



STATE OF GEORGIA

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Sonny Perdue
GOVERNOR

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Governor Perdue Announces Land Conservation Grants and Loans
Funding Approved for Projects in Bulloch, Liberty and McIntosh Counties

ATLANTA – Governor Sonny Perdue announced today the approval of three Georgia Land Conservation Program (GLCP) grants and one low interest loan. Bulloch, Liberty and McIntosh Counties will receive land conservation grants. Bulloch County will also receive a low interest land conservation loan.

“This program and its shared funding represent a collaborative approach to land conservation,” said Governor Sonny Perdue. “I’m pleased that these natural and cultural resources will be preserved and enjoyed for generations to come.”

In Bulloch County, a 29-acre tract will be acquired to create a new park in the city of Statesboro. The property will be managed by the Bulloch County Parks Department as a forest conservation area and eventually as an equestrian park accessible to school groups, families and individuals. The property has been owned by the Fletcher family of Statesboro for more than 100 years and the family is selling the property to the county for a small fraction of the land’s fair market value. The property will now become the Fred Fletcher Memorial Park.

GLCP is contributing a \$10,000 grant and providing a \$132,300 low interest loan. Additional funding is being provided by the property owner and Bulloch County.

Near Fort Stewart in Liberty County, a 201-acre tract of pine flatwoods, wetlands and creeks will be protected through the purchase of a conservation easement. The property abuts Fort Stewart and marks the first land conservation partnership between the GLCP and Fort

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Stewart's Army Compatible Use Buffer program (ACUB). Fort Stewart is not only a critical training ground for the nation's armed forces, but also contains the largest area of the rare longleaf pine forest ecosystem remaining in Georgia. The ACUB program seeks to limit incompatible development adjacent to the Fort and to protect sensitive environments.

GLCP is contributing a \$300,000 grant which will be matched by the ACUB program. Additional support comes from a discounted sale of the easement by the property owner, the Georgia Land Trust.

Along the Altamaha River in McIntosh County, 1,356 acres of bottomland hardwood forest, cypress/gum swamps and longleaf pine sand hills will be protected through the purchase of a conservation easement to be held by The Nature Conservancy. The Altamaha River and the project site are rich in biological diversity and include more than 30 rare species of plants and animals, including one of only two known populations in the world of the federally threatened Radford's dicerandra mint and habitat for the threatened eastern indigo snake.

The remains of historic Fort Barrington are also located on this tract. Fort Barrington was established by the British in 1730 and used as a ferry stop from colonial times until the early 1900's.

The GLCP is contributing a \$490,000 grant. Additional funding is being provided by The Nature Conservancy, the Georgia Wetland Trust Fund, and a deeply discounted sale of the easement by the landowners, the Fort Barrington Hunt Club.

Georgia Land Conservation Program

The GLCP is managed by the Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority (GEFA) and projects are approved by the Georgia Land Conservation Council. The program offers grants for fee title or conservation easement purchases from the Georgia Land Conservation Trust Fund. It also offers low-interest loans for fee title or conservation easement purchases from the Georgia Land Conservation Revolving Fund. Tax incentives are also available for donations of conservation lands or conservation easements. Since the program's inception, GLCO has endorsed 43 projects totaling 61,214 acres.

Conservation lands are permanently protected lands that are undeveloped and meet one or more of the goals of the Georgia Land Conservation Act. The goals include water quality

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protection, flood protection, wetlands protection, reduction of erosion, protection of riparian buffers and areas that provide natural habitat and corridors for native plant and animal species. The goals also include the protection of prime agricultural and forestry lands, protection of cultural and historic sites, scenic protection, recreation (boating, hiking, camping, fishing, and hunting) and the connection of areas contributing to these goals.

Governor Perdue introduced the Georgia Land Conservation Act to encourage the long-term conservation and protection of the state's natural, cultural and historic resources in the 2004 session of the General Assembly. The Georgia Land Conservation Act passed with broad bipartisan support and Governor Perdue signed it into law on April 14, 2005.

Applications for land conservation grants or loans are accepted on a rolling basis throughout the year. Applications and more information about the program can be found at www.glcp.org.

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