



STATE OF GEORGIA

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Sonny Perdue
GOVERNOR

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State Acquires 469 Acres of Conservation Land in Dawson County
Property Provides Critical Link for Dawson Forest Wildlife Management Area

ATLANTA – Governor Sonny Perdue announced today the acquisition of 469 acres of prime conservation land in Dawson County, which includes two miles of the Amicalola Creek and its tributaries, by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Georgia Land Conservation Program (GLCP). Long a conservation priority for the state, the 488-acre tract is a critical connection between two previously separate tracts of the Dawson Forest Wildlife Management Area (WMA). The property protects a vital segment of Amicalola Creek that supports at least 27 native fish species, three of which are endangered. All three tracts together protect more than 15,000 acres.

“Permanently protecting Georgia’s land resources is one of most visible examples of our state’s culture of conservation,” said Governor Perdue. “Acquiring this property at the heart of the Dawson Forest links together more than 15,000 acres of conservation land. Thanks to the partnership of public and private organizations, this stretch of Amicalola Creek and the many species of wildlife it supports will be preserved for generations to come.”

The Nature Conservancy in Georgia acquired the Amicalola Creek property from the Forestar Real Estate Group in 2008 at a reduced price and held it until the state could arrange funding. The Nature Conservancy contributed \$2.15 million through a discounted sale of the property to the state. Contributions from a variety of other public and private partners – the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation, the Robert H. Dobbs, Jr.

Foundation, the Mountain Conservation Trust, the Lyndhurst Foundation, the DNR, the GLCP and anonymous private donors – led to the state’s purchase of the property for \$3,247,158.

“The state of Georgia is thrilled to acquire and manage this important piece of conservation land in north Georgia,” said DNR Commissioner Chris Clark. “More than 80 percent of the funds needed to purchase the land were contributed by our private and federal partners. Without their generous support, the permanent protection of this property would not have been possible.”

“The Nature Conservancy is committed to protecting Georgia’s most treasured landscapes,” said Shelly Lakly, the Conservancy’s state director in Georgia. “The opportunity to safeguard these acres could not be ignored, so we made the decision to act and contribute to the final funding.”

Governor Perdue also announced that 63 land conservation income tax credits were awarded to generous Georgia landowners for land donations that conserved 38,660 acres in tax year 2009. In addition to direct land purchases, DNR and the GLCP offer land conservation state income tax credits of up to \$1 million for land donations and conservation easements on land. More than 200 tax credits have been awarded and more than 70,000 acres permanently conserved in Georgia since 2006 when the credit was established.

Since 2005 the GLCP has conserved more than 171,000 total acres. For more information on Georgia Land Conservation Income Tax Credits, please contact the DNR at (770) 761-3043 or the GLCP at (404) 584-1101.

About the Georgia Department of Natural Resources

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) works to sustain, enhance, protect and conserve Georgia's natural, historic and cultural resources for present and future generations, while recognizing the importance of promoting the development of commerce and industry that utilize sound environmental practices. The Real Estate Office and Wildlife Resources Division of DNR provides technical guidance and administrative support to help private landowners donate high-value conservation lands and easements to the State of Georgia. For more information on the DNR, please visit: www.gadnr.org.

About The Nature Conservancy

The Nature Conservancy is a leading conservation organization working around the world to protect ecologically important lands and waters for nature and people. The Conservancy and its more than 1 million members have protected nearly 120 million acres worldwide. In Georgia, the Conservancy has protected more than 285,000 acres and works across the state to improve

freshwater habitat, conserve coastal ecosystems and safeguard forests for future generations. To learn more, visit www.nature.org/georgia.

About the Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority – Land Conservation Program

The Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority (GEFA) provides financial assistance and administers programs that encourage stewardship of the environment and promote economic development statewide. GEFA manages the Georgia Land Conservation Program (GLCP), which works to preserve a statewide network of land and water resources for current and future generations to use and enjoy. The GLCP provides land conservation funding, including grants, low-interest loans, and tax incentives, to achieve the permanent conservation of land through the acquisition of conservation easements and fee-title ownership. Since the program's inception in 2005, the GLCP has played a role in 223 land conservation transactions that have permanently protected a total of 162,049 acres. For more information on the GLCP, please visit www.glcp.ga.gov or www.gefa.org.

About Conserve Georgia

The Conserve Georgia program was developed to foster a culture of conservation throughout the state of Georgia. Nearly a dozen state agencies and authorities are working together with businesses, civic leaders, educational institutions, non-profit organizations and residents to make Georgia's land, water and energy resources more sustainable now and for generations to come. The program's Web site – www.conservegeorgia.org – serves as a portal to help Georgians find information on a wide range of conservation resources and programs.

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