

Land Exchange

On the Chattahoochee and Oconee National Forests



U.S. Department of Agriculture
Forest Service
Southern Region

The Forest Service is working on a proposal for a multi-party land exchange that will involve land in Rabun, White, Putnam, Murray, and Jasper Counties. Parties in this proposed exchange include the Rabun County Board of Commissioners, the Rabun County Board of Education, private citizen Mr. Larry Cooper and the U.S. Forest Service.

The land exchange process is an invaluable tool for the US Forest Service to address land and resource management needs. Within this particular proposal, the United States of America would convey approximately 323 acres of land to the exchange proponents and would receive approximately 759 acres of land as part of the Chattahoochee and Oconee National Forests. Land exchanges are considered on the appraised value of the tracts and rarely result in an acre for acre exchange. Within Rabun County, one tract that is proposed to be exchanged is a national forest tract which lies adjacent to the Rabun County landfill.

Conveying this tract to the County would allow the County to resolve issues with the Georgia Environmental Protection Division over current leakage from the landfill and would allow for better monitoring of the site thus saving local taxpayers in potential expense. Two tracts to be conveyed out of government ownership are located close to the Rabun County High School and Middle School complex and would allow the Rabun County Board of Education to provide for long-term school system expansion.

The remaining tracts within Rabun County to be divested from National Forest ownership are three very small tracts which, due primarily to size and location, are inefficient to manage by the US Forest Service. These three tracts were significantly impacted by the recent widening of US 441.

The Forest Service in exchange would receive lands to provide an administrative site for the Conasauga Ranger District and the Chattooga River Ranger District. A tract near Yonah Mountain in White County would allow the Forest Service to protect scenic values and acquire a key inholding. Another tract to be acquired for National Forest ownership is the Cliff Creek tract which lies within the Chattooga River watershed.

- The Forest Service is conducting public involvement meetings for this project.
- More property boundary and archaeological surveys and other work is underway.
- The projected completion for this exchange is expected in Spring 2009.
- A location map of tracts involved in this exchange can be found on the U.S. Forest Service website: www.fs.fed.us/conf/.

For additional information, call Terry Stolz at (770) 297-3090.

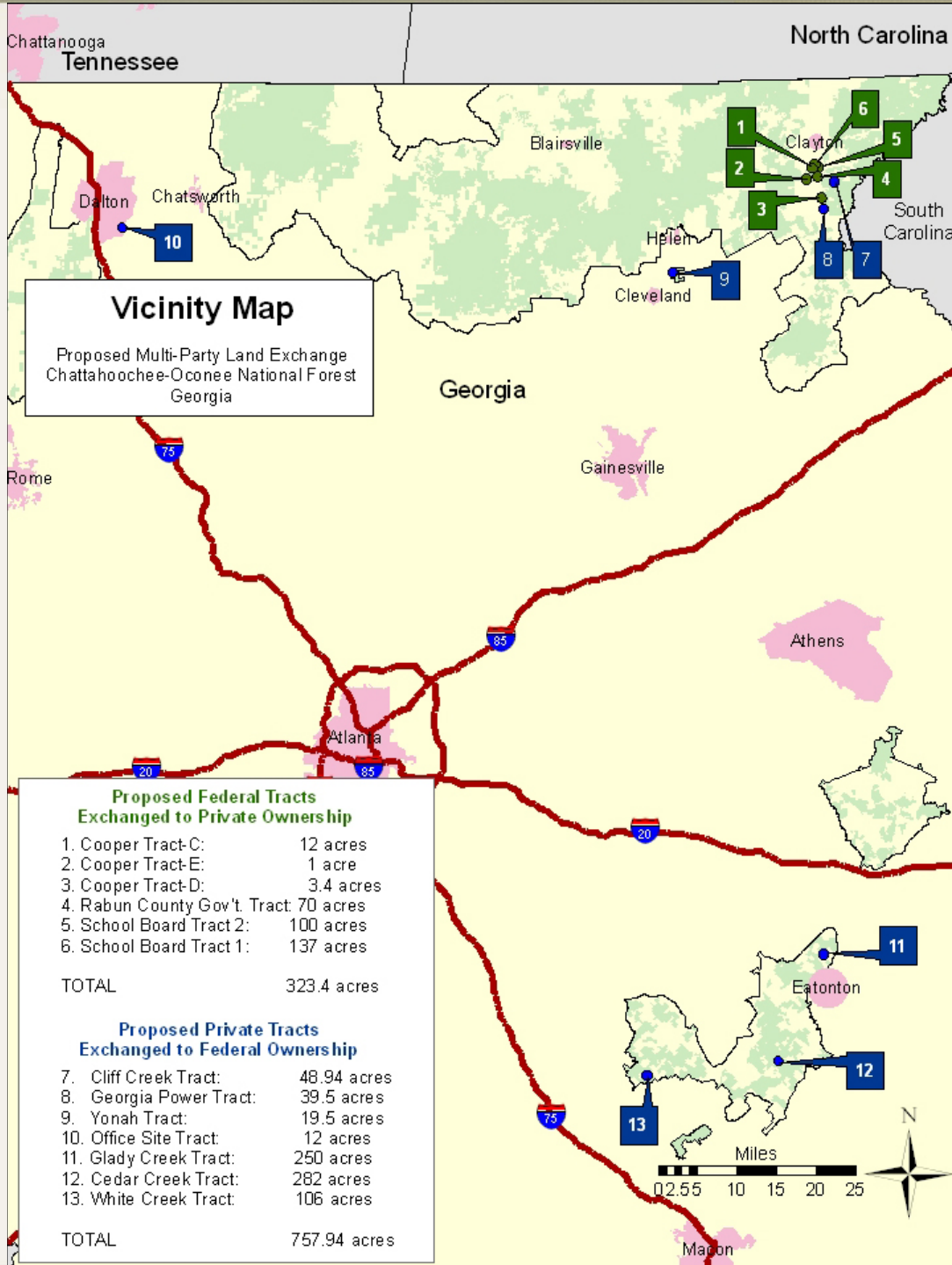
Chattahoochee Oconee National Forests – Georgia
Winter 2008 www.fs.fed.us/conf

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