

ALBANY DOUGHERTY COMMUNITY GREENSPACE PLAN (2003)

INDEX

	<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
1.	Executive Summary.....	1
2.	Introduction	2
3.	County Description.....	3
4.	Statement of Vision & Goals ...	5
5.	Existing Tools	8
6.	Barriers to Achieving Goals	12
7.	Ten-Year Strategy to Remove or Mitigate Barriers.....	13
8.	Funding	15
9.	Summary of Implementation Strategy and Schedule.....	17

- **Executive Summary**

- a. Dougherty County sees the Greenspace Program as a powerful tool with which to improve the quality of life of our citizens. Its favorable timing presents an opportunity to integrate programs already in place to capitalize on preserving the Flint River corridor and providing recreational opportunities while protecting water quality in southwest Georgia. The Greenspace Program will allow us to extend protection to some of the valuable wetlands and upland forest areas in undeveloped areas of the county. Many of these areas are in plantation holdings that may be protected by conservation easements.
- b. Dougherty County's program includes the city of Albany, the only municipality in the county. The city is participating actively in the program which has one trust fund administered by Dougherty County Finance Director.
- c. Dougherty County is committed to protecting 20% of its 334.7 square miles (adjusted acreage of 209,793 acres) by 2023. 42,000 acres of protected land will include:
 - River corridor, associated flood plains and other stream buffers
 - Wetlands and contiguous upland areas
 - Agricultural and forest lands
 - Parks and areas suitable for parks, including land in residential developments and other developed locations
 - Historic resources
 - Land that provides connectivity between these areas

Albany and Dougherty County currently have 4,875 acres protected.
- d. To preserve these lands, the County will utilize fee simple purchase, conservation easements, and permanent protective covenants. It will also enforce existing regulations and promote amendments to zoning regulations that will provide new tools to encourage protection of more valuable land.
- e. Barriers that have been identified do not preclude protecting property in Dougherty County. However, there are actions that would strengthen our position, such as amending the subdivision regulations to require open space protection. Education of the public about conservation easements and about the program in general is needed to encourage

participation and to develop support for funding initiatives that will be necessary to meet outlined goals.