



**GEORGIA**  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
WALTER RABON, COMMISSIONER

June 23, 2026

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, Board of Natural Resources

FROM: Walter Rabon, Commissioner

SUBJECT: Acquisition (purchase) of 2,900± acres from the Conservation Fund, 1<sup>st</sup> Phase of the Charlton County Project, Charlton County.

Comments

The Department is seeking approval to acquire 2,900± acres in Charlton County for conservation and recreational purposes.

<u>Owner</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Total</u>
The Conservation Fund	2,900±	\$8,230,316.00

For your review, we are enclosing:

- (1) Summary
- (2) Resolution

We have presented all available information pertaining to this purchase to the Chairman, Land Committee, and to the member of the Board within whose district this project is located.

Discussion and Conclusion

This 2,900± acre acquisition in Charlton County will protect land along Trail Ridge near the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge. The tract provides critical habitat adjacent to the Okefenokee swamp and will provide new outdoor recreational opportunities in Charlton County. The acquisition also offers the opportunity for longleaf pine restoration and wetland restoration, along with expansion of fire buffer areas next to the swamp. The recent wildfires in this area highlight the need for this management. Upon acquisition the property will be managed as the Alachua Trail Wildlife Management Area along with an additional 3,833 acres that is due to be sold to the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge. The Department will manage both tracts to provide public hunting, fishing and other outdoor recreation opportunities. At the time of conveyance, the Conservation Fund will place a deed restriction on the property that prohibits any future mining or mineral extraction activities.

With Board approval we intend to take this project to State Properties Commission (SPC) and if approved we will close August 2026. This tract represents the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of a 3,964± acres project. We will return to the Board for approval of the second phase of this project totaling 1,064± acres for anticipated closing in March 2027.

B-1

The Department will acquire the property with Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Grant (GOSA) funds and a federal U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Pittman-Robertson (PR) grant. As a condition of receiving multiple funds, an affidavit will be recorded against the tract stating it may not be disposed of in any manner or used for purposes inconsistent with the programs it was acquired for without the prior approval of the USFWS and GOSA Board of Trustees.

**Recommendation**

We recommend adoption of the attached Resolution.

WR: bw

Enclosures (2)

SUMMARY STATEMENT

PROJECT: TCF Charlton County

TRACT: The Conservation Fund. 1<sup>st</sup> Phase Tract

LOCATION: Charlton County

THIS ACQUISITION: 2,900± acres

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

GOSA Grant	\$7,000,000.00
USFWS Pittman-Robertson Grant	<u>\$1,230,316.00</u>
<b>Total Purchase Price</b>	<b>\$8,230,316.00</b>

As a condition of receiving federal and private funds, an affidavit will be recorded against this property stating it may not be disposed of in any manner or used for purposes inconsistent with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Pittman-Robertson Grant and Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Grant funds.

HISTORY OF NEGOTIATION: The Department entered a purchase option with the Conservation Fund on May 5, 2026.

NOMINATION: Wildlife Resources Division

KNOWN RIGHTS OUTSTANDING: None

VENDOR RESERVES: None

BENEFITS OF ACQUISITION: The acquisition opens the tract for public recreation such as hunting, wildlife viewing, hiking, observing nature.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS REPORT: A study was made and all conditions and guidelines under the Georgia Environmental Policy Act have been evaluated. It has been determined that this acquisition will have no significant adverse effect on the environment.

RELATIONSHIP TO DNR'S FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN: This property fits into our Strategic Plan, because it will encourage new audiences to enjoy the outdoors and increases opportunities for access to our natural resources.

FIVE YEAR OPERATIONAL: The following operating budget for the property represents the estimated cost for the proposed acquisition only.

FY 2026 - \$63,100  
FY 2027 - \$12,050  
FY 2028 - \$12,050  
FY 2029 - \$12,050  
FY 2030 - \$12,050

**Total 5-Year Operating Budget Estimate = \$111,300**

APPRAISAL SUMMARIES:

<u>DATE</u>	<u>APPRAISALS</u>	<u>ACRES</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
4/22/2026	Odom Real Estate Appraisal, Inc.	3,964±	\$11,300,000 (\$2,850.66 per acre)
2/2/2026	Zac Ryan Appraisal Services, Inc.	3,984±	\$9,960,000 (\$2,500.00 per acre)
OPTION:	The Conservation Fund	3,964±	\$11,250,000.00 (\$2,838.04 per acre)
	1 <sup>st</sup> Phase	2,900±	\$8,230,316.00 (\$2,838.04 per acre)

1<sup>st</sup> PHASE TERMINATION DATE: September 16, 2026

1<sup>st</sup> PHASE LATEST CLOSING DATE: September 30, 2026

COORDINATION: Wildlife Resources Division

**RESOLUTION**

RECOMMENDING ACQUISITION BY NEGOTIATED PURCHASE OF THE FOLLOWING NAMED PROPERTY, MORE PARTICULARLY IDENTIFIED AS THE 2,900± ACRES 1<sup>ST</sup> PHASE TCF CHARLTON COUNTY TRACT ON THE ATTACHED “EXHIBIT A”, FOR CONSERVATION AND RELATED PURPOSES.

CONSERVATION AND RELATED PURPOSES DEFINED

Conservation and related purposes as herein used include recreational, historical, archaeological, fish and wildlife, and other related uses of land and water resources.

Property To Be Acquired:

**Project**  
TCF Charton County 1<sup>ST</sup> Phase

**Property Owner**  
the Conservation Fund

WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources is responsible for the conservation and wise utilization of the State's natural resources; and

WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources' staff has studied the subject property and found its conservation and related values are indeed of statewide significance and that the acquisition and appropriate development of this property would contribute greatly to meeting the conservation needs of Georgia's natural resources and thus recommends the preservation of the subject property through acquisition or other appropriate action; and

WHEREAS, At the time of conveyance, the Conservation Fund will place a deed restriction on the property that prohibits any future mining or mineral extraction activities; and

WHEREAS, As a condition of receiving multiple funds, an affidavit will be recorded against the tract stating it may not be disposed of in any manner or used for purposes inconsistent with the programs it was acquired for without the prior approval of the USFWS and GOSA Board of Trustees.; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Georgia Board of Natural Resources concurs in the findings of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources staff and recommends that the Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources seek the approval of the State Properties Commission to acquire by negotiated purchase and develop the subject property, for conservation and/or related purposes generally in accordance with applicable laws, policies, and procedures.

Adopted this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of June 2026.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Patrick Denney, Chairman  
Georgia Board of Natural Resources

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dan Garcia, Secretary  
Georgia Board of Natural Resources

EXHIBIT A

TCF Charlton  
Charlton County

