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INVESTING IN GEORGIA'S  
ENERGY, LAND & WATER RESOURCES



## *Georgia Land Conservation Program*

Georgia Urban Forest Council  
3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Program  
Alpharetta, GA

Fuller Callaway  
August 18, 2016



# Program Summary

- **Created in 2005 in the Land Conservation Act (O.C.G.A. 12-6A-1 through 12)**
- “...The General Assembly recognizes that the state-wide network of land and water resources, the state's prime agricultural and forestry lands, and its natural, cultural, historic, and recreational areas are a priceless legacy that enhance the health of ecosystems, encourage working landscapes, foster natural resource stewardship, sustain a healthy economy, and promote a sustainable high quality of life for current and future generations of Georgians...”
- **Permanently protected more than 358,626 acres of conservation land**
- **Leveraged every \$1 in state expenditures with approximately \$5 in private and other government funds**
- **Supported projects in 128 of Georgia’s 159 counties**



# Land Council

**The GLCP is governed by a 9-member council:**

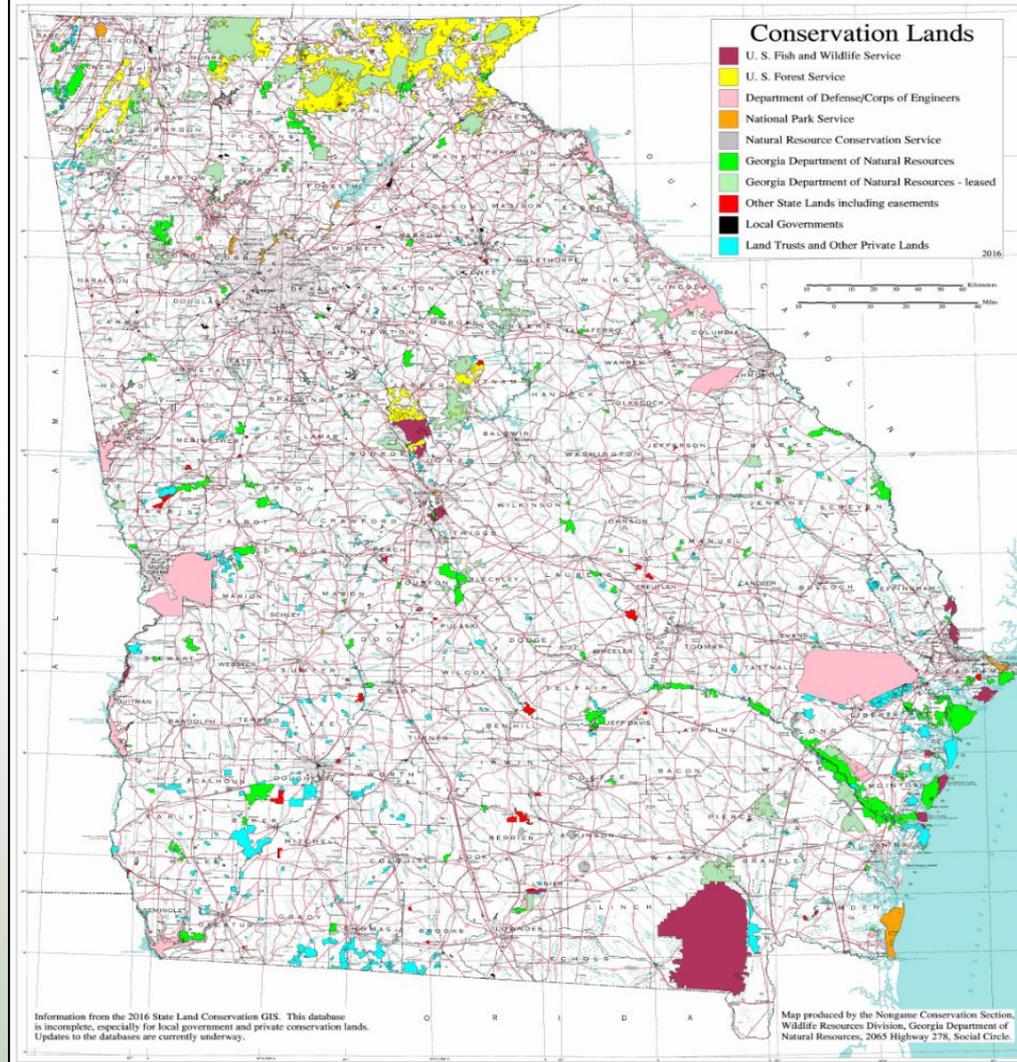
## **5 ex-officio members**

- Steve Stancil, State Properties Commission (chairman)
- Camila Knowles, Georgia Department of Community Affairs
- Kelley Dudley, Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission
- Robert Farris, Georgia Forestry Commission
- Mark Williams, Georgia Department of Natural Resources

## **4 gubernatorial appointees**

- Dr. John Bembry, Tree Farmer and Veterinarian
- Chuck Leavell, Musician and Owner of Charlane Plantation
- Paul Michael, Meritage Homes
- Stacy Patton, Atlanta Beltline, Inc.

# Conservation Lands





# Conservation Purposes

**Section 12-6A-2(5) of The Land Conservation Act Defines 10 Conservation Purposes:**

- **Water Quality Protection**
- **Flood Protection**
- **Wetlands Protection**
- **Erosion Reduction**
- **Native Plant and Animal Habitat**
- **Protection of Ag. and Forestlands**
- **Protection of Cultural Resources**
- **Scenic Protection**
- **Provision of Recreation (Passive)**
- **Provision of Connectivity**



# Loan Funding

**Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF): GEFA provides loans to local governments and NGOs for wastewater, stormwater, nonpoint source pollution control, land conservation, and other water quality projects.**

- Current capacity of \$321 million
- \$75 million of loans in FY15

**Land Conservation Revolving Loan Fund: \$55 million of CWSRF funds dedicated to local governments and NGOs for projects that permanently protect land and water quality**

- \$62.3 million awarded to 16 projects
- 46,000 acres protected



# Grant Funding

**Grants available to pay transaction expenses associated with conservation donations to state agencies**

- Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
- Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC)

**Principal Forgiveness criteria being developed now and will likely include projects that have a green/conservation component**

- **Energy Conservation**
- **Water Conservation**
- **Land Conservation**



# Project Assessments

## All applications for land conservation funding are scored

- DNR scores consistency with each of the 10 conservation purposes
- GEFA scores funding commitment and project innovation
- Scores combined into overall project score

## No minimum score requirement

- GEFA board and Land Council have approval authority
- Average approved application score = 61.6
- Average denied application score = 48.1



Program	5-Year Loan	10-Year Loan	15-Year Loan	20-Year Loan	25-Year Loan	30-Year Loan	Annual Borrowing Maximum
Benchmark Rate	0.92%	1.31%	1.90%	2.39%	2.89%	3.20%	---
Georgia Fund	0.92%	1.31%	1.90%	2.39%	N/A	N/A	\$3,000,000
Georgia Fund – Conservation or WaterFirst	0.67%	0.81%	1.15%	1.39%	N/A	N/A	\$3,000,000
Georgia Fund – PlanFirst	0.67%	1.06%	1.40%	1.89%	N/A	N/A	\$3,000,000
Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF)	0.50%**	0.81%	1.40%	1.89%	2.39%	2.70%	\$25,000,000
CWSRF – Conservation or WaterFirst	0.50%**	0.50%**	0.65%	0.89%	1.39%	1.70%	\$25,000,000
CWSRF – PlanFirst	0.50%**	0.56%	0.90%	1.39%	1.89%	2.20%	\$25,000,000
Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF)	0.50%**	0.81%	1.40%	1.89%	N/A	N/A	\$25,000,000
DWSRF – Conservation or WaterFirst	0.50%**	0.50%**	0.65%	0.89%	N/A	N/A	\$25,000,000
DWSRF – PlanFirst	0.50%**	0.56%	0.90%	1.39%	N/A	N/A	\$25,000,000



# Current Activities

## **Facilitate highly-leveraged projects that protect Georgia's lands**

- Loan at least \$5 million annually to local governments and NGOs
- Dedicate revenue from Checkoff donations to pay state agencies' expenses when accepting conservation donations
- Leverage funding from non-state sources for state conservation projects

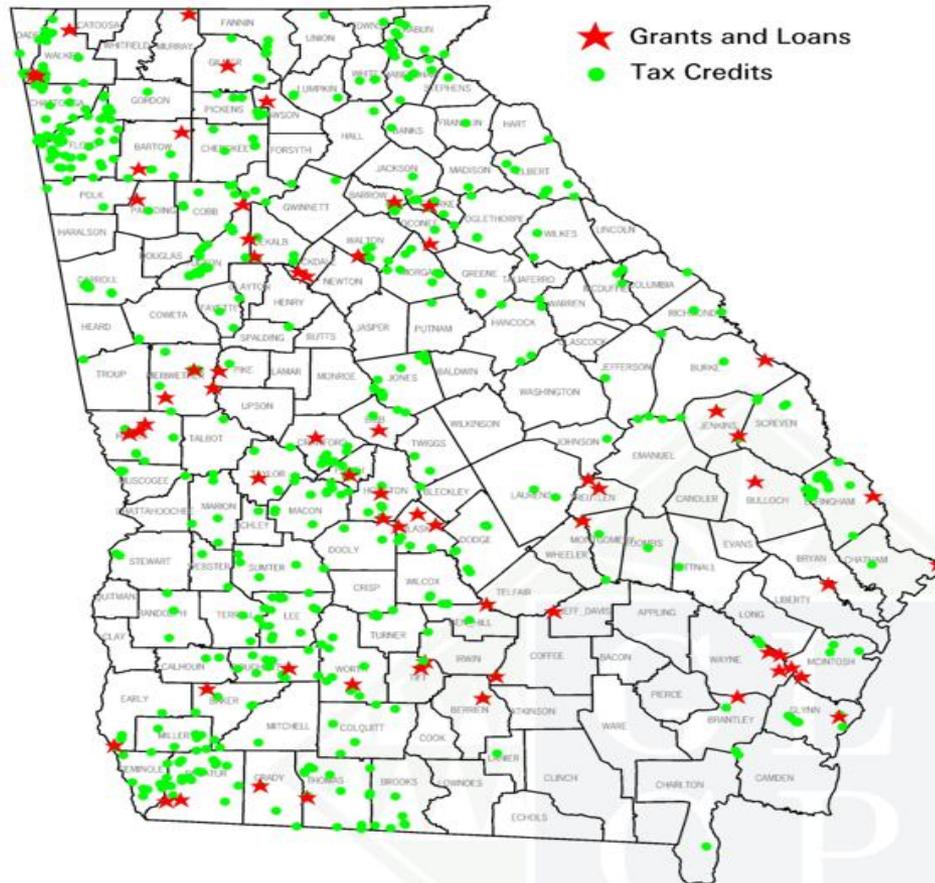
## **Fund and support the Conservation Tax Credit Program**

- Has incentivized protection of 522 tracts covering 220,358 acres
- Administered by DNR under funding agreement with GEFA

## **Outreach to residents and stakeholders about conservation options**

- Incorporate customer survey findings into communications plan
- Employ geographic information systems (GIS) to identify opportunities
- Expand partnerships with land trusts, conservation groups, and state agencies

## GEORGIA LAND CONSERVATION PROGRAM APPROVED PROJECTS 2005 - 2015





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