STATE OF ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF
CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

State Capitol Auditorium
Montgomery, Alabama
March 9, 2019

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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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Proceedings taken before Tracye
Sadler Blackwell, Certified Court Reporter, ACCR
No. 294, and Commissioner for the State of Alabama
at Large, at the State of Alabama Capitol
Auditorium, Montgomery, Alabama, on Saturday,
March 9, 2019, commencing at approximately
9:01 a.m.
BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Joseph Dobbs, Jr., Chairman,
Commissioner Christopher M. Blankenship
Commissioner Rick Pate
Dr. Gary Lemme
Mr. Patrick Cagle
Mr. Jeff Martin
Mr. Raymond Jones, Jr.
Mr. Grady Hartzog
Mr. Ben C. Stimpson, Jr.
Mr. Gary Wolfe
Mr. Tim Wood
Mr. Greg Barksdale
Mr. Brock Jones

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CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Welcome to everyone. Call the meeting to order, the first Conservation Advisory Board Meeting, March 9th, 2019. I'm glad you all are here today. Hello to our usual attendees and welcome to the first-time participants. Let's have a productive meeting today with good dialogue.

If everyone would please stand with me, we will have the presentation of the colors by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Honor Guard.
(Presentation of the colors.)

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you very much. Thank you, Chief, very much. Well done. Very well done.

I'm going to ask Gary Wolfe to give our invocation today, but before he asks for God's blessings and guidance, our condolences to our Board member Mr. Greg Barksdale. His mom lost a long battle on Monday.

Peace to you and your family.

Let's take a moment, too, while we're standing with bowed heads to remember our fellow Alabamians from Lee County and Beauregard who lost loved ones and whose lives have been forever altered.

(Moment of silence.)

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Gary, would you lead us in prayer, please.

MR. WOLFE: Let us pray.

Our most gracious Heavenly Father,

thank you for this beautiful day. Thank
you for watching over us as we all come from different places in this state to come to this meeting today. Lord, we pray that you watch over the people that lost loved ones during hunting season that were tragic accidents. We also pray that you watch over the families that have lost loved ones with this tornado that came through Alabama. We pray that you watch over this meeting with the grace of God. And we appreciate you giving us the opportunity to hunt God's animals during hunting season, and we pray that you watch over each and every one of us as we go after this meeting back to our designated homes. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you. Thank you all for your prayers and respect.

I'm going to ask Grady Hartzog, please, to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

MR. HARTZOG: Everybody please stand.
(Pledge of Allegiance recited.)

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, Grady.

The next item on our agenda is the Sportsmen's Pledge. It's something that rings true to what we all believe is the purpose of forward-minded resource management. Those that would like, please recite the pledge along with the Board.

I'm going to ask Mr. Tim Wood to lead us today. You have a copy of it. It should have been in your seat.

So, Mr. Wood, if you will lead us.

MR. WOOD: The Conservation Statement: Since the state in its sovereign capacity occupies the attitude of guardian and custodian of the people's welfare, it is therefore the duty of the state by enactment of appropriate legislation to endeavor to extend adequate protection to those resources in which the people have collectively a natural right. Wise and discreet individuals who feel no
inclination to make assaults on nature's storehouse should have their rights protected by the enactment of strong laws to restrain the hands of the wanton and the reckless whose vandalism would annihilate every visible thing of fin, fur, or feather to gratify their savage instincts. John H. Wallace, Jr.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, everybody. Y'all have a seat, please.

Mr. Secretary, do we have a quorum today?

COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Yes, sir, we have a quorum.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you very much.

The minutes of the May 19th, 2018, Board Meeting -- I know our Board has read them. Are there any changes to the minutes from the May 19, 2018, Board Meeting?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: While there's no indication of any changes, the Board Meeting
Minutes are noted and approved.

Thank you, Ms. Tracye. The Board minutes were perused and checked by Ms. Betsy Jones.

At this time I'm going to start at the far end with Mr. Barksdale and I'm going to ask each Board member to introduce themselves, note their congressional districts, and provide us with a brief report of the goings-on in their district.

Mr. Barksdale.

MR. BARKSDALE: Good morning. My name is Greg Barksdale. I represent District 4. I haven't had a lot of contact this year so far with anything other than the CWD issues, dog deer hunting, and some duck hunting issues going on. Primarily it's been pretty quiet so far.

MR. MARTIN: Jeff Martin, District 3. All in all it's been a good year. Some of the changes we made last year have been going really well from both sides.
Fishing was going really good. And I was telling Raymond I was in the grocery store the other day and the guy asked me if I wanted to flip flower beds. For y'all that don't know that, Logan Martin was flooded and he was talking about going fishing in people's gardens. All in all it was good until the flood came.

MR. WOLFE: Gary Wolfe, District 1.

Everything down south has centered around red snapper and reef building. It's been a great effort for the reef building, everything going on that's happening in south Alabama. There's a lot of positive feedback as to how the current state-managed system is being conducted. Kudos to Director Bannon, Chief Anson, and their staff. Everyone is looking forward to banner fishing this year. It looks like everything's going to be really great.

Our thanks, also, to Senator Shelby
and Congressman Byrne for their efforts
in Washington. They really helped us to
get everything done this year and get
some stuff done that the money -- get
that in place.

Everyone is reporting a good deer
season in terms of harvest. Not as many
were seen, but the weather was a
contributing factor. I think everybody
realizes the rain and everything we had
this year kind of slowed a lot of stuff
down.

Everyone I spoke to was slowly
seeing benefits of our accounting of the
deer harvest, Game Check, and most are
participating. We hope more and more
people will do that and do the Game
Check. It's really helped. It has
given us some true numbers on what we
really know instead of just grabbing
numbers out of the air like we've been
doing in the past.

There are still a few dim spots
where there are negative interactions between the private land and specific dog deer hunting clubs, particularly in the northern part of Baldwin County. We've just got some little pocket areas that's happening in, and hopefully we'll address that with the officers being able to work that out in a positive way.

I'm looking forward to turkey season despite the fellow turkey hunters not seeing as many as we have in the past. I don't know what's going on in our little area of Marengo County, but I know we're not seeing as many turkeys as we have in the past. But hopefully that will change and just hope that everybody else has a great turkey season. I just can't wait to get in the woods and hunt. Thank you.

MR. WOOD: I'm Tim Wood representing District 7. I'm from Selma. We kind of represent, along with Brock Jones, the west part of Alabama, the Black Belt.
The deer season was pretty mixed. I visited a lot with the processors and some of the lodges. December was extremely slow. It was devastating in a lot of areas. But January was phenomenal, and it put a lot of pressure on the processors as well as the guides.

You know, the lodges I spoke with did a really good job of harvesting 15-, 16-inch deer for them. They're calling that a trophy. For a lot of individual private landowners it may not quite be what most of us are looking for. But overall it was a pretty good to average year in deer hunting.

Turkey season is coming around, and there's an awful lot of people optimistic because we have seen a lot of turkeys in the fall and also in the winter.

Mr. Chairman, I'm a little surprised we've got opening day of youth here and we're in the inside.
CHAIRMAN DOBBS: We're a little thin on the crowd, too, so ... 

MR. WOOD: But overall it's been a pretty good winter. We're looking forward to spring. And I think there are some issues on feral hogs that are coming along that we're pretty excited about, and that's probably one of the major issues we've got in our part of the state.

MR. STIMPSON: I'm Ben Stimpson, District 1. And Gary gave a great report from our district. I agree with everything he said.

The only thing I would add is that I continue to get a lot of positive feedback from the duck hunters in the Delta about the no gas motor zones that we've passed over the last year or two. They're very happy about that and even to the point where they're like when are you going to do another one. But there's been a lot of positive feedback
about -- and, in addition, Appalachian
Refuge where it's a no hunting zone now,
that's been very positive. And all you
have to do is drive across the Bayway
now and you actually see ducks
everywhere because they use it a lot.

But with Gary giving a good, full
report, I'll pass it on.

MR. RAYMOND JONES: Raymond Jones,
Congressional District Number 5, which
is located in north Alabama.

We had a good year all in all. The
deer season has been reported as slow,
but I think that it rained every weekend
and was 70 degrees, so it did not help
with that situation very often.

Same thing with the ducks. Without
the lack of cold weather -- we have a
lot of high duck populations normally in
north Alabama, but we did not see that.
Refuge counts were down significantly,
and we just did not see the numbers of
ducks that we have.
We have seen excellent turkey reproduction. This is the fourth year in a row that we have seen record -- or what I would call record hatches. So we have a lot of gobblers running around in our area located in the north.

But other than that, things went well, Mr. Chairman.

MR. BROCK JONES: Brock Jones. I represent with Tim Wood District 7, which is basically the Black Belt. It's great to have Tim on the Board representing District 7. He's certainly a great asset and very in touch with everybody out of Selma.

Like Tim said, for the most part it was a good season deerwise. It seems like Greene County and Sumter County were more negatively affected by flooding and rain than the other counties based on what the people I know in those two counties are saying. But overall it was an average year.
CWD, of course, has got everybody concerned, but for the most part everybody that I talked to is very confident that the response plan that the state has is proper and will do what it takes to minimize the spread should it come to Alabama.

Hogs continue to be a problem. It seems to be that people are kind of accepting them as part of the process. And like Tim said, the hope is that eventually we'll have something that will eradicate.

A lot of positive comments about the public lakes in our district. The Monroe County Lake, 100 acres, in Beatrice. The one in Sardis -- near Sardis in Dallas County is -- a lot of favorable things about that. I continue to hear a lot of great things about the Barnett Lawley Forever Wild Trial Area which is at the old State Cattle Ranch west of Greensboro. And then, of
course, the SOAs at Cedar Creek and Portland Landing, as Chuck, I'm sure, will probably talk about, those are in high demand and have been a tremendous asset for the state of Alabama.

That's all I've got. Thank you.

MR. HARTZOG: Morning, everybody. Grady Hartzog, District 2, Eufaula, Alabama, southeast Alabama.

I also, like Tim, went to the processors around the area. The processors all felt like we had an increased deer harvest in our area. As y'all know, Barbour County is the only county that has the three-point rule, and most everybody still seems to love that. The processors told me that they were beginning to see more and more deer in the 150, 160, 170 class range coming in because of that and heavier deer also. So it looks good.

Turkeys is kind of mixed. You talk to one landowner and I got more turkeys
and you talk to another landowner and you got less turkeys. So we'll just see how that shakes out.

This morning the State Parks guys ought to be feeling good because at the state park boat landing you could not put another boat in there this morning at 5:00 for the bass tournament. So those are going well. And I generally when I go into restaurants and a bunch of bass fishermen are in there -- I always talk to them, and they've been a little slow mainly because of high water and the changing water depths and all.

The one bad -- one good thing for the lake but bad thing for Eufaula is about half of the airplanes in the hangar from Eufaula is in the lake adding additional fish structure to Lake Eufaula from the tornado that we had. We were south of the area where people got killed, but it totally tore up our airport and fire station and industrial
park across the street. So there's a lot of metal structure and a lot of airplane parts sitting in the lake now adding additional fish structure. So maybe we'll have some new fish structures that everybody can go put their GPS on.

But other than that, no real complaints. I did have, it seemed like, toward the end of the season a lot more complaints from Coffee County with dog deer hunting. And so that continues to be an issue, and maybe we will be able to address that issue this year.

Gary. Thank you.


The Extension System put out a new publication for the general public explaining the science behind the CWD. It's available on the "ACES.edu" website. And in addition to that, there's several spring hog management
workshops going on across the state.

COMMISSIONER PATE: Good morning. I'm Rick Pate. I'm the new Commissioner of Ag and Industries. I soon realized when I got in this race that one of my responsibilities as the new Ag Commissioner was going to be to serve on this Board, and I've been fortunate to talk to many of y'all as I've traveled the state over the last year.

I'm actually from Lowndes County, which is in the 7th Congressional District. I have to say anecdotally I had a good hunting season. I didn't know I was supposed to ask other people that.

We have a tremendous problem with beavers. I set, I think, 19 beaver traps this week, and I'd be checking them this morning if I wasn't here.

MR. CAGLE: Patrick Cagle. I serve District 2, the same as Mr. Hartzog. I live here in Montgomery which gives me
unique opportunity. I get to see a lot of folks in the Department often and interact with them, and I think they deserve a lot of praise.

You know, during my time on this Board we've had a great department, and each year they get a little better. They're really focused on the future. The Department is working on things that are going to really pay dividends. My two-year-old son is going to benefit from some of the mentored hunts and the programs that this department is doing. So I think they deserve a lot of praise.

As far as the district, you know, I was getting little calls. I think we all do. You all know those issues. This year what stands out is CWD. It's on everyone's mind. I tried to learn what I can. Don't have the -- I'm not a biologist, so will never know as much, but work with stakeholders from my district and around the state and just,
you know, hear concerns and try to
close those where we can and just
understand -- help folks understand why.

I think Director Sykes and Chairman
Dobbs deserve a lot of praise. At this
meeting last year they recommended that
we prevent the import of, you know, deer
parts unless it's deboned meat from all
states, including those where CWD had
not been found. Well, as we sit here
today -- at that meeting Tennessee --
CWD had never been found there. A
border state. A lot of deer probably
came across. You know, we sit here
today and there's over 170 cases of CWD
found in Tennessee. That was very
forward thinking, and I appreciate that.
I think you deserve a lot of credit for
that forward thinking that's proven
right.

COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Thank you, all.

I'm Chris Blankenship, the Commissioner
of Department of Conservation. I just
have a few comments, and then Mr. Fred Harders, our Assistant Director of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries, is going to give some information about CWD. There's a lot of misinformation around the state. So we figured while we have everybody in one place here for the meeting, we'll take a few minutes and just let Fred share some of the scientific research and information concerning CWD.

I want to welcome Commissioner Pate to the Conservation Advisory Board. Commissioner McMillan sat there for eight years and did a great job. He was a great asset to the Board. And most of the time you don't have to ask people how their hunting season was. They'll just tell you.

And so I appreciate your willingness to serve as our Commissioner of Agriculture and for your work you're going to do here with us and the
Conservation Advisory Board. We work very closely in the -- the Department of Conservation and Department of Ag and Industries work very closely together and look forward to working with you for the next several years.

You know, we really are blessed to live in a wonderful state, but we live in the -- this year we live in the wettest state in the union, which usually means really good things. It means we have plenty of grass and trees and acorns and all the stuff we need. This year it just means we had a lot of water. I think that affected a lot of people's hunting season this year because of some of the flooding.

But we really are blessed to live in a great state that has deer and turkey and freshwater fish, saltwater fish, and we really have a sportsmen's paradise here. And I'm honored to be the Commissioner of the Department.
We've done a lot of work this year dealing with CWD and having -- getting all this -- trying to keep it out of our state and then being able to mitigate it or contain it if we do happen to have the unfortunate circumstance where it does show up here. It has been -- the work that our staff has done has magnified over the last two years with it being found in Mississippi last year and then in Tennessee this year. You know, it's right here on the doorstep. So it's extremely important for us to do everything we can to keep that out of our state. And you'll hear a little bit about CWD, like I said, from Mr. Harders.

I do want to praise our staff. You know, we are blessed to have four of the best division directors anywhere in the country. We have Patti McCurdy who is our State Lands Director; Greg Lein, our State Parks Director; Scott Bannon, our
Marine Resources Director; and Chuck Sykes, our Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Director. And they do a very good job in each of their divisions of making sure that we stay on top of what we need to do in the state and to try and provide ample opportunities for recreational activities throughout the state. And I just want to thank them for their -- publicly thank them for all of their work that goes on throughout the year. You only get to see them sometimes twice a year at our Advisory Board Meetings, but they are working diligently 365 days a year to keep recreational opportunities abounding for us.

And so while I'm introducing staff, I do want to introduce our new general counsel for the Department of Conservation, Charlanna Skaggs.

If you'll just wave, Charlanna. We don't actually start paying her until
Monday, and so she's here for free today. Appreciate you being here.

Some of you may be hearing from her or seeing her, so I wanted you to know she's our new general counsel that starts to work on Monday.

We did have some problems this year with our "Outdoor Alabama" app. I apologize, while I've got the group here, and tell you I'm sorry for any people that tried to report and it kept turning and wouldn't -- wouldn't load. If you were in an area with poor cell service and had some problems with it, we have worked with our developer, the company that handles that for us. We -- they assure us it is fixed now.

And I apologize for any problems you had during the season. We worked on that with them all through the season. They found some small problem in the coding that caused all the issues, and it wouldn't show up until you were in an
area with poor cell service. And it seemed to only show up on a Saturday or a Sunday when people weren't in the -- we had to get the company out to try and fix it.

So during turkey season this year and for Snapper Check season it should work flawlessly. If not, we'll be finding a new company to handle our "Outdoor Alabama" app from now on. I'll just give you that as my word. We want that to work. Appreciate y'all participating in reporting the deer. We'll appreciate you reporting your turkey harvest this year as required by the law, but it really gives us incredible amounts of information throughout the state to help us to make management decisions.

And, you know, you mentioned about the duck hunting. Our staff has done a remarkable job over the last few years really increasing the work that we're
doing towards duck habitat and duck habitat management and creation of duck habitat and partnering with Ducks Unlimited, trying to partner with Delta Waterfowl, a new partner in our state, and then just working with a renewed interest in providing duck hunting opportunities throughout our state. And so you'll see a little bit more of that over the next few years.

And as I'm talking about partners, we do have a great opportunity in the Department of Conservation to work with many organizations that care about the outdoors. They care about habitat. They care about the species. And when I say partner with them, that means to me not just that they bring money, but a big part of it is they bring money. They don't just talk about things that they want to do or that we ought to be doing as a department. But they work with us with some ideas, with -- using
some of their staff, and then they also provide funding for certain projects that we can use and match that with federal dollars and bring more money into the state for us to be able to do some good work. Those partners include Ducks Unlimited, the National Wild Turkey Federation, the Coastal Conservation Association, Alabama Wildlife Federation, the Alabama Coastal Fishermen's Association. And then we are now trying to create some new partnerships with Delta Waterfowl and the National Wildlife Federation to do some good things in our state.

Among others. I hate when you name names. You'll leave somebody out. If I left your organization out, I apologize. But those are just the ones that came to mind as good organizations that partner with us throughout the year.

If you are not getting information -- if you're not signed up
to receive our "GovDelivery" distribution, that is the newsletter that comes out from the Department with hunting news, fishing news, any press releases we send out. If you want to stay informed throughout the year, I encourage you to go to the "OutdoorAlabama.com" website and click on "newsletters" to sign up for our "GovDelivery" information.

There's a whole bunch of categories on there. If you don't want to get everything the Department sends out, then you just click -- if you want to get everything, you can just click one box and you get everything we send. If you only want hunting news or you only want fishing news or you only want something that deals with saltwater fishing, you can just check those boxes and anything we send out about that they'll email to you or text it to you. So I encourage you to do that just to
stay on top of what's happening in the Department throughout the year. I think that will help keep everybody informed.

And with that, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to give Mr. Harders the opportunity, if you don't mind, to give a little information about CWD.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: I think that's perfect.

Mr. Fred, when you're ready.

(Brief interruption wherein Board members move.)

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Harders is an expert on many subjects, and this is one. This is very important.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR HARDERS: No, I'm not an expert.

CWD, chronic wasting disease. If you're a deer hunter, you may have heard about it. Some of you may have even attended some of the seminars that Director Sykes did around the state.

The first thing I want to make -- point I want to make is Alabama does not
have CWD. Contrary to what you might have read, heard from a buddy, pal, whatever, we do not have chronic wasting disease. The Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture and Industries started sampling deer in 2002. 8,000 deer have been sampled from around the state. We have not found CWD.

Now, since Mississippi and Tennessee have detected chronic wasting disease, the division is intensifying its sampling effort. 1500 deer a year will be sampled with an emphasis around those areas of Mississippi and Tennessee.

Now, you may have heard, you may have seen on YouTube, you may have read on a deer forum, you may have heard from a friend that a Pennsylvania sportsmen's group made an announcement that the real cause of CWD was discovered by a researcher from LSU. They also
announced that in a year from now there will be a test kit available to hunters where you can instantly test your deer to see if it has CWD. Also, two years from now they say there's going to be a vaccination -- a vaccine for captive deer and in three years one for deer in the wild. That sounds good, but the vast majority of scientists and researchers that have been working on this disease and are still working on the disease don't accept that theory.

The theory that's coming from the researcher at LSU is that CWD is caused by a bacterium, Spiroplasma mirum. That's not accepted by the majority of scientists. I'll talk about what they believe in a minute.

What is CWD? It's a fatal neurological disease that affects deer and members of the deer family, whitetail, mule deer, elk, reindeer, moose. It was first discovered or found
in Colorado back in 1967. Nobody is sure how or why. There's speculation as to it, but nobody can say for sure how it started there or why.

About 30 years later you can see how it spread in that area. But, also, if you notice, look up north in Canada and Saskatchewan. There's one dot up there. How in the world? How did it pop up there?

That was an elk farm, and that elk farm had purchased elk from a farm in South Dakota. Watch the map.

2008, you can see how the area in Colorado has spread, also Canada. Popped up in Wisconsin, Illinois. It's starting to spread. 2016, it's continuing to spread.

Current distribution, 26 states, three Canadian provinces. What's not shown on here is South Korea and Norway. They both have it. The third Canadian province -- look over here. One area
popped up.

CWD is classified as a TSE disease. That stands for transmissible spongiform encephalopathy. What does that mean?

Transmissible means it's infectious. It can be passed on to other individuals. The spongiform --

spongiform encephalopathy means that the infected individual's brain develops lesions like holes similar to a sponge.

Which one of these deer do you see here has chronic wasting disease and is infectious?

The answer, both of them. Deer can be infected and infectious and not show any clinical signs for two years or more.

Now, the disease is spread through body fluids -- saliva, urine, feces -- and it can survive outside of the deer's body. So these deer are spreading that infectious agent. Soil absorbs it. It can be in water. It can be on plants.
It can be in plants. Plants absorb it through its root system and spread out through the plant. So an uninfected deer can eat a plant or drink the water or eat the soil and they're infected and the disease spreads. So what causes this disease?

The current majority of scientists and researchers say it's not a bacterium. It's not a virus. It's not alive. You can't kill it. You can't cook the meat enough to destroy it. What is it?

You may have heard the word "prion." This is what causes chronic wasting disease and other TSE diseases. So what is it if it's not a bacterium, it's not a virus? What is it?

An infectious prion is a misfolded protein. What? A misfolded protein? What's that?

Just to give you a little idea -- and stick with me, now -- what proteins
do, proteins are the molecular machines of our body. They do most everything. You see some different functions that proteins serve. When you're out hunting and you see that deer, that light -- that image is absorbed by protein receptors in your eye transferred to your brain. When you shoot that deer, your finger is powered by muscle proteins. When you cook that venison with the onions and the spices, that nice aroma that you smell is absorbed by protein receptors in your nose transferred to your brain. When you eat that deer, that taste, yep, protein receptors in your tongue transferred to your brain. When you digest that venison, yep, proteins, protein enzymes. Proteins are us. They do everything in your body basically.

Now, here's where we're going to get a little deep, but stick with me. What is a protein?
A protein -- they're made in your cells. As we're standing here, sitting here, proteins are being made constantly in the cells of your body. If you think of a protein as a string of beads, those beads are the building blocks of those proteins. The building blocks of proteins are amino acids. There are 20 amino acids that our bodies use to make proteins, various combinations and various numbers.

To give you an idea of the diversity of the proteins in our body, the shortest one is 44 amino acids. That's 44 building blocks, 44 beads. The longest one -- and this, again, is in the cells of our body -- over 34,000 amino acids.

So once the amino acids, the building blocks, are put together to form this string of beads, there's atomic forces in those amino acids that want to attract and repel each other.
that causes that string of beads to fold. So the amino acid makeup, the building block makeup, and the way that protein folds dictates what the function is going to be.

Now, when those proteins fold into a three-dimensional complex structure, they're held together by bonds. This is the deepest I'm going to get. Stick with me.

There are two types of bonds, alpha bonds and beta bonds. The alpha bonds are a helical bond, not hard to break. Beta bonds are sheath-like. They're hard to break. So, now, what about this prion deal?

This represents a normal and an infectious prion. A normal prion -- yes, we have prions in our body. Scientists are still trying to determine all the functions that they perform, but they found out that it had to do with the neurological system, the myelin
sheath, the cover of our nerves. They're also involved in memory. Also involved in a circadian clock, if you've heard about that, that our body has. They're still discovering what they do.

A normal prion, PrPC on the left, has a majority of alpha bonds. They're breakable. The infectious prion, PrP Sc, has a majority of beta bonds. Those beta bonds form an impermeable sheath that resists destruction. That's why this thing is so hard to get rid of, hard to destroy.

Okay. So what happens? When a deer picks up an infectious prion -- prions end up going all through their body, but the majority are found in the brain and spinal cord. When that infectious prion meets a normal prion, it causes the normal prion to misfold and become infectious. That just keeps going on, keeps going on. It kills cells in the brain, forms lesions, spongiform.
That's where that comes from.

So you may have heard that the Center for Disease Control doesn't recommend you eating venison or elk, whatever, contaminated by CWD. But wait a minute. If these prions are all over the place shed from deer and the disease has been there since the '60s, the '70s, people have been eating that stuff, venison, elk. You may know of somebody that goes out west that says, yeah, I've been doing that for -- I'm not sick. That's kind of confusing. How come that's -- how come it hasn't caused a problem?

A study was done to look at people that did eat and consume venison, elk that were probably contaminated and those that didn't and compared the disease rate to see if those people came down with a TSE, a fatal disease. There was no difference. Kind of doesn't make sense. So what's the big deal?
There's a transmission barrier, a species barrier between the infectious deer protein and our normal protein. And what this paper is telling us is that the difference in the building-block makeup of the deer prion and our prion is the blockage, the building -- the barrier -- the transmission barrier. So what's the problem? We're home free; right?

Uh-oh. Sometimes barriers are broken.

You may have remembered or you might have heard of mad cow disease. Mad cow disease is a TSE. That infectious cow prion was consumed by humans which became infected. They came down with something called variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob prion disease, and it was fatal -- not everybody, but some did. That's why the Center for Disease Control is saying, you know, I don't recommend you eat that and, by the way,
be careful when you're gutting that deer
or handling any parts.

So that's why we're very concerned
about chronic wasting disease. That's
why there are regulations that ban the
importation of live deer. That's why
there are regulations to prohibit
field-dressed deer from coming back in
the state. Even if you go across the
line in any -- in Mississippi,
Tennessee, Georgia, Florida -- I'm just
going a couple of miles. Nope. That's
why we've had officers monitoring
highways and giving tickets to people
that were bringing field-dressed deer
in. And when the officer said didn't
you know about this -- yeah, but I
didn't think it was such a big deal.

Now you know why it's a big deal.
There's no vaccine. There's no cure.
Once the state gets it, you don't get
rid of it. It seems like it expands.
That's why we're so concerned. So let
folks know this is a pretty important issue. That's why -- don't bring it home. We don't want it. We don't have it.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, Mr. Fred. Any questions for Mr. Fred?

(Brief interruption wherein Board members move.)

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR HARDERS: One thing I'd like to mention. If you do hunt out west, if you do hunt in the states that do have CWD -- and you may have heard of this -- you get your deer tested. When it's properly processed, brought home, in two weeks or so you might get a letter from the Wyoming Game and Fish saying we're sorry to inform you, but your deer has CWD. So what do you do with that meat?

Don't dispose of it. Call us. We'll dispose of it properly. Because if you throw that out, you're spreading prions.
But, yes, if you're hunting in any areas -- Mississippi, Tennessee -- have those deer checked. If you hunt in those states, they'll tell you how to do it.

MR. BROCK JONES: Fred, I've got a question.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR HARDERS: Sure.

MR. BROCK JONES: Do you think there's a connection with the CWD in South Korea and the CWD in North America?

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR HARDERS: Yes. There were animals that were sent from here over there just like the first Canadian outbreak that elk came from South Dakota. The movement of animals is a problem. That's why we have the ban on importation of live deer. Sorry about your reindeer for Christmas, but don't bring them here.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Do you have questions?

Mr. Hartzog.

MR. HARTZOG: Mr. Fred, I remember in earlier presentations it was more or less
implied that -- and I may not use the
correct terminology -- but the
incubation was like you didn't see it
until you saw like a two-year-old deer
or whatever. But it's my understanding
now in some of the Tennessee deer that's
being tested that age limitation -- what
was thought was an age limitation has
proven to be wrong.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR HARDERS: Well, it can be
up to two years and not show any
clinical signs, but fawns -- you don't
want to test fawns. You need to get
older deer. So, yes, there is -- there
is a time at which you want to test the
deer to see if they have CWD.

MR. WOOD: Have there been any cases of any
spread of CWD through scent or either
through semen, or has there been any
documented cases of that?

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR HARDERS: Who knows.

MR. WOOD: Has the semen ever been tested to
see if it carries --
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR HARDERS: Well, the semen -- the best way to answer that is, is there's a similar disease called scrapie from sheep, and the sheep industry -- this happened way before CWD. And the sheep industry went, whoa, wait a minute, you know, we're doing all of the AI and we've got to find out if there's a problem. And so far it's not as big a problem with semen.

DR. LEMME: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Dr. Lemme.

DR. LEMME: I'd ask Mr. Fred if he could rank in the order of risk how CWD could come into Alabama.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR HARDERS: Live importation, number one. Carcass, number two. What other ways?

DR. LEMME: Body fluids and things like that?

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR HARDERS: Right. That would be down there. I don't want to go into like crows and birds and stuff like that. There are studies that
have looked at when a deer dies, what consumes that deer, what happens to prions -- that's been studied. One of the big concerns is Golden Eagles. Golden Eagles eat deer, dead deer, so that's a concern. There's a lot of unknowns that's still being studied about this.

DR. LEMME: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Any other questions?

MR. HARTZOG: I just want to make one comment. Every time I've ever had any questions Mr. Fred has been the guru on knowing about it. And I want to commend Mr. Fred and Chuck in allowing Mr. Fred to learn as much as he can because that resource will be definitely needed in the case we ever get it into the state. So thank you.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: I have one additional question. Would there be benefit to us and to the Department -- there are studies
about the importation of fluids,
anything. There's a study in Texas.
The USDA has a study. Alfa has a study.
Do we have the results of those studies?
Are they preliminary? Are we going to
get those? Can we get those?

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR HARDERS: I'm sure we can
get them, but I don't know what stage
they're in to be honest with you.

DIRECTOR SYKES: There are quite a few studies
going on right now looking at the semen
industry, looking at the urine industry
as Dr. Lemme was alluding to. All of
the scientific information right now is
showing live deer and dead deer way
above everything else. If it comes to
Alabama, more than likely that's where
it would come from. Then followed
closely behind would be semen and urine.
Because you don't have to be a scientist
to understand if it's transmitted
through bodily fluid, that's a bodily
fluid.
So there are studies looking at that right now, but as Fred said, it's a lot more -- it's an older disease in the cattle industry and in the sheep industry, so they're leaps and bounds ahead right now. There is a risk. It's a smaller risk, but it is still a risk to bring it in that way.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Are other states mitigating that risk in ways, states that have it and states that don't?

DIRECTOR SYKES: There are. There's quite a few states that have already outlawed the importation or made illegal the importation of those products. So, yeah, it's -- in the AFWA BMPs -- the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies -- their management practices to prevent introduction of CWD or mitigate the risk, that's one of the things that they note is to remove all doubt you need to stop importing urine, semen, live deer, or dead deer.
CHAIRMAN DOBBS: So we're doing a pretty good job so far?

DIRECTOR SYKES: Yes, absolutely.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Yes, Mr. Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Well, I just wanted to thank Fred for the presentation. If you didn't know, Fred used to be a schoolteacher before he came to work for us quite a few years ago. So I think he was back in his element being able to talk about prions and proteins. But I do appreciate that.

We're not trying to scare anybody or to unduly concern people about consuming deer or hunting deer. We just wanted to provide the information as to why this -- that we feel like that it's so important to keep that out of our state and why we feel like that if we can keep it out of Alabama that's good for us, that's good for the wildlife, and good for you. And if it so happens to come here, we need to be able to contain it
as best we can and to keep it from spreading.

And so I think it was very good for Fred to maybe go a little bit further into some of the science than you might have been expecting today, but I think it just shows the depth of research that's being done and why we take it so important here in Alabama.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you. I'm not sure, but I'm going to ask this. And I want to say thank you to the Board. Those are the best district reports we've ever had. That was very well done and well thought out. Thank you.

These are the gentlemen that in your districts if you have questions or ideas, please call them. They're on top of this. They're working at it all the time. We're all talking and trying to work through the problems and communicating. So we will communicate
with you. Thank you.

So our Directors' reports, we're really not going to have any.

Director McCurdy, do you have anything, State Lands?

DIRECTOR McCURDY: I don't unless there's a question or something from a Board member.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Any questions from the Board for Ms. McCurdy?

I'm sorry. Grady.

DIRECTOR McCURDY: I shouldn't have asked.

MR. HARTZOG: You shouldn't have asked.

What have we got in the works in adding any additional WMAs? Have we got any projects that we're in kind of the final stages on?

DIRECTOR McCURDY: I think you mean in the Forever Wild Land Trust area.

MR. HARTZOG: Correct.

DIRECTOR McCURDY: Yes. I mean, we're always working toward that. We've had several good nominations, a lot of short-listed
properties that are available to the Board. And so I will let -- you know, Chuck could speak more to how -- the particular spots that they would intend to manage. But we've had a lot of good opportunities. We have a lot of nominations. Only 15 percent of our nominations actually make it through to actual acquisition. So you can imagine the ones that do are the top-level opportunities.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Any other questions for Director McCurdy?

Director Lein, any thoughts or ideas from you?

And let me say that the lodge in Gulf Shores is over the top. It's fabulous. Thank you. We're going to grace you with our presence, if you'll have us, at our next meeting. So we're going to start making reservations.

DIRECTOR LEIN: Good morning. We very much look forward to hosting the Board at the
new lodge and conference center at Gulf
State Park. I'm old enough to remember
the last time the Advisory Board had a
meeting there. It was in the old lodge,
and it was in its final stage of serving
the public and was taken out by one of
the tropical events. We don't use the
"H" word in the Parks system, but you
know what I'm talking about.

But we've gone 14 years without a
lodge at that park, and a lot of work
went into all the steps to create that
new facility. Patti was very much
involved with that. It's one of the
positive things that came out of the BP
oil spill that devastated our coastal
communities years ago. But we look
forward to hosting the Board there.

Right now our staff are working very
hard to be prepared to host the spring
breakers in all of our parks, and for us
that's almost a two-month occurrence.
They start arriving in March and that
goes on through April and then we have a lull and then the summer breakers hit us. So we're going to be hosting the Board in May in between those windows of peak activity, and we look forward to doing that. I won't ask you if you have any questions.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you very much. Any questions for Director Lein?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Okay. Director Sykes, Mr. Fred Harders, Assistant Director, took your time.

DIRECTOR SYKES: I'm good.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Director Bannon?

DIRECTOR BANNON: I just have a quick couple of notes on some updates. I'll move over here to make sure everybody can hear me.

Everybody can hear me without the microphone? Are you good?

The 2018 red snapper season, just a quick update on that from last year. It
was scheduled to potentially be 47 days. We were fishing to 984,291 pounds. We reached 986,000 pounds in 27 days -- or 28 days. So we had a shortened season. Some people look at that as that is not a success. We look at it, it is a success because the state management was trying to show that we can manage it to a much better standard, that when we get to the level that it needs to be closed, we close it without overfishing so we're not penalizing ourselves in the future.

So based on those numbers from last year, with about a 40-percent reporting rate on Snapper Check, we're going to do -- the 2019 season is going to be 27 days, June 1st through July 28th, including the 4th of July. So it's long weekends again, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and we're going to include Thursday, which is the 4th of July.

The first weekend is a short weekend. June 1st is a Saturday. Our
federal for-hire charter boats will start June 1st, and they have a 62-day season this year. They're still under federal management. It's a different system. And they run straight through. So if any of you are coming down to go fishing, you can fish Monday through Friday as well with the federal for-hire charters. The state-licensed -- excuse me. The state private angler is only Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

But we did get a little bump in quota. So we're at about a million pounds. And in April at the Gulf Council meeting we hope to vote for a full-time state management system. So for the 2020 season and beyond the State of Alabama will control the season dates. We still don't control the amount of fish that we get to fish, but we get to control the days. And as last year, if we get bad weather or something, we can actually add days to
the season this year. That's how tight
the control is for us.

Really quickly, we did dedicate some
artificial reef zones inside the 9-mile
state waters. We created seven new
ones, and then we named eight after
individuals and some organizations.
Three individuals: Dr. Steve
Szedlmayer, Dr. Sean Powers, and Dr. Bob
Shipp are the individuals. The Alabama
Wildlife Federation, National Fish and
Wildlife Federation, Coastal
Conservation Association of Alabama, the
Alabama Charter Fishing Association, and
the Alabama Reef Foundation. It's a lot
longer than that. I just don't remember
all the words for that one.

The eight zones that were named.
And they received a proclamation from
the Governor. They will be open to
fishing. They are new zones that are
just getting started. We've just put
material in them. So they won't be real
productive, but they're also there for study -- for some artificial reef zone studies.

The things that we presented to you guys for approval this year mostly are just cleanup items to some regulations. We do have two things that are pending that we're hosting public meetings for -- and anybody here is welcome -- that we're looking to make some changes to spotted seatrout and flounder. Those are two very important fish to the state of Alabama. Spotted seatrout are gamefish.

We are looking at trout as a concern -- not as a critical issue, but we don't want to get to a critical issue. So we've seen a few downward trends, and so we would like to address that. And flounder, we're past concerned, and it's probably critical that we do make some hard choices there.

So we're hosting some public
meetings, and it addresses different user groups differently. We have a commercial fishery for flounder as well as a recreational fishery, and for spotted seatrout it is just a recreational fishery, but we also have charter fishermen. So we kind of address it from each of their perspectives.

So we are hosting meetings. We have hosted several meetings in conjunction with CCA of Alabama. We've held two already. The Alabama Coastal Fishing Association, we had a meeting Thursday night. We have a commercial fishing meeting on March the 13th and a private angler meeting on March the 13th and a charter for-hire meeting on March the 27th.

So we're trying to get input for -- from those communities as to what they consider to be appropriate changes. We have a list of options that we can make.
And we can apply multiple options or we can do just one option. And we're showing them what the potential changes would be, whether you're looking for a quicker return, a long-term return. But we have to have a positive return. That's the purpose of the meeting and the changes.

And so if you guys get any calls or concerns from anybody in your district, feel free to call me anytime. I know we've already had some feedback.

And then just to update you on oysters in Alabama, we did not have a harvest season this year. We are looking to do some restoration projects, and part of that is to create a larger hatchery at our Mariculture Center down in Gulf Shores and do what we call a spat on shell. We're kind of going to jumpstart some reefs. We'll put the spat on the shell. We'll grow them out to a certain size. And then we'll go
put them out on the public oyster reefs, one of which we're going to elevate. We've had some low oxygen problems. We'll elevate that oyster reef and provide some, hopefully, better habitat to kickstart our commercial oyster harvest out in the Bay.

And at our Mariculture Center we're working on a flounder project because, again, flounder is a concern for us. And we're just getting started. We're having to buy some equipment, make some changes. We have some broodstock that recreational fishermen have provided to us, and so we have about 40 fish, somewhere around in there. And so we're hoping to birth some babies here in the near future. And we have a goal of putting about 50- to 60,000 flounder back into the system each year. That should be up and running in 2020.

And I think that's -- oh, the other one of question will be the reef fish
endorsement that is in your packet. Nobody likes to have extra costs, and so we -- we had to look at this real hard about if this is something we wanted to do.

There are a couple things with the reef fish endorsement that we've presented as a regulation. We have to identify how many people are participating in reef-fish fishing in Alabama. Right now we sell saltwater fishing licenses, but there are some people that fish for saltwater species that never leave the Mobile Bay area. They're not participating in the reef-fish fishery. With an endorsement to that license, you only buy it if you're going to participate in reef-fish fishing, which is offshore in general.

And so we also have to continue funding our research that goes on there. We lose some of our funding at the end of this year. So we're changing the way
that we're doing some of the research. We are moving some of those projects to other funding mechanisms. We're also -- some of those research items will have been completed this year. It costs us about a million-and-a-half dollars a year to do some of these things, and Snapper Check is included in that.

We've already moved some things to get it down to around $800,000. We think we can get it down to around $500,000 a year to continue some of the reef-fish research that we're doing and run Snapper Check, which we would like to expand and make it a little bit tighter system and a better system.

With the reef fish endorsement, that's sharing it amongst private anglers, charter for hire, and commercial fishermen who all utilize the reef system off the state of Alabama -- so it is a tiered system -- and let everybody share in that cost. We don't
want to put a big burden on any user
group.

We did not put a non-resident fee in
there from the commercial and charter
for hire. There's only a handful that
would be non-resident. And I do not
want to scare away anybody from another
state to come down here and participate
in fishing in Alabama. So I don't want
to make the burden any greater for them.

So it has potential to generate
between $250,000 and $400,000. So it'll
come close to supporting the annual
cost. The first year we may not need as
much money, and so if we can maintain
that funding, then we should be able to
manage those research projects through
the University of South Alabama and the
Dauphin Island Sea Lab with just that
amount of money. And it's also
available to be used as matching funds
because it is state money. So we can
turn that into matching funds with the
federal government.

So with that, that's my update. If I can answer any questions. I know that was a lot.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Any questions for Director Bannon?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you. Thank you, Director Bannon.

I'd like to say just briefly thank you to Ms. W. McCullers and Ms. B.F. Jones for being here and helping put this meeting on. It's very important. They're always here with everything for us and the placards and things for our participants. So thank you to them and their staffs very much. Thank you.

Our next item on our agenda -- I'm sorry. Yes, Grady.

MR. HARTZOG: I just have one question of Chuck.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Yes, sir.

MR. HARTZOG: We were talking about different
fundings, and I know that PR is --
Pittman-Robertson is a big dollar source
for us and it has been a big dollar
source for us. And I've been reading
that that dollar source is going to
start -- do we have any kind of
projection what our next five-year -- it
had gotten up to about what? About
$20 million?

DIRECTOR SYKES: Yeah. My first year our
apportionment in December of 2012 when I
started was roughly $8 million. It was
almost $19 million last year. I mean,
the Obama administration was excellent
for gun salesmen and ammunition
salesmen.

I just, as you know, was in Denver
this week in meetings. We met with a
lot of the industry reps while we were
there. Their sales are down. People --
however, people's stockpile of
ammunition is beginning to go down. And
so we are anticipating a drop over the
next couple of years. It's not going to be drastic. I don't think we'll ever go back to the $8 million. There's going to be a new normal. We're guessing, you know, 10, 12, somewhere in that mid range. It's never going to get back to that high point or I hope we don't get in a national crisis where it gets back to that high point. It's going to drop, but we're going to set a new normal. So I think we'll be okay.

MR. HARTZOG: Well, I just know that Patti's office depends heavily on that because when we got that big increase we had to have the matching quarter, and the oil revenues gave us that matching quarter and it just -- I just wondered what we're going to be able to look at --

DIRECTOR SYKES: We're going to set a new normal. It's not going to be back to historic lows. It will just be a new normal in the next couple of years.

MR. HARTZOG: Okay. Thanks, Chuck.
DIRECTOR McCURDY: I will say, Mr. Chairman, just to clarify, too, that Forever Wild Land Trust money can be used as a state match that Chuck needs to further those purchases. So that's still -- that aspect is secure. That has been working well. The federal agencies are fine with that. And so I think we do have an ongoing source of the match necessary to even utilize the funds, which is always the first -- the first challenge that Chuck has.

DIRECTOR SYKES: And, Mr. Chairman, could I make one more comment?

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Yes, you may.

DIRECTOR SYKES: Mr. Jones brought up the SOAs. Our Special Opportunity Areas have been a tremendous hit, and that is working with Patti and the Forever Wild Board on that match where we can further the Board's mission as well as further our mission. It's been an absolutely incredible program and been a huge
success.

And to answer Mr. Hartzog's question about adding more, we definitely intend to do that and maximize our PR dollars and help the Board maximize their authority on accomplishing their goal of providing the stuff. So, yeah, things are good.

MR. RAYMOND JONES: Yes. While we're thanking people, I also wanted to extend thank you very much to Chief Weathers and all the officers. Y'all do a great job. I was -- I've known a lot of officers through the years and had great relationships with them.

I was driving down Red Road in Macon County, Alabama, with my son. Bam. A tire blew out. And within five minutes -- I didn't call anybody -- but an officer stopped to help me change a tire. So Blair Sistrunk was his name. But, again, thank you all for all y'all do.
CHIEF WEATHERS: Absolutely. We've got some good guys out there.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Very good guys.

And one quick reminder about the Pittman-Robertson Act, that this department gets no general fund funding. The monies that they get to operate come from license sales and the match. So if you don't buy licenses -- am I right -- we can't grab that big bucket of money that comes from sale taxes and use taxes on guns and ammunition, et cetera, that's in Washington, D.C.

So encourage your friends to always buy a license. It's very important that we keep on keeping on.

Our next part of today's proceedings are the public commentary. That's where I am in this. If there are no more questions from the Board or no more announcements, we'll move on to public commentary.

We don't have many speakers today.
So we are not going to use the ready chairs like we have in the past. I'm just going to call the speaker's name to please come to the podium. And I'm going to ask again, as I always do, for everyone in the auditorium, let's be respectful. Reserve your comments to outside the hall. No applause or outbursts during the question period.

And I'm going to ask each Board member to refer to the chair for questions of the speakers, please. Again, let's be courteous and give each speaker the respect that you would expect.

Speaking today first on freshwater fishing is Brandon Jackson from Cullman. MR. JACKSON: Good morning, I'm Brandon Jackson, Walker County. One, we wanted to express our appreciation -- I wanted to express my appreciation for the Department and for all the work that's been done at Walker County Public Lake.
Between the new archery range --

My girls love it by the way. They've been there several times.

-- the walking trail, and stocking of rainbow trout, what was probably once a forgotten resource in our area has been revitalized. A lot of people seem to be really enjoying it. We've heard a lot of great comments about it and especially about the trout fishing there as a great benefit.

They stocked about 1,000 to 1,200 rainbow trout on November the 19th and fishing began on November the 22nd. They required a $5 daily trout permit as well as a valid Alabama fishing license. The creel limit was reduced to four fish as opposed to the statewide five fish creel limit, and it seems to be -- have been a great success.

Between November the 22nd and March the 7th the lake was open -- I'm not a math guy, but I think with taking out
the Christmas vacation that goes on at the Christmas break and Wednesdays -- because the lake is closed on Wednesdays -- they had about 47 days of fishing. And in that 47 days, as many of you know, we had a good deal of rain, bad weather, wind and stuff like that.

But even with all of that, the four-fish limit, they were able to harvest 832 of those trout. So they -- in that short period of time 832 trout were harvested, and they sold 350 individual trout licenses. So that's not the general lake. That's just for the trout fishing in that short period of time.

I appreciate the effort of the state in making that available for the people in Cullman and Walker Counties but also throughout the region. People seem to be enjoying it, traveling in order to participate in it.

It is a closed system. We
appreciate the work that was done there and the way it was managed in order to promote those fishing opportunities in the winter. Sometimes below Smith Lake Dam they may be limited a little bit because of generation. It seems like we get some -- some of those rains in the winter and this provides people an additional opportunity.

As those temperatures rise, those fish will die. Once that lake -- it's only a 2-acre lake. Once it gets above 70 degrees, every one of those fish will perish. And so we appreciate that opportunity when it's available and as it's available.

MS. JONES: Time.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Is that it, Brandon? Is there any specific point you want to make?

MR. JACKSON: That's it.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Okay. Thank you very much. Any questions from the Board?
Grady, Mr. Hartzog.

MR. HARTZOG: Actually not of Brandon. But the funding for the stocking of those fish, were those some of the power company fish or were those some that we bought ourselves?

I'm sorry to make you get up.

CHIEF NICHOLS: Nick Nichols. I am Chief of Fisheries.

That project is -- parallels a project we've been doing up on Madison County Lake for years, but the purchase of those trout is handled through our public fishing lakes program. So we actually purchased those fish with dollars from our public fishing lake program.

MR. HARTZOG: Continue?

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Please.

MR. HARTZOG: So we had 350 permits at $5 apiece. What was our cost of the stocking?

CHIEF NICHOLS: I'm going to defer to my
Assistant Chief.

ASSISTANT CHIEF GREENE: We don't have that in front of us, but we can get that information.

MR. HARTZOG: Well, I mean, if it's profitable, let's double the amount of fish and advertise that we double our revenue.

CHIEF NICHOLS: Well, you know, it's --

MR. HARTZOG: I'm being --

(Simultaneous crosstalk.)

CHIEF NICHOLS: I'm not sure if we're really making much money. One thing that has proven to be very successful up at Madison County Lake, especially if you look at the demographics in the Huntsville area -- there are a lot of people that do -- that are from other parts of the country where they do like to fish for trout. And that's been very successful up there. It actually supports -- it provides interest for that lake year around by having that
trout fishery during the wintertime.

So it might be hard for us to actually put a pencil to it and work out whether we're making a profit or not, but it does seem to enhance the interest in the lake from the public there.

MR. HARTZOG: Mr. Chair, could I ask, just out of curiosity, to send an email to us and let us know kind of what the cost was and what --

CHIEF NICHOLS: We can get that information to you.

MR. HARTZOG: Yeah. Just out of curiosity.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Cagle.

MR. CAGLE: Yeah. The work that y'all are doing there and at the other county lakes are great. I see news about it all the time, and I think there is a renewed interest.

As most people probably know, there's a stocking effort that goes on at Sipsey Fork below Smith Dam for years. The Department has been doing
some research on it both on the biological aspects of it as well as user group research. Appreciate y'all's effort there.

We've had a conversation on it, and I want to keep looking at it just to see -- you know, sometimes there's some -- it's not easy to find solutions. There's not always solutions. But within the context of the -- you know, first based on the biological science and then the user groups, I think having that conversation, being thoughtful, you know, may yield the possibility to find a way that we make it work for the most users without -- you know, with minimal conflicts.

So I look forward to working with the Department to see if we can, you know, maybe find a few things to extend the -- give everyone a little of what they want. Like a lot of things -- or most things, no one gets everything they
want. But I look forward to continuing that and maybe have something we can discuss at the next Board meeting.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Just from a housekeeping standpoint, there's a report, Chief Nichols, that you are going to get. I understand that's been delayed and we'll enjoy that report later.

CHIEF NICHOLS: Correct. There's a study that we've been funding with Dr. Steve Sammons at Auburn University and one of his students. I believe we started that study in 2017.

ASSISTANT CHIEF GREENE: Yeah. This is the third year.

CHIEF NICHOLS: We extended it a year. There were some -- you know, just due to some of the high water flows that Brandon mentioned, that kind of complicated some of the study. So we extended that study through this fiscal year. So we should be seeing a final report on that study sometime probably early 2021 -- excuse
CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you. Thank you, Chief.

Any more questions from the Board?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Brandon, thank you very much.

MR. HARTZOG: Thank you, Brandon.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Our next speaker today is Mr. Bradley Durham from Limestone County.

MR. DURHAM: First of all, thank you guys for all you do for -- all you do for Alabama and all the outdoor enthusiasts.

My name is Bradley Durham. I'm from Madison in Limestone County. I'm here to share my concerns about the change to the permits for the Alabama organized field trials. Of course, they -- there's a variety of field trials throughout this state. Some of them are shooting. Some of them are nonshooting.

What I mainly want to speak about is coon hunting because that's what I'm passionate about. And I've had a lot of
questions about what exactly we do on a
competition coon hunt. We do not take
any coons. We do not try to harm them.
All we're trying to do is showcase the
dog's talents.

So the clubs that -- they're having
a hard time making ends meet as it is,
and when we put the $50 permit fee and
only limit them to three, it really
burdens them.

I have -- I gave you guys a copy of
some of the numbers from some of the
hunts and some of the clubs and some of
the other -- what other states do, and
we're what seems to be way out of align
with what other states do. I think
we're double -- more than double the
permit fees, and I don't think there's
any of them that have a minimum -- or
maximum amount that they can have.

And we -- I'm in charge of one of
the biggest coon hunting clubs in the
state of Alabama. We've had hunts for
ten years and had up to 400 dogs in one weekend a year. And we're really, really hurting now because we're having to send all our hunters across the state line to Tennessee for our small hunts. And it's really hurting us really, really bad.

There's other papers I put on there that are entry numbers just to let you guys know what exactly -- how big these coon hunts actually are and what all they're bringing to the state economically. I know you guys get more of the money off the Pittman-Robertson Act where license sales -- so I think there is a civilized way that we can go about changing this. And I'm not opposed and most of the people I've talked to are not opposed to a fee, But whenever we're having up to 31 hunts a year and having to pay -- change, you know, people's names around and all this -- you can see -- I think there is
one sheet on there that has if we're charged $50 for every fee -- every hunt --

MS. JONES: Time.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Any more specific points? Do you have another point that you want to make, Bradley?

MR. DURHAM: I'm fine with that.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: All right. Are there any questions from the Board?

Mr. Hartzog.

MR. HARTZOG: I reckon I'm the question-asker today.

You said that you have -- your club ends up with 31 hunts a year?

MR. DURHAM: Yes, sir. Up to 31 hunts a year. We can have two hunts a month through the Professional Kennel Club, and we hunt seven a year through the United Kennel Club. And there's other organizations out there, also, that we don't hold any more field trials for.

MR. HARTZOG: Okay. And you said that some of
your coon hunts you have 40 dogs.

What's your entry fee?

MR. DURHAM: Some of our hunts in the past
have had up to 150.

MR. HARTZOG: Okay. But what's your entry
fee?

MR. DURHAM: My entry -- they're different
compared --

MR. HARTZOG: I mean just on an average.

MR. DURHAM: We have three hunts a year that's
a $50 entry fee, and the rest of them
are $30 to $10.

MR. HARTZOG: Okay. Well, I professionally
trial Retrievers, and I know the Barnett
Lawley Center is one of the premier
places they use for the Retrievers and
all. But I can't see where a $50 fee --
when you're making a $45 entry fee for
400 dogs and a $50 fee is detrimental to
your club revenue.

Now, a change that might work would
be if you're limited to three for $50 is
just set a dollar amount per field trial
and divide by three by -- into 50 is, you know, 17 bucks a trial.

MR. DURHAM: That's correct.

MR. HARTZOG: And so, I mean, that shouldn't --

MR. DURHAM: Our big hunts --

MR. HARTZOG: That's a gimme. I mean --

MR. DURHAM: Our big hunts are added purse hunts. We only make -- the club only makes $10 per dog. We put up $1,000. You can see in the one pamphlet. $10 per dog. You have to have 100 dogs. This year we lost $1700 worth. And then plus you add the 50, the $940 for the insurance on the building. I'm out $3500 this year alone.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Raymond Jones.

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

I guess I'm trying to figure out -- what's your definition of hunting? Is it pursuing or killing?

MR. DURHAM: According to the Alabama handbook -- which I got showed two weeks
ago and acted like I didn't know what I was talking about. Our definition in the handbook is chase, also, or pursue.

MR. RAYMOND JONES: Okay. I think that's most everyone's definition is pursuing.

MR. DURHAM: Yes, that's correct.

MR. RAYMOND JONES: It seems like a license would be something that -- if you got the hunting license, then that would take care of -- the same situation.

When I go to pursue turkeys in Texas, I have to buy a license.

MR. DURHAM: We don't --

MR. RAYMOND JONES: Now, hopefully I kill turkeys in Texas, but that's not a guarantee.

MR. DURHAM: Our intent is not to kill though.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Did you say your intent was not to kill?

MR. DURHAM: That's correct.

MR. MARTIN: What if you did?
MR. DURHAM: I've been doing it 20 years, competition hunting. There's probably seven or eight times in the last 20 years and I go to about 150 a year. I go all over the -- I go all over where there's coon hunts. I've been in upper New York and --

MR. MARTIN: Well, I think in relation to what Mr. Jones was talking about, you're pursuing.

MR. DURHAM: That's correct.

MR. MARTIN: There's a chance you could kill one.

MR. DURHAM: That's correct.

MR. MARTIN: I'm not saying you're trying to, but --

MR. DURHAM: My point is the state lines -- the clubs that are on state lines are not getting a fair opportunity because the people in the center of the state do not have to buy a hunting -- they already have a hunting license, so they don't have to buy a permit to hold a
field trial. We're losing $3400 already on top of 150 more. I just -- I don't see where it's fair to people that's close to state lines.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Durham, just bear me out. I'm listening.

MR. DURHAM: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: And I'm in agreement. We all agree that chasing or pursuing is hunting by definition. That's easy enough. So you do understand that when you buy that $50 permit for the three events -- and possibly more, but certainly three events -- that the members or the participants in those events don't have to buy a hunting license even if they come from out of state. Is that correct?

So, frankly -- I said it earlier -- we derive our resources from hunting licenses. The $50 is a help because we get generally a three-to-one match. But we're not getting that hunting license.
So that's -- I'm losing sight of where you're losing.

MR. DURHAM: All right. I agree that you are losing that money because -- all right. But why do I have to live in this state and pay my fees and hold hunts in my state and send everybody across the state line to Tennessee to have a hunt?

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: I don't know why you do.

MR. DURHAM: Because I can't get another permit for it.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Hartzog.

MR. HARTZOG: Mr. Chairman, I would like the staff to possibly come up with a change in that regulation. Instead of limiting it to three for $50, put $20 a hunt on there, and so they don't have to change -- the Grady Hartzog Club is having three hunts and the Gary Lemme is having three hunts and allow each club to buy as many permits as they want and instead of three for 50, do $20 apiece. And if they can't -- I know what entry
fees are, and $20 is a steal. So, I mean, that's the only recommendation --

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Time out. Mr. Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Thank you, Mr. Hartzog. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

This is -- it's $50 per hunt, and then they were allowing three for each particular club. So what you're really asking is for them not to have a limit on those --

MR. HARTZOG: No. No. What I'm saying is, is not have a three-hunt limit but just if they want ten hunts, they pay $20 a hunt -- instead of three for 50, they get --

COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: It's not three for 50. It's $50 per hunt.

MR. DURHAM: Per hunt.

COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Per hunt.

MR. DURHAM: So 150 and we're only allowed three.

MR. HARTZOG: Oh, okay. Well, leave it at $50 and --
COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: But this does allow them to have the field trails without all of their participants from out of state having to buy a hunting license.

MR. DURHAM: Exactly.

COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: So we feel like as a department that this does provide the opportunity for them to have these hunts at an extremely reasonable cost to bring the participants in.

So I really -- I don't want to disagree with you vehemently in front of everybody, but I feel like that the $50 and the permit that we charge for this is actually a benefit to the people that are closer to the state line because those people in the state -- close to the center of the state, they're having these trials with people that are already spending more money on a hunting license than these people that are coming from out of state on the edges that are covered by the $50 permit.
But we can discuss with the staff and bring back something to you before the next meeting on whether the three-hunt limit for each club is reasonable or not, provide some information on that.

MR. HARTZOG: Well, that's -- I misunderstood that. I apologize. I thought it was $50 --

MR. DURHAM: If you look on the very front of it, on the very front page, you can see that we're way out of align with what every other state does. We're more than -- we're more than double than what any other state charges for a permit, and no other state has a limit -- a maximum number of permits that they're allowed.

MR. CAGLE: Mr. Chairman. Yeah. It's difficult here to compare to other states. I mean, all states are funded differently. I'm not sure that any others get zero general fund dollars.
I mean, so it's not really apples and oranges.

You know, we're a very lean state. Our state legislature has voted not to fund the Department. So it's hard to compare it to somewhere like Tennessee where they do get substantial money. And I understand that, you know, from a practical application it does, but it's just hard to compare when you're comparing funding sources because we literally are using that matching PR money to operate.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Just an observation, just an ask: These states that you have where there is no fee or the fee is minimal, do you have to have a hunting license?

MR. DURHAM: No, not if you're out of state. Nowhere that has a permit system requires out-of-state hunters to have a hunting license.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: That's fine. Go ahead, Mr. Pate.
COMMISSIONER PATE: Is the limitation -- are you upset about the limit of three or the $50? I can't really --

MR. DURHAM: Both of them, mainly because our smaller hunts -- we have more smaller hunts. And Alabama ranks third in the most organized field trials for coonhounds out of the whole world. We're only behind Tennessee and Indiana.

COMMISSIONER PATE: Well, let's separate those two issues. Is there any reason we want to limit coon hunting?

I mean, we're not really short of coons that I know of.

MR. DURHAM: No, not at all.

COMMISSIONER PATE: I mean, so I think we can solve that issue if that's the issue that he's limited in the amount of coon hunting. And it's a whole separate issue --

(Brief interruption by the court reporter.)

COMMISSIONER: I'm sorry. I guess my point
would be -- there seems to be two separate issues here, and I think we've got to talk about them separately if we're going to solve them. But it doesn't seem to be any reason we'd limit, I mean, the amount of coon hunting that went on in the state of Alabama.

MR. DURHAM: Correct. And my other point is if we're only allowed three at $50 a hunt and we have 31 hunts a year and then you pay $20, that's a lot more money for a smaller fee with no maximum.

MR. WOLFE: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Wolfe.

MR. WOLFE: But to that point -- and I guess I might be missing something. But, again, we're going back. You're not killing the coons.

MR. DURHAM: That's correct.

MR. WOLFE: Just you're hunting them. So with what he's saying, that's not going to help kill all the coons in Alabama. So
we're not talking about the same thing. You're talking about just the chase. And the way it's defined in our regulation the chase is hunting; right?

MR. DURHAM: Yes.

MR. WOLFE: So I don't think we're talking about the same thing. We're not helping killing all the coons. It's just y'all are wanting to hunt -- I think -- to me the staff -- I think we need to go back to the staff and let the staff work with y'all and try to figure out a solution because we're not talking about a fair chase and kill and all. So I think we need to let the staff come back and make us some recommendations.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Agree.

Mr. Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: That's all I was going to say is that -- I mean, I don't want to debate this up here with the Board. I'd rather not until we've had a chance with the staff to really talk
about it and bring back a recommendation
to the Board before the next meeting, if
that would suit you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: I think that's ideal, and we
can expect something before the May 9
meeting.

And you're welcome to return,
Bradley. Thank you very much.

Our next speaker -- small game
again -- is Mr. Jimmy Mitchell from
Quail Forever.

MR. MITCHELL: Like the chairman said, my name
is Jimmy Mitchell. I reside in Hanover,
Alabama, and that is in Coosa County for
people who don't know. It's about
10 miles north of Rockford. I'm here
today to represent Quail Forever and
more importantly landscape-scale
conservation.

We met with Keith Gauldin, the
Wildlife Chief, about three months ago,
and he's shown us some things that the
Department has done to do small game
upland management, you know, that benefits quail, rabbits, brood-rearing turkeys and everything. And he was gracious enough to meet with us and a Quail representative -- an employee who represents four states.

And we're really -- Quail Forever is really growing through the state. I know they partnered with the Alabama Wildlife Federation last year to do a tour to try to -- with the Alabama Black Belt Adventures to kind of bring attention to, you know, the quail culture in Alabama, and there's a rich history with field trials.

Some of the things that Keith talked about -- you know, the burning. I know there's extensive effort -- pretty good efforts at Freedom Hills WMA in northwest Alabama and also Barbour County WMA. Probably our highest quail numbers in the state. And those efforts are not unappreciated. I'm here today
to hopefully entice you guys to
springboard those efforts and ramp up
those efforts.

In 2006 I think there was two Quail
Forever chapters in the state, one at
the Conecuh Forest down in Conecuh
County around Andalusia and one Covey
Rise chapter around Alexander City.
Since then, in the last two years, there
have been four chapters added. So
that's a total of six chapters and
interest in the last two weeks in
starting a chapter in Enterprise,
Alabama.

And so, you know, we're also having
a meeting with the Alabama Wildlife
Federation. There's a lot of great
resources in the state. Alabama
Wildlife Federation has three biologists
that work across the state. No fee
charged to help landowners whether
they're managing for deer, turkeys,
quail. And we're hoping to -- you know,
they have Claude Jenkins on staff. He
studied under Wes Burger at Mississippi
State, one of the leading researchers
for quail.

So I think there's a lot of
knowledge for quail in the state of
people who know how to manage for wild
quail. You know, I know there's a lot
of pen-raised hunts, and, you know,
certainly that's kept the sport alive
through the years, but ...

Let's see. You know, just where
feasible -- I know everywhere is not
feasible. I know there's, you know,
some efforts -- you know, we can -- you
can do. I know the Conecuh Forest
chapter, they've put -- and since
they've been alive they've put $100,000
into public land, into the Conecuh
National Forest, part of what's Geneva
State Forest and what's now the Boggy
Hollow WMA, which was created in the
last couple of years.
Another thing is, you know, a youth mentor program. I know the State Lands Division -- there's the Wehle Tract and the -- what's the area -- State Cattle Ranch. If we could work and, you know, enhance the habitat on those places to do a youth mentor program. I know Barbour County had a youth hunt this year.

MS. JONES: Time.

MR. HARTZOG: Go ahead and end it.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Please finish.

Thank you, Grady.

MR. MITCHELL: I know Barbour County did a youth hunt this year. I wasn't aware of that. I wish -- you know, we can help promote that program. It was -- you know, they did a rabbit hunt, I think, and a squirrel hunt, but it was to introduce youth to the sporting programs. They did that last weekend on Barbour County WMA. Had pretty good facilities. They had bathrooms there.
I know the Wehle Tract is adjacent to it. I'm not aware of the quail numbers. But if we could enhance management and, you know, increase that -- if we could have a youth hunt on that same day maybe for quail. You know, anything we can do. I'm open for ideas. Quail Forever is open to helping you guys and, you know, also, in kind dollars of volunteer work to match PR -- you know, to get some PR dollars to put into these public lands.

You know, I know that the Dutch Bend Tract over in Dallas County, the Old Cahawba site -- you know, I don't know if some of that land could be reclaimed into some quail management. I'm not sure, you know, all the things that can be done, and I'm not the technical expert on habitat. But, you know, I know there's people out there. We've got some great people in the state. I know Keith Gauldin said that, you know,
he's going to have someone to -- a quail biologist maybe by April. I'm not sure if that's still on plan.

But, you know, I think there's some positive things going, and, you know, if there's increased interest -- and I think that, you know, it will bring the people in if we can implement the habitat and, you know, keep increasing our numbers.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, Mr. Mitchell. Are there any questions from the Board?

Mr. Hartzog.

MR. HARTZOG: Not really a question but just a couple of comments.

He was talking about the State Cattle Ranch. And with Patti at the State Cattle Ranch -- they've already done a bunch of extensive work with warm season grasses for quail habitat.

You were talking about Barbour County, and, of course, that's my county. And I know about the hunt last
weekend. There were several hundred kids there. There's been extensive quail work being done there.

You talked about AWF and Claude Jenkins and the guys they have on staff there.

For those that are interested, AWF just got through doing a tremendously nice book on warm season grasses and identifying those warm season grasses and plants in the prairie Black Belt. So all you've got to do is contact the AWF, and they'll send you a free copy of that.

MR. MITCHELL: Yeah. I would recommend the AWF. They're a great program. And, you know, you could support them financially, but they -- you know, they do work -- you know, if you need landowner assistance, you know, you don't know how to manage for deer, turkey, whatever you want to, you know, they'll come out and help you -- you
know, they don't have any financial assistance, but they can tell you where to go to possibly get some cost share if it's applicable.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Any other questions?

MR. HARTZOG: And thanks to the foundation for giving to the Barbour County Youth Hunt.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Noted. Thank you very much.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank y'all.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: I failed to mention it earlier, but I will again. We're -- a lot of latitude today because there are so few speakers. But Ms. Jones is keeping time. Speakers have three minutes.

Ms. Blackwell down here, thank you so much for being here with us today too. And she's recording it.

So our next speaker is Mr. Jimmy Jimmerson from Cleburne County.

MR. JIMMERS: I want to thank you for allowing me to be here again this year.

Last year I met with this same group and
I had some handouts. I'm not going to
give out any handouts this year.

But what I'm asking for -- and
Cleburne County is at the northern part
of the state north of I-20 which goes
from Birmingham to Atlanta. Our deer
are rutting early. We've been -- for
the last three years we've allowed the
Game and Fish folks -- the biologists to
come in and shoot does early in the --
or shoot the does late, and it's
showing -- their results is showing that
our deer are being bred before our gun
season opens.

And what I'm asking for is the ten
days that y'all give the whole state --
take those ten days off at the end.
That's not doing us any good. Add it to
the front side of hunting season and
allow us to hunt ten days -- that way we
get to hunt the rut. We're not -- our
bucks are rutting early. The does are
being bred early. So that's mainly what
I'm asking for.

I'd like to add that in the 2019 
manual -- Alabama Farmers Federation 
2019 policy from Alfa and the Farmers 
Federation -- but it says that the 
Alabama Department of Conservation and 
Natural Resources continues to study the 
breeding patterns of whitetail deer to 
determine an accurate conception range. 
We encourage the Alabama Department of 
Conservation and Natural Resources to 
use this information to set hunting 
season dates accordingly.

Does anybody have any questions?

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Jimmy, when is y'all's rut?

MR. JIMMERSOHN: They're rutting before gun 
season opens. We're on the -- Cleburne 
County is right on the Georgia line. 
Georgia is -- they're hunting a month 
earlier than we are. Those deer that 
were stocked in the Choccolocco Wildlife
Management Area back in the '40s and '50s -- those deer came, I think, from North Carolina. That's the reason -- that gene that's in those deer that were put there, that's the reason that they're rutting early.

And, like I said, it's just -- it's not fair that we don't get to hunt the rut because -- and I know, you know, y'all gave us ten days at the end of the season. Barbour County and a lot of those counties in south Alabama the deer aren't rutting till after the end of hunting season. So give them ten days and then everybody else ten days. We just need our ten days added on the front side.

We've -- we've been working with the Department of Conservation. For three years we've allowed them to come in and shoot does later in the season. The biologists was testing them, and it is showing that they're being bred.
They're already -- conception rate is early, so ...

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Cagle.

MR. CAGLE: Very briefly. I don't want to get too caught up. But you mentioned something from the Alabama Farmers Federation.

MR. JIMMERSON: Yes.

MR. CAGLE: Wasn't that a proposal that didn't pass?

MR. JIMMERSON: That's in their 2019 policy manual.

MR. CAGLE: Yeah. I think it was something they voted on that didn't pass.

MR. JIMMERSON: This is in the manual. It's passed.

MR. CAGLE: Okay.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Any other questions?

Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: I'd like to ask Chuck a question.

Chuck, is there any other places like this around, or can you elaborate on --

DIRECTOR SYKES: Yeah. I mean, Mr. Jimmy is
100 percent correct. I mean, no ifs, ands, or buts. That's one of the few things that we have got concrete data on. We've got the maps. We know within two weeks of when deer are being bred all over the state. There are several places just like what he's talking about. There's one in Grady's county. I mean, there's a couple of counties down along the Georgia line that just depending where you stand in the county you can hunt peak rut November, December, January, and February.

So he's correct. And I've talked with several of the Board members. I mean, we've got three zones now where we used to just have one. We're headed in that direction. It's just going to take a little bit of time to get where we're helping Mr. Jimmy in Cleburne and then we're going to have folks in Barbour saying, well, you did it there, carve me out here, or folks up around Bankhead,
carve me out here.

So we know it for a fact. He is 100-percent correct. We've been working with him. Our biologists are working with him. It's just the -- it's going to take time to get -- if the Board decides to do that, we may end up with 15 zones versus three zones. So we just aren't -- as a Department we're not ready to make that recommendation yet despite the fact that he is 100-percent correct.

MR. MARTIN: Well, just keep in mind he ain't no spring chicken.

MR. JIMMERSON: That's right.

MR. MARTIN: We had that conversation earlier.

MR. JIMMERSON: That's my next point. If we wait for all these -- it takes three years for the biologists to do their studies. If we do that for all the other areas -- you know, I'm 72 years old. I'm not going to live forever like Grady. We're getting a little age on
us, but --

MR. HARTZOG: We're getting a little
grey-headed.

MR. JIMMERSON: That's right. And bald-headed too.

But, you know, it's penalizing us to
not go ahead and approve it. It's not a big deal. The boundary lines are drawn.
But if we have to wait for all these other counties, like I said, that -- arguing that point, it's never going to happen, not in my lifetime.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Dr. Lemme.

DR. LEMME: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask Chief Weathers a question concerning the implications of -- if we follow the trend out and we cut out the small areas that are biologically rutting earlier, what would be the implications both on the Enforcement Division but also on the hunters?

I know I've been in some states where the -- there were so many little
zones that I couldn't tell where I was and where I wasn't.

CHIEF WEATHERS: Dr. Lemme, you know, as regulations become more complex, the maps get harder to read.

Is it tougher on the hunters? Absolutely. Everything we add to the book is more for them to keep up with.

For our officers, because they're stationed in a particular county, it's not that hard for them. Seasons are constantly changing. We deal with one thing to another from turkey season into the height of fishing season, those sorts of things.

On our officers it's not a particular hardship. Is it on the hunters trying to keep up with that considering that a hunter may have land leased, you know, on the other end of the state? It's hard for them to keep up with. Is it something they're willing to do? Most likely. Is there a
learning curve? Absolutely. You know, we've got management areas where we have zones on a management area, Choccolocco being one of those.

Mr. Jimmerson is exactly right. I'm from Jacksonville, Alabama. And the best deer that I've ever killed in my life was in full rut a few days out of bow season. He's dead-on-the-money right. Folks get used to it. They figure it out. There's a learning curve, but the hunters will pick it up. So I think all could agree on it.

To echo what Director Sykes is saying, if you're going to move these zones, you want to do it -- you don't want 15 zones. If there are a bunch of places like that where we can pull it together and make that a Zone D in different pockets around the state, that's better than Zone D, E, F. Similar regulations are better for everybody.
CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, Jimmy.

MR. WOLFE: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Yes, Mr. Wolfe.

MR. WOLFE: A question. I guess go to Chuck.

Other states that are in like zones like Georgia and Mississippi that adjoin us, they have the same problem that we would have in the north of the state and south of the state.

Georgia has a split state. Is that right?

MR. JIMMERSON: That's right.

DIRECTOR SYKES: Well, most states don't have to deal with what we have to deal with. Again, we've got peak rut November, December, January, and February. Most states -- you go to Illinois. First week to ten days of November every deer in the state is rutting wide open. So I don't know of another state that has the management issues that we have.

Now, that can be portrayed as a good thing because we're the only ones -- us
and Mississippi are the only states with a February rut that has a season. That's a good thing as far as hunters coming in, but it's a management nightmare when you've got four areas in the same county that's got different deer. And they are genetically different deer. We can go look back at the historical stocking data.

It's a management nightmare in trying to carve out all of those little zones. It's up to y'all. If y'all want to do it, we will do it to the best of our ability, but just understand you're never going to be able to get everything where Grady's folks are not going to be mad if we give it to Mr. Jimmerson. If we're going to do it, we need to do wholesale. And if y'all tell us to do that or look into it, that's something that we can look into before next year. But I don't think we need to do one zone. It needs to be -- if we're going
to do it, we've got to do it for everybody.

MR. JIMMERS: And the zone that I'm talking about is easily outlined. You've got the state of Georgia on one side. You've got I-20 on the bottom side. You've got Calhoun County on the west side and Cherokee County on the north side. The county boundary lines are pretty much where this is happening at. So it would be easy to do.

And it probably would be an economic boom for the community because people -- the rest of the folks in Alabama, they're going to come and hunt around Choccolocco. And people out of state probably would pay an extra out-of-state license to come and hunt that early season in Cleburne County.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chuck, I was just wanting to clarify. You said you do have all that
information statewide for these different pockets?

DIRECTOR SYKES: Oh, absolutely. Absolutely. And, again, Mr. Jimmerson is right. His zone is easy to define. The other ones are not that easy. So everything he's told y'all is spot on.

MR. MARTIN: I think as a board we should take a look at it.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. B. Jones.

MR. BROCK JONES: Chuck, as far as the -- how long do you think it would take to get this together as far as defining the 15 or so zones?

And I personally don't see a problem with not feeling like you have to do them all at the same time.

DIRECTOR SYKES: Let me respectfully disagree with doing it all at the same time. We tried that with the February extension, and I don't want to go down that road again. So I think if we do it, we need to do it. We can -- we're working on a
CWD response plan right now. As soon as we get done with that, then we can start laying out the state for this.

I don't think it's going to happen for this season. But if y'all want to do that, if Mr. Jimmy can make it till 74, which we all hope he does, that's a realistic possibility.

MR. JIMMerson: We've had this argument going on for the last three years anyway, so ...

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Hartzog.

MR. HARTZOG: Mr. Chairman -- and, there again, Mr. Jimmy, I understand. I get complaints all the time. People don't realize that there's actually been studies and papers written on Barbour County where -- because the deer herd that was introduced in Fort Benning came down the river and then we had a herd -- deer herd that was in the Bledsoe Hills that go back to the Indian time and then the Barbour County Management Area was
stocked with different deer. We've got three separate DNAs, and for some reason those DNAs don't mix. And the rut does just like you're saying. The rut on the river where I am is actually over about the time of gun season.

Just as curiosity, Chuck, we got a three-buck limit and we extended the ten days to satisfy the people from west Alabama all the way over to Barbour County because Barbour County Management Area had a deer herd that had the -- but, there again, you start trying to divide Barbour County into three areas -- you know, I've seen graphs that Bill Gray has done, who is our district deer biologist, and it would be a nightmare trying to define zones where -- you know, where the Bledsoe Hill starts and all this kind of stuff.

Since we've got the three-buck limit, would the Department consider the possibility of leaving the ten days on
the end and putting ten days on the front, since we've only got a three-buck limit, and that satisfies Mr. Jimmerson as well as satisfies those that, oh, we can't kill a deer till February the -- I mean, would that be easier to pass a regulation and make Mr. Jimmerson happy as well as those that we can't kill a deer till February the 30th?

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Excuse me just one moment.
Let's do this, Grady. Let's defer this to --

MR. HARTZOG: Well, that's basically what I'm saying is would the Department consider that and bring that back to us as --

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Okay. If you have some recommendations individually, Grady, write those -- get those to me. I'll get them to him, or you send them straight to him.

MR. HARTZOG: Okay.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Jimmerson, is that okay with you?
MR. JIMMERSOM: That's fine. Try it for one year in the area that I'm talking about and see how it works, and then you can work forward adding those other areas in the state. There's no reason why we shouldn't just go ahead and approve -- I mean, the lines are drawn in the Cleburne County area. Go ahead and approve it for that and then see how it works and then work it out as you go down through other parts of the state.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: We're going to look at it.

MR. JIMMERSOM: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: We're going to get back with you.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, Mr. Jimmerson, for always coming.

The next speaker is Mr. Guy Moore, the Sipsey Wilderness Hunt Club.

MR. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, honorable members of the Board, thank you for the opportunity to be able to address you today.
I am Guy Moore. I live near Birmingham in Jefferson County. I own hunting property in Jefferson County, Shelby County, and Marion County. I also hunt Lamar County, Winston County, and some other counties.

But I'd like the Board to consider or address the issue of feeding deer. Most hunters believe that -- true hunters, trophy hunters that I deal with -- that our system is broken. And we need to look at somehow how we can tweak it as far as -- I'm surprised that I'm standing here today and would be in favor of unrestricted feeding of deer with corn, food attractants, minerals, but, frankly, I can't compete with my neighbors who are doing that.

MR. STIMPSON: Can you get closer to the mic, please?

MR. MOORE: Okay. I'm sorry.

I'm commonly referred to as -- you know, as a deer snob to be candid with
you because -- and I don't have a problem with somebody that's shooting deer, but I just have a problem with -- when somebody just -- you know, just shoots everything that walks. And we got that going on, and my neighbor is shooting deer over corn. And I know that's happening and we know that's happening and I don't know how to fix the problem.

But I am considered, you know, as somebody that knows what I'm doing trying to hunt and -- but commonly my neighbors -- my neighbors are harvesting the deer that I've got all the pictures of that are the two- and -- well, the three- and four-year-olds. Like this year on one place I had six four-year-olds -- six three- and four-year-olds. They all died during the deer season, and I wasn't even hunting them.

But what was common -- what was
happening was, is I got my cameras out year around and I'm feeding year around. Well, I've got plenty of gobblers in there and turkeys that I know are there. But right when the deer season shows up -- when the gun season shows up, my turkeys are gone and my long-beards are gone and they don't -- and they're gone. I say, well, they must have shot my turkeys. Well, every year about a week after the deer season is over my turkeys are back on my camera again right there where they always are.

So my point is, is I don't know how we can fix it. I appreciate the difficulty of enforcing our game laws, but I'm frustrated and tired of trying to compete with everyone who feeds only during the deer season. And that's just frustrating, you know. And I know I'm not speaking alone. I've talked to a lot of other hunters that are in the same area. But really -- and I've
talked to game officers who are frustrated, too, because it is difficult, you know, to -- a hundred yards away behind some kind of natural barrier. And so anything you can do to fix that, I would appreciate it.

I also addressed this Board about -- well, I don't have time.

But, anyway, I addressed this Board several years ago about the extended ten days and the doe issue. We just -- the coyotes are doing a real good job of --

MS. JONES: Time.

MR. MOORE: But, anyway, I need something done because -- like in northern Jefferson County they don't ever need a doe to be shot, not right now, not in northern Jefferson County, and a few other places I hunt. So, anyway, I'd appreciate the Board thinking about that.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Any questions for Mr. Moore?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, Mr. Moore. Thank
you for being here, for coming.

Our next speaker on dog deer hunting in support of same is Mr. Chad Dugger from Baldwin County.

MR. DUGGER: My name is Chad Dugger, and this is my son, Easton, and we're from Robertsdale, Alabama, in Baldwin County. And, first off, I'd like to thank you for letting us -- allowing us to talk to you.

We represent Halls Fork Hunting Club. We'd like to thank the Advisory Board for giving us the opportunity to continue to hunt and make memories with our families. We had several young kids harvest their first buck --

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Dugger, would you speak closer to the microphone. You're talking softly. Thank you.


We've had several young kids harvest their first buck in front of hounds with their dads and grandfathers by their
side. With this being said, we have had two guys report that we have been having dogs on their property, and most of these complaints that have been called in were dogs that were on a public road where we have property on both sides of the road. And there also has been times they have just rode up and down the road trying to catch our dogs while we are trying to keep them -- trying to keep them off of unpermitted property.

This has been an ongoing problem for years, and no one else in the community has ever had a complaint on us or our dogs. We have had community cleanups and, also, an annual fish fry for the people of the community.

We just want to keep the way we love to hunt alive and to keep making memories with our families and don't want to get it taken away by a couple of people that just have a personal grudge against a club and some of its past
members. Thank you for your time, and we ask you to let us keep our rights.

And, also, I just wanted to let you know that when y'all think about this stuff -- he just got two dogs this particular year, just puppies, that we're going to go in the woods hopefully this year and hunt with those. And we have GPS. We spent a bunch of money. And there's quite a few people in our club that has GPS. We diligently try to keep dogs off of other people's land. And, you know, we try to do a good job of that and cut the dogs off when we hunt.

Everybody that hunts -- our standers, we'll tell them, you know, if a dog comes by you, try to catch the dog, please don't let it get on somebody else's property. If a property owner comes up, be respectful. You know, just be nice to our community.

But he's nine years old. And I can
remember going with my dad at seven or eight, and he's been going since he could walk. And, you know, I remember all them times that I've hunted with dogs and, you know, with deer. Some people like to still hunt, and that's fine. But we like to dog hunt.

But we do our best and spend hundreds of dollars on GPS tracking systems just to keep them off of other people's property and diligently try -- and I teach him -- you know, diligently try to respect other people because they don't want them on there. And that's understandable.

So we're just up here to ask for y'all to think about it, and we just -- you know, we love to dog hunt.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, Mr. Dugger.

Any questions for Mr. Dugger?

MR. WOLFE: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Wolfe.

MR. WOLFE: Do y'all participate in any kind
of -- I understand -- I've gotten a lesson the last two or three meetings learning more about how to control dogs. Are y'all participating in any like whistle training or shock collars or anything like that?

MR. DUGGER: Yes, sir. Well, that GPS has shock collars on them. And, you know, not everybody has got them in the club, but -- I don't really know a percentage. I haven't talked to how many people has got them. But I would say half of our club has them. But they're very expensive. I mean, they just cost a lot of money, and some people just frankly can't afford it.

But a lot of them older guys that's got them dogs -- them dogs are smart. They've been hunting with them for years. They'll run for a little bit. They'll start hollering or whooping and they'll get off that deer trail and they'll come back. You can see them
walking down the road. They'll have six
dogs and they don't have a collar, but
they've been hunting with them for
years.

And, you know, we know we've had a
problem in the past. So we
diligently -- we tell our new hunters,
our guests, you know, when you come up
here, if you see a dog, grab that dog,
you know. And our dogs don't bite.
They're good dogs. But grab that dog.
Please don't let it go on somebody
else's property and just respect them.
And if the property owner comes up from
somewhere, be nice. And that kills them
a lot of times with kindness, you know.
And there's a few times we've had
problems, but we have property owners
that'll tell us if your dog goes on a
property -- don't take no gun -- call
us. We'll come open the gate up and let
you go in there and get your dogs. Just
don't go on it without asking us. And,
of course, we do that.

So we have some people that works great, and we just have a few that don't necessarily want us to do it and they just want to still hunt and they don't want the dogs on there. But, like I said, we diligently buy GPS and do everything we can. And there are some places we've kind of got a couple of trouble areas, so to speak --

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Dugger, thank you. The Commissioner has a question for you.

COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: So your place is on Phillipsville Road --

MR. DUGGER: Yes, sir.

COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: And where is that in relation to the Assembly of God Church right there? Is it close to that on Phillipsville?

MR. DUGGER: Yes, sir. It's right over from it.

COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: And so your property is on both sides of
Phillipsville Road? Those are the roads you're talking about?

MR. DUGGER: Yes, sir, that is correct.

COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHP: All right. Just making sure I had the right area. Thank you.

MR. DUGGER: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Any other questions for Mr. Dugger?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you very much.

MR. DUGGER: Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Our next speaker today is Mr. Don Knight from Calhoun County.

MR. KNIGHT: I think most of you know who I am. I'm Don Knight. I live in Anniston, and I hunt in Barbour.

And I want to first thank the Conservation Advisory Board and the Conservation Department itself for the work on CWD. I think that's a very important function of this state. If we don't get it stopped, it's going to
change our total way of hunting, and we
need to work on that even more.

Now, most of you got my letter, so
I'm not going to go into that. You know
what I'm talking about there.

What I would like to bring up today
is what we need to do about saving
all -- all aspects of hunting period.
You read in the papers and everything
every day where the states around this
United States is trying to shut down all
hunting -- not just dog hunting. All
hunting. And even in a couple of them
it's fishing. We've got people out
there today that are working extremely
hard to shut us all down, and if we
don't all stick together and we don't
all work toward knocking these people
out, they'll get us.

Look around, people. Look around to
what's happening in this world today and
see what's going on. You can kill
babies, but they're not going to let us
go out there and kill Bambi. Think about it. It's coming. Get serious. There are a lot of things that's going on down here, but we need to get serious about that.

All right. Another thing I want to bring up is the gentleman that brought up the coon hunting deal a while ago. We also have rabbit dog trials, which I have rabbit dogs, and I love to rabbit hunt. But the thing that you got to understand is you're talking about your money, but when you do away with these things or cause them to be done away with, you're taking away from the community. When these people come into town to go to these trials, they spend money and that community is helped a lot. So I know you've got to have your money, but stop and think about the communities around it before you make a decision on it. And it's a lot of money. I promise you it is.
And I just want to thank you people.
Glad to see Mr. Pate here and all the
rest of you. I know sometimes I cause
you problems, but you cause me problems.
That's just as simple as it can be.
I've worked with these boards for 25
years now, I guess.

Grady -- I see him down there eating
steaks at a restaurant and I know he's
got plenty of money. I have to go in
there and scrimp to buy me a steak in
that airport restaurant.

It didn't get blowed away, did it?

MR. HARTZOG: No.

MR. KNIGHT: Good. That's our eating place.

MS. JONES: Time.

MR. KNIGHT: And I just want to let you know
that -- please help us as dog hunters.
If you could, go to these land
companies. You're talking about
something that would help the dog
hunting problems. Go to these land
companies and ask them to lease these
large tracts of land to dog hunters. We would keep our dogs off of everybody else's property. It would be a big help.

But you need to protect all forms of hunting no matter whether it's quail hunting, snipe hunting or whatever.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, Don. We appreciate it.

MR. KNIGHT: Thank you.

MR. HARTZOG: Mr. Chairman, one comment.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Yes. Go ahead.

MR. KNIGHT: He's like the rest of us. He's getting this color.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Yes. Yes, he is.

The next speaker is Ms. Susan Morrow.

MS. MORROW: Good morning, I'm Susan Morrow. Most of you know me. I want to thank the Board for what y'all have done and hope that y'all will make sure that chronic wasting disease does not come to our state because hunting is a big part
of what a lot of us family people like to do.

And I'd also like to ask the Board to -- if you remember -- when these people call you with complaints about dog hunters, a lot of times it's not hunting dogs. It's just a dog.

And also this past year I have visited with some dog hunting clubs. Just about all our dog hunters now -- a lot of the clubs won't let you even turn loose if you don't have a GPS collar on your dog, and that is a lot of money. And we are doing a whole lot better. I would say 85 percent of the clubs you don't turn loose unless you got GPS collars on.

And everybody says that they've had a good season. And I would like to remind the Board that in the past, many years ago before some of y'all was on the Board, the common thing was if you wanted to get rid of dog hunting, you
called the representative in your area and told him. Because unlike trespassing, a sheriff will come out there or a game warden and they will arrest a trespasser, but the dogs -- the dogs show up or they don't show up.

We are trying our best to keep our dogs on our property. And before whenever -- it was common knowledge all you had to do was call, get it brought up at a meeting, and then the next meeting they would vote. And that's how dog hunting got done away with in a lot of counties in Alabama until the dog hunters started showing back up to these meetings to defend ourself. And we come up here and it's like we got our hat in our hand. We beg y'all to keep the kind of hunting that we like to do. We're not trying to change y'all's. And we don't mind restrictions because we want to continue to hunt the way we do.

So I would like for y'all before you
make any decisions on taking any more
dog hunting away to think about these
other counties, how they got dog hunting
done.

And, also, hunting license have been
on a down-cline, especially since dog
hunting -- every time it comes up. And
a lot of our hunters, they don't do
nothing but dog hunt. And if the
restriction on dog hunting would be
better and no more taken away, your
hunting license might come back up.

And I would also ask that y'all make
sure that the chronic wasting disease
stays out of our state. Thank y'all.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, Susan. Thank you
very much for being here.

Our next speaker is going to be
Mr. John Williamson.

MR. WILLIAMSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My
name is John Williamson from Bessemer,
Alabama, in regards to hunting in Walker
County.
Unlike the previous two speakers, I'm speaking against dog hunting. I'm not asking that dog hunting get taken away. Okay. I done that 25, 30 years ago myself. I've also given you just a few of our documentation of dogs. And these dogs are dog -- deer dogs. They're not house dogs. You can see in these pictures. And you can see correspondence from the first day of gun season all the way through till about the end of January even though season was closed on the 15th.

Hearing the lady speak previously about GPS collars, I wish that they were hunting next to me. Okay. And a gentleman earlier saying the same thing. I feel it should be mandatory for them to have those GPS. I know they're expensive, but, hey, I spent 12 grand on 700 acres last year to hunt for family. It's just a few of us and it's family.

So for me to sit here and come out
and hunt 40 days, 45 days during the year and I only get five days that I'm not hearing the dogs run or dogs coming across the field or running deer off my field that I'm sitting at or my wife is sitting at or my young nephews and nieces, my liberties get taken away. It's not fair.

I'd love to have these people that are speaking respectfully of having GPS collars and keeping them on their own property. But when they're turning them loose right next to the property line -- you're sitting in a stand 300 yards from the property line and you hear them turn them loose, drop the tailgates. That's not right. There's got to be some kind of limit somewhere. I ain't asking for it to be taken away, but there's got to be penalties somehow or another associated.

You know, these dogs ain't going to go hungry. You look in there. You can
find a couple of dogs in there that are skin and bones. They've been out there running around. And it's not just the fact of hunting on Friday and Saturday. You go out there on Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday thinking you might get away with it. No. The stragglers are still out there running around, running in circles, following you. They get so poor. Now, when they come to the camp, trust me, my wife, that gentleman's daughter, them dogs -- they're going to get fed and they're going to get taken care of. We're not going to hurt somebody's dogs. But it sure did hurt our season. Hurt that kid from having a good chance at a buck.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Any other specific point that you would like to make?

MR. WILLIAMSON: Just other than the fact that, you know, there's got to be some mandatory punishments or requirements more dedicated toward this dog hunting.
CHAIRMAN DOBBS: So if there were some rule in place that allowed a dog to be penalized or a dog's owner to be penalized for being on your property illegally or uninvited, as it were, would that be something that you think would help you?

MR. WILLIAMSON: Oh, it would definitely help my area in my situation. The club south of me was scared to come up here. They're scared of retribution. Well, I'm past that. I don't care.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Retribution from the ... MR. WILLIAMSON: Dog owners.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: From the dog owners and the dog deer hunting clubs. Well, there's -- we have a rule that has been brought up on several occasions. We've talked about it, and it sort of -- it's something that I would like for Chief Weathers, if he could, to give us a rundown of that particular rule that might help you.

CHIEF WEATHERS: Chairman Dobbs, you know,
it's been brought up a couple of times over the last few years. The dog deer hunting regulation, 220-2-.112, it establishes some of the few laws that we have on dog deer hunting.

We talked about several years ago -- introduced the idea of a dog encroachment subsection being added to the dog deer hunting regulation, and basically what it said was this: It shall be unlawful for any person after having received a written warning from a Conservation Enforcement Officer to allow a dog for the purpose of deer hunting to enter onto, cross, or remain upon the property of another without written permission.

So it could not really be enforced ever by a sheriff's deputy or a state trooper or anybody other than someone who had some understanding of hunting and fishing issues and conservation issues. It's a game warden regulation.
No one would be cited for this, arrested for this without having been warned the first time. It's very similar to criminal trespass. There is a warning. When the same behavior occurs again, the dogs show up for a second time, the dog's owner can be cited for a violation of the exact same regulation that's in place right now. So that's basically what it was.

We looked at it as a way to be as minimally restrictive on dog deer hunting statewide as we could. Instead of putting more counties on the permit system, which has the possibility of taking away public lands, things that we don't permit, putting one regulation out there that held an individual accountable and not the entirety of the club. The way we looked at it was that it would give the dog deer hunting clubs a tool, something in their bylaws of the individual club that if that member was
given a warning for allowing their dog
to go onto a neighboring property owner
or being arrested for it, so to speak,
given a ticket for this, that that club
could have that in their bylaws and use
that as a tool to eject that member of
the club and not punish that club. It's
a fairly minimally restrictive way of
looking at it to accomplish a goal.

Walker County --

MR. WILLIAMSON: Well, that would help because
presently when I call Phil -- and Lord
knows that if he was here, I mean, he
could tell you. I mean, I wore him out
hard for several weeks with -- and
there's some of that correspondence in
there.

CHIEF WEATHERS: Sure.

MR. WILLIAMSON: But if they don't have GPS
collars on to stop them --

CHIEF WEATHERS: Sure.

MR. WILLIAMSON: -- even what you're saying is
not going to do any good. And as far as
that goes, I had two dogs that had tracking collars on --

CHIEF WEATHERS: Sure. It occurs.
Absolutely.

MR. WILLIAMSON: -- that stays over there --

CHIEF WEATHERS: This would be a tool for your county that does not currently exist. And Walker County is not on the permit system as it stands right now. So this would be some tool if a dog was to be able to be caught on your property, a collared dog, a hunting dog -- there is a possibility of doing something with that dog's owner aside from what's going on right now, meeting him back out at the road, delivering the dog to him, and it can occur again two hours later.

MR. WILLIAMSON: Now, would that pertain just in particular to that one dog or any dog under that man's name?

CHIEF WEATHERS: Under his name. It's not a specific dog.

MR. WILLIAMSON: Under his name, so it's not a
specific dog.

CHIEF WEATHERS: Right.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, Mr. Williamson.

Chief Weathers, a quick question.

If a hunting club is on or an area is on the permit system, this is not something that's going to affect them directly. It's more to the individual. Is that right?

CHIEF WEATHERS: The way that we've looked at it is it should be an aid for them, a tool. If a club gets multiple complaints in a year, typically what we do, we send them a warning letter and we'll put them on probation for the next year.

Now, they may have gotten those multiple complaints for one or two members. The vast majority of the club is doing exactly what they should be doing. They bought tracking collars. They've whistle-broken their dogs, whatever it is. They're controlling
their dogs. But they may have a couple
of club members who are habitually
turning dogs loose with no respect to
whether it appears on somebody else's
property or not.

It gives us a tool -- right now all
we have is after a year's worth of
warnings to carve out a piece of
property of that dog hunting club and
say, okay, between this road and this
road you can no longer dog hunt or take
the dog deer permit from the entirety of
the club. We don't in our current
regulation have a way to punish the
individual that may be -- you know,
honestly, he may be -- that one person
may be the only problem in that club,
and that's -- I think that's a reality
in a lot of places.

So, no, it's not any kind of
situation where we would go and arrest
this one person, the club ejects them,
and then next year pull the club's
permit. That's absolutely not the intent of it.

MR. WILLIAMSON: No. I think it would be fine if you just did it to the one owner itself and not even be an issue with the club.

(Simultaneous crosstalk.)

MR. WILLIAMSON: So it's up to the club and the club president to ensure that everybody is doing --

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, Mr. Williamson. Thank you. We appreciate the dialogue, and we'll take this under advisement for sure.

Questions?

MR. BARKSDALE: Yes. I have one question.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Barksdale.

MR. BARKSDALE: How would you do that with dogs that do not have a collar on? Because they simply can just open the box --

(Simultaneous crosstalk.)

CHIEF WEATHERS: Will it fix every problem?
Absolutely not. It won't fix every problem. But right now if they're dog hunting, they have to have collared dogs. Can anybody get around that?

Absolutely. But it's more of a tool than what we have right now.

MR. BARKSDALE: Sure. And I don't disagree with that at all.

CHIEF WEATHERS: Anyone who is going to violate that in that manner is going to violate anything that we could conceivably pass or --

MR. BARKSDALE: Exactly right. I understand. I just wanted to make that point.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Any other questions from the Board?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Chief Weathers, thank you very, very much. We appreciate that. Our next speaker is -- is he here -- Mr. Avery Bates. Is he here?

Oh, there he is.

DIRECTOR SYKES: I was going to speak for
Avery today.

MR. BATES: My name is Avery Bates. I'm vice president of Organized Seafood. Been doing this a long time.

But first I want to invite y'all to the "Seafood Bash" on the 20th. Love to see our new Agriculture fellow that just went to the restroom come with y'all.

DR. LEMME: March 20th; right?

MR. BATES: March 20th. We should have a lot of good seafood.

A number of concerns. We're losing our barrier islands. We want the Conservation to support some bills that David Sessions -- we're trying to get the beach quality sand to build back the island. If we lose that one barrier island we got, we're in trouble inside toward your estuaries and stuff. It's critical that we keep our barrier islands like Dauphin Island alive and well and sand put back on the beach. So far the Corps has really done us in.
Also, we've got a problem -- our Board of Health now tells me we've got a lot of people on the east side of the Bay that's putting cages for their personal use -- oyster cages. This in turn -- if they harvest oysters when they want to, if they hit the market -- they won't hit the market. They can't hit the market. But what the problem is, Vibrio vulnificus gets very prevalent when the water gets up.

And we can't oyster when it gets over 80 degrees without having the oysters brought. But if the people on the piers get sick, what happens? It gets in the press. It destroys -- we mentioned it before -- the market for all of Alabama oysters.

When it says oyster with Vibrio in it, we're going to have a problem with enforcement, getting with the Board of Health. Byron Webb says I don't know what the Conservation is going to do
about it. But I hope we're working on
that to make sure that these people that
has their own private piers -- when they
harvest the oysters, they better be
careful that the oyster industry is not
hampered, hindered, or shut down.
People will not eat oysters if they know
that they're going to get sick, and I
don't blame them.

So we would love for something to
come up with the Department with
enforcement to try to head off a problem
before it truly gets here because it's
getting ready to boom with some of these
private piers. And that's a concern for
the Board of Health, too, and I hope
it's a concern for the Conservation.

We -- we want to continue to supply
a lot of food for our people. We're
worried about what the Corps is doing up
the Bay. The flooding that we're having
now -- we had two tremendous floods
putting extra sedimentation in the Bay.
The Corps in turn digs the bottom of the channel --

MS. JONES: Time.

MR. BATES: -- puts the spoil out on the flats, and adds maybe 200 years of siltation across some of our reefs.

So think what we have to deal with with our commercial fishermen and don't make a regulation on fishing that will hamper or interfere with our restaurants. Our restaurants are begging for seafood. So don't put a regulation that'll put some of these fish that's coming up on a part where the public can't consume them in our restaurants. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, Mr. Bates.

Any questions for Avery?

Mr. Wolfe.

MR. WOLFE: Mr. Avery, I've had a lot of people come to me in the last year that -- it is. It's spreading on the Point Clear/Weeks Bay area, right
through there. And that's kind of where it's spreading, and I'm just absolutely telling them not to do it. And I think you're right. And I think it's something that we as a board are going to have to address because somebody is going to get sick and somebody is going to really get sick bad.

So it is a big thing growing, and we know it's growing. And we know there's a lot of people starting to do it in that little area through there. But I'm doing everything I can to notify them when they ask me and tell them not to do it.

MR. BATES: You know, our oyster industry -- we produce some of the best oysters in the world. If you come to this meeting that we're going to have on the 20th, you'll get to eat some half-shell oysters if the waters are open. And I want to tell you, I open a lot of them for the people there. They say they're
the best we ever ate. We know that. We want the people in north Alabama -- we just delivered seafood to Huntsville. I had to fill in for a fellow, and we was late. They called us three times. Please get here with our oysters. Please get here with our crabs. Please get here -- Sexton in Birmingham. All these people, they say, look, we don't care if you're late; we'll meet you anywhere.

And when you go to these restaurants, they're begging for more seafood, and we want to produce it from our waters. So let's don't hinder our shops with any regulation or any law that might say, well, this fish is going to be shut down.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Bates, the Commissioner has a question for you.

MR. BATES: Sure.

COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: No, not a question. I don't want to hold you up, Avery. But
I did want you to know and let the Board know that there was a bill that was introduced in the regular session -- I think it's House Bill 107 -- that would address recreational oyster harvest under those piers and would be a no-cost permit. It's not a departmental bill. I'm just letting you know that there is a bill out there. I would encourage you to look at that. And it would create that no-cost permit where they would track the people that are doing this recreational oyster work under the piers where they can provide them information about Vibrio vulnificus and track what they're growing there. So just take a look at that, please, sir.

MR. BATES: Yes, sir. But we did have grave concern both to the Board of Health and our oysters. And I want to say if you've got a pier and you want oysters -- it scares me that they're going to get them in July when the
Vibrio is the highest and go consume them and kill the market that's really trying to refrigerate their oysters within one hour, which --

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, Avery. Thank you very much.

MR. BATES: Thank y'all.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: We're always glad to have you here.

Our next speaker is Mr. Blakeley Ellis from Orange Beach, Alabama.

MR. ELLIS: Thank you, Chairman. I just wanted to take the opportunity to speak to y'all about some of the stuff we've been working on with the Department and Marine Resources.

I will just tell you, I really appreciate the relationship that my organization, the Coastal Conservation Association, has with the Department, with Chris and with Scott and with Kevin. I see a lot of other states. I talk to a lot of other executive
directors around the country, and they're all pretty jealous of the type of relationship we have and the amount of information we can share with each other and the amount of projects that we do work on together. And it's just something that I'm really proud of.

While I'm talking about stuff that I'm really proud of, it makes me really proud to see us continue to grow the artificial reefs off our state. It's no secret that we've got the best artificial reef system in the world, the biggest. And it makes me even more excited that we're not slowing down and that we're continuing to add more artificial reefs even though some folks at NOAA, the Marine Fisheries -- National Marine Fisheries don't necessarily like the artificial reefs. But I appreciate y'all continuing to work towards that.

I wanted to thank y'all again for
the opportunity to have the reef zones named after my organization. Appreciate Governor Ivey and Chris and Scott for all the work they did on that. My organization will continue to support all of y'all's efforts to have more and more of a state-controlled reef fish off our coast.

Definitely encourage the Snapper Check program, the compliance. We do understand that that's the weak link and a lot of the arguments is the compliance and the participation, or lack thereof, with our anglers. And so we're definitely open to helping spread that word or encourage participation with that process.

With the trout and flounder regulation changes that are being discussed, those are easily the two fish that I get the most phone calls at my office about is people concerned with those species, speckled trout and
flounder, but specifically flounder. I
do feel good knowing that we do have
guys working hard at the hatchery down
at Gulf Shores to produce flounder to
restock some, but there's definitely
something that's got to be taken with
that.

Look forward to seeing y'all down in
my neck of the woods in May down at
Orange Beach.

And I'll take this -- if any of
y'all have -- any of y'all or anybody in
the room, if there's a youth group --

MS. JONES: Time.

MR. ELLIS: -- a camp or any type of an
organization that has access to a pond
or a lake and needs fishing equipment,
rods and reels or some tackle -- it
doesn't have to be saltwater. That's
what we work with primarily. But if you
know of one that needs rods and reels
for the kids, get in touch with me.
We'd like to help with that.
CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, Blakeley.

Any questions for Mr. Ellis?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you very much.

Our last speaker is Mr. Lonnie Miller. My note says you wanted to be last.

MR. MILLER: Oh, I'm sorry. I won't tie you up very long.

I'm Lonnie Miller, the president of the Alabama Dog Hunters Association. I'm going to just kind of feed on what some of these other folks talked about.

The communication -- what I've talked about for -- this is my fourth year. Communication is what's going to help the dog problem. This year for some reason we don't have the communication that we've had in the past.

What I mean by that is that the -- I had to do a Freedom of Information Act this year to get the deer dog report
complaint -- the complaint report. In the past it was something I would just email the DCNR, which the Chief at the time -- two weeks later -- you know, every two weeks or so I would do that. This year I emailed two weeks into the season, and I was told, you know, by Chief Weathers basically it was a legal issue now and that -- basically because of a comment that was made publicly here and they can't do that, so I have to do a Freedom of Information Act to get any information.

So I did -- look, I did the Freedom -- the FOI. I did it. So I asked for the report. Then I was told we had to wait till the season was over, which I get that. But the only way that I know there's 16 complaints in Washington County or 17 in Mobile County is if I can get the complaint. If we could get it at three or four complaints on my side I could head it off. I know
where the problem's at. And so I got
the report two weeks after the season
was over.

So like today I talked to
Mr. Hartzog. He says there's complaints
in Coffee County. On that report
there's zero complaints in Coffee
County. In Baldwin County there's nine
complaints. One of those was hunting
out of season. In Walker County --
there was three complaints in Walker
County on the report.

And I don't doubt there's dog
complaints. There's always going to be
somebody breaking the law. We could buy
the most expensive GPS equipment in the
world. Sometimes it does not work.
Collars fail. The satellite don't get a
signal. That's not going to stop the
problem. And if you want a zero
tolerance, you're not getting it.

In the last year we had 25
complaints. This year there's -- I say
complaints. Either warnings or tickets, arrests they call it. This year there's somewhere around 118 based on the report that I got.

So all I'm saying is -- and I've talked with three or four of you guys, and I appreciate the ones that do talk to me and call me if there's an issue. Communication is going to stop the problem.

Two weeks ago I was at Teel Creek Hunting Club in Coffee County. That is a duck hunting issue, not a dog hunting issue. There's one pack of 14-inch Beagles that the guys were hunting -- one pack of Beagles in that small a club I don't think is an issue. I've been all over the state. And in the past what I do know is communication is going to fix the problem, not restrictions.

MS. JONES: Time.

MR. MILLER: So as far as any restrictions go, what I ask is let the dog hunters be a
part of the chain so we can fix it on
our end as well and be a part.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, Lonnie. Thank you
very much.

Any questions for Mr. Miller?

Jeff Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Is there any way that we could
get -- I've worked with Lonnie a bunch,
and the communication we've had and the
communication he has where I'm having
issues has been outstanding. And I was
hoping that fellow would be here because
I was going to tell him to talk to you.

Is there any way we can get him that
information any quicker?

CHIEF WEATHERS: It would be a question for
our legal section.

Here what's important to bring up is
that the dog deer hunting report, as
Lonnie calls it, we didn't do that.
Chief Dodd started that four years ago
for Lonnie. And we don't keep track of
complaints in general. We get complaints through the officers, through emails -- it might be at the post office -- on everything, fishing complaints. You name it. We don't take time -- we have very few officers. We try and tie up their time on paperwork as little as possible.

But we don't track complaints. We began this four years ago for Lonnie to provide that information, not to try and target dog hunting or anything like that. To provide this information.

As far as the Freedom of Information Act request, the open records request, that's the advice of our legal counsel, and that's really not a question that I can answer. But, understand, we do take very good records on what comes into us, and we give it as fast as we can so he doesn't have to do a FOI request every two weeks.

MR. MILLER: What I'm saying about the --
CHAIRMAN DOBBS: The Commissioner has a question.

MR. MILLER: I'm sorry.

COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: I was just going to say, again, Mr. Lonnie did file two open records requests. I think the second one that he filed -- I think we were able to turn that around in about two days and get that back to him. On the last one we replied. So it's not like this is dragging out for months and months. I think in two or three days we got him the information that he asked for.

Some of the stuff that he asked for, like the complaints, is not something that we have on a -- that we compile on a weekly basis or when the officers send -- some of it takes a little bit more time to get that information for you.

MR. MILLER: Yes, sir. But that's just --
that's the exact point. But the same information that you're saying you don't have is what we're regulating -- you guys are being told we got all these complaints, but they're not keeping up with them. And what I'm saying, as I said for four years, if you don't have a substantiated complaint -- did you catch the dog, who does it belong to -- it doesn't matter. Anybody could call or stop me at the store and complain, but is it a complaint --

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, Lonnie. And a lot of these complaints, as you know, come to these Board members.

MR. MILLER: Sure.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: So they vet those complaints before they bring them here as a fact.

MR. MILLER: Sure.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: So just to understand it.

Thank you very much.

MR. MILLER: Sure. I understand fully.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Chairman?
CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Yes, Jeff.

MR. MARTIN: I would just suggest to any of the Board members, especially the new guys -- I would get Lonnie's number because he has helped me a bunch. And if I have a complaint, I can call him, and 99 percent of the time he'll take care of it in a very professional manner.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: And I'm happy to share that with anyone. I have it. I'm happy to share it. Thank you.

MR. MILLER: Look, guys, about the dog encroachment, I strongly suggest we get a committee of dog owners if that's what you guys are going to do, but I can tell you that a person breaking the law -- you can make all the rules you want. It's not going to stop -- this gentleman on the end, he's right. If they want to take the collar off the dog, nobody knows who owns the dog. So you can wipe dog hunting out. We can shut it down.
And then you're going to have a big deal, and so --

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Thank you, Lonnie. We'll reserve it for another time.

MR. MILLER: I'm sorry. See you.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: We're past our three minutes. I've been very lenient today with everybody --

MR. MILLER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: -- because we had so few speakers, and it's taken a long time and I apologize.

(Brief interruption by the court reporter followed by a brief recess.)

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: We're back to order.

For edification moving forward, please refer all questions or comments to the Chair so that I can say the name of the commenter, et cetera, so Ms. Blackwell can get all of that for us. She has missed some names. So duly chastised and I apologize.
Our next agenda item is unfinished business. In my notes the only thing that I have is the motion that was made and passed at the previous meeting where a review provision was in that motion for the Piney Mountain and -- or Ivory Mountain and Piney Woods. I'm going to need an up-or-down motion on that and maybe to hear some discussion regarding that.

Is there any discussion?

MR. HARTZOG: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Yes, sir.

MR. HARTZOG: Gary was just saying and I agree with him -- would you read that motion for us, please.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: You know what, I don't have it in front of me. It's in the meeting minutes, but I will find it if you'll bear with me.

MR. HARTZOG: All right. Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: From Mr. Martin, this motion is for the Talladega National Forest to
eliminate dog deer hunting on the Piney Woods/Ivory Mountain area. I'll define those borders in a minute.

No dog deer hunting on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday of each week unless a holiday falls on those days.

Dogs must be boxed at or before 2 p.m. on Thursdays and Fridays.

Dog deer hunting allowed on weekends during legal shooting hours during the 2018-2019 deer season.

This motion has a sunshine review provision. A review and recommendation regarding the continuation of this change will be made by Law Enforcement at the first Conservation Advisory Board meeting of 2019.

And then it goes into defining the area. Would you like for me to do that?

MR. HARTZOG: No. That's fine. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Okay. So in accordance with that, if we could ask Law Enforcement, Chief Weathers, if you would give us a
review of what has happened in that area and your experiences.

CHIEF WEATHERS: I've spoken with the officers that work those two separate areas. There have been some public complaints from dog hunting in those areas, some things sent through Facebook that originated there that they were able to go back -- some pictures that were sent to us that they were able to go back to spots in the forest and identify that, yes, this was a hunt that was held there. Quieted it down quite a bit absolutely, undoubtedly. And in one respect, from what I understand from the local officers there, the folks that were hunting those areas moved to another area, and we got a fair number of complaints from that particular next area down the line.

So it really is a people problem. They just moved -- moved locations. Not as many complaints as in the past, but
there are still some complaints on those
two areas. But the people that were
generating the complaints have sort of
moved down the line a little bit.
That's the overall feeling in the
county.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: What about -- it's my
understanding that there were some dogs
shot or injured.

CHIEF WEATHERS: Yes. It was not on either of
the closed areas. But, yes, there was a
dog that was killed around the High
Falls area in Clay County opening day of
the season. A really bad incident.

A landowner there who we have had a
pretty good bit of history with -- we've
had lots of complaints from him. He's a
landowner who owns property bordering
the National Forest and borders -- the
Forestry Service borders his property.

Constant problems with dogs running
on his property. He's called us 30 or
40 times over the years. Our officers
respond. We've caught dogs, taken them off his property, the same thing he's done. A few years ago we actually arrested him. He put out relaxing snares to try and keep dogs off of his property, and we charged him, I think, with nine counts of having snares out.

Opening day of the season he was on a food plot and a dog showed up on his property, and long story short, he killed it. Drug it off the property onto the National Forest. Our officers and the sheriff's department got involved. The district attorney's office spoke with our officers. And I know that felony charges were looked into. I do not know that he has been charged at this point. Cruelty to animals -- they were pushing for felony cruelty to animals. He stated that he was in fear for his life, that sort of thing.

A bad situation all the way around.
Shouldn't have killed the dog, shouldn't have been placed in the situation where he had to, that sort of thing. But that has nothing to do with those two areas to clarify that.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: All right. What percentages of your complaints have come from those areas? Is it up or down?

CHIEF WEATHERS: From the two closed areas?

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Yes.

CHIEF WEATHERS: Down. It is down. The neighboring areas have gone up.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Yes, Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: I've spoken with Gene Miller. He is the fellow who is the private landowner that had the petition out that was all around those areas. He actually called Lonnie Miller.

Lonnie, I think you can help me verify this when Gene called you. Everybody around that surrounding area that Gene had sign is extremely happy.
I talked to Mr. Stevens who kind of heads up that dog hunting on the mountain. He's --

MR. MILLER: Mr. Sprayberry. Mr. Sprayberry.

MR. MARTIN: Yeah, Mr. Sprayberry, too. I don't know about on down the line. I'm sure that was -- I had actually said something to Mr. Stevens that those guys that are there would probably be spread out or moved somewhere --

CHIEF WEATHERS: That's pretty much what's happened. They're happy. The closure worked right there. We probably will hear from the folks, you know, where these guys -- it's a people problem is what it is.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: So I'm understanding these -- the previous folks that caused the issues have moved into Clay County?

CHIEF WEATHERS: Yes.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Into Clay County. Out of Talladega into Clay County?

CHIEF WEATHERS: I don't -- you know, we don't
know for sure. There's not documents to prove that. But, you know, that's kind of what we think went on.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Yes, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: Just asking. If you don't feel like you can answer off the cuff, that's fine. But if you were to have a regulation like the dog encroachment rule where it could handle -- you say it's a people problem. If there was a regulation that could address particular individuals that are causing the problem, would that take care of a lot of the other issues in the area or most of the issues?

CHIEF WEATHERS: It would take care of a majority, I think. And, you know, one of the -- one of the bad things that came out about the shooting of the man's dog down there -- one of the questions that the district attorney asked was what could he have done, was there something that -- a tool out there, a
law that he could have, you know, used as a victim, so to speak, and not shot the man's dog. And I think that was sort of a problem there. He himself had been arrested trying to keep dogs off his property, and it was a ten-year-long problem or so.

And the petition -- this man's name was on the petition. I think he was one of the people that was really kind of instrumental in spreading that petition around. So he really had tried to fix this problem in just about every way that he could and then did something really stupid, and on both counts it's a really bad thing.

Had an encroachment regulation been in place -- he was one of the guys who was catching dogs routinely. He was catching collared dogs and meeting people on the road every weekend. You know, it was one of those things. Could he -- could that have helped him in his
situation? Absolutely.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Perfect answer.

Okay. Thank you very much. Well, there is our review. So we'll move on to new business.

Are there any items in new business for us today? Any motions for new business?

MR. STIMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I have a motion.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Stimpson.

MR. STIMPSON: I would like to make a motion that this Board accept and endorse all the changes as noted in the Marine Resources memorandum of February 13th, 2019, with one exception: The proposed reef fish endorsement, Regulation 220-3-.87.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: There's a motion on the floor. I'll read it again for clarity: I make a motion that this Board accept and endorse all the changes as noted in the Marine Resources memorandum of February 13th, 2019, with one exception:
The proposed reef fish endorsement,
Regulation 220-3-.87.

And this is just like we would
normally do in approving seasons and bag
limits. They have some federal
regulations that they have to deal with.
So we're doing this a meeting early;
right?

Okay. Is there a second?

MR. RAYMOND JONES: Second.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: The motion is made. There is
a second.

Is there any discussion?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: No discussion. We'll call
for a vote. Let's do this just by
"ayes" and "nays."

All those in favor let me know by
saying "aye."

(All Board members present respond
"aye.")

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Any opposed?

(No response.)
CHAIRMAN DOBBS: The motion is carried.

Are there any additional motions or new business?

Yes, Mr. Cagle.

MR. CAGLE: Mr. Chairman, I move that we approve the CPI increase as it's presented by the Department as we do annually.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: A motion has been made to approve the CPI.

Are you ready for that, Assistant Director?

A motion has been made to approve the Consumer Price Index increase in license fees for this coming season.

The motion is made. Is there a second?

MR. MARTIN: Second.

MR. HARTZOG: Second.

(Brief interruption by the court reporter.)

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Is there any discussion?

(No response.)
CHAIRMAN DOBBS: There is no discussion.

Again, we'll vote on this.

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

(All Board members present respond
"aye.")

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Any opposed?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: The motion is carried.

Any other new business at this time?

MR. RAYMOND JONES: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Mr. Jones.

MR. RAYMOND JONES: I would like to ask the
   Department to do some more research on
   the importation of semen -- Cervidae
   semen and, you know, what potential
   effects it might have on the wildlife of
   this state.

DIRECTOR SYKES: You got it.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Okay. So noted. And we
   will -- it would be reasonable to expect
   something back before our meeting in
   May?
DIRECTOR SYKES: Yes.
CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Some indication?
DIRECTOR SYKES: I will put Professor Prion on it.
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR HARDERS: There's an International Prion Conference in Calgary coming up. Maybe I can --
(Simultaneous crosstalk.)
CHAIRMAN DOBBS: To the Calgary Stampede.
As an aside, would you like for the -- we'll wait until next meeting to review the proposals for Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries in their packet.
I have no announcements. Are there any announcements? Anything?
Mr. Hartzog.
MR. HARTZOG: There again, Mr. Chris, would you get -- you know, the legislature is fixing to go in session. I understand there's been four or five bills that have been prefiled. Would you just kind of make the Board as well as the public aware of what bills that affect
conservation have been prefilled and are before the legislature.

COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: You mean get those to you now or send you something or -- I mean, are you asking me to talk about it now or just to send some information out to the Board?

MR. HARTZOG: Just send some information out to the Board.

COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: I can get you about half of them off the top of my head, but without that, I'm -- to give you just a -- there were 170-something bills, I think, that --

MR. HARTZOG: No. Just the ones that affect conservation.

COMMISSIONER BLANKENSHIP: All right. I'll get those to you.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: Any other announcements or requests?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: The date and location of the next meeting will be May the 4th -- I'm
pretty sure that's right -- at the Gulf Shores -- in Gulf Shores at the new lodge. Make your reservations early.

MS. JONES: I'll send out room block information.

CHAIRMAN DOBBS: And Ms. Jones will send out -- Ms. B.F. Jones will send out room block information.

All right. Safe travels to everybody going home. Thanks for your participation. It was a good meeting.

Meeting adjourned.

(Meeting adjourned at approximately 12:09 p.m.)
REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

STATE OF ALABAMA:

MONTGOMERY COUNTY:

I, Tracye Sadler Blackwell, Certified Court Reporter and Commissioner for the State of Alabama at Large, do hereby certify that I reported the foregoing proceedings of the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Advisory Board Meeting on March 9, 2019.

The foregoing 192 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 25th day of April 2019.

/s/ TRACYE SADLER BLACKWELL

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