

**Minutes
Land Committee
Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center
Banquet Room – Dining Hall
543 Elliott Trail
Mansfield, GA 30055**

**Tuesday, August 23, 2022
9:00 a.m.**

Committee Members

Tim Lowe, Chair
William Bagwell, Vice Chair
Nick Ayers
Randy Dellinger
Patrick Denney
Dwight Evans
Rob Leebern
Billy New
Bodine Sinyard
Gary Vowell
Bill Jones, Board Chair, Ex-officio

Board Members

Nancy Addison
Joe Hatfield
Ray Lambert
Miki Thomaston

Guests

Andrea White, Georgia River Network
Max Brown, Georgia Audubon, Sierra Club
Lyndy Saporow, Georgia Natural Resources Foundation

Staff Members

Mark Williams, Commissioner
Walter Rabon
Kyle Pearson
Cathy Barnette
Artica Gaston
Thomas Barnard
Jeff Cown
Steve Friedman
Ted Will
Doug Haymans
Brett Albanese
Alan Isler
Jon Ambrose
Taylor Brown
Daniel Brown
Lindsey Brown
Whitney Fenwick
Jared Flowers
Jennifer Gadson
Brock Hoyt
Jessica James-Weems
Casey Jones
Thom Litts
Soheila Naji
Mark Patterson

Richard Dunn, Director
Karen Hays
Chuck Mueller

The August 23, 2022 meeting of the Land Committee was called to order by Bill Jones, Chairman of the Board of Natural Resources.

Chairman Jones called on Mr. Tim Lowe, Chairman of the Land Committee. Mr. Lowe called on Steve Friedman, Chief of Real Estate, to present the first item on the Land Committee agenda.

Mr. Friedman stated that Item A is seeking approval to acquire the 236.9± acre Keadle Land Company Tract in Butts County, as an addition to Indian Springs State Park. He further stated the Keadle tract is an edge-holding of the park and has paved road frontage and power, so it would have been an easy site for someone to develop. He added that Indian Springs State Park has become very popular with the public for events since the opening of Idlewilde Event Center, but the park does not have enough cabins to accommodate demand. He further added that the acquisition will allow the park to add more cabins and camping areas, as well as provide more hiking for the public. He stated the tract is wooded and has some high bluffs overlooking Aboothlacosta Creek.

Mr. Friedman stated the Department will acquire the property with existing Park Revenue funding.

A motion was made by Mr. Bagwell, 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 for the Acquisition (Purchase) of 236.9+ acres as an addition to Indian Springs State Park, Butts County.

Mr. Friedman stated that Item B is requesting the removal of the Heritage Preserve Dedication for approximately 5.98 acres of Paradise Public Fishing Area (PFA) in Berrien County. He further stated that House Bill 619 amended the Heritage Preserve legislation to provide for the removal so it can be sold to a private entity subject to a conservation easement. He added that Paradise PFA is 1,340 acres, and the legislation authorized the State Properties Commission (SPC) to sell up to 8.6 acres, however, the Department determined that approximately 5.98 acres could be sold without impacting the public's use of the PFA. He further added that the SPC will appraise the property and then put it on the market seeking a buyer. He stated that the conservation easement would preclude any development of the property. He further stated that these acres are on the northeast side of Paradise PFA and were part of a boundary line dispute

with the neighbor. He added that the Department agrees selling these acres subject to a conservation easement will not adversely impact the PFA.

Mr. Friedman stated the Department held a public hearing in Berrien County on May 17, 2022, chaired by Board member Gary Vowell. He further stated that only two members of the public appeared and there were no objections to this proposal.

A motion was made by Mr. Vowell, 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 Remove the Heritage Preserve Dedication of 5.98+ acres of the Paradise PFA, Berrien County.

Mr. Friedman stated that Item C is requesting a revocable license agreement (RLA) and permanent easement (PE) be granted by the State Properties Commission (SPC) and General Assembly (GA) to Georgia Power for up to 0.026± acres at J. L. Lester WMA, in Polk County.

Mr. Friedman stated that Georgia Power Company has requested the RLA and PE to replace the distribution line along Antioch Road that will improve power reliability and reduce power outage restoration time. He further stated that replacing this line requires that a RLA be issued by the State Properties Commission and a PE be granted by the General Assembly. He added that since the distribution line is not solely for use by the Department, SPC will determine the appropriate consideration for this request. He further added that this area is Heritage Preserve dedicated, but the line was in place before the designation, and it provides power to the WMA, therefore a change of use is not necessary.

A motion was made by Mr. Dellinger, seconded by Mr. Vowell, and carried unanimously that the Committee recommends the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to Grant a Revocable License Agreement and Permanent Easement of up to 0.026± acres by the State Properties Commission and General Assembly to Georgia Power at JL Lester WMA, Polk County.

Mr. Friedman stated that Item D is requesting approval to Grant a Revocable License Agreement and Permanent Easement of up to 0.009± acres by the State Properties Commission and General Assembly to Satilla Rural Electric Membership Corporation (REMC) at Bullard Creek WMA, in Jeff Davis County. He further stated that Satilla REMC is seeking to remove some existing poles and install new ones along Uvalda Highway to support a supply station operated by AGL. He added that replacing these poles requires a RLA be issued by the State Properties Commission (SPC) and a PE be granted by the General Assembly (GA). He further added that since the

distribution line is not solely for use by the Department, SPC will determine the appropriate consideration for this request. He stated that this area is Heritage Preserve dedicated, but the line was in place before the designation, and it provides power to the WMA, therefore a change of use is not necessary.

A motion was made by Mr. Dellinger, seconded by Mr. Evans, and carried unanimously that the Committee recommends the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to Grant a Revocable License Agreement and Permanent Easement of up to 0.009± acres by the State Properties Commission and General Assembly to Satilla REMC at Bullard Creek WMA, Jeff Davis County.

Mr. Friedman stated the last item on the agenda, Item E, is requesting approval to Enter into an Eighteen (18) Year Sublease with Seminole County for the 60± acres Cummings Landing tract, Lake Seminole State Park, in Seminole County. He further stated the Department entered into a 25-year no cost lease with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) on July 1, 2015, to use the land for public purposes as a State Park. He added that this lease includes the 60-acre Cummings Landing tract, that is separated from the rest of the leased land. He further added that Seminole County will sublease Cummings Landing at no cost to the Department, then improve the facilities which were damaged by Hurricane Michael and continue to allow the public to use the land. He stated there is a small boat ramp, parking, and restroom facilities on the tract which the County will improve. He further stated the sublease will be for eighteen years, the remaining period of our lease with the COE.

A motion was made by Mr. New, seconded by Mr. Evans, 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 Eighteen (18) Year Sublease with Seminole County for the 60± acres Cummings Landing tract, Lake Seminole State Park, Seminole County.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.