

**Board of Natural Resources  
Minutes**

2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive  
Suite 1252 East Tower, S. E.  
Atlanta, GA 30334

**March 25, 2009**

**Attending:**

Board Members

Bill Carruth, Chairman  
David Allen  
Bill Archer  
Earl Barrs  
Gene Bishop  
Jenny Lynn Bradley  
Warren Budd  
Joe Hatfield  
Walter Hudson  
Mabel Jenkins  
Phyllis Johnson  
Ray Lambert  
Bob Rutland  
Loyce Turner  
Jim Tysinger  
Jim Walters  
Philip Watt  
Tom Wheeler

Visitors

Robert Farris, Georgia Forestry Commission  
Curt Soper, Georgia Land Conservation Council  
Robert Farris, Georgia Forestry Commission  
Bryan Tolar, Georgia Agribusiness Council  
Andrew Schock, The Conservation Fund  
Katie Kirkpatrick, Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce  
Gordon Rogers, Satilla Riverkeeper  
Rob Williams, Fanning Institute UGA  
Gary Strickland, College of Coastal Georgia

Staff Members

Noel Holcomb  
Chris Clark  
Carol Couch  
Susan Shipman  
Steve Friedman  
Dan Forster  
Marlin Gottschalk  
Becky Kelley  
Ray Luce  
Todd Holbrook  
Jim Ussery  
Doralyn Kirkland  
David Crass  
John Bowers  
David Freedman  
Mary Ann Eaddy  
Suzanne Burnes  
Angie Johnson  
Lynda Bryan  
Lauren Curry  
Sarah Dearman  
Emily Hitchcock  
Mary Ann Evans  
Hellen Harris

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Todd Silliman, McKenna Long & Aldridge, LLP  
Robert Ramsey, The Nature Conservancy  
Greg Adams, Board of Regents  
Linda Daniels, Board of Regents  
Dexter Adams, UGA Grounds  
Shelly Lakly, The Nature Conservancy  
Rex Boner, The Nature Conservancy  
Glenn Dowling, Georgia Wildlife Federation  
Shana Udvardy, Georgia Conservancy  
Ronny Just, Georgia Power Company  
Bettie Sleeth, Home Builders Association of Georgia  
Thomas Farmer, The Nature Conservancy  
Abit Massey, Georgia Poultry Federation  
Gary Black, Georgia Agribusiness Council

The March 25, 2009 meeting of the Board of Natural Resources was called to order by Board Chairman Bill Carruth.

Chairman Carruth called for a motion for the approval of the minutes of the February 25, 2009 meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Walters, seconded by Dr. Turner and carried unanimously that the minutes of the February 25, 2009 meeting of the Board of Natural Resources be approved.

Chairman Carruth called for a motion for the approval of the minutes of the March 13, 2009 conference call meeting of the Board of Natural Resources.

A motion was made by Mr. Walters, seconded by Dr. Turner and carried unanimously that the minutes of the March 13, 2009 conference call meeting of the Board of Natural Resources be approved.

Chairman Carruth expressed appreciation to Commissioner Noel Holcomb for his many years of faithful service to the State of Georgia, commended him for his accomplishments as Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and read the Resolution commending Commissioner Holcomb. Chairman Carruth then called for motion to present the Resolution from the Board honoring Commissioner Holcomb.

A motion was made by Mr. Budd, seconded by Mr. Barrs and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to Commissioner Noel Holcomb expressing appreciation for his 34 years of faithful service to the State of Georgia. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part hereof)

Chairman Carruth read and presented the Resolution from the Board to Commissioner Holcomb.

Chairman Carruth called on Todd Silliman, Rob Williams, and Katie Kirkpatrick, representing the Institute for Georgia Environmental Leadership (IGEL).

Mr. Silliman stated that his company McKenna, Long and Aldridge, LLP partners with the Fanning Institute of the University of Georgia, in the IGEL, Inc. Program, a leadership program which addresses Georgia's environmental challenges. He further stated that the 200+ alumni of the program include former congressmen, acting heads of State agencies, DNR Board members, and leaders of some of Georgia's top businesses and non-profit organizations. He added that the IGEL Program would not have been possible without the support of the Department of Natural Resources. Mr. Silliman expressed his appreciation to Commissioner Holcomb for his personal commitment to IGEL.

Mr. Rob Williams stated that Commissioner Holcomb entered the IGEL Program as an accomplished leader, who helped make the program work and whose leadership had been significant in mentoring others in the Program.

Ms. Katie Kirkpatrick stated that as a fellow graduate with Commissioner Holcomb in IGEL Class 6, she was honored to participate in expressing appreciation to him for his work with the program. She read and presented the resolution from IGEL, Inc. honoring Commissioner Holcomb for his commitment to the IGEL Program.

Chairman Carruth called on Shelly Lakly, The Nature Conservancy; Rex Boner, The Nature Conservancy and Conservation Fund; and Glenn Dowling, Georgia Wildlife Federation.

Mr. Boner acknowledged visitors, representing nonprofit conservation organizations, who came to honor Commissioner Holcomb's commitment to conservation in the State of Georgia. Mr. Boner expressed appreciation from the conservation community to Commissioner Holcomb for his commitment to land and natural resource conservation and presented him with a picture of McLemore Cove, a recent significant land conservation project led by Commissioner Holcomb.

Chairman Carruth called on Curt Soper, Georgia Land Conservation Council (GLCC), and Robert Farris, Georgia Forestry Commission, who expressed appreciation to Commissioner for his work with the GLCC on the many land conservation projects involving more than 100,000 acres of protected land in Georgia. He presented a framed GLCC sign, autographed by GLCC members and Governor Perdue, which was a copy of signs posted on 145 conservation project areas throughout the state.

Mr. Farris expressed appreciation to Commissioner Holcomb for his leadership to the GLCC and for his partnership to the Georgia Forestry Commission and the forestry community.

Commissioner Carruth called on Commissioner Holcomb to give a Faithful Service Award presentation.

Commissioner Holcomb presented the Faithful Service Award to Susan Shipman, Director, Coastal Resources Division, for her 30 years of faithful service to DNR and expressed appreciation for her work and commitment to the Department.

Ms. Shipman expressed appreciation for the award and for the support of the Department to her through the years.

Commissioner Holcomb requested that Chairman Carruth call for a motion for the Board to amend a December 3, 2008 action, which would correct his retirement date and the effective starting date of incoming Commissioner Chris Clark.

A motion was made by Mr. Wheeler, seconded by Dr. Watt and carried unanimously that the Board amend the December 3, 2008 action by the Board regarding the appointment of Chris Clark as Commissioner of Natural Resources so that the effective date of his appointment is April 1, 2009.

Commissioner Holcomb called on Commissioner-Select Chris Clark to present a budget update to the Board.

Commissioner-Select Clark stated that he wanted to correct an issue from the briefing regarding State ParkPasses presented to Parks, Recreation and Historic Sites Committee meeting on March 25, 2009. He stated that the correction states that the ParkPass discount for senior citizens and senior disabled veterans would be sustained at current discount levels.

He called attention to a handout of the FY 2009 budget and compared the House and Governor's budget reductions for FY 2010. He presented and explained additional budget cuts that the House had made and stated that the House and Senate would continue deliberations and a new FY2010 budget would be passed by April 3, 2009. He stated that the Department had been directed to outsource additional State-owned golf courses and lodges, and he called attention to other cuts in the budget. (Budget and PowerPoint attached hereto and made a part hereof)

Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Holcomb called on Ray Luce, Director, Historic Preservation Division (HPD), to present State Stewardship Awards.

Dr. Luce stated that in 1998 the Legislature passed the State Stewardship Program, which encourages the preservation of historic resources and establishes an awards program which recognizes State employees for their services relating to historic resource preservation.

He presented the Governor's Award for Excellence in Historic Preservation to Linda Daniels, Vice Chancellor for Facilities, Office of Real Estate and Facilities, Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, for her outstanding commitment to historic preservation planning and genuine consideration of the preservation assets that are part of the University System of Georgia.

He presented the Governor's Award for Historic Preservation Stewardship to Angie Johnson, former site manager, Dahlonga Gold Museum, Parks, Recreation and Historic Sites Division (PRHSD), DNR, for her outstanding leadership and significant achievements in preserving and protecting the historic Dahlonga Courthouse and Gold Museum.

He presented the Governor's Award for Historic Preservation Stewardship to Fred Hay, Sapelo Island Manager, Wildlife Resources Division (WRD), DNR, for his more than five years' support and encouragement of the Sapelo Island Archaeological Research Consortium.

Dr. Luce presented the Governor's Award for Historic Preservation Stewardship to Dexter Adams, Director, University of Georgia's Grounds Department, and to Janine Duncan, Campus Planning Coordinator, University of Georgia, for spearheading a long-term protection strategy for the preservation of the historic Old Athens Cemetery (sometimes referred to as the Jackson Street Cemetery).

He presented the Governor's Award for Historic Preservation Stewardship to Gary Strickland, Director of Facilities, College of Coastal Georgia; and to Brian Tankersley, Harold Day, Caesar Grovner, Francisco Mendozo, and Lee Stallings for their outstanding efforts laying the groundwork for the 80 plus volunteers who participated in a successful workday to stabilize the Coffin Administration Building at Sapelo Island.

Commissioner Holcomb called on Dr. Luce to give an update on items of interest from HPD.

Dr. Luce stated that the 2000<sup>th</sup> National Registration Nomination was for the listing of the Waynesboro Historic District, Burke County. He further stated that a giant party will be held on May 13, 2009, in Waynesboro to celebrate its distinction as being the 2000<sup>th</sup> listing on the National Register.

He expressed appreciation to Commissioner-Select Chris Clark, Board members, and private organizations, offering assistance regarding budget cuts for HPD's Archaeological Program. He pointed out the importance and responsibility of expediting projects, which would qualify for grants included in the 2009 federal Stimulus Package.

Commissioner Holcomb called on Susan Shipman, Director, Coastal Resources Division (CRD), to give an update from CRD.

Ms. Shipman stated that in May a barge, containing 44 scrap subway cars from New York City, would be deployed to Georgia; and that the subway cars would be placed at DRH Reef, 15 miles east-southeast of Little St. Simons. She further stated that in 2010 another barge is expected, and that the subway cars would be placed off the coast at Savannah.

She reported on the status of House Bill 170, which would set water bottoms lease rates for docks that have more than 500 linear feet of mooring, at \$1000 per acre annually to be adjusted by the Coastal Marshland Protection Committee, based on rules passed by the Board to account for inflation or deflation of the economy. She further stated that an amendment was added to the bill by the Senate, which would provide an

exemption from Marsh Act permitting for EMCs, municipal and public utility authorities. She added that the final vote on the bill should come next week.

She called attention to a handout relating to recovery of the severely overfished Red Snapper stock. She stated that federal law mandates that the federal Fishery Management Council (FMC) take action within one year to end overt fishing of the Red Snapper fishery, and that the FMC is working on an amendment to provide long-term protection of Red Snapper. She further stated that this long-term protection would not be in place by July 2009, and that it was necessary for the Council to adopt the Red Snapper Interim Rule to close recreational and commercial fishing of Red Snapper from North Carolina through the Florida Keys. She added that the timing of the closing was unfortunate because of the current economy and severe implications for the for-hire fisheries. She further added that the FMC has requested the regional administrator of the National Marine Fisheries Service to allow experimental fishing permits to provide for continued collection of data on Red Snapper while this fishery is closed.

She stated that CRD is tentatively scheduling a Coastal Marshlands Protection Committee meeting for May 1, 2009, in the Savannah area.

Commissioner Holcomb called on Dan Forster, Director, Wildlife Resources Division (WRD), for an update from his division.

Mr. Forster stated that House Bill 326, relating to hunting and fishing licenses, would offer a discount on the transaction fee to a sportsman purchasing a hunting or fishing license before their current license expires. He further stated that the bill would also adjust non-resident license fees to current market levels of the Southeast, and he added that the predicted impact of the bill could raise \$2.3 million in revenues.

He stated that Senate Bill 72 is a house-keeping bill that would update codes in law that refer to Board regulations regarding criminal violations, and that current statutes mandate a regular update of these regulations.

He stated that Senate Bill 111 passed, which updates lighting regulations for hunters for night hunting. He further stated that Senate Bill 110 passed, which provides for trapping of beaver on road right-of-ways without a permit, and added that this bill would benefit municipalities with jurisdiction of roadways plagued with beavers in culverts. He further added that a number of other bills are being considered which are of interest to WRD regarding all terrain vehicles in streambeds and a landowner liability for hunters on private property, which would include agricultural and agribusiness interests.

Mr. Forster stated that on March 18, 2009, Corporal Curtis Wright, WRD Law Enforcement Officer who was shot Thanksgiving Day while on waterfowl patrol, was recognized and honored by the House and Senate. He further stated that the *Atlanta Journal Constitution* ran an article on March 3, 2009 regarding Corporal Eric Sanders,

WRD Law Enforcement Officer, who found \$10,000 of treasury bonds on a trash dump while patrolling the Conyers area for illegal dumping. He added that Corporal Sanders returned the bonds to the family that owned them, and that he was commended for his honesty.

Mr. Forster stated that two reservoirs, Flat Creek and Ocmulgee Public Fishing Areas, are beginning to fill from recent rains and that an earlier problem with leakage at Ocmulgee had been corrected.

Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Holcomb called on Carol Couch, Director, Environmental Protection Division (EPD), to give updates from her division.

Dr. Couch reviewed changes in the House Budget FY 2010 impacting EPD. She stated that proposed budget cuts would reduce EPD's state-funded travel budget by 80%, which would significantly impact site inspections, compliance, complaints and permitting in the future. She further stated that EPD was working with Senate Appropriations to address the effect of the cut on EPD's ability to perform its required tasks.

She stated that Senate Bill 198 would relate to fees returned to EPD from inspection of cars in the nonattainment area, and that bill would provide flexibility to apply these dollars on managing emissions from cars. She further stated that several bills that she had reviewed in earlier meetings would not be considered this session.

She stated that she had attended a national organization of state environmental directors, which covered current Environmental Protection Agency concerns and regulations relating to greenhouse gases and toxins affecting children's health. She further stated that she would brief the Board at the April meeting on jurisdictional waters of the United States related to Clean Water Act purposes and Army Corps of Engineers activities.

She expressed appreciation to WRD Law Enforcement for their work relating to illegal dumping as a first line of defense and to visitors from the Board of Regents and the University of Georgia for their work which focuses on water conservation.

Commissioner Holcomb expressed appreciation for the kind words, gifts and presentations extended to him in recognition of his work as Commissioner. He stated that when he became Commissioner, he set three strategic goals, which were to development partnerships, increase recreational opportunity, and buy high quality land for conservation; and he felt that he had achieved these goals. He added that he felt that the transition to the new Commissioner, Chris Clark, would be a seamless passing of the baton, and he expressed appreciation to the Board for their support to him

through his tenure as Commissioner and to DNR staff who had been like a family to him through his years at DNR.

Chairman Carruth called on Warren Budd, Chairman of the Land Acquisition Committee.

Mr. Budd stated that the Land Acquisition Committee had two items to present.

A motion was made by Mr. Budd, seconded by Mr. Bishop and carried with negative votes by Mr. Lambert, Mr. Hatfield, and Mrs. Johnson that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval for the acquisition (purchase) of 7,180± acres of real property, Altamaha River Townsend Wildlife Management Area (WMA), Rayonier Forest Resources, L. P. Tract Phase I via The Nature Conservancy (TNC), McIntosh and Long Counties. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part hereof)

A motion was made by Mr. Budd, seconded by Mr. Bishop and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval for the granting of a Revocable License and granting of a permanent right-of-way easement by the FY-11 General Assembly, for a maximum of 0.19± acres of real property for road construction on State property, Hugh Gillis Public Fishing Area (PFA), Laurens County. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part hereof)

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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Bill Carruth, Chairman

ATTEST:

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Earl D. Barrs, Secretary