

**Minutes  
Land Committee  
Brasstown Valley Resort  
6321 Highway 76  
Young Harris, GA 30582**

**Wednesday, December 7, 2022  
9:00 a.m.**

**Committee Members**

Tim Lowe, Chair  
William Bagwell, Vice Chair  
Nick Ayers  
Dwight Davis  
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  
Duncan Johnson  
Ray Lambert  
Paul Shailendra  
Miki Thomaston  
Dee Yancey

**Guests**

Aaron Mitchell, Georgia Power  
Rosa Chi, Georgia Power  
J. D. McCrary, Georgia Forest Watch

**Staff Members**

Mark Williams, Commissioner  
Walter Rabon  
Kyle Pearson  
Cathy Barnette  
Donald Kirkland  
Artica Gaston  
Thomas Barnard  
Jeff Cown  
Steve Friedman  
Doug Haymans  
Ted Will  
Antoinette Norfleet  
Clint Peacock

Richard Dunn, Director  
John Eunice  
Karen Hays

The December 7, 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. William Bagwell, Acting Chairman of the Land Committee. Mr. Bagwell called on Steve Friedman, Chief of Real Estate.

Mr. Friedman stated the first item under Tab E, Item A, is seeking approval to acquire 1,342± acres as an addition to the Chattahoochee Fall Line WMA-Langdale Tract in Marion County, subject to a conservation easement to be held by The Nature Conservancy (TNC). He further stated the TNC will acquire the tract from Mr. Langdale for a price of \$2,059,744, and it appraised for \$2,565,000. He added that Mr. Langdale has also made numerous improvements to the roads and replanted many acres of longleaf pine, all at the request of the Department. He further added that TNC will use funding in the amount of \$1,024,480 from the Army and will place a conservation easement on the tract, which greatly reduces the purchase price. Mr. Friedman stated the Army is providing funding due to the importance of the tract to Fort Benning as a buffer. He further stated that it is also an important tract for recreation and conservation and is located within a high priority zone as identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan. He added the Department will manage the Langdale Tract as an addition to the Chattahoochee Fall Line WMA.

Mr. Friedman stated the Department will acquire the property with \$535,264 from the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program (GOSP) and \$500,000 from the Knobloch Family Foundation. He further stated as a condition of receiving the acquisition funds, an affidavit will be recorded against the property stating that 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 GOSP, and the Knobloch Family Foundation.

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 for the Acquisition (purchase) from The Nature Conservancy of 1,342± acres as an addition to the Chattahoochee Fall Line WMA-Langdale Tract, Marion County.

Mr. Friedman stated the next item under Tab E, Item B, is seeking approval to acquire 2,424± acres in Paulding, Haralson, and Polk Counties from The Nature Conservancy (TNC) for conservation and recreational purposes. He further stated the Department will acquire two tracts from TNC along the Dugdown Mountain Corridor, that will become part of the Paulding Forest WMA and Tallapoosa River WMA. He added the purchase price is significantly below appraised

value because TNC received other funds that they used to lower the price. He further added that the Department currently leases these tracts which are popular with the public due to their proximity to Atlanta for hunting, fishing, hiking, bike riding, and studying nature. Mr. Friedman stated that in addition, these tracts will permanently protect habitat for the rare montane longleaf pine, provide buffer along the Tallapoosa River, and protect the land within the Dugdown Mountain Corridor.

Mr. Friedman stated the Department will acquire the property entirely with a federal Forest Legacy Grant in the amount of \$1,705,000. He further stated that as a condition of receiving the grant, an affidavit will be recorded against the tracts stating they may not be disposed of in any manner or used for purposes inconsistent with the program they were acquired for without the prior approval of the U. S. Forest Service – Forest Legacy Program.

A motion was made by Mr. Denney, 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 for the Acquisition (purchase) of 2,424± acres from The Nature Conservancy, Dugdown Mountain Tracts, Paulding, Haralson, and Polk Counties.

Mr. Friedman stated the next item under Tab E, Item C, is 392± acres in Jeff Davis County from the USHA Reddy Trust. He further stated the Department will acquire the USHA Reddy Tract edge holding as an addition to the Flat Tub WMA. He added the tract will be acquired using a federal grant from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Pittman-Robertson Grant in the amount of \$569,278.70, and an existing match from previous acquisitions. He further added this tract will improve management of the WMA, increase public recreation opportunities, and protect rare habitat important for Altamaha Grit outcropping unique to this area, longleaf pine wiregrass, gopher tortoises, and eastern indigo snakes.

Mr. Friedman stated that as a condition of receiving the federal grant, 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 program it was acquired for without the prior approval of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

A motion was made by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Ayers, 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 392± acres from the USHA Reddy Trust, Flat Tub WMA, Jeff Davis County.

Mr. Friedman stated the next item under Tab E, Item D, is seeking approval to purchase a conservation easement over 1,520± acres of land owned by Warbick Farms, LLC, in Thomas County. He further stated the protection of the 1,520 acres by a conservation easement will preserve stands of old growth longleaf pine, high quality groundcover, and habitat for the federally endangered red-cockaded woodpecker (RCW), and state protected gopher tortoises. He added this tract is located within a high priority area according to the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) and is enrolled in a Cooperative Safe Harbor Management Agreement for RCWs. He further added that Warbick Farms is selling the CE at a reduced price of \$2,736,000, to provide match for the Fish and Wildlife Service Grant.

A motion was made by Mr. Leebern, 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 a Conservation Easement over the 1,520± acres Warbick Farms, LLC, Thomas County.

Mr. Friedman stated the next item under Tab E, Item E, is requesting approval to enter into a twenty-five (25) year agreement with Lee County to lease the 2.3± acres, Kinchafoonee Creek Boat Ramp. He further stated the Department will install a new concrete boat ramp and improve the parking area, and then Lee County will assist with the general facility maintenance at no cost to the Department.

A motion was made by Mr. Sinyard, 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 enter into an agreement with Lee County to lease the 2.3± acres, Kinchafoonee Creek Boat Ramp.

Mr. Friedman stated the next item under Tab E, Item F, is seeking approval to enter into a twenty-five (25) year License Agreement for 943.7± acres at Lake Walter F. George Wildlife Management Area (WMA) with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE), in Clay County. He further stated Lake Walter F. George WMA has been managed by the Department since 1997 and offers a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities. He added that for the benefit of the public, the COE and the Department are interested in continuing the License Agreement at no cost. He further added that upon approval by the Board, the License Agreement will be submitted to the State Properties Commission (SPC) for approval at the next available SPC meeting, and the new dates as set by the COE will begin retroactive to March 31, 2022, and end on March 30, 2047.

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 renew a 25-Year License Agreement of 943.7+ acres at Lake Walter F. George with the U.S. Army, Corps of Engineers, Clay County.

Mr. Friedman stated the next item under Tab E, Item G, is seeking approval to enter into a fifty (50) year intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with the City of Columbus to operate and manage Standing Boy Creek State Park. He further stated the IGA will allow the City to operate and maintain the 1,578 acres Standing Boy Creek State Park for a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities. He added this is a no cost IGA with the City covering all costs and maintenance of the Park, except the Department will maintain the hunter access roads and retain some hunting rights.

A motion was made by Mr. Vowell, 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 Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Columbus, Standing Boy Creek SP, Muscogee County.

Mr. Friedman stated the next item under Tab E, Item H, is seeking approval via Executive Order to demolish a residence on Standing Boy Creek State Park, in Muscogee County. He further stated the residence is a wood frame structure that was built in the late fifties or early sixties and the brick exterior was installed over asbestos that will be properly disposed of during the demolition. He added the residence hasn't been lived in for nearly a year due to black mold growing throughout and expensive repairs needed to the plumbing, HVAC, electrical, windows, and flooring. He further added the cost to repair the house and bring it up to ADA compliance is more than it is worth, therefore the recommendation is the house should be removed.

Mr. Friedman stated that structures of historical significance and/or 2,000 square feet and larger require an executive order authorizing their removal. He further stated the Office of the State Archeologist determined the house is not historic, so demolition would not have a negative impact on the Georgia/National Register of Historic Places. He added the structure is 2,400 square feet, so an executive order is required. He further added that subject to receiving the executive order, the Department will remove the residence and all debris from the site.

A motion was made by Mr. Vowell, 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 via Executive Order to demolish a residence on Standing Boy Creek State Park, Muscogee County.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.