

**Minutes
Land Committee
Suwannee River Eco-Lodge
400 Eco Lodge Drive
Fargo, GA 31631**

**Tuesday, September 27, 2022
9:00 a.m.**

Committee Members

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

Board Members

Joe Hatfield
Duncan Johnson
Ray Lambert
Paul Shailendra
Miki Thomaston

Guests

Bill Clark, Okefenokee Swamp Park
Bryan Tolar, GA Urban Agriculture Council
John S. Quarterman, Suwannee Riverkeeper
Lakesha Nixon, Sowing Seeds
Sylvia Everett, Sowing Seeds
H. Elaine Bailey, Sowing Seeds
Danielle Bailey, Sowing Seeds/Bailey Bro. Foundation
Ebony Garard, Sowing Seeds
Emily Floore, St. Marys Riverkeeper
Gordon Jackson, Brunswick News
Kim Bednarek, Okefenokee State Park
Rena Ann Peck, Georgia River Network
Ruth Ann Tesanovich, Madison Co. Clean Power Coalition
Drago Tesanovich, Madison Co. Clean Power Coalition
Rev. Antwon Nixon, Okefenokee Protection Alliance

Staff Members

Mark Williams, Commissioner
Walter Rabon
Kyle Pearson
Donald Kirkland
Cathy Barnette
Artica Gaston
Stephen Adams
Jeff Cown
Steve Friedman
Doug Haymans
Ted Will
Karl Burgess
Bert Deener
Brad Ballard
Tina Blackstock
Ellen Graham
Bryan Gray
Mitchell Hendrix
Angie Johnson
John Shellnut
Josh Snead
Desmond Timmons

John Eunice, EPD Dep. Director

The September 27, 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.

Mr. Friedman stated the first item, Tab C, Item A, is requesting approval to purchase approximately 876± acres as an addition to the FDR State Park in Meriwether and Harris Counties. He further stated the 876-acre Coleman Tract is an FDR State Park edge-holding and has paved road frontage, a clean boundary, and power, so it would have been an easy site for someone to develop.

Mr. Friedman stated that FDR State Park is very popular with the public for hikers and backpackers, an estimated 60,000 people a year use the Pine Mountain Trail which runs through the park. He further stated the acquisition will avoid development against the park and buffer one of the backcountry camp sites. He added the landowner has completed a lot of restoration work of the roads, is replanting longleaf pines, and has begun a controlled burning program. He further added there is a blue hole spring, and multiple forest types on the tract, which are conservation priorities for the Department.

Mr. Friedman stated the total purchase price is \$2,628,288, and the Department will acquire the property with a grant from the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program and donation from the Knobloch Family Foundation.

A motion was made by Mr. Bagwell, 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 for the Acquisition (Purchase) of 876.9+ acres as an addition to FDR State Park, Meriwether and Harris Counties.

Mr. Friedman stated that the next item, Tab C, Item B, is requesting approval to purchase approximately 48± acres as an addition to the FDR State Park in Meriwether County. He further stated the 48-acre Clark Tract is an edge-holding of the Coleman Tract, which is a proposed addition to FDR State Park. He added that this tract came up for sale after the Department entered into an option to acquire Coleman. He added it will clean up the boundary and improve management with Coleman and provide more hiking opportunities for the public.

Mr. Friedman stated the purchase price is \$144,000 and the Department will acquire the property with existing park revenue funding.

A motion was made by Mr. Bagwell, 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 for the Acquisition (Purchase) of 48+ acres as an addition to FDR State Park, Meriwether County.

Mr. Friedman stated the next item, Tab C, Item C, is requesting approval for Conveyance (Donation) of six properties from the Georgia Department of Transportation (DOT), approximately 4,949± acres, in Madison, Upson, Bleckley, Putnam, Screven, and Jeff Davis Counties for recreation and conservation purposes. He further stated the project will secure six tracts acquired by the DOT as mitigation properties, which since they were acquired the Department has managed five as public Wildlife Management Areas (WMA), and one as part of a State Park. He added these tracts have high conservation values and provide public recreation opportunities.

Mr. Friedman stated the DOT will donate these six tracts to the Department; however, the DOT will retain all wetland and stream mitigation credits.

A motion was made by Mr. Evans, seconded by Mr. Bagwell, and carried unanimously that the Committee recommends the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to acquire by donation from the Georgia Department of Transportation 96± acres, as an addition to Watson Mill Bridge State Park in Madison County.

A motion was made by Mr. Evans, 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 acquire by donation from the Georgia Department of Transportation 1,364± acres, the Flint Ravines Tract, as an addition to Big Lazer Wildlife Management Area in Upson County.

A motion was made by Mr. Evans, seconded by Mr. Bagwell, and carried unanimously that the Committee recommends the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to acquire by donation from the Georgia Department of Transportation 1,127± acres, the Stuckey Tract, as an addition to Ocmulgee Wildlife Management Area in Bleckley County.

A motion was made by Mr. Dellinger, 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 acquire by donation from the Georgia

Department of Transportation 1,538± acres, the Little River Tract, as an addition to the Cedar Creek Wildlife Management Area in Putnam County.

A motion was made by Mr. Dellinger, seconded by Mr. New, and carried unanimously that the Committee recommends the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to acquire by donation from the Georgia Department of Transportation 333± acres, as an addition to the Dixon Bay Wildlife Management Area in Screven County.

A motion was made by Mr. Dellinger, seconded by Mr. Bagwell, and carried unanimously that the Committee recommends the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to acquire by donation from the Georgia Department of Transportation 491± acres, as an addition to Bullard Creek Wildlife Management Area in Jeff Davis County.

Mr. Friedman stated the next item, Tab C, Item D, is requesting approval to grant a Revocable License Agreement (RLA) and Permanent Easement (PE) of up to 0.72± acres by the State Properties Commission and General Assembly to Georgia Power at Jack Hill SP, Tattnall County. He further stated the Department is installing a new boat ramp at Jack Hill State Park and requested Georgia Power install power to the ramp. He further stated that Georgia Power requested a RLA and PE of up to 0.72± acres to install power to the boat ramp. He added that installing the power 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 solely for use by the Department, the recommendation to SPC is it to be issued at no cost.

Mr. Friedman stated this area is Heritage Preserve dedicated, but the boat ramp is an allowed use within the designation, therefore a change of use is not necessary.

A motion was made by Mr. New, 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 grant a Revocable License Agreement and Permanent Easement of up to 0.72± acres by the State Properties Commission and General Assembly to Georgia Power at Jack Hill SP, Tattnall County.

Mr. Friedman stated the last item on the agenda, Tab C, Item E, is requesting approval to enter into an agreement with Camden County to lease the 2.0± acres, Temple Landing Boat Ramp. He further stated the Department will enter into a lease on the St. Mary's River for a twenty-five (25) year term with Camden County. He added this is an existing boat ramp; however,

the Department will install a new concrete boat ramp and improve the parking area. He further added that Camden County will assist with general facility maintenance at no cost to the Department.

Mr. Friedman stated for the benefit of the public and upon approval by the Board, the Department will enter into a twenty-five (25) year lease agreement with Camden County at no cost.

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 agreement with Camden County to lease the 2.0± acres Temple Landing Boat Ramp.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.