

**MINUTES
ALABAMA FORESTRY COMMISSION
July 10, 2008**

PRESIDING - Jerry Smith, Chairman

SECRETARY - Linda Casey, State Forester

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT – Jerry Smith, Chairman, Melisa Love, Vice Chairman, Don Heath, Jerry Lacey, Jett Freeman and Kenneth Real.

ALABAMA FORESTRY COMMISSION PERSONNEL PRESENT - Linda Casey, Bill Baisden, Craig Hill, Tom Conway, Gary Cole, Neil Letson, Tara Johnson and Regina Miller.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER - Chairman Jerry Smith called this regular meeting of the Alabama Forestry Commission to order at 10:00 a.m. on July 10, 2008 in the Forestry Commission's Executive Conference Room located at 513 Madison Avenue, Montgomery, Alabama 36104.

ROLL CALL - Regina Miller called roll. Commissioners Jerry Smith, Melisa Love, Don Heath, Jerry Lacey, Jett Freeman and Ken Real were present. Commissioner Randy Gilmore was absent.

Miller announced that the meeting was properly advertised.

MINUTES OF THE APRIL 17, 2008 MEETING - MOTION NO. 910: Don Heath made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 17, 2008 meeting. Ken Real seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

REORGANIZATION OVERVIEW – State Forester Linda Casey presented an overview of the AFC reorganization structure explaining two major changes: restructuring from four to six regions with the addition of work unit managers and the other change in the communications system. These changes will provide a more efficient and cost effective delivery of services to the tax payers of Alabama.

BUDGET – Administrative Division Director, Jerry Dwyer informed Commission's of the AFC's FY '09 General Fund Appropriation of \$15,312,438. Discussion followed regarding grants and other possible revenue sources.

OLD LAMAR COUNTY OFFICE SITE – Tom Conway reported that the sale of old Lamar County Office Site to the County Commission should be completed next week.

DISPOSAL OF TOWER SITES – Conway requested approval to sell or revert to heirs one tower site in Franklin County and one tower site in DeKalb County if the Protection Division determines they are no longer needed for communication purposes. MOTION NO. 911: Melisa Love made a motion to revert the Franklin County Tower Site to the heirs and to sell the DeKalb County Tower Site for 90% or greater value if the AFC does

not revert the tower to the heirs or does not keep to maintain communications access. Ken Real seconded the motion. Don Heath recused himself from voting due to a conflict of interest. The motion was passed by unanimous vote.

LAW ENFORCEMENT – Law Enforcement Chief, Craig Hill reviewed Law Enforcement Section organizational plans. At the current time, there are four full-time law enforcement officers and others that work dual roles. He explained that the AFC needs its own timber theft law to receive funds from fines collected. Record keeping, training, and publicizing arrests were also discussed.

LAND SALES – Assistant State Forester Bill Baisden proposed the sale of four parcels of property along with appraisals for each parcels. (Attachment #1)

George Washington State Forest – With no access to the property, there is a limited market for this 20-acre site. MOTION NO. 912: Don Heath made a motion to sell this property and to contact adjoining landowners and others ho might have an interest in purchasing the property. Jett Freeman seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Miller Nursery – This 121.44 acre site is located in Autaugaville. MOTION NO. 913: Don Heath made a motion to sell this site and to pay the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources the appraisal cost plus \$500 and the cost of the announcement. Melisa Love seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Crawford State Forest – This 80-acre site is located in Mobile County. Don Heath made a motion to sell the property at the appraised cost. Jett Freeman seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Baldwin State Forest – this 240-acre site is located in Baldwin County. Don Heath made a motion to maintain ownership of the property for 1-2 years and to re-evaluate the sale of the property at that time in hopes of bringing a higher sale price. Ken Real seconded the motion and the motion carried.

WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE GRANT ACTIVITIES – Urban Forestry Coordinator, Neil Letson spoke of the concerns for the safety of the public and of forest sustainability in cases of wildfires reaching neighborhoods in Alabama. The AFC received almost \$1.4 million in grant funds to combat these threats in Alabama. The funds will be used to train homeowners, develop hazard mitigation plans, provide cost-share assistance and produce a Public Awareness Campaign.

TRAINING – Assistant State Forester, Bill Baisden discussed training to be provided for personnel for Type I, Type II, and Type III fires. Also mentioned were Senior Team Building Training, Ranger Class Career Development Training, and upcoming Work Unit Manager Training.

LITTLE RIVER STATE FOREST – Southwest_Regional Forester, Gary Cole reported that the Creek Indians are not interested in the Park and that the Monroe County

Commission nor the Escambia County Commission is interested in running the Park. Conservation is interested but will need financial and in-kind assistance. The next step is to schedule a meeting of the Advisory Council for further discussion.

OUTREACH – Outreach Coordinator, Tara Johnson reported that Forestry Camp was a success having raised \$20,000 and recruiting 36 campers.

Three separate grant applications for improvements to Little River State Forest, Geneva State Forest and a recreational trail in Marion County will be submitted to ADECA for funding. Also mentioned were a grant to supplement workshops for landowners and an Outreach Redesign Grant to identify landowner information to reach especially small landowners.

Johnson explained that efforts are underway to better diversify the Outreach Council since some members are rotating off the Council.

STATE FORESTERS REPORT - State Forester, Linda Casey discussed the Alabama State Assessment which must be completed by May 22, 2010. This Assessment is required in the Forestry Title of the 2008 Farm Bill and is an integral part of the USDA Forest Service State & Private Forestry Redesign. Components of the Assessment include

- an analysis of forest conditions, trends and delineates priority rural and urban forest landscapes,
- provides long-term strategies for investing resources to manage priority landscapes,
- focuses federal investment on leveraging action and engaging multiple partners, requires an annual report on how S&PF funds will address the assessment and strategy,
- must be approved by the Secretary of Agriculture and completed by May 22, 2010.

DATE AND LOCATION OF NEXT MEETING – MOTION NO.914: Ken Real made a motion to meet on October 16, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. in the Executive Conference Room of the State Office in Montgomery. Don Heath seconded the motion and the motion carried.

MEETING ADJOURNED – The meeting adjourned at 1:49 p.m.