

**Minutes
Land Committee
DNR Boardroom
2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, SE
1252 East Tower
Atlanta, GA 30334**

**October 26, 2021
9:00 a.m.**

Attendees:

Committee Members

Dwight Evans, Chair
Dwight Davis, Vice Chair
William Bagwell
Randy Dellinger
Patrick Denney
Rob Leebern
Tim Lowe
Billy New
Bodine Sinyard
Miki Thomaston
Dee Yancey, Board Chair, Ex-officio

Board Members

Nancy Addison
Nick Ayers
Joe Hatfield
Duncan Johnson
Ray Lambert
Gary Vowell

Guests

Sam Collier, Sierra Club
Ronny Just, Georgia Power
Leslie Miller, Georgia Power
Max Brown, Sierra Club
Rena Ann Peck, Georgia River Network
Josh Marks, Parker Poe
Reaganne Coile, Office of the Governor

Staff Members

Mark Williams, Commissioner
Kyle Pearson
Kate Iannuzzi
Cathy Barnette
Donald Kirkland
Alexandrea Solomon
Soheila Naji
Thomas Barnard
Steve Friedman
Doug Haymans
Ted Will

Richard Dunn, Director
Jac Capp
Karen Hays
Chuck Mueller
Laura Williams
Sara Lips
Steve Allison
Anna Aponte
Jim Boylan
William Cook

The October 26, 2021 meeting of the Land Committee was called to order by Dee Yancey, Chairman of the Board of Natural Resources.

Chairman Yancey called on Dwight Evans, Chairman of the Land Committee. Mr. Evans called on Steve Friedman, Chief of Real Estate.

Mr. Friedman stated the first item is requesting approval to purchase a conservation easement and access easement over 881± acres of land owned by Warnell Conservation, LLC. He further stated the conservation easement will provide a connective corridor to other conservation lands, and continued connectivity to the rare species on Fort Stewart, such as gopher tortoises.

Mr. Friedman stated that the tract is located in northwestern Bryan County on the eastern bank of the Canoochee River and consists of intact, xeric sandhills with natural longleaf pine and groundcover, bottomland hardwoods, mesic bays, and planted slash pine. He further stated the parcel is adjacent to Fort Stewart and provides an important buffer to the base, which is why the Army will contribute funds to help with this acquisition. He added the Warnell family is also selling the CE at a reduced price to provide match for the Fish and Wildlife Service Grant.

A motion was made by Mr. Evans, seconded by Mr. Mr. Davis, and carried unanimously that the Committee recommend the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval of the Acquisition (Purchase) of a Conservation Easement and access easement over 881± acres, Canoochee River, Warnell Phase 2 Tract, Bryan and Bulloch Counties.

Mr. Friedman stated that item B is requesting approval to acquire three tracts for an approximate total of 909 acres, as an addition to the Paulding/Sheffield Forest WMAs. He further stated the Thompson Tracts acquisition will add to the recreational values of the Paulding and Sheffield Wildlife Management Areas. He added that the purchase and will clean up in-holdings and edge-holdings, protect frontage on Raccoon Creek, which has two federally listed fish in it, improve our ability to manage the WMAs, and add more public recreation land. He further added that these tracts are important to the Department for conservation, recreation, and management purposes, particularly management with fire, which is a critical component to the montane longleaf pine ecosystem found on the WMAs.

Mr. Friedman stated the Department will acquire the property with State, federal, and private funds. He further stated that as a condition of receiving the acquisition funds, an affidavit will be recorded against the property state that it may not be disposed of in any manner or use

for purposes inconsistent with the programs it was acquired for without the prior approval of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Knobloch Family Foundation, The Nature Conservancy via the Stone Mountain Industrial Park, and the National Wild Turkey Federation.

A motion was made by Mr. Evans, seconded by Mr. Lowe, and carried unanimously that the Committee recommend the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval of the Acquisition (Purchase) of approximately 909± acres as an addition to the Paulding/Sheffield WMAs-Thompson Tracts, Paulding County.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.