

**LAND USE AND ACCESS COMMITTEE MEETING
NOVEMBER 7, 2012**

ATTENDEES

COMMISSIONERS

Jim Cogdell — Chairman
Joe Barker
Durwood Laughinghouse
Thomas Berry
Ray Clifton
John Coley
Garry Spence
David Hoyle

VISITORS

John Barbour – State Property Office
Dick Hamilton – NCWF

STAFF

Gordon Myers	Russell Wong
Mallory Martin	Jackie Bullock
Cecilia Edgar	George Norris
Betsy Foard	Dale Caveny
Norman Young	David Cobb
Chris Dillon	Kyle Briggs
Isaac Harrold	Christian Waters
Shannon Deaton	Kate Pipkin
Mark Hamlett	Bob Curry
Erik Christofferson	

Summary

Acquisitions Update — Isaac Harrold

One Thousand acres have been closed on in the last six weeks.

Game Land Rule Proposal H-15 — Consider a modification to regulation proposal to prohibit horseback riding on Perkins Game Land in Davie County as requested by the landowner, Duke Energy.

The proposal to prohibit horseback riding on Perkins game land year round went to public hearings and was opposed by hounds clubs. The modified proposal would prohibit horseback riding from November 1 to January 1 in order to reduce potential conflicts between hunters and horseback riders. Support of Duke Energy's request was recommended. Chairman Cogdell recommended approving and going forward with the proposal.

Property Matters

Exhibit G — Easement Request, Bladen County — Consider a request by the Department of Transportation for an easement at the Tar Heel Boating Access Area.

Chairman Cogdell recommended going forward with the proposal. A question was asked about how high power lines are in the area. Mark Hamlett with Engineering Services stated that boating would not be impacted. The easement will not affect renovation of the boating access area.

Land Acquisitions — Consider approval for staff to begin working with the State Property Office and funding partners to develop acquisition plans for the following properties:

Exhibit H-1 — Summit Boating Access Area, Lake Gaston — A potential 0.08 acres is proposed as a transfer to WRC. The transfer would help offset the cost of an access easement, which has been requested by the adjacent landowner across the property. The transfer would allow for parking improvements.

Exhibit H-2 — Watauga River, Blowing Rock — Angler access and parking on a portion of Delayed Harvest Trout Waters was lost due to "no trespass" posting by property owner. A question was asked about whether the area had been used before by anglers. The response was yes, but the area was closed by the property owner because of concerns about activities other than fishing. Because of the posting, the area will not be stocked with trout by WRC. Recommendation was made to move forward.

Exhibit H-3 — Pinch Gut Phase 4 Tract, Brunswick County — Tract acquired by The Nature Conservancy for \$862,000 through a North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant. The property will be transferred to WRC when the Conservancy takes title. Tracts 1 and 2 are already owned by WRC. The tract scores 30 out of 30 on the Relative Priority Evaluation Worksheet and contains wet pine savanna and pocosin habitats. Thirteen listed species associated with these habitats have been identified by the Wildlife Action Plan. The committee approved a recommendation to move forward with the acquisition.

Exhibit H-4 — Capel Tract, Montgomery County — Tract scores 28 out of 30 on Relative Priority Evaluation Worksheet. The Land Trust for Central North Carolina purchased 260 acres of property in 2009 for \$1 million. The Trust has received a grant from the Clean Water Management Trust Fund to assist with the purchase of an additional 65 acres at a cost of approximately \$600,000. Once the Trust takes title to the 65 acres, they are willing to sell the entire property (325 acres) to the WRC for \$350,000.

Exhibit H-5 — Brown's Island Tract 2, Carteret County — WRC owns tracts 4, 5, 6 and 7, which total 158 acres of Brown's Island. The N.C. Coastal Land Trust received a Coastal Wetlands Grant for \$840,000 to purchase the tract. The Trust anticipates closing on the property in December, at which time Tract 2 will be donated to WRC.

A question was asked about the value of Tract 3, which is owned by a Mr. Julian Brown. The ultimate goal is to have the entire island in a conservation status.

Exhibit I — Braun Tract Phase 2 Donation, Ashe County — Consider final approval to accept donation of the Braun Tract in Ashe County for incorporation into Pond Mountain Game Land.

Tract offered as donation by Blue Ridge Conservancy. Early Successional Habitat found on property; gates will be installed to prohibit vehicular access.

Chairman Cogdell commended staff for their work. Executive Director Gordon Myers proposed that Exhibits G, H1 through H-5 and Exhibit I all be voted on as a group. Motion was seconded and carried.

Cooperative Agreement for Portion of Sandy Mush Game Land, Buncombe County — Notification of a cooperative agreement to enroll Buncombe County property (88 acres) owned by the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy into the N.C. Game Lands Program, to be managed as part of Sandy Mush Game Land.

Presented for informational purposes only. There was no formal action requested of the Committee.

Chairman Cogdell stated he would like to see a report in 2013 regarding a history of properties as well as capital costs and stewardship costs on properties that have closed.

Gordon Myers commended Isaac Harrold on his presentation.