

House Bill 382

By: Representatives Burns of the 159th, Watson of the 172nd, Smith of the 70th, Gaines of the 117th, Rhodes of the 120th, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 6A of Title 12 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
2 outdoor stewardship, so as to redefine eligible applicants for and recipients of the grants; to
3 provide for up to 5 percent of trust moneys for state administrative costs; to provide for
4 annual reporting of program administration expenditures; to provide for related matters; to
5 repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 Chapter 6A of Title 12 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to outdoor
9 stewardship, is amended in Code Section 12-6A-6, relating to grants, conditions of eligibility,
10 and loans, by revising subsection (a) and adding a new subsection to read as follows:

11 "(a) From within the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Trust Fund, moneys shall be made
12 available in each fiscal year for grants to any ~~city, county, department, agency, qualified~~
13 local government or constituted recreation board as such terms are defined by the Board
14 of Natural Resources, any state agency, or any nongovernmental entity of this state having
15 a project proposal which has been approved by the department. As a condition of
16 eligibility for any such grant, a project proposal shall have as its primary purpose one of
17 the following conservation objectives:

18 (1) To support state parks and trails. Funds disbursed for the purposes of this paragraph
19 shall be used to aid in the improvement and maintenance of currently owned state parks
20 and trails;

21 (2) To support local parks and trails of state and regional significance. Funds disbursed
22 for purposes of this paragraph shall be grants to local governments to acquire and
23 improve parks and trails within the jurisdiction and under the control of such local
24 governments;

25 (3) To provide stewardship of conservation land. Funds disbursed for purposes of this
26 paragraph shall be used for maintenance or restoration projects of the department to

27 enhance public access, use, or safe enjoyment of permanently protected conservation
28 land; or

29 (4)(A) To acquire critical areas for the provision or protection of clean water, wildlife,
30 hunting, or fishing, for military installation buffering, or for natural resource-based
31 outdoor recreation. Real property shall only be acquired pursuant to this chapter under
32 the following circumstances:

33 (i) Where such property is, at the time of acquisition, being leased by the state as a
34 wildlife management area;

35 (ii) Where such property adjoins state wildlife management areas, state parks, or
36 would provide better public access to such areas;

37 (iii) Lands identified in any wildlife action plan developed by any agency of the state;

38 (iv) Riparian lands so as to protect any drinking water supply; or

39 (v) Lands surrounding any military base or military installation.

40 (B) Acquisitions of real property or any interests therein pursuant to this chapter shall
41 not be made through condemnation."

42 "(d) From within the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Trust Fund, moneys shall also be made
43 available in each fiscal year for costs incurred by the state in administering the program,
44 but in an amount not to exceed 5 percent of the total moneys received by the state."

45 SECTION 2.

46 Said chapter is further amended in Code Section 12-6A-7, relating to the establishment of
47 the Board of Trustees of the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Trust Fund, membership, role,
48 and priorities, by revising subsection (c) as follows:

49 ~~"(c) Beginning no later than July 1, 2019, and annually thereafter, the~~ The board shall
50 accept applications from ~~state agencies, qualified~~ local governments, ~~nonprofit and~~
51 ~~for-profit organizations, private land trusts, and individuals~~ constituted recreation boards,
52 state agencies, or nongovernmental entities annually for project proposals eligible for
53 funding. The board shall evaluate the proposals received pursuant to priorities established
54 by the board."

55 SECTION 3.

56 Said chapter is further amended in Code Section 12-6A-8, relating to applications and
57 proposals for funding, quarterly review and approval of proposals, final approvals, and
58 disbursement of funds, by revising subsection (a) as follows:

59 "(a) The Board of Trustees of the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Trust Fund shall accept
60 applications from ~~state agencies, qualified~~ local governments, ~~nonprofit and for-profit~~
61 ~~entities, private land trusts, and individuals~~ constituted recreation boards, state agencies,

62 or nongovernmental entities for project proposals eligible for funding. The board shall
63 evaluate the proposals received in accordance with this chapter and pursuant to priorities
64 established by the board."

65 **SECTION 4.**

66 Said chapter is further amended by revising Code Section 12-6A-10, relating to annual report
67 by department, as follows:

68 "12-6A-10.

69 Following the close of each state fiscal year, the department shall submit an annual report
70 of its activities and program administration expenditures for the preceding year pursuant
71 to this chapter to the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the House of
72 Representatives, the chairperson of the Ways and Means Committee of the House of
73 Representatives, the chairperson of the Senate Finance Committee, the chairpersons of the
74 Appropriations Committee of the House of Representatives and the Appropriations
75 Committee of the Senate, and the chairpersons of the Natural Resources and Environment
76 Committee of the House of Representatives and the Natural Resources and the
77 Environment Committee of the Senate, and make such report available to the General
78 Assembly."

79 **SECTION 5.**

80 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.