

State of Vermont

Senate Chamber



Montpelier, Vermont

Joint Senate Resolution

By Senate Committee on Institutions,

J.R.S. 19. Joint resolution relating to State lands transactions in Jamaica State Park and Coolidge State Forest.

Whereas, the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation (the Department) owns and manages the Jamaica State Park (the Park) in Jamaica and the Coolidge State Forest (the Forest), which includes the Curtis Hollow Block in Woodstock, and

Whereas, Jamaica State Park, which is situated adjacent to the West River, includes the widely used West River Trail, and a segment of this trail passes across a 5.4-acre inholding that the Nancy J. Winslow Revocable Trust (the Trust) owns, and which is known as the Salmon Hole Lot (the Lot), and

Whereas, the public uses the Lot to access and picnic along the West River, and for bicycling, cross-country skiing, and hiking on the West River and Overlook Trails, which pass through the Lot, and Peter Winslow has agreed to acquire this parcel from the Trust, and

Whereas, Peter Winslow owns two non-contiguous parcels adjacent to the Park, and the Department recently discovered that development on one of the parcels encroaches on the Park, and

Whereas, the Department proposes to convey to Peter Winslow an approximately 24.7-acre parcel that is of little conservation or recreational value, which will resolve the encroachment, in exchange for the Department's acquisition of the Lot and an associated right-of-way easement across the West River Trail to access the Lot, and

Whereas, the Department will retain a right-of-way easement along Jacobs Road, across the property to be conveyed to Peter Winslow, to provide access to the Park for both public access and forest management, and

Whereas, Jaime Ellertson owns a 160-acre parcel that separates a segment of the Forest from another parcel of the Forest, and he also owns a second parcel that the Forest separates from his 160-acre parcel, and

Whereas, the 160-acre Ellertson parcel and the separated segment of the Forest are both landlocked and lacking in legal access, and the Vermont Land Trust (VLT) holds a conservation easement on the 160-acre Ellertson parcel that allows for the subdivision and development of one residential lot, and

Whereas, Jaime Ellertson has agreed to convey to the Department a 102-acre parcel and a 400-foot-wide right-of-way easement for a public recreational trail to the summit of Old Baldy Mountain, and, in exchange, the Department will convey to Jaime Ellertson a 102-acre parcel, subject to a conservation easement to be conveyed from the Department to VLT, and these transactions will eliminate the privately held subdivision and development right under the VLT easement, either through extinguishment or conveyance to the Department, resolve the access issues related to the 160-acre Ellertson parcel and the separated Forest parcel, and provide permanent public recreational access to the summit of Old Baldy Mountain, and

Whereas, 10 V.S.A. § 2606(b) authorizes the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation (the Commissioner) to sell, convey, exchange, or lease land, or interests in land, or to amend deeds, leases, and easement interests subject to General Assembly approval, and both the Commissioner and the General Assembly find the following actions to be in the best interests of the State, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly authorizes the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation to take the following actions:

First: With respect to Jamaica State Park: To convey to Peter Winslow a parcel of approximately 24.7 acres in the Town of Jamaica with certain deed restrictions prohibiting commercial and residential development and use and limiting use of the parcel to forestry, recreation, and vehicular access by Peter Winslow. In exchange for the conveyance of the Department, Peter Winslow will convey to the Department a parcel of approximately 5.4 acres, known as the Salmon Hole Lot, via a warranty deed, without restrictions on use other than commercial and residential restrictions that currently exist in the deed held by the Trust. The Department shall retain a right-of-way easement for forest management and public recreation purposes across the 24.7-acre parcel from or along Town Legal Trail 12 to access the Park.

Second: With respect to Coolidge State Forest: To convey to the Vermont Land Trust a conservation easement restricting development and use on a 102-acre parcel, which is part of the Curtis Hollow Block, to forestry, educational, recreational, and open-space purposes, and then to convey the parcel to Jaime Ellertson, subject to the conservation easement. In exchange for the conveyance of the currently Department-owned 102-acre parcel to Jaime Ellertson, he shall convey to the Department a separate 102-acre parcel adjacent to the Forest, subject only to the existing VLT easement, along with a 400-foot-wide right-of-way easement for a public recreation trail to the summit of Old Baldy Mountain. Additionally, Jaime Ellertson shall eliminate, either through conveyance or extinguishment, his existing right to subdivide and develop one residential lot on the 160-acre parcel, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation.