BEFORE THE

PENNSYLVANIA GAME COMMISSION

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BEFORE: SCOTT H. FORADORA, PRESIDENT

Dennis Fredericks, Vice President

Allen DiMarco, Secretary

Stanley I. Knick, Jr., Member

Michael F. Mitrick, Member

Todd A. Pride, Member

Haley J. Sankey, Member

Kristen Koppenhafer, Member

Robert C. Schwalm, Member

HEARING: Saturday, April 13, 2024

9:52 a.m.

LOCATION: PA Game Commission

2001 Elmerton Avenue

Harrisburg, PA 17110

WITNESSES: None

Reporter: Derek Richmond

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1	APPEARANCES	
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3	W. CREIGH MARTSON, ESQUIRE	
4	PA Game Commission	
5	2001 Elmerton Avenue	
6	Harrisburg, PA 17110	
7	Counsel for Pennsylvania Game Commission	
8		
9	ALSO PRESENT:	
10	MATTHEW SCHNUPP, Director of Bureau of Wildlife	
11	Management	
12	JASON DECOSKEY, Director of Bureau of Wildlife	
13	Protection	
14	DAVID GUSTAFSON, Director of Bureau of Wildlife	
15	Habitat Management	
16	STEPHEN SMITH, Deputy Executive Director	
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PROCEEDINGS 1 2 3 PRESIDENT FORADORA: I'd like to reconvene the meeting. Thank you. We need to call 4 5 for the approval of minutes. So, do we have a 6 motion for the approval of minutes from the January 7 meeting? COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: So moved. 9 COMMISSIONER KNICK: Second. 10 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Any discussion? Thank you. Mr. Secretary, call the vote. 11 12 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: All those in 13 favor, signify by saying aye. 14 (AYES RESPOND) 15 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Opposed, the 16 same sign. 17 (NO RESPONSE) 18 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Motion 19 carries. 20 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you. 21 Okay. 22 Next item is the Bureau of Wildlife 23 Management.

for consideration can be found on page two of your

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ATTORNEY MARTSON: And the first item

agendas.

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To effectively manage the wildlife resources of this Commonwealth, the Commission, at its January 27th, 2024 meeting, amended Section 141.28 to eliminate age restriction and permit requirements and provide the Director the authority to annually designate WPRAs to be opened to hunting and establish appropriate season dates and bag limits. As a result of this regulatory change, all individuals eligible to hunt pheasants statewide would also be allowed to participate in pheasant hunting within WPRAs, subject to landowner permission.

This amendment is now before the Commission for final adoption.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Do we have a motion?

COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: So moved.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Second?

20 COMMISSIONER KNICK: Second.

21 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Motion and

22 second. Discussion on the motion? Okay.

Mr. Secretary, call for a vote.

<u>COMMISSIONER DIMARCO:</u> All those in

25 favor, signify by saying aye.

1 (AYES RESPOND) 2 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Opposed, the 3 same sign. 4 (NO RESPONSE) 5 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Motion 6 carries. PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you. 8 ATTORNEY MARTSON: The next item for 9 consideration can be found on page four of your 10 agendas, and also comes from the Bureau of Wildlife 11 Management. To effectively manage the wildlife 12 13 resources of this Commonwealth, the Commission, at 14 its January 27th, 2024 meeting, amended Section 15 139.4 to provide updated seasons and bag limits for 16 the 2024-2025 license year. This amendment is now before the 17 18 Commission for final adoption. 19 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Do we have a 20 motion? 21 COMMISSIONER KNICK: So moved. 22 COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Second. 23 PRESIDENT FORADORA: We have a motion 24 and second. Discussion? Any discussion on the 25 motion?

1 COMMISSIONER KOPPENHAFER: I'd like 2 to offer a floor amendment if I could, Mr. 3 President. 4 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Go ahead, 5 Commissioner Koppenhafer. 6 COMMISSIONER KOPPENHAFER: On page 7 ten, regarding white-tail deer seasons, we heard yesterday from Staff about the need for additional 9 opportunity in increasing antlerless harvest within 10 our disease management areas. Staff has recommended an extended season for antlerless only in three 11 12 WMUs, WMU 4A, 4D, and 5A. And they proposed that 13 season run January 2nd, 2025, to January 20th, 2025. 14 I'd like to make a motion that we 15 amend what is written on page ten for deer season 16 and adopt that recommendation that was proposed by staff yesterday. 17 18 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Clarification, 19 Commissioner Koppenhafer. Is it page 11 that was 20 the new one? The new one? Page ten is good. 21 You're amending page 11? 22 COMMISSIONER KOPPENHAFER: So it's 23 the seasons for white-tail deer on page ten. 24 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Okay. 25 That's - sorry. That is where it

begins. Sorry, my mistake. Okay.

We have a motion on floor. Do we have a second?

COMMISSIONER KNICK: Second.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Any discussion
on that motion?

COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: You know,
I'd like say a word about that. I, you know, my hat
is off to the Bureau of Wildlife Management. This
CWD issue is obviously getting very serious. And at
least initially there seemed to be a huge outcry,
especially for those hunters and sportsmen in the in the DMA areas, you know, Blair County mainly.
But the information that we're getting from staff
and Andrea Korman's presentation yesterday.

I mean, I don't know about you all, if you were here, I mean, it's absolutely scary what's going on. And here, she - she was predicting that things would be in certain places in two decades, and in reality, we were there in four years. So, it's a real challenge. It's going to be a real challenge to harvest enough deer to keep the herd under control and try to keep the CWD at bay.

So, my hat's off to the Bureau of Wildlife Management, and this is a first move. I

mean, this isn't something that is partly it's done.

This is Commissioner Giger's proposal is a step, and

This is Commissioner Giger's proposal is a step, and I suspect that there'll be more steps to come.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you,

5 Commissioner Fredericks.

COMMISSIONER PRIDE: Scott, can I ask
one question?

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Yes.

COMMISSIONER PRIDE: And Matthew, not that I'm expecting you to answer this question. And I think for most of the staff, they know how fiercely I have attacked the CWD issue. And so, to Denny's point about how serious this is. And for those that may have seen Andrea's presentation yesterday, she specifically, you know, showed a chart regarding where it was in 2020 and where it is in 2024.

And from a biologist standpoint, not that you have to answer this question, but if we took the approach of what we probably should do, and you can correct me if I'm wrong, we'd probably depopulate all of the deer in those areas. We effectively can't do that for a number of reasons, but we've got more work to do because if we look out, and I think I had asked a question in our

January meeting to Andrea at the Staff presentation, where would she project CWD to be in that map in ten years? And I'm going to shorten that to say in five years.

If we look at what we saw yesterday, in four years, the next four years, it's probably going to double in terms of where it is. So we've got some significant decisions to make. I mean, this is a step in the direction, but I think we've got to really double down. I mean, I heard some comments earlier regarding the significance of Pennsylvania nationally. We've got to be a little bit more aggressive because in my area, in the Philadelphia area and our surrounding counties, we've got the largest number of Sportsman's club in the entire state. In the southeast where we are, we have over 100 by a multiple.

And if and when CWD gets down where we are, as I heard from a number of hunters this past fall, and these are hunters that manage deer management groups. A number of them said, their wives said to them, don't bring this in the house, in terms of the venison. This is a real issue that we've got to get a little bit more aggressive. I'm not proposing anything new, but just to share with

those that are in this room, those that are listening online, and to the media, we've got to take, I think, a bit of a little bit more of an aggressive approach, so.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you, Commissioner Pride. Agree with your comments.

Any other discussion or Matthew, do you have anything -?

DR. SCHNUPP: Yeah, if I may. If you don't mind. I'm an eternal optimist, so I do want to provide some level of a silver lining here. We are proposing three WMUs, and the reality is, is that our hunters did step up with our increased allocations in the other WMUs that have CWD. So I really want to re-emphasize the importance of us collaborating with hunters, and they showed up. I mean, they really did.

We asked them to increase their harvest. We talked to them about harvesting the antlerless - antlerless deer, and they stepped up. And that's why we're only needing to propose three WMUs. And so, these three that we are proposing, we really need them to go out and help us manage this issue. And I think, from what we've seen last year, we really expect that to happen. And we just can't

thank them enough for doing that and working collaboratively with NGOs and with the hunters to really everybody take this responsibility seriously.

And so, I just want to wanted to provide that note of optimism as well. That we do have great partners, but - but we certainly need to take this seriously, and I think that we're doing that with these kind of step forwards.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you,

Matthew. And I want to reiterate what Matthew said

from the Commissioners. I want to thank the hunters

for stepping up to the plate as well. So, thank you

for mentioning that.

Any other discussion -?

COMMISSIONER PRIDE: I just want to say in terms of the allocation. So, what I think a number of us saw from last year, both January and now in terms of season bag limits and increasing the allocation, you know, I saw a number of references in the media and the social media being critical of us increasing the antlerless allocation. And it was very general and broad. Just the comments of the, you know, Game Commission is increasing allocations.

And I think I've asked and I'd like to see in what we put out, you know, some references

to the formula that we use for those and for these particular reasons. So we're not haphazardly, okay? Increasing the allocation, okay? Just to do it for, you know, the purpose of doing it. And we hear the comments about, you know, not enough deer here, you know, too many deer here. But I think we, you know, that allocation element, I think we'd, and I would like to see us, you know, add a little bit more information to what we put out to the public. Because there's a reason why we're increasing the allocation, you know, in various areas, whether or not it's CWD, whether or not we're not harvesting enough in certain areas.

But just so we can put something out so the public knows and our media partners know that when they print these things, you know, let's, you know, share with the public why we're doing this.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you.

Thank you, Commissioner. Okay.

Any other discussions on the floor amendment? If not, Mr. Secretary, can you call for a vote on the amendment?

COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Those in favor, signify by saying aye.

25 (AYES RESPOND)

COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Those opposed, 1 2 no. 3 (NO RESPONSE) 4 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Motion 5 carries. PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you. Okay. 6 7 We need to come back to seasons and bags, and we had a motion and a second. 9 Discussion on that? If there is discussion - if there's no further discussion on the 10 entire season and bags package, Mr. Secretary, we 11 need to call a vote for that entire season and bags 12 13 recommendation. 14 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Those in 15 favor, signify by saying aye. 16 (AYES RESPOND) 17 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Those opposed, 18 no. 19 (NO RESPONSE) 20 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Mr. President, 21 motion carries. 22 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you. 23 Thank you, Mr. Secretary. 24 I just want to read a statement after 25 we approve season and bags here. We as

Commissioners want to make a statement to the public.

With today's vote, the Board has once again scheduled the start of the firearms deer season to be on Saturday. We do this firmly believing that starting the season on a Saturday creates the most opportunity for hunters, and thus helps ensure the future of the sport that we are charged with protecting.

Nonetheless, we understand that there are those with different opinions who would like to see a return to the Monday opener, and we recognize the passion that many of you feel about this issue. We may disagree, but we have heard your voices. As the debate over a Saturday or Monday opener lingers on, it has unfortunately caused considerable disagreement within our hunting ranks. It has fractured and divided us at a time when we need to be united.

Therefore, I am directing staff within the Commission to work with the leadership of the House Game and Fisheries Committee to develop a plan to once again study and analyze this issue. It is our hope that a comprehensive review can take place to address some of the concerns that we have

heard and ensure that the Board's decision is truly in the best interest of our hunting community. Thank you.

The American Marten is a furbearer once commonly found in portions of Pennsylvania but extirpated from the Commonwealth in the early 1900s due to deforestation and unregulated harvest.

In accordance with Goal 1.3(b) of the Pennsylvania Game Commission Strategic Plan 2020 to 2023 and as authorized by the Commission at its July 9th, 2022 meeting, Commission staff developed an American Marten Reintroduction and Management Plan for Pennsylvania. The plan outlines a long-term, 10-year strategy, to translocate the species back to the state and then conduct long-term monitoring to evaluate the reintroduction. Communication strategies, partner engagement, costs, and timelines are also included.

At its September 16th, 2023 meeting, the Commission authorized release of the proposed American Marten Reintroduction and Management Plan for a 60-day public comment period. At its January

27th, 2024 meeting, the Commission tabled the proposed American Marten Reintroduction and Management Plan to allow for collection of additional information on habitat and human dimension elements of the potential reintroduction.

All comments were considered and appropriate revisions to the plan were made. Staff compiled data confirming habitat suitability of potential reintroduction sites and clarified the underlying reasons for supportive or neutral attitudes towards marten reintroduction among respondents to hunter surveys. The Bureau of Wildlife Management is requesting final acceptance of the 2024-2033 American Marten Reintroduction and Management Plan.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Do we have a motion?

18 <u>COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS:</u> So moved.

19 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Do we have a

20 second?

21 <u>COMMISSIONER SCHWALM:</u> Second.

22 PRESIDENT FORADORA: We have a motion

23 and a second. Discussion on the motion?

COMMISSIONER MITRICK: I'd like to

25 say something, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Yes, Commissioner Mitrick.

COMMISSIONER MITRICK: Last evening,

I had the opportunity to see the first episode of a series called Franklin. In one of the opening scenes, Benjamin Franklin was in front of the French nobility seeking aid for the failing American Revolution in 1776. As he was doing so, he was dressed in what he termed a very American looking outfit. And part of that outfit encompassed a fur hat that he was wearing.

Benjamin Franklin, of course, was a native son of this great State of Pennsylvania, this Commonwealth. And anyway, the French people were very much enthralled with this hat that he was wearing. And when he talked about it, he mentioned that it was the fur from the marten. And I thought that was very interesting in light of what we're taking into consideration today. Thank you.

20 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you. Is 21 there discussion?

22 <u>COMMISSIONER KNICK:</u> Yeah. So,

23 Chair.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Yes,

25 Commissioner Knick.

COMMISSIONER KNICK: You know, I believe Tom did a great job. On presenting this for martens. And right now, I feel that I'm still getting comments both ways. People that want them, people that are against them. And right now, I'm up in the air. I don't feel that I think I need more information to put it that way. And speak to more people.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you. And Commissioner Knick, I'll make a comment likewise.

Tom Keller has done an amazing job and the team, and right now with the testimony of some sportsman groups and what I'm hearing, it's - the gentleman said it correctly. It's a matter of timing. So, you know, myself, I think it's important to reintroduce a species, but I just need a little more information.

COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Mr. President.
PRESIDENT FORADORA: Yes.

COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: I think I echo some of your concerns. I think, as I think back from when this started, and I was brand new at this job, still don't know a whole lot about it, obviously. But it's been interesting to see and to hear and to read the emails and the articles and

papers and magazines and hearing you people stand up here and do your presenting.

And I think it has really, in my mind, we started like this, but the scales are doing this. And I think it is a wonderful job. And, Tom, I give you every accolade in the world for spending on what you tell me the other night, 105 different times, and he has been across this state and has given absolute positive responses to people and education. I invited him to a meeting that I was - that we were two together, and went to Benton on Tuesday evening. And I was told, when the gentleman called me, be prepared, because everybody in this room is against introducing the martens. And I said to him at that time, I said, well, I doubt if everybody is, but there may be a significant number that are. So I told Tom what we were walking into.

at that meeting was when Tom started, at the very, very beginning, laid out everything that had to do with the martens, and he talked about what we believe or what we hear. And my challenge at the end of the meeting was everyone says, well, they say this or they say that. And my question was, who is or who are "they"? There's the guy right back

there. That's the guy.

And the amount of time he has spent to put all these facts out against the - for us to consider has come a long way. You've heard what everybody has said here. That we postponed this thing twice now to try to get some more information and for Tom to do his magic and waving his wand.

I'm not sure if I skipped a part. When the meeting was over, not one person, not one out of all these people that are going to jump all over us, came up and talked to us in a negative manner about the martens being introduced.

I also understand that we have a lot of people who are concerned about the numbers of turkeys and the number of grouse. Tom has shown us, a lot of the articles have shown us that there's not really probably going to be a real big issue with it, but there's a perception out there that they could take a hold. Well, I believe that that is possible, but I also believe that from what we heard yesterday from our reports, from our staff, people are seeing more turkeys and they're also seeing more grouse. And that's from visual experience.

And I believe that if we have another good year, spring, where the hatches and the

clutches are all, have the opportunity to do their jobs with their mothers, that we're going to hear even more success about the turkeys and the grouse coming back. Now what we're going to do about West Nile, and maybe it isn't even an issue, but that's also a perception that's out there.

So, where I am is, I ask for more time. And I'm just, Tom and the rest of you, I am right here. And I believe that if we give ourselves enough time to look at what the clutches are for this year. And we have, Tom, a little more time to spread the honest word, the truth of the Bible. I believe that most people, if not more than most. I think the large, large majority of hunters and non-hunters and conservationists, I think we can do this in a very positive manner and I think we can take everybody with us.

So I am with, in agreement with some of the other people that I think I need just a little more time. And I know, Tom, you have to be saying, not again. And I apologize to you.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you,

Commissioner DiMarco. You said what I wanted to
say, my feelings on that, I'm bad at verbalizing
that, but thank you for your comments.

Other discussion?

COMMISSIONER KOPPENHAFER: Yeah. So to point, counterpoint that and to show the variation not only that we're hearing in public, but amongst the Board of Commissioners, I embody hook, line, and sinker on this and I think we should go full steam ahead. I also understand that I'm one vote out of nine. And I know that the thought process of this board is very similar to the thought process of hunters as a whole across Pennsylvania.

And to Allen's very visual scale analogy that he just put up there, we're tipping that scale. And I'm going to sit back and ride this wave out because I'm confident that that scale is going to tip in the direction of Marten reintroduction. And, you know, I'm just going to watch us bide our time and get as much hunter buy in as we can.

You know, we do hear routinely from hunters that say, you don't listen to us, our opinions don't matter. I mean here we are begging hunters to talk to us about this. Still, go back to that one third of folks that have no opinion, which is - blows my mind that one third of hunters in Pennsylvania have no opinion because we all know

that if you have 100,000 hunters in the room, you've 200,000 opinions. Part of the process, and it's going to be a whole lot of fun and very interesting to watch it continue to unfold. And so, hats off to you, Tom and Matthew and your team. Thank you.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you,

Commissioner Koppenhafer. Any other? Commissioner

Schwalm.

COMMISSIONER SCHWALM: Mr. President, I concur with my fellow Commissioners. And I had the pleasure of traveling with Tom on many of his presentations in which he's done an outstanding job. And he had to drive some long ways to visit the various clubs in district nine. And the work that he put into this is just unbelievable. And I truly appreciate and respect everything that you have done, Tom, and I thank you for that.

But I also would like to ask for more time on this. I think this is something that's very important, and it needs to be done right. So, again, Tom, I thank you for everything. I really appreciate what you did. I know you worked your tail off, but at this time, I concur with the other fellow Commissioners. Thank you.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you,

Commissioner. 1 2 Other comments? Yes, Commissioner 3 Sankey. COMMISSIONER SANKEY: If you don't 4 mind, yeah. So, I respectfully disagree with a lot 5 6 my patriots up here. I think the plan is 7 straightforward. It answers all the questions. don't necessarily - I'm not a patient person, and I think I've been patient enough, and I'd like to see 10 this move forward as it is. 11 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you, 12 Commissioner Sankey. Is there -? 13 COMMISSIONER PRIDE: Scott? PRESIDENT FORADORA: Commissioner 14 15 Pride. 16 COMMISSIONER PRIDE: Yes, thank you. 17 I also want to acknowledge the work that Tom has done on this and the team has worked with him, both 18 19 within the agency. And then, as we heard yesterday, 20 some of the other organizations, universities as 21 well. 22 But, you know, I just wanted to touch 23 on the point of Tom and the staff have done a 24 tremendous job. This has been several years of

work. Several years of work. And in reaching, but

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I think I've got agreement that I think all of us are in support of reintroducing something that was here. But once we do it, when we do it, it's done. I mean, the species may not - in the presentations we heard yesterday, I think there's some questions. That there's always a possibility that the species may not survive for a multitude of reasons. But once it's introduced, it's introduced.

And so, in the many, many presentations, we heard over 100 that were given. So you know, sportsman's groups, other wildlife groups and others have been presented to at our presentation, 90 minutes. But there were years of work that the team put into researching and then proposing, putting together the plan for this. And so, I think to the point of asking for more time, and again, we're not going to spend the same amount of time that Tom and the staff did, and the organizations that support it are not going to spend that time.

But to sit with something for just a little while, we're not saying years, because we do, I think we all know that we're continuing to get reach outs from different groups that, you know, are important to us. I mean, everybody that reaches out

to us is important. And so to give time, a little bit more time to educate, I mean, I said relatively the same thing in January. But I just think, you know, we just need to think about the process of what we're asking people to - to do and to consider in the support of us.

And all of us have a role in this. I mean, we're volunteers in what we do. And so, you know, we take our time to educate. We ask Tom to go out and present, you know, to other groups. And I think for the partners that we have in here, I mean, it's great to see our Penn State Wildlife Society here. You know, we all have a role in educating others and more so those that are on the fence or that oppose.

And so, I just wanted to make that point regarding the process of, you know, what we're going through and the decisions that we make but also acknowledging that there's been several years, many years of work going into this. And so, you know, to the time, I do think we need a little bit more time.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you,
Commissioner Pride. Commissioner Fredericks.

25 COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Mr.

President, after hearing my fellow Commissioners and their concern, to which I truly understand. Me personally, as one of nine of us, I'm entirely satisfied with the plan, the information that we've been given, convinced that the species being discussed is going to be relatively confined to a small habitat area up there where they're planned to be introduced. And personally, it would make me extremely happy to introduce another species that was once native to the state, and now is extirpated.

To me, it's a very exciting thing, but with all that said and out of respect for each and every one of you and most importantly, everything that you just heard these Commissioners say, most importantly, we take a lot of heat, and it's been intense lately. About how we don't listen. We do listen. Each and every one of us listens. And we hear you, and we try as hard as we can to react to each and every one of your concerns.

It's not easy sitting up here and, you know, I've been here the longest. I won't talk about how long, but I've been here a long time. So given that, it's a little easier for me than one of my fellow Commissioners or for more than a year, just for a year or two.

One thing I want to point out before I say what I have to say is I don't recall ever being in a public meeting where I heard so many public commenters thank the Board. You have no idea how much we appreciate that. There's some Board members up here that have some significant family issues, and makes it extremely hard for us to travel and be here for you and for the agency. So, but we

don't mind it. We do it because we love it.

We're not here for the money. We're not corrupt, we're not being paid off. Each and every one of us are here because we love wildlife, period. I don't mean to speak for all of you. I apologize for your offended, but that's the way it is. So, in the interest of us all loving wildlife just as much as you do, and even though I was the first to move on the motion, I would like to offer an amendment to the motion to postpone indefinitely this decision.

I'll leave it at that until we get a second for discussion, and then I'll have something to say. So Mr. President, if I could get a second on that. And again, my motion is to postpone indefinitely.

COMMISSIONER KNICK: I'll second

1 that. 2 PRESIDENT FORADORA: We have a motion 3 -. We have a motion and a second to, what'd you 4 say? Postpone indefinitely? 5 COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Yeah. 6 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Do we have a 7 second? COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: 9 PRESIDENT FORADORA: We have a 10 second. 11 COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: So it's 12 open for discussion. 13 Right? 14 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Yes. 15 COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: 16 COMMISSIONER KNICK: So, chair. 17 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Yes. 18 COMMISSIONER KNICK: I want to say 19 that even though we motion and a second here, it all 20 depends on the vote. But if - all depends on which 21 way it goes. I would like a roll call vote. 22 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you, we 23 will do that. Commissioner Fredericks, continue. 24 COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Yeah. 25 Please, please don't anybody get bent out of shape

about that language, postpone indefinitely. It's just another way of us trying to be helpful to you, to get you to understand. You know, if we table again, sure enough, it'll be in the media. You know, there they go again. This is the third time they've tabled it. So, we got together, we discussed it. We felt that if we got to this point, the best thing to do would be to postpone indefinitely.

But that doesn't mean that we won't be well informed by July or September, but we do need some more information. There's obviously, there's some of us that feel, and again, they need more information. And again, I can't stress enough, it's an effort on our part to convince you that we hear you on each and every issue. And we try as hard as we can to listen to and take everything into consideration. So don't let the language of postpone indefinitely get you all bent out of shape. That's it. That's all I have to say.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you,

Commissioner Fredericks. I'd like to offer

discussion to Tom Keller. Allen, you articulated

the best on how I was feeling. It's indefinitely,

it's a short indefinitely as Commissioner - in my

mind, Commissioner Fredericks said.

Tom, assembled a group of the people that were at best neutral, that probably negative, and you have them questioning as well as I believe you're going to be invited to a larger group. So, Allen articulated best. The scales are right here, and I believe in a short amount of time, we will have the affirmative decision. So, that's my add to the discussion on the postponement.

Any other comments or discussion on postponement?

12 COMMISSIONER MITRICK: I'd like to 13 say something.

> PRESIDENT FORADORA: Yes,

15 Commissioner Mitrick.

> COMMISSIONER MITRICK: I've been on this Board now for a little more than six years, and I'm not going to be on it that much longer. just want to say, I really want to see this Marten reintroduction occur on my watch and will do everything in my power to see that it happens.

22 Thank you.

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PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you, Commissioner Mitrick.

25 COMMISSIONER PRIDE: I just wanted to .

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Yes.

COMMISSIONER PRIDE: - you know, just add or just maybe ask a question. Make a statement in terms of clarifying what this actually means from a process standpoint.

So, to think we asked for advice on this from our counsel and just the process and procedure that we go through. So, correct me if I'm wrong, that if we didn't postpone indefinitely, and I, you know, echo what Dr. Mitrick just said, in his support. If we were to vote and not postpone indefinitely and it didn't pass, that means this dies?

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Commissioner

Pride, can we direct that to the legal counsel for clarification?

ATTORNEY MARTSON: What we're dealing with now is a subsidiary motion to postpone. If the motion carries, the matter will be postponed indefinitely. If the motion does not carry, the Board will have to address the overriding or overarching motion to adopt the reintroduction plan.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER PRIDE: All right.

And so, if we - if it gets to that 1 2 point though, if this doesn't pass and then we're 3 having to vote on reintroduction, correct me if I'm 4 wrong. If that didn't pass, that means that this 5 effort dies? 6 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Correct. COMMISSIONER PRIDE: And all the work that has been done just stops? 9 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Correct. Are you asking a legal matter? 10 11 COMMISSIONER PRIDE: Yeah. 12 ATTORNEY MARTSON: Until such time as 13 the matter is reintroduced and placed back on the 14 agenda before the Board. 15 COMMISSIONER PRIDE: Okay. 16 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you, 17 Commissioner Pride. 18 discussion on the amendment before the Board? If there's no other discussions, 19 20 Mr. Secretary, make a roll call vote. And the 21 motion is to postpone indefinitely. So, a yes vote 22 is to postpone. A nay vote is to move forward. 23 Secretary, roll call the vote, please. 24 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: President 25 Foradora?

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1	PRESIDENT FORADORA: Yes to postpone.
2	COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Mr.
3	Fredericks?
4	<pre>COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Yes,</pre>
5	postpone.
6	<pre>COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Allen DiMarco,</pre>
7	yes to postpone. Stanley Knick?
8	COMMISSIONER KNICK: Yes to postpone.
9	<pre>COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Kristen</pre>
10	Koppenhafer?
11	COMMISSIONER KOPPENHAFER: No.
12	<pre>COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Michael</pre>
13	Mitrick?
14	COMMISSIONER MITRICK: No.
15	<pre>COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Todd Pride?</pre>
16	<u>COMMISSIONER PRIDE:</u> Yes to postpone.
17	<u>COMMISSIONER DIMARCO:</u> Commissioner
18	Sankey?
19	COMMISSIONER SANKEY: No.
20	<u>COMMISSIONER DIMARCO:</u> Commissioner
21	Schwalm?
22	COMMISSIONER SCHWALM: Yes to
23	postpone.
24	<pre>COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: President</pre>
25	Foradora, results are six yeses and three nos.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you, Mr.

Secretary. The motion to postpone passes, and thank you all for your diligence Commissioners. And thank you, Tom. You have more work to do, and I know you'll be successful so thank you. So, work with us.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: You're not alone.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you. Next
item, please.

ATTORNEY MARTSON: The next item for consideration can be found on page 16 of your agendas.

The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, or AFWA, requested contact information for furtaker license holders in Pennsylvania for a National Trapper Survey being conducted in cooperation with Responsive Management. This will be the fourth iteration of this survey, which was previously conducted in 1992, 2004, and 2015. The goal of this study is to capture important information about trapping and trappers in the United States so that agencies can better understand and promote the activity for future generations to enjoy. Information gathered in this survey will

also help agencies gauge the success of current efforts to recruit, retain, and reactivate trappers, plan future efforts to increase trapper participation, and guide future efforts of the Best Management Practices for Trapping program.

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AFWA is requesting information for all individuals who held a Pennsylvania furtaker license during the 2021, 2022, and 2023 license The data specifically sought includes Customer Identification Number, license type, name, phone, e-mail, and street address. Section 325 of the Game and Wildlife Code generally restricts the release of customer licensing data, but an exception is permitted when the release of records or reports is, quote, authorized by action of the Commission for the sole purpose of exercising legitimate governmental function or duty, closed quote. Commission evaluated the records request and determined that it meets this exception and, if approved, will result in the return of valuable survey data that will enhance its trapping program within this Commonwealth. AFWA will itself be subject to applicable criminal and civil restrictions regarding any further publishing, circulation, or disclosure of any records that it

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receives from the Commission under this
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    authorization.
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                   PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you.
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 4
    we have a motion?
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                   COMMISSIONER KOPPENHAFER: So moved.
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                   COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Second.
                   PRESIDENT FORADORA: Motion and
    second. Discussion? Hearing no discussion on the
    motion, Mr. Secretary, could you call the vote?
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                   COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Those in
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    favor, signify by saying aye.
    (AYES RESPOND)
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                   COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Opposed, no.
14
    (NO RESPONSE)
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                   COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Mr. President,
16
    motion carries.
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                   PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you.
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                   ATTORNEY MARTSON: The next item for
    consideration can be found on page 17 of your
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20
    agendas, and comes from the Bureau of Wildlife
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    Protection.
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                   Since the mentored hunting program's
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    initial inception in 2006, the program has gradually
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    grown and expanded to include additional species of
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    game and wildlife and age groups eligible to
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1 participate in the program. With each progressive 2 expansion, the mentored hunting program has come 3 into closer alignment to the Commission's 4 traditional hunting license structures. 5 Commission is now proposing to amend Section 147.805 to allow a mentor to accompany up to three of any 6 7 combination of mentored youth or mentored adults at This maximum limit of three would also a time. 9 include any junior hunter present and otherwise 10 requiring accompaniment by the mentor as required by 34 Pa.C.S. Section 2711(a)(8) when the person is 11 12 also serving as a mentor. This change will not 13 expand the one lawful hunting device limit for 14 mentored youth, but it will allow mentored adults 15 and junior hunters to possess their own hunting 16 implement while accompanied by a common mentor. The 17 Commission has evaluated the relevant safety data 18 and determined that the amendments will not create 19 an unreasonable safety risk to the persons 20 participating in the hunt or other persons in the 21 vicinity of the hunt. 22 Thank you. PRESIDENT FORADORA: Do

we have a motion to -?

COMMISSIONER KNICK: So moved.
PRESIDENT FORADORA: Is there a

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second?

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COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Second.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Motion and

4 second. Discussion on the motion?

COMMISSIONER SANKEY: I just want -.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Commissioner

7 Sankey, yes.

COMMISSIONER SANKEY: Yeah, thanks.

I just want to say that this is a direct result of

10 public comment and emails that we all received on

11 this matter. And I'm glad that we were able to move

12 forward with this, knowing that other states have

13 not had an issue with safety in this regard, so.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you.

15 Commissioner Pride.

16 COMMISSIONER PRIDE: And I also

17 wanted to say, I'm glad to see that this is being

18 put forth. And some of the mentor activities that

19 the Agency has been partnered on, such as with the

20 John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge or partners with

21 US Fish and Wildlife Service, and then DCNR. The

22 interest of the number of youth and others to want

23 to hunt together to be able to do that is

24 substantial. And so, I'm glad to see where we got

25 this on the table and we're going to make a decision

on this.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you,

Commissioner Pride. I want to offer my comments.

I have said in my lifetime, two of the best decisions, in my opinion, not the Commissioner's, was the point restrictions of Gary Alt and doe management plan, and then mentored youth. So, it is very important that we allow maximum opportunity. And pleases me to know that we're talking about this today.

Jason, do you want to elaborate on anything or any questions? Further discussion?

MR. DECOSKEY: No, I think you hit it the head there. It did come from public comments and responsible letters written to us addressing issues that families are facing. And growing up, I was one of those families. That I didn't have a mentor youth permit back then, but we only had one rifle, so we kind of got used to this anyway, so.

But we had a gentleman here with this family today. And this makes perfect sense. It's great. I have no issues. We've looked at the safety from the previous HRSI's and it's less than a percent. I mean, it's a safe program, and I look forward to it growing.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Other 1 2 Commissioner comments? 3 COMMISSIONER SCHWALM: Mr. President? 4 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Yes. 5 COMMISSIONER SCHWALM: I would like -I would like to also say how happy I am to see this 6 7 on the table. I believe we are at a very critical time here, and we need to do as much as we can to get as many youth involved. And if this helps 10 families, like the gentleman that spoke here 11 earlier, to get his youngsters out there, we need to 12 do everything we can to create as many 13 opportunities. And I hope that if this passes, that 14 more people will take advantage of this and let's 15 get our youth involved. We need to do it. 16 to do it badly. So again, thank you. PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you, 17 18 Commissioner Schwalm. Other comments from the Commissioners? Commissioner DiMarco. Oh, sorry, if 19 20 there's no other - any other discussion? Okay. 21 Mr. Secretary, could you call the 22 vote, please? 23 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Those in favor 24 of the motion, please signify by saying aye. 25 (AYES RESPOND)

1 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Opposed, the 2 same sign. 3 (NO RESPONSE) 4 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Mr. President, 5 motion carries. PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you. 6 7 ATTORNEY MARTSON: The next item for 8 consideration can be found on page 19 of your 9 agendas. 10 To effectively manage the wildlife 11 resources of this Commonwealth, the Commission, at its January 27th, 2024 meeting, amended Section 12 13 141.4 to replace the current hunting hours table and 14 migratory bird hunting hours table to accurately 15 reflect the dates and hours of legal hunting for the 16 2024-2025 hunting/trapping license year. 17 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Do we have a 18 motion? 19 COMMISSIONER SANKEY: So moved. 20 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Do we have a second? 21 22 COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Second. 23 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Motion and a 24 Any discussion? second. 25 COMMISSIONER PRIDE: I'd like to

point out.

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PRESIDENT FORADORA: Yes,

Commissioner Pride.

GOMMISSIONER PRIDE: For what we're getting ready to go into next in terms of our decisions on property activity, I just want to say, and particularly regarding the table here, and this also is related to what we just talked about regarding the mentor hunt. But, and this may be a little off stray but just follow me for a second.

I've heard some comments over the last year or two from a few people that have questioned what we're doing with our mentored activities and so forth. And the numbers being relatively small, whether or not it's the John Heinz initiative or Benjamin Rush, but one of the, actually a parent and a daughter that participated in that. Came out of this last two years and created a website and a Facebook page and Instagram, and has reached, it has almost 4,000 supporters. So exponentially, those numbers have now reached thousands of people just from those two, and there are similar situations to that. But relative to this, the mother created a segment of her messaging that says, my eyes will adjust.

And when I look at this table here, 1 2 often times when we're able to hunt, okay? 3 Sometimes, you know, when our eyes can't see a lot. 4 And then when it ends. I mean, this isn't specific 5 to this, but I just want to make that point as we go 6 into our land discussions because this is important. 7 I mean, extremely important, so sorry to take up time. 9 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you, 10 Commissioner Pride. So, relevant to the times, if 11 you - for the public out there, Commissioner Pride 12 shared with us the writeup, what was it called? Ιn 13 darkness or? 14 COMMISSIONER PRIDE: Your eyes - my 15 eyes will adjust. 16 PRESIDENT FORADORA: My eyes will adjust. So, if you get the opportunity to YouTube 17 or Google, is it one -? 18 19 COMMISSIONER PRIDE: Yeah, my eyes 20 will adjust. And I guarantee you, you will all be 21 moved. 22 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Any other 23 discussion on the motion and second? Mr. Secretary, 24 could you call the vote?

COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Those in

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1 favor, signify by saying aye.

(AYES RESPOND)

COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Opposed, aye.

4 (NO RESPONSE)

COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Mr. President,
motion carries.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you.

ATTORNEY MARTSON: The next item for consideration is found on page 24 of your agendas, and comes from the Bureau of Wildlife Habitat Management.

John G. and Melissa L. Sabella are offering 200 more or less acres of land in Rockland and Cranberry Townships, Venango County, adjacent to State Game Land Number 45. The option price is \$467,000 lump sum to be paid from the Game Commission's restricted account, representing funds from third party commitments for compensation of habitat and recreational losses which occurred on state game lands from previously approved projects. Acquisitions using this account may exceed \$400 per acre. The North Country National Scenic Trail runs through the property. Access is through existing State Game Land Number 45 and from State Route 2002. This acquisition contains critical and unique

riparian habitat of East Sandy Branch Creek, a stocked trout stream.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Do we have a

motion?

<u>COMMISSIONER KOPPENHAFER:</u> So moved.

<u>PRESIDENT FORADORA:</u> Do we have a

second?

COMMISSIONER SCHWALM: Second.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: We have a motion and a second. Discussion? Before we have any discussion, Dave Gustafson, would you like to add anything to this for our information?

MR. GUSTAFSON: So, I think you're all aware we've got some comments and we got some questions about this acquisition, about pricing, and things like that. And so, there, for everybody's awareness, I think when you look at the price tag on this piece of property, it might seem out of line to some folks. If you look at land acquisitions we've done maybe five years ago, and the prices per acre.

We do have a certified appraisal on this piece of property. It was done in July of 2022 - I'm sorry, July 2023. So, nine months old, that established the appraised value of \$467,000. I

think that's indicative of the price of land and real estate these days. It has - we've all seen it go up significantly in recent years, so it's kind of a new norm when we look at, you know, forest land properties like this.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you. And it's open for discussion. My discussion, I want to echo Mr. Gustafson's comments. In north central region, three years ago you picked up - only four, five years ago, \$500, \$600 an acre for swampland. For swampland you better be at \$1,000 now or greater. And for good land, it's substantially higher than that. So unfortunately, we're caught up in the inflations as well.

Any other discussion or comments?

COMMISSIONER KOPPENHAFER: If I can,

17 Mr. President?

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Yes,

Commissioner Koppenhafer.

COMMISSIONER KOPPENHAFER: Mr.

Gustafson, your shop has been busy lately putting these in front of us, and I applaud you and your staff for the efforts. A few points of clarification, just from some correspondence we've

25 received as Commissioners from the public. So just

to make sure that we understand as well, and I appreciate you clarifying a purchase price because, you know, we're pushing half a million for that.

And the market bears what it does. So, I appreciate knowing that there was an appraisal done on that - on that property and paid fair market value for it.

It looks like there's a section at North Country Trail that may go through that property. Is that accurate? If so, is there any effect that that might have?

MR. GUSTAFSON: I think the effect is going to be all positive, allowing for access for folks through that piece of property. If you look to the far northwest corner of the map, there's also a place where the North Country Trail touches the edge of Game Lands 45 up there as well, cuts across a little place. The North Country Trail also crosses numerous other game lands in the region, Game Lands 95, Game Lands 63.

And not unlike many of our other hiking trails in Pennsylvania, the Tuscarora Trail and even the Appalachian Trail that have significant mileage through game lands. We think that's a positive opportunity for folks that, you know, come

across those trails to recognize that they're on State game lands and this is a wildlife area. And maybe that's something a little special and different.

But we don't see anywhere where that would impede the ability of our hunters to cross over and use the game lands on both sides of that trail. So we don't see any negative impacts to that.

One follow up question, mostly because we've had some housekeeping in the past where we've dealt with encroachment issues, et cetera. And it looks to me like there's about 25 foot roadway agreement on this map. Is that cleared out, documented? I mean, so that future boards aren't going to have to play mop up on this one like we have done in the past?

MR. GUSTAFSON: It is. You know, we have a great team, and I can't say enough about the real estate team that we've had to rebuild in recent years, that people have retired and jobs have turned over, and we've got some great folks that are doing the work. And yeah, we discovered in our due diligence in looking at this property, there are recorded, documented instruments that provide for

1 that 25-foot access all the way into that property. 2 COMMISSIONER KOPPENHAFER: Okay, 3 thank you. 4 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you. 5 other discussion on this? Mr. Secretary, could you call for a vote? 6 7 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Those in 8 favor, signify by saying aye. 9 (AYES RESPOND) 10 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Opposed, aye. (NO RESPONSE) 11 12 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Mr. President, 13 motion carries. 14 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you. 15 ATTORNEY MARTSON: The next item for 16 consideration can be found on page 26 of your agendas. 17 18 The Estate of Betty J. Brenneman is 19 offering 19.7 more or less acres of land in 20 Catherine Township, Blair County, adjacent to State 21 Game Land Number 166. The option price is \$50,000 lump sum to be paid from the Game Commission's 22 23 restricted account, representing funds from third 24 party commitments for compensation of habitat and recreational losses which occurred on State game 25

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    lands from previously approved projects.
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    Acquisitions using this account may exceed $400 per
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    acre. Access is from Beaver Dam Road.
                                             This
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    acquisition improves property integrity and
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    manageability of State Game Land Number 166 by
    connecting two existing tracts.
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                   PRESIDENT FORADORA: Do we have a
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    motion?
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                   COMMISSIONER KNICK: So moved.
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                   COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS:
                                              Second.
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                   PRESIDENT FORADORA: Motion and a
    second. Discussion? Any comments on this, Dave?
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    Thank you.
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                   We have a motion and a second.
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    Secretary, call the vote.
                   COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Those in favor
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    of the motion - did somebody say something?
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                   PRESIDENT FORADORA: Yes. Good.
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    Commissioner Knick, did you have a comment?
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                   COMMISSIONER KNICK:
                                         No.
                   PRESIDENT FORADORA: Oh, okay.
21
                                                    Okay.
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                   Mr. Secretary, call the vote.
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                   COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Those in
24
    favor, signify by saying aye.
25
    (AYES RESPOND)
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1 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Opposed, same 2 sign. 3 (NO RESPONSE) 4 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Mr. President, 5 motion carries. 6 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you. 7 ATTORNEY MARTSON: The next item for 8 consideration can be found on page 28 of your 9 agendas. 10 Adam James Clark is offering 67.07 more or less acres of land in Snyder Township, Blair 11 12 County, an indenture into State Game Land Number 13 278. The option price is \$138,000 lump sum to be 14 paid from the Game Fund. The parcel is an indenture 15 to State Game Land Number 278 and therefore the 16 Commission may exceed \$400 per acre under Section 17 705(b) of the Game and Wildlife Code. Access is 18 through existing State Game Land Number 278. 19 acquisition improves property integrity and 20 manageability of State Game Land Number 278 by 21 clearing an indenture and connecting two existing 22 tracts. 23 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Do we have a 24 motion? COMMISSIONER SANKEY: So moved. 25

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Do we have a 1 2 second? 3 COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Second. 4 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Moved and 5 seconded. Any discussion, questions? 6 COMMISSIONER SANKEY: I just want to 7 say, so I actually used to live near here. So this purchase is really great because it connects those 9 two parcels. And I know that that land up there was 10 kind of patchwork and it was difficult to get from 11 one to the other. So, it's really an awesome 12 purchase. Thank you. 13 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you, Commissioner Sankey. 14 15 COMMISSIONER PRIDE: Yeah, I just 16 want to make a point. 17 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Yes. 18 COMMISSIONER PRIDE: Just a short 19 point. What Dave was referencing and alluding to 20 regarding the reach out that we got and, you know, 21 verification on the inflation and everything else. 22 But you know, these three properties that we've just 23 looked at are relatively all in the same cost per 24 I mean, it's all over \$2,000 per acre. So, I acre. 25 think you know, as we look at these numbers, you

- know, it's, you know. Costs is going up everywhere. 1 2 So, you know, we're just having to deal with this 3 to protect these wildlife habitats and, you know, 4 extend our, you know, game land opportunities. 5 just wanted to make that point regarding, you know. You see these numbers regarding the acreage and then 6 7 the cost, and at least the last three are, you know, relatively close. 9 MR. GUSTAFSON: And on this one in 10 particular, Commissioner, we do have a certified
 - MR. GUSTAFSON: And on this one in particular, Commissioner, we do have a certified appraisal on this property as well from January of this year that established the value of the \$138,000.
- COMMISSIONER PRIDE: These numbers

 would look very different down in Chester County and

 Bucks County.
- PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you,

 Commissioner Pride. Any other discussion? Mr.

 Secretary, call the vote.
- 20 <u>COMMISSIONER DIMARCO:</u> Those in favor 21 of the motion, signify by saying aye.
- 22 (AYES RESPOND)

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- 23 <u>COMMISSIONER DIMARCO:</u> Those opposed,
- 24 the same sign.
- 25 (NO RESPONSE)

COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Mr. President, 1 2 the motion carries. 3 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you. 4 The next item for ATTORNEY MARTSON: 5 consideration can be found on page 30 of your 6 agendas. Denis E. and Sharon A. Mora are 8 offering 23.5 more or less acres of land in Liberty 9 Township, McKean County, adjoining State Game Land 10 Number 61. The option price is \$64,000 lump sum to be paid from the Game Commission's restricted 11 account, representing funds from third party 12 13 commitments for compensation of habitat and 14 recreational losses which occurred on State game 15 lands from previously approved projects. 16 Acquisitions using this account may exceed \$400 per Access is from Old Bush Mill Road. 17 18 acquisition improves public access and the 19 Commission's ability to manage State Game Land 20 Number 61. 21 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Do we have any 22 motion? 23 COMMISSIONER KNICK: So moved. 24 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Do we have a 25 second?

COMMISSIONER PRIDE: Second. 1 2 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Motion and 3 second - moved and seconded. Any discussion? Ιf 4 not, Mr. Secretary call the vote. 5 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Those in favor 6 of the motion, signify by saying aye. (AYES RESPOND) COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Opposed, same 9 sign. 10 (NO RESPONSE) 11 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Mr. President, motion carries. 12 13 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you. 14 ATTORNEY MARTSON: The next item for 15 consideration can be on page 32 of your agendas. 16 Rachel M. Stone is offering 0.25 more 17 or less acres of land adjoining State Game Land 18 Number 335 to the Commission in exchange for a 0.1319 more or less acre, non-exclusive right-of-way on 20 State Game Land Number 335 to access the remaining 21 Stone land, all of which is located in Union 22 Township, Tioga County. The right-of-way will be 23 conditioned to protect the Commission's interests,

including a restriction on future buildings on the

remaining Stone land that could result in additional

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safety zones. As such, the Commission determined
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    that the 0.25 more or less acres to be conveyed to
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    the Commission is of greater value than the 0.13
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    more or less acre right-of-way to be granted to
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    Stone, and that the proposed exchange is in the best
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    interest of the Commission. This exchange improves
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    property integrity and manageability of State Game
    Land Number 335 by resolving a boundary line issue.
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                   PRESIDENT FORADORA: Do we have any
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    motion?
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                   COMMISSIONER KOPPENHAFER:
                                              So moved.
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                   PRESIDENT FORADORA: Do we have a
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    second?
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                   COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS:
                                             Second.
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                   PRESIDENT FORADORA: Moved and
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               Discussion on the motion?
    seconded.
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                   COMMISSIONER MITRICK: I just have a
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    question.
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                   PRESIDENT FORADORA: Yes.
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                   COMMISSIONER MITRICK: It says this
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    is a right-of-way. A right-of-way to what?
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                   MR. GUSTAFSON: So, while this may
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    seem minuscule in numbers and you know, 0.25 and
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    0.13 acres. I can tell you, this is tremendously
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    important for Ms. Stone house with her house right
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there.

COMMISSIONER MITRICK: Her house is
there?

MR. GUSTAFSON: Her house is right there. You can't quite see it. It's under the word Stone. It's kind of shaded out, but if you see the Game Lands Number 335, you can tell that's a fairly recent acquisition. This was owned by a large timber company and we acquired it several years ago.

And in - in the survey work being done, we realized that there was this small sliver of the game land that comes down from north to south all the way to the road. Well, over time with Ms. Stone's property, their driveway is actually also using the same access that is the access road that goes back into what is now game lands. If you can also notice, those blue lines indicate streams, water courses. So, they didn't have any other option of where to put their driveway.

So they had a previous kind of handshake arrangement with that timber company. It didn't matter to them, that they could use that loop driveway for their use. Of course, as our survey team is out there managing the integrity of our game lands, we identified that as a potential issue. And

said, you know, this could be an audit finding, potentially if we didn't gain control of the situation. But we realized that Ms. Stone really didn't have any other options. So this is the best way to clean up this. They were willing to trade that small piece of land to keep their driveway there.

There are stipulations in that agreement to ensure that the Game Commission, you know, continues to have access through there. We won't be blocked. They're not allowed to, you know, block or otherwise construct anything on that right of way, but it simply permits the continued use of that driveway space. Game Commission got something back in trade to make it all on the up and up.

COMMISSIONER MITRICK: We still have
the right-of-way to -?

MR. GUSTAFSON: Absolutely, correct.

COMMISSIONER MITRICK: Yeah, thank

20 you.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Any other discussion? Mr. Secretary, call the vote, please.

COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Those in favor

of the motion, please signify by saying aye.

25 (AYES RESPOND)

1 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Opposed, the 2 same sign. 3 (NO RESPONSE) 4 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Mr. President, 5 the motion carries. 6 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you. 7 ATTORNEY MARTSON: The next item for 8 consideration can be found on page 34 of your 9 agendas. 10 The Irvona Borough Council in 11 Clearfield County requested that a right-of-way for 12 a borough street be dedicated as a public road. The 13 roadway is 25 feet in width and travels a total of 14 737 more or less feet across State Game Land Number 15 120. The road is currently a State game lands road open to public travel and services a number of 16 17 private properties. Dedicating the road to the 18 Borough will eliminate maintenance obligations for the Commission, will resolve future conflicts with 19 20 access to the private properties, and will allow for 21 a more efficient provision of public utilities in the area. 22 23 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Do we have a 24 motion?

COMMISSIONER SCHWALM: So moved.

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COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: Second. 1 2 PRESIDENT FORADORA: we have a motion 3 and second. Any discussion? Mr. Secretary, call 4 the vote. 5 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Those in favor 6 of the proposed motion, please signify by saying 7 aye. (AYES RESPOND) 9 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Opposed, the 10 same sign. (NO RESPONSE) 11 12 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Mr. President, 13 motion carries. 14 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you. 15 ATTORNEY MARTSON: The next item can 16 be found on page 36 of your agenda and is an 17 informational item only. 18 On February 28th, 2024, the Board of 19 Commissioners approved, by notational vote, the 20 offer from William C. and Casey J. Kunkel of a 50.7 21 more or less acres of land in Albany Township, Berks 22 County, an indenture into State Game Land Number 23 106. The option price is \$224,272.97 lump sum to be 24 paid from the Game Fund. The parcel is an indenture

into State Game Land Number 106 and therefore the

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Commission may exceed \$400 per acre under Section 705(b) of the Game and Wildlife Code. Access is through existing State Game Land Number 106. This acquisition improves property integrity and manageability of State Game Land Number 106 by clearing an indenture and straightening the existing boundary.

Again, this is an informational item only and no action is required. Which brings us to page 38 of your agendas, also an informational item only.

On February 28th, 2024, the Board of Commissioners approved, by notational vote, the offer from Lois A. and Barry Rentschler of 197.97 more or less acres of land in Albany Township, Berks County, an indenture into State Game Land No. 106. The option price is \$875,726.23 lump sum to be paid from the Game Fund. The parcel is an indenture into State Game Land Number 106 and therefore the Commission may exceed \$400 per acre under Section 705(b) of the Game and Wildlife Code. Access is from Pine Swamp Road. This acquisition improves property integrity and manageability of State Game Land Number 106 by clearing an indenture and straightening the existing boundary.

Once again, as an informational item
only, there is no action required by this Board.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER SCHWALM: Mr. President,

I'd like to -

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Yes.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Yes.

COMMISSIONER SCHWALM: Dave, district nine is very grateful to these two properties that came about. When this was done by notational vote. When we do a notational vote, we don't get to discuss the project at a public meeting other than the reading on the agenda item. So I was hoping maybe you could explain for the record a little bit more about this project.

Why did we need to do a notational vote instead of waiting for a meeting?

MR. GUSTAFSON: So, and yeah. You can see this was done on February 28th, so less than a month after our last meeting. Sometimes in the real estate world, folks want to have things fast. First, I'm going to step back and just say I credit the regional field staff team for discovering that

these properties were available, and then our real estate team here in Harrisburg for being able to jump on these quickly.

The landowners, if you look at the last two pages, 37 and 39, you'll see on the map those two properties, how they fit together. They were willing to accept our matched offer when they had two other offers on the table, but they weren't willing to wait for the typical time it takes for us to get to a Board meeting, and then the follow on actions that have to take place through the attorney general's office and the comptrollers to make payment. It can often take six plus months. And they were in a little bit of a hurry.

So, in order to not lose that opportunity, seeing the importance of these complete indentures within the game lands there, we knew there were other interested parties. We wanted to do what we could to try to speed that along. So as much as we don't like to do notational vote items like that, this was one where we were grateful to the Board for allowing us that flexibility to get there.

COMMISSIONER SCHWALM: Dave, why were these tracks so important for the game land's use?

MR. GUSTAFSON: So, if you look at the map there, like I said, you can see the one that was - I'll look at - the map on page 37 kind of shows them both in a bigger scale. You can see the one that's colored in blue is kind of a "T" shape and really bisects, it almost separates that eastern parcel of Game Lands 106. It has very little connectivity up there and also the accessibility to that.

So by linking those two together, now we've created one solid block there. I'll also say that, you know, we got an appraisal done on this property very quickly, and we were also aware that there's significant timber value in here. So what we really wanted to do was protect the future habitat there, not see that be developed and have timber maybe mismanaged or harvested prematurely. We wanted to make sure we had the best chance to manage that for wildlife and - and create that connectivity.

So for those reasons, we felt it was really important, the region felt it was really important. And again, I can't say enough about how fast our team moved on that. And with you all giving us the flexibility to move things in this

manner. It really helped us secure what we think - and in Berks County, I mean, there's - there's not a lot of availability down there, especially things this critical in the middle of an existing game lands.

COMMISSIONER SCHWALM: Right. Is there anything else you'd like touch on?

MR. GUSTAFSON: I don't think so. I mean, again, it just - this - the real estate, the land acquisition priorities of the agency, you know, we really focus hard on these indentures, these interiors, the accessibility, but also the habitat value, too. So, you know, we're not just out there looking at any random chunk of ground that might be up for sale. We certainly get a lot of offers. We get a heck of a lot more offers than we actually bring to the table for one reason or another.

But I think that what you see in these agenda items speaks to the adherence of our staff to our priorities. That we are after critical and valuable habitats, accessibility, and indentures.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you,

Commissioner Schwalm and Dave.

COMMISSIONER PRIDE: Scott?

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Yes.

COMMISSIONER PRIDE: I have - I'm

glad Bob brought that up. Because again, I think for everybody who's here and those that are online, I mean, this is an opportunity to educate, you know, our supporters, our stakeholders regarding what happens with these.

And as I'm listening to you, I mean this really connects very well from the presentation we heard yesterday regarding the Private Lands
Initiative, which you know, I think and we're we're really excited. I'm excited about that
initiative. So, we sometimes get criticized because
all we're doing is acquiring property for the sake
of acquiring it. But there's a lot that goes into into this, you know, for the benefit of our
residents of the state and our visitors. So, I'm
really glad that Bob brought that.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you, Commissioner Pride.

ATTORNEY MARTSON: And with that, there is one more informational item that is hot off the press. Actually just occurred this past week

that I'd like to offer the commentary on.

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On April 4th, 2024, Executive Director Bryan Burhans notified the Board of Commissioners of the pending auction sale date April 10th, 2024, and the urgent need to react to the sale of property adjoining and providing critical access to State Game Land Number 53. On April 10th, 2024, the Commission was the successful bidder on one of the two tracks of land being offered for sale at a public auction by Robert W. and Donna J. Clevenger. The tract is located in Ayr Township, Fulton County and is adjacent to State Game Land Number 53. The tract is a 51.6 more or less acres and was acquired with a successful bid of \$225,000. The lump sum is to be paid from funds held by the conservation fund in accordance with a prior timber for land exchange agreement as allowable under Section 723 of the Game and Wildlife Code. Access is from a recorded 16foot right-of-way from Ramsey Lane.

Again, this is informational item only, and therefore no action is required.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you. Dave did you want to comment?

MR. GUSTAFSON: Just to say another again, you can see the timeline on this from the

time that - that staff were made aware of this auction possibility to register to notify the Board to get this all-in front of you. It just happened this week. So, sometimes these things happen fast and I think if you look at that map, you'll see the importance of that tract bringing that new access from a place that inside the game lands that doesn't really have much. So again, that flexibility and the tenacity and the response time of our team to be able to jump on things like this is just truly, truly outstanding. I can't say enough about their work.

PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you.

CNX Resources Corporation, or CNX, of Canonsburg, PA requested the Commission offer its oil and gas rights under portions of State Game Land Number 245 for non-surface use development. The proposed tract, containing approximately 113 more or less net acres, is located in West Finley Township, Washington County.

CNX will access the 113-acre reserves from its current and planned drilling operations on

adjacent areas off State Game Land Number 245 by horizontal drilling with no additional surface use or disturbance to the Game Lands. OGM staff negotiated the proposed terms of the agreement with CNX to prudently develop the Commission's oil/gas reserve and simultaneously protect the wildlife resources and recreational use of State Game Land Number 245.

The terms of the Agreement are a six year paid up non-surface use oil and gas agreement, a \$4,000 per net oil and gas acre bonus payment and 19 percent royalty for all oil/gas and other liquids or condensates produced and sold from the proposed tract.

The bonus payment of \$452,000 and any rental payments will be deposited into the Commission's restricted account for the future purchase of wildlife habitats, lands, or other uses incidental to hunting, furtaking, and wildlife resource management. Future royalties owed the Commission will be directly deposited into the Game Fund.

Oil and gas development will be regulated by the Commission's oil and gas regulations and the Commission's non-surface use oil

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    and gas cooperative agreement.
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                   PRESIDENT FORADORA: Do we have a
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    motion?
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                   COMMISSIONER KNICK: So moved.
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                   PRESIDENT FORADORA: Do we have a
    second?
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                   COMMISSIONER SCHWALM: Second.
                   PRESIDENT FORADORA: Motion and
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    seconded. Any discussion?
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                   COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS:
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    President.
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                   PRESIDENT FORADORA: Commissioner
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    Fredericks.
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                   COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: I'd like to
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    call your attention to CNX is my former employer.
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    And even though I'm separated from them somewhat, I
   still receive retirement annuity. So, therefore I
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18
    thought that I'd inform you and the rest of the
    Board of the need to abstain from this motion.
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                   PRESIDENT FORADORA: Noted,
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    Commissioner Fredericks. Thank you.
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                   Any other discussion? If not, Mr.
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    Secretary, could you please call the vote?
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                   COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Those in favor
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   of the proposed motion, please signify by saying
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1 aye. 2 (AYES RESPOND) 3 COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Those opposed, 4 the same sign. 5 (NO RESPONSE) COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Mr. President, 6 7 motion carries. PRESIDENT FORADORA: Thank you. The 9 next item on the agenda, is there any other new 10 business that needs to come to our attention or before us? New business? 11 12 COMMISSIONER PRIDE: I just wanted to 13 make a point. 14 PRESIDENT FORADORA: Yes, 15 Commissioner Pride. 16 COMMISSIONER PRIDE: Scott, I just -17 one, I just want to thank the speakers and others 18 that came here and traveled, you know, quite a bit 19 of ways to get here and they are taking off on their 20 Saturday, the second Saturday of the month I believe 21 this is. But also it's great to see the Wildlife Society from Penn State here. And you know, and 22 23 this is something for us to consider down the line.

24 It'd be great to have a presentation maybe on one 25 of our Fridays.

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PRESIDENT FORADORA: I agree.
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                                                  Also -
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    I'm sorry.
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                   COMMISSIONER PRIDE: Go ahead.
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                   PRESIDENT FORADORA: I was just going
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    to - I actually asked for, and I'll ask the
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    committee. We've historically done traveling
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    meetings once a year, so we'd love to have a meeting
    at State College, and that way you can get all of
    your participants to come to the meeting. So in the
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    future, I know that we've discussed this with
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    Director Burhans. We have one floating meeting,
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    pre-COVID, and we'd like to get back to that.
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    Although we did - last year, we did have Erie, so
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    yeah, we got back there last year. So hopefully in
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    the near future, one of our floating meetings is in
    State College, Pennsylvania. And we'd like to see
16
17
    all of your group there. So, thank you.
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                   COMMISSIONER PRIDE: They live in -
19
    they would have been Harrisburg to State College.
20
                   PRESIDENT FORADORA: Yes.
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                   COMMISSIONER PRIDE: And no, I
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    appreciate that.
23
                   PRESIDENT FORADORA: Oh, you're from
24
    the Harrisburg campus?
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                   PUBLIC MEMBER: We're - we're main
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    campus.
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                   PRESIDENT FORADORA: Main campus,
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    okay.
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                   PUBLIC MEMBER: Yeah, we travel to
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    anywhere.
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                   PRESIDENT FORADORA: Okay.
7
                   Sorry. Put you on the spot.
    you, and thanks - thanks for all of our speakers.
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    Thank you.
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                   Anything else under new business?
    Okay, thank you. Mr. Secretary - excuse me, is
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    there a motion to adjourn?
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                   COMMISSIONER FREDERICKS: So moved.
                   PRESIDENT FORADORA: Do we have a
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    second for adjournment?
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                   COMMISSIONER KNICK: Second.
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                   PRESIDENT FORADORA: Mr. Secretary,
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    call the vote to adjourn.
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                   COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: All those in
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    favor of the motion, signify by saying aye.
    (AYES RESPOND)
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                   COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Those opposed,
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    the same sign.
    (NO RESPONSE)
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                   COMMISSIONER DIMARCO: Mr. President,
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1	motion carries.	
2	* * * * * *	
3	HEARING CONCLUDED AT 11:14 A.M.	
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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing proceedings, a meeting held before Chairman Foradora, was reported by me on 4/13/24 and that I, Derek Richmond, read this transcript, and that I attest that this transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceeding.

Date the 1st day of May, 2024

Derek Richmond,

Court Reporter