

**MINUTES  
ALABAMA FORESTRY COMMISSION  
JANUARY 20, 2011**

PRESIDING – Don Heath, Chairman

SECRETARY – Linda Casey, State Forester

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT – Don Heath, Johnny McReynolds, Melisa Love, Jett Freeman, Ken Real, Jerry Smith, Randy Gilmore

ALABAMA FORESTRY COMMISSION PERSONNEL PRESENT – Linda Casey, Patrick Glass, Tom Conway, Gary Cole, Bruce Springer, Neil Letson, Stanley Anderson, LeaAnna Meadows, Regina Miller and Lynell Mosley.

GUESTS – Stephen Pecot, Anne Rilling, Steve Guy, Jimmy Looney, Gary Cole, Chauncey Wood, Roy McAuley, and Sam Duvall.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER – Chairman Don Heath called the meeting of the Alabama Forestry Commission to order at 10:00 a.m. on January 20, 2011 in the Commission's state office executive conference room, 513 Madison Avenue, Montgomery, Alabama 36104.

ROLL CALL – Regina Miller called roll. All Commissioners were present. Miller announced that a quorum was present.

Miller announced that the meeting had been properly advertised.

MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 14, 2010 MEETING – Upon reviewing the minutes, the following corrections were noted: Page 2, 3rd paragraph \$93.000 should be \$93,000 and page 2, 7th paragraph \$24.000 should be \$24,000. Commissioner Randy Gilmore made a motion to approve the minutes with corrections. Commissioner Melisa Love seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

ELECTION OF NEW OFFICERS – The nominating committee, composed of Commissioners Jett Freeman and Melisa Love, nominated Ken Real to serve as chairman and Johnny McReynolds to serve as vice-chairman. There being no other nominations, Don Heath made a motion to close the nominations and Johnny McReynolds seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Chairman Ken Real presided over the remainder of the meeting.

AFC PROPERTY UPDATES – General Counsel, Tom Conway, reported that the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources will handle the sale of the Wallace Tower Site in Escambia County. Since there is a title issue, a Quitclaim Deed will be executed when the property is sold.

Conway reported that the lease to be executed with the City of Atmore will state that the city will pay the costs associated with bringing well #2 at the old Hauss Nursery in compliance with federal standards.

Conway stated that paperwork has been completed for the removal of the Orvin Tower site in Mobile County.

Southwest Regional Forester, Gary Cole, presented an progress report on the Hauss Nursery silvopasture project describing that the purpose of the project is to provide information on establishing the cost and returns for landowners that might be interested in establishing a silvopasture site on their property. Since there is the possibility of the Hauss Nursery property beind sold in the future, the project will be re-evaluated annually.

East Central Regional Forester, Bruce Springer, discussed the current status of Commission property located in his region stating that the Lee and Lowndes County offices had been closed and personnel were moved to other county offices. A decision had been made to delay selling the Dadeville property due to the sluggish economy. There are two pieces of property but only one will be sold.

Springer made the following recommendations for Commissioners approval:

- Keep both the Thorsby and Stauffer Nurseries for timber production and continue leasing the office and shop located at Stauffer from Auburn University.
- Move the Central Shop to Montgomery, adjacent to the Commission's Communications Center and streamline the program.
- Relocate the FEPP Coordinator and FEPP Screener from the State Office to the East Central Regional Office.

Commissioner Johnny McReynolds made a motion to approve Springer's recommendations. Commissioner Don Heath seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Volunteer Fire Assistance Coordinator, Greg Wood, discussed the FEPP rotation process regarding allocation of equipment to volunteer fire departments. First, the Commission's county offices submit requests to their FEPP regional representative who then forwards requests to Wood who then updates the priority equipment list. As equipment becomes available, FEPP associates at the central Shop and state office issue equipment to volunteer fire departments according to the regional rotation priority list.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT – General Counsel, Tom Conway reported that the Commission will continue to pursue improved law enforcement legislation, improve State Forest regulations, and address severance tax collection issues.

2012 BUDGET – State Forester, Linda Casey, discussed talking points concerning the 2012 budget that will be going out to AFC employees today.

PERSONNEL UPDATE – Patrick Glass, Assistant State Forester, reported that the FY10 staffing level was 334 and the current staffing level is 263 with 19 of those positions being funded through ARRA grants.

FOREST OPERATIONS DIVISION – Forest Operations Assistant Division Director, Neil Letson, gave an overview of Alabama's Forest Assessment & Resource Strategy, Forest Inventory & Analysis (FIA) Program, Forest Health Program, Landowner Assistance Program and Urban & Community Forestry (U&CF) Program. The overviews covered the purpose of the programs, elements of the programs and issues affecting the programs.

Forest Operations Assistant Division Director, Stanley Anderson, reported on the Wildland/Urban Interface and Fire Prevention Programs. Anderson advised that Firewise Grants were issued to Alapine Village, Terry Cove Harbor and Historic Blakeley Park. The three communities received a total of \$60,000 in grant money and performed \$153,535 worth of Firewise and hazard mitigation work. He also reported that external and internal training had been implemented.

GRANTS UPDATE – Stephen Pecot of Larson & McGowan, reported that 7,200 infestations of cogongrass have been documented by twenty scout contractors, five of which are Commission employees. A total of 2,592 infestations in seven counties totaling approximately 142 acres have been sprayed.

Anne Rilling of the Longleaf Alliance presented discussed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Longleaf Restoration (ARRA) Grant program accomplishments. Rilling reported that the restoration initiative for the Longleaf Pine Forest is to maintain existing longleaf ecosystems in good condition, improve acres classified as “longleaf forest types,” and restore longleaf pine forests on suitable sites currently in other forest types/land classifications.

The Commission's Prescribed Fire Grant Coordinator, LeaAnna Meadows, reported on the ARRA Prescribed Burning and Hazardous Fuel Reduction Grant. The program objectives are to educate Alabama landowners on the importance of hazardous fuel, increase the practice of prescribed burning by traditionally underserved landowners and create awareness of hazardous situations in the Wildland Urban Interface.

STATE FORESTER'S REPORT – State Forester, Linda Casey, discussed the 2012 Budget, Forest Stewardship Certification, USFS Redesign Grants, other Grants (received or applied for by the AFC), Volunteer Fire Departments, Management Services and the Strategic Plan. Casey stressed the fact that the Commission is applying for all grants that are available.

DATE AND LOCATION OF NEXT MEETING – Commissioners scheduled the next meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, April 14, 2011 at the Commission's state office, 513 Madison Avenue, Montgomery, Alabama.

ADJOURNMENT – There being no further business, Commissioner Don Heath made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Johnny McReynolds seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 2:57 p.m.