

**From:** Garrison, Rusty  
**Sent:** Wed, 12 Sep 2018 13:41:09 +0000  
**To:** Bowers, John;McGowan, Don;Mixon, David  
**Subject:** Fwd: Huston House, barn and dependencies on Butler Island near Darien

Guys, am I correct that the city of Darien had the maintenance responsibility on this house? Wes needs to respond to the Senator.

Thanks,

Rusty

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

----- Original message -----

From: "Robinson, Wes" <[wes.robinson@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:wes.robinson@dnr.ga.gov)>  
Date: 9/12/18 8:54 AM (GMT-05:00)  
To: "Garrison, Rusty" <[Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov)>  
Cc: "West, Terry" <[Terry.West@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Terry.West@dnr.ga.gov)>  
Subject: Fwd: Huston House, barn and dependencies on Butler Island near Darien

Hey rusty is this indeed the house that we spoke about yesterday? City responsible for upkeep?

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Vargas, Aviel" <[Aviel.Vargas@senate.ga.gov](mailto:Aviel.Vargas@senate.ga.gov)>  
**Date:** September 11, 2018 at 10:01:32 AM EDT  
**To:** "[wes.robinson@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:wes.robinson@dnr.ga.gov)" <[wes.robinson@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:wes.robinson@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Cc:** William Ligon <[william@senatorligon.com](mailto:william@senatorligon.com)>  
**Subject:** **FW: Huston House, barn and dependencies on Butler Island near Darien**

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good morning Wes,

Would you be able to assist me with the constituent inquiry below? I actually received a similar inquiry from another constituent over the weekend as well. Any update that I may pass along to them would be greatly appreciated.

*Aviel Vargas*

[Aviel.Vargas@senate.ga.gov](mailto:Aviel.Vargas@senate.ga.gov)

404-463-0697

---

**From:** [william@senatorligon.com](mailto:william@senatorligon.com) <[william@senatorligon.com](mailto:william@senatorligon.com)>

**Sent:** Monday, September 10, 2018 11:17 AM

**To:** William T. Ligon, Jr. <[william@attorneyligon.com](mailto:william@attorneyligon.com)>; Vargas, Aviel <[Aviel.Vargas@senate.ga.gov](mailto:Aviel.Vargas@senate.ga.gov)>

**Subject:** Fwd: Huston House, barn and dependencies on Butler Island near Darien  
Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

----- Original message -----

From: MARK YEAGER <[REDACTED]>

Date: 9/9/18 10:29 PM (GMT-05:00)

To: Jones Jeff <[jeff.jones@house.ga.gov](mailto:jeff.jones@house.ga.gov)>, Ligon William <[William@senatorligon.com](mailto:William@senatorligon.com)>

Subject: Huston House, barn and dependencies on Butler Island near Darien  
Honorable Sirs

I am writing you to notify you of the alarming and deteriorating condition of the Huston house and barn on Butler Island near Darien, owned by GA DNR.

The house is unsecured and vacant and the barn is in a persistent flood area. The siding is peeling off the barn exposing the interior to further damage.

As the owner, DNR has a responsibility to secure and stabilize these valuable facilities until a re-use plan can take effect in the future.

I am asking you to direct DNR to devise a stabilization plan for these structures and implement the plan at the earliest possible date before further damage by the elements, and possibly vandalism, makes preservation more complicated than it already is.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Mark Yeager

Harris Neck, GA

**From:** Garrison, Rusty  
**Sent:** Fri, 21 Sep 2018 16:11:12 +0000  
**To:** West, Terry  
**Subject:** FW: Thoughts from you.

Terry,

IF we lease the house to Darien, I would still think we cannot allow a business, much less a Distillery, to operate from a DNR owned facility. Your thoughts?

Rusty

---

**From:** Rob Ginn [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, September 21, 2018 11:44 AM  
**To:** Garrison, Rusty <Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov>  
**Cc:** Crass, David <David.Crass@dnr.ga.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Thoughts from you.

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Thanks Rusty for your reply. We think we have a very dynamic option for government-private cooperation to create jobs, significantly improve tourism and provide a self funding option to the restoration of a 1927 farm house. The city of Darien has this lease and are in favor of working with us. So perhaps a lease option is what we need to peruse. I would appreciate a chance to sit down with and consider options. My cell is [REDACTED]. Let me know if that is something you are willing to do. Thanks in advance.

Sincerely,  
Rob Ginn

Sent from my iPad

On Sep 21, 2018, at 9:56 AM, Garrison, Rusty <[Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov)> wrote:

Rob,

Dave Crass sent me your email and asked that I write concerning your idea of a distillery in the Butler House. As you mentioned in the ppt that I also received, DNR owns the house.

As such, placing a distillery in a house/facility under DNR ownership is not an option. You seem to indicate as much in the powerpoint. Selling the house is not something DNR has considered and would require approval by the State Properties Commission. Such a process takes a year or more to accomplish.

If you have questions please feel free to contact me.

Thanks,

Rusty

Rusty Garrison  
Director

**Wildlife Resources Division**

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**From:** Rob Ginn [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 05, 2018 9:34 AM  
**To:** Crass, David  
**Subject:** Fw: Thoughts from you.

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

David thank you for your time yesterday in steering me through DNR. here are two attachments with a forward of Cheryl's reply to my theme of the project question. Also is a copy of my presentation to the Darien Gov. it is interesting to see how the plans for our use dovetails with the tourism assessment. I had no prior knowledge of the study from 2015. How ever none of the initiatives have gained traction. I assume that is lack of funding and D3 could solve that. Many thanks Rob Ginn

---

**From:** Cheryl Hargrove <[CHargrove@georgia.org](mailto:CHargrove@georgia.org)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 4, 2018 2:43 PM  
**To:** Rob Ginn  
**Subject:** RE: Thoughts from you.

Hi Rob,

I am attaching the resource team report for McIntosh County as it provides some detailed recommendations, especially related to Gullah Geechee Culture, Butler Plantation and the Darien Museum.

Each of the "themes" you reference below are important to Georgia Tourism; African American heritage and culture; Food, Drink and Georgia Grown; and the Outdoors are three of the five pillars we will focus on (to develop, market) over the next three years.

My initial thought is that the distillery must be the focal point - with the appropriate tasting room, tour of facilities, and other amenities (gift shop, restaurant, etc.) to attract visitors (groups) and their spending. The Agriculture/Aquaculture theme perhaps fits best to marry the distillery operation with location as U.S. 17 Highway was recently designated a Georgia Grown Trail (from Florida border to South Carolina line) and obviously the distillery will be a "Georgia Grown" product. If you can add the educational components and programs, it can become a year-round attraction for all types of visitors. A good example of opportunity is the Farmview Market in Madison, Georgia; they have an on-site market, butcher, and Georgia Grown café.

African American heritage is perhaps the best alignment for the location, as the Butler Plantation has its own history that can be interpreted on the site as part of a placemaking/placekeeping strategy. The Gullah-Geechee Cultural Center concept fits here as well, although you'd need to connect the distillery in some way to their culture (rice fields now used for a local rice wine?) Before going too far into this "theme", I strongly encourage you to speak with Griffin Lotson, Commissioner on the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission, based in Darien as he is very aware of how best to interpret their history (and is working on several projects right now). This is sacred land for the Gullah Geechee people, and any type of development needs their involvement, approval and sensitive interpretation/market (to avoid commodification or exploitation.)

and roll them into the plan. Distillery will of course be another. Thx. Rob  
Sent from my iPad

**From:** Garrison, Rusty  
**Sent:** Fri, 21 Sep 2018 13:56:51 +0000  
**To:** robginn [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Crass, David  
**Bcc:** West, Terry  
**Subject:** RE: Thoughts from you.

Rob,

Dave Crass sent me your email and asked that I write concerning your idea of a distillery in the Butler House. As you mentioned in the ppt that I also received, DNR owns the house. As such, placing a distillery in a house/facility under DNR ownership is not an option. You seem to indicate as much in the powerpoint. Selling the house is not something DNR has considered and would require approval by the State Properties Commission. Such a process takes a year or more to accomplish.

If you have questions please feel free to contact me.

Thanks,

Rusty

Rusty Garrison

Director

**Wildlife Resources Division**

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**From:** Rob Ginn [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 05, 2018 9:34 AM  
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---

**From:** Cheryl Hargrove <[CHargrove@georgia.org](mailto:CHargrove@georgia.org)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 4, 2018 2:43 PM  
**To:** Rob Ginn  
**Subject:** RE: Thoughts from you.

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Each of the "themes" you reference below are important to Georgia Tourism; African American heritage

and culture; Food, Drink and Georgia Grown; and the Outdoors are three of the five pillars we will focus on (to develop, market) over the next three years.

My initial thought is that the distillery must be the focal point - with the appropriate tasting room, tour of facilities, and other amenities (gift shop, restaurant, etc.) to attract visitors (groups) and their spending. The Agriculture/Aquaculture theme perhaps fits best to marry the distillery operation with location as U.S. 17 Highway was recently designated a Georgia Grown Trail (from Florida border to South Carolina line) and obviously the distillery will be a "Georgia Grown" product. If you can add the educational components and programs, it can become a year-round attraction for all types of visitors. A good example of opportunity is the Farmview Market in Madison, Georgia; they have an on-site market, butcher, and Georgia Grown café.

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As for focusing on the broader McIntosh/Darien history, Georgia Tourism has given the Kit Jones a grant to help with the relocation of this important vessel back home to McIntosh County. I know several local community leaders are involved in restoration plans and deciding the location of its permanent home.

After you review the resource team, let me know if you have additional questions or want more information. This is an important project and we want to help you bring a distillery to McIntosh County.  
Cheers,  
Cheryl

-----Original Message-----

From: Rob Ginn [REDACTED]  
Sent: Monday, September 3, 2018 7:24 PM  
To: Cheryl Hargrove <[CHargrove@georgia.org](mailto:CHargrove@georgia.org)>  
Subject: Thoughts from you.

After our meeting.....mainly over the week end.....I collected notes and thought about themes, concept or attraction that would be a visitor magnet. So I concocted this list of themes for the distillery. Assuming we can get the Butler Island property , that is.

1. Gullah-Geechee culture/heritage.  
Food, history, music, arts & craft display  
Events and meetings

2. McIntosh/ Darien history.  
Move Museum

Barry Sullivan lectures. And other speakers  
Move and old shrimp boat for a display  
Saw mill. Tidal powered  
Pirates, smugglers and blockade runners.  
Naval stores  
3, Aqua/coastal Agriculture  
Grow (when in season) and display  
Rice, sea Island cotton, truck farm crops, peanuts, sugar cane, dairy etc.

4. Legends, lies and ghost stories of the coast

5. Wildlife of the coast  
Birding trails, support the hunting season,  
Seafood  
Understanding the marshes,  
Eco systems of the area.  
Effects of tides and sea.

Anyway. I if you would share your thoughts I'm going to narrow it down to three best areas and roll them into the plan. Distillery will of course be another. Thx. Rob  
Sent from my iPad





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Re: Huston House Butler Island



Crass, David
Wed 11/21/2018 4:18 PM
To: Hover, William



Yeah end of the day yesterday. I sent Terry an IM to see about sub leasing...have a great holiday!

Sent from my iPhone

On Nov 21, 2018, at 1:16 PM, Hover, William <William.Hover@dnr.ga.gov> wrote:

Dave,

You hear anything about this from Mark (curious that the interested party is an "investor")? I replied to Susan to have this request come to me, so we can keep track...

Bill

From: Susan Turner [mailto:sturner@lordaecksargent.com]
Sent: Wednesday, November 21, 2018 12:44 PM
To: Hover, William <William.Hover@dnr.ga.gov>
Cc: David Steele <DSteele@lordaecksargent.com>; Julie Arnold <jarnold@lordaecksargent.com>
Subject: Huston House Butler Island

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Bill,

We have received a request from the Georgia Trust to see the Executive Summary and Summary of Findings from our CAR. As you probably know, the house was included in their Places in Peril list this year. Through that program, it has attracted the intention of a potential investor. The Trust has been in discussions with that individual and would like to review the high-level findings of the CAR to be better informed. Please let me know if it is ok with DNR for us to share these excerpts from the document.

I hope that you have a wonderful Thanksgiving.

Susan

Susan Turner, AIA
Principal, LEED AP

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A KATERRA COMPANY
1175 Peachtree St, Ste 2400
Atlanta, GA 30361
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Re: Huston House Butler Plantation

MS M SAVIC [redacted] Fri 1/4/2019 9:49 AM  
 To: Crass, David  
 Cc: Garrison, Rusty; Whitney, Mark; Mark McDonald <mmcdonald@georgiatrust.org>

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Thank you! Marion

On Friday, January 4, 2019, 9:47:38 AM EST, Crass, David <David.Crass@dnr.ga.gov> wrote:

Hello—I've copied our Wildlife Resources Division (WRD) Director Rusty Garrison on this. WRD manages this property.

---

**From:** M SAVIC [redacted]  
**Sent:** Friday, January 04, 2019 9:41 AM  
**To:** Crass, David  
**Subject:** Huston House Butler Plantation

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good Morning!

I am contacting you to get some information on the Huston House in Darien. My husband and I have met twice with Mark McDonald and Ben Sutton at The Georgia Trust and are beginning the process of gathering more information on the house. We think the Huston House is a treasure and we would like to see it restored. We have an interest in restoring the Huston House, possibly opening it up for historical tours/B&B/event space and would like to know if you have information on that process. We understand that the house is owned by the state/DNR and leased to the City of Darien. We also understand that as a state owned property there are lease restrictions. Mark made an initial inquiry with Mark Williams last month.

I'm not sure who to contact locally, but thought I would start here and begin the conversation.

I appreciate any information or advice you can provide.

Sincerely,  
Marion Savic



Re: Huston House Butler P... GORA files



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You replied on Fri 1/4/2019 2:45 PM

WT

West, Terry  
 Fri 1/4/2019 2:05 PM  
 To: Garrison, Rusty  
 Cc: Crass, David



Just the facts. It's HP designated property. DNR cannot sell any state owned real estate. We are only custodians. Legislature would have to remove HP designation and also approve state property commission to put it out for bids. Bids would require some aspects of historical preservation. We cannot lease house for non governmental or "for profit" purposes under current status. Whole process would take 2.5 to 3 years. If we start this session with a new administration coming in which is highly unlikely. We would like to transfer this property out of our purview.

I'd just call them rather than put some of this in writing. Answer is yes, we want to be shed of this, but the process is lengthy and arduous, and fraught with political hurdles. If we pursue this route and are successful, they could be a bidder on this property. I hope they are.

Might they be interested in a package deal including a barrier island fixer upper?  
 Or an operating lake front lodge facility in beautiful sw ga?

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 4, 2019, at 11:35 AM, Garrison, Rusty <Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov> wrote:

Terry,

Hope you are feeling better. How do you want me to respond to this one?

Rusty

---

**From:** Crass, David  
**Sent:** Friday, January 4, 2019 9:47 AM  
**To:** M SAVIC  
**Cc:** Garrison, Rusty; Whitney, Mark; Mark McDonald  
**Subject:** RE: Huston House Butler Plantation

Hello—I've copied our Wildlife Resources Division (WRD) Director Rusty Garrison on this. WRD manages this property.

---

**From:** M SAVIC [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, January 04, 2019 9:41 AM  
**To:** Crass, David  
**Subject:** Huston House Butler Plantation

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Re: Huston House Butler P...

GORA files

**From:** Garrison, Rusty  
**Sent:** Tue, 18 Jun 2019 20:48:31 +0000  
**To:** Friedman, Steve  
**Subject:** RE: Butler Island

As far as I know

---

**From:** Friedman, Steve <[Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 18, 2019 4:48 PM  
**To:** Garrison, Rusty <[Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Butler Island

Is the brewery idea still being considered

Steve Friedman  
Chief of Real Estate  
GA Dept of Natural Resources  
2 MLK Jr. Drive, S.E.  
Suite 1352 East  
Atlanta, GA 30334  
O - 404-656-9173  
C – 404-538-1215

---

**From:** Garrison, Rusty <[Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 18, 2019 4:47 PM  
**To:** Friedman, Steve <[Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Butler Island

Sorry for the confusion. We knew it was heritage and would have to go through the legal process to get it changed. My concern was/is opening the law to change it.

---

**From:** Friedman, Steve <[Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 18, 2019 4:45 PM  
**To:** Garrison, Rusty <[Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Butler Island

You asked me to check it the day I was out there, forgot to do it until now

Steve Friedman  
Chief of Real Estate  
GA Dept of Natural Resources  
2 MLK Jr. Drive, S.E.  
Suite 1352 East  
Atlanta, GA 30334  
O - 404-656-9173  
C – 404-538-1215

---

**From:** Garrison, Rusty <[Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 18, 2019 4:43 PM  
**To:** Friedman, Steve <[Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Butler Island

Yes, we already knew that...

---

**From:** Friedman, Steve <[Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 18, 2019 4:05 PM  
**To:** Garrison, Rusty <[Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** Butler Island

Is the Butler House part of the Butler Island property? If so Butler Island is Heritage Preserve designated.

Steve Friedman  
Chief of Real Estate  
GA Dept of Natural Resources  
2 MLK Jr. Drive, S.E.  
Suite 1352 East  
Atlanta, GA 30334  
O - 404-656-9173  
C - 404-538-1215

**From:** Pearson, Kyle  
**Sent:** Fri, 5 Jun 2020 16:53:51 +0000  
**To:** iannuzzi, Kate  
**Subject:** FW: 2020 DNR Legislation Submission  
**Attachments:** 2020 Agency Legislation DNR submission.docx

---

**From:** Pearson, Kyle  
**Sent:** Friday, February 14, 2020 7:39 AM  
**To:** Rabon, Walter <Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov>  
**Subject:** FW: 2020 DNR Legislation Submission

FYI sent to Steve from Wes in September.

---

**From:** Robinson, Wes <[wes.robinson@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:wes.robinson@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 19, 2019 12:03 PM  
**To:** Pearson, Kyle <[Kyle.Pearson@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Kyle.Pearson@dnr.ga.gov)>; Johnson, Melanie <[melanie.johnson@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:melanie.johnson@dnr.ga.gov)>;  
Friedman, Steve <[Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov)>; Barnard, Thomas <[Thomas.Barnard@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Thomas.Barnard@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Cc:** Carter, Amber <[amber.carter@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:amber.carter@dnr.ga.gov)>; Hall, Courtney <[courtney.hall@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:courtney.hall@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** 2020 DNR Legislation Submission

Hey Legal & Steve—

Can you please review the attached document? Steve want to make sure I got the HP process down correctly. Legal, mostly worried about the second piece and need your help (or Thomas's??) for some of the data to support our need for requesting this. Thanks and let me know if you need anything on this.

Wes

Wes Robinson  
Director of Public and Governmental Affairs  
**Georgia Department of Natural Resources**  
(404) 656-6546 | M: (404) 242-0116

---

**From:** Pearson, Kyle  
**Sent:** Wed, 15 Jan 2020 15:32:54 +0000  
**To:** Carter, Amber;Hildebrandt, Josh;Friedman, Steve  
**Cc:** Rabon, Walter;Gaston, Artica;Johnson, Melanie  
**Subject:** RE: Draft HP Talking Points  
**Attachments:** HP 15 acres .doc

Attached for review is a draft revision to Code Section 12-3-76 that I believe accomplishes the Department's intent of being able to convey a maximum total of 15 acres of any HP dedicated property to a county or local government or private entity without General Assembly/SPC approval. Kyle

---

**From:** Carter, Amber <[amber.carter@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:amber.carter@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 15, 2020 10:04 AM  
**To:** Pearson, Kyle <[Kyle.Pearson@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Kyle.Pearson@dnr.ga.gov)>; Hildebrandt, Josh <[josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov)>;  
Friedman, Steve <[Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Cc:** Rabon, Walter <[Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov)>; Gaston, Artica <[Artica.Gaston@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Artica.Gaston@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Draft HP Talking Points

Updated version

---

**From:** Carter, Amber  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 15, 2020 9:22 AM  
**To:** Pearson, Kyle <[Kyle.Pearson@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Kyle.Pearson@dnr.ga.gov)>; Hildebrandt, Josh <[josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov)>;  
Friedman, Steve <[Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Cc:** Rabon, Walter <[Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov)>; Gaston, Artica <[artica.gaston@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:artica.gaston@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** Draft HP Talking Points

Attached for your comments

Amber Carter  
Special Projects Manager  
**Georgia Department of Natural Resources**  
(404) 232-1474 | M: (404) 615-7169

---

## Mixon, David

---

**From:** Horan, Robert  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 6, 2020 2:56 PM  
**To:** Mixon, David  
**Subject:** Huston House project and Legislation

David,

We received a call today at the office from Mr. Ed Perry, regarding the project to convert the Huston House into the Butler Brewery. Mr. Perry wanted to know the status of the legislation that was going to be proposed in order to make this project achievable. He would like to know who was going to propose the bill and who he could contact to assist them. I did not have any answers for him but told him I'd ask. His number is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I am happy to call him back if you have any answers or information about this topic.

Thank you,

Robert V. Horan III  
Senior Wildlife Biologist  
Wildlife Resources Division  
O: (912) 262-3173  
M: (404) 985-6579

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**From:** Friedman, Steve  
**Sent:** Thu, 13 Feb 2020 18:34:01 +0000  
**To:** Hildebrandt, Josh;Carter, Amber  
**Subject:** Heritage Preserve Legislation

Is this HB 906? SPC sent me a text that they may have a problem with some of the language. I spoke to them about it yesterday and they wanted to know if this was a way to bypass going through them for these potential dispositions and I told them that was never our attempt. I asked them to read it over and if they have any issues to let us know, which they did about 15 minutes ago via text.

I responded asking them what we need to do to fix their concerns but have not heard back.

Steve Friedman  
Chief of Real Estate  
GA Dept of Natural Resources  
2 MLK Jr. Drive, S.E.  
Suite 1352 East  
Atlanta, GA 30334  
O - 404-656-9173  
C – 404-538-1215

**From:** Friedman, Steve  
**Sent:** Wed, 13 May 2020 12:43:16 +0000  
**To:** Hildebrandt, Josh  
**Subject:** RE: Reversing HB 906 and Saving Butler Island

Thanks.

Hope you are doing well.

Steve Friedman  
Chief of Real Estate  
GA Dept of Natural Resources  
2 MLK Jr. Drive, S.E.  
Suite 1352 East  
Atlanta, GA 30334  
O - 404-656-9173  
C - 404-538-1215

---

**From:** Hildebrandt, Josh <[josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 13, 2020 8:32 AM  
**To:** Friedman, Steve <[Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Reversing HB 906 and Saving Butler Island

Great response Steve!

JH

Josh Hildebrandt  
Director of Public and Governmental Affairs  
**Georgia Department of Natural Resources**  
(404) 656-6546 | M: (404) 313-3465  
-----

---

**From:** Friedman, Steve <[Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 13, 2020 8:28 AM  
**To:** Wong, Clark <[clark.wong@spc.ga.gov](mailto:clark.wong@spc.ga.gov)>  
**Cc:** Hildebrandt, Josh <[josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov)>; de Alba, Miguel <[miguel.dealba@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:miguel.dealba@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Reversing HB 906 and Saving Butler Island

Clark,

We own Butler Island, but under HB906, the island would not be sold. On Butler Island is a house we call the Butler House, HB906 would allow that house to be sold, but it would be sold with a conservation easement that would assure it would always be protected. If it was bought, the new owner could put money into the house to maintain it and assure it would remain in good condition. In addition, the

conservation easement would be written with the help of our HPD office to assure the historical values of the house were preserved in the terms of the conservation easement.

Let me know if you have any follow up questions.

Steve Friedman  
Chief of Real Estate  
GA Dept of Natural Resources  
2 MLK Jr. Drive, S.E.  
Suite 1352 East  
Atlanta, GA 30334  
O - 404-656-9173  
C - 404-538-1215

---

**From:** Wong, Clark <[clark.wong@spc.ga.gov](mailto:clark.wong@spc.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 13, 2020 8:04 AM  
**To:** Friedman, Steve <[Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Reversing HB 906 and Saving Butler Island  
**Importance:** High

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Steve,

See email below. Do you have an answer?

Thank you,



Clark Wong<sup>®</sup> | Land Manager  
Georgia State Properties Commission  
270 Washington Street, Suite 2-129 | Atlanta, Georgia 30334  
Office: 404-656-2360 | Cell: 404-901-5044 | Fax: 770-359-4025  
Email: [Clark.Wong@spc.ga.gov](mailto:Clark.Wong@spc.ga.gov)  
Website: <http://www.gspc.georgia.gov>

---

**From:** Smith, Frank  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 13, 2020 7:44 AM  
**To:** Wong, Clark <[clark.wong@spc.ga.gov](mailto:clark.wong@spc.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Reversing HB 906 and Saving Butler Island



**Frank Smith**  
*Deputy Executive Director*  
270 Washington Street, SW  
Suite 2-129  
Atlanta, Georgia 30334  
Office: (404) 656-5602  
Email: [frank.smith@spc.ga.gov](mailto:frank.smith@spc.ga.gov)

---

**From:** Greene, Gerald [<mailto:Gerald.Greene@house.ga.gov>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 13, 2020 6:15 AM  
**To:** Smith, Frank <[frank.smith@spc.ga.gov](mailto:frank.smith@spc.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Reversing HB 906 and Saving Butler Island

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Is this something the state has bought and wants to preserve??

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Anne Bailey <[REDACTED]>  
**Date:** May 12, 2020 at 10:25:46 PM EDT  
**To:** "[gerald.greene@house.ga.gov](mailto:gerald.greene@house.ga.gov)" <[gerald.greene@house.ga.gov](mailto:gerald.greene@house.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** Reversing HB 906 and Saving Butler Island

PO Box 262  
Vestal, NY  
13851  
May 12, 2020

Dear Rep. Greene,

I hope you are well. My name is Dr. Anne C. Bailey and I am a professor of History at Binghamton University – a flagship university in the New York State university system. I am also the author of the book, *The Weeping Time: Memory and the Largest Slave Auction in American History* which was published by Cambridge University Press in 2017. Since that time, the book has won several awards and has been covered in many media outlets including *The New York Times* on several occasions. In fact, it has been featured in the Pulitzer Prize winning *1619 Project* as seen here.

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/02/12/magazine/1619-project-slave-auction-sites.html> and

[https://pulitzercenter.org/sites/default/files/full\\_issue\\_of\\_the\\_1619\\_project.pdf](https://pulitzercenter.org/sites/default/files/full_issue_of_the_1619_project.pdf) (p. 98).

In recent years in part because of my work but also because of the work of others, *The Weeping Time* slave auction has taken on an iconic status. Many of us across the country, indeed across the world, have gathered to memorialize the 429 enslaved persons who

hailed from Butler Island and were sold in Savannah in 1859. We gather to tell the story of the auction, but we also have gathered to tell the story of African American resilience in the face of family separation and devastation. The story of these men, women and children did not end on the auction block. Instead, Gullah Geechee descendants are now public officials, educators, artists and the like.

It is for this reason that the **Coalition to Save Butler Island** strongly opposes HB906. As a coalition, we are asking you to reverse course and take action to preserve Butler Island. Several of us on this committee including myself are active in historical preservation and are willing, with the help of the state and outside donors, to take charge of this valuable property. We would like to preserve it for prosperity and believe that we are in a position to do so. I know that my university, through my research center, [The Harriet Tubman Binghamton University Center for Freedom and Equity](#), will back such an effort as will others around the country.

Though we are not as directly involved in the other properties on this list, the coalition is also concerned about historical and environmental preservation in Georgia in general and so our plea is that lawmakers such as yourself reverse course and join us in the effort to preserve these properties. We strongly believe that given the great interest in Butler Island and The Weeping Time over the last few years, there is great potential for heritage tourism and the economic windfall that will follow.

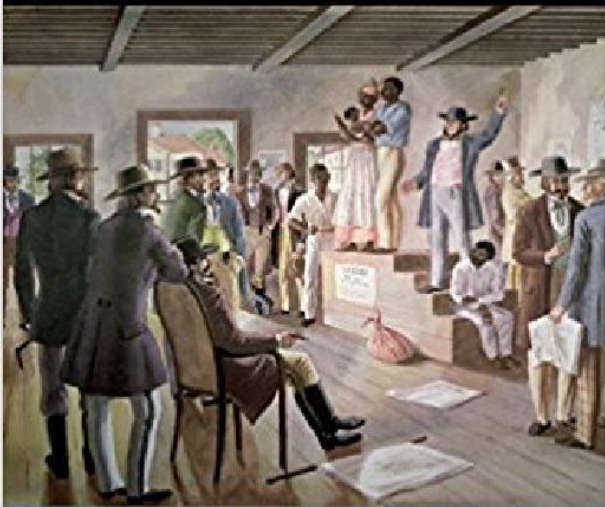
Again, as a coalition, we stand ready to work with you. We appreciate your consideration of our request. As such, I have also sent you a signed copy of my book in the mail. I hope we can look forward to an occasion when a revitalized Butler island is open for business – tourists, researchers and others who come in a spirit of healing and reconciliation of our history.

Sincerely,

Anne C. Bailey Ph.D.  
<https://www.annecbailey.net>

# The Weeping Time

MEMORY AND THE LARGEST SLAVE  
AUCTION IN AMERICAN HISTORY



ANNE C. BAILEY

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

**From:** Darlene Taylor  
**Sent:** Thu, 4 Jun 2020 17:48:55 +0000  
**To:** Hildebrandt, Josh  
**Subject:** RE: Fwd: HB 906

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Thanks just wanted to let you know

DT

Sent with BlackBerry Work  
(www.blackberry.com)

---

**From:** Hildebrandt, Josh <[josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Date:** Wednesday, Jun 03, 2020, 5:08 PM  
**To:** Darlene Taylor <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** RE: Fwd: HB 906

Madam Chair,

I've been seeing all this stuff start getting thrown around. The amount of misinformation is significant. People are thinking the bill does something completely different than what it actually does. I've begun to get emails and calls myself, and I am having conversations with different groups currently.

We are still in a good place on the senate side. Let me know if we can help you in any way.

Many Thanks,

Josh

Josh Hildebrandt  
Director of Public and Governmental Affairs  
**Georgia Department of Natural Resources**  
(404) 656-6546 | M: (404) 313-3465  
-----

---

**From:** Darlene Taylor <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 3, 2020 4:14 PM  
**To:** Hildebrandt, Josh <[josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Fwd: HB 906

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

More info concerning HB906  
All wrong info but may be swept up in racial issues  
Darlene

Sent with BlackBerry Work  
([www.blackberry.com](http://www.blackberry.com))

---

**From:** Michelle Kimbler <[REDACTED]>  
**Date:** Wednesday, Jun 03, 2020, 4:02 PM  
**To:** Taylor, Darlene <[REDACTED]> Darlene Taylor <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** Fwd: HB 906

The following was sent by Carol Biggs. Lapham Patterson House is actually mentioned in the article as being at risk. Carol's email is at the very lower edge of this string and is highlighted. See article below my name.

Best,  
M.

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Michelle Kimbler <[REDACTED]>  
**Date:** Wed, Jun 3, 2020 at 3:59 PM  
**Subject:** Re: HB 906  
**To:** Carol Biggs <[REDACTED]>

Hi Carol,  
Darlene has proposed legislation to protect LP that has been underway since the beginning of session. I will share this post with her as those who are also trying to save LP might be interested to see this property noted here. Thank you so much for bringing this to my attention.

Best,  
Michelle

**WE are RUNNING Out of TIME! GA STATE HOUSE BILL 906 must be defeated. WE need calls and emails to be sent to the Senate Committee on Natural Resources to VOTE NO on HB 906! Please SIGN OUR PETITION AND MAKE THESE CALLS!**

- The '*GA Coalition to Save the Butler Island Plantation House*', is trying to save one of the most important historic sites of enslavement in Georgia. The '*Huston House @ Butler Plantation*' is 15 acres of the land where Enslaved Africans of '*The Weeping Time*', the largest slave sale in



America was held on March 2-3, 1859 suffered during the Antebellum circa (1748-1864). This site is on the Georgia Trust's '*Places in Peril*'.

- **HB 906** is requesting The State of Georgia, the owners of this Plantation, to **STOP THE CONVEYANCE** of the **Butler Island Plantation . Georgia** and the Lampham-Patterson House in Thomasville to private individuals or entities. These developers plan to tear down the dairy barn and create a **BEER DISTILLERY on this historic site.**

WE are **NOT** fighting to save a slave plantation - we are fighting to save the land site that held over 900 Enslaved Africans on a rice plantation owned by two brothers - Pierce & John Butler in Darien, GA -McIntosh County. We need to **SAVE** this site for the creation of a State Historic site, a museum, park, a memorial site of consciousness - **NOT a BEER DISTILLERY.**

We want to preserve this historic site that carries narratives of slavery during during the Colonial, Civil War and Post-war periods on Butler Island Plantation.

This site is sacred to the Butler Island descendants. It is their linkages to their Ancestors sold '*away from one another*' in pouring rain in '*The Weeping Time*' and the African American journey from slavery to freedom in America.

**WHY defeat HB 906:** It is unlawful and violates public trust of elected officials and state agencies entrusted to preserve and protect this site and other sites that illustrate the character of our historic and natural resources in Georgia. There seems to have been **NO PUBLIC MEETINGS** about this **SALE** by the Dept. of Natural Resources to convey public lands to private individuals.

### **AN AMERICAN HOLOCAUST!**

The trauma that occurred on the Butler Island Plantation site is important on a statewide, national and international level. **It is no less important than the Jewish Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. or the Memorial and Museum Site of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camps in Poland!**

Historical artifacts are on this site: Ground penetrating radar and excavations of Slave remains buried there, including '*floating cemeteries*'.

**~Do WE the PEEPUL Want To Be Right...or RIGHTEOUS? Help Is Imperative! ~Patt Gunn, Savannah Gallery on Slavery & Healing**

**PLEASE HELP US 'KILL' THE BILL: HB 906**

**GA STATE SENATE WILL VOTE ON THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2020! PLEASE SIGN OUR PETITION TODAY! HB906 - VOTE: NO to HB 906! Call Senate Chairman Tyler Harper TODAY!**

*'Us lived in mud-daubed cabins, what had ol stack chimbilees made outta' sticks and mud. Our old homemade beds ain' had no slate or metal springs neither. De' cloth what dey give us had ticks of dem' from da' old hay mattresses and pillows out of what was so coarse dat' it*

*scratched us lil' chillun' most ta' death.'* - Ex-slave on a GA Plantation, Rachel Adams, Federal Writers Project, 1935

On Wed, Jun 3, 2020 at 3:50 PM Carol Biggs [REDACTED] wrote:

Michelle, friends on the coast have contacted me as the Lapham-Patterson would also be affected by this bill. What is Darlene's reasoning behind this sponsorship? Thanks.

[https://www.change.org/p/ga-state-senate-committee-chairtyler-harper-404-463-5263-help-us-get-a-no-vote-on-ga-state-house-bill-906-the-weeping-time-plantation-sale?recruiter=258457526&utm\\_campaign=signature\\_receipt&utm\\_medium=facebook&utm\\_source=share\\_petition](https://www.change.org/p/ga-state-senate-committee-chairtyler-harper-404-463-5263-help-us-get-a-no-vote-on-ga-state-house-bill-906-the-weeping-time-plantation-sale?recruiter=258457526&utm_campaign=signature_receipt&utm_medium=facebook&utm_source=share_petition)

---

This email has been scanned for spam and viruses by Proofpoint Essentials. Click [here](#) to report this email as spam.

**From:** Friedman, Steve  
**Sent:** Thu, 4 Jun 2020 13:48:29 +0000  
**To:** Josh Hildebrandt  
**Subject:** FW: Butler plantation

I get so frustrated over the misinformation out there. Sorry I didn't send this to anyone except folks within DNR.

Steve Friedman  
Chief of Real Estate  
GA Dept of Natural Resources  
2 MLK Jr. Drive, S.E.  
Suite 1352 East  
Atlanta, GA 30334  
O - 404-656-9173  
C - 404-538-1215

---

**From:** Friedman, Steve  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 4, 2020 9:47 AM  
**To:** Ambrose, Jon <Jon.Ambrose@dnr.ga.gov>; Lee, Jason <Jason.Lee@dnr.ga.gov>; Sargent, Bob <bob.sargent@dnr.ga.gov>; Morris-Zarneke, Kim <kim.morris-zarneke@dnr.ga.gov>; Albanese, Brett <Brett.Albanese@dnr.ga.gov>; Elliott, Matt <Matt.Elliott@dnr.ga.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Butler plantation

Ugh. Frustrating these rumors.

Any sale of a tract under this legislation would require a conservation easement be held by the Department that protects the cultural values of the property and structures. The CE would be developed with direct guidance from HPD.

These structures are falling apart and would be best protected in someone else's hands that could restore the buildings, live and work in them, and maintain them, again all under a very tight CE.

That is my two cents worth.

Steve Friedman  
Chief of Real Estate  
GA Dept of Natural Resources  
2 MLK Jr. Drive, S.E.  
Suite 1352 East  
Atlanta, GA 30334  
O - 404-656-9173  
C - 404-538-1215

---

**From:** Ambrose, Jon <[Jon.Ambrose@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Jon.Ambrose@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 4, 2020 9:27 AM

**To:** Lee, Jason <[Jason.Lee@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Jason.Lee@dnr.ga.gov)>; Sargent, Bob <[bob.sargent@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:bob.sargent@dnr.ga.gov)>; Morris-Zarneke, Kim <[kim.morris-zarneke@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:kim.morris-zarneke@dnr.ga.gov)>; Albanese, Brett <[Brett.Albanese@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Brett.Albanese@dnr.ga.gov)>; Elliott, Matt <[Matt.Elliott@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Matt.Elliott@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Cc:** Friedman, Steve <[Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** Fw: Butler plantation

FYI-

I was aware of previous attempts to expedite transfer of state property to counties and local governments, but HB 906 includes "private entities", which has obvious development implications. Nevertheless, I had not heard of anything along the lines of what is described in the Medium article. We have been instructed to forward questions and requests for comments to Josh Hildebrandt.

-Jon

Jonathan Ambrose, Ph.D.  
Chief, Wildlife Conservation

**Wildlife Resources Division**  
(706) 557-3301 | M: (404) 291-8196

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---

**From:** Garrison, Rusty <[Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 4, 2020 8:39 AM  
**To:** Ambrose, Jon <[Jon.Ambrose@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Jon.Ambrose@dnr.ga.gov)>; Creech, Lacey <[lacey.creech@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:lacey.creech@dnr.ga.gov)>; Isler, Alan <[Alan.Isler@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Alan.Isler@dnr.ga.gov)>; Spencer, Michael <[Michael.Spencer@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Michael.Spencer@dnr.ga.gov)>; Stowe, Carol <[Carol.Stowe@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Carol.Stowe@dnr.ga.gov)>; Litts, Thom <[Thom.Litts@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Thom.Litts@dnr.ga.gov)>; Will, Ted <[Ted.Will@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Ted.Will@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Cc:** Mixon, David <[David.Mixon@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:David.Mixon@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Butler plantation

FYI, all Butler Plantation questions and HB 906 need to be directed to Josh Hildebrandt.

Thanks,

Rusty

---

**From:** Hildebrandt, Josh <[josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 3, 2020 2:50 PM  
**To:** Garrison, Rusty <[Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov)>; Rabon, Walter <[Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Cc:** Cown, Jeff <[Jeff.Cown@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Jeff.Cown@dnr.ga.gov)>; Crass, David <[David.Crass@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:David.Crass@dnr.ga.gov)>; Haymans, Doug

<[Doug.Haymans@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Doug.Haymans@dnr.ga.gov)>; Barnard, Thomas <[Thomas.Barnard@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Thomas.Barnard@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Subject:** RE: Butler plantation

Hey Y'all,

Rusty, thank you for bringing this article to our attention. At this point, I would ask that all divisions direct all questions about HB906 (press and non-press) to me since this is actively moving through the legislative process. You, your PIOs, and full teams already have full slates to focus on. If you have any questions about this, please feel free to give me a call and we can chat. Thank y'all as always for your hard work for the department and the plethora of support y'all generously offer me on a regular basis.

JH

Josh Hildebrandt

Director of Public and Governmental Affairs

**Georgia Department of Natural Resources**

(404) 656-6546 | M: (404) 313-3465

---

**From:** Garrison, Rusty <[Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Sent:** Monday, June 1, 2020 1:19 PM

**To:** Rabon, Walter <[Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov)>; Hildebrandt, Josh <[josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Cc:** Cown, Jeff <[Jeff.Cown@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Jeff.Cown@dnr.ga.gov)>; Crass, David <[David.Crass@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:David.Crass@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Subject:** FW: Butler plantation

Hey Guys,

Have you seen this article? Do we need to draft some type of response for our folks in case they get calls or requests?

Rusty

---

**From:** Crass, David <[David.Crass@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:David.Crass@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Sent:** Monday, June 1, 2020 10:02 AM

**To:** Cown, Jeff <[Jeff.Cown@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Jeff.Cown@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Cc:** Garrison, Rusty <[Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Subject:** Fw: Butler plantation

FYI, see *Medium* article below.

<https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fmedium.com%2F%40saraheisner%2Fwe-have-two-weeks-to-save-the-state-of-georgia-from-decimating-sacred-weeping-time-land-for-a-7fd2398eda0a&data=02%7C01%7CDavid.Crass%40dnr.ga.gov%7Cd2973ff2c1754d4e2e8008d80631d2e2%7C512da10d071b4b948abc9ec4044d1516%7C0%7C0%7C637266158359801743&data=xaJLwz9eBq4JY5LB%2FUGuY12bmVPJAAtWsgvGj1nMMi98%3D&reserved=0>

## Ambrose, Jon

---

**From:** Elliott, Matt <Matt.Elliott@dnr.ga.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 4, 2020 10:24 AM  
**To:** Ambrose, Jon; Friedman, Steve; Lee, Jason; Sargent, Bob; Morris-Zarneke, Kim; Albanese, Brett  
**Subject:** RE: Butler plantation

Given that this house is likely to continue to flood with increasing regularity (and the front yard is regularly underwater at high tides that are barely above normal), is there any point at which the state or anyone else just gives up on trying to preserve it? I'm a little surprised that anyone would want it. I guess maybe they would use the house as some sort of drinking establishment and that any manufacturing would be done at a more secure location.

Matt Elliott  
Assistant Chief, Wildlife Conservation

**Wildlife Resources Division**  
(706) 557-3306 | M: (404)291-8156

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---

**From:** Ambrose, Jon <Jon.Ambrose@dnr.ga.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 4, 2020 10:14 AM  
**To:** Friedman, Steve <Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov>; Lee, Jason <Jason.Lee@dnr.ga.gov>; Sargent, Bob <bob.sargent@dnr.ga.gov>; Morris-Zarneke, Kim <kim.morris-zarneke@dnr.ga.gov>; Albanese, Brett <Brett.Albanese@dnr.ga.gov>; Elliott, Matt <Matt.Elliott@dnr.ga.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Butler plantation

And my two-cents worth is that these same goals could be achieved through a renewable lease. That would allow the State to maintain ultimate control and ownership, which is what was intended when these properties were originally acquired.

As you know, a conservation easement can be very protective or not at all. It all depends on the terms and the enforcement.

-Jon

Jonathan Ambrose, Ph.D.  
Chief, Wildlife Conservation

**Wildlife Resources Division**  
(706) 557-3301 | M: (404) 291-8196

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*A division of the*  
GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

---

**From:** Friedman, Steve <[Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Sent:** Thursday, June 4, 2020 9:47 AM

**To:** Ambrose, Jon <[Jon.Ambrose@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Jon.Ambrose@dnr.ga.gov)>; Lee, Jason <[Jason.Lee@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Jason.Lee@dnr.ga.gov)>; Sargent, Bob <[bob.sargent@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:bob.sargent@dnr.ga.gov)>; Morris-Zarneke, Kim <[kim.morris-zarneke@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:kim.morris-zarneke@dnr.ga.gov)>; Albanese, Brett <[Brett.Albanese@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Brett.Albanese@dnr.ga.gov)>; Elliott, Matt <[Matt.Elliott@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Matt.Elliott@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Subject:** RE: Butler plantation

Ugh. Frustrating these rumors.

Any sale of a tract under this legislation would require a conservation easement be held by the Department that protects the cultural values of the property and structures. The CE would be developed with direct guidance from HPD.

These structures are falling apart and would be best protected in someone else's hands that could restore the buildings, live and work in them, and maintain them, again all under a very tight CE.

That is my two cents worth.

Steve Friedman  
Chief of Real Estate  
GA Dept of Natural Resources  
2 MLK Jr. Drive, S.E.  
Suite 1352 East  
Atlanta, GA 30334  
O - 404-656-9173  
C - 404-538-1215

---

**From:** Ambrose, Jon <[Jon.Ambrose@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Jon.Ambrose@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Sent:** Thursday, June 4, 2020 9:27 AM

**To:** Lee, Jason <[Jason.Lee@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Jason.Lee@dnr.ga.gov)>; Sargent, Bob <[bob.sargent@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:bob.sargent@dnr.ga.gov)>; Morris-Zarneke, Kim <[kim.morris-zarneke@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:kim.morris-zarneke@dnr.ga.gov)>; Albanese, Brett <[Brett.Albanese@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Brett.Albanese@dnr.ga.gov)>; Elliott, Matt <[Matt.Elliott@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Matt.Elliott@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Cc:** Friedman, Steve <[Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Subject:** Fw: Butler plantation

FYI-

I was aware of previous attempts to expedite transfer of state property to counties and local governments, but HB 906 includes "private entities", which has obvious development implications. Nevertheless, I had not heard of anything along the lines of what is described in the Medium article. We have been instructed to forward questions and requests for comments to Josh Hildebrandt.

-Jon

Jonathan Ambrose, Ph.D.  
Chief, Wildlife Conservation

**Wildlife Resources Division**  
(706) 557-3301 | M: (404) 291-8196

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[Check out our Biodiversity Data Portal!](#)

---

Rusty

---

**From:** Crass, David <[David.Crass@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:David.Crass@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 1, 2020 10:02 AM  
**To:** Cown, Jeff <[Jeff.Cown@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Jeff.Cown@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Cc:** Garrison, Rusty <[Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** Fw: Butler plantation

FYI, see *Medium* article below.

<https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fmedium.com%2F%40saraheisner%2Fwe-have-two-weeks-to-save-the-state-of-georgia-from-decimating-sacred-weeping-time-land-for-a-7fd2398eda0a&data=02%7C01%7CDavid.Crass%40dnr.ga.gov%7Cd2973ff2c1754d4e2e8008d80631d2e2%7C512da10d071b4b948abc9ec4044d1516%7C0%7C0%7C637266158359801743&data=xaJLwz9eBq4JY5LB%2FUGuY12bmV PJAtWsgvGj1nMMi98%3D&reserved=0>



**From:** Pearson, Kyle  
**Sent:** Fri, 5 Jun 2020 18:03:46 +0000  
**To:** iannuzzi, Kate  
**Subject:** FW: Draft HP Talking Points

---

**From:** Pearson, Kyle  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 15, 2020 12:00 PM  
**To:** Friedman, Steve <[Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov)>; Carter, Amber <[amber.carter@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:amber.carter@dnr.ga.gov)>; Hildebrandt, Josh <[josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Cc:** Rabon, Walter <[Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov)>; Gaston, Artica <[artica.gaston@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:artica.gaston@dnr.ga.gov)>; Johnson, Melanie <[melanie.johnson@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:melanie.johnson@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Draft HP Talking Points

Convey just means transfer title. We can sell or exchange as long as the board finds it is good and valuable consideration.

---

**From:** Friedman, Steve <[Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 15, 2020 11:37 AM  
**To:** Pearson, Kyle <[Kyle.Pearson@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Kyle.Pearson@dnr.ga.gov)>; Carter, Amber <[amber.carter@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:amber.carter@dnr.ga.gov)>; Hildebrandt, Josh <[josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Cc:** Rabon, Walter <[Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov)>; Gaston, Artica <[Artica.Gaston@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Artica.Gaston@dnr.ga.gov)>; Johnson, Melanie <[melanie.johnson@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:melanie.johnson@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Draft HP Talking Points

Kyle,

Convey means we can sell it, but does it also mean we could do an exchange?

If not, can we add convey or exchange.

That is the only comment I have.

Steve Friedman  
Chief of Real Estate  
GA Dept of Natural Resources  
2 MLK Jr. Drive, S.E.  
Suite 1352 East  
Atlanta, GA 30334  
O - 404-656-9173  
C - 404-538-1215

---

**From:** Pearson, Kyle <[Kyle.Pearson@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Kyle.Pearson@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 15, 2020 10:33 AM  
**To:** Carter, Amber <[amber.carter@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:amber.carter@dnr.ga.gov)>; Hildebrandt, Josh <[josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov)>;

Friedman, Steve <[Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Cc:** Rabon, Walter <[Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov)>; Gaston, Artica <[Artica.Gaston@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Artica.Gaston@dnr.ga.gov)>; Johnson, Melanie <[melanie.johnson@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:melanie.johnson@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Subject:** RE: Draft HP Talking Points

Attached for review is a draft revision to Code Section 12-3-76 that I believe accomplishes the Department's intent of being able to convey a maximum total of 15 acres of any HP dedicated property to a county or local government or private entity without General Assembly/SPC approval. Kyle

---

**From:** Carter, Amber <[amber.carter@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:amber.carter@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, January 15, 2020 10:04 AM

**To:** Pearson, Kyle <[Kyle.Pearson@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Kyle.Pearson@dnr.ga.gov)>; Hildebrandt, Josh <[josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov)>;

Friedman, Steve <[Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Cc:** Rabon, Walter <[Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov)>; Gaston, Artica <[Artica.Gaston@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Artica.Gaston@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Subject:** RE: Draft HP Talking Points

Updated version

---

**From:** Carter, Amber

**Sent:** Wednesday, January 15, 2020 9:22 AM

**To:** Pearson, Kyle <[Kyle.Pearson@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Kyle.Pearson@dnr.ga.gov)>; Hildebrandt, Josh <[josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov)>;

Friedman, Steve <[Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Steve.Friedman@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Cc:** Rabon, Walter <[Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov)>; Gaston, Artica <[artica.gaston@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:artica.gaston@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Subject:** Draft HP Talking Points

Attached for your comments

Amber Carter

Special Projects Manager

**Georgia Department of Natural Resources**

(404) 232-1474 | M: (404) 615-7169

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**From:** Garrison, Rusty <[Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 4, 2020 8:39 AM  
**To:** Ambrose, Jon <[Jon.Ambrose@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Jon.Ambrose@dnr.ga.gov)>; Creech, Lacey <[lacey.creech@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:lacey.creech@dnr.ga.gov)>; Isler, Alan <[Alan.Isler@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Alan.Isler@dnr.ga.gov)>; Spencer, Michael <[Michael.Spencer@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Michael.Spencer@dnr.ga.gov)>; Stowe, Carol <[Carol.Stowe@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Carol.Stowe@dnr.ga.gov)>; Litts, Thom <[Thom.Litts@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Thom.Litts@dnr.ga.gov)>; Will, Ted <[Ted.Will@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Ted.Will@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Cc:** Mixon, David <[David.Mixon@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:David.Mixon@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Butler plantation

FYI, all Butler Plantation questions and HB 906 need to be directed to Josh Hildebrandt.

Thanks,

Rusty

---

**From:** Hildebrandt, Josh <[josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 3, 2020 2:50 PM  
**To:** Garrison, Rusty <[Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov)>; Rabon, Walter <[Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Cc:** Cown, Jeff <[Jeff.Cown@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Jeff.Cown@dnr.ga.gov)>; Crass, David <[David.Crass@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:David.Crass@dnr.ga.gov)>; Haymans, Doug <[Doug.Haymans@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Doug.Haymans@dnr.ga.gov)>; Barnard, Thomas <[Thomas.Barnard@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Thomas.Barnard@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Butler plantation

Hey Y'all,

Rusty, thank you for bringing this article to our attention. At this point, I would ask that all divisions direct all questions about HB906 (press and non-press) to me since this is actively moving through the legislative process. You, your PIOs, and full teams already have full slates to focus on. If you have any questions about this, please feel free to give me a call and we can chat. Thank y'all as always for your hard work for the department and the plethora of support y'all generously offer me on a regular basis.

JH

Josh Hildebrandt  
Director of Public and Governmental Affairs  
**Georgia Department of Natural Resources**  
(404) 656-6546 | M: (404) 313-3465

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**From:** Garrison, Rusty <[Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 1, 2020 1:19 PM  
**To:** Rabon, Walter <[Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov)>; Hildebrandt, Josh <[josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Cc:** Cown, Jeff <[Jeff.Cown@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Jeff.Cown@dnr.ga.gov)>; Crass, David <[David.Crass@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:David.Crass@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Butler plantation

Hey Guys,

Have you seen this article? Do we need to draft some type of response for our folks in case they get calls or requests?

**From:** Barnette, Cathy  
**Sent:** Mon, 8 Jun 2020 15:20:08 +0000  
**To:** iannuzzi, Kate  
**Subject:** HB 906

**From:** zelda tenenbaum <[zbtenenbaum@gmail.com](mailto:zbtenenbaum@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 12:57 PM  
**To:** Williams, Mark <[Mark.Williams@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Mark.Williams@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** HB 906

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mark:

As a former chair of the Board of the Ossabaw Island Foundation, I am very concerned about the change to Georgia's Heritage Preserve protections being proposed in House Bill 906.

We do understand that the intent of this legislation is to provide a protected way to confer two state-owned historic properties out of state ownership. (Butler Island Plantation House in Darien and Lapham Patterson House in Thomasville). **We ask that HB 906 be modified to specifically address the needs of those two properties instead of applying to all Heritage Preserve-designated property in Georgia, including Ossabaw Island (located in Chatham County in House District 166.)**

As a former President of Historic Savannah Foundation, I am sympathetic to those communities' concerns, and I believe in saving Historic homes. My concern is that this bill seems to be trying to do something specific using language that's way too broad and vague. In an effort to do something worthy, this could potentially harm all Heritage Preserves across the state.

The streamlining of the Heritage Preserve removal process for land, and the addition of the term "private entity" as an option to convey a 15 acre parcel of Heritage Preserve land weakens what is thought to be the highest level of land protection afforded by the State of Georgia.

Both the Butler Island house and the Thomasville house are small properties (less than two acres each.) That is not the "typical" Heritage Preserve in Georgia. Ossabaw Island is 26,000 acres; Snake Creek Heritage Preserve in

Carroll County is 805 acres. Little Tybee Natural Heritage Preserve is 6500 acres.

This bill could turn into a way to sell sections of heritage preserves to developers. Adding conservation easements to the properties doesn't prevent all development.

Even though the bill limits these sales to lands of 15 acres or less, we are concerned that there is no limit to how frequently these 15 acre parcels can be sold. If someone wanted to acquire 90 acres of Ossabaw's North End, could they, through this process, purchase 15 acres at a time at each quarterly meeting of the DNR board, over 18 months?

This bill also proposes that the properties could be sold to a "private entity," defined as "any natural person, corporation, general partnership, limited liability company, limited partnership, joint venture, business trust, public benefit corporation, nonprofit entity, or other business entity." The expansion of this ownership suggests that private development, not public access over generations, is motivating this proposal. The families who have offered these Heritage Preserve lands to the state of Georgia did so because they wanted to assure that the public would always benefit and use these lands. The State of Georgia needs to protect the promises made when they acquired the lands to protect them under the Heritage Preserve . The families that donated the land were and are generous and public-minded citizens. Elenor Torrey West ( Sandy) Of Ossabaw Island is still alive and at 106 years old, probably because she spent her life protecting Ossabaw Island from development!

House Bill 906 is a way of repealing this highest level of land protection 15 acres at a time.

Please revise this Bill so that it only applies to Butler Island Plantation House, and Lapham Patterson House.

Thank you for your service to our state and for your consideration of this request ,

Zelda

zelda tenenbaum  


**From:** Barnette, Cathy  
**Sent:** Mon, 8 Jun 2020 15:18:51 +0000  
**To:** iannuzzi, Kate  
**Subject:** Response to Opposition on HB 906 (Heritage Preserve Bill)

**From:** Hildebrandt, Josh <[josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 3, 2020 2:17 PM  
**To:** Williams, Mark <[Mark.Williams@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Mark.Williams@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Cc:** Rabon, Walter <[Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Response to Opposition on HB 906 (Heritage Preserve Bill)

Commissioner,

Here is the revised explanation for HB906 for Senator Harper and others. See if it is more to your liking. I feel like it is closer to your request and 2/3 shorter than the first response draft.

#### **RESPONSE**

There are several unusable and irreparable properties and facilities in Georgia on Heritage Preserve designated areas that are of no operational use and would require substantial resources to maintain or redevelop that the department does not have. Some of these properties are of interest to other parties (such as local governments, non-profits, private buyers, etc.). HB906 would allow up to 15 acres to have Heritage Preserve removed, at which point the property could then be conveyed to an external private or public partner in exchange for other land or outright purchase while ensuring the location is still preserved through a required perpetual conservation easement on it that would protect all the historical aspects of the property. Georgia DNR is confident that there the necessary protections and opportunities for robust public involvement are in place in HB906, while still providing greater flexibility for interested parties to get involved with the saving of properties that are currently deteriorating to a point where they might be perpetually unusable and irreparable. HB906 will save historic places and properties in Georgia for generations to come.

Many Thanks,

JH

Josh Hildebrandt  
Director of Public and Governmental Affairs  
**Georgia Department of Natural Resources**  
(404) 656-6546 | M: (404) 313-3465  
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---

**From:** Hildebrandt, Josh  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 2, 2020 5:34 PM  
**To:** Williams, Mark <[Mark.Williams@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Mark.Williams@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Cc:** Rabon, Walter <[Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** Response to Opposition on HB 906 (Heritage Preserve Bill)

Commissioner,

Here is a comprehensive response that you can share with Chairman Harper and any other interested officials who are getting concerns about the protections around HB906. Let me know if you have any questions.

**RESPONSE**

Georgia DNR has no agreements with anyone to operate a brewery on Butler Island in Darien, GA. Now as part of the Heritage Preserve legislation before the General Assembly, part of the Butler Island property could be conveyed one day down the road. However, the property to be conveyed would come with a required perpetual conservation easement on it that would protect all the historical aspects of the property. The State Properties Commission would oversee such a sale and DNR would develop the conservation easement.

With all this in mind, and long before a property could be conveyed, the bill would require a lengthy and complicated process to remove the heritage preserve restrictions and to then convey the property. An interested party would have to submit an application to the Board of Natural Resources for consideration at the committee level and full board level. Should the Board vote to accept the application, the State Properties Commission would then get involved with the interested party to determine a reasonable return to the state for the conveyance. Should the party and State Properties Commission come to an agreement, the conveyance is then placed before the state's general assembly for final approval at multiple committee levels in the House, floor level in the House, multiple committee levels in the Senate, and the floor level in the Senate. Even after the conveyance bill crosses all these hurdles with the one conveyance in question still included, the bill still has to be signed by the Governor in order for it to be finalized.

Should HB906 pass and become law, there are a multitude of opportunities for public comment and buy-in during a very lengthy and complicated process for a party who wishes to be conveyed a piece of property with the Heritage Preserve restriction. Georgia DNR is confident that there are necessary protections in place in HB906, while still providing greater opportunity for interested parties to get involved with the saving of properties that are currently moving to be unusable and irreparable and are of no operational use to the state and would require substantial resources to maintain or redevelop. HB906 will save historic properties in Georgia.

Many Thanks,

JH

Josh Hildebrandt  
Director of Public and Governmental Affairs  
**Georgia Department of Natural Resources**  
(404) 656-6546 | M: (404) 313-3465

---

**From:** Barnette, Cathy  
**Sent:** Mon, 8 Jun 2020 15:18:14 +0000  
**To:** iannuzzi, Kate  
**Subject:** Reversing HB 960 and Saving Butler Island

**From:** Hildebrandt, Josh <[josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 13, 2020 4:11 PM  
**To:** Williams, Mark <[Mark.Williams@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Mark.Williams@dnr.ga.gov)>; Rabon, Walter <[Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Reversing HB 960 and Saving Butler Island

Commissioner and Walter,

Similar to the email I sent over to y'all from Rep. Greene, I got this email today from Rep. Darlene Taylor. As you can see by her response, she is still committed to the bill and eager to get it passed. I just wanted y'all to be aware.

In the email, you can see she asks if we are still in favor of it passing. Can I share with her that we would like for it to move forward?

Thanks,

JH

Josh Hildebrandt  
Director of Public and Governmental Affairs  
[Georgia Department of Natural Resources](http://www.dnr.ga.gov)  
(404) 656-6546 | M: (404) 313-3465

---

---

**From:** Taylor, Darlene <[Darlene.Taylor@house.ga.gov](mailto:Darlene.Taylor@house.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 13, 2020 11:59 AM  
**To:** Hildebrandt, Josh <[josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Cc:** Michelle Kimbler <[gahouseseat173@gmail.com](mailto:gahouseseat173@gmail.com)>; Darlene <[darlene@rose.net](mailto:darlene@rose.net)>  
**Subject:** FW: Reversing HB 960 and Saving Butler Island

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Josh  
I received the email below.  
It concerns HB906 The Heritage Preserve Bill  
I have advised House Leadership that this bill is still out there and in the Senate.  
And that I would like to have it passed out of the Senate.  
Please let me know if that is still your wish.

Also, please respond to this person on how the bill affects Butler Island.



Thank you

Darlene Taylor  
District 173

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

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**From:** [Anne Bailey](#)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 12, 2020 10:16 PM  
**To:** [Taylor, Darlene](#)  
**Subject:** Reversing HB 960 and Saving Butler Island

PO Box 262  
Vestal, NY  
13851  
May 12, 2020

Dear Rep. Tyler,

I hope you are well. My name is Dr. Anne C. Bailey and I am a professor of History at Binghamton University – a flagship university in the New York State university system. I am also the author of the book, *The Weeping Time: Memory and the Largest Slave Auction in American History* which was published by Cambridge University Press in 2017. Since that time, the book has won several awards and has been covered in many media outlets including *The New York Times* on several occasions. In fact, it has been featured in the Pulitzer Prize winning *1619 Project* as seen here. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/02/12/magazine/1619-project-slave-auction-sites.html> and [https://pulitzercenter.org/sites/default/files/full\\_issue\\_of\\_the\\_1619\\_project.pdf](https://pulitzercenter.org/sites/default/files/full_issue_of_the_1619_project.pdf) (p. 98).

In recent years in part because of my work but also because of the work of others, The Weeping time slave auction has taken on an iconic status. Many of us across the country, indeed across the world, have gathered to memorialize the 429 enslaved persons who hailed from Butler Island and were sold in Savannah in 1859. We gather to tell the story of the auction, but we also have gathered to tell the story of African American resilience in the face of family separation and devastation. The story of these men, women and children did not end on the auction block. Instead, Gullah Geechee descendants are now public officials, educators, artists and the like.

It is for this reason that the **Coalition to Save Butler Island** strongly opposes HB906. As a coalition, we are asking you to reverse course and take action to preserve Butler Island. Several of us on this committee including myself are active in historical preservation and are willing, with the help of the state and outside donors, to take charge of this valuable property. We would like to preserve it for prosperity and believe that we are in a position to do so. I know that my university, through my research center, [The Harriet Tubman Binghamton University Center for Freedom and Equity](#), will back such an effort as will others around the country.

Though we are not as directly involved in the other properties on this list, the coalition is also concerned about historical and environmental preservation in Georgia in general and so our plea is that lawmakers such as yourself reverse course and join us in the effort to preserve these properties. We strongly

believe that given the great interest in Butler Island and The Weeping Time over the last few years, there is great potential for heritage tourism and the economic windfall that will follow.

Again, as a coalition, we stand ready to work with you. We appreciate your consideration of our request. As such, I have also sent you a signed copy of my book in the mail. I hope we can look forward to an occasion when a revitalized Butler island is open for business – tourists, researchers and others who come in a spirit of healing and reconciliation of our history.

Sincerely,

Anne C. Bailey Ph.D.

<https://www.annebailey.net>

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

**From:** Barnette, Cathy  
**Sent:** Mon, 8 Jun 2020 15:27:45 +0000  
**To:** iannuzzi, Kate  
**Subject:** Meeting Request Re: Butler House

**From:** Williams, Mark  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 30, 2019 8:47 AM  
**To:** Barnette, Cathy <[Cathy.Barnette@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Cathy.Barnette@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: Meeting Request Re: Butler House

Yes

Sent from my iPhone

On May 30, 2019, at 7:40 AM, Barnette, Cathy <[Cathy.Barnette@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Cathy.Barnette@dnr.ga.gov)> wrote:

Can you still meet with Senator Ligon tomorrow at CRD HQ? See below.

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**From:** Vargas, Aviel <[Aviel.Vargas@senate.ga.gov](mailto:Aviel.Vargas@senate.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 29, 2019 3:37 PM  
**To:** Barnette, Cathy  
**Subject:** RE: Meeting Request Re: Butler House

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi there Cathy—I apologize for the delay. I have heard back from our group, is the Commissioner still available to meet on May 31<sup>st</sup>? If so, any time that day is available for everyone on our end so you all are able to decide what would be best for him.

*Aviel Vargas*

[Aviel.Vargas@senate.ga.gov](mailto:Aviel.Vargas@senate.ga.gov)  
Sen. Unterman: 404-463-1368  
Sen. Ligon: 404-463-1383

---

**From:** Barnette, Cathy <[Cathy.Barnette@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Cathy.Barnette@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 23, 2019 2:16 PM  
**To:** Vargas, Aviel <[Aviel.Vargas@senate.ga.gov](mailto:Aviel.Vargas@senate.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Meeting Request Re: Butler House

Hello Aviel:

Commissioner Williams is available to meet at the Brunswick office on the following dates. Let me know which date works best for your group:

Friday, May 31  
Friday, June 21 (after lunch)  
Friday, July 12

Thank you.

Kind regards,  
Cathy

---

**From:** Vargas, Aviel <[Aviel.Vargas@senate.ga.gov](mailto:Aviel.Vargas@senate.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 21, 2019 10:33 AM  
**To:** Barnette, Cathy <[Cathy.Barnette@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Cathy.Barnette@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** Meeting Request Re: Butler House

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Good morning Cathy,

Senator Ligon asked that I reach out in regards to a meeting request with Commissioner Williams. The city manager of Darien, Tim Sweezey, and a few other council members are wanting to discuss the Butler House in the coastal area in regards to a proposal they have in mind. Would you be able to pass along 2-3 available dates and times on the Commissioner's schedule so that I may share them with the council members and Senator Ligon? We would like to schedule the meeting at the DNR office either in Brunswick or Darien so I understand if you need to look at a few dates further out. If you happen to have any questions in the meantime, please let me know!

Sincerely,  
Aviel

*Aviel Vargas*

**Aviel Vargas** | Legislative Assistant  
Sen. Renee Unterman/Chairman, Science and Technology  
Sen. William Ligon/Chairman, Banking and Financial Institutions  
**Georgia State Senate** | 206 Washington Street, Suite 121 | Atlanta, GA 30334  
Sen. Unterman: 404-463-1368  
Sen. Ligon: 404-463-1383  
[aviel.vargas@senate.ga.gov](mailto:aviel.vargas@senate.ga.gov) | [www.georgia.gov](http://www.georgia.gov)

<image001.png>

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*you.*

**From:** Barnette, Cathy  
**Sent:** Tue, 9 Jun 2020 17:01:51 +0000  
**To:** iannuzzi, Kate  
**Subject:** Fwd: Col Huston House

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**From:** Williams, Mark <Mark.Williams@dnr.ga.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 9, 2020 12:28 PM  
**To:** Barnette, Cathy  
**Subject:** FW: Col Huston House

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**From:** Williams, Mark  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 21, 2019 9:14 PM  
**To:** West, Terry <Terry.West@dnr.ga.gov>  
**Cc:** Robinson, Wes <wes.robinson@dnr.ga.gov>; Rabon, Walter <Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Col Huston House

Thank you

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 21, 2019, at 4:48 PM, West, Terry <[Terry.West@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Terry.West@dnr.ga.gov)> wrote:

I called Mr. Thompson and explained we were supportive of seeing this facility converted into an economic asset for the area and also better preserved. Also explained heritage preserve designation and the need for state legislation to allow such transfer. Hope we can get this on the legislative list for next session.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Thompson, Hart" <[Hart.Thompson@mail.house.gov](mailto:Hart.Thompson@mail.house.gov)>  
**Date:** March 21, 2019 at 1:59:26 PM EDT  
**To:** "'[terry.west@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:terry.west@dnr.ga.gov)'" <[terry.west@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:terry.west@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** Col Huston House

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Hey Terry,

Hope all is well with you! Emmitt Nolan in our Brunswick office gave me your information for a quick question if you have a moment. I understand that there is a new project in the works for a distillery at the Col Huston House on Butler Island, but that the house needs to be transferred from Georgia DNR for the distillery to come to fruition. Mr. Carter was thinking about writing a support letter for the new business, but wanted to run it by you before we did so in order to make sure that you all were also supportive of the arrangement.

Any help would be greatly appreciated! Thank you!

**Hart Thompson**

*Legislative Assistant*

2432 Rayburn HOB | 202-225-5831

<image001.png>

[<image002.png>](#)

[<image003.png>](#) [<image004.png>](#) [<image005.png>](#) [<image006.png>](#)

**From:** Barnette, Cathy  
**Sent:** Tue, 9 Jun 2020 17:01:14 +0000  
**To:** iannuzzi, Kate  
**Subject:** Fwd: Butler House

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**From:** Williams, Mark <Mark.Williams@dnr.ga.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 9, 2020 12:33 PM  
**To:** Barnette, Cathy  
**Subject:** FW: Butler House

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**From:** Williams, Mark  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 8, 2020 4:02 PM  
**To:** Garrison, Rusty <Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Butler House

10-4 She needs to get with the investor , as I remember there is a big museum component to his plan in the house. Gullah etc....

Mark

---

**From:** Garrison, Rusty <[Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Rusty.Garrison@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 8, 2020 3:11 PM  
**To:** Hildebrandt, Josh <[josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:josh.hildebrandt@dnr.ga.gov)>; Williams, Mark <[Mark.Williams@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Mark.Williams@dnr.ga.gov)>; Rabon, Walter <[Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Walter.Rabon@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Cc:** Will, Ted <[Ted.Will@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Ted.Will@dnr.ga.gov)>; Lane, Walter <[Walter.Lane@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Walter.Lane@dnr.ga.gov)>; Mixon, David <[David.Mixon@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:David.Mixon@dnr.ga.gov)>  
**Subject:** Butler House

Commissioner,

Just a heads up that Tiffany Young just called David Mixon upset about the potential for a micro-brewery going in at the Butler house. She has ancestors associated with the land, the Butler Island Plantation. The house has nothing to do with the time period in which she is interested. She does have a lot of interest in the house and in the past has wanted to put a museum in the house and use it as a location for her to conduct interpretive tours. She spent 25 minutes on the phone with David, her doing all the talking. David is not sure who sent it to her but she indicated she had the proposal.

Just wanted you aware because she will likely call your office.

Thanks,

Rusty

**Rusty Garrison**

Director

**Wildlife Resources Division**

(770) 918-6401 | M: (404) 276-1402

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