GEORGIA FORESTWATCH

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GAFW is excited to announce that Mark Pelletier has been unanimously elected our new board president. Mark is a senior public health leader at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a longtime environmental advocate, and a photographer. He serves as the Overseas Workforce and Analytics Lead for the Overseas Strategy and Management Branch within the Division of Global HIV &TB. Before this position, he served as CDC's deputy director for the Maternal and Child Health Branch. His earlier roles included deputy director of the CDC Mozambique's DGHT office, deputy team lead for the CDC's Ebola outbreak response in Sierra Leone in 2014, and principal budget advisor for the World Health Organization's East Africa Polio Eradication Program in Nairobi, Kenya.

"My background is in public health and team building," says Mark. "And that's one reason I'm so passionate about Georgia's national forests: public health and the health of our forests are one hundred percent connected. I'm deeply committed to Georgia ForestWatch's mission, vision, and values, and I'm honored to have this opportunity to support our amazing team, expert volunteers, and partner organizations in the field. Working together, we can preserve and protect our Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest for future generations."

A native of Massachusetts, Mark lives in Dahlonega, Georgia, with his partner and GAFW board member Stacia Pelletier. He is the proud father of two

wonderful daughters and one rescue border collie, Jax.

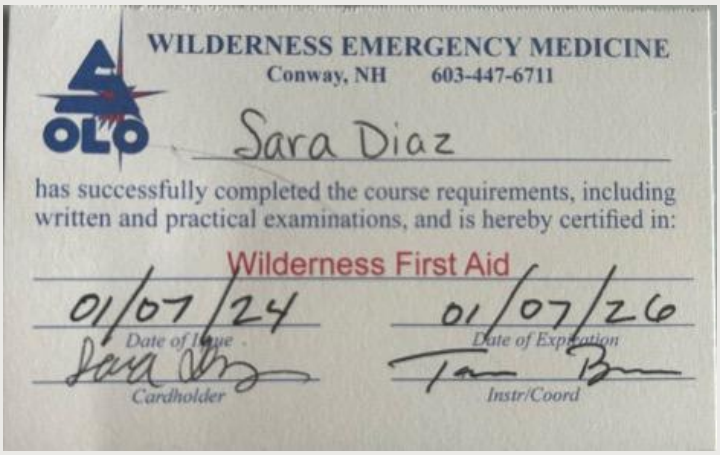
Best Wishes to J.D. McCrary

Please join the Georgia ForestWatch board and staff in thanking J.D. McCrary for his important service and leadership as our executive director. After more than two years of working tirelessly to further GAFW's mission and values, J.D. has departed to pursue new opportunities.

During his tenure with us, he helped build strong forestry relationships, strengthened the GAFW team, conducted site visits to protect our public lands, and strategized key future directions for our national forests in Georgia.

We wish J.D. all the best and success as he begins this new chapter. More information will be forthcoming regarding our leadership search.

Wilderness First Aid Certification



Sara Diaz, GAFW Outreach Coordinator, recently obtained her Wilderness First Aid Certification. This comprehensive certification, granted by Southeast Wilderness Medicine, is valid for the next two years. The intensive 16-hour WFA class equipped Sara with essential skills in patient assessment and providing basic care for individuals facing sickness or injuries in remote wilderness environments. The training comprised a dynamic blend of hands-on scenarios, engaging classroom

lectures, and interactive activities, creating a well-rounded learning experience.

Throughout the course, Sara delved into primary and secondary assessments, gaining proficiency in addressing various medical situations. The curriculum covered crucial topics, including allergies/anaphylaxis, bone and joint injuries, wounds, burns, and illnesses related to temperature extremes. Sara's successful completion of this certification enhances our team's capability to handle health-related challenges during outreach activities.

Upcoming GAFW Outings & Outreach

Thursday, January 25 (New Date!)– **GAFW Book Club Meeting**, Zoom (*The Lost Book of Eleanor Dare* by Kimberly Brock)

Friday, February 2 – **Outing! Len Foote Hike Inn Overnight** - Space is limited!

Thursday, February 8 – **Outing! Chattahoochee Nature Center Guided Tour**

Thursday, February 29 - **Join Us! USFS BRRD Open House**

Have you signed our outing waiver? If not, use this link: **Outing Waiver.**

GAFW Outings on Meetup

Donate to GAFW Today

If this email was forwarded to you, **please register here** to receive GAFW updates.

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Thank You

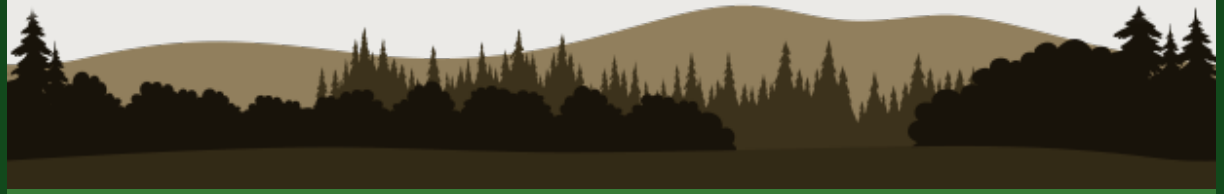
Georgia ForestWatch is the only nonprofit organization with a mission solely dedicated to ensuring the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests remain healthy and available for future generations, and we can only pursue our mission with the support of the community.

Please support our mission by ensuring your **membership is up to date** and providing **additional support** as you are able.

On behalf of our entire national forests in our beautiful state, we thank you for your support.

Our Mission

Our mission is to preserve and protect our national forests.



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