



GEORGIA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
WALTER RABON, COMMISSIONER

October 27, 2026

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, Board of Natural Resources

FROM: Walter Rabon, Commissioner *WR*

SUBJECT: Requesting approval via Executive Order to demolish the Unicoi State Park Squirrels Nest Camping Area in White County.

Comments

The Department seeks the Board's authorization to demolish the Squirrels Nest Camping Area (BLLIP #28599) at Unicoi State Park.

For your review, we are enclosing:

- (1) Resolution
- (2) Executive Order

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

Discussion and Conclusion

The 50+ year old camping area was constructed as part of the experimental recreation theme of Unicoi State Park in the 1960s-70s. The facility features elevated, roofed camping platforms and an associated bathhouse. The interconnected and elevated platforms are on telephone pole supports which are all structurally decayed. Based on follow-up inspections, it was recommended this structure be closed. The demolition of the structures will address and correct camper safety concerns. Structures of historical significance and/or 2,000 square feet and larger require an executive order authorizing their removal. The Office of the State Archaeologist determined the structure is eligible for historic listing, so demolition would have a negative impact on the Georgia/National Register of Historic Places. To commemorate Squirrels Nest Camping Area, The Office of the State Archeologist recommends rehabilitation of the camping platforms or, if unfeasible, a Permanent Archival Record. Subject to receiving the executive order, the Department will comply with OCGA 12-3-55 (e) to document the structure's historic characteristics prior to demolition.

Recommendation

We recommend adoption of the attached Resolution.

WR: bw

Enclosures (2)

RESOLUTION

RECOMMENDING APPROVAL TO REMOVE THE SQUIRRELS NEST CAMPING AREA AT UNICOI STATE PARK VIA EXECUTIVE ORDER FROM THE FOLLOWING NAMED PROPERTY, MORE PARTICULARLY IDENTIFIED ON THE ATTACHED “EXHIBIT A”.

Project

**Unicoi State Park
(Squirrels Nest Camping Area
BLLIP #28599; 624 SQFT)**

Location

White County

- WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources is responsible for the conservation and wise utilization of the State's natural resources and facilities used to manage them; and
- WHEREAS, the Office of the State Archaeologist determined that removing the historic camping area structures would impact the Georgia/National Register of Historic Places; and
- WHEREAS, the Department will seek approval to remove said structures via EXECUTIVE ORDER detailed on “EXHIBIT B”; and
- WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources recommends the removal of the buildings due to significant deficiencies that compromise safety, functionality, and compliance with current standards; and
- WHEREAS, the Department will comply with OCGA 12-3-55 (e) to document the area’s historic characteristics prior to demolition; 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 authorizes the Commissioner to request the Governor of the State of Georgia to execute the proposed Executive Order authorizing the demolition of the Squirrels Nest Camping Area and the appropriate disposal of the debris.

Adopted this 27th day of October 2026.

Respectfully submitted by:

Patrick Denney, Chairman
Georgia Board of Natural Resources

ATTEST:

Dan Garcia, Secretary
Georgia Board of Natural Resources

EXHIBIT A

Unicoi SP
Proposed Demolition
White County

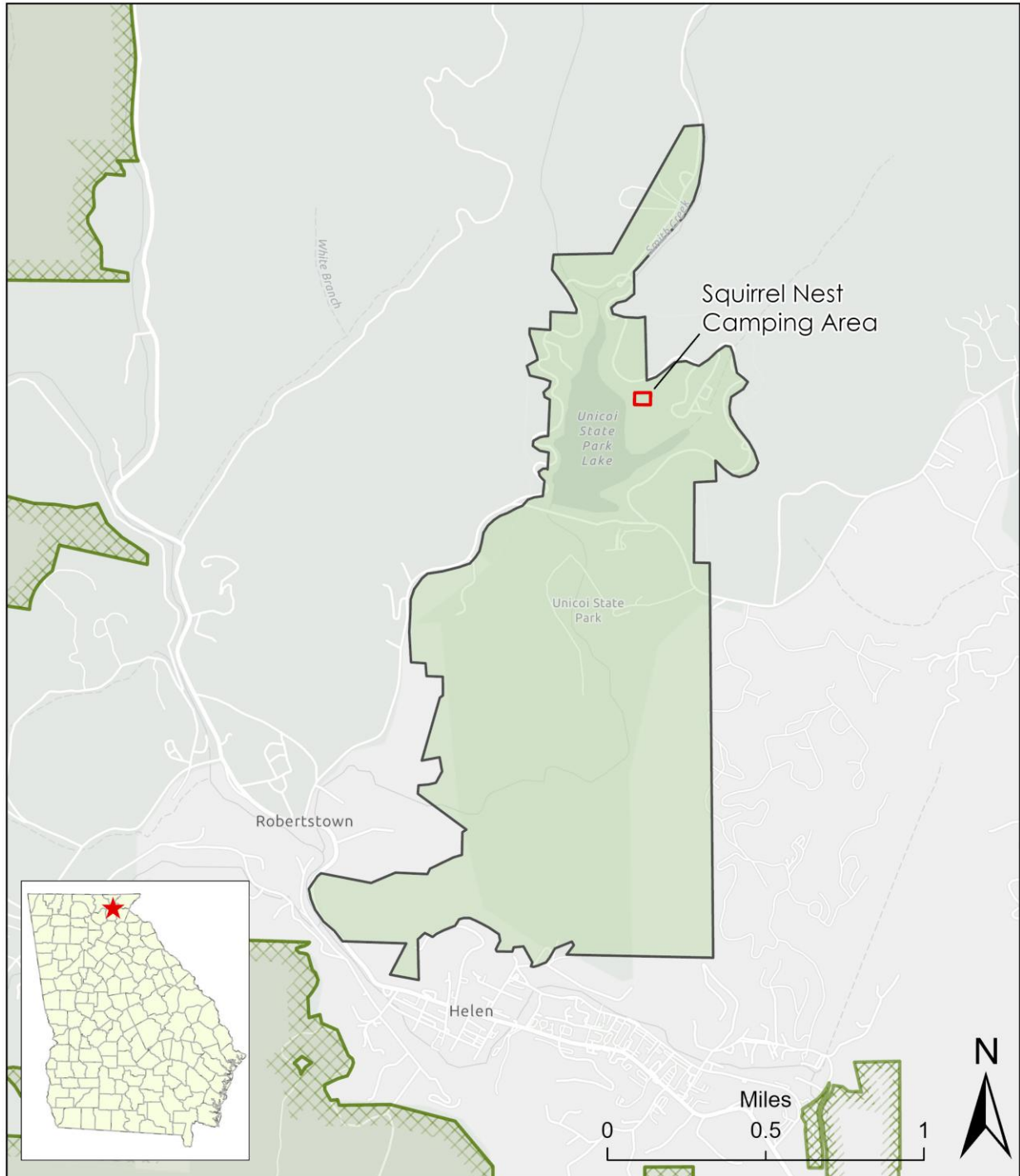


EXHIBIT B

EXECUTIVE ORDER

BY THE GOVERNOR:

- WHEREAS: the Department of Natural Resources operates the facility in White County known as Unicoi State Park for recreation and conservation purposes; and
- WHEREAS: said property contains structures known as Squirrel Nest Camping Area (BLLIP #28599) totaling 624 square feet; and
- WHEREAS: the Office of the State Archaeologist determined the structures are eligible as historic and would impact the Georgia/National Register of Historic Places if removed; and
- WHEREAS: the Department's staff agree that the structures are no longer needed for Department operations, in poor condition, and beyond reasonable repair; and
- WHEREAS: the Board of Natural Resources approved the removal of the structures on October 27, 2026; and
- WHEREAS: the structures have been declared to have no value to the Department.

NOW, THEREFORE, PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME AS GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA BY VIRTUE OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE OFFICIAL CODE OF GEORGIA, ANNOTATED 50-16-61, IT IS HEREBY

- ORDERED: The Department of Natural Resources is hereby authorized and directed to provide for the razing, demolition and disposal of said structures under the terms and conditions which are deemed to be in the best interests of the State of Georgia, in accordance with applicable laws, policies, and procedures, including any requirements under Code Section 12-3-55 regarding historic properties that may pertain to the structures.

This _____ day of _____ 2026.

Brian Kemp
Governor

ATTEST:

Executive Secretary