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**STATE OF ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF
CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
State Capitol Auditorium
Montgomery, Alabama
February 11, 2017**

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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 Capitol Auditorium,
Montgomery, Alabama, on Saturday, February 11,
2017, commencing at approximately 9:02 a.m.

* * * * *

1 BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

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- Mr. Warren Strickland, Chairman
- 3 Mr. N. Gunter Guy, Jr., Commissioner
- Dr. Gary Lemme
- 4 Mr. Jeff Martin
- Mr. Raymond Jones, Jr.
- 5 Mr. Grady Hartzog
- Mr. Joseph Dobbs, Jr.
- 6 Mr. T.J. Bunn, Jr.
- Mr. Patrick Cagle
- 7 Mr. Ben C. Stimpson, Jr.
- Mr. Gary Wolfe

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CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: The February 11, 2017,
 16 Conservation Advisory Board Meeting is
 17 now called to order.

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I hope every one of you had an
 enjoyable outdoor experience this past
 hunting season. The entire board would
 like to welcome all of you to our State
 Capitol in Montgomery, Alabama. At this
 point would everyone, please,

1 discontinue cell phone usage.

2 The first order of business is the
3 delivery of the invocation.

4 Mr. Jones.

5 MR. JONES: Please bow your heads with me.

6 Our Heavenly Father, thank you so
7 much for this beautiful day, this time
8 that we have to come together as members
9 and citizens of our great state of
10 Alabama. Help us in the decisions we
11 make. Help us as a board to listen to
12 the individuals in the audience and for
13 us to make wise decisions. Be with all
14 of those that have gathered here today
15 and be with them on their way home. In
16 Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

17 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Mr. Jones.

18 The next order of business is the
19 introduction of the ex-officio members
20 of the Conservation Advisory Board:

21 Commissioner Gunter Guy,
22 Commissioner of the Department of
23 Conservation and Natural Resources.

1 John McMillan, Commissioner of
2 Department of Agriculture and
3 Industries.

4 Dr. Gary Lemme, Director of Alabama
5 Cooperative Extension System. Thank
6 you.

7 Curtis Jones, Deputy Commissioner.

8 Gentlemen, we appreciate all of your
9 hard work. And, once again, the board
10 wants to recognize the service that you
11 have brought forth over the years.

12 Next we will have the introduction
13 of the board members. If you would
14 state your congressional district and
15 names. And we'll start from the far
16 right.

17 T.J.

18 MR. BUNN: Okay. I'm T.J. Bunn. I represent
19 Congressional District 7.

20 MR. WOLFE: Gary Wolfe, District 1.

21 MR. STIMPSON: Ben Stimpson, District 1.

22 MR. CAGLE: Patrick Cagle, District 2.

23 MR. JONES: Raymond Jones, District 5.

1 MR. MARTIN: Jeff Martin, District 3.

2 MR. HARTZOG: Grady Hartzog, District 2.

3 MR. DOBBS: Joey Dobbs, District 6.

4 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, gentlemen.

5 We certainly appreciate all of your hard
6 work and your contribution to preserving
7 the natural resources in the state of
8 Alabama.

9 May the minutes note that Mr. Austin
10 Ainsworth is absent today.

11 The next order of business is the
12 approval of the minutes, actually, from
13 the previous two meetings. That's March
14 20th, 2016 -- excuse me -- February
15 20th, 2016, and March 26th, 2016.

16 Are there any corrections or
17 addendums to those last two sets of
18 minutes? If not, may I have a motion
19 for approval.

20 MR. HARTZOG: So move.

21 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Grady.

22 MR. JONES: Second.

23 Any discussion?

1 (No response.)

2 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: All in favor?

3 (All board members present respond
4 "aye.")

5 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Opposed?

6 (No response.)

7 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: "Ayes" have it. Motion
8 carries.

9 The next agenda item is Commissioner
10 Gunter Guy's comments.

11 Commissioner.

12 COMMISSIONER GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

13 And welcome, everyone. We have a really
14 packed house tonight -- today, I should
15 say, and I'm going to try to keep my
16 comments short. But I do have just
17 about three things I would like to say
18 briefly, and then we're going to have a
19 couple of PowerPoints by Director Sykes
20 and Director Blankenship that I think
21 will be informative as we move forward
22 through the agenda.

23 The three things I would like to

1 do -- I hope I can keep it at three --
2 is you'll see some awards down here in
3 front. And Alabama Interactive is our
4 web license and Game Check service
5 provider. I know there was -- I think
6 there was going to be somebody here from
7 Alabama Interactive.

8 There he is. Robert, good to see
9 you.

10 I just put a couple of these down
11 front to note what a great job they do.
12 And there's going to be some more talk
13 about the Game Check, which we also do
14 for Snapper Check. And they help --
15 they help, you know, put those things
16 together for us and keep them running.

17 And I think if anybody really paid
18 attention and did their Game Check from
19 this year, you will see that that is one
20 of the easiest ones that there is in the
21 country. And, you know, we heard loud
22 and clear from everybody that, oh, you
23 know, this is -- there's a lot to do.

1 It takes about 20 seconds to do the Game
2 Check -- for all of those who did it and
3 I hope there was a lot that did it --
4 once you get your information
5 downloaded. I don't think you'll find
6 one better anywhere.

7 And I want to just -- I want to
8 thank Alabama Interactive. They work
9 very hard to get what you want and what
10 we want. So just think about the hard
11 work that goes into that, and I think
12 the results speak for themselves.

13 Next, it is just about impossible
14 for me to not mention this every time
15 because I think there are a lot of
16 people that just don't understand about
17 our department. And so we have four
18 divisions:

19 Parks Division. Mr. Greg Lein
20 oversees the Parks Division.

21 I want to thank everybody that
22 hopefully voted for Constitutional
23 Amendment Number 2. It passed by 80

1 percent. So I would think that a lot of
2 people in here were a part of making
3 that possible. And I want to thank you
4 on behalf of Greg and myself. He runs
5 an excellent Parks Division with what he
6 has. And, hopefully, in the future
7 we -- he has plans to make it even
8 better than before now that we have
9 secured that funding from now on. And I
10 want to thank Greg and his staff for
11 what he does for our department.

12 Also, Patti Powell is our Lands
13 Division director. She runs -- in
14 addition to running, I should say -- the
15 first-class Forever Wild program. Her
16 and her staff also oversee the \$1.3
17 billion that we have gotten in oil spill
18 money, which is a whole job into itself,
19 and manages all the state lands, oil and
20 gas and different kinds of things like
21 that. Overwhelming job. They do an
22 excellent job in doing that,
23 Mr. Chairman.

1 Chris Blankenship, Marine Resources
2 director, who will speak in a minute,
3 oversees all of our coastal fisheries.
4 He has worked -- if anybody cares
5 about -- and I think a lot do -- our
6 snapper fisheries -- has just been at
7 the leading edge of trying to get that
8 broken federal system fixed. And you
9 would just not -- you would not believe
10 what Chris has done as far as -- in that
11 way. He is a leader for the state of
12 Alabama, and the state of Alabama is a
13 leader in making that a better fishery
14 for the residents of the state of
15 Alabama.

16 And then, lastly, Chuck Sykes, who
17 also oversees all the Wildlife and
18 Freshwater Fisheries. His section
19 chiefs do -- and he do a wonderful job.

20 And I want to particularly commend
21 Chuck for -- many of y'all saw him this
22 year. I've never seen a director go out
23 and attend as many meetings as he did,

1 go on the road and talk individually to
2 the hunters in this state about what we
3 need from you and how this Game Check
4 was going to work. And I think y'all
5 have found out that he is a man who
6 speaks honestly, like the rest of our
7 division directors do, and tells you
8 like it is. And that's the way you
9 should want it.

10 We're as transparent an agency as I
11 think we've ever been. So when we tell
12 you we want to do something, we usually
13 have a reason that we back it up. And
14 if you don't believe it, just look at
15 the statistics.

16 So the thing that I want to add to
17 that is -- think of this: What I just
18 said about all of these division
19 directors and their staff, they create
20 an economy in Alabama -- I just got some
21 recent information.

22 So tourists and residents spend
23 approximately \$7.5 billion annually,

1 Mr. Chairman, related to outdoor
2 recreation in Alabama. That creates
3 \$494 million in tax revenues and
4 supports approximately \$86,000 -- excuse
5 me -- 86,000 jobs -- supports 86,000
6 jobs, provides \$2 billion in wages, and
7 has over \$3 billion in economic impact,
8 and no tax dollars do we use to do that.
9 It's based on what you do to support our
10 agency and this state. None of your tax
11 dollars go to what we do.

12 Now, that is something to be proud
13 of by the hunters, fishermen, and
14 outdoor recreation people in this state.
15 And for our agency who -- you know, in
16 tough times where people want government
17 to be efficient, we are not using any
18 tax dollars to do that.

19 So, Mr. Chairman, I just want to
20 thank those people I mentioned. I think
21 it's worthwhile noting that our division
22 directors do a phenomenal job and make
23 it certainly very easy for me and for

1 this board, I think, to do their
2 business. So I appreciate that.

3 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Commissioner --

4 COMMISSIONER GUY: And could I say -- and
5 then, lastly, I do want to say this: I
6 want to thank our board up here. They
7 have shown great leadership and, you
8 know, have been willing to do some
9 things. Change is always difficult.
10 And I want to thank our board for the
11 leadership they showed last year in the
12 Game Check. And I think the proof is in
13 the results that we have gotten, and
14 Chuck is going to talk more about that.
15 And I just want to thank our board for
16 that.

17 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

18 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Commissioner.

19 Those words are well received. You
20 know, we are so fortunate to have such
21 an active, productive wildlife and
22 biology staff and our board members. I
23 think this is my tenth year serving, and

1 without a doubt, I feel that we have the
2 most engaged, the most experienced board
3 members that I have seen since I've been
4 here during this tenure.

5 Chuck, you and the division chiefs
6 have done a wonderful job. The state of
7 Alabama is very fortunate to have you
8 guys in that position. Thank you.

9 COMMISSIONER GUY: So, Mr. Chairman, at this
10 time if we could recess -- well, we did
11 have some seats here, but they're gone.

12 So we just need the board members,
13 if we can --

14 (Multiple speakers.)

15 COMMISSIONER GUY: We've got so many people
16 today, and we're sorry for everybody
17 who's standing outside. We're going to
18 try to make these -- we're going to try
19 to make these PowerPoint presentations
20 as quick as possible, but I think we
21 found they're very informative. So
22 we're going to start off with
23 Mr. Blankenship and then be followed by

1 Mr. Sykes, and then we'll get to your
2 comments. Thank you.

3 MR. BLANKENSHIP: Again, I'm Chris
4 Blankenship. I'm the director of the
5 Marine Resources Division for the
6 Department of Conservation. I'm going
7 to give a summary of our Alabama Snapper
8 Check program -- this is the third year
9 of the program -- and then, also, a
10 quick overview of the recommended
11 regulation changes that we have.

12 This slide here is a little bit
13 busy. It has a lot of information that
14 we try and condense from our Snapper
15 Check program, but I highlighted in red
16 the areas that I really wanted you to
17 see. And these are the total landings
18 where we take the reported landings and
19 the discards. And this is the
20 correction factor that we have for the
21 amount of nonreporting that we had and
22 come up with the estimated pounds.

23 So one thing I do also want to point

1 out, this is the average weight for the
2 total season, 8.71 pounds. A little
3 over nine pounds was the average-size
4 red snapper that was caught during the
5 federal season. Back in the late 2000s,
6 when the fishery was in trouble, the
7 average-size red snapper was around
8 three pounds. So we've more than
9 tripled the average size of the fish as
10 the fishery has rebuilt, which is part
11 of the problem with the way it's managed
12 federally now, is the fish are larger
13 and so the quota is met sooner because
14 the fishery has recovered and the
15 management on the federal side has not
16 caught up with the increase in the
17 fishery that we have, especially off the
18 coast of Alabama.

19 I want you to see this number,
20 206,000. We did have a longer season in
21 state waters this year than we've had in
22 the past, and the state waters were
23 extended out to nine miles thanks to

1 some work from Senator Shelby and
2 something he put in the federal omnibus
3 spending bill. Having those extra state
4 waters -- those extra six miles of state
5 waters increased the catch from Alabama
6 state waters about -- about ten times.
7 That's -- that was about 20 or 25,000 in
8 previous years during the state season.

9 So our total for Alabama is a little
10 over 1.5 million pounds from the federal
11 and state seasons in 2016.

12 There are multiple methods where
13 people can report the red snapper catch.
14 They have an app. We have paper reports
15 at six of our select -- or seven of our
16 select boat ramps now on the coast.
17 They can do it online through the
18 Outdoor Alabama -- or through the
19 phone -- touch-tone phone.

20 As you can see, only eight percent
21 of the people used the phone. And we
22 had a very high rate of incorrect
23 reporting using the touch-tone phone,

1 but it -- so we have been successful at
2 getting the ones that do report to
3 either use the app or online. That's --
4 about 80 percent of the reports are
5 coming in electronically.

6 This is just a slide I put up a
7 couple of years ago, and we keep looking
8 at this. It just shows the number of
9 reports by county between the charter
10 boats and the private fishermen.

11 As you can see, Baldwin County and
12 Orange Beach have a -- it is the largest
13 port -- the highest number of charter
14 vessels in any one port in the Gulf is
15 in Orange Beach, Alabama. So that's a
16 big part of the fishery is in Baldwin
17 County. So we're using this information
18 to transition some of our staff from
19 Baldwin County to Mobile County over
20 time through attrition because we see
21 that we're needing more officers, more
22 personnel in Baldwin County as the
23 fishery continues to grow.

1 So this is a quick slide for the
2 comparison for the last three years. So
3 you can see we estimated one-and-a-half
4 million pounds of red snapper landed.
5 The federal government estimates that
6 almost 2.8 million pounds of red snapper
7 were landed in Alabama in 2016. And
8 that does not include the months of
9 November and December, which there will
10 be very, very few landings during that
11 month. But you can see it. It is a big
12 difference. And it follows the pattern.
13 Since we started Snapper Check in 2014,
14 there's the difference and the
15 difference last year and 2015.

16 So the federal system overestimated
17 81 percent in 2014, 68 percent in 2015,
18 and then 79 percent in 2016. It's very
19 consistent how much they have
20 overestimated the catch for Alabama,
21 which when you're managing fisheries
22 against a quota means that the fishery
23 closes sooner because -- than it would

1 have if the landings information was
2 correct.

3 I didn't put up all the boring
4 confidence intervals and statistical
5 information, but this -- we are much
6 more confident in our 1.5 million pounds
7 when you look at it statistically than
8 their 2.7 million pounds. You know, we
9 feel like ours is accurate, is more
10 correct.

11 Just moving forward, we plan to
12 continue the same program in 2017,
13 continue the Snapper Check. One thing
14 that we have added in 2016 and it has
15 expanded for 2017 is there was a pilot
16 program that National Fish and Wildlife
17 Foundation, CLS America, and a couple of
18 other groups were looking to implement
19 where they would do electronic reporting
20 for charter boats. They would have like
21 an electronic logbook. So Alabama
22 partnered with those groups since we had
23 the largest charter fleet in any one

1 place, like I said, in Orange Beach.
2 And so we have almost a hundred percent
3 of our vessels that have been outfitted
4 with these -- for free with these VMS
5 systems and electronic reporting system.
6 They're about \$3100 apiece. And so
7 through this pilot program they install
8 these on the charter vessels.

9 And so now -- when I showed you that
10 number of the ones that were reporting
11 by app, some -- a lot of those came from
12 this charter program that feeds directly
13 into our system. So as a help to the
14 fishermen, we're getting accurate
15 information, and we've shown that that
16 type of system will work. So, again,
17 we're, you know, kind of cutting edge
18 here in Alabama to show the rest of the
19 Gulf what will work and give us better
20 reporting numbers.

21 Our compliance was not nearly as
22 high as I would like for it to be. In
23 2016, from the private vessels we

1 estimate about 25 percent of the people
2 reported accurately and on time, within
3 the time frame when they were supposed
4 to, but about 70 percent of the charter
5 vessels. So that is a big part of our
6 push for 2017 will be to increase that
7 compliance and make this program even
8 better.

9 The whole purpose for doing this
10 Alabama Snapper Check program was to
11 show that the federal government is
12 overestimating the landings for Alabama.
13 We needed three years' worth of data to
14 really have that program certified as
15 the appropriate method for landings
16 calculations for our state. We finished
17 our third year in 2016. We've been
18 diligently working with National Marine
19 Fisheries Service for 2017 to have them
20 use our program as what they will use to
21 count the landings for Alabama and what
22 they will use preseason to estimate what
23 the landings will be for Alabama to set

1 the season length.

2 So this should be granted
3 imminently. We're very -- I had hoped
4 we would have it before we came to this
5 meeting today and I could tell you it
6 was a success. But with the transition
7 in the new administration, things have
8 slowed down, but I think within the next
9 week or two we will have that word and
10 they'll -- so when they estimate the
11 season length for 2017, they'll use our
12 numbers. I won't say that the season
13 will be longer than nine days in 2017,
14 but it will be longer than it would have
15 been if they didn't use our numbers.

16 We expect the nine-mile jurisdiction
17 to remain for 2017. That is in --
18 currently we're in a continuing
19 resolution for the 2016 budget where
20 that -- that granted us the nine miles
21 was included. If they pass a 2017
22 budget -- that is in the draft 2017
23 budget. So we expect to keep our nine

1 miles.

2 Just real quickly -- I won't go into
3 all the details. But Senator Shelby
4 also included \$10 million in the budget
5 last year to change the way the federal
6 government does the stock assessment for
7 red snapper to put together a new
8 program to estimate the population of
9 red snapper in the Gulf different from
10 what they've been doing in the past.
11 They put out an RFP, and they had these
12 universities and consortia to provide a
13 method of how to do this -- do this work
14 Gulfwide.

15 I am happy to report that of the
16 five valid proposals that were put
17 forth, three of them mirrored exactly
18 what we're doing in Alabama to estimate
19 the red snapper population. So I think
20 that was -- that says a lot about the
21 work that we're doing cooperatively in
22 the division and with the University of
23 South Alabama and Auburn University to

1 estimate the populations of the red
2 snapper in the reef zones off of
3 Alabama.

4 So they're trying to take the
5 methods and the way that we're doing
6 things here and extrapolate that out
7 Gulfwide to get a Gulfwide estimate. So
8 I was very -- very happy to see that
9 when you get all the smartest minds in
10 the United States together to try and
11 figure out how to count red snapper,
12 they want to do it the way we do it here
13 in Alabama. We must not be that
14 backwards here.

15 Last year the red snapper season was
16 open from Memorial Day weekend through
17 the month of July. That seemed to be
18 very successful. People were happy with
19 that. They could fish the Memorial Day
20 weekend, all through the summer in June
21 and July when the kids are out of
22 school. We're still discussing what the
23 season should be for 2017, but I did

1 receive a lot of positive feedback from
2 fishermen last year.

3 And one thing that we're proposing
4 this year is to eliminate the phone
5 method for reporting in 2017. You saw
6 that only eight percent of the people
7 used the phone app to report -- or used
8 the touch-tone telephone method to
9 report, and our error -- our error rate
10 with those was extremely high. And so
11 we think that we can move forward with
12 just the app and having the paper forms
13 available at those seven select boat
14 ramps and still be able to get all the
15 information we need.

16 That's all about the Snapper Check
17 program. We just have a few slides with
18 a few regulations that we are proposing.

19 One would be to establish a bait
20 area near Fort Morgan. The legislature
21 changed the way we manage shrimp in
22 2016. We closed all of Mobile Bay for
23 the month of May, and then we reopened

1 Mobile Bay on June 1st. So for the
2 month of May there is no place for
3 people -- for smaller boats or for the
4 live-bait catchers to catch shrimp for
5 people that fish. So we propose to just
6 create this one bait area at Fort
7 Morgan.

8 We have other bait areas around
9 Mobile Bay, but there was nothing in the
10 Fort Morgan peninsula for people to be
11 able to catch bait. So this would only
12 be open during that one month when those
13 waters open for commercial shrimping.
14 And recreational shrimping, this would
15 just be open like it -- like everything
16 else, just -- this is something we're
17 trying to do to help the fishermen and
18 help the community.

19 Commercial crab regulations: It's
20 time to -- our crab landings were
21 down -- have been down substantially.
22 The average crab landings in the late
23 2000s was about 2.3 million pounds a

1 year. The average for the last five
2 years has been about 1.4 million pounds.
3 This year was a better year than we've
4 had in the past, but our crab fishery is
5 not where it needs to be.

6 So we are proposing making a few
7 changes to the crab reg as a
8 precautionary measure to increase the
9 production of blue crabs. One would be
10 to return egg-bearing crabs to the
11 water, you know, where they have -- what
12 they call sponge crabs. If you've ever
13 caught a crab and it's got what looks
14 like a sponge on its belly, those are --
15 those are eggs. And so we would require
16 the commercial crabbers to throw those
17 back.

18 And then most of the -- all of the
19 other states require escape rings, which
20 are small rings that are put in the trap
21 so that undersized crabs can get back
22 out of the crab traps and not -- not be
23 captured. So we feel like by throwing

1 back the egg-bearing crabs and releasing
2 the juvenile crabs, that this will
3 increase crab production in the future.
4 So we're interested in trying that.

5 Louisiana is having the same
6 problems there, but they -- one thing
7 that they did in Louisiana was implement
8 a 30-day closure where nobody can crab
9 in the state of Louisiana from February
10 20th through March 20th. So we want to
11 try and do some of these things
12 preemptively before we get to that
13 situation in Alabama where we have to
14 have time where people just can't -- the
15 commercial fishermen just can't work.

16 And then there are some crab traps
17 that get lost. We have a derelict crab
18 trap program where we pick up traps that
19 are -- that people -- the floats get cut
20 off or they get lost. So in order for
21 those ghost-fishing crab traps to no
22 longer kill crabs if they're lost, we
23 are going to require a biodegradable

1 panel that would be on the side of the
2 trap that if the trap gets lost, after
3 30 days or 45 days that panel falls off
4 and any crabs that are in -- that get in
5 the trap can get back out.

6 And then we're proposing opening an
7 area in northern Mobile Bay that had
8 been closed to crabbing. It was a
9 channel. The channel is being taken out
10 by the Lake Forest Yacht Club. And so
11 we wouldn't allow them to crab in the
12 channel because it was a marked channel,
13 but now that that channel is being taken
14 out, this would open up about another
15 half a square mile of waters for
16 crabbing.

17 One of the fastest-growing segments
18 of the seafood industry is off-bottom
19 oyster aquaculture. I don't know if any
20 of you have had those at restaurants or
21 seen those or seen some articles about
22 that, but it's an extremely productive
23 industry that's taken off in south

1 Mobile County.

2 One of the ways that they -- we have
3 always required oysters to be harvested
4 and placed in sacks -- burlap sacks.
5 That is not very efficient for the
6 oyster aquaculture industry. They would
7 like to have other types of containers,
8 plastic containers, things that they can
9 put the oysters in and stack differently
10 and use for shipment.

11 So in trying to work with that
12 industry as it grows, we're trying to
13 modify our regulations to make it --
14 make those guys where they can be
15 efficient and still meet our
16 requirements for having certain size
17 containers or sacks of oysters and to be
18 able to tag those so we know where they
19 came from in case people -- so in case
20 people get sick eating an oyster or
21 something, we'll be able to track those
22 back.

23 So this is -- to make this one

1 change to add containers, we have to
2 change about five or six regulations.
3 But that's all the change is, is just to
4 make -- to work -- we're working with
5 the industry to help this industry grow,
6 to make them more efficient and put
7 people to work in Alabama. We don't
8 want to be an impediment to people
9 working if it's -- if we could do
10 something that would help them.

11 Just a couple of other quick things.
12 The king mackerel recreational limit is
13 increasing to three per person from two.
14 That's a success story. Our king
15 mackerel fishery is rebuilt, and it's
16 just increasing the recreational limit.

17 And then there was a loophole in the
18 regulations. If people went out in
19 federal waters and caught certain
20 species that didn't have a federal size
21 limit or federal creel limit, they could
22 bring those back into Alabama in any
23 size or any number that they wanted if

1 they came from federal waters. So we
2 would like to close that loophole and
3 just say if they're fishing in federal
4 waters and they left from Alabama that
5 they can only bring back fish to Alabama
6 that meets our size and creel limits. A
7 very -- a minor change and it really
8 just affects those three species right
9 now: tripletail, sheepshead, and
10 pompano.

11 And then we did want to clarify who
12 can sell live bait. That's just a --
13 just another clarification in the
14 regulation.

15 Any questions?

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Is that the egg sac?

17 COMMISSIONER GUY: Can we just save those,
18 Chris, until after we get --

19 MR. BLANKENSHIP: Okay.

20 No. That's actually a male crab. I
21 didn't have a good female crab picture
22 with an egg -- an egg sac. That would
23 have been -- that would have been much

1 nicer.

2 And I would be remiss if I didn't
3 stand up here and tell you that I think
4 it would be a good idea if you eat
5 seafood. Get this many group of people
6 in a room and I ought to be able to tell
7 you that seafood is good for you and
8 healthy. And our commercial fishermen
9 work really hard to provide this, and
10 they would appreciate it if you'd eat a
11 little bit more of it. You can go to
12 "EatAlabamaSeafood.com" and find recipes
13 or where you can find it. Thank you.

14 MR. SYKES: If y'all don't mind, I'm going to
15 do it from up here. Everybody doesn't
16 love me like they do Chris. I want a
17 podium in between me and the crowd
18 before the bullets start flying.

19 Last year when I came to the board,
20 I showed you this map where we were one
21 of three states that did not have some
22 type of mandatory reporting system. And
23 we went over the voluntary harvest

1 reporting. We had less than 20,000 deer
2 reported during the first year, 16,000
3 the second year, 15,000 the third year.

4 Doesn't that map look better?

5 We are one of two now. And just a
6 little FYI. Mississippi is right behind
7 us. Florida is going to be the last man
8 standing when it comes to a mandatory
9 reporting system.

10 As of February the 7th, we have had
11 78,157 deer reported in Game Check.
12 That's a little bit more than the 15,000
13 that we had last year. Voluntary didn't
14 work. I think we all knew that.

15 It's a little over 81,000 right now.
16 There will probably be more people
17 hunting today and tomorrow that hunted
18 the past two days. So we may be up to
19 about 85,000 by that time. So I'm --
20 look, I was cautiously optimistic that
21 people were going to buy into it. It's
22 still not a hundred percent, but it's a
23 lot better than where we were.

1 Out of that 78,000 deer -- I'm going
2 to pose it to the board. I've got one
3 question for y'all: What's the
4 buck-to-doe ratio on that? Is it one to
5 one bucks to does? Two to one? Three
6 to one?

7 Four to one I heard.

8 Guess what, more bucks are reported
9 than does so far. Is that the way it
10 is, or are we killing more bucks than
11 does? Are people not reporting does and
12 reporting bucks?

13 I don't know. Time will tell. But
14 that was something that nobody that I've
15 asked that question has been able to get
16 it. Everybody assumes it's two to one
17 or three to one bucks to does.
18 And we had nine turkeys reported. I
19 don't know why.

20 Just a little tidbit of info for
21 you. Our staff has conducted some
22 informal surveys. We were betting
23 before all of this started that we would

1 have 20 to 25 percent compliance. It's
2 looking like it's better than that.
3 It's about 35. After the end of turkey
4 season, we're going to do some
5 scientific studies on it, but right now
6 the staff members that have been
7 conducting this, I'll bet that their
8 data is going to show the same thing
9 that a scientific data report is going
10 to show.

11 So we're betting on 35 percent right
12 now. I think Georgia had about 50
13 percent this year on theirs. 35 percent
14 for Alabama for the first year, I think,
15 is a monumental success. So that would
16 be -- estimated bucks would be a little
17 over 22,000 (sic), estimated does a
18 little over a hundred. So we're rocking
19 on about two-and-a-quarter. That's not
20 too bad for our first year.

21 Unlike Chris, who had 80 percent
22 reporting over online and app, we only
23 had 46 percent. And I thought we beat

1 that horse pretty good in all the
2 seminars that we did and magazine
3 articles and newspaper articles. But
4 we've still got 30 percent reporting
5 their harvest through telephone.

6 Chris, please keep me updated on
7 knocking that out in 2017. I would love
8 to be right there behind you.

9 24 percent chose to report their
10 harvest through the website. So we've
11 basically got 70 percent that's doing it
12 online. And, again, just like with
13 Chris, the data that's coming in on the
14 phone is substandard from what we get
15 online and through the app.

16 And I do want to thank Robert and
17 everybody with AI for doing the app.
18 That was -- that was a huge success.

19 The mail survey that we've been
20 using for the past 50 years has
21 estimated approximately 295,000 deer
22 were killed last year. As you know,
23 voluntary Game Check said we killed

1 about 15,000. So we're going to fall
2 somewhere in between the way it's
3 looking right now.

4 Here are some really interesting
5 facts as we've started to tease out some
6 of this data.

7 Dallas County passed Jackson County
8 last week for the first time in the four
9 years that we did three-year voluntary
10 and one-year mandatory. Jackson County
11 was always number one. And as you see,
12 Jackson County is sort of -- Dallas
13 County is one now, but if you look on
14 the mail survey results, it's number
15 two. It's still good. But if you look
16 at the difference in the blue line and
17 the red line on bucks to does, the mail
18 survey is estimating about three to one
19 bucks to does. Same thing with Macon
20 County.

21 Macon County is number one on the
22 mail survey. You look at it over here
23 on Game Check numbers. It's middle of

1 the road. Jackson County, which has
2 been number one up until last week for
3 reporting, if you look at the mail
4 survey, it is way toward the middle of
5 the pack.

6 So although overall numbers may be
7 close right now, it's the little things,
8 the buck-to-doe ratios, which counties
9 are doing what, which is what we've been
10 talking about the whole time. We need
11 much more specific information where our
12 guys in the field can make
13 recommendations and we can do the best
14 job that we possibly can.

15 All of this is preliminary. We're
16 not going to do anything one year with a
17 knee-jerk reaction, but this is the kind
18 of data that we're going to be looking
19 at. And, y'all, this is stuff that you
20 can go online. Y'all can look at it
21 just like we can. Go to the
22 "OutdoorAlabama" website. You can see
23 all of this data right there.

1 Some changes -- and the title is
2 major changes, but really, compared to
3 the past couple of years, these are
4 minor changes for 2017-18.

5 Turkey season boundaries for a part
6 of Geneva County that was previously
7 closed are going to be opened up for a
8 limited season.

9 The feral swine season that we did
10 last year -- Joey and Jessica and
11 members of the hog dog hunters
12 association have been asking for years
13 to be able to hunt at night with their
14 dogs without having a permit during
15 those summer months when it's hot. We
16 allowed that last year, but there was a
17 lot of confusion over whether you could
18 use guns or not.

19 There is no confusion now. If you
20 want to use a gun, get a permit, just
21 like always, and you can use a gun. I
22 don't think that's going to be a problem
23 with anybody, but we wanted to spell it

1 out where there weren't any confusion
2 this year.

3 U.S. Forest Service may have some
4 restrictions a little bit further than
5 what we have as far as small game. Some
6 of the areas are looking at closing fox
7 squirrel season or limiting the fox
8 squirrel harvest. But it's their
9 property. They can make restrictions
10 more than we do. So we're just giving
11 a heads-up that that may happen.

12 Pintail limit was reduced from two
13 to one. That's not going to affect us
14 in Choctaw County too much.

15 A segment was added to the regular
16 goose season from October 7th to the
17 23rd in order to fully utilize the new
18 federal framework.

19 And despite what's going around, the
20 rumors on social media and everywhere
21 else, no changes have been made for Swan
22 Creek WMA at the present time. A survey
23 by our biologists on the area asked

1 hunters some options of what they would
2 like. As with most things, a little
3 information can get twisted and turned.
4 The governor has been getting calls.
5 We've been getting calls that five
6 people were going to vote to close Swan
7 Creek. It's not going to happen. Y'all
8 can settle down. Nothing is changing on
9 Swan Creek right now.

10 The deer zone map, it worked last
11 year. No changes other than calendar
12 days.

13 At the request of the board, they
14 have asked us to revise our depredation
15 permits for deer, and we've done that.
16 The permits will no longer be handled by
17 our law enforcement section. They will
18 be handled by our wildlife section,
19 namely our technical assistance
20 biologists. They will be issued
21 separately from hog and coyote
22 depredation permits.

23 There will be property inspections

1 to verify that there is damage. Maps of
2 these areas will be given to the local
3 CEOs where everybody knows you have a
4 permit. The number of deer taken, the
5 day and disposition of the carcass will
6 be recorded on a data sheet. And in
7 order to renew your permit, you're going
8 to have to fill out these data sheets.

9 If hunters need to report their deer
10 harvest, deer depredation permits are
11 going to need to report their deer
12 harvest. A dead deer is a dead deer
13 whether it's killed in the summer on a
14 soybean field or on a food plot in
15 January. We need to know those numbers
16 where we can do our job. No permits
17 will be issued during the regularly
18 scheduled deer season.

19 Some revised regulations: In order
20 to close a loophole in 220-2-.142, the
21 turtle dealer or turtle farmer
22 regulation, verbiage was added to
23 prohibit propagation of nonindigenous

1 turtles.

2 Standards of care for wildlife held
3 for public exhibit needs to be amended
4 to require them to also obtain a USDA
5 permit in order to have a permit from
6 us.

7 Organized field trial regulation
8 limited to three free field trials per
9 year per organization with an
10 administrative fee of \$50 per permit.

11 Nongame species reg was amended to
12 require a permit before you can sell or
13 offer to sell anything with a
14 diamondback rattlesnack. In y'all's
15 packet there's a little list of why, and
16 basically U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
17 is looking at the diamondback
18 rattlesnake. It is a species of concern
19 here. We want to get ahead of it.

20 For areas like the Opp Rattlesnake
21 Rodeo, they can still get a permit from
22 the Commissioner to obtain snakes for
23 that. We're not eliminating it. All

1 we're doing is trying to get ahead of
2 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service listing
3 it where it's going to be a problem for
4 us as well as landowners.

5 And then the dog deer hunting reg,
6 y'all tried it last year. I'm sure
7 y'all are going to hear a lot of comment
8 on this coming up in the public section.

9 Look, we worked extremely well with
10 the Alabama Dog Hunters Association this
11 year, made monumental strides in
12 reducing landowner conflicts with dog
13 hunters. I know Lonnie does not
14 represent everybody. That's a shame
15 because we're working well.

16 Talladega went down to very, very,
17 very few complaints this year. Jeff had
18 to check and make sure his phone was
19 still working.

20 We worked with Lonnie and that group
21 to do the first ever dog hunt on the new
22 Geneva WMA. It went off without a
23 hitch. There was 250, 275 people there.

1 Used whistle-broke dogs. They stayed on
2 the property. Everybody had a good
3 time.

4 Y'all, it can be done. But I think
5 that reg with our staff, that is the
6 answer to the dog-hunting issue. Keep
7 your dog on your property and have fun.
8 When it crosses the line and impacts my
9 ability to enjoy my property, that's
10 where it's a problem.

11 The permit system. Look at Chilton
12 County. A couple of people lost the
13 right for that whole county. With this
14 regulation, it places the burden on the
15 individual, not the club and not the
16 county. It promotes those of you that
17 are doing it right and protects it. I
18 don't know any other way to explain it
19 better than that. The regulation puts
20 the burden on the individual with the
21 dog, not the club and not the county.

22 Last year the board changed some
23 wording in the chronic wasting -- in the

1 Regulation 220-2a-.25 to prohibit
2 bringing in certain parts of deer
3 carcasses that came in from out of state
4 that had CWD. 36 other states have this
5 similar reg. It basically says you
6 can't bring any spinal column, brain
7 tissue -- anything that can carry that
8 disease. Deboned meat, hides, and
9 cleaned skull plate can come back.

10 Y'all, we're trying to do everything
11 we can to keep this disease out of
12 Alabama. This was just another step.

13 Our department is testing
14 approximately 500 hunter-harvested,
15 roadkill, herd health collection, deer
16 depredation permit deer every year. The
17 game breeders are testing approximately
18 500 deer every year. We're all working
19 together to try to make sure this
20 disease does not come to Alabama. So it
21 is -- it's imperative that the hunters
22 do their part as well and not go out of
23 state, shoot a deer, and bring the whole

1 thing back.

2 Those are the states that are
3 impacted with CWD. That map is on the
4 "OutdoorAlabama" website. You can look
5 at it. If you hunt in one of those
6 states in that light color, please bone
7 your deer out, cape it out, go hunt and
8 have a good time, but then when you come
9 back home, bring that deboned meat.

10 I was asked by several of our board
11 members to give them what had been done
12 with our law enforcement section this
13 year. And I just picked a handful.

14 Y'all can remember last year I had a
15 slide that showed that 3.7 percent of
16 Alabama residents bought a hunting
17 license last year. I'm happy to report
18 we're up, 3.8. It's up from 178,000 to
19 182,000. So we're making progress.
20 But, y'all, that's still not enough.

21 I had Acting Chief Lewis pull some
22 numbers for me. Last year during the
23 whole season we had written 375

1 citations for hunting without a license.
2 If people don't buy a license, we don't
3 have money to hire law enforcement
4 officers. If we don't have law
5 enforcement officers, people don't buy a
6 license for fear of not getting checked.
7 It's a vicious cycle.

8 We had saved money. We put ten more
9 officers in the field this year. As of
10 last week, we have contacted 475 people
11 that were hunting without a license. So
12 just by the addition of ten officers, in
13 half the time more than a hundred people
14 were ticketed for not hunting with a
15 license.

16 Y'all, they're stealing from you,
17 not from me. That's the biggest issue
18 we have in this state is people hunting
19 without buying a license, and the only
20 way we can stop that is sell more
21 licenses where we can hire more
22 officers. It's a vicious cycle.

23 Y'all, please, tell your friends,

1 tell your family, purchase a hunting
2 license. As the Commissioner said
3 earlier, we receive no general fund
4 money. The only way we can provide
5 services to you is by people buying
6 hunting licenses.

7 All right. I'll get off my soapbox
8 on that.

9 We had two arrests and multiple
10 warnings for bringing dead deer into the
11 state from CWD-positive states. The
12 regulation worked. We had people that
13 brought deer in from Illinois and are
14 still working on several others right
15 now.

16 We had 16 arrests for illegal sale,
17 transportation, release, or possession
18 of live feral swine. That was an
19 18-month case that covered eight or nine
20 counties in three states. Y'all, we've
21 got enough hogs. We don't need to catch
22 them and take them somewhere else and
23 turn them loose.

1 Two arrests were made for illegal
2 sale of wildlife. I'm sure most of
3 y'all in this room have seen pictures of
4 that piebald deer that was taken in
5 Washington County. Tremendous trophy.
6 It's now in our possession because it
7 was illegally sold.

8 32 arrests, more than 40 warnings
9 for failure to maintain accurate
10 inventory, report transportation of
11 white-tailed deer, and operating without
12 the proper game breeder license. One
13 arrest for illegal transportation of
14 live white-tailed deer into the state of
15 Alabama.

16 Y'all, we -- we don't want CWD here.
17 As hunters and everybody else, we have
18 got to come together and stop bringing
19 things into the state that could cause
20 us a problem. That carcass importation
21 reg is important. If y'all see anything
22 that looks suspicious, a dead deer or
23 live deer, please let your local officer

1 know so we can check.

2 And that's it. And I'll entertain
3 questions from the board.

4 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Are there any questions
5 from the board members that you would
6 like to direct to Chris or Chuck in
7 regards to --

8 (Brief interruption by the court
9 reporter.)

10 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Attention. We're back
11 in session here.

12 Dr. Lemme, if you'd like to address
13 Chris or Chuck in regards to questions.

14 DR. LEMME: Chris, I had a quick question on
15 the biodegradable panels on the crab
16 traps. How often do they have to be
17 replaced on an active trap if it's not
18 lost?

19 MR. BLANKENSHIP: I think they -- it depends
20 on the trap and how -- where they use
21 them and how they powerwash their traps.
22 But I think that most of them would have
23 to be replaced probably annually to put

1 those -- to restring those or do some
2 maintenance on those traps, which they
3 do that anyway. They usually have to do
4 a lot of maintenance on their traps
5 throughout the year. And it is one more
6 thing that they'll have to do.

7 MR. HARTZOG: Chris, on the nine-mile limit --
8 of course, it's -- Shelby attached it to
9 the budget bill. Hasn't some states
10 already gotten permanent nine-mile, and
11 what's our chances of getting a
12 permanent nine-mile?

13 MR. BLANKENSHIP: The states of Florida and
14 Texas have nine miles, and that was
15 done, really, when they came back into
16 the Union after the Civil War. Alabama,
17 Mississippi, and Louisiana have three
18 miles. And so we're working with
19 Senator Shelby to have something that's
20 put in there more permanently than just
21 year to year in the budget. And so if
22 the '17 budget passes, we think that
23 we'll be in good shape to have that nine

1 miles from then on.

2 And then we're also -- you know, a
3 new congress started in January. So any
4 bill -- we had several bills that were
5 making their way through congress that
6 expired in December. So now we're
7 having those reintroduced. Senator
8 Shelby and then Congressman Byrne from
9 Alabama have bills that would make that
10 nine miles permanent, and we're trying
11 to work those through the -- through
12 congress.

13 MR. DOBBS: Mr. Chairman?

14 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Yes.

15 MR. DOBBS: Question for -- for the crab
16 traps, you spoke about everything being
17 commercial. Will those rules and regs
18 apply to recreational crab traps and
19 crab trappers?

20 MR. BLANKENSHIP: Yes. Yes. I have Major
21 Scott Bannon and our Chief Biologist
22 Kevin Anson here as well.

23 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Are there any further

1 questions from the board?

2 (No response.)

3 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: At this time we would
4 like to acknowledge the presence of the
5 press. We certainly appreciate you-all
6 being here today.

7 The next order of business is the
8 public hearing.

9 COMMISSIONER GUY: I'm sorry. I don't know if
10 they knew that Chuck -- y'all can ask
11 questions of Chuck, too.

12 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: I'm sorry.

13 COMMISSIONER GUY: That's all right.

14 MR. JONES: Patrick had a question.

15 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: You have the floor.

16 MR. CAGLE: Sorry. This question is for
17 Chris.

18 I know that your department has been
19 making major investments and putting a
20 lot of effort into rebuilding reefs and
21 creating new ones. Can you give us a
22 quick overview of some of y'all's more
23 recent efforts and what's -- what you

1 have planned in the future?

2 MR. BLANKENSHIP: Sure. We received about
3 12-and-a-half-million dollars from the
4 National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
5 for artificial reef creation on a
6 three-year program. We just refurbished
7 about \$2.1 million worth of our inshore
8 reefs that have been built over the last
9 20, 25 years. We put new material on
10 those reefs. We just built a new
11 nine-acre reef inshore off of Point
12 Clear just out from the Grand Hotel.

13 Just this week we partnered with CCA
14 on a memorial reef for Bernie Heggeman.
15 He was a fishermen that died a couple of
16 years ago, drowned. And we had a -- CCA
17 and the Mobile Big Game Fishing Club and
18 others wanted to do a reef in his
19 memorial. So they raised \$137,000 and
20 provided that to us, and we used some
21 matching funds. And we just built a
22 reef this week just south of Bayou La
23 Batre on a site where they used to have

1 a gas rig that was one of his favorite
2 places to fish. And then we'll be
3 starting next week on a new reef in
4 Pelican Bay just south of Dauphin
5 Island.

6 So those are our inshore sites. We
7 plan to do about another couple of
8 million dollars' worth of refurbishment
9 on those -- on new inshore reefs next
10 year.

11 We're building reefs offshore.
12 We're building some 25-foot-tall pyramid
13 reefs. We just sank -- we did a great
14 partnership with Alabama Power Company
15 and Cooper Marine and sank a 180-foot
16 barge with two huge boilers from Alabama
17 Power Company earlier this fall. That
18 was a great partnership that didn't cost
19 the state any money. It was all donated
20 material from those two companies. We
21 were excited to work with them on that.

22 We're opening bids in the next
23 couple of weeks to sink two ships.

1 We're working to sink two large --
2 really large vessels offshore. And
3 those are out for bid now. We'll see
4 what kind of proposals we get from
5 different companies.

6 So we -- we have a lot of artificial
7 reef work going on offshore and inshore.
8 And we're trying to get a new -- new
9 reef zones permitted between six and
10 nine miles offshore. And as soon as we
11 get those permitted, we have the money
12 set aside to build 600 artificial reefs
13 within that six- to nine-mile range.

14 We're working with the Corps of
15 Engineers. They're holding us up on
16 getting our permits. As soon as we get
17 that permit, we're ready to go. We have
18 the money set aside. We have the bid
19 documents ready to put out. All we need
20 is just a permit from the Corps, and
21 we'll be ready to build 600 more reefs
22 in that six- to nine-mile reef zone.

23 MR. CAGLE: Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: You have the floor,
2 Mr. Jones.

3 MR. JONES: I'm going to ask Chuck so he
4 doesn't feel -- I mean, we've got to
5 have equal time here.

6 Chuck, seriously, how many meetings
7 did you attend this year on behalf of
8 the Game Check system and in how many
9 counties? Do you know that information?

10 MR. SYKES: Our staff conducted approximately
11 50 in 37 or 38 counties, and I did 44 of
12 them.

13 MR. JONES: Thank you very much. We really
14 appreciate that.

15 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: And, Chuck, one other
16 question.

17 There was about 33-percent
18 participation in Game Check?

19 MR. SYKES: Let's go 35. We'll be optimistic.

20 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: So what can we do to
21 increase participation in Game Check?
22 That's such valuable information that
23 we're getting from our hunters out

1 there.

2 MR. SYKES: It's just going to take time.

3 Honestly, that's all I think. We -- we
4 beat the bushes pretty hard last year.
5 We're not going to quit. We're going to
6 still continue to keep that on,
7 educating people. And I think more
8 people tried it, saw that it worked. We
9 didn't send a drone in to give them a
10 ticket when they got on their phone and
11 reported it. So a lot of the conspiracy
12 theories are fading away right now.

13 I just think it's going to take
14 time. Honestly, 35 percent I thought
15 was pretty good for our first year, and
16 I think next year we'll bump on up.

17 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Excellent job.

18 Commissioner.

19 COMMISSIONER GUY: Mr. Chairman, let me just
20 add to that because Chuck may not want
21 to say it. But just like the three-buck
22 limit, Game Check -- we've been kind of
23 discretionary. Officers have used a lot

1 of discretion about that and been pretty
2 lenient, and they're going to start
3 enforcing it. And so just be prepared.

4 We see that it's not that hard to
5 do. Now you don't even have to carry
6 that paper around. All of that is
7 contained on the app. And our officers
8 will start enforcing it if you're not
9 Game-Checking the deer just like they do
10 when you don't have a hunting license.
11 That's the way they do it in every other
12 state in the country, and ours is going
13 to be the same. People want three-buck
14 limits. We've got to enforce it. So I
15 hate to add that bad news, but that's
16 the way it's going to be.

17 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Well, it's just such
18 important data that we have to have to
19 manage our resources. We start to, you
20 know, see the results of the regulations
21 that we put in place, buck restriction,
22 Game Check, harvest limits. All those
23 really impact the quality of deer

1 hunting that we have here in the state
2 of Alabama.

3 Grady.

4 MR. HARTZOG: I've said it to Chuck. I had a
5 question thrown at me concerning one of
6 the proposed changes that he posted up
7 there on the Geneva County change. And
8 I reminded him of the situation where
9 several years back when we had just a
10 weekend-long alligator hunt out in -- on
11 Lake Eufaula and one of the weekends a
12 hurricane came through and nobody really
13 killed anything.

14 But April the 21st through the 25th
15 in Geneva, I asked Chuck if he would get
16 with his biologists and see, you know,
17 if that's a bad weekend when the
18 tornadoes are coming through and the
19 hunters don't really get it, then
20 possibly look at the possibility of two
21 weekends instead of one weekend. So
22 that's the only question I have for
23 Chuck, if he would talk to his staff and

1 bring it before the next meeting.

2 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Grady.

3 Any other questions from the board?

4 MR. DOBBS: Director Sykes, what will be --
5 what can we as a board do and what are
6 you doing and staff doing to alert or
7 bring about more awareness for chronic
8 wasting?

9 I've read some articles, and I know
10 that our members and a lot of people are
11 very concerned about it. The new cases
12 in Wisconsin and Michigan, if you could
13 speak about those, if you're aware, and
14 Arkansas, an almost neighboring state.
15 What are we going to do?

16 MR. SYKES: Y'all took a big step last year
17 with improving the language in the
18 carcass import reg. And, again, it's
19 about like Game Check. It's going to
20 take a little while for everybody to
21 understand. We did actually have
22 taxidermists calling us. We had
23 processors calling us. We did make

1 cases. We gave a lot of warnings this
2 year. That's going to be more strictly
3 enforced next year.

4 We're working closely with the deer
5 breeders association to make
6 traceability better where deer are going
7 from one place to the other. When Texas
8 found CWD, they were able to find out
9 where it went -- where everything went,
10 the spider web of affected areas
11 quickly. And we've got an open line of
12 communication with their association
13 working on that.

14 Again, we are -- it's not always the
15 good people that are -- it's the ones
16 that don't abide by the deer association
17 rules. It's the people that don't abide
18 by ours. Just like the individual that
19 brought deer in from another state. I
20 mean, that's -- that's self-serving
21 interest that's putting the whole state
22 at jeopardy. The same thing with the
23 people going -- and one -- I'll give you

1 a prime example.

2 We had someone hunting in Illinois.
3 Shot a deer. Shot a buck, a nice
4 eight-point. Threw the whole deer on
5 his four-wheeler where everybody could
6 see it coming back from Illinois and
7 Kentucky and Tennessee and into Alabama
8 where everybody would know what a good
9 hunter he was. And it just happened
10 that someone recognized the county tag
11 on his truck, saw our press releases,
12 and said that's an issue and called the
13 local officer. And we were waiting on
14 him when he came across the state line.

15 Illinois was happy because not only
16 had he violated our rules; he had taken
17 a buck on a doe tag. So everybody knows
18 what a good hunter he is now, but it's
19 going to cost him.

20 So I'm saying that because it's
21 just -- it's going to take time. I
22 mean, I think we're doing what we can.
23 Y'all are doing what you can. But

1 it's -- it's up to these people.
2 They're -- if it hadn't have been for
3 tips from the public that knew what was
4 going on, that saw our literature,
5 understood what we were doing, there's
6 no way we could get to all that.

7 So it's just going to -- we're going
8 to continue to educate people. We're
9 going to continue doing public meetings,
10 having magazine articles, newspaper
11 articles, radio spots.

12 Look, it's up to the hunters. It's
13 their deer. It's their resource. We're
14 just the ones that's in charge of
15 managing it. So it's going to be up to
16 them to help us and sell more hunting
17 licenses where we can get more officers
18 out there.

19 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Chuck?

20 MR. SYKES: Yes, sir.

21 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Do you feel -- we had a
22 pretty severe drought this hunting
23 season. Do you feel that that drought

1 will increase the susceptibility of our
2 herd for CWD?

3 MR. SYKES: No, sir, I don't think so. I
4 really don't. Just my personal -- not
5 Director Sykes, "Biologist Chuck"
6 talking to you, people had a bad year
7 because we're stuck in a rut. We're
8 used to going and sitting on that same
9 food plot at three o'clock in the
10 afternoon. There was no grass for the
11 first two months. Then there was warm
12 weather. Things in the woods started
13 popping back out. Deer weren't coming
14 to the plots because there was pressure
15 there.

16 I think in another couple of weeks
17 when the pressure is gone and people
18 start running trail cameras inventorying
19 what is there, they're going to be
20 surprised that all those deer that left
21 are miraculously back again. I think if
22 we have a good spring that deer are
23 going to get back healthy and they're

1 going to be in good shape and we'll have
2 a good season next year.

3 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Chuck.

4 MR. SYKES: Yes, sir.

5 MR. DOBBS: One additional comment.

6 Director Sykes, what do you perceive
7 as the biggest threat from CWD? Is it
8 people bringing carcasses back? Is it
9 people bringing live deer?

10 MR. SYKES: It's both. I mean, a dead deer
11 can transmit the disease just like a
12 live one can. So that -- it's about
13 like hogs moving around. Natural
14 migration is pretty slow, but when it's
15 going 75 miles an hour down the
16 interstate, it can cover a lot of ground
17 quickly.

18 So that to me is the biggest threat
19 we have is self-serving individuals only
20 worrying about themselves and not
21 worrying about the resource of the state
22 and be that bringing a live deer in or
23 be that going to Texas and killing a

1 deer and saying, well, you know, one
2 deer is not going to hurt anything; I'm
3 just going to carry it back and -- it's
4 an inconvenience to me to debone that
5 meat. It is. But I can assure you it's
6 going to be a greater inconvenience if
7 we ever get it here.

8 MR. BUNN: Chuck, these breeders that are
9 buying AI straws and breeding deer
10 here -- I know you can't check for CWD
11 until the deer is dead. How do you know
12 that some of these straws that they're
13 buying and artificially inseminating
14 deer here don't -- are not carrying CWD?

15 MR. SYKES: We don't.

16 MR. BUNN: I mean, is it something we need to
17 look at and maybe we can't buy AI straws
18 from the states that are --

19 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Chuck, isn't CWD a virus
20 pretty much that's in the central
21 nervous system?

22 MR. SYKES: It's a mutated protein prion that
23 can be transmitted from nose to nose,

1 deer to deer. The proof has not come
2 whether urine, feces, and all that does
3 it. It's just speculation right now.

4 So I don't know if AI straws is the
5 answer. I -- I think bringing the whole
6 deer is much more concerning to me than
7 that. I -- just a little sidebar, I've
8 been working with the Archery Trade
9 Association, which I know you're very
10 familiar with. They have a program
11 where they're working with the deer
12 scent industry. There's a lot of states
13 that have panicked and have banned the
14 use of deer urine even though there's
15 not a whole lot of scientific data out
16 there right now saying it can be
17 transmitted that way.

18 So the industry is working together
19 to put self-imposed restrictions on
20 themselves to ensure that their business
21 is protected as well as the resource is
22 protected, same thing that we're doing
23 working with Alabama Deer Breeders

1 Association, trying to make sure that
2 their business interests are okay as
3 well as the native resource, which is
4 what we're all here for.

5 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: And since it is a virus,
6 it really only takes one deer -- one
7 infected deer to really create a
8 problem. So all of us --

9 MR. SYKES: Yes, sir.

10 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: -- have to really
11 understand that. You know, we have to
12 be very diligent and make sure that we
13 follow the regulations that our
14 biologists have put in place to protect
15 our herds here in the state of Alabama
16 because it doesn't take much --

17 MR. SYKES: Yes, sir.

18 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: -- to become an
19 epidemic.

20 MR. SYKES: It only takes one self-serving
21 individual to mess it up for everybody.

22 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Yes.

23 MR. WOLFE: How -- what's the process that

1 we're checking the breeders? I mean, is
2 it your officers go in so often and
3 check them? Is it computerized? How do
4 we do that?

5 MR. SYKES: Have yearly inspections where the
6 inventory is examined and paperwork is
7 looked at, but it's in a three-ring
8 binder about that big.

9 MR. WOLFE: Is that -- does that need to be
10 updated? Are we looking -- are y'all
11 looking at doing --

12 MR. SYKES: We are talking with the deer
13 breeders association. We met with them
14 about a month ago on some options, yes.

15 MR. BUNN: Chuck, one question. Are they
16 mandated where if they have a deer
17 die -- are they mandated to inform us?
18 Are they mandated to check it for CWD?

19 MR. SYKES: If it is over one year of age, to
20 comply with the CWD-monitoring
21 regulations, it has to go be tested.
22 That's where that 500 deer that I put on
23 my slide -- we're checking 500 wild deer

1 a year. They're averaging anywhere from
2 four to 600 a year that goes to be
3 tested.

4 And, look, it's not just a CWD test.
5 We're looking for all kind of -- it's
6 just a disease-monitoring program.

7 MR. WOLFE: So right now there is a window
8 from day one to a year old --

9 MR. SYKES: To a year old.

10 MR. WOLFE: -- that they're not checked at
11 all?

12 MR. SYKES: That's right.

13 MR. DOBBS: One additional question.

14 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Joey.

15 MR. DOBBS: Are the deer that people are
16 breeding -- are they Alabama deer or do
17 they come from other parts of the
18 country?

19 MR. SYKES: Well, they're -- what T.J. said,
20 straws can come in. So a Michigan deer
21 may be bred to a Texas deer. That
22 offspring may be bred to -- you know,
23 whatever. I -- but the deer on these

1 facilities -- I think 1997 is when the
2 ban started on moving deer across state
3 lines. I may be incorrect on that, but
4 it was somewhere around that time.

5 So there's not supposed to be any
6 live deer coming in the state, but we
7 know it's happening. I mean, we caught
8 one. So there's still some individuals
9 that are trying to do that.

10 There is enough genetics, enough
11 breeders in Alabama. There's no reason
12 to do it. Because there's 206 or 208
13 licensed game breeders in the state of
14 Alabama. So bringing deer from out of
15 state is completely unnecessary.

16 MR. DOBBS: One follow-up question, please.

17 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Sure, Joey.

18 MR. DOBBS: Where do most of those deer go
19 that are being bred? Do people turn
20 them loose? Are we shooting them?

21 MR. SYKES: From my understanding -- I'm not
22 completely familiar with the market --
23 but they're going between each other

1 improving each other's genetics and they
2 are going to enclosures to hunt. So as
3 far as I know, there's two markets.
4 There's a breeder market and then
5 there's a shooter market.

6 MR. WOLFE: Mr. Chairman?

7 COMMISSIONER GUY: Let me just add to that.

8 And, Chuck, you just answered a question
9 to Joey. And remember that we passed a
10 reg that said you cannot intentionally
11 release a deer into the wild.

12 MR. SYKES: Yeah. They have to go inside an
13 enclosure. They can't just be released
14 into the wild.

15 COMMISSIONER GUY: Which is the reason for the
16 need for the traceability.

17 MR. WOLFE: Mr. Chairman?

18 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Gary.

19 MR. WOLFE: So, Chuck, are we looking at
20 really running fast-track on this thing
21 and try to get a hold of it, or where
22 are we at right now with it? I mean,
23 are we just looking at other states?

1 Are we looking at -- I know y'all caught
2 somebody bringing deer in. But is there
3 something we need to do and look at as a
4 study to kind of fast-track this thing
5 and make some decisions?

6 MR. SYKES: We have an online database that
7 several of the breeders have tested.
8 Tweaks have been made. And, again,
9 we're in meetings with -- we met with
10 them about a month ago discussing some
11 options on that.

12 So we are proceeding -- look, it's
13 just the traceability thing. If Deer
14 "A" goes here, here, here, here, and
15 here and we've got a three-ring binder,
16 it's kind of hard to -- it's takes a
17 while. Like I said, Texas did theirs in
18 hours what would take us months.

19 MR. WOLFE: And that's what I'm getting at.
20 I'm familiar with that. In Texas, the
21 reason they stopped it is because they
22 had the system in place and they jumped
23 right on it and stopped it.

1 MR. SYKES: Well, not necessarily stopped it,
2 but they at least knew where that
3 deer -- all of the facilities that it
4 had been in where they could quarantine
5 and do the proper testing to make sure
6 everything was safe there before
7 anything else moved around.

8 Look, once it gets here, there is no
9 stopping it. That's -- that's the major
10 issue. It's not like EHD that we get
11 every year. We lose a few deer. The
12 ones that make it have an immunity to
13 it. They're fine. Once we get it, it's
14 here forever and ever, amen.

15 MR. BUNN: Chuck, going back, is this
16 something we need to look at with these
17 breeders bringing in AI straws from the
18 states that are affected by CWD? Is
19 this something we need to look into and
20 maybe --

21 MR. SYKES: I will get my staff to look at the
22 latest research as far as -- because
23 I'm -- I would be talking out of turn.

1 I don't know what the latest research is
2 showing on that. My gut feeling is
3 there is not anything real specific
4 right now, but we can -- we can look
5 into it before the next board meeting.

6 MR. BUNN: Because, like you said, we've got
7 enough breeders in the state now. It's
8 really -- I don't see any reason for
9 somebody needing to, you know, buy
10 straws from Texas or Wisconsin or
11 Michigan when we've got plenty of
12 breeders here in the state they can
13 trade between.

14 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Any further questions
15 from the board?

16 (No response.)

17 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Chuck, thank you.

18 MR. SYKES: Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Chris and Chuck,
20 excellent presentation.

21 Okay. The next order of business is
22 public hearings. For those who
23 participate in the public hearing, there

1 are a couple of rules you need to
2 follow.

3 When your name is called, please
4 come to the microphone. You are limited
5 to only three minutes, and it will be
6 strict adherence to three minutes, three
7 minutes from the time you are called.
8 State your name and the subject you wish
9 to talk on. No interference from the
10 audience will be tolerated. In
11 addition, all board members are asked to
12 please address the chair before taking
13 the floor.

14 Okay. The first public hearing will
15 be Mr. Avery Bates. Mr. Bates.

16 Mr. Bates is quite a familiar face
17 here at the Conservation Advisory Board
18 Meetings. Thanks for coming, Mr. Bates.

19 MR. BATES: You think I'm familiar here. You
20 ought to be in Bayou La Batre.

21 My name is Avery Bates, vice
22 president of Organized Seafood
23 Organization.

1 I want to thank the board for all
2 y'all's work for us over the years. For
3 the last number of years you've put in
4 for pompano, Spanish mackerel, and
5 sheepshead to stay a commercial fish so
6 everybody can enjoy it through our
7 markets. You know, the property we
8 enjoy, what we call the common property,
9 is precious to us.

10 And while I'm here, real quick, I
11 want to invite y'all November -- I mean,
12 March the 7th we're going to have a
13 Seafood Bash as normal. And the
14 Commissioner comes. I hope he enjoys
15 the seafood. We always enjoy seeing
16 Chris and everybody else.

17 And we want to tell you right now on
18 the three things that we have -- I think
19 it's three for the commercial fishermen.
20 We do not have any major problems. We
21 have some commercial things -- I'd say
22 cosmetic things that was done on the
23 crab the one year -- and I thank

1 Mr. Hartzog for asking me, why cosmetic.
2 And that being the true problem exists
3 all up and down the Gulf Coast,
4 especially in areas that has no -- the
5 crab trap ban in Louisiana -- they have
6 not allowed sponge crabs for many years,
7 and they're the one that's running the
8 crabber back out of here.

9 Now, we had a sponge crab law in the
10 '40s here, a regulation. They took that
11 away a number of years later. But our
12 problem with the crabs, Louisiana's
13 problem with the crabs, Texas' problem
14 with the crabs -- you say, well, why is
15 such a problem through the -- in the
16 tonnage that you saw that was lost. You
17 ask me and this is the reason why.

18 We've got a problem with red drum,
19 black drum, too. Red drum is also a
20 gamefish in these states that I
21 mentioned and others. When you take one
22 species and let it proliferate to such a
23 degree -- and thank you for writing that

1 article in the paper about wild hogs.
2 Tremendous multiplication.

3 Let me tell you something about
4 redfish. They can live up to 60 years.
5 And guess what? They eat tons of crabs.
6 Clean some. What's the best bait for a
7 redfish? Crabs. Crabs. It's up and
8 down the Gulf Coast. They're going to
9 run the crabber out of Louisiana, and
10 they already don't allow sponge crabs.
11 Why do we continually miss the main
12 point of what's going on?

13 You think you got trouble with wild
14 hogs. Do the math. When you got one
15 redfish up to three to four years that
16 can produce up to a million-and-a-half
17 to five million -- I would love to
18 see --

19 MS. JONES: Time.

20 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Mr. Bates --

21 MR. BATES: I just started. Okay.

22 -- the multiplication factor in
23 what's being lost with these feral

1 redfish.

2 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: They're calling you,
3 Mr. Bates.

4 MR. BATES: Many more things I want to say to
5 y'all. But thank y'all for not allowing
6 the gamefish status.

7 The letter that I handed y'all is
8 just a preliminary letter, but we are
9 tired of seeing our stuff covered up in
10 Mobile Bay by this 150 thing that we
11 see --

12 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Mr. Bates?

13 MR. BATES: Believe it or not -- I mentioned
14 it last time -- you're covering up what
15 the good Lord put there, live natural
16 oysters, live clam reefs. You are
17 allowing -- or the State of Alabama is
18 allowing --

19 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you very much.

20 MR. BATES: -- massive devastation in Mobile
21 Bay and still --

22 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Mr. Nelson, you're next.
23 Mr. Bates is taking up all your time.

1 You've got two minutes and ten seconds.

2 MR. MELTON: Can I talk from right here?

3 Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Wynnton
4 Melton, Geneva County. I've been here a
5 lot of times, too, about 48 consecutive,
6 I think.

7 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: I don't think you've
8 missed a single meeting.

9 MR. MELTON: I know. It's been about 48 of
10 these in a row. Seen a lot come and a
11 lot go.

12 I'm here speaking on behalf of all
13 the dog hunters, coon hunters, deer
14 hunters. It's a grand sport. I put a
15 picture of our club up there for you. I
16 wanted to say about that -- and I've
17 heard it said by conservation
18 officials -- that a deer killed on a
19 legal, honorable dog deer drive brings
20 more enjoyment to more people than any
21 animal harvested in the state of
22 Alabama. And I sort of want to document
23 their 18 deer. All those folks had a

1 great time with it.

2 We're doing well. The improvement
3 is unbelievable. In the last several
4 years these tracking devices we have now
5 are helping so much with dog control.
6 You can train and track and keep up with
7 it so much better. Nothing will ever be
8 100 percent, but it's getting pretty
9 darn close.

10 The rogue hunters are about gone in
11 our part of the world. I can't speak
12 for the rest. Don't know what 220 is,
13 but I'm here to plead with you, hey,
14 don't give us a bunch more regulations.
15 We're doing quite well. We don't need
16 the anxiety of having to go out and
17 worry more and more and more. It's like
18 punishing a child when they do bad. You
19 get good results. Punishing a child
20 when they do good, you get an angry
21 youngster.

22 So, please, we appreciate you. Seen
23 a lot come and a lot go. Hunting with

1 hounds is a great tradition. We enjoy
2 it. We just appreciate you and know you
3 have a hard job. But, please, please,
4 don't regulate us right out the door.
5 Just let us hunt, have a good time, and
6 we'll do our darndest to make it as easy
7 on you as we can. Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Mr. Floyd Nelson.

9 MR. NELSON: I can say what I want to say in
10 about two minutes.

11 That proposal number 50, we're
12 against this that's on this marsh area.

13 Also, spending two-and-a-half
14 million dollars on NRPA funds, what
15 they're doing, they're dredging out
16 Mobile ship channel up there, and
17 they're covering our oyster reefs up.
18 I've been up there. I work up there.
19 I'm a fisherman. I can't catch no more
20 fish up there. They're gone. I run
21 aground where they piled the mud up in
22 the water where we always run with our
23 boat. Well, we run aground in that mud.

1 That's how much mud is up there.

2 Radcliff Materials dug all of our
3 reefs up on the east side of the river.
4 Now they want to dig all of them -- or
5 cover them up on the west side. And
6 that's our mother reefs. That's the
7 ones that spawns -- let the spawns come
8 down the Bay and catch on the reefs down
9 there. And that's where we get our
10 seafood -- our oysters from.

11 If they can get this
12 two-and-a-half-million dollars, that's
13 what they have to bear. That's the
14 state docks. Well, they get another 20
15 million after they get that. And when
16 they get the 20 million, no telling what
17 they'll do with it.

18 That's all I wanted to say.

19 Appreciate it.

20 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Mr. Nelson.

21 Next we have Michael Best.

22 MR. BEST: Michael Best from Cullman, Alabama.

23 I have a form up there that's got my

1 name on it if y'all want to look through
2 it. What I'm here for is -- I'm coming
3 before you today to request changes in
4 the current laws considering bowfishing.
5 My request is so more people with
6 disabilities can enjoy this sport.

7 I have friends that run the Fallen
8 Heroes, Incorporated, a nonprofit, that
9 is currently taking disabled veterans
10 out bowfishing. During a discussion we
11 saw a need to have changes made to the
12 current laws to make it easier for all
13 disabled vets to be able to participate
14 in the sport.

15 The team at Fallen Heroes have
16 specially -- specialty equipment to
17 allow wheelchairs on their boats, but
18 currently taking a vet out with missing
19 arms or limbs or nerve damage -- they
20 can take the vet out, but they do not
21 have -- cannot participate basically.
22 You know, if you can't pull a bow, you
23 can't participate.

1 Alabama currently has a law that
2 allows spearfishing or use of a
3 speargun, but it's only if the gun is
4 submerged under water. So my idea is to
5 be able to fire a device above water
6 that is powered the same as a speargun
7 with rubber delivering the power instead
8 of the limbs of a bow or crossbow.
9 Being able to use the rubber would make
10 the device more manageable to being
11 fired one-armed.

12 I know several states have legalized
13 slingbows. It's basically a slingshot
14 designed to shoot arrows. You can find
15 slingbows on the commercial market. I
16 am asking something along these lines
17 but with a grip so the arrow can be
18 released by a trigger, basically a cross
19 between a slingbow and a speargun.

20 I said I had designed a device --
21 and there's pictures of it -- that I
22 would like to see if we could get
23 legalized for use in the state. I

1 contacted -- now, this is -- when I
2 first built this was back last July.
3 And I contacted Chief Dodd with the
4 Alabama Game and Fish Division who said
5 he saw no problem with the idea other
6 than the fact that it didn't follow the
7 current law.

8 I appreciate the opportunity to
9 bring this to your attention, and if
10 there's something we could do to help
11 some of our disabled veterans out, I'd
12 appreciate it.

13 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Mr. Best.

14 MR. CAGLE: Mr. Chairman?

15 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Yes.

16 MR. CAGLE: I have a question.

17 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Patrick, you have the
18 floor.

19 MR. CAGLE: Are you proposing to have this
20 done with a reel on it so it will --

21 MR. BEST: Oh, yeah. That's -- well, that's
22 the whole thing. We can't -- I didn't
23 go any further with it because you can't

1 go test it if it's illegal.

2 MR. CAGLE: Got you.

3 MR. BEST: So it's going to have a reel on it.

4 The boat has -- you know, there's a crew
5 on the boat. So at least -- you know,
6 even if you're one-handed, you're able
7 to take the shot, and then the crew can
8 actually reel your fish in for you.

9 MR. CAGLE: So it would work off a standard
10 bowfishing line?

11 MR. BEST: Yeah. It's going to be a standard
12 bowfishing line, standard bowfishing --
13 you know, a 20-inch. Instead of the big
14 arrow, it would be the 20-inch
15 bowfishing arrow that's for a crossbow.

16 MR. CAGLE: Okay. Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: I have one question.

18 What about safety issues? You know,
19 there's a -- when you're bowfishing,
20 it's a lot of movement. Is there a
21 safety on it? Once that thing is
22 cocked --

23 MR. BEST: Well, I mean, I'm -- we're not

1 quite there yet. Again, you know, I'm
2 not sure -- and, you know, I'm not for
3 positive that this design that I got
4 will work.

5 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: I see. So it's in the
6 developmental stage?

7 MR. BEST: It's in developmental stages. But,
8 you know, if we can change the law where
9 we can use rubber instead of just the
10 power of the limbs of a bow or a
11 crossbow, we could go a lot further.

12 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: There are a lot of
13 people bowfishing, a lot of people in
14 the boat, a lot of movement.

15 MR. BEST: Oh, yeah, yeah.

16 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: That could be -- you
17 know, it's --

18 MR. BEST: Oh, I understand.

19 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Safety has to be a
20 consideration.

21 MR. BEST: I understand that. I understand
22 that.

23 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: All right. Thank you.

1 MR. BEST: Uh-huh (positive response).

2 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Next speaker will be
3 Michael Carter.

4 MR. CARTER: First off, I want to thank the
5 board for everything you do. We all
6 appreciate it.

7 My name is Mike Carter. I am a
8 licensed fishing guide for Lake
9 Gunterville and Tennessee River. My
10 wife, Sharon, she has the main points of
11 what we're here for, the Lake
12 Gunterville Conservation Group, and I'm
13 going to go over just a few things.

14 What we're looking at is the decline
15 of the fishing on Lake Gunterville.
16 For years and years of Bass, FLW,
17 everybody has always recognized
18 Gunterville Lake as one of the top
19 lakes in the country. One of the
20 comments this weekend was the -- one of
21 the elite bass-fishing lakes in the
22 country. And with this decline that
23 we've seen -- I've fished this lake all

1 my life, been a licensed guide for 12
2 years. And several of us have seen this
3 decline of this lake.

4 And, no, it's not a massive decline.
5 I mean, there -- people are still
6 catching fish, but when you get a lot of
7 people coming down in groups and
8 tournaments and they see the decline
9 themselves, they don't want to come
10 back. They're looking at other lakes.
11 Bass didn't even have them in the top
12 ten this year. Could be political or
13 whatever. But that impact -- that
14 impacts the tourism when they see that.
15 It impacts the tourism. They barely
16 made top five in the Southeast. Bass
17 also had a rating of number two as the
18 most overrated lake -- number two in the
19 country, the most overrated lake.

20 These are the things that hurts the
21 economical impact of not only
22 Gunterville but Scottsboro or Marshall
23 and Jackson Counties. And that's what

1 we're here to talk to you about is the
2 possibility for the help to try to get
3 something done for the lake, a
4 restocking program, changing the creel
5 limit, get something done to try to help
6 the lake out.

7 We don't want to turn these
8 tournaments away. We don't want to turn
9 the tourists away. This is what we
10 want. This is how we make our living,
11 between your bait shops, your
12 restaurants, hotels, et cetera. We want
13 to try to do something to try to help
14 this lake and get it back healthy where
15 it used to be and get it back where it's
16 more noticeable; instead of having a
17 negative impact, get a positive impact
18 and bring everybody -- bring everybody
19 back to the lake. That's all I have.

20 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Mike.

21 MR. CARTER: Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Next speaker is Brandon
23 Jackson.

1 MR. MARTIN: Excuse me, Commissioner --
2 Chairman.

3 Chris, do you mind giving us some of
4 the information -- you and I talked
5 about this earlier before the meeting.
6 We were talking about Gunterville. A
7 lot of people -- I hear it, too, that
8 Gunterville is low, but would you share
9 your thoughts that we had.

10 MR. NICHOLS: Yes. My name is Nick Nichols.
11 I'm chief of fisheries for the Wildlife
12 and Freshwater Fisheries Division.

13 We actually have heard a lot of
14 comments from some folks reflecting
15 these same concerns about Lake
16 Gunterville over the last year and a
17 half or so. Lake Gunterville is
18 probably one of the best-studied
19 reservoirs in the state. Besides the
20 work our own staff has done on Lake
21 Gunterville to standardize sampling and
22 creel surveys, we've actually had two
23 studies that we funded through Auburn

1 University that looked at the fishery at
2 Gunterville as well as Wheeler.

3 Right now the status of Gunterville
4 Lake is it's at its -- about what we'd
5 call its 30-year average in terms of the
6 quality of the fishery. It's right on
7 track with the way it's been for the
8 last 30 years that we have data on the
9 reservoir.

10 What has been seen -- what's been
11 perceived by some folks is we had a very
12 strong year class back in 2008. That
13 year class was like two-and-a-half times
14 larger than you would normally see on
15 the lake. And that year class -- since
16 the fish do have a longevity of ten
17 years or less, that year class has now
18 left the fishery. And it was also
19 followed by two weak year classes.
20 However, we've got some new year classes
21 coming on now, and we expect and
22 anticipate the fishery is going to turn
23 up a little bit.

1 But there's nothing in terms of a
2 creel limit change or a stocking program
3 that's going to have any biological
4 significance on how that fishery
5 performs. And that's basically our
6 data. That's what it supports.

7 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you.

8 MR. CARTER: Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Our next public speaker
10 is Brandon Jackson.

11 MR. JACKSON: Good morning. Thank you for the
12 opportunity. We appreciate all the work
13 that the board does. I wanted to thank
14 DCNR and their conservation officers
15 that police the Sipsev Fork area of our
16 fishery. They do a great job -- an
17 excellent job, actually, in making
18 themselves known and greeting people and
19 talking to them on the river.

20 But I'm here to talk about the
21 Sipsev Fork and the trout fishing there.
22 There is a -- a great opportunity with
23 that fishery. It is a wonderful

1 opportunity, a singular opportunity
2 within the state for year-around
3 opportunities to catch rainbow trout.
4 We would like to see more people have
5 that opportunity to catch those fish,
6 have an opportunity to see them.

7 There is a study that will begin
8 this year in order to determine more
9 closely where those fish are going,
10 what's happening with them, where
11 they're moving within the river, and we
12 look forward to the results of that
13 study.

14 But in the meantime, we do feel that
15 there are certain recommendations. And
16 you should have received a handout from
17 me concerning the recommendations that
18 we would like to see implemented in
19 order to help this fishery and make it
20 open to angling -- for anglers
21 throughout the state and throughout the
22 U.S.

23 If the Sipsey Fork -- if you take

1 that river and look at it, it's
2 basically -- especially in the upper
3 sections -- a series of small ponds
4 connected to one another. And what's
5 happening now -- what we see happening
6 now is -- is that they stock our trout.
7 On the Sipsy Fork this year, in 2017,
8 we will hopefully be able to have --
9 it'll never be above for this next year
10 40,000 trout stocked in that river for
11 the year. It's going to be less than
12 40,000.

13 There is a -- what I think is a twin
14 sister to this river, and it's called
15 the Little Red River. It's the Greers
16 Ferry tailrace. So it's a tailrace just
17 like ours. It has very similar
18 topography, similar access, similar
19 opportunities, except for they have --
20 many of these regulations that we're
21 proposing, they have those in place
22 already, and yet they're stocking
23 180,000 fish. Same things. Just

1 different areas.

2 In order to preserve our 40,000, we
3 propose a catch-and-release section and
4 some other ideas there that you'll see
5 within that in order to help those small
6 ponds that are closest to the dam. Even
7 though they're connected, when they
8 stock, those fill up with fish, but
9 right now anglers can come in and if
10 they're the first ones there, they take
11 all the fish out of those small ponds.
12 And it takes a much longer period of
13 time for those fish --

14 MS. JONES: Time.

15 MR. JACKSON: -- to come back.

16 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Mr. Jackson.

17 The next speaker is Michael Key.

18 MR. KEY: I would like to thank the board, our
19 commissioner, our chairman, our
20 directors, our chiefs, and our members
21 of staff for this opportunity.

22 I know it's been mentioned among us
23 trout fishermen about a quality zone in

1 an area below Lewis Smith Lake. We
2 already have a quality zone. It's been
3 established for decades. And I see no
4 sense in trying to establish something
5 we already have.

6 Family and friends and strangers
7 have fished by different methods
8 alongside one another for decades. Some
9 sit on coolers. Some sit on five-gallon
10 buckets. Some sit in chairs. Some
11 wade. And they all enjoy the sport of
12 fishing the way they like to fish.

13 You see, our quality zone, it's got
14 the highest number of trout that we
15 stock. You can hear kids when they
16 catch a trout. You'll hear them --
17 they're so excited. And if you're
18 within earshot, you can't help but
19 smile. And they want to get right back
20 in the water to try to catch another
21 one. It's there for everybody, no
22 matter how you fish or what method you
23 fish by, as long as they're legal.

1 I have actually as an adult enjoyed
2 fellowship and friendship with people I
3 did not know. I met them there and
4 actually just got to know one another
5 from those experiences, through good
6 experiences. And most of the time just
7 being there means a whole lot. We relax
8 under the strain of trying to catch a
9 fish. Does that make any sense to
10 y'all?

11 It's really part of recreation. And
12 we want to make sure we don't lose any
13 of our rights, any of our outdoor
14 activities on the Sipsey Fork.

15 And we're also losing trout, but
16 it's not because of anglers. We
17 actually came in and remade the Sipsey
18 Fork. We channelized it again. We
19 knocked out three shoals that were barn
20 doors to keep the striper out except
21 during generation or post-generation as
22 the water was receding into Bankhead
23 Lake.

1 Now, don't have nothing against the
2 striper. Hey, he's doing what he was
3 supposed to do. And our Chief Nichols,
4 he actually predicted the next world
5 record would come out of our Black
6 Warrior channels, and it did. And I'm
7 going to tell you what. It's not just
8 because of shad. And I'm not a
9 biologist, but I am --

10 MS. JONES: Time.

11 MR. KEY: -- an everyday man.

12 But that's part of the problem. If
13 I may, that is part of the problem. The
14 anglers are not taking those fish. Very
15 few are the anglers taking. We need to
16 try to get ahead of these stripers a
17 little bit. Let's increase the limit
18 after the studies are done in
19 anticipation of there being no limit.

20 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Mr. Key.

21 MR. KEY: Thank you, sir. Thanks to everyone.

22 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Well, we certainly value
23 our Sipsey Fork trout fishing. It's a

1 huge recreational opportunity for
2 Alabama.

3 The next speaker is Kevin Linn.

4 MR. LINN: Good morning. I'm Kevin Linn from
5 Marshall County and Jackson County,
6 Alabama.

7 COMMISSIONER GUY: Speak up. Speak up,
8 please, sir.

9 MR. LINN: Kevin Linn from Marshall County and
10 Jackson County.

11 We've got a tremendous asset in
12 north Alabama with that Tennessee River
13 chain. It's a tremendous asset, one
14 that we don't even have to spend money
15 on to bring people in that spend their
16 dollars in our stores and businesses, et
17 cetera.

18 Lately, I don't know if we need more
19 attention to it or if we just need to
20 get some teeth and some laws that can
21 help our guys in brown enforce things.
22 But we've got to -- we've got to kind of
23 groom this chain of rivers up there to

1 be able to continue through economic
2 downturns, which there might be some
3 because of, you know, the health of the
4 fish and the downturn in the survey, et
5 cetera. You know, how long are we going
6 to have to pay for those downturns when
7 we could do some little things that
8 would change the lake in a positive
9 fashion.

10 If you go in and Jordan-Hare was
11 only 60,000 seats, you would build
12 40,000 more. Because that's what you
13 do. You know, you go in there, and if
14 there's a call and a demand for
15 something, you meet it. You know, if
16 you go and lease a piece of land or buy
17 a piece of land as a hunting property,
18 you go in there and you improve it. You
19 know, you don't go in and say, well,
20 we're in the middle of a 30-year norm
21 and we're on the downside of that; let's
22 not do anything. You go in and say
23 let's put some food plots in, you know,

1 let's create this kind of habitat.

2 So let's get this lake healthy again
3 and be able to create some of the things
4 we need to there. Even if we are within
5 cyclical norm -- which I agree with the
6 biologists. I know we're in that
7 downturn of the norm, but why accept
8 that. I don't feel like when we've got
9 all these people coming in that we don't
10 have to spend a dollar to get here -- to
11 get, why accept them not coming in when
12 we could make some small changes. And
13 you'll hear about some of the other
14 small changes that could be made when
15 more people are going to speak to you
16 today.

17 But we need some help there, folks,
18 because we've got a great asset that
19 we're not taking full advantage of. I
20 hear things about needing more income
21 from license fees and things like that.
22 Send the guys in brown up there. And I
23 know you have. In the last year I've

1 seen more up there than I have in the
2 last ten years.

3 I've been living on the lake for 15
4 years, doing business on the lake for
5 25. I own Waterfront Tackle up there,
6 too. So I get this from everybody
7 coming in. It's not just my opinion.
8 Talk to hundreds of people in the course
9 of a year. I know you're coming to
10 Guntersville next week -- or next
11 month -- excuse me -- to visit us, and
12 we'll have some more information then.

13 But, please, please, open up to the
14 possibility of not just leaving
15 something status quo but helping us make
16 it better by small steps. Nothing big.
17 Not saying any one will work. I'm
18 saying the aggregate total of five or
19 ten or 15 different plans that we've got
20 I'd sure like for you to look at. We
21 could use your opinion and support.
22 And, in turn, when we keep bringing
23 these people in like we have and these

1 big organizations come in, that's going
2 to continue to kick money back into the
3 coffers, and that's going to continue to
4 keep the excitement level up for buying
5 fishing licenses, et cetera.

6 So I guess my time is up.

7 MS. JONES: Time.

8 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Mr. Linn.

9 Our next speaker is Sharon Thomas.

10 MS. THOMAS: I represent, also, the Lake
11 Guntersville Conservation Group in
12 Jackson and Marshall Counties. And I,
13 too -- this is a vast body of water that
14 has increased pressure year after year
15 from anglers throughout the U.S.,
16 tournaments that are going to be coming
17 more and more each year such as the
18 Bassmasters, the BFL. We just had the
19 FLW tournament, ABT, ABA. Big Bass
20 Splash will be here in April. And local
21 tournaments, wildcat tournaments, high
22 school, and even college tournaments are
23 beginning to fish this lake. And that's

1 kind of a bucket list for everybody to
2 fish Lake Guntersville.

3 And as Mike Carter said, this lake
4 has dropped in standings as being
5 overrated. And the biologists -- I know
6 they have their paperwork to do and
7 they -- they've got their stats. But
8 these gentlemen that get out here and
9 beat the water every day fishing --
10 whether it be a guide, whether it be
11 just your local fisherman or someone
12 like that -- they know what's going on.
13 And there are so many people that say,
14 you know, we're not coming back, people
15 from Kentucky that I've talked with,
16 Ohio, different places like that. They
17 say the fish are not here. And where
18 are they going?

19 They're going to the next adjoining
20 state, Tennessee, to Chickamauga Lake
21 where they stocked them back several
22 years ago. And they are flourishing.
23 And that's one reason I'm here today, to

1 ask the state -- which I sent papers to
2 all of you, to the governor, to Gunter
3 Guy and -- to help us in re-establishing
4 what we did have in restocking and
5 dropping the creel limit. And I know
6 the creel limit has been discussed as
7 not being that much, but every little
8 bit helps.

9 We have programs that we are going
10 to try to implement later on in trying
11 to keep our fish alive, keep our fish
12 well. And from that standpoint -- it's
13 not just, hey, we want fish. It's just
14 we got to work together in this. And
15 north Alabama provides one of the best
16 lakes in the country, and we want it to
17 stay -- or get back up to number one
18 rather than falling in the ranks.

19 That's all I've got to say to you.

20 Thank you so much.

21 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Ms. Thomas.

22 Next speaker, Tyler Moses.

23 MR. MOSES: I'd just like to thank y'all for

1 your service, and I'll decline the
2 opportunity. Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Tyler.

4 Next we have Eddie Jolley.

5 MR. JOLLEY: Good morning. My name is Eddie
6 Jolley from Auburn in Lee County. And I
7 have prepared a document for you that
8 you should find, I think, in front of
9 you by now. It's dealing with the
10 approval of the use of crossbows to hunt
11 turkeys.

12 Okay. I think it's quite evident
13 across the country that crossbows are
14 very popular. In fact, you gentlemen
15 have seen fit to approve the use of
16 crossbows to hunt big game such as deer.
17 Big game are hunted across the country,
18 whether it's bear or caribou or moose or
19 elk. I looked to see how many states in
20 the South have approved the use of
21 crossbows for hunting turkey. 11 states
22 were surveyed, and I have excerpted some
23 information and presented it to you.

1 Out of those 11 states that were
2 surveyed, ten of those have already
3 approved the use of crossbows. One
4 state has not done that, and that is
5 Alabama.

6 So my question to you is would you
7 approve the use of crossbows to hunt
8 turkey in Alabama. There are a lot of
9 benefits to that. Number one, we
10 already know that the crossbow is a very
11 effective weapon. Modern crossbows are
12 very efficient. They are very accurate.
13 And they can do a really nice job of
14 harvesting an animal. We have many,
15 many videos, television programs that
16 depict the harvesting of wild turkeys
17 with crossbows.

18 We also have to think about the
19 ability to hunt certain areas of our
20 state. We are experiencing urban
21 sprawl. So some of our areas may not be
22 suitable for hunting with guns because
23 of that sprawl. So hunting with a

1 crossbow may be an alternative. Same
2 thing for hunting inside city limits
3 where it's approved.

4 Some individuals may have
5 limitations that prevent the use of
6 hunting with longbows or compound bows.
7 So being able to hunt with a crossbow
8 would be a viable alternative.

9 Okay. You're also able to bring in
10 family members to help -- to teach them
11 how to hunt; okay? And it's not a loud
12 noise. And it's a weapon that could be
13 easily used and trained -- or the
14 individual could be trained to use that.
15 In fact, this year my wife approached me
16 about hunting deer for the first time in
17 a long, long time, and I told her we had
18 to be able to practice and learn how to
19 use our crossbow. Within just moments
20 of practicing, she was ready to go.

21 Chuck, in fact, she bought a hunting
22 license. So that added to your
23 percentage increase; okay?

1 So, you know, we have an
2 opportunity --

3 MS. JONES: Time.

4 MR. JOLLEY: So I'm asking you to go ahead and
5 approve the use of crossbows. We're the
6 only state in 11 states from Florida to
7 Missouri, from Louisiana to North
8 Carolina that haven't approved the use
9 of crossbows to hunt turkeys. Thank
10 you.

11 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Mr. Jolley.

12 Next speaker, Curtis Anderson.

13 MR. ANDERSON: If you don't mind, I would like
14 clarification first from Mr. Sykes. Did
15 he say that there was going to be no
16 change at Swan Creek Management Area, or
17 do I need to go ahead and make my
18 presentation?

19 MR. SYKES: No, sir. You need to make your
20 presentation. I said there were none at
21 this present time.

22 MR. ANDERSON: Okay. Thank you.

23 Yes. My name is Curtis Anderson.

1 I'm here opposing options one, two,
2 three, and four for changes at Swan
3 Creek Management Area. The changes take
4 no consideration in the fact that
5 fathers and grandfathers want to carry
6 their school-age children to Swan Creek.
7 They get out at 2:40 in the afternoon.
8 They jump in the back of a pickup truck
9 and change clothes to try to get down
10 there to hunt that afternoon. And
11 closing at 12 o'clock, you can forget
12 that.

13 You can't teach a child -- when he's
14 out there on the soccer field, that's
15 not one on one. When he's on the
16 football field, it's not one on one. In
17 that duck blind, that's one on one. How
18 would you close at 12 o'clock and
19 alleviate those children from hunting
20 and from us teaching them?

21 Number two, one of the proposals --
22 how would the swing-shift people --
23 right there around Swan Creek you've got

1 Toyota swing shifts. You've got Daikin.
2 You've got Amoco, Montsano, 3M. You
3 know, you're just alleviating a
4 tremendous amount of people that want to
5 hunt Swan Creek Management Area. I
6 can't see that it makes sense.

7 I understand that Drew feels like
8 the count is way down -- the kill count.
9 You know, you can't control that. I
10 know people think you can. We haven't
11 had any cold fronts in three years.
12 Anybody that's a duck hunter knows -- we
13 shoot migratory birds. All these
14 resident ducks around here, all they are
15 is trading back and forth from one
16 place. And if you think that you're
17 going to outsmart them by closing at 12
18 o'clock, they're going to be in there in
19 the morning. As soon as they hear boat
20 motors, all the headlights -- it doesn't
21 take them long to figure out what's
22 going on.

23 I've been doing it -- I started

1 hunting at Swan Creek 53 years ago. I
2 believe I know what Swan Creek needs,
3 and it's not to close at 12 o'clock and
4 it's not to cut out our hunting hours.
5 I have different ideas and so do a
6 multitude of other people, other hunters
7 that they've asked me to represent here
8 today.

9 So that's my speech. And I hope
10 that you will please give us the
11 opportunity before any decision is
12 made -- let us have one-on-one
13 conversation or group conversation.
14 This is not the place for it. Thank
15 you.

16 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Chuck, do you want to
17 address any concerns with Mr. Anderson?

18 First of all, there has been no
19 proposed changes, are there?

20 MR. SYKES: No.

21 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: And our biologists have
22 basically sent out a survey, and from
23 that survey -- I think 70 percent of the

1 hunters who turned in the survey
2 suggested changes, that they felt that
3 changes were necessary.

4 Chuck, can you go ahead and -- you
5 probably have ...

6 MR. SYKES: Mr. Chairman, I'll be brief.

7 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Okay. Sure.

8 MR. SYKES: What Mr. Anderson said y'all can
9 take to heart. He's hunted Swan Creek
10 for 53 years, and nothing has been
11 changed in 53 years. How many other
12 things are we doing the same way we did
13 53 years ago?

14 We're not trying to limit anything.
15 We're trying to make it better. We
16 haven't proposed anything. Drew simply
17 sent out a questionnaire to all of the
18 hunters there, got some options.

19 Mr. Stimpson helped us last year at
20 Mobile and the Delta down there putting
21 in some different management tools that
22 was tremendous this year. That's all
23 we're doing is looking at some options.

1 Nothing has been done right now. We're
2 just looking.

3 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Chuck.

4 Mr. Anderson --

5 MR. ANDERSON: And we welcome management
6 tools. We don't welcome cutting the
7 hours that we get to hunt. You know,
8 you buy a license, sir, to hunt 60 days,
9 not to hunt 30 days.

10 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: So, Mr. Anderson, what
11 happens is our biologists will take a
12 critical look at what is best for our
13 resources. These are federal migratory
14 birds. And the changes that we -- if
15 any changes are made -- and, again,
16 there's no -- there's been no proposed
17 changes. Those changes, if they are
18 instituted, would be what we feel is
19 best for, you know, our migratory birds
20 in that area.

21 MR. ANDERSON: I understand. And I know
22 you -- I understand that you --

23 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: And you want your

1 grandkids and their kids to continue to
2 have great duck hunting there. That is
3 a great resource. So I think now we're
4 just in the process of discovery.

5 MR. ANDERSON: Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Grady, you have the
7 floor.

8 MR. HARTZOG: Sir, one -- sir, if you would go
9 back to the mic.

10 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Mr. Anderson.

11 MR. HARTZOG: Mr. Anderson, if you would go
12 back to the mic.

13 MR. ANDERSON: Sure.

14 MR. HARTZOG: Of course, I'm one of the
15 waterfowl hunters that's on this board,
16 and Raymond is on the board. And, like
17 he said, last year we did some work
18 through Ben's help in Mobile that
19 everybody loved. We made changes. You
20 said you could make some recommendations
21 to make it better. What would you tell
22 our biologists to make Swan Creek
23 better?

1 MR. ANDERSON: The biologists?

2 MR. HARTZOG: Yeah. What would you say would
3 make --

4 MR. ANDERSON: I've got a proposal.

5 MR. HARTZOG: -- Swan Creek a better
6 management area?

7 MR. ANDERSON: I've got a proposal written,
8 and we're having -- we're starting back
9 up a club called North Alabama Waterfowl
10 Association. It was there in our area
11 for years. I was on the board. The
12 great Tommy Carter helped us out. Right
13 now Danny Crawford -- he's our
14 representative for Limestone County. He
15 is behind it a hundred percent. He even
16 told me I could use his name today.

17 But cutting hours -- the only thing
18 I'm here for is to say cutting hours --
19 you pay for a hunting license for 60
20 days. Cutting those hours by 40
21 percent -- there's a lot that could be
22 done -- I know a tremendous amount can
23 be done. DU -- I understand from

1 Drew -- I met with him personally
2 Wednesday. DU is going to come in and
3 help some. I'd like to know more about
4 that. A lot of it is education.

5 It's not overhunted. I hunted down
6 there this year. Every day I hunted in
7 the afternoon I heard less than 20
8 shotgun shells go off. You're setting
9 there saying -- people are talking and
10 running their mouth, youngsters, that
11 don't even -- on this survey --

12 MR. HARTZOG: When you get that report written
13 as to what you feel would make Swan
14 Creek better, get that report to us.
15 Because --

16 MR. ANDERSON: I've got --

17 MR. HARTZOG: -- ducks need rest. Ducks need
18 a place to feed and to operate. And so
19 it's been a success in Mobile. You go
20 to Arkansas, which is one of the best
21 duck-hunting states. They close their
22 management areas down. They rest their
23 management areas.

1 So when you get your report written
2 as to what you feel like Swan Creek --
3 what would benefit Swan Creek, we would
4 love to look at it. Because I and
5 Raymond and Ben, all being waterfowlers,
6 anything we can do to make it better,
7 but we've still got our biologists that
8 tell us other than that. And so,
9 anyway, when you get the report, we
10 would love to see it.

11 MR. ANDERSON: Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Any other comments from
13 the board?

14 MR. JONES: Yes. Mr. Anderson, you referenced
15 a club. You do realize this is a public
16 area to hunt and a public thing, not a
17 club issue?

18 So I just want to stress that. This
19 is a public resource.

20 MR. ANDERSON: I absolutely understand. Thank
21 you.

22 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Mr. Anderson.

23 Any other questions or comments from

1 the board?

2 (No response.)

3 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Next speaker, Joey
4 Flowers.

5 MR. FLOWERS: Morning, board members. My name
6 is Joey Flowers. I'm from Baldwin
7 County, Alabama. I'm representing the
8 Alabama Hog Dog Hunters Association and
9 speaking on their behalf.

10 The first topic I'd like to discuss
11 is the 2016 wildlife management area hog
12 dog hunt that we had from September 1st
13 through the 10th this year -- or this
14 past year. We had about 62 hunters that
15 reported back to me about their kills.
16 And we had about 217 hogs reported for
17 that two -- or ten days. We had 98
18 boars, 117 sows, and two barred hogs
19 within that ten days.

20 We're asking if we can try to extend
21 those days just to eliminate that much
22 more. A lot of these people that wanted
23 to hunt couldn't hunt those days because

1 they were working out of town or just
2 couldn't get off of work. So we're
3 asking if we can extend those days a
4 little bit more or even open up more
5 management area in other areas that will
6 help out with that cause also.

7 I don't think -- from what I was
8 told, there was no misconducts. No one
9 got in trouble, no transporting anything
10 illegal on the Lower Delta Wildlife
11 Management Area. So if the board would
12 consider trying to open up more days for
13 us and open up more wildlife management
14 area.

15 The next thing is our Wounded
16 Warrior hog hunts that we do every year.
17 It's been going really well. We're
18 getting a lot of people wanting to come
19 in and participate and hunt and stuff
20 like that, and we're getting a lot of
21 landowners that usually don't allow dog
22 hunting come forward and, you know,
23 letting us use their property, which has

1 been really successful. I think the
2 year before last we caught 52 in a day
3 and a half, and this past year I think
4 we caught 23 and real big, nice
5 trophies. And I think some of the
6 Wounded Warriors even had three of them
7 they were able to get mounted and put on
8 their wall. So it was really neat.

9 Our association is footing the bill
10 for these Wounded Warriors coming out
11 from out of state to pay for their
12 hunting license because most of them are
13 out-of-state Wounded Warriors. So we're
14 doing that.

15 My next topic of business is killing
16 hogs on the spot when we catch them,
17 especially during the summer months.
18 It's really hot. And most of the time
19 when you kill them, they're going to
20 waste. We cannot savour the meat unless
21 we're able to tie them up, stage them in
22 a certain place until after the hunt,
23 kill them, and take them home. And how

1 the laws are written we can't do that.
2 So we would like to ask if the board
3 would consider coming up with a
4 regulation to where we can savour the
5 meat so it's not being ruined in the
6 summer heat.

7 I got a little saying out of
8 Proverbs 12:27 that says "The man who
9 hunts game and kills it -- it does
10 not -- and does not take possession of
11 it for eating is a slothful man." We
12 don't want to be like that. So I would
13 like for you guys to take that into
14 consideration.

15 MS. JONES: Time.

16 MR. FLOWERS: And just real quick, my last
17 topic was coming up with something to
18 make it mandatory for all dog hunters to
19 have tracking collars on their dogs.
20 You heard some of the other people talk
21 about it earlier. We need to come up
22 with something that will help eliminate
23 a lot of these dogs getting off their

1 property.

2 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Mr. Flowers.

3 MR. FLOWERS: Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: And, Mr. Flowers, we
5 certainly appreciate your hard work with
6 the veterans.

7 MR. FLOWERS: Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Patrick, did you have a
9 question?

10 MR. CAGLE: This question is for Chuck or
11 Keith.

12 Can the department -- you know, I
13 know y'all have been working
14 successfully with the hog dog hunters
15 association, you know, and I encourage
16 y'all to continue to work with them to
17 see if maybe there is some opportunities
18 to extend days, maybe two weekends on
19 management areas of the ones that can be
20 opened up. You know, we appreciate
21 their effort to work with the
22 department, and I encourage the
23 department to continue to work with them

1 to just, you know, find more
2 opportunities that don't cause conflict
3 with the other uses of the WMAs.

4 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Mr. Flowers.

5 MR. FLOWERS: Thanks.

6 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Our next public speaker
7 is Tammi Hudson.

8 MS. HUDSON: Mr. Commissioner, Mr. Chairman,
9 and Board, I'm Tammi Hudson. I live in
10 Clarke County. I normally hunt the
11 disabled hunting areas, and I come every
12 year and thank you for those areas.

13 This past year I was -- this season
14 I did not get to deer hunt the disabled
15 hunting areas. I had a family member
16 that was very ill and did not get to
17 deer hunt this year. But y'all listened
18 and Mr. Sykes opened up one of them for
19 turkey hunting. So come turkey season,
20 I will be trying to harvest a turkey.

21 And Mr. Bunn says that I won't be
22 able to do that. So I hope I'll be able
23 to come back and show you that I did.

1 He says that that's not the way it
2 works, but we're going to -- we're going
3 to try to show you that I can get one;
4 okay?

5 MR. BUNN: I hope you get one.

6 MS. FLOWERS: So I want to thank you for that,
7 Mr. Sykes. And, hopefully, maybe we'll
8 be able to try it on a few more next
9 time.

10 And I just want to say that me and
11 my family, we appreciate being able to
12 hunt every different way that we can for
13 deer hunting. We bow hunt, we stalk
14 hunt, and we deer dog hunt, and we
15 appreciate being able to do that. And
16 we just appreciate our resources that we
17 have. We appreciate the job that y'all
18 do. Y'all try to do a good job managing
19 our resources. We appreciate that.

20 I try to have a good story about the
21 law enforcement each year when I come
22 up. I wasn't -- didn't have any
23 interaction with them this year. But I

1 try to let them know that we appreciate
2 all that they do and appreciate the
3 service that they do and the risks that
4 they have every day when they go out on
5 the job. And I want to say that we
6 appreciate that.

7 Okay. And I want to say that --
8 like the first man that talked about
9 deer dog hunting, I just want to put in
10 that I would appreciate it if we would
11 try to let -- we're all doing as good as
12 we can to regulate ourselves with our
13 tracking systems and so forth and if we
14 could cut down on as little regulation
15 as possible. Because we are doing a
16 good job, I think, trying to regulate
17 ourselves on that. And that's all I
18 have to say today.

19 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Tammi, I'm going to give
20 you Mr. Bunn's e-mail address to send
21 him a picture of that turkey this
22 spring.

23 MS. FLOWERS: I have his e-mail address and I

1 will. I'm going to.

2 MR. BUNN: Send me some pictures.

3 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Our next speaker is
4 Michael McAlpine.

5 MR. McALPINE: Morning. Michael McAlpine.
6 I'm with BHA, the Bow Hunters of
7 Alabama. You know, we established in
8 1967 to support hunting rights, and
9 we've worked hand in hand with the DCNR.
10 We've had a great relationship with
11 them.

12 This past few months it was brought
13 to our attention about the ATV use on
14 management areas and they was tearing
15 the roads up. One in particular was
16 Skyline Management Area. So we was
17 approached and wanted to know where we
18 stood with ATV use.

19 And we are a hunting organization.
20 We are not opposing any regulations that
21 y'all impose in closing roads because we
22 are a guest in y'all's house. So, you
23 know, anything we can do to help and

1 support DCNR with anything, you have
2 full BHA support.

3 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you. I think the
4 Bow Hunters Association do a great job
5 in the state of Alabama. I'm a life
6 member. And I appreciate all the hard
7 work you guys are doing. We need to get
8 more members involved. We need -- and
9 we need to get more of you-all to sign
10 up for BHA.

11 MR. McALPINE: Yes. And one other thing. I
12 don't know if y'all know it or not, but
13 the last weekend in February we're
14 hosting a Reinhardt 100 tournament down
15 at Lake Eufaula State Park. That is 50
16 North American game animals and 50
17 African game animals. It's a two-day
18 event. So, I mean, we're actually going
19 to have a life-size giraffe. He's
20 19-foot tall. So, you know, it's a --

21 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: It would be worth coming
22 down to see that giraffe. Thank you.

23 The next public speaker is Kayla

1 Cooper.

2 Thank you, Ms. Cooper.

3 MS. COOPER: Thank you for giving me the
4 opportunity to speak today. My name is
5 Kayla Cooper. I am here today on behalf
6 of the Alabama State Coon Hunters
7 Association. I am their
8 secretary/treasurer. I'm also a member
9 of the --

10 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Could you get a little
11 closer to the mic?

12 MS. COOPER: Oh, I'm sorry.

13 Alabama State Coon Hunters
14 Association. I'm also a member of the
15 Alabama Hog Dog Association and a member
16 of the United Blood Trackers
17 Association. I do wounded-game recovery
18 with my dogs in addition to hog hunting
19 and coon hunting.

20 Thank you for allowing me to speak
21 to you. And I especially want to thank
22 the Alabama Conservation enforcement
23 officers department which has approved a

1 thousand-dollar grant for our Coonhound
2 Youth State Championship. And so we're
3 really excited about that and everything
4 we're going to get to do with the kids
5 at our state championship in May.

6 The main reason I'm here today is
7 concern for the new field trial permit
8 that has been proposed. We have a lot
9 of clubs in Alabama. They license
10 events through multiple registries:
11 UKC, AKC, PKC, ACHA, NKC. I'm licensed
12 as a judge for several of them.

13 Proposing the new field trial to
14 three a year cuts down tremendously on
15 the clubs having people come from out of
16 state. A lot of our clubs are
17 struggling.

18 There was an article published in
19 Field & Stream back in 2008 about
20 competition hunting saved coon hunting.
21 We as an association represent the
22 pleasure hunters. We also represent the
23 competition hunters. And this permit is

1 really, really cutting down on people
2 wanting to come from out of state.
3 Because we only get three a year per
4 club, and they're hosting 15, 30, 50
5 events. It doesn't cover it all.

6 We don't want to do anything to hurt
7 the participation with the clubs,
8 especially at a lot of the events we
9 have that are benefit events. I know
10 the Clarke-Washington County Coon
11 Hunters Association has donated over
12 \$235,000 to St. Jude's in the past
13 several years with their events. These
14 type of events are stuff that we want to
15 keep going not only to preserve the
16 sport and the tradition but also for all
17 the good that they do for the youth
18 events, for the YEP program that runs
19 the UKC that gets kids into hunting.
20 And having that permit limits a lot of
21 those opportunities.

22 Thank you for allowing me to speak.

23 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Ms. Cooper.

1 Commissioner, you have the floor.

2 COMMISSIONER GUY: I just wanted to recognize
3 Chuck to speak to Ms. Cooper's issues
4 here because that's -- I appreciate your
5 comments, but, you know, when you say
6 limit you to three, that's three free
7 ones. So I'm going to let Chuck address
8 it.

9 And I would want to point out to the
10 board -- and I think maybe we've talked
11 a lot -- if not, we'll go over that, and
12 we'll certainly consider any comments.
13 But that reg was never meant to address
14 anything but quail and duck field
15 trials.

16 So we'll look at what you're
17 requesting. But, Chuck, would you --

18 MR. SYKES: Well, I got to feel like Chris
19 Blankenship for two speakers anyway.

20 Look, it is three free. They can
21 have as many field trials as they want.
22 All we're asking is buy a small game
23 license. That's it.

1 We had one club that had 120 permits
2 a couple of years ago. That's a little
3 excessive. We did a -- Chief Dodd did a
4 sweep of all the clubs that requested
5 permits. The average was less than
6 three per club. So we thought we were
7 being very generous with allowing three
8 free permits per each club. They can
9 have a hundred after that. They just
10 need to buy a license.

11 COMMISSIONER GUY: Chuck -- I'm sorry. And
12 then, if you would, address the issue
13 about the out-of-state -- out-of-state
14 issue where somebody is coming from out
15 of state, meaning that -- some of those
16 places don't even allow them to do field
17 trials. They get to come here and do
18 them, at least up to three --

19 MR. SYKES: Some of the -- one phone call I
20 got that really sticks in my mind -- and
21 this may be not the norm. But I had a
22 guy that says with this \$20 license
23 these people are not going to be able to

1 drive from Canada to come to my field
2 trial, and if they can't come to this
3 field trial, they're not going to be in
4 the winning to win the truck. If you're
5 bringing a truck, trailer, dogs, all
6 your equipment from Canada and coming
7 down to a field trial, a \$20 license is
8 not going to prohibit you from enjoying
9 that activity. I'm sorry. And I'm not
10 trying to be ugly. But that was a
11 legitimate phone call that we got.

12 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Commissioner.

13 COMMISSIONER GUY: And could I just make one
14 more point?

15 So the other point, ma'am, is this,
16 too: It takes a lot of effort, a lot of
17 manpower hours, a lot of administrative
18 functions to do what y'all are asking
19 for. Consequently, as we mentioned
20 earlier, we don't get state dollars, no
21 general fund money. So we have to also
22 look at what we provide to you through
23 our law enforcement section, our

1 wildlife section, all the people -- just
2 so you'll understand. I'm not trying to
3 be ugly. I want you to understand.

4 When we help with these things --
5 because there has to be somebody that
6 comes there, spends time, makes sure
7 that people are obeying the laws and
8 this kind of thing. So when we look at
9 this, I just want you to know it wasn't
10 some helter-skelter type of action on
11 our part. It was to also try to support
12 what you need when y'all put on these
13 field trials through monies we need to
14 get administratively.

15 MS. COOPER: And I absolutely understand that
16 and would never have any problem with
17 paying for a permit, never did. I was
18 actually when I applied for the first
19 one quite surprised they were free
20 because I expected to pay a fee. No
21 problem paying a fee.

22 What I might suggest is, if
23 possible -- and I reread the e-mail I

1 was sent multiple times as I was sitting
2 up here in the crowd before I came down.
3 The way the e-mail was worded does not
4 convey that the first three are free or
5 that you're allowed any after that. And
6 it says in the e-mail that, yes, it was
7 originally designed for bird dog field
8 trials, which I have participated in,
9 also, but that they also issue them for
10 raccoon, fox, squirrel, and it made
11 mention of others. So that's why it
12 became a concern of ours and was brought
13 to our attention as an association by a
14 lot of small game hunters.

15 COMMISSIONER GUY: And can I just -- and just
16 briefly -- so I appreciate those
17 comments. And that's what we're trying
18 to do, get it right now.

19 MS. COOPER: Yeah.

20 COMMISSIONER GUY: It was a matter of
21 interpretation over about 40 years that
22 was causing us, like I say, a lot of
23 manpower and that expense. So I promise

1 we'll work with you. Just work with us
2 in understanding what we're trying to do
3 here, and I think we'll all come to find
4 a common place.

5 MS. COOPER: We'd absolutely love to work with
6 you. And that's another reason I'm here
7 today is to start establishing a working
8 relationship between the state coon
9 hunters association and the conservation
10 board. Because a lot of our membership
11 and our officers were very dormant for
12 years and years until new membership and
13 management took over.

14 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Mr. Hartzog, you have
15 the floor.

16 MR. HARTZOG: One question, Chuck. Is the fee
17 per club event or per entrance?

18 MR. SYKES: Club event. So one -- they can
19 have 150 participants for \$50.

20 MR. HARTZOG: I mean, the entry fees that they
21 take in can more than cover a \$50
22 permit. I mean, that's not a problem.

23 MS. COOPER: We also pay portions back to the

1 registries. And I'm not sure how or
2 where the board is and stuff of the
3 license fee that we pay to UKC. We pay
4 not only a license fee for the event,
5 but we also pay per dog entered, so ...

6 MR. HARTZOG: I know.

7 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Ms. Cooper.
8 We're looking forward to working with
9 you. Thank you for coming forward.

10 MS. COOPER: Thank you so much.

11 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Our next speaker will be
12 Richard Wallace.

13 MR. WALLACE: Thank you. My name is Richard
14 Wallace. I'm from Killen, Alabama, and
15 that's in Lauderdale County.

16 I was a conservation officer for
17 almost 39 years. I retired in 2010. 36
18 of those years was in Lauderdale County
19 as a conservation officer. This past
20 year we were part -- or a part of my
21 county -- the east portion of my county
22 was put on restricted doe days. We went
23 from having a 57-day doe season to

1 having an 18-day doe season.

2 I worked that county as a
3 conservation enforcement officer, and I
4 have been from one end of that county to
5 the other for 36 years. There are just
6 as many deer in the east end of
7 Lauderdale County as there are in the
8 west end of Lauderdale County.

9 I sat in a shooting house with my
10 grandson this year who does not care to
11 hunt very much. And I explained to him
12 that, look, we can't shoot does; we'll
13 have to shoot bucks. Now, my grandson
14 comes and hunts with me probably twice a
15 year. And, like I say, he's not a
16 hunter. But he does like to go with his
17 grandfather.

18 We sat in that tree stand -- I mean,
19 that shooting house, and there were
20 probably 20 unantlered deer that came in
21 the field. He didn't get to shoot. Of
22 course, I didn't get to shoot. We go
23 home and he won't come back. He sat and

1 watched those deer and realized that he
2 had better things to do by playing a
3 video game.

4 If we had a problem -- and I worked
5 hard to try to establish a deer herd in
6 Lauderdale County. If we had a problem,
7 I would be one of the very first ones to
8 say something needs to be done. But we
9 do not have a problem with deer in the
10 east part of Lauderdale County. And I
11 am requesting that whatever this board
12 decides as far as a season for the east
13 part of Lauderdale County, consider that
14 I think whatever happens in the west end
15 of Lauderdale County should happen in
16 the east part of Lauderdale County.

17 Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Mr. Wallace, I know you
19 have -- you have to have an excellent
20 relationship with our conservation
21 officers. I would suggest that, Chuck,
22 maybe you could spend some time, you
23 know, a few minutes with Mr. Wallace.

1 MR. WALLACE: I have.

2 MR. SYKES: We have.

3 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Okay.

4 MR. WALLACE: I have already spoken to him,
5 and he was very receptive to me. And I
6 appreciate that. I do.

7 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: I feel that you
8 definitely deserve that.

9 MR. WALLACE: In my years -- my years of
10 experience working with the department,
11 I had probably the best job in the
12 world. I worked with -- Captain Johnson
13 was my last supervisor. Captain Askew
14 was a lieutenant for me. I enjoyed that
15 tremendously.

16 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Well, we certainly
17 appreciate your service that you brought
18 to the state in the past.

19 Grady, you have the floor.

20 MR. HARTZOG: Mr. Wallace -- and correct me if
21 I'm wrong, Chuck. When we passed these
22 different zones and passed the different
23 seasons, did not we do it on a two-year

1 and so this would be the last year and
2 then we were going to try to readjust
3 those seasons for the following years?

4 MR. SYKES: The only thing that was sunsetted
5 with Mr. Cagle's motion was the extended
6 deer season. It didn't have anything to
7 do with the zones. The zone was -- if
8 you had property in that zone like
9 Mr. Wallace, the DMAP program is
10 tailor-made to handle those issues on a
11 specific landowner-by-landowner basis.
12 And I think that's what Mr. Jones was
13 wanting to speak about.

14 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Ray, you have the floor.

15 MR. JONES: Yeah. And I was going to say the
16 deer management program -- Deer
17 Management Assistance Program, to be
18 precise, you can apply for that and have
19 that done on the specific -- if you've
20 got too many does on your property,
21 that's the way to handle that is to go
22 through that program.

23 MR. WALLACE: We spoke about that earlier.

1 Mr. Sykes and I spoke about that
2 earlier. I -- if I thought I was the
3 only person who was having that type of
4 situation, but I'm not. It's -- it's
5 all of east Lauderdale County.

6 I don't -- you probably -- I don't
7 know how many of you have ever been to
8 Joe Wheeler State Park, but you cannot
9 drive through Joe Wheeler State Park
10 without nearly running over a deer.
11 They're everywhere. They're -- I mean,
12 it's not -- it's not a situation where
13 I've got a problem with more deer on
14 mine. They're everywhere. I mean, it's
15 not a -- it's not a centralized --

16 MR. JONES: I understand. And I think our
17 biologists can look at that on a --

18 MR. SYKES: I offered and Mr. Wallace is going
19 to outline what his lines should be.
20 And we'll get with our staff and have
21 something for y'all before the next
22 board meeting.

23 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Chuck.

1 MR. WALLACE: I certainly appreciate y'all
2 listening to me.

3 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Mr. Wallace.
4 Thank you for coming.

5 The next speaker will be Billy Joe
6 Johnson.

7 MR. JOHNSON: Thank y'all for the opportunity
8 to speak with you today. I'm Billy Joe
9 Johnson. I'm from Cherokee County. And
10 just like Mr. Wally, I've got a problem
11 with the split deer season -- split doe
12 season. This was implemented into our
13 county this year. And I talked with
14 Mr. Sykes, and he suggested that we get
15 together as a group up there and maybe
16 propose some realignment of the lines.

17 I met with a little ad hoc committee
18 we put together. Phillip Abney with the
19 Natural Resources and Conservation
20 Service, one of your retired biologists,
21 Tracy Nelson, was on that, Harlan Starr,
22 who is a sitting member on the National
23 Wild Turkey Federation Board of

1 Directors, and myself. We talked about
2 this redistribution of the lines, and it
3 just -- it just didn't need it. We --
4 the whole county is completely full of
5 the doe population that we seem to be
6 wanting to protect here. And we
7 couldn't decide any area that needed
8 excluding to follow the guidelines.

9 So what we -- what we decided to do
10 was to determine what problems this was
11 creating for the county. There's some
12 collateral damage going on with this.
13 Don't know if y'all are familiar with
14 our deer processors that we have around
15 the state. I'm sure you are. But I
16 went and talked to those guys. They're
17 looking at somewhere between -- one of
18 my buddies, my neighbor, is looking
19 between seven and \$9,000 down for this
20 year income because of the provisions.
21 This -- and a disturbing fact in this is
22 the number of doe they've been -- I
23 mean, bucks they've been processing.

1 Normally it's close to a 50/50 thing,
2 maybe 60. They've been processing -- 70
3 or 80 percent of the deer they processed
4 this year have been little bucks.

5 Like Mr. Wally, I have grandchildren
6 that I hunt with. And with the number
7 of days that we have to provide this
8 information to them, provide the
9 activity to them, it's hard for us to
10 get out there and be able to teach those
11 young folks about good solid deer
12 hunting. I've always known that when
13 bucks are on -- I mean, does are on the
14 field, those are opportunities for -- to
15 fill the freezer, to put meat in the
16 freezer. A little buck comes on the
17 field. You show him a chart that the
18 Alabama Wildlife Federation has got that
19 we have in each shooting house that
20 shows you the need and what letting that
21 little buck pass would do for the herd.

22 MS. JONES: Time.

23 MR. JOHNSON: We're killing those little bucks

1 in Cherokee County. That's what's
2 really disturbing.

3 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Mr. Johnson?

4 MR. JOHNSON: Yes.

5 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: That's your three
6 minutes.

7 MR. JOHNSON: Okay. That's my three minutes.

8 Lastly -- I was waiting -- I was
9 waiting for that young lady to give me
10 my three minutes.

11 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: She actually did.

12 MS. JONES: I did. I said "time."

13 MR. JOHNSON: Oh, did she?

14 Oh, the last thing I want to add is
15 that if y'all can do anything to help us
16 with this -- with this split season, we
17 would appreciate it.

18 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Mr. Johnson.

19 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Our next speaker is Pete
21 McCoy.

22 MR. McCOY: My name is Pete McCoy. This will
23 be really short.

1 First of all, I appreciate all that
2 y'all do for us as hunters here in the
3 state.

4 Also, I appreciate you extending the
5 season this year, ten days for deer
6 hunting. Yesterday I was able to
7 harvest the largest buck of my life.
8 Somehow this deer knew when January 31st
9 was. I've been hunting this deer for
10 three years. Got tons of trail camera
11 pictures. And they've all been
12 February 1st and after when he decided
13 to start showing up. So yesterday
14 morning I got out there early, and I was
15 able to get him. He didn't get the
16 e-mail that the season had changed. So
17 I appreciate you extending the season.

18 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Congratulations. Send
19 us a picture, Pete.

20 Next speaker, Rick Baxter.

21 MR. BAXTER: Good morning. Rick Baxter from
22 Washington County, Alabama.

23 First and foremost, I want to thank

1 every member that returned my phone call
2 December the 27th. I was on an
3 information-gathering project. Some of
4 you I didn't get ahold of because I
5 didn't have your phone number. But the
6 ones that did, it was the week after
7 Christmas, and you took the time out of
8 your day to call me back -- and I really
9 appreciate that -- with that information
10 we were putting together to figure out
11 how many complaints we were having in
12 the state against dog hunters hunting
13 for deer.

14 At that time I talked to seven
15 different board members, I believe it
16 was. We had three at that time in the
17 whole state. All right. Since then
18 it's up to 65. That number has
19 increased. We knew that was coming.
20 From last year, the report that you
21 have, I'm sure, was 272. 75 percent
22 decrease. As Mr. Melton said, we're
23 doing -- we accepted a challenge from

1 the board, from Commissioner Sykes -- I
2 mean, Director Sykes, Commissioner Guy
3 to clean up our act.

4 I'm a member of the -- I'm the vice
5 president of the Alabama Dog Hunters
6 Association. We work hard. Lonnie, the
7 president, has traveled. I have
8 traveled all over the country -- or all
9 over the state this year trying hard.
10 We have helped. We are not the end
11 result. The end result is the
12 individual hunter that has taken the
13 challenge to be better and be stewards
14 of what we do. And they've accepted
15 that, and they have exceeded.

16 So with that said, I'm in the same
17 boat Mr. Melton is in. If you've got to
18 put a regulation on us, then take one
19 away from us.

20 The encroachment law, that's -- I
21 want the individual held -- I want to be
22 accountable for what I do. I don't want
23 my cousin, my brother, or someone else

1 taking something away from me because of
2 what he's doing. But with that said,
3 with the encroachment law, if you're on
4 a permit system, he could still do that.

5 I hunt in a county that half the
6 county is on a permit system. I hunt in
7 Clarke County. Highway 17 divides the
8 permit. Okay. So Hebron, a 13,000-acre
9 hunting club, they're over there with a
10 permit system. Now you implement this.
11 They could still have one guy -- and I
12 have many friends that hunt that club.
13 They have one guy. He gets a ticket for
14 the third try, whatever. He gets a
15 ticket. That could still shut his whole
16 club down because it hurts the permit
17 system. That to me is double jeopardy.

18 All I ask is you consider that and
19 think about that when you're making the
20 decisions on this. The permit system, I
21 do think it had its place at the time.
22 It's worked in places. It has helped us
23 tremendously. One other thing that I

1 think has helped is the ten days back in
2 December. The 272 complaints going to
3 65, I would attribute that -- cutting
4 the dog hunting off at January the 15th
5 to probably 50 percent of your complaint
6 decrease.

7 MS. JONES: Time.

8 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Mr. Baxter.

9 MR. BAXTER: One last thing.

10 Mr. Wallace, to get that boy out
11 from in front of those computer games
12 and video games, bring him to Choctaw
13 County. We'll put him in a buggy with a
14 bunch of beagle puppies, and he won't
15 play video games no more, I can promise
16 you. Thank you.

17 MR. WOLFE: Mr. Chairman?

18 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Yes, Gary. You have the
19 floor.

20 MR. WOLFE: The number that he just spoke of,
21 is that the updated number that's -- do
22 we know that updated number of what he
23 spoke of?

1 MR. SYKES: I'm going to let Chief Lewis
2 answer that question.

3 MR. WOLFE: As a board member, I don't know
4 what that number is. I'd like to know
5 what that number is.

6 MR. LEWIS: End of the year total is 181
7 complaints that were received on dog
8 deer hunting statewide.

9 MR. WOLFE: Okay. Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Our next speaker is
11 Lonnie Miller.

12 MR. MILLER: I'm Lonnie Miller, the president
13 of the Alabama Dog Hunters Association.
14 I'm here basically to thank you guys for
15 hearing us and hearing our voice.

16 The report that I got from Chief
17 Lewis was 65 roughly. Last year when
18 Kevin Dodd gave it to me, it was 242
19 complaints, not 272. And I did not and
20 have not checked with him since the
21 season went out. And, of course, as
22 I've told several of you -- a few of you
23 in the past week or so, the report is

1 not accurate. And I can tell you a
2 prime example.

3 Last year -- you know, well, the
4 bottom line is we don't know if it's
5 substantiated complaints or not. We
6 don't know if it's a phone call, did
7 they catch the dog -- is it a
8 substantiated complaint or is it a phone
9 call, if they call you guys or -- you
10 know, and I'm not in no way here to
11 disrespect Chief Lewis or the
12 department. But what my point is and
13 what I said last year, we have to have
14 chain of command. It's got to go from
15 the landowner that catches the dog to
16 the top and back down through us and you
17 guys. And if it don't do that, anybody
18 can call and complain.

19 I personally through -- Kevin Dodd
20 sent me some information on some people
21 that are here today at this meeting.
22 And I called these people, and some of
23 the stuff was valid. Some of it was

1 not. And I did research on my end, sent
2 GPS documents, you know, from our
3 Garmins.

4 So the point being, we need to --
5 that report needs to be valid, you know,
6 not -- with all due respect to Chief
7 Lewis, I asked him -- and Kevin Dodd and
8 I were working on the report to get the
9 proper number of acres, the proper
10 number of clubs in the counties. And I
11 had worked all spring and part of the
12 summer with Kevin in doing that -- or
13 Chief Dodd.

14 And, you know, of course, some
15 people think that report is not
16 important. It's very important. Like I
17 told Jeff Martin yesterday on the phone,
18 that report is very important because
19 if -- it needs to be the proper number
20 of acreage, the proper number of dog
21 clubs. And I think in one county it may
22 list 13 dog clubs. Well, there's 19 dog
23 clubs in that county. Well, if you

1 start doing the math, maybe the problem
2 is not as bad as it really seems and,
3 then again, maybe it is.

4 I'm not here to say that there's not
5 problems because we do have a few hot
6 spots. But I can tell you we made a big
7 change. And we need to make sure
8 that -- I agree with what Mr. Melton
9 said. I don't want any type of
10 legislation or any kind of -- any more
11 laws or rules. Give us a chance and --
12 so what?

13 And people said it's a year. It's
14 only been a year.

15 MS. JONES: Time.

16 MR. MILLER: It's only been a year. But I can
17 tell you, we made a big change.

18 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Commissioner, you have
19 the floor.

20 COMMISSIONER GUY: So Lonnie, first of all,
21 let me say this: I think the point that
22 needs to be made here is that -- and I
23 think I've said this publicly -- is that

1 y'all have worked well with us, and I
2 appreciate the dog hunters association
3 and you doing so. I know you take a lot
4 of heat from your membership sometimes
5 because I don't think they quite
6 understand -- and I'm saying it
7 publicly -- what we're trying to do.

8 So thank you, number one, for
9 working with us. Thanks to all the dog
10 hunters for trying to eliminate the
11 complaints that we have, but we still
12 have them; right?

13 So all we're trying to do -- and I
14 want to be clear about this -- is to try
15 to reduce those complaints. Those
16 conflicts, as you well know, are
17 probably the majority of the issues we
18 deal with during the hunting season;
19 right?

20 So we're not -- we are not -- let me
21 state it unequivocally -- trying to do
22 anything to, you know, stop dog deer
23 hunting. We are just trying to work

1 with you guys to try to minimize those
2 conflicts between dog deer hunters and
3 others. And I promise you and I promise
4 the people in here that if you'll
5 continue to work with us and listen to
6 what we're trying to do -- and we'll
7 listen to what y'all's concerns are -- I
8 think we will get there. But there has
9 to be a mentality, like you've shown so
10 far, of working through those issues for
11 the benefit of everybody. And that's
12 what I want to thank you for.

13 And so, yes, reducing those
14 conflicts -- the number of complaints
15 has been tremendous. And I thank you
16 and I thank all of the people that have
17 worked to get it there. And what do we
18 always say?

19 It's always the bad apples that
20 cause everybody else the problem; right?
21 That's always what it is. Because as a
22 whole -- it's not the dog deer hunter as
23 a whole, just like there are bad stalk

1 hunters and bad this, that, and the
2 other. So what we're trying to do is
3 get to the -- is get to help you -- help
4 you as an association address those bad
5 guys that aren't really wanting to
6 conform.

7 So I just want to say that publicly.
8 I know that you've tried to make sure
9 your organization knows that. And I
10 want to thank you for sitting down with
11 us and having some hard discussions.

12 MR. MILLER: And we appreciate the
13 relationship that we've had with you
14 guys as well. And, you know, it's a
15 work in progress, but I can tell you
16 that it's very important to get the
17 complaints substantiated. And, you
18 know, as far as the -- you know, if it's
19 not a substantiated complaint -- you
20 know, I used to be a prison guard, and
21 if it wasn't in writing, it did not
22 happen. And we have to -- we have got
23 to document the case. And I agree with

1 what Rick said. It's my responsibility
2 to keep my dog on my property, period.
3 And that's what I say. And it's got to
4 be that way.

5 COMMISSIONER GUY: Let me just make one
6 clarification here. And I may be wrong.
7 I'll look to my folks.

8 So to substantiate the complaint,
9 though, isn't that after warnings --
10 written warnings or no?

11 MR. LEWIS: A substantiated complaint is --
12 when I say total, that's the total
13 number of complaints we received
14 regarding dog deer hunters. Within
15 those, if it's a permitted county, we
16 would have substantiated complaints
17 where an officer went out and
18 investigated this. We have a picture of
19 the dog where the dog is right there.

20 Of course, another --

21 (Brief interruption by the court
22 reporter.)

23 COMMISSIONER GUY: You have to stand up,

1 Chris. Our court reporter needs to hear
2 what you're saying.

3 MR. LEWIS: Substantiated complaints are -- if
4 we have a permitted county, permitted
5 club, if we get a complaint, we'll go
6 out and investigate that. And if we can
7 verify a dog intrusion, we can verify
8 with either proof of the dog there or
9 the dog still there, we recover it, we
10 call that a substantiated or confirmed
11 complaint.

12 On permitted clubs, we get a call, a
13 dog intrusion. We get out there.
14 There's nothing there. We log that as
15 an unconfirmed complaint. Either way
16 it's still a complaint that we receive
17 that we responded to.

18 If it's not a permitted county, it's
19 just -- it's a complaint. We go
20 investigate it. We don't do a report
21 since it's not a permitted county.

22 Permitted clubs, we do reports for
23 each club based on the number of

1 complaints they get. Each club will get
2 a letter at the end of the season if
3 they had complaints, confirmed or
4 unconfirmed. They will get a follow-up
5 letter at the end of the season: Hey,
6 this is what you had; what are we going
7 to do in the future to address it?
8 Those are on the permitted clubs.

9 Unpermitted clubs, we don't have --
10 we don't have relations with -- or we
11 don't follow up with them. We don't --
12 we go out there. We deal with the
13 problems. If they're there, they're
14 there. If they're not, we don't contact
15 them afterwards.

16 COMMISSIONER GUY: So do you have that, then,
17 about substantiated and unsubstantiated
18 broken down?

19 MR. LEWIS: With the permitted -- if it's a
20 permitted club, yes.

21 COMMISSIONER GUY: If it's not --

22 MR. LEWIS: If it's not, it's just a --

23 COMMISSIONER GUY: So I would just ask you to

1 do this: Provide that to the board and
2 we can -- and we'll talk to Lonnie about
3 those.

4 MR. LEWIS: Okay.

5 COMMISSIONER GUY: All right. Thank you.

6 MR. WOLFE: Mr. Chairman?

7 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Yes.

8 MR. WOLFE: So do I understand the ones that
9 you're talking about is just the numbers
10 that are permitted counties? Did I
11 understand that right, or that
12 includes -- the number you gave us was
13 everything?

14 MR. LEWIS: The number I gave you is
15 everything we received statewide --

16 MR. WOLFE: Statewide.

17 MR. LEWIS: -- whether it's a permitted county
18 or not. And some of those complaints
19 come from counties that have been closed
20 to dog deer hunting for years, and we'll
21 get complaints there.

22 Some of the complaints, you know,
23 it's hard -- they're complaints we

1 receive, but they're from dogs in
2 Mississippi -- hunters in another state
3 running into Alabama. But, again, it's
4 a dog deer complaint, and we record all
5 of those.

6 MR. MILLER: One complaint on the report was a
7 dog in a pen barking on a hunting club.
8 That was a complaint. And so --

9 MR. LEWIS: I strike those from my total. I
10 had some complaints about dog deer --
11 deer dogs being shot. I strike those
12 from our report, too, at the end of the
13 year.

14 MR. MILLER: But in Butler County -- and I
15 know Butler County had one issue. Me
16 and Mr. Hartzog talked about it earlier.
17 As a prime example, there's a pack of
18 yard dogs running deer and, you know --
19 and so, you know, if a landowner calls,
20 hey, I got some hunting -- you're dog
21 hunters -- yeah, we're dog hunting or --
22 you know, I don't hunt in Butler County.
23 I hunt in Covington County.

1 But it's not fair for the dog
2 hunters to get complained -- you get
3 complaints because somebody has got dogs
4 out and they run deer. It just happens.
5 That happened in Baldwin County this
6 year, you know. And that's what I'm
7 saying.

8 And don't get me wrong. I really
9 appreciate what Chuck has done and Chris
10 and all the folks. I'm good with that,
11 and I want to continue a relationship.
12 But I cannot accept more punishment or
13 restrictions at this point in time. My
14 membership is not going to want to do
15 that. It's not me. It's my membership.
16 And we're going to vote on whatever you
17 guys decide to do as to what they want
18 to do. But I know it's my
19 responsibility to keep my dog in my --
20 in my -- on my property. I agree with
21 that 100 percent. Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Mr. Miller.

23 Next public speaker -- excuse me,

1 Chuck.

2 MR. SYKES: I'm sorry.

3 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: No problem.

4 MR. SYKES: I understand their position on
5 unsubstantiated complaints. I
6 understand it. That's why the way that
7 reg is written now, whether you're in a
8 permit county or not a permit county,
9 you have to get two written warnings by
10 one of our officers, not word of mouth,
11 not a made-up, trumped-up complaint.
12 It's got to be investigated just like on
13 a permit county. That would solve the
14 problem.

15 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Chuck.

16 Any questions from the board?

17 (No response.)

18 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Next speaker, William
19 Allen.

20 COMMISSIONER GUY: Go ahead. You've only got
21 three minutes.

22 MR. ALLEN: Well, I may concentrate on one.

23 My name is William Allen. Everybody

1 calls me Andy. I live in Andalusia,
2 Alabama, Covington County. But this
3 concerns the -- actually being in favor
4 of the implementation of a permit system
5 for Butler County, particularly the area
6 between Highway 10 and Highway 106.

7 I lease approximately 250 acres of
8 Soterra land there. And I'm surrounded
9 by some leased land, Willard Timber
10 Company, which is leased by a
11 dog-hunting group which basically is
12 giving dog hunters a bad name. They
13 have little or no respect for adjoining
14 landowners or lessees. They do all they
15 can to bend the rules solely for their
16 benefits. They get my pattern down.
17 Adjoining club members, they get their
18 pattern down. They come in there. They
19 throw their dogs out.

20 I supplied the board -- each of you
21 have -- I think it's 14 pictures of
22 those dogs on my food plots that you'll
23 see those times in the middle of the

1 day, or there's Sunday when I as a
2 minister am not there. So they're doing
3 this at times when they think they can
4 get away with it.

5 This year, on the 26th of November,
6 I caught them setting up part of my land
7 and their land as well to run it. And
8 they had not throwed the dogs out. And
9 once I got there, within about five
10 minutes they all came and they all got
11 up to the gate and all left. But the
12 story was that they were trying to cut a
13 dog off that had come in from way far
14 away. The trouble is they have no land
15 in that area that they're supposed to be
16 running. It's permit land, and their
17 lease specifies from their own overseer
18 they are not to run dogs on this
19 property.

20 So they also -- when they're caught,
21 they use the old statement that, well,
22 we're trying to cut this dog off running
23 from two miles away. Also, they have an

1 attitude. We've done it for 40 years.
2 We'll keep doing it. You're just going
3 to have to live with it.

4 Also, they use the statement that my
5 dog can't read property lines. So,
6 therefore, you know, they're on my road.
7 They're lined up on my road. So they've
8 got their gun right here at the driver's
9 seat. You know, they're not trying to
10 cut a dog off. They're trying to shoot
11 that deer when it crosses the road going
12 through the middle of my property.

13 So they're also mixing alcohol,
14 driving, guns, and kids --

15 MS. JONES: Time.

16 MR. ALLEN: -- all at one time.

17 Thank you for your time. Thank you
18 for listening.

19 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Mr. Allen.

20 Which board member is Butler County?

21 Patrick, you may want to talk with
22 Mr. Allen and address some of his
23 concerns, and if you could report back

1 to us the next board meeting. Thank
2 you.

3 Next speaker is Michael Eiser.

4 ME. EISER: Hey, I'm Mike Eiser. I represent
5 a still hunt club in Coffee County, and
6 we're highly encouraging you or begging
7 you to please put a permit system in
8 Coffee County.

9 And let me preface this by saying
10 that I have nothing wrong -- nothing
11 wrong with dog hunting. It's fun. It's
12 exciting. I've done it before. But
13 when you've got the type of encroachment
14 we have in our club in our area, it's
15 not fun anymore.

16 We've got -- this year alone we have
17 six documented cases of dogs being
18 captured on our property. We have tons
19 of our hunts being ruined by rogue dogs
20 running across our property. And I
21 can't for the life of me figure out how
22 Coffee County has escaped the permit
23 system so far.

1 We're not dealing with the Lonnie
2 Millers of the world. We're not dealing
3 with the guys he described as do it and
4 do it right and do it well and do it by
5 the law and engage the techniques that
6 help cut down on complaints. We don't
7 have those guys here in Coffee County.
8 We got the guys that don't give a crap.
9 And our recourse -- what is our recourse
10 if we come up with a single man -- if
11 he -- this happened recently. We
12 know -- we have caught those dogs --
13 we've got a guy criminally
14 trespassing -- charges and arrest made
15 for criminal trespassing on our
16 property.

17 So if you can't get the type of guys
18 that we want to have deer dog hunting
19 privileges in Coffee County, give us the
20 permit system. Give us something. Give
21 us something with some teeth, some
22 recourse to protect our interests.
23 Because there's nothing more aggravating

1 than working your butt off for years and
2 hundreds of hours and all off season.
3 Oh, you sit down on your stand the first
4 day you can get there and have dogs come
5 running across your property. When you
6 do catch them, you bring them out there.
7 They say, oh, well, my dog can't read
8 signs. Well, I get that. Well, give us
9 the permit system. Give us something to
10 hang our hats on.

11 And, again, nothing against any dog
12 hunter in this property -- in this room.
13 You're doing it and doing it right.
14 It's the jerks that are in our county
15 that are ruining it for us, and they're
16 ruining it for you.

17 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Patrick, I think that's
18 your congressional district.

19 MR. CAGLE: Yes.

20 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: If you could get with
21 Mike.

22 MR. CAGLE: I've been discussing this with
23 folks in their club and folks in the

1 adjoining club, and it's a discussion
2 we're going to need to continue to find
3 the best resolution.

4 MR. EISER: Can we get a vote or get a -- how
5 do we get you guys to vote on a permit
6 system for our county?

7 MR. CAGLE: Anything we vote on would be at
8 the next board meeting --

9 MR. EISER: Okay.

10 MR. CAGLE: -- on March 4th.

11 MR. EISER: Well, I'm begging. Anybody who is
12 opposed to the Coffee County permit
13 system, please call me and tell me why.
14 I want to know.

15 And recently we had an incident that
16 involved a dog hunter who escalated to
17 the point of pulling a gun on us.
18 That's got to end. This is a powder keg
19 in Coffee County. You can't have that.

20 (Multiple speakers.)

21 MR. EISER: Read the police report. Read the
22 police report. The sheriffs were
23 called. They had -- we had to -- his

1 members had to physically restrain --

2 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Hey, Mike --

3 MR. EISER: -- him from getting his gun.

4 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Let's go ahead. We'll
5 take this up.

6 MR. EISER: Fair enough. Thank y'all. Now
7 I'm going to get out of here before I
8 get shot.

9 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: The next speaker is
10 Kaelyn Fillingim.

11 MS. FILLINGIM: I like to move around too much
12 to keep the mic in the stand.

13 My name is Kaelyn Fillingim, and I
14 am from Coffee County. I have several
15 memories in my childhood about hunting
16 with my daddy. He would let me name all
17 the dogs after my favorite princesses.
18 We had Cinderella, Snow White, and even
19 Sleeping Beauty.

20 It breaks my heart when I realize
21 how much hunting participation has
22 dropped. 50 percent of hunters are over
23 the age of 47. With declines like these

1 and cuts and restrictions on any type of
2 hunting, this will negatively impact
3 license sales and potentially affect
4 everyone in the room.

5 The proposed encroachment or leash
6 law states it shall be unlawful for any
7 person for the purpose of deer hunting
8 to permit a dog to enter onto, cross, or
9 remain upon property of another after
10 request not to allow entry of said dog
11 onto property has been communicated to
12 that person by the owner of such
13 property of authorized person.

14 I'm here representing all dog
15 hunters in Alabama, not the Alabama Dog
16 Hunters Association.

17 So you mean to tell me with this law
18 that my pet "Shooter" who wears sweaters
19 and takes selfies will suddenly be
20 deemed unlawful if he chases a butterfly
21 across a property line? What determines
22 that that dog is a deer dog or that that
23 dog was actually chasing a deer? Who

1 makes this determination?

2 For this proposed law to be enacted,
3 every landowner will have the ability to
4 act as an animal control officer. This
5 law will turn neighbors against each
6 other.

7 Why are we not promoting hunting?
8 We are all hunters. We should not
9 distinguish one type of hunter from
10 another. Whether you're a stand hunter,
11 coon hunter, quail hunter, dog hunter,
12 or bird hunter, we are all aiming to
13 achieve the same purpose. More
14 restrictions do not fix problems. They
15 simply create them. I know many of your
16 childhoods, like mine, were formed
17 around the memories we made hunting with
18 our daddies, brothers, uncles, and
19 friends.

20 Social media plays a prevalent role
21 in all of our lives. Anti-hunting
22 groups are constantly trying to prove
23 hunting to be unethical. Some have even

1 called dog hunters barbaric. We need
2 every hunter in the room to join
3 together to keep those childhood
4 memories alive because before this fight
5 is over we will need everyone and all
6 types of hunting.

7 Dog hunters are no longer
8 apologizing when we are not guilty of
9 anything. The days of bowing down are
10 over, and we are here standing up for
11 what we all know is right. I know that
12 I will be a dog hunter in Alabama as
13 long as I live with the hopes that this
14 advisory board and Conservation
15 Department does not put this sport to an
16 end. Dog hunters are here following the
17 rules and restrictions that are in place
18 just like every other type of hunter in
19 this room.

20 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: You have the floor,
21 Mr. Wolfe.

22 MR. WOLFE: I don't know who can answer the
23 question. The law you read, I'm not

1 familiar with that law that pertains to
2 what we're talking about.

3 MS. FILLINGIM: It's the leash or
4 encroachment --

5 MR. WOLFE: Chuck, can you -- can anybody
6 here -- is that a local law that you're
7 talking about in your area?

8 MR. SYKES: That -- that was last year's reg.
9 The one this year says two written
10 warnings -- it's in y'all's packet --
11 two written warnings by a conservation
12 enforcement officer, not any other law
13 enforcement branch. So it's not a
14 verbal warning. This is a
15 substantiated -- which is what the dog
16 hunters association wanted. This is a
17 substantiated complaint.

18 MS. FILLINGIM: The proposed questions would
19 still be in place even if they were
20 written warnings; correct? I mean,
21 because you're still going -- you're
22 still going to have the question of
23 whether the dog is a deer dog or if the

1 dog was chasing a deer. I'm not sure
2 how you make the differentiation or how
3 that would work.

4 MR. WOLFE: Yeah. But you've got to
5 investigate it. You've got to find out
6 whose dog it is and invest -- I mean,
7 that's what the officers are for.

8 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Kaelyn.

9 MS. FILLINGIM: Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Next speaker, Susan
11 Morrow.

12 MS. MORROW: Good morning, Chairman --
13 afternoon. I don't know what time it is
14 now. I'm Susan Morrow. I'm from Mobile
15 County. I'm here to talk to y'all about
16 dog hunting.

17 Dog hunters in the last several
18 years have worked very, very hard. We
19 have disassociated ourself with the bad
20 dog hunters. We do it right, and we
21 keep getting more and more restrictions
22 put on us.

23 Dog hunting is fun. As she said

1 earlier, we should all band together to
2 keep all types of hunting going. You do
3 away with dog hunting and you're going
4 to lose a lot of license sales. You
5 think you won't, but you will. And
6 we've worked so hard. And, now, if
7 there is a problem -- and as you said --
8 the officers, they need to arrest these
9 people.

10 We have disassociated ourself with
11 the bad dog hunters. We are not law
12 enforcement. We cannot arrest them.
13 And they will continue to do it anyway,
14 whether y'all stop dog hunting in
15 Alabama or you don't. And the only way
16 that that complaining is going to stop
17 is for somebody to start arresting these
18 people and getting them. I mean, you
19 know, you can set up a sting or
20 something if you have to, but show us
21 that it's actually happening this way.
22 And so I'm asking y'all to, please, look
23 at that.

1 And I'm also asking for more WMAs to
2 be opened. I understand that a lot of
3 the counties have been closed to dog
4 hunting. But this is a state property
5 that you lease or Forever Wild.

6 Mr. Guy, he can open it up just on that
7 state property for a hunt.

8 Yes, we lost Scotch. And I know all
9 of you that's been here have heard me
10 say. Scotch was the best organized dog
11 hunt you would ever go on. It was. We
12 lost Boykin. So y'all gave us Geneva.
13 And, yes, I went to the Geneva hunt, and
14 I will say this: I took my
15 seven-year-old grandson, and he got to
16 stay out of school to go. And when we
17 got there, after we -- we was told to
18 get our little numbers and all and get
19 in line -- well, show our license.

20 And so we got in line, and then they
21 had a little meeting, called us all over
22 there. And we was sold by Mr. Miller
23 that do not put your hands on our dogs;

1 do not catch our dogs; we will catch our
2 dogs. He said -- and somebody said,
3 why? And he said, well, it could be
4 that you put two male dogs in a box and
5 they go to fighting, and we don't want
6 our dogs hurt. Then he come up with the
7 dogs might bite you. And I'm thinking,
8 oh, Lord, what kind of dogs are we in
9 the woods with? Because there was
10 nowhere to --

11 MS. JONES: Time.

12 MS. MORROW: -- register your dogs to go.

13 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Ms. Morrow --

14 MS. MORROW: Ask me a question so I can
15 continue.

16 But, please -- I will wind it up.
17 But my grandson asked me -- he said,
18 Mawmaw, does this mean that if a dog
19 comes up and looks at me with them big
20 eyes I can't catch him? I said, yes,
21 son, that's what it means. He says,
22 let's go home right now. It was not
23 family oriented. It was like get in

1 line, stay right there. It was -- if it
2 would have been my first dog hunt, it
3 would have been my last.

4 And I wish that y'all would look at
5 opening up some more. They can be
6 organized hunts. It was done with state
7 people. So I wish y'all would do that.

8 And, also, Lonnie Miller does not
9 speak for me as a dog hunter in this
10 state and a lot of other dog hunters in
11 this state.

12 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Ms. Morrow.

13 MS. MORROW: Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: The next speaker, Donald
15 Nelson.

16 MR. NELSON: Thank you, gentlemen, for
17 allowing me to speak this morning. I'm
18 going to try to be as quick as I can. I
19 am friends with Mr. Lonnie Miller and
20 Ms. Morrow back there, so I love them
21 both.

22 Okay. I'm Colonel Don Nelson,
23 United State Marine Corps Retired. Some

1 of y'all know me as Mayor Don Nelson --
2 ex-mayor now -- 16 years in our little
3 town. But what I'm saying is 32 years I
4 took an oath to defend the freedoms of
5 this country, also the states -- the
6 state of Alabama. I'm a deacon at my
7 church. I'm a trustee at my church.
8 And the reason I'm telling you this is
9 not to beat my chest. It's to say I'm
10 not an outlaw and I'm not a renegade.
11 I'm just a good American that was raised
12 in this country, and I appreciate that.

13 I killed one buck deer this year on
14 my family's 200 acres, confirmation
15 number 172B80924202. And I had a flip
16 phone, so it was a challenge to do that.

17 I dog hunted for over 50 years, and
18 I enjoyed that in the area I hunted. I
19 haven't killed a deer on that club in
20 ten years. I don't even carry a shotgun
21 no more. I enjoy going with my dogs.

22 And I'm -- and, like I say, what I
23 want to do, I want to thank Pat Cagle

1 for calling me this year. There was a
2 complaint on the club that I belong to,
3 and I appreciate Pat for calling me and
4 alerting me to that problem about a dog
5 intrusion. Left 80 acres of my land,
6 went over for 30 minutes. The landowner
7 called me. I'd already put some
8 safeguards in place. Got chewed out and
9 I took it. I can take it from a man.
10 I'm a marine. I can -- if I do wrong,
11 I'll own up to what I did.

12 But I thank Pat for calling me. I
13 had already said no more dogs on that
14 property, that we have to alleviate that
15 problem. And there's been no more
16 complaints, I don't believe, from that
17 piece of property there.

18 We've purchased over -- my group of
19 folks I hunt with, we purchased over
20 \$50,000 worth of tracking collars, all
21 the systems that's associated. We're
22 getting ready to buy another \$5,000
23 worth of shock collars. We're trying to

1 implement the whistle training of these
2 younger dogs. My dogs are 12 to 14
3 years old. They're like me. An old dog
4 is hard to teach a new trick, but we're
5 trying.

6 We also put a perimeter road that is
7 a mile around the perimeter of our
8 property to stop this problem here. We
9 have had one problem in our area, and I
10 think the young lady talked about it.
11 These dogs, they're pets. And where I
12 hunt at, there's two Labs -- two black
13 Labs. There's a Collie dog. He looks
14 like a wolf. I'm surprised he hadn't
15 got shot because he looks like a coyote.
16 And a tri-colored Walker dog. They've
17 been reported to Lieutenant Randall Lee,
18 I believe, in Andalusia through one of
19 our members there that those dogs had
20 been running all summer. They're still
21 running right now. And my members have
22 seen them. They ran three bucks under
23 one of them during stalk season. I do

1 both stalk hunt and dog hunt, and I
2 enjoy both. I take my grandson, and I
3 hope I have the opportunity.

4 I'm -- we haven't had a complaint in
5 the past two years. We did this year.
6 Every year I come here I ask Mr. Hartzog
7 and I ask Pat since he's been on the
8 board have you had any complaints the
9 last two prior years, no. This year,
10 yes. We slipped up. I regret that we
11 had the complaint.

12 MS. JONES: Time.

13 MR. NELSON: But I feel like we've rectified
14 it. The only thing I would ask you to
15 do is, please, don't put us on the
16 permit system in Butler County and that
17 that regulation about -- that you
18 consider that you wouldn't do that.
19 Thank you for your time.

20 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Mr. Nelson.

21 MR. NELSON: Any questions?

22 MR. CAGLE: Mr. Chairman?

23 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Patrick, you have the

1 floor.

2 MR. CAGLE: Don, I want to thank you. I did
3 hear some complaints in Butler County.
4 I talked to Lonnie. I talked to Don.
5 Before I talked to them, I talked to
6 Nate Foster, the enforcement officer in
7 the area, and, you know, figured out
8 there were issues that needed to be
9 corrected.

10 Don came forward at my request to
11 work with Lonnie, and they came up with
12 a set of recommendations that they're
13 going to voluntarily impose to prevent
14 the problem. That's the model we all
15 need to be following. Because just
16 fighting every year at this board
17 meeting, you know, one side against
18 another is not going to get us anywhere.

19 At the end of the day, the goal is
20 to minimize conflict. We'll never end
21 it all. But if everyone takes
22 responsibility for their own actions and
23 keeps their dogs from continuously going

1 on others' property, the sport is going
2 to continue and we're going to have less
3 problems. And taking these voluntary
4 actions and -- you know, under Don, you
5 know, with him leading his club in that
6 direction and Lonnie's help, that's the
7 model we need to be following.

8 If there's a problem, let's identify
9 a real problem and come up with a
10 voluntary solution to solve it. It
11 makes it easy on us, and it makes it
12 easy on the club. Because, you know, at
13 the end of the day it's -- if dogs
14 continuously come on a neighbor's
15 property, it's a problem that's going to
16 get fixed one way or another. The best
17 way is the easiest way. So thank you.

18 MR. NELSON: Thank you for alerting me to that
19 problem. I will correct anything, shut
20 my dogs down to let other people hunt
21 theirs. It is a privilege, and I thank
22 y'all for your time and what you do.
23 Thank you, gentlemen.

1 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Mr. Nelson.

2 Our next public speaker is Larry
3 Ollis.

4 MR. OLLIS: My name is Larry Ollis. First I'd
5 like to start by thanking each of y'all
6 for allowing me to be here and speak to
7 y'all this morning.

8 I'm a dog hunter in Talladega
9 National Forest. This past season our
10 dog season was shortened from 58 days to
11 36. Of the 36 days we were allowed to
12 hunt, we had to have our dogs out of the
13 woods and in the box by noon. Of the 36
14 days that we had to run dogs in the
15 national forest, only nine of those fell
16 on -- or 11 fell on Saturday or Sunday.

17 Most folks have got to work Monday
18 through Friday. We can't hunt during
19 the week. Of the 11 that fell on a
20 Saturday and Sunday, two of those were
21 Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

22 I want to know what's being done by
23 this board to give us our season back,

1 if anything, what's being looked at to
2 give us our season back in the Talladega
3 National Forest.

4 Mr. Miller his self said that a lot
5 of the complaints that have come in --
6 when he sat down and worked with the
7 board to reduce our season, a lot of the
8 complaints that have come in about dog
9 hunters in the national forest were
10 unfounded, unsubstantiated, whatever he
11 wanted to call it. The bottom line is,
12 without any proof -- if there's no
13 investigation, if there's no proof that
14 our dogs have even trespassed, then why
15 was our season took away? Why were we
16 cut down?

17 That's about the only question I
18 really got this morning. Other than
19 that, I'd just like to say that -- just
20 like Ms. Morrow said, the ADHA no longer
21 represents every dog hunter in the state
22 of Alabama. Lonnie Miller does not
23 represent every dog hunter in the state

1 of Alabama. He don't represent me. He
2 don't represent the guys I hunt with.
3 He don't represent half the guys in
4 Talladega National Forest. He has no
5 business speaking for us. Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Mr. Martin.

7 MR. MARTIN: I want to say working with Lonnie
8 has been an absolute pleasure.
9 Talladega National Forest had a lot of
10 big issues. He called me the other day,
11 and I said, I mean, I've had one
12 complaint, and it wasn't -- and said,
13 hey, it's not perfect, but it's a heck
14 of a lot better than it ever has been.
15 So I wouldn't slam Lonnie that bad. I
16 mean, he's -- what's been going on has
17 been working. So, you know, I say
18 continue on.

19 But, Lonnie, I appreciate everything
20 you've done because it's been -- it's
21 been a pleasure working with you, and I
22 think we have a great working
23 relationship.

1 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Any other questions from
2 the board? Comments?

3 (No response.)

4 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Our final public speaker
5 is Joe Thomas.

6 MR. THOMAS: I just -- I know that a lot of
7 y'all heard from me on the telephone
8 calling complaining about dogs. I don't
9 have nothing against dog hunting, people
10 who hunt dogs. But when a man owns a
11 piece of property and he's not allowed
12 to hunt it because they're running dogs
13 over it and you're offending your
14 neighbor, that ain't right no matter
15 what. I mean, you know, if I was
16 offending my neighbor and stopping him
17 from hunting, he'd be down here raising
18 Cain about me. Well, I hadn't stopped
19 him from hunting. I mean, you'll never
20 hear a dog hunter say that --

21 And I ain't talking about the good
22 dog hunters. I'm talking about folks
23 that are outlawing.

1 -- come up and say, oh, those still
2 hunters messed me up; they went in the
3 woods; they're too quiet.

4 I mean, there ain't but one argument
5 here. The dog hunters don't want to
6 stop dog hunting, of course. I don't
7 want to see it stopped. But the whole
8 argument is you got still hunters that
9 can't hunt their land like mine. I
10 drove an hour and a half to hunt my
11 land. I get up there -- and I caught
12 the dogs twice. One man said, oh, it
13 was his yard dog. Well, it -- you can
14 ask the game warden. It wasn't. But, I
15 mean, he was just, you know, using any
16 excuse he can. I mean, if you got to
17 lie about doing something, you know you
18 ain't up to no good anyway.

19 But the last dogs I caught, I called
20 the game warden and sent pictures and
21 all that, but -- they hunted in Escambia
22 County, which I -- my land is at the
23 back of -- starts at Escambia County. I

1 live in Baldwin County. Well, Baldwin
2 is under a permit system. Mr. Wolfe and
3 Mr. Stimpson told me about it. But in
4 Escambia County, they run their dogs
5 across there and, you know ...

6 I asked that fellow when they took
7 him his dogs back, you know -- I said,
8 did y'all hunt? He said, oh, yeah, we
9 had a good time today. I said, I didn't
10 get to hunt; I had to catch your dogs.
11 I mean, he -- you know, he didn't care.
12 He's going to do the same thing the next
13 day. He said he was going hunting the
14 next day, you know. And you couldn't
15 stop him.

16 So, I mean -- you know, I mean, I
17 understand they got the right to dog
18 hunt. I'm not asking the board to stop
19 that at all. What a man does on his
20 property to me is his business. But he
21 ought to be able to do what he wants to
22 on his own property. He ought to have
23 the right to. He pays a note and taxes,

1 you know. I mean, if a dog come over --
2 your neighbor's dog come over and turned
3 your garbage over every day, you'd get
4 ticked eventually. You know, it ain't
5 right. And I thank all.

6 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Mr. Thomas.

7 MR. DOBBS: Real quick, Mr. Chairman.

8 Mr. Thomas, one question. Where do
9 you hunt? Where exactly? You said
10 Escambia --

11 MR. THOMAS: No. Baldwin. In Lottie,
12 Alabama, the Baldwin and Escambia County
13 line.

14 MR. DOBBS: I don't know where you're -- what
15 road? What county road?

16 MR. THOMAS: Highway 61 is the highway. It
17 goes up towards Atmore. My address is
18 Atmore.

19 MR. DOBBS: Okay. Thank you.

20 MR. THOMAS: Thank you, sir.

21 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Commissioner.

22 COMMISSIONER GUY: So I want to make one
23 comment. I probably shouldn't make it,

1 but I'm going to make it anyway.

2 So I heard a lot of people bashing
3 Lonnie. And that's fine. You're
4 entitled to your opinion. There might
5 be others that bash other folks in the
6 dog deer hunting association or
7 whatever.

8 Here's what I was listening to and
9 trying to make sure you understand: You
10 know, the one thing that I think we've
11 appreciated about Lonnie is that we're
12 trying to make decisions based on real
13 facts, real issues, and we're trying to
14 work and have been trying to work
15 through things that are true. Be
16 careful who you listen to about issues
17 because this -- and I always talk about
18 it like social media or whatever. You
19 know, somebody hears something and they
20 thinks it's the gospel. Better make
21 sure whoever are your leaders are
22 telling you truthful statements about
23 what we are trying to do. I admonish

1 you in that because if you base your
2 emotions on false information, you're
3 making a mistake, no matter who your
4 leaders are.

5 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

6 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: This concludes the
7 public hearing.

8 Grady, you can have the floor.

9 COMMISSIONER GUY: Patrick.

10 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Excuse me. Patrick.

11 MR. CAGLE: Go ahead. I'll come behind him.

12 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: No. Go ahead.

13 MR. HARTZOG: Go ahead, Patrick.

14 MR. CAGLE: I just want to remind everyone
15 that the regulation that Director Sykes
16 has talked about -- I believe it's -- I
17 believe it's well written. It would
18 take -- you know, you would get two
19 documented written warnings that your
20 hunting dog -- and the idea that it
21 would not be hunting dogs is not the
22 case. I mean, our officers have enough
23 on their plates. They're not going to

1 be chasing yard dogs deciding whether
2 they're hunting dogs. You know, to have
3 a legal hunting dog, you have to have a
4 collar on them. You know, that's all
5 just -- but a regulation that would
6 allow a landowner to report the dog, you
7 would have to see the collar. If the
8 same member of your club has their dogs
9 caught three times and the first two
10 times are a warning on a neighbor's
11 property, that third time there's a
12 problem. I think that's a simple -- a
13 simple regulation.

14 But the choice here isn't nothing or
15 something. The choice is between
16 continuing to add counties on a permit
17 system where there's documented problems
18 or going to this system that holds
19 individuals accountable. So it's
20 important to remember that. We're not
21 talking about doing nothing or doing
22 something. It's simply the choice of
23 what mechanism we use, are we going to

1 hold individual club members responsible
2 or is the whole club going to suffer for
3 the actions of a few bad actors. Thank
4 you.

5 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Mr. Grady Hartzog has a
6 special presentation.

7 MR. HARTZOG: David, could I get you with your
8 camera and all, please, sir?

9 Could I ask Shawn Battison with
10 Ducks Unlimited to come down?

11 I'd like Gunter and Chuck to come
12 down. I would like Raymond and Warren
13 to come down.

14 You know, guys, the Conservation
15 Department -- I sit on the board of
16 Ducks Unlimited, and Ducks Unlimited is
17 a viable organization that does an awful
18 lot of good in the state of Alabama and
19 the prairies of Canada to produce ducks
20 which migrate down and -- so we can have
21 them at Swan Creek and all the other
22 WMAs. But, you know, over the years the
23 department as well as Ducks Unlimited

1 has had a special friend that has helped
2 the department as well as Ducks
3 Unlimited get some legislation passed
4 that helped both the Conservation
5 Department and Ducks Unlimited.

6 Last year we had the scientific-data
7 collection, which I think Fred will tell
8 you they had been trying for years and
9 years and years to get passed. This
10 individual helped lobby the legislature
11 and pushed for it and got it passed.
12 Ducks Unlimited wanted an increase in
13 the Duck Stamp bill, and this guy worked
14 his ass off and got the legislature to
15 approve a Duck Stamp bill.

16 We had a lot of help from different
17 senators. We had Senator Whatley. We
18 had McCutcheon, which always got us on
19 the floor to finally get the bill
20 passed. Reed Ingram and Randy Davis.
21 We had an awful lot of friends in the
22 legislature.

23 But at this time I'd like to call

1 Chauncey Wood forward to receive an
2 award from the Conservation Department
3 as well as from Ducks Unlimited.

4 And, Gunter, if you will read the --
5 here you go, Gunter.

6 COMMISSIONER GUY: All right. Thank you.

7 In recognition as a Ducks Unlimited
8 conservation leader, for your support of
9 the Alabama Department of Conservation
10 and Natural Resources, and on behalf of
11 the Alabama Duck Stamp to further
12 waterfowl conservation in Alabama and on
13 the breeding grounds of Canada, we
14 recognize Chauncey D. Wood, III.

15 Chauncey.

16 MR. HARTZOG: Again, thank you, Chauncey.

17 And just to tell you how Chauncey is
18 still working, the Conservation
19 Department presently has two bills in
20 the house. One is a college license so
21 that the college students can buy
22 in-state licenses and also working on
23 increasing the age limit on license, and

1 Chauncey is doing that.

2 I can tell you that you don't want
3 Chauncey on your bad side because he can
4 get a lot done in the legislature, and
5 he has been a great friend to the
6 Department of Conservation and to Ducks
7 Unlimited.

8 So thank you, Chauncey, for all
9 you've done.

10 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Chauncey, once again,
11 congratulations.

12 The next order of business is a
13 motion for approval of license for CPI.
14 I think that's Raymond Jones.

15 Do you have a motion?

16 MR. DOBBS: Mr. Chairman, I would like to
17 propose that motion.

18 That pursuant to Section 9-11-68 and
19 9-11-69 that we approve -- I make a
20 motion that we approve the increase of
21 the hunting and fishing licenses and
22 fees based on the increases as set forth
23 in the consumer price index.

1 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Can we get a second?

2 MR. JONES: Second.

3 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Any discussion?

4 (No response.)

5 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: All in favor?

6 (All board members present respond
7 "aye.")

8 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Opposed?

9 (No response.)

10 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Motion carries.

11 Is there any other old business from
12 the board?

13 (No response.)

14 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: If not, we will move to
15 new business.

16 Is there any new business that needs
17 to be discussed from the board?

18 Grady.

19 MR. HARTZOG: Mr. Chairman, all I would like
20 to do is -- I'm talking about promoting
21 hunting and promoting the kids. Barbour
22 County Youth Hunt is February the 25th.
23 It's the largest youth hunt in the state

1 of Alabama. It's the third largest in
2 the country.

3 So on February the 25th, if you've
4 got some kids that want to have a good
5 time, bring them down to the Barbour
6 County Management Area. I guarantee you
7 they'll be fed well and they'll have a
8 good time. They'll learn skeet
9 shooting, archery, BB guns. It's a --
10 they actually carry them out and
11 squirrel hunt, raccoon hunt. So
12 February the 25th, put that on your
13 calendar and come out and let the kids
14 have a good time.

15 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Joey, do you have a
16 motion?

17 MR. DOBBS: Additional new business,
18 Mr. Chairman, a general statement
19 that -- regarding the proposed
20 regulations included in our packets from
21 both Marine Resources Division, Fish and
22 Game, Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries,
23 as well as the additional packet that

1 was with those to be added, that those
2 will be voted on at our next meeting as
3 new business.

4 And another piece of new business,
5 things that we have discussed in the
6 past about the dog deer encroachment
7 rule, which is part of this package, to
8 be further clarified, some minium
9 acreage requirements that we discussed
10 in the past for leaseholders for dog
11 deer hunting. And that is all that we
12 have discussed.

13 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you.

14 And these will be considered for
15 voting the next meeting; am I correct?

16 MR. DOBBS: Yes, that's correct.

17 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: All right. Let the
18 minutes reflect that.

19 Grady, you have the floor.

20 MR. HARTZOG: Mr. Chairman -- and I've gotten
21 with Chuck and Keith. There is a typo
22 error in the waterfowl that we can kill
23 11 mallards, not four. So that needs to

1 be changed before we vote on it at the
2 next meeting.

3 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: Thank you, Grady.

4 Any further new business from the
5 board?

6 (No response.)

7 CHAIRMAN STRICKLAND: If not, the final agenda
8 item is announcement of the date and the
9 location of the next meeting. And that
10 next Conservation Advisory Board Meeting
11 will be March 4th, 2017, at Gunterville
12 State Park.

13 If there's no further business, this
14 concludes today's meeting. We
15 appreciate everyone coming out. See you
16 on March 4th.

17
18
19 (Meeting adjourned at
20 approximately 12:26 p.m.)

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23

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

* * * * *

STATE OF ALABAMA:

MONTGOMERY COUNTY:

I, Tracye Sadler Blackwell, Certified Court Reporter and Commissioner for the State of Alabama at Large, do hereby certify that I reported the foregoing proceedings of the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Advisory Board Meeting on February 11, 2017.

The foregoing 214 computer-printed pages contain a true and correct transcript of the proceedings held.

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

This 15th day of May 2017.

Tracye Sadler Blackwell
ACCR No. 294
Expiration date: 9-30-2017
Certified Court Reporter
and Commissioner for the State
of Alabama at Large