

**Minutes  
Land Committee  
2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, S. E.  
Suite 1252 East Tower  
Atlanta, GA 30334**

**Tuesday, August 22, 2023  
9:00 a.m.**

**Committee Members**

Tim Lowe, Chair  
Charles DePriest, Vice Chair  
Nancy Addison  
Randy Dellinger  
Patrick Denney  
Dan Garcia  
Penn Hodge  
Kevin Jackson  
Bill Jones  
Gary Vowell  
Dwight Davis, Board Chair, Ex-officio

**Board Members**

Joe Hatfield  
Mark Hennessy  
Duncan Johnson  
Ray Lambert  
Paul Shailendra  
Harley Yancey

**Guests**

Debbie Phillips, GA Industry Environmental Coalition  
Josh Purdy, Georgia State Parks  
Melanie Reed, GA DNR  
Mark Woodall, Sierra Club  
Chris Manganiello, Chattahoochee Riverkeepers  
Brooks Varnell, DNR Law Enforcement  
Nic Matthew, Office of Planning and Budget  
David Anderson, Office of Planning and Budget  
Rick Dunn, Office of Planning and Budget  
Meris Lutz, Atlanta Journal and Constitution  
Anna Edmondson, Robbins Government Relations

**Staff Members**

Walter Rabon, Commissioner  
Kyle Pearson  
Kate Iannuzzi  
Donald Kirkland  
Cathy Barnette  
Thomas Barnard  
Steve Friedman  
Doug Haymans  
Angie Johnson  
Ted Will  
Jill Andrews  
Antoinette Norfleet  
Scott Robinson  
  
Jeff Cown, Director  
James Boylan  
Chuck Mueller  
Anna Truszczynski

The August 22, 2023 meeting of the Land Committee was called to order by Dwight Davis, Chairman of the Board of Natural Resources.

Chairman Davis called on Tim Lowe, Chairman of the Land Committee. Mr. Lowe called on Steve Friedman, Chief of Real Estate.

Mr. Friedman stated the first item on the agenda, Item A, is requesting approval to purchase from William C. Elliott 62± acres as an addition to Dawson Forest WMA, Dawson County. He further stated Bill Elliott owns the tract separately from his brother. It has road frontage and connects to the Elliott brothers' tract we also propose to acquire. He added the development pressure is strong in this part of the state and acquiring this tract and the 275-acre tract from the Elliott brothers will improve our ability to manage the WMA, create more opportunities for the public to recreate, and give us road access where our current access on this part of the WMA is limited. He further added there are multiple tributaries that flow through these tracts directly into the Amicalola Creek, one of the most important creeks in the Etowah River basin. He stated that collectively these two tracts will add 338 acres to the WMA.

Mr. Friedman stated the Department will acquire this tract with a federal USFWS Pittman-Robertson Grant (USFWS). He further stated that as a condition of receiving the grant, an affidavit will be recorded against the tract stating it may not be disposed of or used for purposes inconsistent with the program it was acquired for without the prior approval of the USFWS.

A motion was made by Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Garcia, and carried unanimously that the Committee recommends the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval of the purchase from William C. Elliott 62± acres as an addition to Dawson Forest WMA, Dawson County.

Mr. Friedman stated the next item on the agenda, Item B, is requesting approval to purchase from William C. Elliott and Ernest G. Elliott 275± acres as an addition to Dawson Forest WMA, Dawson County. He further stated the Elliott brothers are selling this essential in-holding to the Department at a deeply discounted price because they want to see it protected.

Mr. Friedman stated the Department will acquire this tract with a federal USFWS Pittman-Robertson Grant (USFWS). He further stated that as a condition of receiving the grant, an affidavit will be recorded against the tract stating it may not be disposed of or used for purposes inconsistent with the program it was acquired for without the prior approval of the USFWS.

A motion was made by Mr. Jackson, 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 purchase from William C. Elliott and Ernest G. Elliott 275± acres as an addition to Dawson Forest WMA, Dawson County.

Mr. Friedman stated the next item on the agenda, Item C, is requesting approval to purchase from Jeanne Jordan Cook 308± acres as an addition to Clybel WMA, Jasper County. He further stated that the Department will acquire Marben Farms, an edge holding to Clybel WMA, from Jeanne Cook. He added that this tract will provide more public access and improve our ability to manage part of the existing WMA. He further added that there are some open fields on the tract that could be managed for dove hunting. He stated that due to the location and topography, Marben Farms would be easy to develop into a subdivision, so acquiring it will add further protection to the WMA. He further stated that this WMA is popular with the public due to its proximity to Atlanta for hunting, fishing, and hiking.

Mr. Friedman stated that the Department will acquire the property with a federal USFWS Pittman-Robertson Grant (PR) and donation from the Knobloch Family Foundation (KFF). He further stated that as a condition of receiving the grant and funding, 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 and the KFF.

A motion was made by Mr. Denney, seconded by Mr. Garcia, and carried unanimously that the Committee recommends the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval of the purchase from Jeanne Jordan Cook 308± acres as an addition to Clybel WMA, Jasper County.

Mr. Friedman stated the next item on the agenda, Item D, is requesting approval to purchase from April Chapman 337+ acres as an addition to Griffin Ridge WMA, Long County. He further stated the Chapman tract connects to the WMA and has road frontage, which will improve the ability to manage the WMA, and will add more public hunting opportunities. He added the nearby tracts are being developed and subdivided, but Ms. Chapman wanted to see her property preserved by the Department. He further added that there are some nice hardwood wetland stands on the property, and the uplands will be restored to longleaf pine and managed with controlled burning over time.

Mr. Friedman stated the Department will acquire this tract with a federal USFWS Pittman-Robertson Grant (USFWS) and donation from the Knobloch Family Foundation (KFF). He further stated that as a condition of receiving the grant and donation, 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 and the KFF.

A motion was made by Mr. Garcia, 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 of the purchase from April Chapman 337+ acres as an addition to Griffin Ridge WMA, Long County.

Mr. Friedman stated the next item on the agenda, Item E, is requesting approval to purchase from Gator Hollow LLC 8± acres as an addition to Vogel State Park, Union County. He further stated the Gator Hollow tract is approximately 8 acres on the north end of Vogel State Park. He added that this property has a house on it that will be used for staff housing. He further added that the lot is largely wooded with hardwoods and a beautiful creek adjacent to the house. He stated it has a good road frontage and utilities and would be easy to develop if we are not able to protect it. He further stated that acquiring it will prevent development, protect the creek, hardwoods, and allow Parks to extend their hiking trails.

Mr. Friedman stated that the Department will acquire the property with funds from State Parks.

A motion was made by Mr. Dellinger, seconded by Mr. Garcia, and carried unanimously that the Committee recommends the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval of the purchase from Gator Hollow LLC 8± acres as an addition to Vogel State Park, Union County.

Mr. Friedman stated the next item on the agenda, Item F, is requesting approval to enter into a twenty-five (25) year lease agreement with the U.S. Army-Corps of Engineers for 0.34+ acres, Lake Seminole, Seminole County. He further stated the Law Enforcement Division uses the ranger station, which includes a boat ramp, to patrol Lake Seminole, a U. S. Army Corps of Engineers lake. He added that under the terms of the lease, the Corps allows the Department to use the property at no cost for the benefit and safety of the general public. He further added that upon approval by the Board, the long-term lease agreement will be submitted to the State Properties Commission (SPC) for approval at the next available SPC meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Vowell, 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 to enter into a Lease with the U.S. Army-Corps of Engineers for

0.34+ acres, Lake Seminole, Seminole County.

Mr. Friedman stated the final item on the agenda, Item G, is requesting approval to grant a Revocable License Agreement and Ground Lease of up to 7,200 feet by the State Properties Commission and General Assembly to Extenet at Smithgall Woods State Park, Dawson County. He further stated the Ground Lease will allow Extenet to install buried fiber cable to an existing cell tower, which may improve cell service within the Park, but the primary goal is to improve cell service to Helen. He added the Ground Lease will be until December 31, 2027, after which it can be renewed two times for five years each renewal. He further added that because the request is not solely for the benefit of the Department, State Properties Commission will determine the cost of the lease. He stated this area is Heritage Preserve Designated; however, the tower and access road to it were in place prior to the designation, therefore a Change of Use is not necessary.

Mr. Friedman stated that upon approval by the Board of Natural Resources, the Department will seek State Properties Commission and General Assembly approval to enter into the Ground Lease until December 31, 2027, which can be renewed two times for five years each, with Extenet.

A motion was made by Mr. Yancey, 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 grant a Revocable License Agreement and Ground Lease of up to 7,200 feet by the State Properties Commission and General Assembly to Extenet at Smithgall Woods State Park, Dawson County.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.