



# News Release

For more information, contact:  
Wendy Burnett  
478.751.3535  
[wburnett@gfc.state.ga.us](mailto:wburnett@gfc.state.ga.us)  
GaTrees.org

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE...MAY 2, 2013**

## **FOUR-THOUSAND FORESTED ACRES CONSERVED FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS**

Two environmentally significant pieces of Georgia property will be permanently protected under conservation easements recently finalized by the Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC). The diverse acreage is located in both Meriwether and Harris Counties, and totals nearly 4,000 acres. The donations were established through a working partnership with the Georgia Forestry Commission and state Department of Natural Resources.

"This is a noteworthy gift to the people of our state," said Buford Sanders, Staff Stewardship Forester with the Georgia Forestry Commission. The GFC manages the US Forest Service Forest Legacy program, which protects environmentally important working forests threatened by conversion to non-forest uses. "Both properties contain distinctive topographical features and are home to an abundance of wildlife. Through this transaction, they will be conserved and enjoyed for generations to come."

Through the conservation easement program, J. Roger Lumsden donated a contiguous 2981.89 acres of Meriwether County forest land on Highway 109 Spur between Greenville and Gay, Georgia. The property contains five major creeks for a total of 10.3 miles and the 92-acre Jones Mill Pond, which once provided a source of water to power an old grist mill owned by an adjoining landowner. There is a historical record of the endangered Highscale shiner fish on the property. The property is a major working forest in Meriwether County, providing abundant forest products, and is additionally managed for recreational hunting.

"It was instilled in my brother and me to be good stewards of the land," said Roger Lumsden, whose recent donation was his fourth conservation easement. "This property assemblage began in 1993 and it's been like a big jigsaw puzzle, working with landowners and timber companies. With the development we see going on today, I think it's important to help keep these ecosystems balanced," said Lumsden.

In Harris County, on Highway 116 between Hamilton, GA and I-185, Callaway Blue Springs donated a contiguous 986.492 acres to Georgia through the conservation easement program.



"The property connects to other significant protected acreage under permanent easement," said Ken Callaway, Callaway Blue Springs Partner. "That amounts to more than 4,500 acres, as well as FDR State Park, which makes over 15,000 acres of protected property on the Pine Mountain Ridge; and it is an incredibly beautiful part of Georgia."

According to the State Wildlife Action Plan, the Callaway Blue Springs land contains several high priority habitats, including canebreaks, montane longleaf pine-hardwood forest, oak woodlands and savannas, swamps and a mesic hardwood forest. The plumleaf azalaea, a DNR species of special concern, is also on the land.

"We're pleased with these acquisitions because they provide multiple public benefits," said the GFC's Sanders. Those include water quality protection, key wildlife habitat, and outstanding recreation opportunities and scenic views, while giving traditional forest users opportunities for timber harvesting and wildlife management. The state holds title to the easements and provides technical advice to landowners.

For more information about conservation easements and services of the Georgia Forestry Commission, visit [GaTrees.org](http://GaTrees.org).

# # #