

Minutes
Board of Natural Resources
Amicalola Falls State Park & Lodge
418 Amicalola Falls State Park Road
Dawsonville, GA 30534

Tuesday, December 3, 2024
9:00 a.m.

Board Members

Joe Hatfield, Chair
Lesley Reynolds, Secretary
Nancy Addison
Jeff Andrews
Randy Dellinger
Patrick Denney
Charles DePriest
Dan Garcia
Mark Hennessy
Penn Hodge
Steve Hufstetler
Duncan Johnson
Ray Lambert
Brent Layton
Harley Yancey

Guests

Ethan Hunt, Nogawild
Hope Bennett, Nogawild
Damon Kirkpatrick, Friends of Georgia State Park
Anna Edmondson, Robbins Governmental Relations

Staff Members

Walter Rabon, Commissioner
Trevor Santos
Taylor Brown Fisher
Cathy Barnette
Kyle Pearson
Artica Gaston
Mike England
Doug Haymans
Angie Johnson
Ted Will
Brent Womack

Jeff Cown, Director
Chuck Mueller
Anna Truszczynski
Katie Hegarty

The December 3, 2024 Board of Natural Resources meeting was called to order by Chairman Joe Hatfield.

Chairman Hatfield thanked Robert Berrey, General Manager of Amicalola Falls State Park and Lodge, and the staff, Mr. Charles Burton, Executive Director of the North Georgia Mountains Authority, and Mark Osterhaus, President of Coral Hospitality, for a warm welcome to beautiful Amicalola Falls State Park and Lodge.

Chairman Hatfield called on Sergeant Casey Jones, Law Enforcement Division, for a moment of inspiration.

Chairman Hatfield thanked Sergeant Jones for his inspirational message and his service to the Department of Natural Resources.

Chairman Hatfield stated he would like to amend the agenda to add a resolution under the Commissioner's report and requested a motion to approve.

A motion was made by Mr. Lambert, seconded by Ms. Addison, and carried unanimously to amend the agenda.

Chairman Hatfield adjourned the Board meeting to move into the Committee meetings.

Chairman Hatfield called the December 3, 2024 meeting of the Board of Natural Resources to order.

Chairman Hatfield called for a motion to approve the minutes of the Board of Natural Resources meetings on October 22, 2024 and November 4, 2024.

A motion was made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Garcia, and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the Board of Natural Resources meetings on October 22, 2024 and November 4, 2024.

Chairman Hatfield called on Jeff Cown, Director of the Environmental Protection Division, for his report.

Director Cown updated the Board on the Air Protection Branch's continued efforts on improving employee's education and understanding of other programs, as well as being

recognized as the first and only state to have a fully approved Regional Haze State Implementation Plan, in EPA Region 4. He further updated the Board on attending the Georgia Association of Manufacturers Fall Meeting, and Ania Truszczynski, Watershed Branch Chief, attending the House Study Committee on Private Water Systems.

Director Cown stated this concluded his report.

Chairman Hatfield called on Walter Rabon, Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources, for his report.

Commissioner Rabon began his report by taking a moment to remember DNR's first commissioner, Joe Tanner, who passed away peacefully on November 24. He stated that former Commissioner Tanner was appointed in 1972 by then-Governor Jimmy Carter to serve as the commissioner of the newly formed Department of Natural Resources, consolidating 38 separate state agencies to form the DNR as we know it today. He further stated that he served in this role until 1984, and was appointed a second time as commissioner, serving from 1990 until 1995.

Commissioner Rabon stated that during his second stint with DNR, Joe served as Georgia's lead negotiator during the inter-state "Water Wars" which led to the compacts with Georgia, Alabama, and Florida. He further stated that these landmark agreements addressed water resource management across state lines and promoted the sustainable use of invaluable resources.

Commissioner Rabon stated that throughout his 26-year career in state government, he was responsible for more than 400 legislative efforts. He further stated that Joe's tenure also saw the passage of the Shore Protection Act of 1979 and the Heritage Trust Act of 1975, which preserved critical sites like Ossabaw Island. He added that his legislative accomplishments in these areas continue to support DNR's mission to protect Georgia's natural, historic, and cultural resources.

Commissioner Rabon stated that throughout his career, he was known as being one of the toughest and most committed public leaders who always insisted upon following the law, rules, and regulations with no excuses for failure, but he was also loved and admired as being one of the most compassionate and generous men anyone knew.

Commissioner Rabon stated that Joe will surely be missed. He asked that the everyone keep his family in their thoughts and prayers.

Commissioner Rabon provided an update from the Law Enforcement Division, and the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, and stated that an investigation continues into the incident that

occurred on Sapelo Island. He stated that he hoped to have the investigation wrapped up by the end of the year.

Commissioner Rabon stated that Attorney General Chris Carr's office has hired Wiss, Janney, and Elstner Associates to conduct an independent investigation into the cause of the collapse of the gangway at the Marsh Landing Dock. He further stated that WJE is a firm of engineers, architects, and materials scientists specializing in the investigation, testing, and design of repairs for buildings, bridges, and other structures. He added that the firm has participated in the engineering or architectural investigation of many of the United States' most significant major failures and natural disasters and has assisted in many investigations globally. He further added that at this time, we are not aware how long their investigation may take.

Commissioner Rabon stated that the Leadership Academy concluded its final session of the year a few weeks ago at Unicoi State Park and Lodge, with 17 DNR employees graduating in this year's class. He thanked the Board members who were at Unicoi, Chairman Hatfield, Ms. Reynolds, and Mr. Hufstetler, and attended the graduation. He added that the staff appreciates the ongoing support provided by the Board.

Commissioner Rabon stated the 2025 DNR Career Academy application period has closed, and there are more than 220 applicants. He further stated that the team is eager to conduct interviews with 60 of the qualified applicants at the end of this week.

Commissioner Rabon stated that the 2025 Weekend for Wildlife is quickly approaching and will be held from January 31-February 1, 2025. He further stated that the Georgia Natural Resources Foundation Executive Director, Lyndy Rogers, has yet again, been quite successful growing this fundraiser into what it is today. He added that at this time, there are nearly 370 seats filled, 114 sponsors, and over 1.8 million dollars raised.

Commissioner Rabon stated the DNR will be hosting the 78th Annual Conference of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in Augusta from December 9-13, 2024. He further stated that nearly 600 people from 15 state agencies, 2 territories, and non-governmental organizations will participate in the weeklong conference, shedding light on issues and topics of importance to those who manage and protect fish and wildlife resources. He added that the department is excited to extend a warm Peach State welcome to those in attendance and about the plenary session that will take place on making the outdoor accessible to all, including an overview of Georgia's Outdoors Beyond Barriers initiative.

Commissioner Rabon provided an update from the State Parks and Historic Sites Division. He began by sharing the loss of Tallulah Gorge State Park Assistant Manager Kristy Kerst, who was fatally struck by a vehicle on November 4, while visiting family in Colorado. Kristy began her

career with DNR at F.D. Roosevelt State Park as a part-time Maintenance Ranger in February 2024 and was promoted to Assistant Manager at Tallulah Gorge in June of this year.

Commissioner Rabon stated that though her tenure with the Parks Division was short, she had a huge impact on those she worked with. He further stated that Kristy had an infectious personality and smile and was proud to be a Park Ranger. He added that she was particularly honored to have been selected as the Class President of Georgia Park Ranger Academy Class #7 which is currently in progress. He further added that Kristy worked earnestly to develop the class t-shirt and draft her speech for graduation. In that undelivered speech, she shared her “Why” - her story of being motivated from a young age to become a park ranger and her passion for parks.

Commissioner Rabon stated that upon coming to Georgia, Kristy fell in love with the state and knew during her first visit to Tallulah Gorge that it was her park and stated that a “career with Georgia State Parks was what I had been dreaming about my entire life.” He asked everyone to please keep Kristy’s family in your thoughts in prayers, as well as the staff at Tallulah Gorge.

Commissioner Rabon stated that many of our Parks were closed due to the impact of Hurricane Helene. He further stated that all sites are open or have portions of the park open except General Coffee and George L. Smith, which had the greatest impacts. He added that Elijah Clark just reopened the campground and cottages on November 22, although the day use area will remain closed until debris removal and repairs to facilities are completed.

Commissioner Rabon stated that this autumn was unusual due to Hurricane Helene and exceptionally dry and warm weather and leaf watching remains one of our most popular guest activities. He further stated that the Parks Division annual Leaf Watch website had more than 145,000 page views during the season. He added that the user-generated gallery tagged with hashtag GaLeafWatch or hashtag GaStateParks was viewed more than 34,000 times.

Commissioner Rabon provided an update from the Wildlife Resources Division and stated that WRD took part in a signing ceremony for a multi-agency agreement that guarantees important trout hatchery funding support. He further stated that through this agreement, the Tennessee Valley Authority and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service agree to continue funding three federal fish hatcheries that help provide Georgia DNR and Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency with millions of trout for stocking in respective state waters.

Commissioner Rabon stated the Outdoors Beyond Barriers deer hunts have come to close for the season and they were extremely successful with 5 hunts in total. He further stated that thanks to our knowledgeable and committed staff, specific modified equipment like ground blinds or gun holders, and the EcoRover adaptive chairs, these hunts provided in the field opportunities to 45 excited participants. He added that in total, 25 deer were taken during these

public land hunts. He further added that the success rate is 56%, which is pretty good for these events, but more importantly it created opportunities for these participants in the woods, and Department staff was able to make the connection with these hunters. He stated that their input and experiences will be beneficial to the OBB program as future hunts are planned. He further stated that staff with the OBB program are now looking ahead to planning fishing events for the Spring.

Commissioner Rabon stated that last year the Bat Conservation Fund was created through historic agreements between the Georgia Department of Transportation, DNR, and federal partners to streamline transportation project approval related to tree clearing activities associated with transportation projects. He further stated that through this agreement Georgia Department of Transportation provides about \$4 million annually to DNR to protect priority high-quality habitats. He added that the first land acquisition was closed using the new Bat Conservation Fund and another one is nearing completion. He further added that the first tract covers 373 acres in Polk County in the Terrapin Creek watershed, and the second tract is also in Polk County and covers nearly 1,800 acres. He stated that both properties will be managed as part of Treat Mountain VPA.

Commissioner Rabon called on Doug Haymans, Director of the Coastal Resources, for his report.

Director Haymans provided an update on the Dock Stakeholders meetings and stated a public meeting is scheduled for January 2025; the Red Drum Stock Assessment; the new state record for the Lane Snapper caught on November 18 by Marcus Hannon of Savannah; and the recent Coastline publication.

Director Haymans stated this concluded his report.

Commissioner Rabon called on Colonel Mike England, Director of the Law Enforcement Division, for his report.

Colonel England provided an update on the Bleckley County bear case; Hall County night hunting cases; Florida murder case; Hunt Regulations app; Operation Bouncing Off with a Trailer; and SOG training with KGM R556A1 suppressors.

Colonel England stated this concluded his report.

Commissioner Rabon stated that before he concludes, he would like to provide a few recognitions. He stated that Artica Gaston, Director of Administrative Services, will be departing the DNR after 14 years for a new role with the Department of Agriculture, beginning in the new

year. He further stated that Artica has been an invaluable asset to the team and will be missed dearly. He thanked Artica for all she has done for the DNR.

Commissioner Rabon recognized Cathy Barnette and stated that she will be retiring at the end of the year following 14 years of service to the DNR and many more years of service to the State of Georgia. He expressed deep appreciation for her commitment to the Board and to the department. He congratulated her on her accomplishment and offered his best wishes.

Chairman Joe Hatfield read a Resolution honoring and expressing appreciation to Cathy Barnette on her retirement and requested a motion to approve.

A motion was made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Ms. Addison, and carried unanimously to adopt the Resolution honoring and expressing appreciation to Cathy Barnette. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

The resolution was presented to Ms. Barnette by Chairman Hatfield and Commissioner Rabon.

Commissioner Rabon stated this concluded his report.

Chairman Hatfield called on Randy Dellinger, Vice Chairman of the Land Committee, in the absence of Paul Shailendra, Chairman of the Land Committee for his report.

A motion was made by Mr. Dellinger, seconded by Mr. Johnson, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval of the Acquisition (purchase) of 2,244± acres from Timberlands II LLC., 1st Phase of the Upatoi Ravines Project, Talbot County. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

A motion was made by Mr. Dellinger, seconded by Ms. Addison, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval of the Acquisition (purchase) of 8,384± acres from The Conservation Fund (TCF), Dugdown Corridor, Treat Mountain and Tallapoosa River Volunteer Public Access Areas (VPA), Haralson and Polk Counties. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

A motion was made by Mr. Dellinger, seconded by Ms. Addison, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval of the Acquisition (purchase) of 94± acres from Mary Balent Long and Sergio A. Garza-Corona as Co-Executors of the Estate of Steven W. McCloud,

Crockford Pigeon Mountain WMA, Walker County. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

A motion was made by Mr. Dellinger, seconded by Mr. Johnson, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval of the Acquisition (purchase) of 4.28± acres from Julia Wheeler and Mary Lois Wheeler Morris, Broad River Boat Ramp Project, Elbert County. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

A motion was made by Mr. Dellinger, seconded by Mr. Johnson, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement with Wilkinson County, Balls' Ferry State Park, Wilkinson County. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

A motion was made by Mr. Dellinger, seconded by Ms. Addison, and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to enter into an agreement with Terrell County to lease the 2.694± acres Kinchafoonee Boat Ramp, Terrell County. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part thereof)

Vice Chairman Dellinger stated this concluded his report.

Chairman Hatfield called on Ray Lambert, Chairman of the Nominating Committee for 2025 Officers, for his report.

Mr. Lambert stated the following members served on the Nominating Committee: Nancy Addison, Duncan Johnson, and Bodine Sinyard. He further stated that the committee met via conference call on November 13, 2024, and the committee voted unanimously to recommend the following members to serve as the 2025 Officers: Lesley Reynolds, Chairman; Patrick Denney, Vice Chairman; and Randy Dellinger, Secretary. He stated that the full board will vote on the slate of officers at the January 31, 2025 board meeting.

Mr. Lambert stated this concluded his report.

Chairman Hatfield adjourned the board meeting for an Executive Session of the Land Committee.

Chairman Hatfield called the Board of Natural Resources meeting back to order.

Chairman Hatfield stated the next board meeting will be held on Friday, January 31, 2025, at A. W. Jones Heritage Center, 610 Beachview Drive, St. Simons Island, GA 31522.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Joe Hatfield, Chairman

ATTEST:

Lesley Reynolds, Secretary

Minutes
Environmental Protection Committee
Amicalola Falls State Park & Lodge
418 Amicalola Falls State Park Road
Dawsonville, GA 30534

Tuesday, December 3, 2024
9:00 a.m.

Committee Members

Ray Lambert, Chair
Nancy Addison
Jeff Andrews
Patrick Denney
Dan Garcia
Penn Hodge
Steve Hufstetler
Duncan Johnson
Lesley Reynolds
Joe Hatfield, Board Chair, Ex-officio

Board Members

Randy Dellinger
Charles DePriest
Mark Hennessy
Brent Layton
Harley Yancey

Guests

Ethan Hunt, Nogawild
Hope Bennett, Nogawild
Damon Kirkpatrick, Friends of Georgia State Park
Anna Edmondson, Robbins Governmental Relations

Staff Members

Walter Rabon, Commissioner
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Taylor Brown Fisher
Cathy Barnette
Kyle Pearson
Artica Gaston
Mike England
Doug Haymans
Angie Johnson
Ted Will
Brent Womack

Jeff Cown, Director
Chuck Mueller
Anna Truszczynski
Katie Hegarty

The December 3, 2024 meeting of the Environmental Protection Committee was called to order by Chairman Joe Hatfield.

Chairman Hatfield called on Ray Lambert, Chairman of the Environmental Protection Committee. Mr. Lambert called on Ania Truszczynski, Ph.D., Chief of the Watershed Protection Branch, to present action on Proposed Amendments to the Rules for Water Quality Control, Chapter 391-3-6-.03 pertaining miscellaneous rules.

Dr. Truszczynski stated that the U.S. EPA, under the Federal Clean Water Act (CWA), requires states to review their water quality standards at least once every three years and revise them if appropriate. She further stated that an initial public hearing was held on March 22, 2022, to solicit items to be considered for this 2022 Triennial Review. She additionally stated that targeted stakeholder meetings were held on September 21, 2022, March 15, 2023, and February 7, 2024, on human health; August 16, 2022, March 21, 2023, March 28, 2023, and August 14, 2024, on selenium; 5 meetings were held in August and September 2024 on new lake criteria, and 2 GAWP presentations were held in 2024. She finally stated that a comprehensive final public meeting was held on October 7, 2024.

Dr. Truszczynski stated that the key changes are adding a definition of “CAS RN”, which is already used in tables/ footnotes in the rule, and moving the location of an existing definition. She further stated that EPD is adding table formatting and modifying sub-paragraph numbering for various criteria. She finally stated that EPD is adding missing CAS RN numbers to criteria where necessary, and removing footnotes from criteria tables.

Dr. Truszczynski stated that EPD is adopting EPA’s 2016 recommended aquatic life selenium criteria, which includes four element criteria based on fish tissue and water column hierarchy, adding a provision to allow for site-specific criteria in waters where sturgeon and paddle fish are absent, and using 30Q10 flow for water column criteria. She further stated that EPD is adopting EPA’s 2005 recommended aquatic life diazinon criteria, and adopting EPA’s 2005 recommended aquatic life nonylphenol criteria.

Dr. Truszczynski stated that further key changes update human health criteria for 82 pollutants and add new human health criteria for 6 pollutants based on probabilistic risk assessment, which includes adding two criteria for Organism only and Water + Organism. She further stated that EPD is adding language to allow for Site-Specific Bacteria Criteria.

Dr. Truszczynski stated that further key changes revise designated uses to reflect current uses, including updating 11 waterbody segments to include recreation designated use. She

further stated that these waterbodies met all EPD's criteria for a designated use change to recreation, including year-round primary contact recreation, planned or current investments, stakeholder and/or community support, and no stakeholder opposition. She additionally stated updates to 7 waterbody segments to include drinking water designated use. Finally, she stated that EPD is adopting site-specific criteria for Lakes Rabun, Burton, and Tugalo, including chlorophyll *a* and nutrients.

Dr. Truszczynski stated that following the kickoff public hearing in 2022, the 15 different public & stakeholder meetings throughout 2022-2024, and after briefing the Environmental Committee of the DNR Board today, there will be a public notice in December 2024 and a public hearing in February 2025. She further stated she plans to request adoption of the proposed amendments at the March 25, 2025 DNR Board meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

**Minutes
Land Committee
Amicalola Falls State Park & Lodge
418 Amicalola Falls State Park Road
Dawsonville, GA 30534**

**Tuesday, December 3, 2024
9:00 a.m.**

Committee Members

Randy Dellinger, Vice Chair
Nancy Addison
Patrick Denney
Charles DePriest
Dan Garcia
Mark Hennessy
Penn Hodge
Steve Hufstetler
Brent Layton
Harley Yancey
Joe Hatfield, Board Chair, Ex-officio

Board Members

Jeff Andrews
Duncan Johnson
Ray Lambert
Lesley Reynolds

Guests

Ethan Hunt, Nogawild
Hope Bennett, Nogawild
Damon Kirkpatrick, Friends of Georgia State Park
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Staff Members

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Mike England
Doug Haymans
Angie Johnson
Ted Will
Brent Womack

Jeff Cown, Director
Chuck Mueller
Anna Truszczynski
Katie Hegarty

The December 3, 2024 meeting of the Land Committee was called to order by Joe Hatfield, Chairman of the Board of Natural Resources.

Chairman Hatfield called on Mr. Randy Dellinger, Vice Chair of the Land Committee, in the absence of Paul Shailendra, Chair of the Land Committee. Mr. Dellinger called on Brent Womack, Chief of Real Estate.

Mr. Womack stated the first item for consideration is seeking approval to acquire 2,244± acres from Timberlands II, LLC., 1st Phase of the Upatoi Ravines Project in Talbot County. He further stated the property is party of a large area of contiguous forested land in the headwaters of the high-priority Upatoi Creek in the Chattahoochee River drainage. He added that the property is less than 3 miles from Fort Moore Army Post, and adjacent to Fort Moore Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration program and Georgia Sentinel Landscape boundaries. He further added that it is located within the Significant Geographic Area of the Chattahoochee Fall Line Conservation Partnership, increases connectivity among several protected state lands, and builds upon a number of previous land conservation projects along the Fall Line. He stated that the project bolsters several state, national, and international conservation plans. He further stated that it will help to achieve recovery criteria for the federally endangered plant, fringed campion (*Silene polypetala*) and conserve other high priority, at-risk species occurring in the project, including the tricolored bat, which is proposed for federal listing as endangered. He added that streams on the target tract provide high-quality habitat for the goldstripe darter, bluestripe shiner, broadstripe shiner, and alligator snapping turtle (proposed for federal listing as threatened); all are state protected and SWAP priority species. He further added that with Board approval the department intends to take this project to the State Properties Commission and, if approved, will close January 2025. He stated that this tract represents the 1st phase of a 9,014± acres project. He further stated that the proposal will be presented for Board approval of the second phase of this project totaling 6,770± acres for an anticipated closing in August 2025.

Mr. Womack stated the Department will acquire the property with GADOT Bat funds, a federal U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service Pittman-Robertson Grant, a federal USFWS Recovery Grant, State Bond funds, and Stone Mountain funds. He further stated that in 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, GADOT Bat funds, and Stone Mountain funds.

A motion was made by Mr. Garcia, seconded by Mr. Yancey, and carried unanimously that the Committee recommends the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the

Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval of the Acquisition (purchase) of 2,244± acres from Timberlands II LLC., 1st Phase of the Upatoi Ravines Project, Talbot County.

Mr. Womack stated that Item B is seeking approval to acquire 8,384± acres from the Conservation Fund, Dugdown Corridor, Treat Mountain and Tallapoosa River Volunteer Public Access Areas in Haralson and Polk Counties. He further stated that these Volunteer Public Access Areas are located within the Dugdown Corridor that connects Paulding Forest and Sheffield Wildlife Management Areas with Talladega National Forest. He added that this area has been identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan as a high priority for conservation. He further added that these tracts also contain remnant montane longleaf pine and provide opportunities to restore this habitat type at a landscape scale. He stated that protection of these tracts will also protect water quality in the Tallapoosa River and Terrapin Creek watersheds, both of which are priorities for conservation in Georgia and Alabama. He further stated that with Board approval the department intends to take this project to the State Properties Commission and, if approved, will close December 2024.

Mr. Womack stated the Department will acquire the property with a U. S. Forest Service, Forest Legacy grant, and Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program funds. He further stated that as a condition of receiving funds from 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 Forest Legacy Program and Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program.

A motion was made by Mr. Garcia, seconded by Ms. Addison, and carried unanimously that the Committee recommends the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval of the Acquisition (purchase) of 8,384± acres from The Conservation Fund (TCF), Dugdown Corridor, Treat Mountain and Tallapoosa River Volunteer Public Access Areas (VPA), Haralson and Polk Counties.

Mr. Womack stated that Item C is seeking approval to acquire 94± acres from Mary Balent Long and Sergio A. Garza-Corona as Co-Executors of the Estate of Steven W. McCloud, Crockford Pigeon Mountain WMA in Walker County. He further stated that Crockford Pigeon Mountain WMA is one of the top conservation priorities for the Department. He added that just over 20,000 acres, this WMA is managed for wildlife and is heavily used by the public for multiple types of recreation. He further added that the McCloud tract has good road frontage, which will add better access to this side of the WMA, improve public recreation opportunities, and improve our ability to manage this portion of the WMA.

Mr. Womack stated the Department will acquire the property with a federal USFWS Pittman-Robertson Grant, a grant from the Open Space Institute Appalachian Landscapes Protection Fund, and a donation from the Knobloch Family Foundation. He further stated that as

a condition of receiving the grants and funding, an affidavit will be recorded against the McCloud 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, Open Space Institute Appalachian Landscapes Protection Fund, and the Knobloch Family Foundation.

A motion was made by Mr. Hennessy, seconded by Ms. Addison, and carried unanimously that the Committee recommends the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval of the Acquisition (purchase) of 94± acres from Mary Balent Long and Sergio A. Garza-Corona as Co-Executors of the Estate of Steven W. McCloud, Crockford Pigeon Mountain WMA, Walker County.

Mr. Womack stated that Item D is seeking approval to purchase 4.28± acres from Julia Wheeler and Mary Lois Wheeler Morris, as part of the Broad River Boat Ramp Project in Elbert County. He further stated that the Wildlife Resources Division Fisheries Management Section currently operates a boat ramp across the street from this property. He added that GADOT has plans to carry out a road improvement project in the area that could impact the Fisheries Sections ability to continue to use the existing ramp. He further added that they seek approval to acquire this property as a potential secondary location for a new boat ramp if needed in the future. He stated that with board approval the department intends to take this project to the State Properties Commission and, if approved, will close December 2024.

A motion was made by Mr. Hennessy, seconded by Mr. Yancey, and carried unanimously that the Committee recommends the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval of the Acquisition (purchase) of 4.28± acres from Julia Wheeler and Mary Lois Wheeler Morris, Broad River Boat Ramp Project, Elbert County.

Mr. Womack stated that Item E is seeking approval for a twenty-five year intergovernmental agreement with Wilkinson County to operate and maintain 525± acres of the Balls' Ferry State Park in Wilkinson County for the public. He further stated the Department will have no financial responsibility associated with the property's upkeep or maintenance. He added that the county will use Balls' Ferry to create a public park, public access, public recreational use, and ecological, historical, and cultural education.

A motion was made by Mr. Hodge, seconded by Mr. Denney, and carried unanimously that the Committee recommends the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement with Wilkinson County, Balls' Ferry State Park, Wilkinson County.

Mr. Womack stated that Item F is seeking approval to enter into a 25-year agreement to lease the 2.694± acres Kinchafoonee Creek Boat Ramp from Terrell County. He further stated that the County will be responsible for the general facility maintenance of the boat ramp at no cost. He added that the Department will continue to operate the boat ramp and parking area while performing structural maintenance and repairs as needed. He further added that for the benefit of the public and upon approval by the Board, the Department will enter into a twenty-five year lease agreement with Terrell County at no cost.

A motion was made by Mr. Hodge, seconded by Ms. Addison, and carried unanimously that the Committee recommends the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to enter into an agreement with Terrell County to lease the 2.694± acres Kinchafoonee Boat Ramp, Terrell County.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes
Executive Session of the Land Committee
Amicalola Falls State Park & Lodge
418 Amicalola Falls State Park Road
Dawsonville, GA 30534

Tuesday, December 3, 2024
9:00 a.m.

Committee Members

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Patrick Denney
Charles DePriest
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Steve Hufstetler
Brent Layton
Harley Yancey
Joe Hatfield, Board Chair, Ex-officio

Board Members

Jeff Andrews
Duncan Johnson
Ray Lambert
Lesley Reynolds

The Land Committee was called to order by Randy Dellinger, Vice Chairman of the Land Committee, in the absence of Paul Shailendra, Chairman of the Land Committee.

Vice Chairman Dellinger called for a motion.

A motion was made by Mr. Denney, seconded by Ms. Addison, and carried unanimously by Mr. DePriest, Mr. Garcia, Mr. Hennessy, Mr. Hodge, Mr. Hufstetler, Mr. Layton, and Mr. Yancey that the Land Committee go into Executive Session in accordance with O. C. G. A. §50-14-3(b)(1)(B), in order to discuss the authorization of negotiations to purchase property and to dispose of property. (Affidavit attached hereto and made a part hereof)

There was no action taken during the December 3, 2024 Executive Session of the Land Committee.

There being no further business, the Land Committee was adjourned.