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GAEP *Informant*

April 2018

News, Events, and Announcements from the Georgia Association of Environmental Professionals

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GEORGIA ASSOCIATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROFESSIONALS

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GEORGIA ASSOCIATION OF
ENVIRONMENTAL PROFESSIONALS

Presents:

NAEP Webinar: NEPA Policy and Legislative Update



NAEP

The National Association of
Environmental Professionals

TM *Promoting Excellence in the Environmental Profession*

Location:

CH2M Office
6600 Peachtree Dunwoody Road
Bldg 400, Ste 600
Atlanta, GA 30328

Date and Time:

Wednesday, April 11th
3:00 – 4:30 pm

The National Association of Environmental Professionals (NAEP) is proud to host its annual NEPA Policy and Legislative Update. The April 11th webinar will provide current information on federal infrastructure initiatives including the FAST Act, the Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council, the Permitting Dashboard, Executive Order 13807, and related policies such as One Federal Decision. Presentations will be made by representatives from The White House Council on Environmental Quality and the Permitting Council. The panel will also include an esteemed NEPA attorney providing an industry perspective on these significant policies and initiatives. Please join us for this timely and important topic.

Check out our new website and RSVP at www.gaep.info

Refreshments will be provided for all attendees.

Members - \$5.00

Non-members - \$10.00

RSVP for NAEP Webinar [HERE!](#)



Georgia Bat Working Group

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Lakepoint State Park, Eufaula, AL

<http://alapark.com/lakepoint-state-park>

Netting sites will be located near Lakepoint State Park in Alabama and Georgia.
Registration will open soon.

Hotel-style rooms and cabins are available for rental. NO FREE HOUSING IS PROVIDED DURING THIS BLITZ.

To make a reservation, visit www.alapark.com or call 800-544-5253 (you must call to reserve cabins).

Camping is also available at Lakepoint State Park. Information on campsites and pricing can be found here <http://alapark.com/Lakepoint-state-park-camping>



2018 Bat Blitz

The 2018 Bat Blitz will be held July 23-27 in Sewanee, TN

Due to the cost of housing and food, all participants are expected to attend the entire bat blitz

Those interested in being team leaders should contact michael.whitby@gmail.com for details.

Blitz participants should be current bat researchers, researchers or managers hoping to gain experience, and students interested in gaining bat sampling experience in the field. Ideal participants are rabies vaccinated and able to assist with netting activities, however all managers/biologists/students/professionals with an interest in gaining bat sampling experience and connecting with regional bat researchers are welcome to join.

This is not a public event. Members of the public are welcome at our free bat blitz education event on Monday July 23rd – More information to come.

Scholarships for students who do not have a grant or cannot afford to pay for the student registration fee. Please email michael.whitby@gmail.com (Subject: BAT BLITZ SCHOLARSHIP) with a statement of:

1. Current School, Adviser, expected graduation
2. Very Brief description of project
3. Why you want to attend the blitz / What you will gain from attending the blitz.

Do you have suggestions for GAEP Social Events or Lunch 'n' Learn topics? Please email the Co-

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GAEP SCHOLARSHIP

GAEP Scholarship Search (2018-2019)

The Georgia Association of Environmental Professionals is pleased to announce our 2018-2019 scholarship search. GAEP seeks to recognize one deserving student currently enrolled in an environmental field with a \$1,000 scholarship grant. To learn more or apply, please visit the [Scholarship Page](#).

Seeking Employment - Resume Spotlight

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Decatur, Alabama 35603
 Email: awils120@gmail.com
 Cell: (678) 913-4249

Education

Bachelors of Science, Biology; 3.56 GPA
 Kennesaw State University
 121 Hours Total
 435 GPA Credits Earned

July 29, 2014
 1000 Chastain Road
 Kennesaw, GA 30144

Experience

Alabama Whooping Crane Outreach Program Assistant
International Crane Foundation

Nov 2017-Mar 2018
Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge

- Schedule programs on Whooping Cranes around north Alabama for k-12 schools, civic groups, hunting groups, environmental groups, birding groups, home school groups, college groups, and others
- Maintain amicable relations with locals around Wheeler NWR for the protection of the cranes
- Conduct radio and television interviews, and write/assist with articles in local papers and blogs
- Use Zoom communication program, and Office 365 to conduct meetings and share documents with the team in Wisconsin
- Develop and perform unique and informative programs on cranes for the public at Wheeler NWR, Alabama Wildlife Center, and Ruffner Mountain Nature Center
- Consistently research and learn more about Whooping Cranes and their natural history

Associate Outdoor Leader
Houston Independent School District (Trinity, Texas)

Aug 2016 – Oct 2017
The Outdoor Education Center

- Guided and taught Houston 5th graders about forest ecosystems, invertebrate and vertebrate food chains, historical events such as the industrial revolution and how it impacted the environment, and other topics
- Acted as safety guard during canoeing and horseback riding/responsible for the safety and intellectual stimulation of thirteen 5th graders during their stay
- Developed and performed my own night hikes, owl prowls, reptile and mammal demonstrations, sunset paintings, and astronomy lessons
- Observed students and adjusted my lessons based on their interactions with me and each other, used team building exercises to bond group
- Evaluated students based on their performance using matrices that would go back to school with them

Head Counselor
Camp Kingfisher (Roswell, GA)

May 2017-July 2017
Chattahoochee Nature Center

- Prepared orientation materials, and lead training sessions on environmental education/Beetles teaching strategies, reptile and animal demos, and camper behavior solutions for new staff
- Supervised 10 camp counselors, and assisted in leading camp gatherings, games, and guiding campers
- Conducted formal evaluations, and provided constructive feedback to my staff for their growth
- Lead day and night hikes, animal demos, lessons on the Chattahoochee watershed

Resource Education Intern

Mar 2016 – Aug 2016

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- *Develop hands on programs on cultural and natural history of the Smokies for k-8 students in Cades Cove*
- *Create junior ranger programs centered on megafauna of the Smokies and lead stream splashers programs focused on macro invertebrates*
- *Assisted with law enforcement officers to regulate visitor interaction with bears, assisted the Fisheries department with electroshocking survey plots, and helped collect data for the park Entomologist*
- *Edited and developed park educational signage*
- *Directed volunteers and visitors during bike closure days, Old Timer's Day, Astronomy Night, and other special events*
- *Taught over 7,000 visitors and 1,000 K-8 students during my internship in Cades Cove*

**Alabama Whooping Crane Conservation Intern
International Crane Foundation (Decatur, Alabama)**

**Nov 2015 – Feb 2016
Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge**

- Scheduled, designed, and performed Whooping Crane programs for community members around Wheeler NWR at Decatur Public Library
- Collaborated with teachers and principals to create programs on cranes specifically for their students, and performed programs for large school assemblies of up to 500 students
- Lead an orientation on the Whooping Crane Trunk for environmental educators around Alabama
- Taught 4,000 students and teachers about cranes during my internship
- Developed a higher-level program for Athens State University biology students focused on conservation and biology of cranes
- Worked gun shows, festivals, and local events to spread the word about Whooping Cranes

Volunteer Experience

Tremont Institute in Great Smoky Mountains National Park (3 mo)– lead bird phenology citizen science project, bird banding assistant, trained interns and volunteers on bird phenology project.

Husbandry volunteer for International Crane Foundation Crane Conservation Department (6 mo) - cared for cranes in their enclosures by changing water and food buckets, assisted with ecology department by becoming a member of the prescribed burn team.

Chattahoochee Nature Center (4 yr)– connected the public with the Chattahoochee watershed, and spread ideas of conservation to the public.

Certifications

-**Project Wet and Wild Trained** May 2016- May 2018

-**NAI Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG)** October 2014 – October 2018

-Great Smoky Mountains National Park Search and Rescue (SAR4) May 2016 – May 2018/Adult & Child **CPR Certified**

-Great Smoky Mountains **Leave No Trace Trained**

REGULATORY UPDATES

Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Act - [House Bill 332](#) & [House Resolution 238](#)

The Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Act has passed! The Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Act (HB 332) and companion legislation calling for voter approval in a referendum this fall (HR 238) were both overwhelmingly passed by the Georgia House of Representatives and the State Senate on Sine Die, the final day of the session. The Georgia Conservancy and the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Coalition thank Representative Sam Watson and Senator Steve Gooch for marshaling support for these measures in their respective chambers.

HB 332 now goes to the Governor's desk for signature. Per Georgia law, HR 238 does not require a signature, having received the two-thirds majority necessary to be put on the ballot for the November general election. The Governor has 40 days from the end of the legislative session to sign bills into law.

The ballot measure, HR 238, as passed will go to the voters to allow for the dedication of up to 80% of existing sales tax collections on outdoor sporting goods as classified by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). The enabling legislation, HB 332, as passed would initially dedicate a

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after ten years with the option to be renewed.

Our state currently lacks a dedicated funding mechanism for the conservation for priority lands, the stewardship of state parks and wildlife management areas, and the support of local parks and preserves - the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Act seeks to change that.

With the goal of conserving Georgia's precious natural resources – its people, jobs, land and water – through a sustainable source of funding for land and water conservation, The Georgia Conservancy, The Nature Conservancy, Trust for Public Land, Georgia Wildlife Federation, The Conservation Fund and Park Pride joined forces in 2010 as a coalition advocating for dedicated conservation funding.

Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Act seeks to:

- Dedicate up to 80% of all monies received from the state sales and use tax collected from the sale of outdoor sporting goods.
- Provide for the acquisition of critical areas for the provision or protection of clean water, game, wildlife, or fisheries, or natural-resource-based outdoor recreation.
- Aid local governments in the acquisition and improvement of local parks and trails.
- Provide for the stewardship of conservation lands through maintenance and restoration projects.

Georgia's natural resources play a critical role in job creation and the economic health of communities throughout the state. Conservation funds generated by the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Act would have a significant impact on our ability to conserve and protect our lands and waters and to continue to attract hunters, anglers and other outdoor enthusiasts who contribute to our tourism and recreation economy.

Access to outdoor space also plays a key role in the state's efforts to promote a healthier population. Finally, it is important to note that Georgia's economic competitors, such as Texas, Virginia, Alabama and Florida, all have programs in place to ensure conservation funding.

From within the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Act, dollars would also be made available in each fiscal year for loans to any city, county, or nongovernmental entity to defray the costs of acquisition of conservation land or of conservation easements placed upon property that ensure its permanent protection as conservation land.

To allow for the dedicated allocation of tax revenue, the Constitution of Georgia would first have to be amended and the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Act would seek to accomplish this through the creation of a ballot initiative presented to Georgia voters during the fall 2018 election cycle. The passage of House Resolution 238 creates this ballot initiative. The proposals would also better position Georgia to compete for additional investment from federal, private and philanthropic entities.

[Click here](#) to read a press release regarding the passage of the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Act.

[House Resolution 238 has passed the State Legislature allowing for a 2018 statewide ballot initiative.](#)

[House Bill 332 has passed the State Legislature and will now move the Governor's desk.](#)

Dedicated Fees - [House Resolution 158](#)

HR 158, sponsored by [Rep. Jay Powell \(R-171\)](#) proposes an amendment to the state constitution that would require the state to "dedicate", or spend fees on the specific purposes for which the fees were collected.

Since the economic downturn of 2007-08, Georgia lawmakers have relied on a practice of diverting to the

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For example, the tire fee on new tire purchases that is supposed to fund the clean-up of dangerous tire dumps has been diverted to other state activities and programs. The diversion of fee income has left the state with inadequate funds to properly clean-up these tire dumps that pose a threat to the public safety, health and the environment. HR 158 would prohibit this practice.

House Resolution 158 passed the House but did not pass the Senate before the end of the 2018 Legislative Session.

Regional Mass Transit Funding - [House Bill 930](#)

An amended House Bill 930, one reconciled by both chambers through a conference committee, passed on *Sine Die* and would allow 13 counties in the metro region to fund mass transit projects through voter approved sales tax referendums. Counties would have to submit mass transit projects proposals to be approved by a new regional transit board (Atlanta-region Transit Link Authority), which each bill would establish. Each county would also be eligible to seek state funds for approved projects.

House Bill 930 passed both chambers and will now move to the Governor's desk.

Oil and Gas Extraction Regulations - [House Bill 205](#)

House Bill 205 proposes new rules and stronger regulations for the extraction of oil and gas in Georgia, and the authority to create an Oil & Gas Board under certain circumstances.

The bill would establish much needed regulations on the extraction methods commonly known as fracking. The intent is to put in place statutory measures to properly protect Georgia's waters, especially those in Northwest Georgia, an area of the state that has seen an increased interest in gas extraction from its Conasauga Shale.

During 2017, HB 205 passed the House, but an amended Senate version could not be agreed upon in conference committee before the close of the session.

House Bill 205 has passed the House and the Senate and will now move to the Governor's desk.

Offshore Oil and Gas Exploration - [House Resolution 1041](#) and [Senate Resolution 706](#)

House Resolution 1041, sponsored by [Rep. Carl Gilliard \(D-162\)](#), and Senate Resolution 706, sponsored by [Sen. Lester Jackson \(D-2\)](#), are bi-partisan measures that oppose seismic testing and oil and gas drilling off of Georgia's coast. The resolutions ask for the General Assembly to express their support for Georgia's fishing and coastal tourism industries, extensive salt marsh and marine mammals, as well as opposition to offshore oil and gas exploration.

Neither House Resolution 1041 nor Senate Resolution 706 were adopted by their respective chambers before the end of the 2018 Legislative Session.

Coal Ash Landfill Dewatering Notifications - [House Bill 879](#)

House Bill 879, sponsored by [Rep. Jeff Jones \(R-167\)](#), provides for new coal combustion residual (CCR) definitions in the code section and requires the owner or operator of a coal ash pond to provide

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House Bill 879 passed the House and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and the Environment, but was tabled by the Senate before the end of the 2018 Legislative Session.

Working Forests License Plate - [House Bill 695](#)

HB 695, sponsored by seeks to establish a specialty license plate honoring Georgia's working forests and the benefits they provide to Georgians and wildlife habitat.

The funds generated by the sale of this license plate would be given to the Georgia Forestry Foundation. Passage of this bill requires a two-third's majority vote in both houses of the Legislature.

HB 695 was amended last week to include an effective date of July 1, 2019, as well as to add an additional plate supporting the Sickle Cell Foundation of Georgia.

House Bill 695 has passed both chambers and will now move to the Governor's desk.

Extending The Hazardous Waste Trust Fund - [House Bill 792](#)

Sponsored by [Rep. Terry Rogers \(R-10\)](#), HB 792 seeks to extend the sunset date on the state's Hazardous Waste Trust Fund. The collection of fees that support the fund is currently set to expire on July 1 of this year. With passage of this amended bill, the Hazardous Waste Trust Fund will be extended.

Until June 30, 2019, under this legislation, when a municipal solid waste disposal facility is operated by private enterprise, the host local government is authorized and is required to impose a surcharge of \$1.00 per ton or volume equivalent, in addition to any other negotiated charges or fees which shall be imposed by and paid to the host local government for the facility. On July 1, 2019 that fee will be increased to \$2.50.

The Hazardous Waste Trust Fund is supported by monies collected from hazardous waste generators, solid waste tipping fees and various fines for violations. The Fund, which is administered by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division, is used to remediate contaminated sites throughout the state. If the collection of fees were to sunset, the ability of local governments to fund the clean up of leaking landfills, as well as abandoned and contaminated properties, would be seriously hindered.

The amended House Bill 792 has passed both chambers and will now move to the Governor's desk.

Fuel Conversion of Non-Recyclable Plastics - [House Bill 785](#)

House Bill 785, sponsored by [Rep. Randy Nix \(R-69\)](#), seek to adds to and modify definitions of solid waste so as to provide for additional options in their management. These additional management options include the gassification and pryolosis of materials previously classified as waste, such as non-recycled feedstock and post-use plastics.

To complement current recycling, this bill would allow for materials that cannot be economically recycled to be converted in to fuel.

HB 785 has passed both chambers and will now move to the Governor's desk.

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Senate Resolution 778, sponsored by [Rep. Steve Gooch \(R-51\)](#), urges the United States Congress to create a reliable, predictable stream of resources to address deferred maintenance needs of the National Park Service, specifically for NPS properties found within Georgia.

[Senate Resolution 778 was adopted by the State Senate.](#)

UPCOMING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES



US Army Corps of Engineers ®

USACE Webinar

Tuesday, May 1 from 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

The webinar will discuss tributary terminology, ordinary high water mark indicators, and desktop review/resources. Information on joining the webinar will be forthcoming on the USACE Savannah District website.

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