

**Minutes**  
**Board of Natural Resources**  
2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, S. E.  
Suite 1252 East Tower  
Atlanta, GA 30334

**March 7, 2011**  
**Via Conference Call**

**Attending:**

Board Members

Earl Barrs, Chairman  
Dennis Billew  
Gene Bishop  
Bill Carruth  
Ray Lambert  
Robert Leebern  
Mark Smith  
Loyce Turner  
Jim Walters  
Philip Wilheit  
Steven Woodruff

Staff Members

Mark Williams  
Emily Hitchcock  
Kyle Pearson  
Steve Friedman  
Spud Woodward  
Mary Ann Evans

The March 7, 2011 special called conference call meeting of the Board of Natural Resources was called to order by Chairman Earl Barrs.

Chairman Barrs stated that this meeting was called to discuss the acquisition of up to 25 acres of marshland buffer and the placement of permanent restrictions on up to 120 acres of marshlands in Chatham County, and called on Steve Friedman, Chief of Real Estate, for presentation of the item.

Mr. Friedman stated that although the State owns, by presumption of law, all coastal marshlands with the exception of marshland conveyed with a Crown Grant or State Grant, Chatham County purchased this property in December 2008 for a \$1,000,000 to establish the Salt Creek Mitigation Bank (Bank). He further stated that the County proposes to restore historic tidal flows and saltmarsh vegetation on approximately 100 acres of the site in order to compensate for unavoidable impacts to saltmarsh habitat in the County. He added that once an area of historic tidal flows and rice production in the 1700's and 1800's, this site was impounded in the 1960's for duck hunting and other private, freshwater recreational uses.

Mr. Friedman stated that the County is willing to quitclaim any interest in the property (the mitigation bank and the upland buffer) it may claim to the State and convey 25% of all the saltmarsh credits the Bank generates, at no cost to the State, in exchange for the State placing permanent restrictions on the property. He further stated that the permanent restrictions are required in order for the Corps of Engineers to approve the Bank. He added that the State will also enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the County requiring the County to fully restore and monitor the Bank during the approval period, which is estimated to be ten (10) years. He further added that upon full approval of the Bank by the Corps, the County's responsibility will end and the Department of Natural Resources will assume all future monitoring of the Bank under the Coastal Marshlands Protection Act.

Mr. Friedman stated that coastal marshlands of Georgia comprise a vital natural resource system linked to the economy of Georgia's coastal zone. He further stated that there are areas within the marsh that require restoration, but this action can be very costly. He added that the cost to restore this Bank will be borne by the County, but will benefit the State and allow County and State public works projects to move forward. He further added that it is estimated the Bank will generate up to 450 saltmarsh credits, of which the State will receive 25% of the credits.

Mr. Friedman stated that he would like to request the Board's approval of this item.

Discussion ensued.

A motion was made by Dr. Turner, seconded by Mr. Smith and carried unanimously that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval to acquire by quitclaim deed up to 25 acres of marshland buffer and seek approval from the State Properties Commission and General Assembly to place restrictions over the Bank and associated uplands in Chatham County, and also authorizes the Commissioner to enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the County allowing the County to construct and monitor the Bank until the Corps of Engineers has fully restored it. The Department will assume all future monitoring of the Bank under the Coastal Marshlands Protection Act, Salt Creek Mitigation Bank, Chatham County. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part hereof)

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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Earl D. Barrs, Chairman

ATTEST:

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Mabel C. Jenkins, Secretary