



# DNR Announces 14 Grants Through the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program

ATLANTA, Georgia

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The Georgia Department of Natural Resources today announced the selection of the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program “Conserve Georgia” grants for conservation and outdoor recreation projects. Selected applicants will be invited to the second and final level of the application process for their proposals, which would result in \$19.86 million of funding to benefit local parks and trails systems and state-owned lands. Grantees will join with private, public, and non-profit partners to help provide the support to leverage the state outdoor stewardship dollars with an estimated \$77 million in additional match funds.

“This program is a dynamic and lasting initiative for the future of conservation in Georgia. We look forward to working with state and local partners to increase recreational access and protect critical conservation areas,” said Mark Williams, Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources. “We are excited about these projects and the potential impact on the communities across Georgia.”

Conserve Georgia grants are awarded through the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program (GOSP). In November 2018, Georgia voters passed Amendment 1 to authorize the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Act with an astounding 83% support. GOSP is Georgia’s first source of dedicated funding for the conservation of priority lands, the stewardship of state parks and wildlife management areas, and the support of local parks and trails.

For the inaugural 2019-20 grant cycle, eligible applicants, which include local governments, recreation authorities, state agencies, and certain non-profit organizations, cumulatively submitted 58 applications requesting a total of \$78 million dollars in grant funding. The Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Trust Fund Board of Trustees reviewed all projects and selected

a slate of proposals, which was subsequently approved by the Board of Natural Resources and the Appropriations Subcommittees of the State House of Representatives and State Senate over DNR.

Of the 14 selected, eight projects are by local governments or nonprofit organizations for the development or stewardship of local parks or trail systems, two are by DNR for the acquisition of conservation land, and four are by DNR for stewardship projects on state lands. The complete list of Conserve Georgia grant awards is below. For more information about the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program and these grants, visit [www.gadnr.org/gosp](http://www.gadnr.org/gosp) (<https://gadnr.org/gosp>).

## **2019-2020 Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program Selected Projects**

### **Forsyth County**

*Eagles Beak Park; \$2,250,000*

Forsyth County plans to create a 225-acre outdoor passive recreation space along the biologically diverse Etowah River. This project will serve as a recreation corridor for residents and visitors, featuring a large greenspace area, ADA-approved play park and extensive trail system marking the historical Trail of Tears.

### **Jefferson County**

*Where the Moss Meets the River; \$898,983*

Jefferson County plans to develop 230 acres of lowland forest bordering the meandering Ogeechee River to enhance and expand opportunities for recreation, healthy living and wellness, nature education and conservation of land for public use. Park facilities will include new hiking and mountain biking trails, campsites, outdoor classroom and kayak launch.

### **City of Johns Creek**

*Cauley Creek Park Development; \$3,000,000*

The City of Johns Creek plans to develop the 200-acre Cauley Creek Park located on the Chattahoochee River between Abbotts Bridge Chattahoochee River NRA and National Park Service land. The funds will be directly used to develop the park into a community destination that both serves the local population and encourages visitation by providing nature-based recreational opportunities such as hiking, biking, fishing and wildlife viewing that are not presently available in the area.

## South Fork Conservancy

*Confluence Natural Trail Network and Blueway; \$950,500*

South Fork Conservancy plans to create two-miles of nature trails in the heart of Atlanta, connecting four regional trail networks and 25 acres of greenspace. This project will enable hundreds of thousands of residents within a 10-minute walk of the trail to enjoy new outdoor recreational opportunities in some of the most park-deficient neighborhoods of Atlanta.

## Trees Atlanta, Inc.

*Atlanta BeltLine Westside Extension Trail; \$1,000,000*

Trees Atlanta, Atlanta BeltLine, Inc. and the PATH Foundation plan to construct the Atlanta BeltLine Westside Trail Extension to the Silver Comet Trail. The project will help close the gap between downtown Atlanta and the Silver Comet Trail, while also addressing fragmented wildlife habitat in an urban environment by extending the Atlanta BeltLine Arboretum.

## The Trust for Public Land

*Chattahoochee Camp and Paddle Trail; \$2,260,000*

The Trust for Public Land plans to create a 48-mile long camp and paddle trail on the Chattahoochee River. Funds will be used to install three rustic campsites within the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area boundary to enable multi-day paddling trips.

## Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County

### *Restore Our River; \$550,000*

Athens-Clarke County plans to re-establish high-quality wildlife habitat, enhance ecosystem services and provide enhanced outdoor recreation opportunities along the North Oconee River in Athens' downtown district. This project creates the first publicly accessible water trail on the North Oconee River as well as in Athens-Clarke County.

### **City of Winder**

#### *Winder/Fort Yargo Multi-Use Connector Trail; \$1,001,757*

The City of Winder plans to construct a one-mile multi-use trail for walking, bicycling, inline skating and nature viewing from downtown Winder to Fort Yargo State Park. The 10 ft.-wide pathway will create access for residents, park patrons and visitors to and from the state park and the city.

### **Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division**

#### *Cabin Bluff Acquisition, Camden County; \$2,555,000*

The Department of Natural Resources plans to acquire 7,958 acres of property which will be managed as a Wildlife Management Area and 3,217 acres under a conservation easement for a total of 11,175 acres in Camden County, providing permanent protection to the property. Cabin Bluff is located within 10 miles of I-95 and offers opportunities for hunting, fishing, boating, camping, hiking and wildlife observation.

### **Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division**

#### *Ceylon Acquisition (Phase I), Camden County; \$3,504,000*

The Department of Natural Resources plans to acquire over 4,000 acres in Camden County. This property, which will be managed as a Wildlife Management Area, is located within 5 miles of I-95 and offers opportunities for hunting, fishing, boating, camping, hiking and wildlife observation.

### **Department of Natural Resources, Coastal Resources Division**

#### *Noyes Cut Ecosystem Restoration Project, Camden County; \$1,733,833*

The Department of Natural Resources, partnering with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, plans to close and fill the no-longer-needed Noyes Cut on the Satilla River in order to restore fisheries in coastal waters. This ecosystem restoration project will improve habitat and water quality for important marine species as well as improve recreational opportunities for boaters, anglers, hunters and wildlife viewers.

Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division

*Sprewell Bluff Longleaf Pine Restoration, Meriwether County; \$69,025*

The Department of Natural Resources plans to restore approximately 550 acres of loblolly pine plantation to longleaf pine habitat on Sprewell Bluff WMA. This project will return a native forest type to Sprewell Bluff, benefiting several high priority species and improving recreational opportunities for hunters, hikers and wildlife enthusiasts.

Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division

*Sandhills Longleaf Pine Restoration, Taylor County; \$26,884*

The Department of Natural Resources plans to restore approximately 125 acres of longleaf pine on the West Unit of Sandhills WMA. Restoration of this habitat will benefit populations of gopher tortoise, loggerhead shrike, Bachman's sparrow, coal skink, and southern hognose snake, among other species of conservation concern.

Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division

*Post-Hurricane Michael Longleaf Pine Restoration at Silver Lake and Chickasawhatchee, Decatur and Dougherty Counties; \$60,500*

The Department of Natural Resources plans to replant containerized longleaf seedlings on 500 acres of storm-damaged pine stands on Silver Lake and Chickasawhatchee WMAs. This project will address the urgent need to replant and reforest mature pine stands that were impacted by Hurricane Michael on the two largest WMAs in Southwest Georgia.

The mission of the Department of Natural Resources is 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.

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