



Land Use and Access Committee Meeting Summary

August 26, 2015

Commission Chair Tom Berry called the meeting to order at 1:25 pm.

Attendees

Committee Members

Tom Berry, Chair
Tommy Fonville
Garry Spence

John Coley
Joe Barker

Commissioners

Wes Seegars
Brian White
Joe Budd
Jim Cogdell

John Litton Clark
Mark Craig
Neal Hanks

Staff

Mallory Martin
Betsy Haywood
Isaac Harrold
Jodie Owen
Kris Smith
Kyle Briggs
Mark Hamlett
Carolina Medina

Gordon Myers
Erik Christofferson
Ashton Godwin
Thomas Harvey
Bob Curry
Tommy Hughes
George Norris

Visitors

Ned Jones – NC Trout Unlimited
Will Morgan – The Nature Conservancy

Justin Boner – The Conservation Fund
Bill Holman – The Conservation Fund

Review of Land Acquisitions

Isaac Harrold, *Lands Program Manager*, told the Committee that **Exhibit H-1**, Cumberland Farms Tract in Cumberland County, will not be considered at this time. Staff will conduct more investigation before asking for possible action by the Commission.

Phase I Projects

Harrold then reviewed five Phase I land acquisition projects:

- Deviney Brier Creek Tracts – Cleveland and Rutherford counties (**Exhibit H-2**)
- McGee Tract – Caldwell County (**Exhibit H-3**)
- Porter Capital Corp Tract – Polk County (**Exhibit H-4**)
- Sorrells Meadow Tract – Haywood County (**Exhibit H-5**)
- Waccamaw Campbell Group Tract – Columbus County (**Exhibit H-6**)

Discussion about the Sorrells Meadow Tract included the cost of the acquisition. Commissioner Neal Hanks toured the tract. This acquisition is an opportunity to acquire property that is a habitat for priority species and that adjoins other lands in conservation ownership.

The Land Use and Access Committee will recommend approval of the five Phase I projects at the August 27, 2015 meeting of the WRC.

ACTION: The committee asked Isaac Harrold to prioritize possible property acquisitions to make best use of available funding.

Phase II Projects

Harrold reviewed six Phase II land acquisitions. The Committee will recommend approval by the Commission of the following properties:

- Ashley Tract – Bladen County (**Exhibit I-1**)
- Graves Addition Tract – Caswell County (**Exhibit I-2**)
- Pioneer Tract – Brunswick County (**Exhibit I-3**)
- Sheepback Mountain Tract – Haywood County (**Exhibit I-4**)
- Stolting Tract – Richmond County (**Exhibit I-5**)
- Voice of America Tract – Beaufort County (**Exhibit I-6**)

Review of Easement Requests

Harrold reviewed three easement requests. The Committee will recommend approval by the Commission.

- Polk County – reciprocal access easements across a portion of Green River Game Land and adjacent private property (**Exhibit J**)
- Columbus County – request from NCDOT for easements across portion of Columbus County Game Land to facilitate two bridge improvement projects (**Exhibit K**)
- Burke County – request to amend an existing utility easement across portion of Johns River Game Land for purpose of correcting alignment issues (**Exhibit L**)

Zone Designations

With Commissioner John Coley recusing himself from discussion or action on Exhibit M today and at the WRC meeting on August 27, 2015, the Committee reviewed **Exhibit M**, which is a staff recommendation to designate Safety and Restricted Firearms Zones on a portion of Butner-Falls of Neuse Game Land in Durham County. The restrictions are necessary to address Federal Law for firearm possession and use near schools.

Field Trial Schedule 2015 -2016

Prior to consideration by the Commission on August 27, 2015, the Committee reviewed **Exhibit N**, the 2015-2016 Running Schedule for the J. Robert Gordon Sandhills Field Trial Area.

Other Discussion

Voice of America Tract – Beaufort County

Gordon Myers told the Committee that the VOA site is very important to the Henslow's sparrow. The VOA sites are the only locations in the southeastern United States where this species of special concern breeds. Commissioner Joe Barker announced that he would like to apply to name the area for his good friend who died.

ACTION: Provide Commissioner Barker with the policy for naming a land or facility in honor or memory of someone.

Texas Plantation Update

Tommy Hughes informed the Committee that improvements to the Texas Plantation site are on schedule. The impoundments are being restored. A parking area is in place. Dove fields have been planted and permit hunts are in place. In answer to a question about what to do with the house on the property it was decided to have this as a topic for discussion at a September 22 meeting of the Land Use and Access Committee.

Burke County Shooting Range

Erik Christofferson, *Deputy Director of Operations*, informed the Committee that there was a great deal of local opposition to both sites that were suggested by the WRC. Christofferson stated that staff will confer with the US Forest Service about using some of their land for a shooting range site. Christofferson stated that Burke County passed a resolution asking the WRC to develop an indoor shooting range.

Carbon Credits

Chairman Tom Berry told the Committee that carbon credits were discussed in a meeting with Counsel. Updates to the LUAC will be provided as more information becomes available.

Adjourn

Chairman Berry adjourned the meeting at 2:35 pm.