

House Bill 901 (COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE)

By: Representatives Cheokas of the 138<sup>th</sup>, Greene of the 151<sup>st</sup>, Lumsden of the 12<sup>th</sup>,  
Wiedower of the 119<sup>th</sup>, and Smith of the 70<sup>th</sup>

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Part 1 of Article 1 of Chapter 23 of Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia  
2 Annotated, relating to general provisions regarding the Georgia Environmental Finance  
3 Authority, so as to provide for the power to make loan commitments and loans to local  
4 governments and nongovernment entities for projects that permanently protect land and  
5 water; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 Part 1 of Article 1 of Chapter 23 of Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,  
9 relating to general provisions regarding the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority, is  
10 amended in subsection (b) of Code Section 50-23-5, relating to purpose, powers, and duties,  
11 by deleting "and" at the end of paragraph (32), by replacing the period with "; and" at the end  
12 of paragraph (33), and by adding a new paragraph to read as follows:

13 “(34) To make loan commitments and loans to local governments and nongovernmental  
14 entities for projects that permanently protect land and water, or interests therein, that are  
15 in their undeveloped natural states or have been developed to be consistent with, or are  
16 restored to be consistent with, one or more of the following conservation purposes:

17 (A) Water quality protection for rivers, streams, and lakes;

18 (B) Flood protection;

19 (C) Wetlands protection;

20 (D) Reduction of erosion through protection of steep slopes, areas with erodible soils,  
21 and stream banks;

22 (E) Protection of riparian buffers and other areas that serve as natural habitats and  
23 corridors for native plant and animal species;

24 (F) Protection of prime agricultural and forestry lands;

25 (G) Protection of cultural sites, heritage corridors, and archeological and historic  
26 resources;

27 (H) Scenic protection;

28 (I) Provision of recreation in the form of boating, hiking, camping, fishing, hunting,  
29 running, jogging, biking, walking, or similar outdoor activities; and

30 (J) Connection of existing or planned areas contributing to the goals set out in this  
31 paragraph."

32 **SECTION 2.**

33 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.