



Rural Development Council: Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Act

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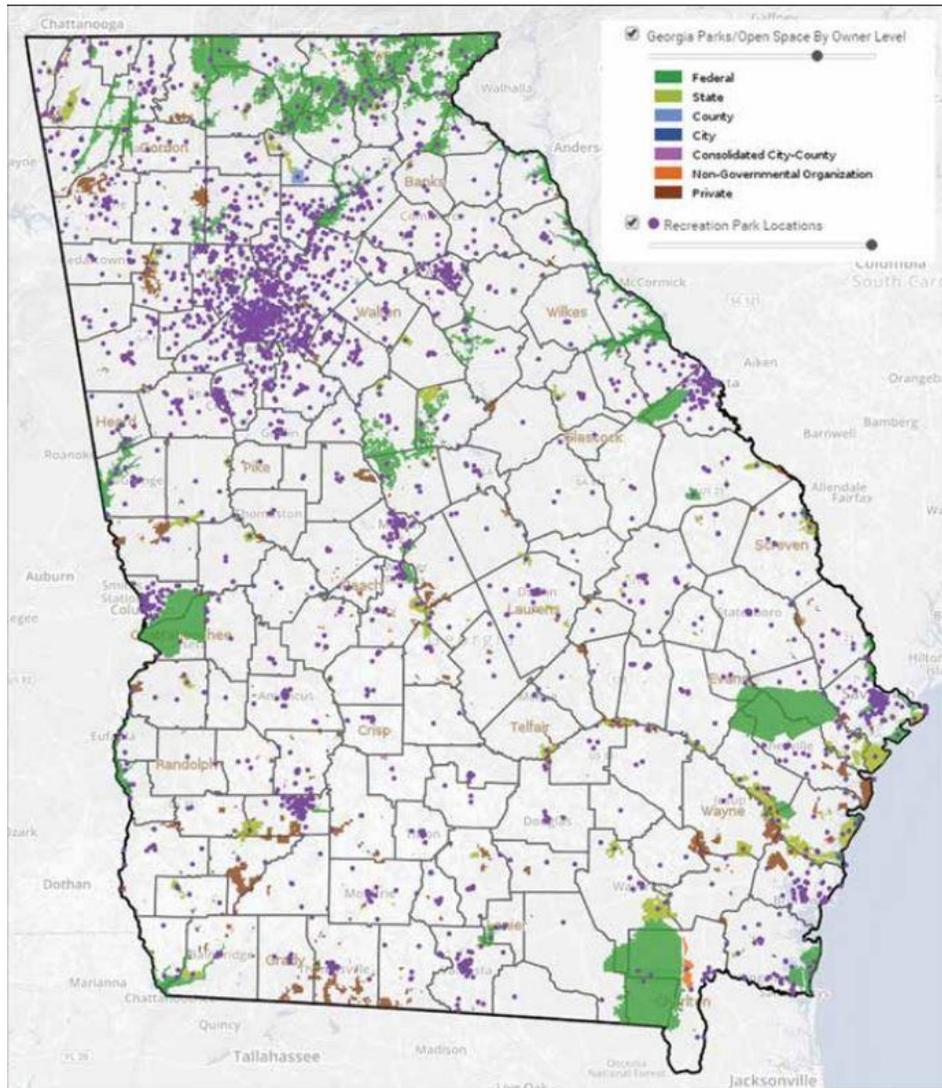
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Recreation has billion-dollar impact on Georgia's economy

- Georgia manages over 1,000,000 acres and over 60 State Parks & Historic Sites
 - Diverse locations and opportunities
- 3,640,000 acres of protected land across state—9.7% of Georgia
 - 2,674,000 (7% of Georgia) open to recreation
- State Parks
 - 9 million visitors annually
 - \$900 million economic impact
- Hunting/Fishing
 - 1.08 licensed anglers
 - \$1.3 billion retail sales
 - 640k licensed hunters
 - \$977 billion retail sales

Number of Georgia Counties, by Percent Land Area for Recreation	
% Land Area	# of Counties
40+%	4
10% to 39%	30
5% to 9%	24
1% to 4%	44
Less than 1%	57

Parks & open space are widely distributed



- Large federal properties in lower population density areas
- NPS/Corp of engineer properties more evenly distributed
- State properties lean towards lower population areas
 - Often relatively close to population center
- The first experience people have in park will generally be a municipal or county property

Georgians support Outdoor Stewardship

- In 2018, the General Assembly passed HB 332 and HR 238 which put constitutional amendment on the ballot.
- **Nov. 6, 2018: Georgia voters passed Amendment 1 with 83% support.**
- In 2019, the General Assembly passed HB 382, GOSA clean-up legislation.
- The Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program became **active on July 1, 2019**, ushering in the inaugural 2019-2020 funding cycle.

The legislation has specific intent

- Funding for:
 - State Parks
 - State lands
 - Wildlife Management Areas
 - Local parks & trails
 - Protect critical conservation land
- For projects that:
 - Protect water quality
 - Protect cultural sites & historic resources
 - Protect land around military installations
 - Support economic development
 - Promote outdoor recreation including hunting & fishing
 - Enhance permanently protected conservation areas and Parks

Year 1 funding projections greater than expected

- **Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Trust Fund** - GOSA authorizes up to 80% of all moneys received by the state from sporting goods store sales and use taxes collected on outdoor recreation equipment from each preceding fiscal year.
 - 2019 – 2020 funding cycle authorized **40%** of sales and use tax receipts
- The Board of Trustees are responsible for allocating these funds each cycle.
- Georgia Environmental Finance Authority is responsible for the disbursement of funds following project approval.

We are now accepting applications

- Applications opened September 1 and will be open through October 31
- The Board of Trustees shall accept applications evaluate and approve these proposals in accordance with priorities established by the GOSA legislation and priorities established by the Board of Trustees.
 - Priorities were adopted at first Board of Trustees meeting, July 2019

Project selection occurs in January

- Project selection process:
 1. DNR Grants staff will score applications based on metrics approved by the Board of Trustees
 2. Board of Trustees will vote on projects in January
 3. The Board of Natural Resources will vote on the slate of projects approved by the Board of Trustees in January
 4. The projects will be submitted to the appropriations sub-committees with jurisdiction over DNR by the end of January

Encourage your communities to apply

- All Qualified Local Governments
- Constituted Recreation Authorities
- State Agencies
- Non-governmental Entities

Loans and grants are available

- Conserve Georgia Grants
 - Local parks and trails projects between \$500,000 and \$3,000,000
 - Projects of “regional significance”
- Low interest loans will also be made available

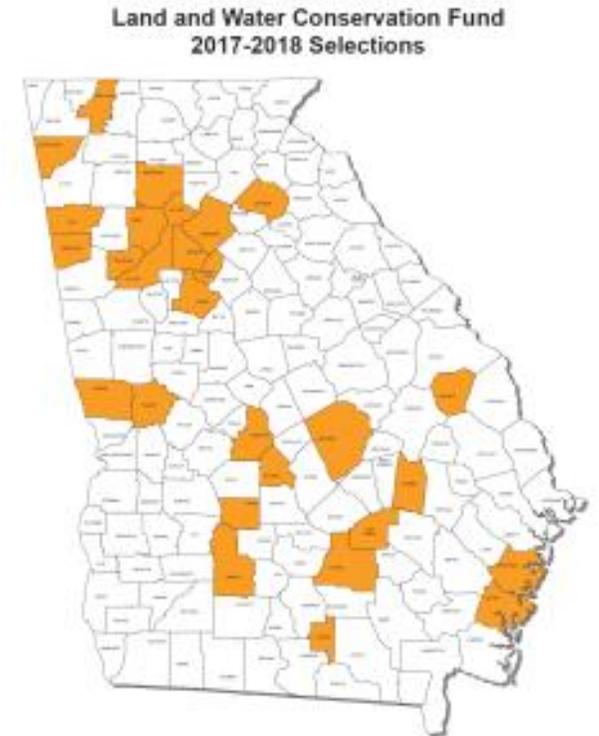


The funding cycle has specific criteria

- One funding cycle per year
- Applicants may submit one application per year
- Local parks and trails projects must be between \$500,000 and \$3,000,000.
 - Applicant must provide 25% match.
 - Grantees pay for 100% of the total project cost and then submit for reimbursement of 75% of eligible costs.
 - Projects must be completed within 24 months.

Funding is also available for smaller projects

- Land & Water Conservation Fund
 - Acquire and develop recreation lands
 - Rehab outdoor recreation facilities
 - 2017-2018 cycle: 33 selected projects, impacting 29 counties
- Recreational Trails Program
 - Fund the construction of local trails
 - Funding also available for motorized trails
 - 2017-2019 cycle: 19, selected projects 19 counties impacted
 - Currently accepting applications for the 2019-2020 cycle (deadline November 17)



Questions?

gadnr.org/gosp

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