



Emily Ellison Named Executive Director of St. Simons Land Trust

(St. Simons Island, GA) The Board of Directors of the St. Simons Land Trust has named Emily Ellison as their new executive director. The St. Simons Island resident has been serving as development and communications director for the Land Trust since January 2018 and will begin her new role immediately.



Emily Ellison, Executive Director

“After an extensive search for a new executive director, the search committee chose to promote from within,” according to Jack Kilgore, chair of the committee and a member of the Land Trust’s Board. “Emily brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the position that will be extremely beneficial as the organization moves to a new level.”

Ellison has a long history of leading non-profit organizations, including Literacy Action, Inc., Atlanta Girls’ School and YWCA of Greater Atlanta. She is also an author of a dozen published books including three novels, an anthology of contemporary American literature, children’s books, and an educational tool that encourages young students to read.

“To serve as executive director of an organization I truly believe in is an extraordinary opportunity,” according to Ellison. “Georgia’s barrier islands have some of the most biodiverse ecosystems in the world and provide critical habitat for coastal wildlife and rare species of plants and animals. The Land Trust has a solid team of professionals, both volunteers and on staff, who are dedicated to conserving those environmental values and important historic and cultural features, who have the future of St. Simons Island’s quality of life on their minds every day. It’s an honor to be a part of this team, and I look forward to continuing my service to the organization and community.”

Ellison is a graduate of Oglethorpe University in Atlanta with a concentration in art and literature. She has also graduated from Harvard Business School’s Strategic Perspectives in Nonprofit Management program and Emory University’s Executive Leadership Program for Nonprofit Organizations.

Since July 1, Ben Slade has been serving as interim executive director and will continue to assist the Land Trust as a volunteer consultant during a transition period. He was a co-founder of the organization and served as founding Chairman of the organization's Board of Directors from 1997-2006.

The executive director of SSLT is responsible for leading and directing all aspects of the Land Trust, including managing finances, overseeing fundraising, communications, land stewardship, managing and leading staff, and building positive working relationships with the Board of Directors, community, stakeholders and donors.

SSLT retained The Chason Group (www.thechasongroup.com), an executive search firm specializing in non-profit organizations, to assist in the executive search process.

About the St. Simons Land Trust.

The 501-C-3 nonprofit organization is led by an 18-member volunteer Board of Directors and a larger Advisory Council. Over 1,300 members make financial contributions each year to SSLT and more than 150 dedicated and hardworking volunteers assist in the preservation of the island's natural environment and culture. SSLT uses various conservation transaction types to protect land forever. The projects undertaken are carefully vetted against a set of criteria that include ecological value, public access/benefit, and fundraising feasibility. SSLT's future focus entails effective stewardship and management of a robust portfolio of properties and more than 1,000 acres of protected land on the island.