

Minutes  
Board of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources  
Teleconference Meeting  
August 8, 2024 10:00 am

The regular meeting of the Board of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources was held at 10:00 a.m., August 8, 2024 via teleconference. Notice of the date, time and place of the meeting was posted and mailed to the news media. Chairman Norman Pulliam presided at the meeting. Board members present included Dr. Mark Hartley, Mike Hutchins, Jerry Lee, Carlisle Oxner, Jake Rasor, Jr. and Duane Swygert. Director Boyles and staff members of the Department of Natural Resources were present at the meeting.

1. **Call to Order**

Chairman Norman Pulliam called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. **Invocation**

Director Boyles offered the invocation.

3. **Pledge of Allegiance**

Vice Chairman Hutchins led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. **Introduction of Guests**

Shannon Bobertz, Chief of Staff, reported there were no guests present.

5. **Constituent Comments**

Mrs. Bobertz stated there were no requests for constituent comments.

6. **Approval of Minutes**

Chairman Pulliam asked if there were any additions, deletions or corrections to the minutes of the June 27, 2024 Board meeting. *Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the minutes of the June 27, 2024 Board meeting be approved as submitted. Mr. Swygert seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

7. **Agency Reports/Updates**

Director Boyles commended *SC Wildlife* magazine staff Joey Frazier, Cindy Thompson and Kathy Diaz for their hard work which was recognized in a note to the Director from a constituent who had received the July-August 2024 special edition of the magazine and said, "I believe it is one of the best editions ever produced by DNR".

Director Boyles commended Andy Wicker, Jeff Boyer, Ross Self, Leo Rose and Nicole Kish for their dedication and hard work on the agency's response to the incident at Lake Paul Wallace.

Director Boyles asked Deputy Directors Emily Cope, Blaik Keppler and COL Chisolm Frampton for a status update concerning Tropical Storm Debby.

Emily Cope, Deputy Director for Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries, stated that there is flooding on all properties on the coast and staff are beginning to assess the situation. Mrs. Cope also noted that they are monitoring Lake Paul Wallace.

Blaik Keppler, Deputy Director for Marine Resources, reported that early inspections are showing no impacts on facilities, but staff have not been able to get to Bennett's Point.

COL Chisolm Frampton, Deputy Director for Law Enforcement, gave the Board a briefing of Law Enforcement Division activities including with other law enforcement partners.

**8. Items for Board Information**

A. Climate Update

Hope Mizzell, Land, Water and Conservation Division, briefed the Board on the latest forecast for Tropical Storm Debby. Dr. Mizzell noted that TS Debby made landfall near Bulls Bay, SC around 2:00 am. Dr. Mizzell reviewed the preliminary highest rainfall totals, peak wind gusts, river flooding forecasts, and tornadoes associated with TS Debby.

B. WMA Trapping Survey Results

Jay Butfiloski, Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division, gave the Board highlights of the WMA Trapping Survey Results, but will provide a more detailed report at the September meeting.

C. Agency Head Review

This item was deferred until executive session.

**9. Advisory Committee Reports**

A. Land, Water and Conservation

Ken Rentiers, Deputy Director for Land, Water and Conservation reported that the Land, Water and Conservation Advisory Committee held a virtual meeting on July 22, 2024 to act on the Conservation District Commissioner Appointments/Reappointments that the Board considered earlier.

B. Heritage Trust

Mr. Rentiers reported that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board met July 25, 2024. The Advisory Board received the annual FOIA and Procedural update. The Advisory Board received a presentation from Dr. Richard Porcher on his book "A Guide to Saving South Carolina Wildflowers". The Advisory Board considered and approved the 2025-2026 Heritage Trust Budget and four property acquisitions that the Board will consider today.

C. Marine

Mr. Swygert reported that the Marine Advisory Committee met July 26, 2024. The Advisory Committee received presentations on the Blue Crab Fishery and Cobia.

**10. Executive Session**

*Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the SCDNR Board go into executive session pursuant to SC Code Section 30-4-70(A)(1) to discuss personnel matters related Item(s) for Board Information C and Item(s) for Board Action K and SC Code Section 30-4-70(A)(2) to discuss contractual matters related to Item(s) for Board Action F, G, H, I and J. Dr. Hartley seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

**11. Open Session**

*Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the SCDNR Board return to open session, noting that no action was taken during executive session. Mr. Rasor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

**12. Items for Board Action**

- A. Approval of FY 2025-2026 Heritage Trust Budget  
*Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the SCDNR Board, acting as the Board of Trustees for the Heritage Land Trust, approve the FY 2026 Heritage Trust budget, in the amount of \$6,341,589.00, as requested by the Heritage Trust Advisory Board. Mr. Swygert seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*
- B. Approval of FY 2025-2026 Budget Request  
*Mr. Swygert made a motion that the SCDNR Board affirm the prioritization as appropriate, and approve the FY 2025-2026 SCDNR State Budget Request as recommended by staff by email dated August 7, 2024. Corrections and adjustments may be made to calculations where necessary. Mr. Lee seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*
- C. Approval to Grant an Easement in Florence County  
*Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the SCDNR Board, upon the recommendation of SCDNR staff and the Director, grant approval of the proposed easement to the SC Law Enforcement Division (SLED) on SCDNR's Florence Office property to install a sanitary sewer line to SLED's proposed new office building, in addition to approvals required by the Department of Administration and the State Fiscal Accountability Authority. Mr. Lee seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*
- D. Amendment to SCDNR Board Policy #301.01: Use of Force  
*CPT Lee Ellis reviewed the request as proposed in the meeting packet. Mr. Lee made a motion that the SCDNR Board accept the recommendation of SCDNR Law Enforcement Staff and the Director, and reassign SCDNR Board Policy #301.01, Use of Force, as SCDNR Law Enforcement Division Directive #D309. Mr. Swygert seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*
- E. Amendment to SCDNR Board Policy 300.01: Deputy Law Enforcement Officer  
*CPT Ellis reviewed the request as proposed in the meeting packet. Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the SCDNR Board accept the recommendation of SCDNR Law Enforcement Staff and the Director, and approve the removal of the following language from the SCDNR Board Policy #300.01, section IV(D): Retired SCDNR Officers serving as Deputy Law Enforcement Officers will not be required to meet minimum work hours, but are required to attend all required training to maintain commission. Mr. Lee seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*
- F. Preliminary Approval to Investigate the Acquisition in Colleton County  
*Mr. Razor made a motion that the SCDNR Board, upon recommendation of staff and the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, grant preliminary approval to evaluate the potential purchase of approximately 11.8 acres in Colleton County to be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the Corpus of the Heritage Trust as a part of St. Helena Sound Heritage Preserve & Wildlife Management Area. Mr. Swygert seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*
- G. Preliminary Approval to Investigate the Acquisition in Florence County  
*Mr. Lee made a motion that the SCDNR Board, upon recommendation of SCDNR staff and the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, grant preliminary approval to evaluate*

*the potential purchase of approximately 2,584 acres in Florence County to be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the Corpus of the Heritage Trust as a part of Woodbury WMA and the expenditure of up to \$20,000 of Heritage Trust Funds to conduct due diligence activities. Mr. Rasor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

H. Preliminary Approval to Investigate the Acquisition in Florence County

*Mr. Lee made a motion that the SCDNR Board, upon recommendation of SCDNR staff and the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, grant preliminary approval to evaluate the potential purchase of approximately 4,969 acres in Florence County to be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the Corpus of the Heritage Trust as a part of Woodbury WMA and the expenditure of up to \$20,000 of Heritage Trust Funds to conduct due diligence activities. Mr. Swygert seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

I. Preliminary Approval to Investigate the Acquisition in Pickens County

*Chairman Pulliam disclosed that he may have a potential conflict with this issue and did not participate in the conversation of this item and, as Chairman, does not have a vote. Mr. Rasor made a motion that the SCDNR Board, upon recommendation of staff, subject to standard due diligence, amend the preliminary approval to increase the project by an additional +/- 131.43 acres in Pickens County, as a part of Jocassee Gorges WMA. Dr. Hartley seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

J. Final Approval of Acquisition in Horry County

*Mr. Lee made a motion that the SCDNR Board, upon the recommendation of SCDNR staff and the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, subject to standard due diligence, grant final approval to purchase approximately 353 acres in Horry County that will be dedicated as part of the Lewis Ocean Bay Heritage Preserve/Wildlife Management Area and placed into the corpus of the Heritage Trust. Mr. Rasor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

K. Conservation District Commissioner Appointments/Reappointments

*Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the SCDNR Board accept the recommendation of SCDNR Staff, the Director and the Land, Water and Conservation Advisory Committee and approve the following conservation district commissioner appointments: Thomas Legare, Charleston – 08/08/24 – 01/31/27; Doug Heydt, Newberry – 08/08/24 – 03/03/26; Danielle Himsey, Newberry – 08/08/24 – 01/31/25; and Gary Sayre, Jr., Spartanburg – 08/08/24 – 04/07/26. Mr. Rasor seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

*Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the SCDNR Board accept the recommendation of the SCDNR staff, the Director and the Land, Water and Conservation Advisory Committee and reappoint the following conservation district commissioners: Diane O. Bosler, Allendale – 10/14/24 – 10/13/28; James E. Fender, Dorchester – 09/19/24 – 09/18/28; Joe Alvin Derrick, Edgefield – 08/01/22 – 7/31/26; Jimmy Poston, Florence – 02/12/23 – 02/11/27; Roddey E. Gettys, III – 07/06/24 – 07/05/28; and Frances McClary, Williamsburg – 09/19/24 – 09/18/28. Mr. Swygert seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

**13. Time and Location of Next Board Meeting**

The Board will hold a meeting on September 12, 2024.

**14. Adjournment**

*Mr. Hutchins made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. Mr. Lee seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*