

# Tennessee Heritage Conservation Trust Fund

## Board Meeting Minutes

January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024

### Clover Bottom Mansion

2941 Lebanon Pike, Nashville TN 37214

## Attendance

Quorum ✓

| Tennessee Heritage Conservation Trust Fund Board |                |            |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------|------------|
| Trustee                                          | Representation | Attendance |
| Phil Poux                                        | West           | Present    |
| Mike Frick                                       | West           | Present    |
| Angie Box                                        | West           | Absent     |
| Andrew Goddard                                   | Middle         | Present    |
| Bernie Butler                                    | Middle         | Present    |
| Charles Hankla                                   | Middle         | Present    |
| Jeremy Nagoshiner                                | Middle         | Present    |
| Larry Zehnder                                    | East           | Present    |
| Madge Cleveland                                  | East           | Present    |
| Pete Claussen                                    | East           | Present    |
| vacant                                           | East           | Absent     |

**TDEC Hosts:** Bill Avant, Liz Campbell

**Guests:** Mitch Porcello (TDEC), Adam Binger (TDEC), Greer Tidwell (TDEC), Noel Durant (TPL), Ryan Hall (WRC), Findley Frazer (WRC), Tim Churchill (TWRA)

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## Orders of Business

- Roll Call

## Reading of the Minutes

- Motion made to approve the minutes by Cleveland.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> by Nagoshiner
- Vote/approval – approved by all.

## Unfinished Business

1. Transfer of .09-acre Bowe tract to be transferred from Wolf River Conservancy to TWRA. The 43.28-acre property was purchased with 50% funding from the Heritage Conservation Trust Fund, it is currently appraised at \$108,027. Property will be transferred to Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency for \$54,000.
  - a. Motion to approve by Cleveland.
  - b. Hankla seconds the motion.
  - c. Board unanimously in favor – motion passes

## NEW Applications

### 1. TPL – Vinson

This property is intended to provide public paddling access to South Chickamauga Creek, including a parking lot, interpretive signage, and low-impact launching infrastructure for personal watercraft that take advantage of the mellow topography and ease of access from one of Chattanooga's most traveled arterial streets. The City of Chattanooga will be the property's permanent owner, which will be managed by the Department of Parks and Outdoors (DPO) as part of its portfolio of outdoor recreation infrastructure, along with other canoe launches and trailheads on city property.

- a. Motion to approve by Goddard.
- b. Board discusses concerns about project cost estimates.
- c. Board approves conditional funding; more information is needed to support the project costs.

## **2. WRC/CF TWRA – McCowan / Cowen**

The conservation acquisition of the 55.353-acre McCowan property and 139.641-acre Cowan property is part of an effort to purchase and transfer two adjoining private tracts -McCowan and Cowan tracts respectively-to the State of Tennessee for long-term management by the Wolf River Wildlife Management Area unit of the Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency (TWRA). The McCowan property is within the Wolf River WMA Area of Interest (AOI) and adjacent to current WMA lands. It contains multiple, important conservation values, including bottomland hardwood and wetland habitat; improved recreation and public access; and vital protection for drinking water in eastern Tennessee. In coordination with TWRA, The Conservation Fund (TCF) and Wolf River Conservancy (WRC) have partnered together to lead and support the purchase and temporary hold of the property, until it can be conveyed to TWRA. Until ownership is conveyed from TCF to the State, the land is being passively managed, with support and assistance from WRC and local Wolf River WMA managers.

- a. Motion to approve both applications by Butler.
- b. Zehnder seconds the motion.
- c. Board unanimously in favor – motion passes

## **3. TWRA – Harris**

TWRA wishes to acquire the Royal Blue-Harris tract at approximately 709 acres to conserve an inholding within the Royal Blue Unit of the North Cumberland Wildlife Management Area (WMA). TennGreen Land Conservancy (TennGreen), The Conservation Fund (TCF), and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) have negotiated a purchase price on the property with the plan of pre-acquiring the property. The NGOs will then convey the land to TWRA. If acquired and incorporated into the North Cumberland WMA, the property will be vested in the State of Tennessee and management in perpetuity by TWRA. Once under TWRA management as part of North Cumberland WMA, the land will be utilized for public enjoyment similar to the way other lands are managed in the Royal Blue Unit, specifically hunting. TennGreen, TNC, and TCF have the property under contract and plan to jointly acquire the property in January 2024. TWRA will acquire the property from the NGOs at a later date, likely mid-2024. If funded by HCTF, grant dollars will be used to supplement TWRA funds toward the acquisition.

- a. Motion to approve by Cleveland.
- b. Hankla seconds the motion.
- c. Board unanimously in favor – motion passes

## **4. TWRA – Otey**

TWRA wishes to acquire a conservation easement totaling 2,625 acres that will be added to the North Cumberland Wildlife Management Area (WMA). Purchase of the tract will add a high conservation value property important for forest, karst, aquatic, and elk habitats and will expand the Otey Mills Refuge unit, which is adjacent to the WMA's Ed Carter Unit's 43,000-acre permanent conservation and public recreation easement, Cumberland Gap National Historical Park, and the Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail. The CF Ataya LLC tract falls within TWRA's planned area of expansion for North Cumberland WMA as a THCTF area of interest (Cumberland Plateau, pg. 161-165). It also falls within an acquisition boundary of TWRA's Tennessee Wildlife Legacy Plan (TWLP 2021).

- a. Motion to approve by Cleveland.
- b. Board discusses Easement language and consults with TDEC attorney.
- c. Board requests Chairman Goddard and TDEC Sr. Real Property Manager Avant review easement language

### **Future Action Steps**

1. Next Board meeting will be held on April 9, 2024, at 12:00pm Clover Bottom Mansion.

### **Closing**

- Public Comment Period – no comments