know this has been said before. Their hands are tied.

MS. JONES: Time.

MR. MARSHALL: So what I'm asking for is Monroe County to be put under a permitting system.

Any questions?

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Thank you very much.

Okay. The next speaker will be Robert Mason.

Mr. Mason?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Okay. If Mr. Mason doesn't come to the microphone, we will take our first alternate.

Clarence Herring?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Okay. How about Jim Roberts?

Oh, here we go.

MR. ROBERTS: I am Jim Roberts.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Okay.

MR. ROBERTS: And I thank you for letting us
voice our opinion. All the other guys have stole my thunder.

I'm requesting that you gentlemen please give serious consideration to a permit system for dog hunting in Baldwin and Monroe County. I've been hunting that area for 25 years or better, and it just progressively gets worse every season. And it's -- I work for a living. We only get to hunt on the weekends, and at 8:15 -- you can set your watch and the hunt's over for that weekend.

We're losing club members as a result of it. And we spend a lot of money in the community. And we just want our voice to be heard, and I appreciate the opportunity for that to happen. Thank you.

MR. DOBBS: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN MOULTON: Yes, Mr. Dobbs.

MR. DOBBS: Are you a private landowner in that area?
MR. ROBERTS: I have -- both. I have private land and I lease property from timber companies that I would rather not name.

MR. DOBBS: Thank you.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you for your time.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Thank you, Mr. Roberts.

The next speaker will be Steve Pierce.

MR. PIERCE: Good morning. My name is Steve Pierce from Andalusia, Alabama.

I put on there I'm against dog hunting. I'm not totally against dog hunting. I'm against the way it goes -- the way they do it down home. That's the bottom line. And I say it's partially the board's fault.

You've got them permitted north of 84. Down south all you've done is turned all the drunks and thugs loose on us. You got zero complaints north of 84. That's from both of the game wardens telling me that. They're both in my cell phone.
I've asked y'all before to help us. It's time something is done. I'm not saying permit them down there. I don't know the cure for that. That's for y'all to figure out. But we need something done down there before somebody is hurt. Because you got a bunch of drunks hunting in the roads, riding young'uns around in the back of pickups and on these ATVs, four-wheelers, whatever you want to call them.

Somebody is going to get hurt. I don't want to see a young'un hurt. I want people to hunt and enjoy it. But the problem with that is that that bunch is just like -- it's like anywhere else. It's not all of them in that -- in the club. But the main thugs is the ones with the money, and the rest of them either got to go along with them or not hunt. And when you can't hunt on private land because you got a bunch of
thugs out there, it's not right, period. Something needs to be done.

We've got two fantastic game wardens in Randall and Patrick. And they're busting their hiney trying to do us -- trying to help us, but they got to catch them. When you call them to come out there, they know they're coming before they're there and they're gone. But you ride down the county road -- you go down there and ride down it during hunting season. You'll see them standing on the side of the road -- on the side of a paved road hunting. That's wrong.

Something needs to be done, now. I'm not asking you. I'm telling you. I won't be back to bother y'all no more. But if something happens, now, it's on y'all's conscience because a young'un or something got hurt down there because of stupidity.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Have you talked to anybody on the board, Mr. Pierce, your
representative?

MR. PIERCE: I have tried to call
Mr. Hartzog's office, and he hadn't been
in, sir, when I did. And I just -- I
got tired of it. But I'm not joking.
You can ask our game wardens. I'm in
both of their cell phones and they're in
mine. And they know I don't mind
calling them.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Mr. Hartzog, can you get
in contact with Mr. Pierce?

MR. HARTZOG: (Nods head.)

MR. PIERCE: And, you know, that's what I'm
saying. It's -- where it's south of 84
there, you know, in Covington County.
It's not just one, you know. And, like
I say, I'm not saying that the permits
will cure it --

MS. JONES: Time.

MR. PIERCE: -- you know, to permit the dog
hunting. That ain't it. But something
needs to be done.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Thank you for your
comments, Mr. Pierce.

The next speaker is Joe Thomas.

MR. THOMAS: My name is Joe Thomas. And I talked to Mr. Hatley on the phone and I talked to Mr. Don Knight. I don't know who he is, but --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Hey.

MR. THOMAS: My name is Joe Thomas. You remember talking to me?

Dogs have run over us so bad in Citronelle we had to leave and go home. We couldn't even hunt. So I bought some land in Baldwin County up in Perdido, and I went up there and dog tracks were everywhere. And, I mean, I was just -- you couldn't hunt at either place.

So I called Mr. Hatley, then I called Mr. Knight, because I was aggravated. And Mr. Knight told me -- I told him I was aggravated because my hunting rights were taken away. And he said, no, ain't nobody took your hunting rights away. He said, it's a proven
fact that a dog, when he runs a deer off
of a piece of property, that deer will
be back within 24 hours. So I told
him -- I said, well, you just, you know,
lost my time -- hunting time for 24
hours, then, being that their dogs had
run through there. They would run all
the deer off and the turkeys too.
But -- because I couldn't hunt that
morning. I had to work and all I could
hunt was that evening.

But according to him, he said it's
proven that when folks run dogs across
land that they don't hunt it, the deer's
not going to be back for 24 hours. I
know there's some places that you can go
and the people run dogs and then the
deer will be back that evening. But
it -- that's very seldom. I mean, they
run the fire out of them.

I don't know what to do. I mean, I
got to quit hunting. Y'all act like
y'all want people to hunt, but I don't
have -- Mr. Blalock, the game warden in Baldwin County, told me I didn't have a leg to stand on. I asked him could I get a lawyer or what do I need to do. He said, son, you can go to that board meeting. He said, that's all I can tell you. He said, you don't have no right -- he said if I shoot a dog that's a felony charge against me, that they're going to take my hunting rights and my gun rights away. But that dog can come on my land and do what it wants.

But I talked to a fellow that hunts in Perdido and Florida. He told me if the dogs come on across their land in Florida the dog owner gets a fine for trespassing. But he said they don't have no problems in Florida. He said the problem's in Alabama. Because the dog hunters, they -- the first thing they do is buy a tracking collar. They know that dog is going to run. Why don't they buy a shock collar.
I sent you a letter and asked you about it. Why don't they put a leash on him when they go down through there with a driver. There's ways you can stop it.

Well, it's either that or just -- I mean, what do you do?

(Audience responds.)

CHAIRMAN MOULTTRIE: No comments from the crowd.

MR. THOMAS: Oh, I don't want to take nobody's hunting. I don't want to take away nobody's hunting.

CHAIRMAN MOULTTRIE: If you would address the board, please, sir, not the crowd.

MR. THOMAS: Yes, sir.

But I just don't know what to do. I mean, I don't -- nobody has the answer except Florida and where they got permits. Then them folks, they do what's right once you -- once you guys make them, but until then they ain't. I sit here today and y'all know good and well it's a problem. I ain't the only
one talking.

MS. JONES: Time.

MR. THOMAS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN MOULTON: Thank you, Mr. Thomas.

We're going to go back. Mr. Mason came back that missed his time.

Mr. Mason.

MR. MASON: Thank you for doing this. Hi, my name is Robert Mason. I'm from Alexander City, Alabama, and I'm here on behalf of Briar Patch Hunting Club and J & P Hunting Club. And our issue is kind of -- kind of the same of what you're hearing with the dogs.

But Clay County, the county we hunt in, right now is not in the permit -- that you have to have a permit to run the dogs up there, and what we would like to ask is if somehow we can get Clay County permitted, best way we can put some restrictions and stipulation on these guys. Because it's the same everywhere, whether you're trespassing,
turning dogs loose.

And we have actually had somebody else in our group to get in touch with Jeff Martin about the guys, how they got their camp set up. It's killing the poultries. You know, and where we hunt at, these guys -- when their dogs kill their poultry -- you know, that's a way of life for these guys. That's food. That's a source of income to them, a source of food.

But, if you would, just kind of keep in mind on Clay County, see if we can't get, you know, at least it permitted. That would really help us out some with keeping this kind of resolved and keeping down on that end of it. But everything else is pretty well much what you've been hearing up here.

We do appreciate it. Thank you for your time.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Mr. Mason, have y'all sent letters to Mr. Martin or to the board?
MR. MASON: Yes. I believe I got one in my
group that has got in touch with him. I
think he has talked to him. But we have
also had game wardens and everything
else involved. But one of the fellows
here with me today, I believe he has
spoke with Mr. Martin on something.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Okay. Just as you're
doing today, make it a documented case.
We have to have documented cases, and
you need to get those to Mr. Martin.
Just if it's for or against, either
way -- not saying one way is right or
wrong. But whether you're for dog
hunting or against dog hunting, those
cases for or against need to be
documented with the board member in your
area.

MR. MASON: And what do you do about trying to
get like the county -- well, you know,
when you're running dogs, you really
need a wide spread of property. I mean,
you just can't turn a hound dog,
especially a deer dog, a'loose on, just
say, 40 acres of land and expect him to
stay on that 40 acres.

Now, when you're small-game hunting
or maybe even hog hunting -- I'm not
familiar with hog hunting or how far
they run. But a deer can run, you know,
across a county or two before he stops,
so, you know --

CHAIRMAN MOULTRE: Thank you, Mr. Mason.
We'll get into those issues after the
public segment.

MR. MASON: Okay. Thanks a lot.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRE: Okay. The next speaker
will be Randall Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: I heard more bragging on you
folks today than I've heard in three or
four meetings I've been down there.
But, seriously, what I'm here for -- and
I'll be brief -- is to brag on you
again.

I'm Randy Thompson from Cherokee,
Alabama, which is up in west Colbert
County. And we have been down for the
last two or three years in meetings
because we had some of the same
problems. And I'm glad you let me speak
because I've got a success story here.

But we had some of the same problems
that a lot of these guys have shared
today. We documented our problems with
dog hunting. We were being just ran
over. It was five of us landowners that
were on a perimeter where there was a
lot of dog hunting going on. We were
just being overrun, not allowed to hunt
our greenfields and the shooting houses
without just dogs laying on the
greenfield or running around our
greenfields and property.

This past year you folks put this
area on a permit system, and I'm going
to tell you it worked. We had a very
good year this year. Dr. Andre Taylor,
Rod Wallace, Carnell Goodlow, Mike
Worsham, and myself are the owners
there. All of us had the same report.
There were only -- most of us just maybe
heard dogs a couple of times in the
distance. I can't say that there was a
dog on my property at all. May have
been when I was not there.

But I'm just here to say there's a
way. I appreciate you folks helping us
with it and doing the right thing. And
we understand the frustration of so many
of these others today, but it worked for
us. The permit system has worked up to
this point, this year. It really made a
big difference. So thanks for your
help.

CHAIRMAN MOULTIE: Thank you, Mr. Thompson.

The next speaker is Mike Worsham.

MR. WORSHAM: My name is Mike Worsham. As
Randy said, my property adjoins his in
Colbert County. And you've heard us
complain the last couple of years. We
wanted to come back and say thank you.
Because you put our area on the permit
system last year and, as he said, the
difference was tremendous.

In past years we would see deer the
first week or so of the season and then
we wouldn't see a lot until the last two
weeks when the dog hunting had stopped.
This year we saw deer the entire year.
We saw rutting activity, does chasing
bucks, and it's been eight or ten years
since we've seen that. It was just a
much more pleasant year, much more
enjoyable, and we just want to thank the
board for doing the right thing and
protecting our property owner's rights.
Thank you.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Thank you, Mr. Worsham.

That's --

MR. HARTZOG: Chairman Moultrie?

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Yes.

MR. HARTZOG: Out of curiosity, if Kevin can
answer this, when we put Colbert on the
permit system, did we lose any -- did
all the clubs get a permit or did we
actually lose any clubs?

MR. DODD: I'm sorry. When we first put who?

MR. HARTZOG: Colbert.

MR. JONES: To clarify, there was only a small section of Colbert County put under a permit system.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: If y'all will address the chair.

MR. JONES: It's not the entire county.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Mr. Dodd, do you understand the question? Do you understand Mr. Hartzog's question?

MR. DODD: I'm not sure I entirely do.

MR. HARTZOG: If there were five clubs in the area that were put under the permit system, did all five clubs stay with the permit?

MR. DODD: I cannot answer that, but Lieutenant Askew should be intimately familiar with that.

MR. ASKEW: There were three clubs and one voted to discontinue dog hunting.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We can't hear him.
CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: There were three clubs.
One voted to discontinue dog hunting.
Is that right, Mr. Askew?

MR. ASKEW: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Mr. Hartzog, anything else?

MR. HARTZOG: No, sir. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Mr. Jones?

MR. JONES: No.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Okay. We're going to go -- I'm going to move the reduction in hunting day to the end. We're going to take the ten supporting dog deer hunting immediately after the other. So we're going to move that behind the dog deer hunting support.

The first support for dog deer hunting is Jack Hall.

MR. HALL: My name is Jack Hall, and I'm from Bay Minette, Alabama, which is located in Baldwin County. I'm also a member of Tensaw River Hunting Club, and I'm also a member of Halls Fork Hunting Club.
Both of those hunting clubs are probably the oldest dog-hunting clubs in Baldwin County.

I enjoy dog hunting. I'm a dog-hunting person. My father is still a dog-hunting person. I pick him up every Wednesday night and take him fox hunting up around Stockton, and he's 91 years old. And we'll stay up till about 11:30, 12 o'clock listening to dogs run. In the morning he fixes breakfast and I catch the dogs.

So we are walker-dog-type hunters. And when I joined Halls Fork, I realized, number one, I can't hunt that type of dog out there at that hunting club. So this year I hunted something called a Beagle/Feist, which is about this tall. Very energetic. He runs extremely fast for about five minutes. After that the deer has done got distance on him and he turns around and he comes back. That's one of the steps
that we've taken out at Halls Fork,
changing the breed of dog to meet the
environments.

Number two, we've added 200-plus
acres to our club to give more buffer
zone. We hope to add to that and build
a little larger buffer zone. Right now
we're creeping up on right at 4,000
acres.

So we have a pretty good hunting
club. It's well organized. It's a
family-organized club. We allow no
alcoholic beverages at all, period,
whether it's during the hunt, after the
hunt, or just hanging around the camp
house. There's no drinking allowed at
all, period.

Some of our complaints come from our
neighbors that used to be members of
this club. They chose to get out many,
many years ago. One or two of them was
captured illegally hunting over corn, and
they were asked to get out of the club.
Some of that is some of the anger from this community.

We also have things that we do for the community out there. We had a community cleanup day where we cleaned up about 11 miles' worth of road on both sides. We picked up a 1010 trailer full of trash that we paid for ourselves to carry to the dump.

We also have a community fish fry which we invite everybody in the community to come out. And this year we had about 50/50 as far as members and people --

MS. JONES: Time.

MR. HALL: -- in the community.

And one other thing that we did do is we had a youth hunt early in the year where most of the hunters that came were nonmembers. We opened it up to not only the community, but to the people of Baldwin County.

Again, it's a good club, and we're
working to satisfy our neighbors and
satisfy anybody in that area. I thank
you for your time.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRE: Thank you.
The next speaker is Stanley -- if
you'll hold your applause until the end,
please.
The next speaker is Stanley Hamrick.
Mr. Hamrick?
There you are.

MR. HAMRICK: Hello, everyone. My name is
Stanley Hamrick, and I have a hunting
club at Good Ol' Boys Hunting Club.
It's a dog-hunting club. It is one of
the best clubs.

I have a hearing issue since I was
born, and when I was stalk hunting, I
couldn't hear deer moving or anything.
And December 31st, 2013, I heard dogs
getting louder and louder and louder and
I saw my first deer and I killed it.

And it's a very good club. We had
67 kids that come to a youth hunt, and
we teach them how to play safe -- man,

1 teach them how to dog hunt very safely.

And there is no drinking and we -- if

2 any people is not playing safe, we kick

them out of the club.

3 Another thing is that if somebody

like is being mean or any hatefulness or

4 anything, we get rid of them and we try

to straighten them out.

5 Another thing is that people will

6 tell us to shoot the right direction, do

7 not shoot down the roads where people

8 may get hit by bullets or something.

9 Like, for instance, last hunting season

10 I saw -- I heard this noise with the

11 dogs, and there was a big ol' buck

12 right -- right behind me. People done

13 told me in that hunting club do not

14 shoot down the road where that deer was.

15 And there was somebody behind it and I

16 couldn't shoot. But it would be better

17 for me not to shoot the deer than

18 someone get hurt. That's all.
CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Thank you, Mr. Hamrick.

MR. HARTZOG: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Yes, Mr. Hartzog.

MR. HARTZOG: If you notice the lady that was sitting right next to him, she had a big smile on the way her son presented himself.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: That was an absolute excellent job by that young man.

The next speaker will be Don Knight.

MR. KNIGHT: I'm Don Knight. I'm president of the Alabama Dog Hunters Association. Seems like today I feel like I ought to be in an orange jumpsuit or have a target on me somewhere. It's been a little rugged.

A couple of things that I want to touch base with you on this morning is for some reason this year I didn't get many calls from any of y'all at all about any problems. We've set it up in the past that you can call me. I'll get in touch with the club. We'll try to
get the problem solved.
    That didn't happen much this year.
We seemed to have backed off of it. So
what I want to do is come back to you
and ask you to return that. Let's do
it. I think we had some success with it
and it worked real good. So let's try
it again. And if you don't have my
number, I assure you they got it in
Montgomery. But most people have it;
okay?

    Now, these gentlemen got up here
from Colbert County and said it was real
good, and we're very proud that that
happened that way up in Colbert County
this year. But I want to tell you
something. The permit system did very
little.

    What happened was the guys in the
club that they were having trouble with,
we sat down and talked and we decided to
do exactly what we offered to do before
we was ever put on the permit system.
That was give up their Saturday hunts, cut down on their hunts during the week, and not hunt on Wednesday. That's a lot of give-up and it worked.

So it's the people. I told you last year it's the people. If we can get that going and the people want to do it, they'll come in better.

Down there in Baldwin County this year we thought everything was going fine. Then Mr. Hatley shot me with a shotgun right in the chest with all the problems we had; okay? We didn't know about them. How can we fix something that we don't know is broke?

And I'm going to be honest with you. And I'm not being ugly. I'm not being -- whatever it is. I'm not trying to cause trouble. But if you people let all these people call you individually, they're going to drive you crazy; okay? They're going to drive you crazy.

Because they need to be working with the
game warden. And if they call you, if
you'll call me, I promise you we'll get
something done in the first couple of
days. We'll have you some answers.
We'll have some remarks. We've done it
before; okay?

We'll do that. We want to work with
you every way we can. And Colbert
County was an excellent -- I'm so glad
those people were happy up there, but
most of it is due to the change in the
club. One of the clubs got out. They
didn't want to put up with the permit
system.

I've got a nice letter at the house.
So you'll have to excuse me. I'm
getting old. I left it on my desk.
It's from the Colbert County Commission.
It's got their little seal on it. And
it's a resolution --

MS. JONES: Time.

MR. KNIGHT: It's a resolution where they want
to back dog hunting and keep it going
just like it has been going. Okay. I'll send each one of you a copy of that letter when I get back to the house. I'm sorry I didn't have it with me. Any questions?

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Thank you, Mr. Knight. The next speaker is Wynnton Melton.

MR. MELTON: I'm Wynnton Melton, Geneva. I feel like I should have brought an absentee slip because last year is the first year in about 43 years that I didn't attend at least one of your meetings. And I've seen a lot come and a lot go, and I appreciate all that you do. And I fully understand and have a lot of empathy for what you're going through.

Actually, what I signed up for is a little bit on coon hunting. And I noticed the -- there's a regulation now which would allow you to trap coons with a special permit beyond the trapping session. And I read the Commissioner's
article in one of the magazines and saw
that on the -- in the regulations.

What I was wondering, if there's any
way we might could extend that privilege
to coon hunters with hounds on a permit
system like that, a special permit, on
our own private property or on leased
land.

Last night I was hunting with a
friend. I don't coon hunt a lot because
I'm a 1941 model and my friend is a 1943
model. So we don't hunt if it's under
40 degrees or if the water's over
three-feet deep or if the foot logs are
slippery. So our hunting is limited a
little.

But, anyway, we were talking about
it. Today is the last day for coon
hunting that you can take a coon. And,
my goodness, we haven't had a lot of
good days to go. We like to take -- we
got a group of little girls that we like
to take. And that's fun, real fun. I
mean little girls, nine, ten-year-old girls. And what we're just trying to do is to see if we could figure out a way -- I know enforcement has issues, but we think it could be worked out.

And we aren't going to overkill. My goodness. No hound dog man is going to overkill his game because then he don't have anything to run. I think last night we did quite well. We did take three in just a little while. And, my goodness, there are coons everywhere, but that's only five we've taken off of that entire 2200 acres last year. And my friend owns about 12,000 acres of his land. And, you know, he's just not ready to quit. He would like to go a few more times. And that's what we would like to do is see if we can do -- make that happen and cooperate in every way to see that it was successful.

Now, as far as a dog permit, I helped draw up the permit system in many
of the south Alabama areas, worked at it for a long, long time. And it's working well with us. We got our letter, I think, this week that we had no complaints, either verified or unverified. Now, what's been said around the corner somewhere I don't know. But we had very, very few dogs -- I mean very, very few -- to get off our property.

It's challenging. It's difficult. But it can be made to work. And if at any time that I can assist --

MS. JONES: Time.

MR. MELTON: -- in any way -- yes, ma'am -- in any way to share with you what we have done and in any way to help in any matter whatsoever, I'm here prepared to do. And I thank all of you for what you've done for all these many years. Thank you so very much.

CHAIRMAN MOULTTRIE: Thank you, Mr. Melton.

Director Sykes, did you get that
request?

The next speaker will be Susan Morrow.

MS. MORROW: Good morning. Or is it afternoon? I'm not sure. I'm Susan Morrow. I'm from Mobile County. I'm the vice-president of the Alabama Dog Hunters Association.

I guess this will be number four, Mr. Chuck.

I want to thank the Advisory Board for giving us back our ten dog days. We really appreciate it. But I would also ask y'all to look at maybe putting those back in December because the stalk hunters are really complaining about us being in the woods with our dogs till the 25th of January. And I think that it would cause less problems and cut down on some of our problems if we run our dogs during the ten days in December and we was out of the woods by January the 15th with our dogs.
And, also, I would like to ask y'all to look at opening up more management areas for dog deer hunting. On the Scotch Management Area this year they said that they had to take the two days that y'all so graciously gave us away because of the -- there was too much pressure on the deer, too many people coming to the hunts.

Well, the people coming to the hunts, if you look at the numbers, the numbers are actually down there of the dog hunters that have been coming because it's been spread out because of having the three hunts. Because a lot of the hunters are in clubs, not all of them. But a lot of us just hunt management areas.

So this year we only got to have two hunts two days each, and we would like for y'all to look at that. We did kill some really nice deer. And my question is -- also, Keith Gauldin told us
that -- well, he told me. Him and I talked. And he told me that we was killing too many deer with the dogs.

   Well, if that is the case, then when we have a dog hunt at Scotch, 16 years -- under the age of 16 and women are allowed to shoot does. Everybody else has to shoot bucks. Well, when we have a stalk hunt there, you get to kill two deer a day, whether it's a -- if you're not tagged out on your bucks, one of them can be a buck and one of them can be a doe. But you get that doe anyway.

   So if the deer population is down, let's reduce the stalk-hunting number on that, also, to get that deer herd back up at Scotch. Because it is a very good place. It is one of the best organized hunts -- dog hunts that you will go on.

   And I would ask the board, also, to look at putting in the rules and regulation book the rules, the law of
shooting a dog. We had a lot of dogs that were shot this year. We have one guy in Washington County --

MS. JONES: Time.

MS. MORROW: -- that shot a dog ...

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Sum it up, Ms. Morrow.

MS. MORROW: Sum it up?

Anyway, he shot a dog, and then he admitted to busting the GPS collar. And when he was arrested, he said that he shot the little Beagle because it was being aggressive to him and his eight-year-old son. But then he took the collar off and he busted the collar. So if he was being aggressive, I don't think I would have messed with him or anything. But he was not aware that it could be very serious. So I would ask y'all to please put that in the books. We don't want our dogs shot.

And thank y'all for what you do and thank you for your time.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Thank you, Ms. Morrow.
The next speaker is John Pfeffer.

MR. PFEFFER: My name is John Pfeffer. I'm with -- out of Baldwin County, part of Halls Fork Hunting Club.

I actually was going to kind of tell y'all how the season went this year, you know, from -- we had our little bumps in the road last year, and we made, you know, quite a few adjustments for this year -- of how everything was going as far as hunting.

Like Mr. Jack Hall was saying, you know, about the dogs and stuff, as far as breeding the dogs down to actually get away from these longwinded dogs, which is actually got us all the way down to, you know, just a small Feist or Beagle, or some of the guys has even went to a Beagle dog which is -- you know, really don't have no wind to them at all. If you hear the -- if you hear the dogs running, then, you know, it's -- you better be looking for the
deer, even if you hear the dog a hundred yards or so away, because they're just really slow and they don't get out of pocket a lot.

As far as our days hunting, we've cut back on our days hunting. We didn't hunt as much this year as what we did last year and the years prior to that. As far as, you know, trying to help out the neighbors and trying to make for sure that we wasn't causing no issues of dogs, you know, interrupting anybody as being accused of.

But we have been making the adjustments of trying to make all of this work. And with us, it went very, very well for us. We -- you know, we -- we just now -- it was brought to our attention three days ago -- which we had a meeting about coming up here and what we was all going to discuss and how everything was going to go and how we was going to tell y'all that -- you
know, the good year that we did have, when we got the phone call stating that, you know, there's been complaints, not necessarily on us, but throughout Baldwin County.

We haven't heard of anything through Baldwin County that has actually stated that we've -- that Baldwin County has had any issues. But, you know, therefore, we're only hunting on our club, but you still -- word gets around, you know, from people talking.

So with that being said, you know, if there was any issues, then we should have been addressed the issues, no matter what hunting club it was, to where they could have been fixed.

Also, you know, through Baldwin County how many tickets was issued to the dog hunters about us doing something that was not right, that was against the law, versus how many -- which me and my boys is -- from the time deer season,
turkey season -- it don't matter --
whenever it comes in, that's what we do.
It's either climbing a tree or running a
dog or setting on the ground hunting a
turkey.

But versus -- dogs versus stalk
hunters -- how many tickets was give out
to stalk hunters this year versus how
many tickets was give out to dog hunters
this year. I'm not saying that all dog
hunters are doing the right thing when
they are dog hunting, but all of the
clubs that I know that's around our
area, about 100 percent to the tee
they're doing what they're supposed
to --

MS. JONES: Time.

MR. PFIEFFER: -- and actually trying to make
things work a lot better.

So with that being said, on our
part, on our club of Halls Fork, the
adjustments we have made seemed to work
for us this past year and seemed to work
for the neighbors. So maybe, you know, this coming up next hunting season we can do a little bit more and we won't have no complaints at all even, you know, to be concerned about. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Thank you, sir.

The next two speakers will be our last two, and after that we'll take a brief recess. But the next speaker will be Rick Baxter.

Mr. Baxter, are you still here?

MR. BAXTER: Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to speak this morning.

I had a long list and a speech made out, but after hearing some of the things, I'll get straight to the point and leave a little time for someone else.

I'm Rick Baxter. I'm from Deer Park, Alabama, Washington County. I hunt with dogs primarily. I hunt in Washington County. Also, I'm a member of Ararat Hunting Club in Choctaw
County. This year we've had about the
same success as we always have at
Ararat. We've killed some good deer
there, some very good deer. We have had
in the past -- this is a 40 or
50-year-old club. I've been in it for
about five years. I have relatives that
have been there for 20 years in this
club. And we've had no complaints
really of neighbors in our area. It's
all went well. Up until this year we've
had, like I said, very little.

Now, this year with the new hunting
into February we have had some
complaints of neighbors directly to us.
As far as I know we haven't had any to a
board member or anything like that.
They've came to us or we've met them at
the River Store down the road or
whatever. And just in talking, these
people hate the fact that we can run
dogs into January, to the 25th. They
state this early in the year.
Dog hunting to me is a privilege and
it's a privilege that can be taken away
from me at the drop of a hat, and I
don't want that. I want to respect it.
I want to respect the game and the
conservation of the game, but I want to
get along with my neighbor.

Well, as you stated, we've had way
more complaints. To me this is a simple
fix, and I'm a simple-minded person.
But I get to travel the state and the
whole United States in the business that
I'm in and I get to talk to people. I'm
an avid hunter, and I get to talk to
hunters all over the United States. And
I get to talk to the people in Louisiana
that have lost those privileges that had
them taken away because they abused
them. I get to visit with people in
Georgia once a month. On the south end
of Georgia they get to run dogs still,
the north end of Georgia they don't.
And those people are in the same boat.
Well, what we're up against now is those privileges being taken because of a few rogue people. And we have those. We have them on still hunting. We have them on dog hunting.

But I'm here today just to ask you to revisit the ten days in December. Because anybody that I talk to that's a still hunter, even in early season, even as a bowhunter, was already "anti" dog hunting because of this ten days that we got into January. They were already upset and hadn't even heard a dog bark yet.

So I'm asking you, please, to revisit that, to think about it, to give those days back, and let's give the still hunters an entire month unharassed, untroubled. They get to hunt the places that they spend thousands and thousands of dollars to hunt. And I understand that. I feel for them. If I go out and I spend 15,
$20,000 or whatever it may be -- in our club it's 800 bucks, and I don't want anybody harassing me. And I feel the same way they do.

MS. JONES: Time.

MR. BAXTER: So let us help them to where they get a whole month. They can go out and hunt the rut. I can hunt the rut, whatever, and they can do that. And that way they're not harassed by us at all. And maybe we can close that gap and we all get along, you know, kind of like Alabama and Auburn fans. We can all get along. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Thank you, Mr. Baxter.

Very good presentation.

The next speaker is Jon Warr.

MR. WARR: I'm kind of like that gentle man earlier. When I prepared this, I thought it was five minutes, so I'll try to go as quickly as possible.

My name is Jon Warr, and I'm a dog hunter from Washington County, which is
located in the southwest corner of the state. When I entertained the idea to come and speak on behalf of the dog hunters, I asked myself what does dog hunting mean to me.

I was introduced to dog hunting by my grandfather, John S. Wood, in 1975. It was a Saturday morning ritual that started the second Saturday in November. My grandfather would awaken my brother and me early on that morning. After a quick breakfast, it was always our responsibility to go out and load the dogs.

He would come out and get in the pickup with us. We would pull out to the end of the drive, and there would be a group of men, granddaddies, fathers and sons and occasionally a lady or two, even back in those days, would be convened at the end of the drive. We would all get together and some guys would be already gone out and ridden the
roads. And they'd find a buck to track, and we'd come back and they'd have an idea of how we was going to hem him up and kill him.

That never worked out very often. However, it was always the comradery of the people in the community getting together and spending that time together that was remembered by all. That is a tradition that my family as well as others in our community have continued for the last 40 years.

I am proud to have raised my three sons as dog hunters. It has been invaluable in molding them into good woodsmen as well as young conservationists. We still gather up on Saturday mornings somewhere throughout the community or we actually go up to Dollarhide Hunting Club in Greene County on the banks of the Black Warrior River. We also have several thousand acres of private lands as well as leased lands in
Washington and south Choctaw County. The biggest trans -- somewhere between 15 and 40 people would attend these hunts. We pride ourselves on doing it the right way.

The biggest transition that my hunting group has made over the last 15 years is -- I'm sorry. The biggest transition that my hunting group has made over the last 15 years is going to shorter-running, better-handling dogs. These dogs have worked out well for us. However, our style dogs may not fit the dogs of dog hunters across the state due to varying terrains and topographies.

We always put a tracking collar on our dogs so we know their whereabouts at all times. We make every effort to have the dogs back in their pens shortly after lunch so we do not disturb afternoon still and stalk hunters. We also invite all adjoining landowners to attend all of our hunts. These things
seem to go a long way in landowner as
well as lessee relationship.

There are rogue deer hunters just as
there are rogue still and stalk hunters
and turkey hunters and every other
hunter across the state. We try to
police ourselves as much as possible and
report the ones giving us blackeyes to
the authorities.

Successful relationships are
possible between both stalk hunters and
dog deer hunters. It requires a
little --

MS. JONES: Time.

MR. WARR: -- give and take from both parties.

The next question I asked myself is
where do we go from here. I've polled
numerous hunters from both the
dog-hunting and stalk-hunting
communities. The general consensus in
our area was that deer dogs are expected
to be out of the woods on January the
15th. Now, how is this possible with
the season extended to February the 10th
and the dog season extended to January
the 25th?

We as dog hunters certainly don't
want to lose the ten days so graciously
given back by you guys. In our opinion
the scenario that would be most
beneficial for both parties would be to
allow dog deer hunters to hunt the
previously closed dates of December the
1st through 10th, the same idea that a
couple other speakers have had. That
would enable us as dog deer hunters to
have ten days that we didn't have to
worry about interfering or with
disturbing the still and stalk hunters.
This would basically translate into one
Saturday that we would be able to hunt
for the majority of us who have straight
day jobs. Dog deer hunting would then
close on January 15th, which is the day
hunters are accustomed to. That would
give them -- the still and stalk hunters
26 days from January the 16th through
the close of season on February 10th
that they wouldn't be bothered by dogs
or dog hunters.

The dates of January the 6th through
February the 10th are the days most
coveted by the stalk hunters due to the
fact that this is pre-rut and rut times
of the year in our region of the state.
On the hunts that I went on -- I was
able to hunt two days on the extended
period -- the deer did appear to us to
act differently. Whereas our deer will
normally make loops, small loops to
large -- they're eventually going to
come back. Them jokers left the country
those last ten days. The deer are
rutting. The dogs smell them a lot
better. And they just left the world
where they normally -- we have large
enough properties they don't get off.
They crossed three different landowners
on those days. So that did appear in my
eyes to be a problem.

With the ten days of December the 10th through the -- 1st through the 10th being strictly used as dog hunting, it would be a great opportunity to invite non-dog hunters as well as "anti" dog hunters to hunt with us, to see what we do, to maybe give them an opportunity to do something that they hadn't previously done.

I invited a friend of mine that I actually went to high school with. He was not actually an "anti" hunter, but neither was he an advocate of dog hunting. I took him on a hunt one morning, and by the time we got our dogs gathered up he had already left. But he called me the next day, and he said, I want to let you know that I don't ever intend to miss that hunt again.

But the state actually took the -- the hunt actually took place on State Representative Elaine Beech's land. And
he had called her and said, Ms. Beech, I do expect to be able -- an open invitation to hunt on your land, and she said, you're welcome at any time. So that was a good thing.

Thank you all for your time.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Thank you, Mr. Warr.

That will be the last speaker.

We're going to take a brief recess.

It's about 11:40 now. We'll start back at 12 o'clock even. That will be a 20-minute recess.

Commissioner McMillan said there's additional bathrooms if you go straight down the hall here and those right in front of the auditorium.

So we'll convene back at 12 o'clock.

(A recess was taken.)

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Okay. The next order of business will be the Advisory Board district reports. And we'll just start at the end of the table and work our way this way.
Mr. Ainsworth.

MR. AINSWORTH: Sure. I'm in District 4. I had a lot of great reports from people killing nice deer, mature deer, four and five-year-old deer, many over 150, which is great for Alabama. Had a pretty quiet year. Didn't have a lot of issues. You know, didn't have a lot of issues. And duck season was a little slower than normal. It seems like the ducks came in later in February. But other than that, it was quiet, a good year. Everybody seems happy.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Are people seeing more does?

Does were an issue last year in your area. Have you heard anything on the doe issue in your area?

MR. AINSWORTH: I haven't heard a thing. I think that's good.

MR. BUNN: T.J. Bunn, District 7, which is a majority of the Black Belt.

I heard my district had a bad deer
season quality-wise. From what I'm hearing, a big acorn crop, I think, that played a lot into it, and, of course, we had -- we didn't have really good weather.

The popularity of the extended season, it looks like it's really popular with people. A lot of deer were killed. Talked to the processors. I think a lot of people utilized the ten days. A lot of people that usually don't hunt in the area came down from the north and people from out of state. And so that's a good thing.

I didn't get a lot of complaints on dog deer hunting, but I think it's because -- Mr. Knight might could tell me. I think the three clubs in Greene County do not -- don't exist anymore. So maybe that's the reason for that.

Had a good turkey hatch, I believe, in my district last year. It looks like a late hatch. But just talking to
property owners, a lot of people have
seen a lot of poults.

I want to encourage everybody to get
involved with Game Check. Y'all don't
realize how vital that information is to
us. When y'all come up here and ask us
to make decisions, if we don't have any
data, it's hard for us to make an
educated decision. So please encourage
your friends and please participate in
Game Check.

And I also want to commend Chuck and
Chris and all their staff on what a
great job they do. Y'all don't realize
how lucky we are here in the state of
Alabama to have such quality people as
Chuck and Chris and Gunter leading our
department. We are extremely fortunate
to have people of their quality and
their character to lead us. And I can
promise you they want to do what's best.
But I guess that's it.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Mr. Martin.
MR. MARTIN: Jeff Martin, District 3.

I'm kind of like Austin. The processors I went to had a real good year. A lot of big bucks killed.

I was going to say fishing season was -- looked like it was going to come kind of early until last week. I think we're going to be delayed a little bit. But I know last year the season was real good for fishing and everything.

So all kind of quiet. Had a few complaints on dog hunting, but they came actually last week. So other than that, it's been pretty good.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: No comments on fall turkey from your area at this time?

MR. MARTIN: Not yet. But you had to bring it up, so I'm sure they will.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: That's our job.

Mr. Jones.

MR. JONES: Yes. Raymond Jones, District 5.

I helped host and organize an event for duck hunters in north Alabama where
District 5 is. The state is taking a new, very proactive approach to improving duck habitats on state lands, which has really not been -- it's been absent for many years. So that was the event that we did.

I also worked closely with Officer Askew, and he did an outstanding job monitoring the dog deer hunting permit situation in Colbert County, and as we said earlier, the permit system worked. Had only one complaint in that area.

Working, also, with local processors, talking to them. It was -- had an extreme acorn crop this year. Not many deer were killed -- as many deer were killed in our area as normal.

Also hoping that the "Hunters for the Hungry" program continues to expand, and we're looking and talking about some ways to possibly do some of that.

The duck hunting in our area was fabulous. It was by far probably the
best duck season that I personally have
ever seen with many large numbers. And
the only thing is Curtis Jones shoots
too many of them. But other than that,
it was good.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Very good.

Yes, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER GUY: Raymond, was it you that
talked about the "Duck Hunting for the
Hungry" as well?

Why don't you mention that. I think
it's a good idea.

MR. JONES: It was an idea I had. There's a
lot of ducks killed in the north Alabama
region, and the idea was to expand the
"Hunters for the Hungry" program.
Because oftentimes, you know, when you
kill several hundred ducks or -- you
know, in a year's time, that's a lot of
ducks to put in your freezer. It's a
lot of ducks to ask other people to put
in their freezer.

And, for instance, a friend of mine,
I know on their farm -- this is going to sound like Arkansas, but they killed over 1400 ducks on their farm this year in one place, one pond. And that's a lot of ducks to get rid of. So we're looking at expanding the "Hunters for the Hungry" program to accept ducks, which I think we've figured out a way to do that. And that will be a good thing. So the duck can be donated to the processor. The processor would clean the duck, get it to the food banks or to the charitable services that have that. So that's an idea that we're kicking around.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: That's excellent. Very good.

Dr. Strickland.

DR. STRICKLAND: You know, I've told Ray that I would take all of his ducks, but he wouldn't clean them for me. Same thing about his fish. I'll take all your fish if you'd just clean and dress those fish
for me.

But Ray and I both are in the same district, Congressional District 5, and basically exactly the same thing as Ray has just said. We had a very good duck season. Lots of duck killed in northern Alabama.

Deer season was a little slow. A bumper acorn crop. So most of the deer late were peeling the timber. Very few came out to the food plots. But overall we had lots of hunters in the field. Everyone loves the -- you know, basically the antler restriction that we put in place. It has really, really had a huge impact.

We were just talking about Jackson County. Jackson County really produced some outstanding white-tails this year. We had -- what did you say -- 40 bucks over 150 -- yeah, 41 bucks over 150 inches for the state of Alabama.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRE: Unbelievable.
DR. STRICKLAND: But it was a good year and everyone is looking forward to turkey season.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Mr. Hartzog.

MR. HARTZOG: Grady Hartzog, District Number 2. Everything went good, I think, in the -- is that better?

All right. In talking with the processors, everything went good. Everybody really enjoyed the extra ten-day season. A few of the commercial operators got confused on them not having archery days during those ten days, which they -- you know, they know better next year. But everybody was pleased with the extended season.

I talked to the processors, though, and it was an interesting fact. We always talk about disturbance on deer and that being a factor on the number of deer you're killing. Several of the processors told me they processed as many deer the week after December
the 10th as they did during the last ten

days of the February season. So
disturbance is a big factor. I was glad
the extended season worked. But they
killed an awful lot of deer that second
week in December.

Barbour County is still very happy
to keep the three-point rule. I think
Bill will attest to that. It's working
on the management area. We've added
some more ground on the management area
which ought to be real good for the
Barbour County Management Area. So no
real problems to report.

Did start -- and Mr. Don Knight came
to me and asked me about the complaints.
And I said, well, Don, I normally call
you, but I said, I didn't really start
getting my complaints until after the
season was over and so I hadn't had a
chance to call.

I did take exception to the young
man -- or the man that said he called my
office a half-dozen times and I was always out. My secretaries are always instructed to take numbers and I return the calls. And I think if you talk to anybody else that's ever called me, I called them back generally within the day I got the call, so --

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Even during tax season. You get back with them extremely --

MR. HARTZOG: Even during tax season. Well, in fact, this last week I got a call and the guy said -- he says, you're an accountant. He said, you called me back. I said, well, that's my job, so ...

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: That's right. Very good. Bill, I know you probably keep a lot of data -- Bill Gray -- the age class. Have you seen that going up or is it steady in y'all's area or on the management area or on the age class of bucks being killed?

MR. GRAY: It's -- you're talking about on
Barbour Management Area?

CHAIRMAN MOULTON: Yes.

MR. GRAY: Yeah. I mean, compared to, you know, five years prior to the three-point and then we looked at the five-year evaluation and then on. So it's probably been 50-plus percent of the bucks that are killed are three and a half or older with that regulation. And I guess it's the same in the county now. It's three on one side.

We did the study with some Auburn students that collected data at processors, and we saw an increase in the age class of the harvested deer every year. So there's no doubt that it's improved, you know, the age structure, both bucks in the harvest and you could infer, you know, a standing crop that's out there every year.

CHAIRMAN MOULTON: That's great.

MR. HARTZOG: Dan, one more point. And Chuck may want to answer a few questions on
this.

With doing more research and talking about banding and radio-tagging the turkeys, the Department has also taken on a program to try and find out what's going on with the coyote population. Some of the coyotes are tracked at Barbour County, and it's my understanding from some of the landowners that they track them on that some of those coyotes have already traveled 50 miles in less than a week. So it's amazing the range territory the coyotes have got. But the state is -- you know, it's been brought up at several meetings we've got less does and they felt like the coyotes are having an impact on them, but we've now started radio-tagging the coyotes to see what's going on so we can better understand and manage the population accordingly.

Thank you, Chuck, for doing that.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Very good.
Dr. Shipp.

DR. SHIPP: Thank you, sir.

Yeah. Commissioner mentioned earlier legislation -- excuse me. Let me back up a little bit. District 1 and we're going to go back to red snapper for a few minutes.

Congressman Byrne has introduced a bill to extend the territorial seas of the state of Alabama to nine miles. The way things are now, Florida has nine miles, Texas has nine miles, but Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana only have three miles, which really restricts our ability to manage the red snapper stocks. Whether that will pass or not, his bill may not, but it might well be incorporated into the reauthorization of the Magnuson Act which oversees the management of marine fisheries.

Kudos to Kevin who was elected chairman of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council which oversees
management of fishes in the Gulf.

I just can't applaud more Chris and the guys gathering the data on snapper. My personal and professional opinion is that we could have 180-day season, two fish bag limit, and it wouldn't make a dent in the population. But, unfortunately, we have a procedural problem with the federal government that is preventing us from really moving ahead.

But the data that Chris is putting out is going to really improve the stock assessment. The stock assessments are finally starting to catch up. We may have a slightly extended season this year, but, you know, when you're talking about nine days rather than 180 days, it really doesn't make much difference.

The last thing I'd mention is one of the favorite fishing spots on the coast is underneath the Perdido Pass Bridge. It's probably second only to the state
pier in terms of land-based fishing
opportunities. Unfortunately, that area
has been shut off, I guess, for security
reasons. I know the City of Orange
Beach is very active in trying to find
out what the problem is there so that
people would have an extra access to
fish there.

So that's pretty much it from 1 at
the waterfront.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER GUY: So following up on
Dr. Shipp's comments there about the
Perdido Pass, just so I can clarify for
the record -- because a lot of people
don't know this, but we do not -- we own
the land, but we do not own the wall.
And so the Department of Transportation
owns the wall, and it's their
responsibility to fix, Mr. Chairman.
And we have contacted them and asked
them to proceed with all due speed, and,
of course, their answer is, of course,
we don't have any money.

So, you know, I have heard from the City of Orange Beach. And everybody, including us, is interested in getting that area fixed. Chris and I have talked about that, of course, on a number of occasions. And, really, I don't know what we can do other than to continue to work toward a solution.

But I just did want to make sure anybody that's interested or anybody that might be reporting on this that they understand that the Department of Transportation for whatever reason -- and I don't know -- that they own the wall. And the wall is the issue there, and it is a safety concern. And they are the ones who put up the fence and are keeping people from being able to fish there. But I understand, you know, why, because of the safety.

So bear with us for all those who, you know, want to see that fixed, and
we'll do everything we can to find a solution.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Very good.

Dr. Lemme, we want you to talk -- and we had a -- I had a lot of comments from people that were planting last year and that people were utilizing y'all's Website. You may want to tell us how to do that for people such as the Commissioner that had problems with armyworms and didn't know how to control those and they about ate all his crops. So if you want to explain how people can get to your Website to learn about that.

DR. LEMME: Well, there's -- what Dan is talking about is the Extension publications and information that's out there for what's a standard agricultural practice which influences the dove plantings and food plot plantings. And you can use a couple of different approaches. You can, of course, always stop at your county extension office.
All of our publications are online at "aces.edu." And then there's also an app of field crops, Alabama, and you can read that information and get periodic insect inventory data.

COMMISSIONER GUY: Now you tell me.

DR. LEMME: We do a sentinel plot system across the country, across the state, so we can see as the armyworms begin to emerge in the fall how close they are to you and then what are the legal ways of controlling them.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRE: If somebody has never used that, y'all have an excellent resource. It is very, very good, Dr. Lemme.

DR. LEMME: Well, thank you.

The thing that I've been hearing from the agricultural organizations is a lot of concern over feral hogs, both damage being done to pastures, peanut fields, places like that, and the increased erosion and sedimentation in their ponds and their creeks as a result
of that. And that's almost a universal concern across our state from the south going north. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Mr. Hatley.

MR. HATLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to tell you, I've been on this board since the mid '90s, and this has been the most exasperating year that I've ever spent on this board. I feel like I've been a traffic cop, a counselor. I have toured the largest county in this state, Baldwin County, and been from one end to the other, and 90 percent of the people who spoke here today on dog deer hunting -- I have met with them. They all live in my district. And it's really been frustrating.

I tried to make ends meet with -- piecemeal with different people, but it really -- usually I'm a pretty good negotiator. This year has just really been tough. There's a lot of things and
a lot of people that I've talked to, a lot of people that I'm going to continue to talk to -- i.e., dog hunters, landowners, game warden, and enforcement -- to try to work out solutions on some of these things.

And, Mr. Chairman, at a later point I will have some things that I would like to discuss about the future of dog hunting in these counties, Monroe County and Baldwin County.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: That would be in new business, Mr. Hatley. Very good.

Mr. Dobbs.

MR. DOBBS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I can only follow onto what my colleagues have said. Some of the hot buttons that I hear that are reported to me, the red snapper management and seasons, I think that, again, Chris has done a wonderful job. The state has done a wonderful job. Thanks to Dr. Shipp as well for the data that he's
provided. But that's very important to people across the state. It comes to my district as well.

The Game Check is important to the landowners. People ask what we're going to do next. We can't do anything. It's hard to make management decisions without information. So Chuck's -- Director Sykes' slides showed the lack of participation, the lack of what I would call complete data, I guess. And that's tough. That's tough for us to decide.

I hear from people that they're not seeing the does that they think they should be seeing. They're not seeing the does that they saw in the past. I don't know whether that's from predation -- however, we're dealing with that now, which is fabulous -- or whether it's just recruitment because the deer aren't there. So those are some of the questions that I get.
We've talked today about the processors and speaking to the processors. As part of new business, I'd like to talk about enlisting their help with expanding the "Hunters for the Hungry" program and look at the pitfalls of asking the processors to help provide some information. And I don't know how that would work, but maybe it could.

Several other issues that come from landowners and leaseholders as well. I got two letters this year and several conversations about tags -- big game tags for turkeys and for deer. And as well people have recognized the fact that the three points to one side for one of the three bucks that you kill and then looking at Butler County -- I'm sorry -- Barbour County that has the rule and the size deer that are coming from there, they wonder why can't we do two deer instead of just one.

So that is -- that and the issues
with -- to mirror what Mr. Hatley says with the dog hunters, the problems with the dog hunters in my district, which is something we'll address again in new business. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Very good.

Commissioner McMillan.

COMMISSIONER McMILLAN: Yeah. I'd just like to expand on the feral hog comments that Dr. Lemme made. I see Tim Gothard back there with the Alabama Wildlife Federation. Tim was instrumental in getting Commissioner Guy and I together to start this Feral Hog Council in Alabama. We've got all the various state and federal interest groups. That -- there's more going on than most of us realize with trying to address this problem but not nearly enough going on.

Other than that, the Auburn vet school research on a specific contraceptive is looking -- continuing
to look promising. That's probably
the -- it may be the best hope we've got
anywhere.

But, Tim, we're going to have some
legislation to increase the penalties
for transporting live feral hogs, aren't
we?

MR. GOTHARD: We hope so. We're talking to
some legislators right now, and the
results of those conversations will
dictate what we do or don't do this
session.

COMMISSIONER McMILLAN: Okay.

CHAIRMAN MOULTYRIE: Commissioner Guy, any
other comments?

COMMISSIONER GUY: No, sir.

CHAIRMAN MOULTYRIE: The main project that I've
been working on lately is the Governor's
Turkey Hunt. Everybody thinks that's
just a bunch of folks getting together
to turkey hunt. It is not. Let me
clear that up. And that is because of
your Commissioner -- Commissioner Guy
has pushed this event. He has this event rolling.

What this event funds is the foundation's money for all the projects. Just as Grady told me, they got a thousand dollars for a youth hunt. The "Hunters Helping the Hungry," the "Becoming an Outdoors Woman," all the sundry projects that go on within the state that aren't -- that don't have funding from anywhere else come from this foundation. The foundation is funded almost solely from the Governor's Turkey Hunt.

Anybody can come to that. It's a Monday night. I believe it's the 16th of next month at the train station. They'll have an open social event. There's all kind of stuff for sale and auction, and it's a very, very good event. But everybody needs to give Commissioner Guy a round of applause for having this event.
Commissioner.

The next order of business will be old business. I'll start with the open items from last time that I show.

Okay. Do we have -- and I'll take it up in old business now since we talk about it every time. But, Dr. Strickland, you were going to make a motion. Let's go ahead and make a motion to approve all of the recommendations and the tax -- I mean, the CPI increase on the licenses.

DR. STRICKLAND: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a motion to accept all proposed 2015 Wildlife and Fisheries creel and bag limits as well as game regulations in addition to accept the 2015 CPI.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Okay. Do I have a second with that motion?

MR. JONES: Second.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Okay. We've got a motion and a second. Any discussion?
(No response.)

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Okay. All those --
    Commissioner, yes, sir.

COMMISSIONER GUY: You said creel and bag --
    season as well?

DR. STRICKLAND: Season, yes. Did I not?

COMMISSIONER GUY: Just wanted to make sure
    that was included.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Fishing, hunting, and all
    inclusive; correct?

DR. STRICKLAND: Correct. All of the above.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Any other discussion?
    (No response.)

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Okay. On the motion
    stated by Dr. Strickland, all those in
    favor raise your hand.
    (All board members raise hand.)

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: All opposed?
    (No response.)

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Let the record show it
    passed unanimously.
    Is there any other old business that
    anyone on the board has?
MR. HARTZOG: In the report, Chairman Moultrie --

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Yes, sir.

MR. HARTZOG: -- there was the catfish study.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Yes.

MR. HARTZOG: And, of course, that's been addressed by the new line recommendation and hook recommendation, but I think that was brought up in old business.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: It looked like everything else had been discussed.

Anything else in old business?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Okay. Very good.

All right. The next order of business is new business. Any items -- Mr. Hatley, I think you had something in new business.

MR. HATLEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman. If you would, at the last meeting we did discuss some things on permit systems in particular counties and I deferred that.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Permitting system for
what?

MR. HATLEY: Permitting system for dog deer hunting in Baldwin County at the time.

In light of that fact, I've talked to some people in some other counties in the area, and at this time I want to do a little more research before our next meeting as it relates to Barbour -- I mean, Baldwin and Monroe Counties. And so I would like to -- and, also, there's another thing I would like to bring up at this time.

As it relates to permits, I want to get with staff --

CHAIRMAN MOULTON: Again, you're talking dog deer permits?

MR. HATLEY: Dog deer permits.

CHAIRMAN MOULTON: Okay. Be specific, Mr. Hatley.

MR. HATLEY: Dog deer permits, gentlemen.

I would like to -- I'm going to meet with Chuck and Kevin to look at the ramifications of acreage for permits.
So if you guys would bear with me and
give me some time on that.

So at this time I'm not going to
make any motions pertaining to anything
in Baldwin or Monroe Counties as it
relates to permitting anybody or
anything.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: You're leaving it open
until the next meeting?

MR. HATLEY: Yes.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: All right. Any other new
business?

Mr. Hartzog.

MR. HARTZOG: Chairman Moultrie, I also have
received some complaints on some areas
which we -- that I've talked to Mr. Don
in years past. And like I said earlier,
I didn't call Don because I didn't get
the complaints until afterwards. But I
also want to reserve that we may want to
look at permits in Covington and Coffee
and ...

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: And I know Coffee
County -- it seemed like we talked a lot about Coffee County and then there wasn't a problem and then it's back now or not?

MR. HARTZOG: Well, there's some complaints filed. Haven't gotten to the bottom of it. But because of our system of not being able to vote on anything unless we've brought it up the meeting before, I wanted to put it in the record that those were possible considerations.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Okay. Any other new business?

Mr. Dobbs.

MR. DOBBS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In light of the issues in my district regarding dog deer hunting, I am asking Mr. Sykes and his group to review the rules and regulations, asking enforcement as well to review the rules and regulations of the dog deer hunting permit program and -- for Chilton County. And I reserve the time for the
next meeting to discuss this with —
during that period of time to discuss
this with the director and his staff.

As well I would like to ask them if
there is some viable way to involve the
deer processors in the state of Alabama
for some information as just one more
tool for the tool chest to gather data
so that we as a group -- and y'all, of
course, can make decisions, advise us on
the decisions that need to be made.

That is, I think, the only new
business I have. We've talked in the
past meetings about big game tags.
That's something, again, that I would
like to explore, and we may discuss that
as well.

That's what I have. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Very good. Thank you,

Mr. Dobbs.

Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER GUY: Yes, sir. Mr. Chairman and

Board, if you'll bear with me a little
bit.

I was talking to my directors because sometimes seasons and bag limits don't cover everything they had in their handouts. And, specifically, I think Chris Blankenship has some items that wouldn't be covered under that. So if you would not mind, I would ask him to stand up and go through that item by item and probably request a motion from you just so we're completely legal, Mr. Chairman, on those issues.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Absolutely.

COMMISSIONER GUY: So, Chris, would you do that.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Go to the microphone, Chris.

MR. BLANKENSHIP: I'll run through these pretty quickly.

Some of these that we have were season and bag limits, but there are a couple of regulations that we've proposed that are in your packet.
One deals with oystering. There's an FDA requirement for the oystercatchers to go through a certain amount of education every two years before they're licensed so that they can -- to reduce Vibrio and illnesses in people that eat oysters. So we're asking to put that in our regulation.

To allow taking of oysters in one of our areas by swimming or wading, which there was a prohibition on that.

Just clarifying who issues permits for dredging.

And then making -- making it clear that if you have more than a hundred oysters that those are for commercial purposes.

COMMISSIONER GUY: Why don't you stop reading there. A motion on that, then?

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Can we do it all-inclusive, Commissioner?

COMMISSIONER GUY: I don't know. Let me ask legal.
Can we do it all-inclusive?

MR. GUNTER: You can.

CHAIRMAN MOULTERIE: Go through them and if you'll all will keep track of them, we'll do it all-inclusive.

MR. BLANKENSHP: On our use of nets and harvest of mullet, there has been a prohibition on taking the mullet with a cast net of only 25 fish, and so we just want to clarify on the regulation that that is for recreational purposes, that if they're using a cast net under the commercial fishing license, they can take more than 25 mullet with a cast net.

In our miscellaneous and public access regulation, it's just a clarification. There's a line called the inside waters. So it designates what's inside waters and what's the Gulf of Mexico or outside waters, and that's used in many of our regulations. And so we're just adding GPS coordinates to
some points on that line for Fort Morgan, the east end of Dauphin Island, the west end of Dauphin Island to make it clearer for the public and for us for enforcement.

And then Major Scott Bannon has done a lot of work going through our regulations over the last year looking for inconsistencies, and one of those areas is we had three regulations that deal with spotted sea trout and red drum. Some of those go back to the '80s. One of the -- two of the regulations there was really very little difference except for one paragraph.

And so we're trying to consolidate all three of those regulations into one regulation. So we're asking to repeal two of those regulations and add that one provision into the third regulation with some clarifying language. Nothing is really changing. We're just trying to clean that up for the public so they
can have one regulation that deals with our gamefish.

And then just want to point out one other thing. On the amberjack size limit, the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Gulf Council, they're going to change the size limit for amberjack probably at their next meeting or, if not, in their June meeting. And we want to be consistent with what they do, which it will probably be either 34 or 36 inches. And so we just ask for the ability to match that whenever that is decided by the Gulf Council.

And that's all. That's all of our regulations that are outside season and bag limits.

CHAIRMAN MOULTERIE: Okay. Thank you, Chris.

Director Sykes, do you have anything to go through?

MR. SYKES: We're good.

CHAIRMAN MOULTERIE: Okay. Can I get a motion, Dr. Strickland, to include those?
DR. STRICKLAND: A motion to include the regulations that Chris put forth --
(Inaudible portion.)
CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: All of the recommendations that he just went over and we heard, that you would have those be --
(Brief interruption by the court reporter.)
CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Dr. Strickland, your motion would be ...
DR. STRICKLAND: Yes. A motion to include the regulations that Chris has just -- Blankenship has just put forth, and that was, what, FDA oyster education regulation, cast net regulations, inside water regulations, amberjack size limit regulations, from 34 to 36, Chris. And there was one other you --
MR. BLANKENSHIP: Repealing the spotted sea trout.
DR. STRICKLAND: I'm sorry?
COMMISSIONER GUY: Repealing the spotted sea trout.
MR. BLANKENSHIP: Repealing -- or
  consolidating the spotted sea trout and
  red drum regulations into one
  regulation.
CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Okay. Is there a second?
MR. JONES: Second.
CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Mr. Jones.
  Okay. Any other discussion?
  (No response.)
CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: This is just, again,
  inclusive of all points that
  Mr. Blankenship just made.
  Okay. All those in favor?
  (All board members raise hand.)
CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: All opposed?
  (No response.)
CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Let the record show
  unanimous vote.
  Okay. Any other old or new
  business?
MR. HARTZOG: Mr. Chairman?
CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Yes.
MR. HARTZOG: Just for clarification, on the
proposed regulations that we were
adopting, did that proposed regulation
include the buffer zone for the
waterfowl rest area or was that --

MR. SYKES: It did not between the Causeway
and I-10. It did with the hunting
afternoon hours. The area that we
wanted to make for the rest area, we
were going to give y'all time to talk to
duck hunters and we were going to --

DR. STRICKLAND: So that was a discussion?

MR. SYKES: That was a discussion.

DR. STRICKLAND: We cannot vote on that on
this meeting; right?

MR. SYKES: Well, I would recommend that we do
that next year and give y'all time to
talk to the public.

DR. STRICKLAND: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN MOULTRIE: Anything else?

Mr. Dobbs.

MR. DOBBS: One additional piece of new
business is that I would ask the
director and his group as well to look
at other states -- review adjoining
states and other states and their
minimum requirements for dog deer
hunting with regard to acreage. I think
Mr. Hatley brought that up, but it
wasn't clear.

MR. HATLEY: I'm sorry.

MR. DOBBS: That's okay.

CHAIRMAN MOULTYRE: Any other old or new
business?

Is that it, Mr. Dobbs, or have you
got anything else?

MR. DOBBS: No. Thank you. that's it.

CHAIRMAN MOULTYRE: Anything else?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN MOULTYRE: Okay. The next order of
business is the date and location of the
next Advisory Board meeting. The date
has not been set or the location because
we're polling to see where we can get
our biggest majority of folks there. As
soon as we can get that information,
we'll make that available to the public
immediately.

Being no further business, this meeting is adjourned.

(Meeting adjourned at approximately 12:39 p.m.)

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE
* * * * * * * *

STATE OF ALABAMA:

MONTGOMERY COUNTY:

I, Tracyle 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 February 28, 2015.

The foregoing 214 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 18th day of May 2015.

Tracye Sadler Blackwell
ACCR No. 294
Expiration date: 9-30-2015
Certified Court Reporter and Commissioner for the State of Alabama at Large