



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Chattahoochee-Oconee
National Forests
Armuchee/Cohutta
Ranger District

3941 Highway 76
Chatsworth, GA 30705
(706) 695-6737

File Code: 1920-1-5

Date: February 12, 2004

Dear Forest User:

In 2000, the Chattahoochee National Forest received ownership to five acres of land in Murray County (Land Lot 209, District 26, Section 2) from the U.S. Marshals Office. This addition was the result of a drug seizure. This property is not adjacent to National Forest, nor is there plans to acquire land in this area. Also, this property was being used as a residence and contains structures and improvements, which are not conducive for National Forest management.

National Forest land in an undesirable location or with other negative attributes can be made available for a competitive land exchange with land that is more desirable. Prior to exchanging land, a resource analysis is conducted to see if the land qualifies for exchange. The public is notified of tracts that qualify for exchange and a bid process begins. The individual with the high bid and a desirable tract of land then completes the exchange process.

The above-mentioned 5-acre tract was determined to be suitable for exchange and a bid process was initiated. On January 30, 2000 the highest bidder was determined to be Mr. Kirby Patterson of Chatsworth, Georgia. Mr. Patterson's property was determined to be acceptable for exchange. The Chattahoochee National Forest would receive approximately 19 acres of property in the Holly Creek drainage located on the Cohutta Unit in Murray County (Land Lot 193, District 26, Section 2). Mr. Patterson would receive the 5 acres with improvements.

The following lists the benefits of proceeding with this exchange:

- The isolated 5 acres of land, which does not meet the goals and objectives of the Forest Plan, can be removed from Forest Service management.
- The 5-acre tract would become available for residential use or development.
- The 19-acre tract includes a buffer and a small portion of the riparian zone to Holly Creek. This would help protect water quality in Holly Creek.
- The 19-acre tract would provide additional recreational opportunities for individuals using the Holly Creek area for trout fishing and swimming.
- The 19-acre tract would support the management objective to acquire land in the Holly Creek drainage to protect Threatened and Endangered species.
- This exchange supports the efforts of third party partners to acquire property in the Holly Creek drainage to protect Holly Creek.

Maps of the exchange tracts can be viewed in the planning section of the Chattahoochee-Oconee NF web site (www.fs.fed.us/conf) under Land Ownership and Special Uses.



We are interested in your comments about this project and invite you to send site-specific written comments to us by March 11, 2004 at the Armuchee-Cohutta District office, or by email to mwmurphy@fs.fed.us. Thank you for your interest in your National Forest.

Sincerely,

/s/ Debra Whitman
DEBRA L. WHITMAN
District Ranger