

Land Conservation and the Connection with *Your* Community



Focusing on Habitat Protection





Why does habitat matter?

- **Natural ecosystems** produce services. For example, they:
 - provide us with clean water and air
 - pollinate our crops and disperse seeds
 - protect us from extreme weather and ultraviolet light
 - control pests and disease-carrying organisms



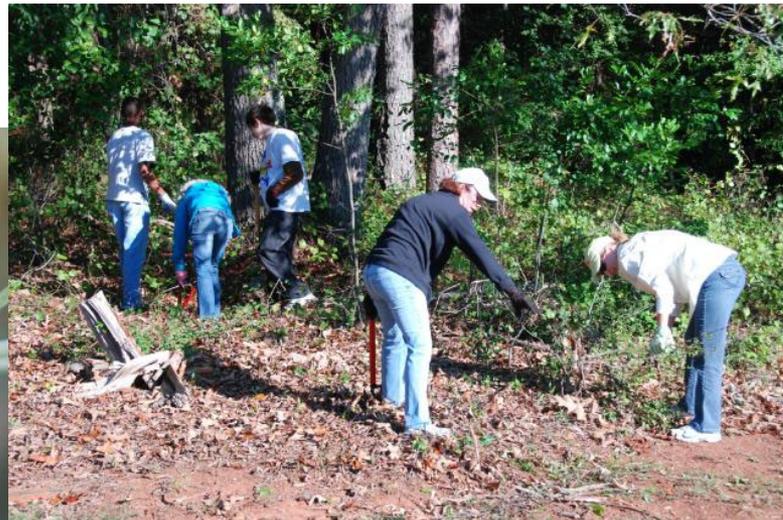
--*American Institute of Biological Sciences*



Why does habitat matter?

- The health and wellbeing of human populations depends upon the services provided by ecosystems and their components - organisms, soil, water, and nutrients.

--American Institute of Biological Sciences



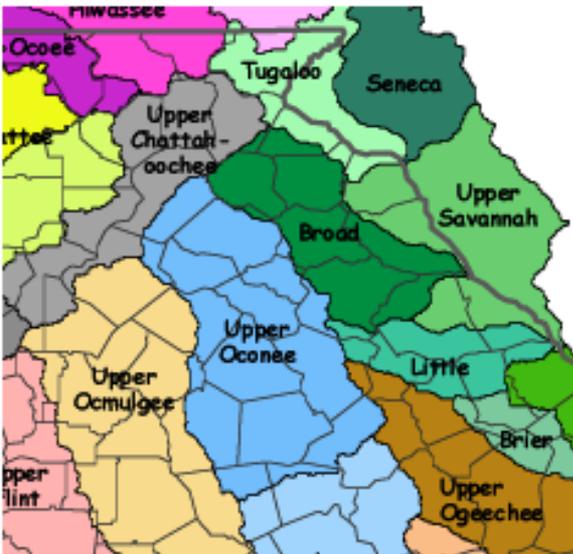
GPLT Protects Habitat

- Founded in 1998 – 501(c)(3) nonprofit
- Mission: Permanently preserving land in the Georgia Piedmont
 - Protect water quality and woodlands
 - Complement conservation of cities and citizens
 - Save farmland and historical features
- Promote values of conserving land permanently.



Private Land Conservation Success

- Founded in Gwinnett – one of the fastest growing counties in the U.S.
- Now working throughout the northern half of GA with protection projects in Bibb, Catoosa, Cobb, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fulton, Gwinnett, Hall, Rockdale, Walton, Wilkes, Whitfield & Upson
- In 20+ years, over 2,000 acres under protection
- Chattahoochee, Ocmulgee and Oconee watersheds



Map by Georgia Department of Community Affairs



Why Private Land Conservation?

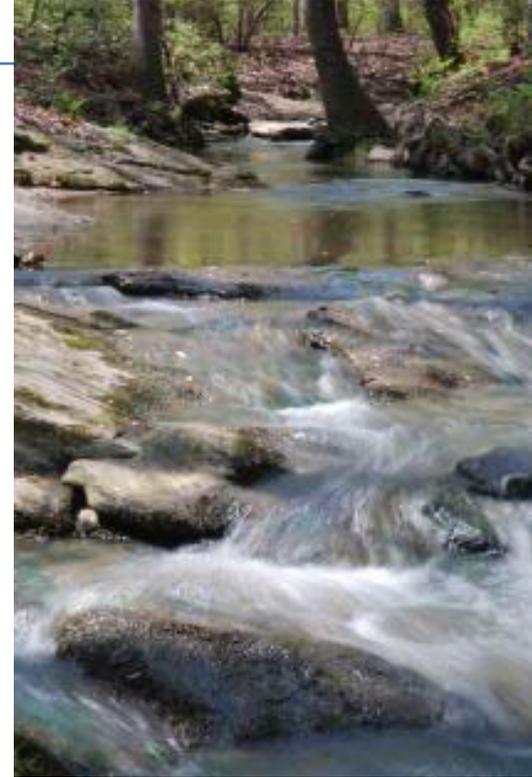


- Shrinking public budgets shift priorities
- Public agencies reluctant to take on additional operational requirements
- Ability to suit the time frame of private landowners
- Focus solely on conservation



Primary methods of protection

- Fee simple ownership by a land conservation entity
- Conservation easement
 - Binding agreement between landowner and qualified conservation entity
 - Recorded with deed: represents a promise to protect
 - Eliminates development potential permanently
 - Can apply to portions of tract



The GPLT Role

- Permanent protection of:
 - Privately owned lands
 - Municipal/County greenspace
 - Conservation Subdivision open space (primary and secondary conservation areas)
- Holding GPLT-owned properties
- Education about the importance of and tools for land conservation



Some GPLT Properties and their Habitat

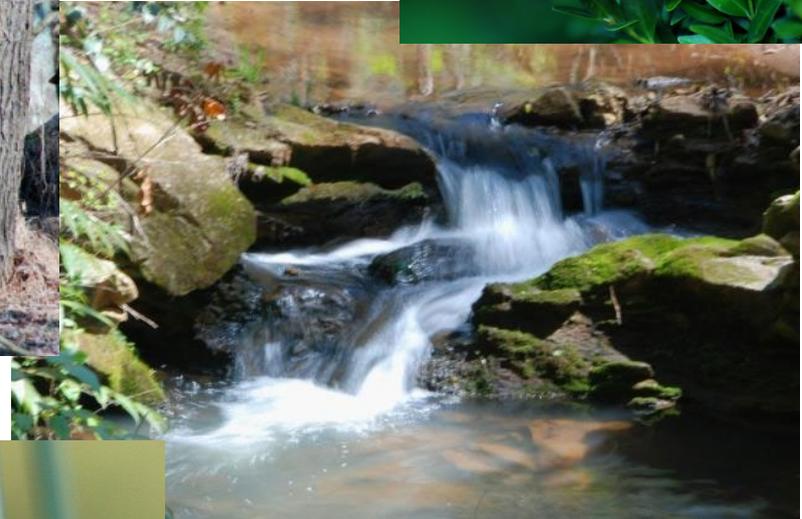


- Drowning Creek, Duncan Creek, Beaver Ruin Creek, Sweetwater Creek, Bolton Creek, Rocky Creek and others – **bottomland hardwoods, floodplains.**
- Beaver Ruin at Satellite Blvd., Yellow River near Hwy. 29 – **wetlands**
- Mulberry Fields – an **in-town community garden**
- Baker's Rock – **granite outcrop**
- Callaway-Garner Cemetery – **upland hardwoods**



The Value of Native Trees and Plants

- Shelter, place to raise young



- Water
- Food



The Value of Land Conservation – and More.

- **Biological diversity – fundamentally necessary for ecosystems healthy enough to support life – including us.**
- Most species could live quite nicely with humans if their most basic ecological needs were met...
 - On protected lands
 - And, just maybe, in your landscape.





“(F)or the first time in its history, gardening has taken on a role that transcends the needs of the gardener. Like it or not, gardeners have become important players in the management of our nation’s wildlife.

Statements and data are excerpted with permission from *Bringing Nature Home: How Native Plants Sustain Wildlife in Our Gardens, 2007* by Douglas W. Tallamy, Professor and Chair of the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology, University of Delaware.



References

- <http://Extension.uga.edu>
 - Click Browse Publications,
 - Enter Native Plants in search line
- www.floridata.com
- www.gnps.org – includes retail sources list
- www.gaeppc.org
- www.gwinnettmastergardeners.com



Some Sources

- Ashe Simpson Garden Center, Brookhaven
- Bannister Creek Nursery, Duluth
- Buck Jones Nursery, Grayson
- Habersham Gardens, Atlanta
- Hastings Nature & Garden Center, soon, in Peachtree Corners
- Nearly Native, Fayetteville
- Randy's, Lawrenceville
- Woody's Nursery, Duluth

