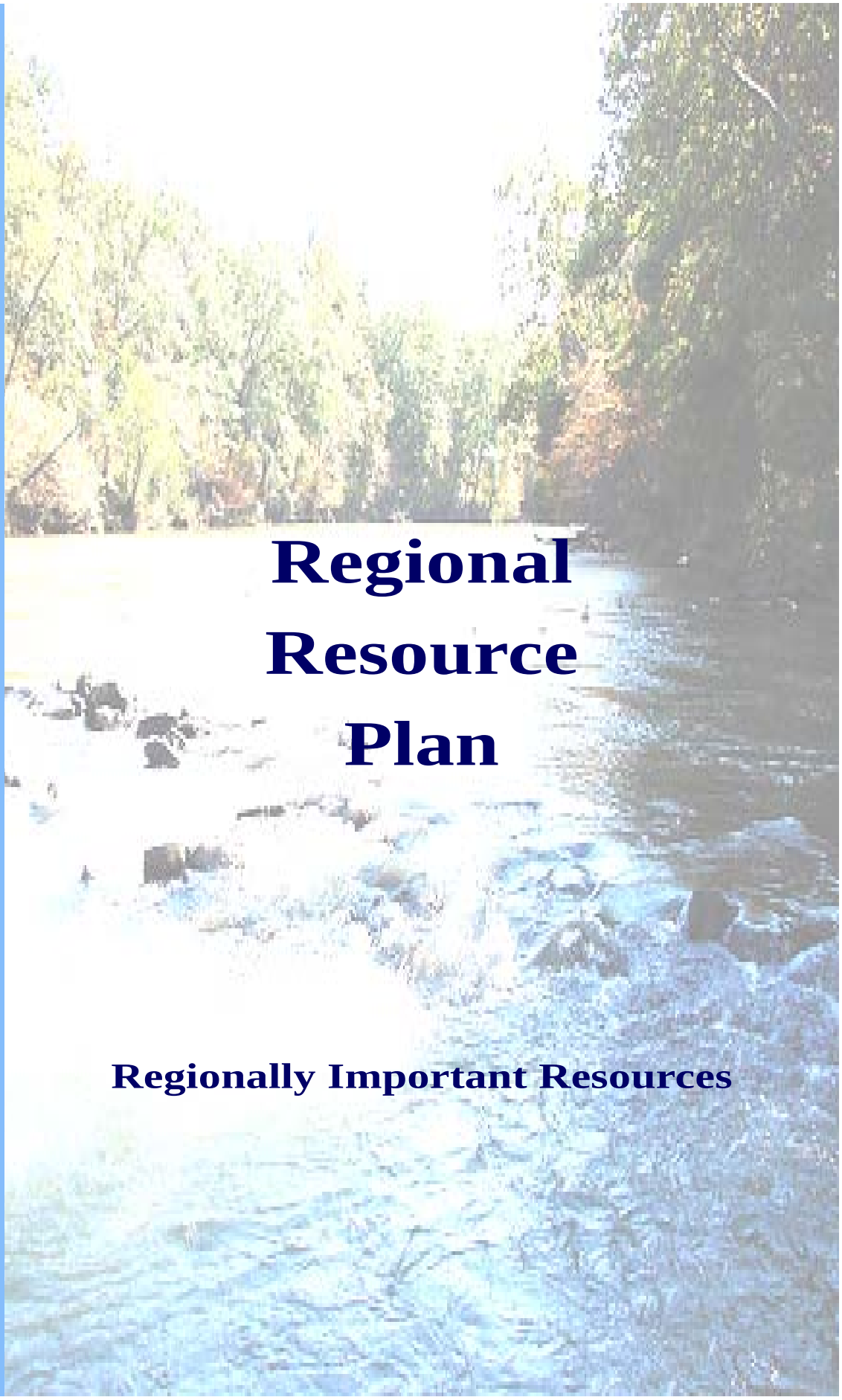
RIVER VALLEY REGION

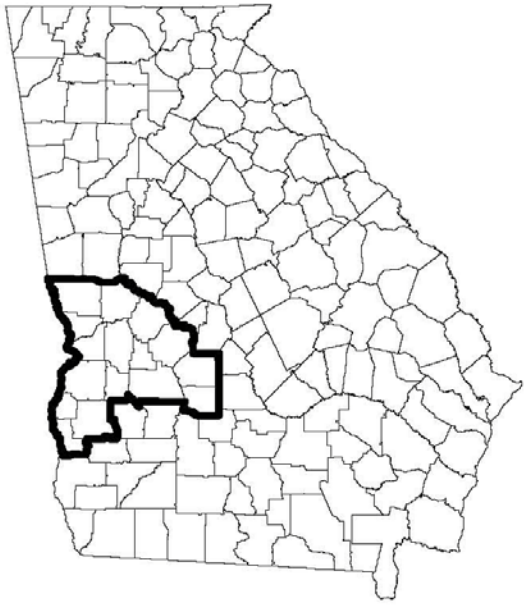


Regional Resource Plan

Regionally Important Resources

Terrell Hudson, Chairman
Patti Cullen, Executive Director
2011

River Valley Regional Commission



RESOLUTION ADOPTING
RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL RESOURCE PLAN

WHEREAS; in enacting the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 the General Assembly authorized the Department of Community Affairs to establish specific rules and procedures for identification of Regionally Important Resources, review of activities potentially impacting them and development of a plan for their protection and management, and

WHEREAS; in establishing said rules and procedures the Department of Community Affairs charged Regional Commissions with the responsibility of identifying Regionally Important Resources, reviewing activities that could potentially impact the resources, and with developing plans for their protection and management, and

WHEREAS; acting in accordance with said rules and procedures the River Valley Regional Commission prepared a Regional Resource Plan, giving careful consideration to the identification of Regionally Important Resources, activities that could impact them and protection and management of these resources, and

WHEREAS; having recently completed its review of said Plan the Department of Community Affairs announced its determination that the River Valley Regional Resource Plan meets all applicable standards and should now be adopted.

NOW, BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED; that the Regional Council hereby adopt and pursue implementation of the River Valley Regional Resource Plan.

Duly resolved and executed this 30th day of November, 2011.

RIVER VALLEY
REGIONAL COMMISSION

Chairman

ATTEST:

Secretary

River Valley Regional Council

Ronnie Burgamy
Jim Lawrence
Edward Lee
Chattahoochee

David McMiller
Richard Morris
Quitman

David Shivers
Steven Foy Martin
Clay

Jimmy Bradley
Steve Whatley
Bryson Langford
Randolph

Wallace Mathis
A. J. Rivers
Mike Speight
Crisp

Greg Barineau
Patricia Jones
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Schley

Terrell Hudson, chair
Emerson Lundy, Jr.
Dooly

Joe Lee Williams
Charles Gibson
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John Harry Lange
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Derek Williams
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Andrea Brooks
Eloise Paschal
Wally Summers
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A. Richmond Felton
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Ralph Brown
James R. "Bump" Welch
Marion

Clinton Perry, vice chair
Harold Heath
Mary Ayers
Taylor

Teresa Tomlinson
Jerry "Pops" Barnes
Dr. Pat McHenry
Muscogee

George Moore
Melvin Crimes
Webster

members and appointing officials:

Noel Williams	Governor
Shannen Kitchens	Governor
William "Bill" D. Burns	Governor
Mitchell Watkins	Lt. Governor
Dr. Carole Rutland	Speaker of the House

Columbus
1428 2nd Avenue
Columbus, GA 31902

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction
- Purpose 1
- Organization 1
- Application 2
- Timeline for Implementation 3
- Implementation 3
- Methodology 3

Natural Resources
- Summary 6
- F D Roosevelt State Park 7
- Florence Marina State Park 8
- George T. Bagby State Park 9
- Georgia Veterans Memorial State Park 10
- Standing Boy Creek State Park 11
- Providence Canyon State Outdoor Recreation Area 12
- Sprewell Bluff State Outdoor Recreation Area 13
- Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge, Bradley Unit 14
- Big Lazer Creek Wildlife Management/Public Fishing Area 15
- Blanton Creek Wildlife Management Area 16
- Fall Line Sandhills Wildlife Management Area 17
- Flint River Wildlife Management Area 18
- Hannahatchee Creek Wildlife Management Area 19
- Montezuma Bluffs 20
- Areas of High Pollution Susceptibility (Groundwater Recharge) 21
  - Map of Natural Resources Sites 22
  - General Policies and Protection Measures 23
  - Best Management Practices 24

Aquatic Resources
- Summary 26
- Chattahoochee River 27
- Flint River 28
- Lake Blackshear 29
- Lake Walter F. George 30
- Oakbin Pond Preserve 31
- Jurisdictional Wetlands 32
- River Corridors 33
  - Map of Aquatic Resources Sites 34
  - General Policies and Protection Measures 35
  - Best Management Practices 37

Historic Resources
- Summary 39
- Andersonville National Historic Site 40
- Jimmy Carter National Historic Site 41
  - Map of Historic Resources Sites 42
  - General Policies and Protection Measures 43
  - Best Management Practices 44

Composite Map
Regionally Important Resources and Green Infrastructure 45

Appendices
- Appendix A – Stakeholders 47
- Appendix B – RIR Nomination Form 48
- Appendix C – Nominated Resources 49

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

This Regional Resource Plan has been prepared in accordance with rules and procedures established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs pursuant to state law,[1] effective July 1, 2009, for identifying Regionally Important Resources, developing a plan for their protection and management, and reviewing activities proposed for sites located within one mile of the resources. It is intended to serve as a guide to ensure that resources identified herein are protected for the benefits of present and future generations. Toward that end it is intended to provide a means for improved local, regional and state level coordination in protecting and managing these important resources.

ORGANIZATION

Resources are classified in one of three broad categories; Natural, Aquatic and Historic. Each resource is presented in a single-page format with basic information and a brief description of importance and vulnerability.

A composite list of General Policies and Protection Measures is presented in the rear of each category for easy reference by local government officials when making decisions likely to affect these resources. While some policies and protection measures are unique to each category, others have application in all three. Hence, the reader will note some duplication. The River Valley Regional Commission will encourage local governments to adopt appropriate policy and protection measures, and refer to them when reviewing local comprehensive plans for consistency with the River Valley Regional Plan.

Each category of resources is also supplemented with a list of Best Management Practices (BMPs) which, when used by developers and land owners, can mitigate adverse impacts development may otherwise have on Regionally Important Resources. A benefit of the developer being proactive in implementing these practices is a reduction in regulatory actions required by local governments to protect important resources. The River Valley Regional Commission will refer to these (and possibly other) Best Management Practices when reviewing Developments of Regional Impact (DRI) located within one mile of these resources.

Resources are mapped at the end of each category and a composite map of all Regionally Important Resources is presented in the rear of the text. A supplemental feature of the composite map is a Greenway Network in the western half of the Region. This network is defined by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs as a strategically planned and managed network of wilderness, parks, greenways, conservation easements, and working lands with conservation value that benefit wildlife and people, supports native species, maintains natural ecological processes, sustains air and water resources, links urban settings to rural ones, and contributes to the health and quality of life for the communities and citizens sharing the network. This green infrastructure network will identify connectivity between the resources; active links such as trail or park networks and passive links, such as protected agricultural lands and conservation easements. This network is intended to aid maintenance and preservation of the Region's heritage.

Presented in the appendix is the list of stakeholders who responded, the nomination form used and a description of each resource nominated.

[1] Georgia Planning Act of 1989: 50-8-7.1(b) (3); 50-8-7.1(d) (3)

APPLICATION

The purpose of identifying Regionally Important Resources is to determine which resources need protection, and to recommend local government policies, protective measures and development practices that can protect these resources from potentially adverse impacts of new development. As described below, the majority of the sixteen-county Region has yet to experience development on a scale which poses a significant threat to these resources. Consequently, many jurisdictions have not implemented land use policies which would promote the broader public interest in protecting important resources. Many which have taken a step in this direction have implemented only rudimentary measures, e.g., a zoning ordinance.

Zoning is the local government authority to regulate where specified kinds of development, as determined by the jurisdiction, are allowed to occur. Even among local governments which have enacted zoning ordinances, few have considered how the developments they allow could adversely affect off-site interests of the general public, e.g., conservation, pollution, stormwater management, sprawl, transportation. This Regional Resource Plan offers local governments some proven policies, protective measures and development practices that can reduce, and even prevent, many potentially adverse impacts of development on surrounding resources.

Zoning is an important and broad power reserved by the state constitution to local government. Hence, it is not subject to impulses of the state legislature, and can be neither implemented nor enforced by state government. Constraints on this power are generally limited only by the state legislature's authority to establish zoning procedures (Zoning Procedures Law) to ensure protection of citizen's constitutional rights. Being a legislative power reserved to local government, courts do not have the authority to zone or rezone property. Because of this, zoning ordinances adopted by local governments are presumed by the courts to be valid until proven otherwise.

A state law providing for assessment of impacts major developments have on local government infrastructure and services is currently in place in the form of reviews of Developments of Regional Impact (DRI). Determinations of whether projects classify as DRIs are based on the size of development and whether the proposed project will be located in one of two state-designated tiers which generally distinguish between more developed (metropolitan) and less developed (non-metropolitan) counties.[2] Fifteen of the Region's counties are located in the less developed tier. The population threshold between these tiers is 50,000. The largest of the Region's non-metropolitan counties is 17,000 residents below the tiered population threshold.

Regulations governing development of this Regional Resource Plan charge the Regional Commission with the task of assessing resource vulnerability to new development. The level of vulnerability in the non-metropolitan area is deemed to be nominal, based on regional characteristics such as the following:

1. The Region is comprised of a disproportionate share of the state's less developed counties. With only 10% of Georgia's 159 counties, the Region was home to 20% (8) of the state's forty less developed counties in 1990, 27% (11) in 2000 and 25% (10) in 2010.
2. Population density is 46% of the level statewide; 23% if the Region's metropolitan area is excluded from this calculation.
3. 90% of the Region is in an agriculture/forest or other "undeveloped" land use.

[2] metropolitan and non-metropolitan as defined in DRI regulations, not as defined by the U. S. Census Bureau

4. Nine of the Region's sixteen counties are among the state's 25 least populated.
5. The 2010 Census credited five counties with a population decrease since 2000.

In the absence of development pressure the majority of the Region's local governments has not developed the administrative capacity to apply policies and practices as described herein to the few small developments that do occur. However, upon adoption of this Plan it shall become the policy of the Regional Commission to encourage and assist local governments with phased implementation of these policies, measures and practices against DRIs. The level of development in the Region's metropolitan community and the vulnerability of resources therein are significantly higher. Implementation of the policies, measures and practices identified herein have immediate relevancy to DRIs in the Region's metropolitan community.

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

This is the smaller of two regional planning documents mandated by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989. The resources identified in this document are to be incorporated into the much larger and more comprehensive Regional Plan, wherein they are to be considered Areas Requiring Special Attention. Regulations governing preparation of the Regional Plan call for identification of specific types of land uses to be allowed in Areas Requiring Special Attention. Both planning documents are currently scheduled for adoption by June, 2012.

The Regional Plan must include minimum standards of local governance which are to be considered essential activities for local governments to undertake and be consistent with the Regional Plan. Current applicable regulatory provisions stipulate local governments are to attain the minimum standards within three years of Regional Commission adoption of the Regional Plan, or risk losing Qualified Local Government status.[3] During this three year grace period the Regional Commission will work with local governments, as necessary, encouraging and assisting with development of the administrative capacity needed to implement the minimum standards identified in the Regional Plan and the general policies, measures and practices of this Resource Plan.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Regional Commission will encourage local governments to adopt appropriate policies and protection measures aimed at protecting Regionally Important Resources. By integrating elements of this document with local plans, jurisdictions can better monitor and minimize adverse impacts on resources whose significance transcends jurisdictional boundaries.

A guide of best practices will be made available for developer reference during project design, and as a reference for review of DRIs located within one mile of any RIR. By actively disseminating this Plan the River Valley Regional Commission can better coordinate activities of the various stakeholders to protect Regionally Important Resources for present and future generations.

METHODOLOGY

In April, 2010, Commission staff began making direct solicitations for nominations for Regionally Important Resources from a variety of stakeholders; local governments, state and federal agencies, land trusts and conservation and environmental protection organizations active in the Region. The nomination form is presented in Appendix B. Staff reviewed related state and local planning documents. A program presented at a

[3] the term used to describe eligibility for certain state-issued grants, loans and permits

board meeting of RiverWay South, an active environmental organization preserving, protecting and promoting the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint river basin, generated several nominations. Commission staff also recommended resources for consideration.

Assisted by Commission staff the Regional Commission's Environmental and Land Use Committees began the process of evaluating nominations and assessing the impacts of Plan implementation on the resources and on local government operations. Nominations were assessed on their value as regional (not local) resources, and their vulnerability and susceptibility to the adverse impacts of development. Resources classified by state agencies as Vital Areas or Protected Areas of Georgia formed the foundation of the Plan. The draft was released for public review and hearings were held May 3, 5 and 9, 2011, in Columbus, Americus and Cuthbert, respectively.

The draft Regional Resource Plan was transmitted to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for review and notification of interested parties in June, 2011. Upon receiving certification of completeness by DCA and subsequently addressing DCA's report of findings and recommendations the Plan was adopted by the River Valley Regional Council November 30, 2011.

NATURAL RESOURCES

SUMMARY – NATURAL RESOURCES

Natural Resources need to be protected not only for their ecological and environmental benefits, but for preservation of regional heritage and character. The area's environmental resources are a vital part of the economy, history, and future, and should be protected. Resources in this section include state parks, natural/conservation and outdoor recreation areas.

The resources included in the Natural Resources category serve an important function within the River Valley Region. These large areas of undisturbed vegetation and natural habitats improve the environmental health of the area in a variety of ways, such as providing sun and wind protection, mitigating stormwater runoff and reducing flooding, and improving air quality by reducing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen into the atmosphere. These resources play a large role in the quality of life for residents; providing access to natural beauty of the Region, and expanding the economy by virtue of their value as tourist attractions.

There are approximately one dozen state parks and wildlife management areas (WMAs) in the Region; all managed by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. Management plans help ensure these resources can be enjoyed today while also being preserved for environmental health of the Region and enjoyment of future generations. This document is intended to protect such resources from potentially adverse impacts of development on sites nearby and which are not controlled by the resource's management plan.

F D Roosevelt State Park

OVERVIEW

Location: Harris County

Owner/Operator: State of Georgia, DNR

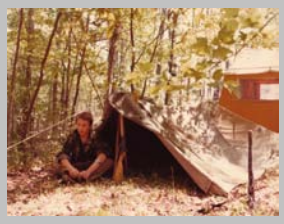
Size: 9,049 acres

Amenities: Cottages, RV sites, Back-Country Campsites, Picnic/Group Shelters, Group Camps, Pioneer Campground, Two Lakes, Trading Post

Activities: Hiking, Fishing, Canoeing, Horse-back Rides, Picnicking, Playground, Birding

NATURAL RESOURCES

Hiking



Camping

Stables

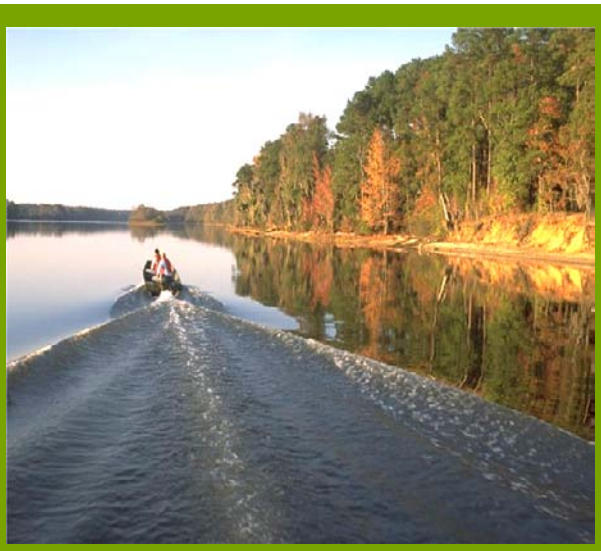
Lakefront Cabins

Regional Importance and Value

The largest of Georgia's state parks was built in 1935 by the Civilian Conservation Corps, one of FDR's many New Deal initiatives intended to hasten the nation's recovery from the Great Depression. Roosevelt first visited the area a decade earlier seeking relief from polio in the naturally-occurring warm springs. He made frequent trips over the period of a quarter-century, dying in 1945 in the Little White House nearby.

Vulnerability

The cultural heritage and history of this site is such that the park has been designated one of the Protected Areas of Georgia, and as such is deemed to be a Regionally Important Resource.



Florence Marina State Park

OVERVIEW

Location: Stewart County

Owner/Operator: State of Georgia

Size: 173 Acres (adjacent to 48,000 acre Lake Walter F. George)

Amenities: Marina, Campgrounds and Cabins, Nature Trail, Group Shelter, Playgrounds

Activities: Boating, Fishing, Swimming, Camping

NATURAL RESOURCES

Visitor's Center

View of Florence Marina

An egret living in the park

Natural Habitats

Regional Importance and Value

Located on the northern end of Lake Walter F. George, Florence Marina State Park offers opportunities for aquatic recreation, such as fishing and boating. The natural deep-water marina, deep-water fishing pier, boat slips, and boat ramp all serve to make these recreational activities more enjoyable.

The park also provides educational activities. The Kirbo Interpretive Center is dedicated to teaching visitors about the Native American history of the region, local history, and nature. The center maintains on display historic artifacts from the prehistoric Paleo-Indian period through the early 20th century, as well as exhibits of local wildlife, including snakes, turtles and fish.

Vulnerability

The park, like many in the region, has a delicate ecosystem. Wildlife and vegetation in the area depend upon Lake Walter F. George and are susceptible to pollution from residential and industrial development.

Wildlife within the park is varied, supporting fish, reptiles, birds and a wide variety of plant life. Heron and egrets are common sites, while bald eagles and other birds of prey can often be seen hunting for fish in the lake. To protect the delicate ecosystem both within and around the park stakeholders must work together to ensure that sound development practices are used.

The cultural heritage and history of this site is such that the park has been designated one of the Protected Areas of Georgia, and as such is deemed to be a Regionally Important Resource.

George T. Bagby State Park

OVERVIEW

Location: Clay County

Owner/Operator: State of Georgia

Size: 700 Acres, (adjacent to 48,000 acre Lake Walter F. George)

Amenities: Marina, Cottages, Golf Course, Lodge and Conference Center, Tennis Courts, Swimming Pool, Group and Picnic Shelter

Activities: Boating, Fishing, Swimming, Hiking

NATURAL RESOURCES

George T. Bagby Lodge

George T. Bagby Trail

Falconry Program

Meadowlink's Golf Shop

Regional Importance and Value

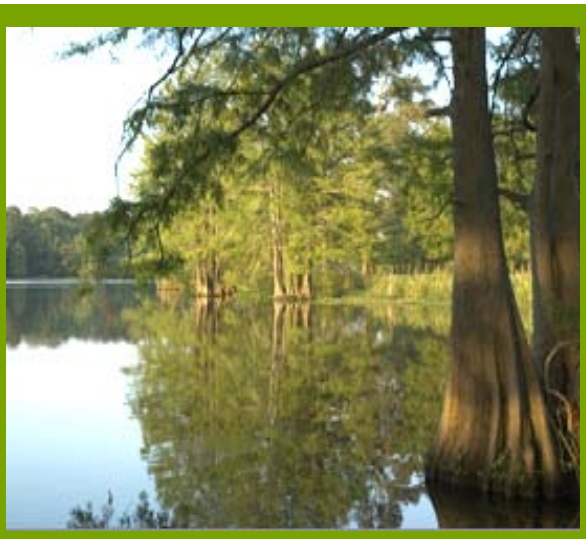
Located on the shores of Lake Walter F. George, the park has a multitude of amenities including a 60-room lodge, conference center and restaurant, cottages and the award-winning Meadow Links Golf Course. A large picnic shelter and numerous picnic sites are available for family gatherings. The park has several facilities to accommodate large groups and events, such as conferences, reunions and weddings. A three mile nature trail weaves through hardwoods and pines, providing visitors direct exposure to wildlife. Terrain varies from wetlands, small ponds to drier oak and hickory forests.

Vulnerability

The sheer size of the lake, 48,000 acres, makes it more prone to encroachment by development. Water flows into the lake from many sources other than the Chattahoochee River, such as the Cowikee, Grass, Chewalla, Barbour, White Oak and Pataula Creeks. Lake ecology is especially vulnerable to the vast watershed and numerous streams and creeks associated with the reservoir. While the 640 miles of shoreline are managed by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, private development and interests are often located along the shore, increasing the risk of exposure to pollution and erosion.

While aquatic vegetation is limited throughout the lake, there are small areas where hydrilla can be found. The backs of coves and creeks along the lake support bulrush, cattails, maidencane and lillypads. Many different bird species live at the lake year round, while others migrate through the park annually. As the populations of these birds continue to grow, protection of the lake will become increasingly important as the ecosystem of the area is affected by the change.

The cultural heritage and history of this site is such that the park has been designated one of the Protected Areas of Georgia, and as such is deemed to be a Regionally Important Resource.



Georgia Veterans Memorial
State Park

OVERVIEW

Location: Crisp County, on the east shore of Lake Blackshear/Flint River

Owner/Operator: State of Georgia, DNR

Size: 1,308 Acres

Amenities: Marina, Cottages, Golf Course, Lodge and Conference Center, Tennis Courts

Activities: Boating, Fishing, Swimming,

NATURAL RESOURCES

Veterans Beach

Aircraft on display

Cabin on Lake Blackshear

Dock on the Lake

Regional Importance and Value

Established as a memorial to U.S. veterans, Georgia Veterans features a museum focusing on military history with a wide variety of artifacts spanning Revolutionary War through Gulf War history. Lake Blackshear Resort and Golf Club is a conference center with 78 lodge rooms, 10 cottages and restaurant. A marina provides boat access to 8,500 acre Lake Blackshear for boating and fishing. The SAM Shortline Excursion Train route passes through the park connecting Cordele and Plains, providing visitors a quick trip to other nearby attractions, among them the Rural Telephone museum, Habitat for Humanity's Global Village, and President Jimmy Carter's boyhood farm. Annual visitation at Georgia Veterans is the highest in the state park system.

Vulnerability

The cultural heritage and history of this site is such that the park has been designated one of the Protected Areas of Georgia, and as such is deemed to be a Regionally Important Resource.

Standing Boy Creek State Park

OVERVIEW

Location: Columbus

Owner/Operator: State of Georgia, DNR

Size: 1,580 acres

Activities: Swimming, Boating (Lake Oliver), Camping, Hiking and Hunting

NATURAL RESOURCES

Camp site

Boating

Swimming

Regional Importance and Value

Standing Boy Creek is among the newest of Georgia's state parks, having been established via executive order of the governor in January, 2004. At this writing it is not yet open to the public. The park is on the east bank of Lake Oliver, a 2,150 acre lake charged primarily with waters of the Chattahoochee River. Because of numerous on-site characteristics the park site has been dedicated as a Heritage Preserve to protect, conserve and preserve the recreational, natural and cultural resources of this property for the benefit of present and future generations.

Vulnerability

Located in the City of Columbus the park is surrounded by dense development, and is an example of other properties across the state with unique natural characteristics, special historical significance and/or particular recreational value that have been lost or altered significantly; the result of development pressure caused by population growth.

The cultural heritage and history of this site is such that the park has been designated one of the Protected Areas of Georgia, and as such is deemed to be a Regionally Important Resource.

Providence Canyon
State Outdoor Recreation Area

OVERVIEW

Location: Stewart County

Owner/Operator: State of Georgia

Size: 1,003 Acres

Amenities: Campgrounds, Nature Trail, Picnic Shelter

Activities: Hiking, Camping, Stargazing

NATURAL RESOURCES

Visitor's Center

Picnic Shelter

Hiking Trails

Park Playground

Regional Importance and Value

Often referred to as "Georgia's Little Grand Canyon", Providence Canyon Outdoor Recreation Area provides visitors the opportunity to see a site unique in the state. The park is defined by its massive gullies, some up to 150 feet deep, which were caused by poor farming practices during the 1800s. Hikers who explore the deepest canyons will usually find a thin layer of water along the trail, an indication of the water table below. The different hues of the soft canyon soil, including pink, orange, red and purple, create a spectacular site, especially at sunset. Several trails throughout the park allow day-hikers to enjoy views of the canyons from the rim trail, while backpackers can stay overnight along the backcountry trail. Among the varieties of plants that flourish in the park is the rare Plumleaf Azalea, found only in this region of the state. This flower blooms in the mid-summer, after other varieties of the flower have lost their color.

Vulnerability

The same force which created this canyon, erosion, now makes it unstable and threatens its structural integrity. Careful control over human impact on the area will be needed to extend the life of this park as a unique environmental piece of Georgia's history and geology.

The cultural heritage and history of this site is such that the park has been designated one of the Protected Areas of Georgia, and as such is deemed to be a Regionally Important Resource.

Sprewell Bluff
State Outdoor Recreation Area

OVERVIEW

Location: Talbot County

Owner/Operator: State of Georgia

Size: 1,372 Acres

Amenities: Nature Trail, Group Shelter, Boat Ramp

Activities: Boating, Fishing, Swimming,

NATURAL RESOURCES

Visitor's Overlook

Flint River

Fishing in the Flint

Picnic Tables on River's Edge

Regional Importance and Value

Located on the Flint River southwest of Thomaston, the Sprewell Bluff State Outdoor Recreation Area is one of Georgia's newest parks. Along the riverfront the park is forested with pine trees and hardwoods scattered between rocky bluffs. Hiking and picnicking along the river are popular activities. Aquatic recreational opportunities include fishing, boating and swimming. Boulders found in the river create opportunities for kayakers to navigate rapids. The area is home to a variety of plants and animals that rely on the river. Wildflowers grow in meadows along the river banks adding natural beauty to the park. Wildlife common in the park include deer, raccoon, rabbit, squirrel, while avian species include wood thrushes, woodpeckers and mockingbirds.

Vulnerability

Because the park is located along the Flint River, the health of the park is intertwined with that of the river. Environmental activists are concerned the water resources provided by the river may be over-utilized in times of prolonged drought to the detriment of the river. While the river has been left mostly unimpeded by reservoirs, the increasing need for water, both upstream and downstream, has created pressure for construction of new dams. The growing metropolitan areas north of the park could impact the in-stream flows of the Flint River. The river is a much needed water supply for agriculture, primarily downstream. The long-term effects of water withdrawal on the river are unknown. The potential impacts on fish and aquatic habitats, as well as birds and other wildlife and vegetation are of concern.

The cultural heritage and history of this site is such that the park has been designated one of the Protected Areas of Georgia, and as such is deemed to be a Regionally Important Resource.

Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge
Bradley Unit

OVERVIEW

Location: Stewart and Quitman Counties

Date Established: 1964

Owner/Operator: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Size: 3,231 Acres

Amenities: Campgrounds and Cabins, Nature Trail, Group Shelter, Playgrounds

Activities: Boating, Fishing, Swimming, Camping

NATURAL RESOURCES

Water birds

Lily pond

Great Egret

Fishing at sunset

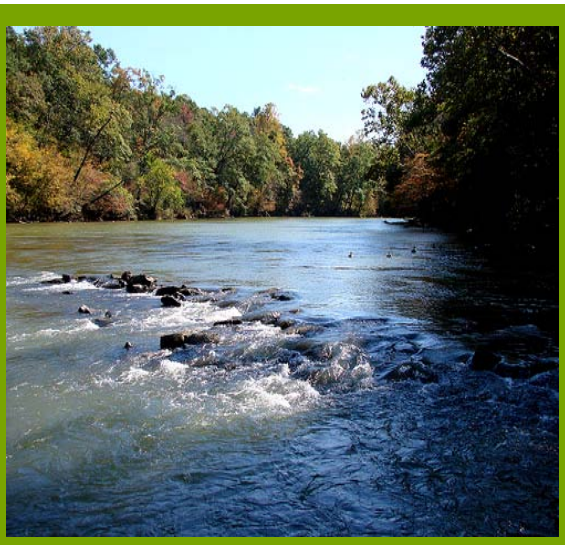
Regional Importance and Value

Located along both the Alabama and Georgia banks of the Chattahoochee River, the Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge was created in 1964 in cooperation with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. One of 550 national refuges across the country, the Eufaula Refuge offers diverse wetland and upland habitats for wildlife. One of the refuge's most prominent features, the Walter F. George Reservoir, provides habitat for many species of wintering waterfowl, other migratory birds and resident species, some of which are either threatened or endangered. In addition to serving as a wildlife preserve the refuge allows the public to interact with some of the region's natural beauty through a variety of recreational activities such as hiking, fishing and camping.

Vulnerability

The Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge is home to large numbers of various bird species. Thousands of wintering ducks and geese, often numbering 12,000-20,000, flock to the Refuge each year as part of their annual migratory patterns. The Refuge also supports a large breeding and wintering population of various birds of prey, such as bald eagle and osprey. Hundreds of great blue heron, great egret, snowy egret, little blue heron, anhinga and cattle egrets use the Refuge as a rookery. As the populations of these birds continue to grow, the protection of the Refuge will become increasingly important as the ecosystem of the area comes to depend on the changing bird populations. The Refuge is especially vulnerable to the vastness of the watershed, streams and creeks that help sustain water flow of the Chattahoochee and metropolitan development upstream.

The cultural heritage and history of this site is such that the park has been designated one of the Protected Areas of Georgia, and as such is deemed to be a Regionally Important Resource.



Big Lazer Creek

Wildlife Management/Public Fishing Area

OVERVIEW

Location: Talbot County

Size: 7,200 acres (6,000 in Talbot County)

Amenities: Concrete Two-lane Boat Ramp, Fishing Pier, Restrooms, Picnic Tables, Primitive Camping, Hiking and Interpretative Trails

Activities: Boating, Fishing, Swimming, Hunting, Camping, Hiking, Bird Watching,

NATURAL RESOURCES

Fishing

Redear Sunfish

Crappie

Hiking opportunities in the Park

Regional Importance and Value

Big Lazer Creek Public Fishing Area (PFA) is one of the state's ten designated PFAs, although fishing is also permitted in most of the state's wildlife management areas (WMA). This PFA is a 193 acre lake in Talbot County on a 7,200 acre WMA of the same name. First opened to fishing in 1989, the lake offers largemouth bass, bluegill, redear sunfish, channel catfish and crappie. About fifteen acres of timber were left during construction of the lake. In addition, the lake is full of submerged cover with fish attractors constructed and placed near the fishing pier. The upper end of the lake is shallow, averaging around 5 feet in depth. Near the dam lake depth exceeds 30 feet.

Vulnerability

The site is prime for private sector development and is an example of the kinds of sites the state has purchased and manages to ensure the general public continues to have access to the natural beauty and recreational opportunities they offer.

Blanton Creek
Wildlife Management Area

OVERVIEW

Location: Harris County

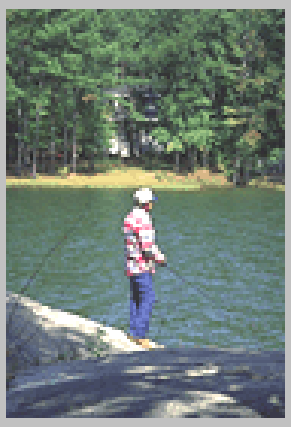
Management: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division

Size: 4,800 acres

Amenities: Walking trails, Camp grounds, Picnic Areas

Activities: Hiking, Hunting, Boating, Fishing, Swimming

NATURAL RESOURCES



Fishing

Home to many plant and animal species.

Regional Importance and Value

Blanton Creek Wildlife Management Area is characterized by steep, somewhat rocky ridges and ravines along the Chattahoochee River. Topography ranges between rolling and gentle hilly terrain. More than half of the habitat on this site is pine and pine-hardwood; other habitats include bottomland hardwoods, upland hardwoods, old fields, and wetlands. Ducks Unlimited provide financial assistance under its M.A.R.S.H. program, Matching Aid for Restoring State Habitat.

The park is home to white-tailed deer, gray squirrel, raccoon, cottontail rabbit, bobwhite quail, mourning doves, wild turkey, bald eagle, various waterfowl and many songbird species.

Vulnerability

The site is prime for private sector development, and is an example of the kinds of sites the state has purchased and manages to ensure the general public continues to have access to the natural beauty and recreational opportunities they offer.

Fall Line Sandhills
Natural Area

OVERVIEW

Location: Taylor County

Owner/Operator: State of Georgia, DNR

Size: 876 acres

Activities: Hunting, Nature Observation, Hiking, Picnicking

NATURAL RESOURCES

Gopher Tortoise

Bachman's Sparrow

Pickering's Morning-glory

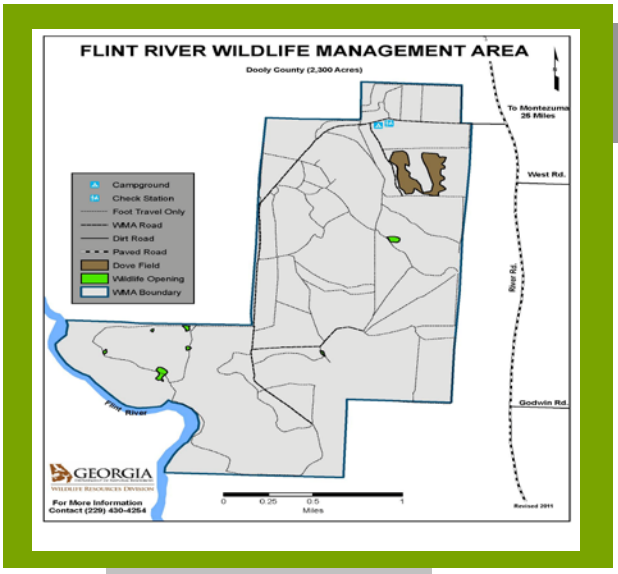
Southern Hognose Snake

Regional Importance and Value

This is one of the state's most unique public lands because of the high diversity of rare species present. The list of rare and threatened animals and plants includes Southeastern kestrels (a type of falcon), Bachman's sparrows, gopher tortoises, southern hognose snakes, gopher frogs, striped newts, federally endangered pondberry, sandhill golden-aster, Pickering's Morning-glory, and lax water-milfoil. DNR Wildlife Resources Division personnel are using a variety of methods to aggressively manage and restore these habitats to their natural state, ultimately benefiting rare and common species native to this area.

Vulnerability

The site was purchased by the state in 2006 from private owners aggressively managing non-native timber species. The site was purchased to restore critical habitat for a large number of rare and threatened species.



Flint River

Wildlife Management Area

OVERVIEW

Location: Dooly County

Owner/Operator: State of Georgia, DNR

Size: 2,300 acres

Activities: Camping, Hunting, Hiking, Fishing

NATURAL RESOURCES

Regional Importance and Value

This wildlife management area is provided by the state for hunters lacking access to privately owned hunting lands. Usage is managed by a state-operated lottery. As the state's population increases and competition for hunting leases increases, hunting opportunities for residents of urban/metropolitan areas diminish. Such facilities help stimulate economic activity in rural areas of the state.

Vulnerability

The site is prime for private sector development, and is an example of the kinds of sites the state has purchased and manages to ensure the general public continues to have access to the natural beauty and recreational opportunities they offer.

Hannahatchee Creek
Wildlife Management Area

OVERVIEW

Location: Stewart County

Size: 5,600 acres

Amenities: Camp Sites, Shooting Range, Horseback Riding Trails, Hiking Trails

Activities: Hunting, Camping, Hiking, Bird Watching and Horseback Riding

NATURAL RESOURCES

horseback riding trails

The park provides an ideal setting for those seeking to explore Georgia's outdoors in a secluded setting.

Regional Importance and Value

Hannahatchee Creek rises near Richland and flows westerly and discharges in the Chattahoochee River near Omaha. Near this stream was the early settlement of Hannahatchee, now the community of Louvale. This park is a 5,600 acre preserve for outdoor enthusiasts interested in hunting deer, quail, feral hogs, doves, rabbits, raccoons, squirrels, turkey, waterfowl, and woodcocks.

Vulnerability

The site is prime for private sector development, and is an example of the kinds of sites the state has purchased and manages to ensure the general public continues to have access to enjoy the natural beauty and recreational opportunities they offer.

Montezuma Bluffs
Natural Area

OVERVIEW

Location: Montezuma

Owner/Operator: Georgia DNR, Wildlife Resources Division

Size: 500 Acres

Amenities: Boat Ramp

Activities: Boating, Fishing, Hiking, Swimming,

NATURAL RESOURCES

River's edge

Visitors enjoy hiking and fishing on the shore.

Birding

A rare trillium at Montezuma Bluffs

Regional Importance and Value

This Wildlife Management Area is defined by its steep rocky bluffs overlooking the Flint River. The area includes mature hardwood forest which, in conjunction with the rocky bluffs, supports a fragile and unique ecosystem. The combination of moist cool air and dry exposed limestone lead to a wide variety of species that thrive in the area. The hardwood forests are home to numerous spring wildflowers, including the very rare and federally protected relict trillium. Every spring hikers and other visitors enjoy one of the state's largest populations of this rare plant. The bluffs also support plants such as the sparkleberry, yucca, mountain catchfly and shortleaf pine.

This park is unique in that visitors can see first-hand fossilized limestone with ancient seashells dating back fifty million years to the Tallahatta Formation marine ecosystem. Hiking and walking trails serve as a primary amenity for the park, with trails weaving along a ridge through wildflowers, palmettos and moss-draped hardwoods. Viewing decks afford visitors views of expansive vistas. From this vantage point birdwatchers can see soaring hawks, woodpeckers, herons and flocks of migratory species. In addition to the trails Crook's Landing boat ramp provides access to the Flint River. Boaters can enjoy magnificent views of the bluffs while exploring the swampy creeks and sandbars below.

Vulnerability

This site is primarily known for, and provides protection to, its botanical diversity and plant rarities.

Areas of High Pollution Susceptibility

OVERVIEW

Location: Distributed widely, accounting for approximately 47% of the Region's surface area.

Size: Approximately 1.6 million acres

NATURAL RESOURCES

Regional Importance and Value

Groundwater is the Region's most common source of water and is stored naturally in aquifers; permeable rock strata occupying vast regions of the earth's subsurface. Aquifers are replenished by precipitation infiltrating zones of the earth's surface known as groundwater recharge areas, and are susceptible to contamination. Management of land uses within these recharge areas is crucial to minimizing the threat of water pollution.

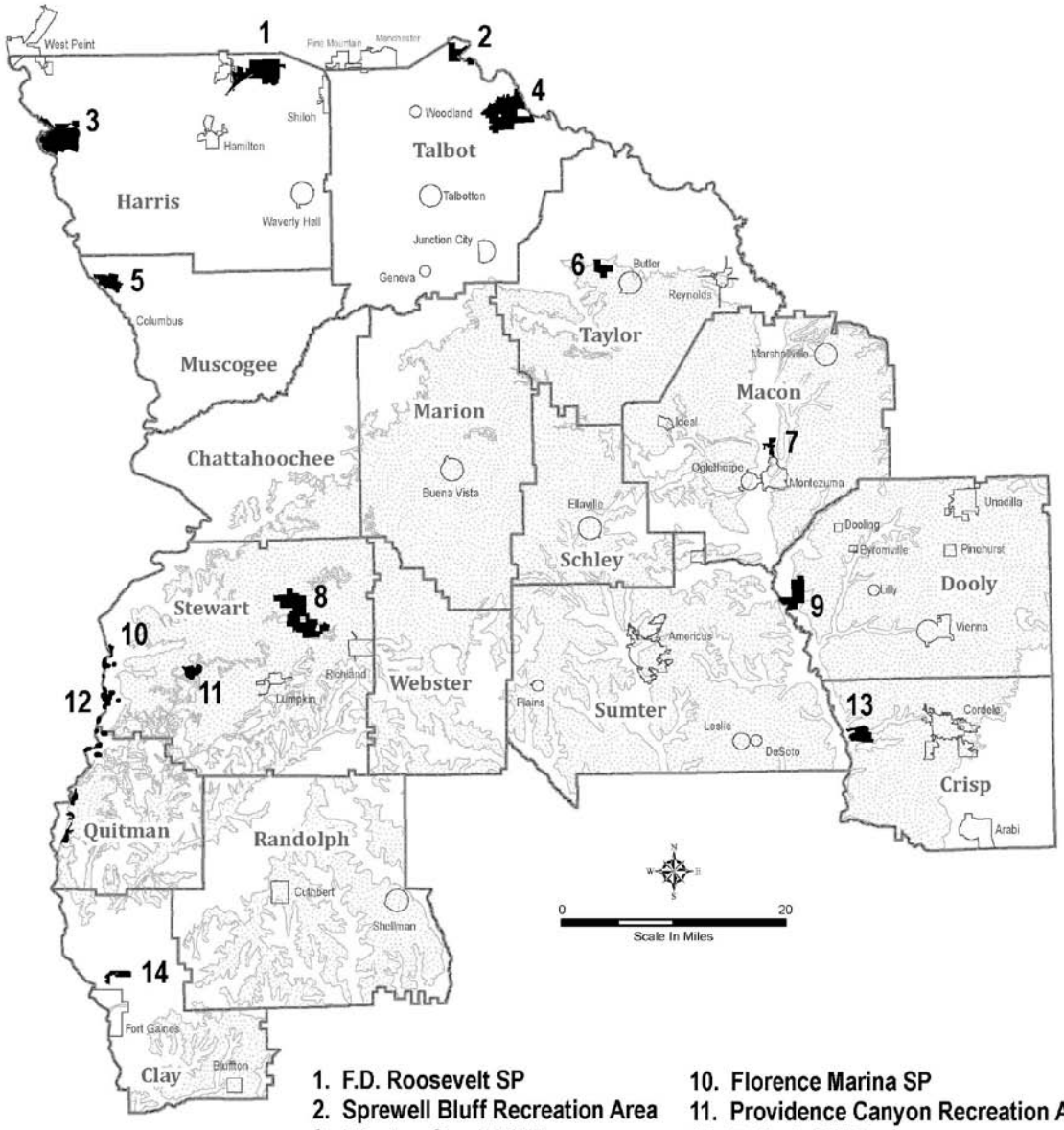
Vulnerability

Approximately 23% of Georgia's land surface has been identified as the area where the most significant recharge to aquifers occurs; 58% of the region has been deemed to be significant recharge area. Pollution occurring in these areas increases the potential not only of polluting groundwater in the immediate vicinity of the site, but of eventually affecting the aquifer down gradient. Because flow rates are relatively slow in most aquifers, the effects of pollution may not appear for years in wells distant from the recharge site.

Even within these areas of significant recharge there are regions of low, medium and high pollution susceptibility. The interrelationships of depth to water, net recharge, aquifer media, soils, slope, impact of vadose zone and hydraulic conductivity is these areas is such that 47% of the region's area has been rated as highly susceptible to pollution resulting from surface or near surface activities of man.

The environmental significance of this area is such that it has been designated a Vital Area of the state, and as such is deemed to be a Regionally Important Resource.

Natural Resources



1. F.D. Roosevelt SP
2. Sprewell Bluff Recreation Area
3. Blanton Creek WMA
4. Big Lazer Creek WMA/PFA
5. Standing Boy Creek SP
6. Fall Line Sandhill Natural Area
7. Montezuma Bluffs Natural Area
8. Hannahatchee Creek WMA
9. Flint River WMA
10. Florence Marina SP
11. Providence Canyon Recreation Area
12. Eufaula NWR
13. Georgia Veterans Memorial SP
14. George T. Bagby SP

Areas of High Pollution Susceptibility

RVRC

GENERAL POLICIES AND PROTECTION MEASURES

While Best Management Practices for Natural Resources aid in reducing the impact of new developments on the identified resources, General Policies and Protection Measures will play an important role in decision-making about future growth and development. By protecting and conserving these Regionally Important Natural Resources local governments can maintain the economic and environmental vitality of these resources for future generations.

- The Region is committed to growth and development that will result in safe and attractive communities, while paying particular attention to development in areas that impact on Regionally Important Natural Resources.

- More compact development and new land uses that contribute to protecting the environment and preserving meaningful open space will be encouraged in order to preserve the Regionally Important Natural Resources.

- Development sensitive to the historic context, sense of place, and overall setting of the community will be encouraged.

- Passive recreation and greenspace are important to the community.

- Green infrastructure and other techniques will be encouraged in new developments and redevelopments.

- Amend/create land development ordinances that will:
  - Implement recommended development guidelines and patterns from comprehensive plans;
  - Encourage cluster subdivisions;
  - Establish significant natural buffers between Regionally Important Natural Resources and new development/redevelopment;
  - Limit parking to the absolute minimum necessary;
  - Limit street width/curbing to minimum necessary for specific function;
  - Minimize clearing, grading and disturbance of development sites;
  - Require DRI-scale developments to survey the environmental features of the site (topography, soils, hydrology, trees, vegetation, wildlife habitat, historical and cultural sites) for preservation as parks, trails or greenbelts;
  - Encourage developers to think "green" in their designs.

- Identify and prioritize key lands for possible acquisition within one mile of Regionally Important Resources for conservation purposes.

- Participate in the Land and Water Conservation Fund (or similar) Program for acquisition of priority conservation areas.

- Explore partnerships and creative strategies to protect priority areas.

- Promote public education in environmental awareness and participation (Adopt-a-Mile) in environmental stewardship.

- Incorporate a review/comment process on developments within one mile of Regionally Important Natural Resources in the subdivision/zoning process.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Natural Resources are especially vulnerable to the impacts of human activity. Best Management Practices (BMP) focus on minimizing adverse environmental impacts of such activity. The following BMPs are recommended, as applicable, for use by developers and landowners when designing and developing sites located within one mile of the Regionally Important Natural Resources identified in this section.

- Survey environmental features (topography, soils, hydrology, trees, vegetation, wildlife habitat, historical and cultural sites) in the planning stage to identify sensitive areas and plan for their preservation as parks, trails, or greenbelts.

- Site plans and building designs should be sensitive to the site's natural features, e.g. woodlands, steep slopes, wetlands, floodplains.

- Minimize site clearance, grading and disturbance to the construction footprint as a way of preserving natural features, e.g. trees, soils that minimize runoff by absorbing precipitation.

- Implement compact and mixed-use development practices to minimize land consumption.

- Link new development to existing, compatible developments appropriately, e.g. trails, greenspace, street network.

- Use aquatic buffers as natural boundaries separating waterways from new development and to protect on-site wetlands.

- To allow underlying soil to absorb and filter rainfall of pollutants and reduce runoff:

    - Maximize design flexibility for utility services and infrastructure to minimize impervious surfaces, i.e. roofs, pavement
    - Use porous paving materials wherever possible
    - Substitute paved turnarounds with vegetated soil
    - Substitute curbs, gutters and drainage pipes with swales

- Construct bio-retention areas or rain gardens to facilitate rainwater absorption and infiltration of pollutants on-site.

- Reduce parking requirements and street widths to the minimum feasible to minimize site clearance.

- Establish nature landscape buffers along the periphery of the development site.

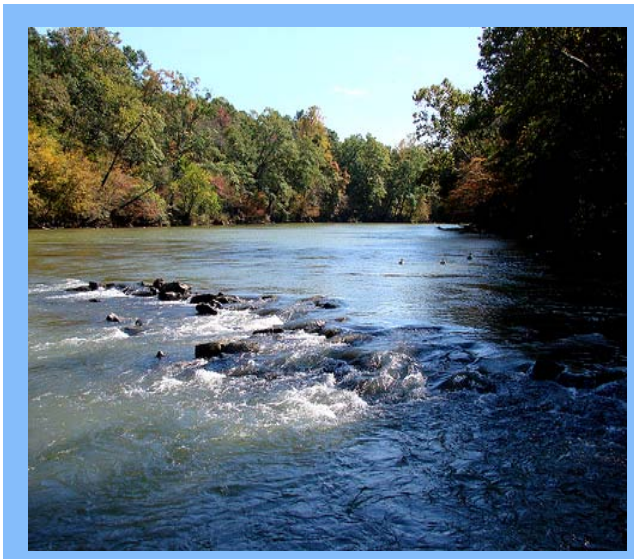
AQUATIC RESOURCES

SUMMARY – AQUATIC RESOURCES

Aquatic resources meet a basic human need (consumption), promote the health and general welfare (public health, fire protection, economic development) and enhance the quality of life (recreational opportunities). Some of them are obvious (rivers, lakes), some less so (seasonal wetlands) while others are areas where natural processes occur (groundwater recharge) and which serve to maintain other resources; some of which are visible (rivers and lakes) others invisible from the surface (groundwater aquifers).

A large proportion of the Region is a groundwater recharge area, where rainwater infiltrates the soil and the underlying strata to replenish aquifers, the source of much of the Region's drinking water. These areas are also essential for sustaining streams and rivers. Wetlands are responsible for a variety of activities that preserve the environmental integrity of the area; mitigating flooding by collecting runoff during storms, facilitating groundwater recharge, and filtering contaminants and sediments from the water. Additionally, wetlands support a diversity of plant and animal species and offer exceptional recreational opportunities.

The impacts of these resources on our environment extend far beyond geographical boundaries. Consequently, some listed here have been identified previously as State Vital Areas. Protective measures have already been implemented by some of the Region's jurisdictions.



Chattahoochee River

OVERVIEW

Location: Harris, Muscogee, Chattahoochee, Stewart, Quitman, Clay Counties

Length: Approximately 150 miles (along Region's west boundary)

Activities: Boating, Fishing, Swimming, Canoeing, Kayaking, Bird watching

AQUATIC RESOURCES

Fishing

Egret along the river

Nature Observation

Regional Importance and Value

The Chattahoochee River serves as the western boundary of the River Valley Region. Originating in the Blue Ridge Mountains of northeast Georgia, the Chattahoochee flows over four hundred miles before converging with the Flint River at Lake Seminole in the southwest corner of the state. The watershed around the river covers an area of over eight thousand square miles. Water flow rate near the region's southern extremity is third highest in the state. The most heavily utilized of the state's rivers, the Chattahoochee is only one of the region's aquatic resources whose significance extends far beyond the region.

Once an important means of transporting industrial goods, it is valued more today as a source of drinking water, with large municipal water withdrawals occurring in Columbus (and metropolitan Atlanta). The health of the region's economy is also linked to the river, as it supports various economic sectors, including tourism. The river is a major ecological resource, serving as home to a wide variety of plant life and wildlife, including several threatened and endangered species.

Vulnerability

Because that segment of the Chattahoochee which comprises the region's western boundary is also the boundary between Georgia and Alabama, the cooperation of both states, with oversight of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, is needed to protect the river. Currently, the greatest threats to the river are industrial pollution in larger metropolitan areas, stormwater run-off from sprawling development patterns, and erosion from agriculture activities. Hence, the river is susceptible to numerous point sources and non-point sources of pollution.

Flint River

OVERVIEW

Location: Talbot, Taylor, Macon, Dooly, Sumter, and Crisp (Lake Blackshear) Counties

Length: Approximately 120 miles (exclusive of Lake Blackshear ±15 miles)

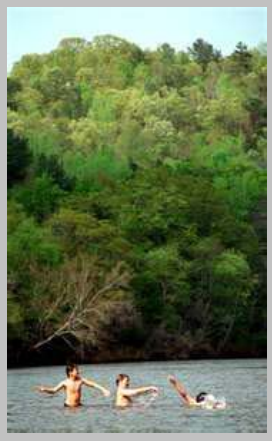
Activities: Boating, Fishing, Swimming

AQUATIC RESOURCES

Fishing

Kayaking

Rafting



Swimming

Regional Importance and Value

The importance of the Flint River to the River Valley region is shown through both its natural beauty and environmental diversity. The watershed encompasses 8,500 square miles of Georgia's Piedmont and Coastal Plains provinces. Within the region municipal, domestic, industrial, and agricultural water needs are supplied by the intricate aquifer system tied to the area's streams. The region's agricultural industry is supported by this water supply.

The Flint River meanders through much of the state, covering 350 river miles within a basin measuring only 212 miles in length. The river is also unique in that it flows unimpeded for over 200 miles, one of only forty rivers in the contiguous United States free-flowing for such a long distance.

Vulnerability

While the river is a much–needed water supply for agriculture, the long-term effects of water withdrawal on the river are still unknown. Advocates are concerned the river may be over-utilized in times of prolonged drought; a frequent occurrence in recent decades. In addition, the growing metropolitan areas in the state might begin to impact in-stream flows as a result of increasing water withdrawals. While the river has been left mostly unimpeded by reservoirs, the growing need for new water supplies has created pressure for construction of new dams. The potential impacts of such development on fish and aquatic habitats, birds and other wildlife and vegetation is of such concern that in 2009 the national environmental organization American Rivers classified the Flint as one of America's most endangered rivers.

Lake Blackshear

OVERVIEW

Location: Crisp, Sumter and Dooly Counties

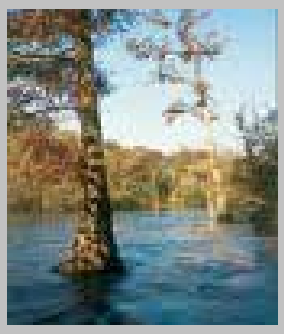
Size: 8,500 acres

Amenities: Lake Blackshear Resort and Golf Club

Activities: Boating, Fishing, Swimming

AQUATIC RESOURCES

Lilly flower on the lake



Trees in the lake

Boating

Fishing Pier

Regional Importance and Value

Lake Blackshear was created in the late 1920's when Crisp County constructed a hydro-electric dam near the approximate mid-point of the Flint River. The lake, which is approximately fifteen miles long and a mile wide, covers approximately 8,500 acres on portions of shared boundaries between three of the region's counties (and a fourth further south). Some trees which stood when the area was flooded continue to grow in the lake.

For the avid fisherman several varieties of game fish common to southwest Georgia can be found in Lake Blackshear. These include various species of bass, sunfish, perch, crappie, and catfish. Lake Blackshear Resort & Golf Club provides many opportunities for visitors and area residents to enjoy the lake's resources.

Vulnerability

In carrying out the responsibilities of its Federal Energy Regulatory Commission license, the Crisp County Power Commission has implemented a definitive Lakeshore Management Plan including a Pier and Dock Permit Program, a public information program, and recreational and wildlife conservation programs in cooperation with other state and local entities. The intent of these programs is to assure that the scenic, environmental and recreational aspects of Lake Blackshear are maintained and preserved for use by the general public. The lake is susceptible to adverse impacts of high concentrations of residential septic tanks along the lakefront, and intensive agricultural activity in the watershed.

Lake Walter F. George

OVERVIEW

Location: Stewart and Clay Counties

Size: 45,000 Acres

Amenities: Eufaula Wildlife Refuge, Florence Marina and State Park, George T. Bagby State Park

Activities: Boating, Fishing, Swimming

AQUATIC RESOURCES

Walter F. George Dam

Fishing for bass and catfish

The lake is home to a wide variety of waterfowl.

Autumn leaf change

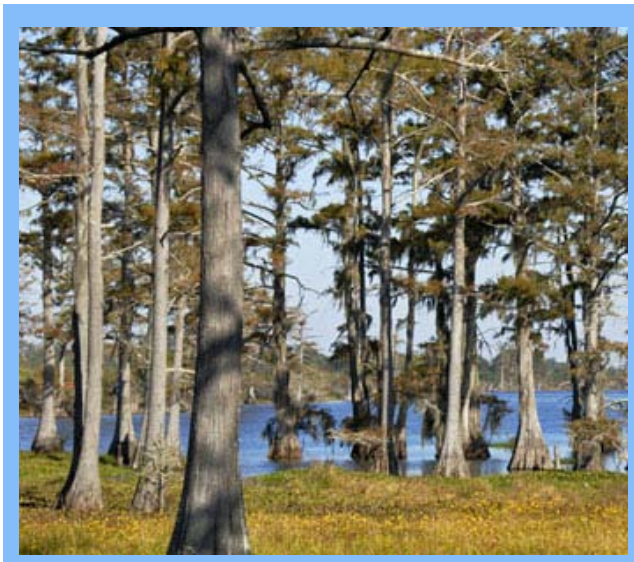
Regional Importance and Value

Lake Walter F. George extends approximately 85 miles along the Chattahoochee River, astride a portion of the boundary between Georgia and Alabama. With approximately 650 miles of shoreline the reservoir offers numerous opportunities for outdoor recreation, including camping, boating and fishing. Along the lake are state parks which provide additional amenities for lake visitors; George T. Bagby State Park and Lodge, and Florence Marina State Park.

While aquatic vegetation is limited throughout the lake, there are small areas where hydrilla can be found. In addition, backs of coves and creeks along the lake support varieties of bulrush, cattails, maidencane and lillypads. Many species of birds live at the lake year round; many others take respite here on their annual migration. As the populations of these birds continue to grow the protection of the lake will become more and more important as the ecosystem of the area comes to depend on changing bird populations.

Vulnerability

The sheer size of the lake makes it more prone to encroachment by development and industry. Although the Chattahoochee River is the lake's primary water source, supplemental flows from the Cowikee, Grass, Chewalla, Barbour, White Oak and Pataula creeks increase lake exposure to potential contamination which could lead to problems with lake ecology. The lake is especially vulnerable to the watersheds, aquifers, and streams associated with the reservoir. While the 640 miles of shoreline are managed by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, private development and interests are often located along the shores, increasing chances for pollution and erosion.



Oakbin Pond Preserve

OVERVIEW

Location: Dooly County

Size: 195 Acres

Amenities: Undeveloped

Activities: Wildlife Viewing

AQUATIC RESOURCES

Night heron

American Alligator

Canby's dropwort

Regional Importance and Value

Located south of Unadilla, 176-acre Oakbin Pond Preserve and an adjoining 19-acre conservation easement protects habitat for rare and imperiled plants and animals. About 80% of the preserve is open cypress pond; the remainder is being restored to longleaf and shortleaf pine forest. Night Heron, wood duck, alligator, snakes, and cotton rats inhabit the site. The elusive bobcat may also frequent the area.

Oakbin Pond is home to the largest (less than 20 documented worldwide) and healthiest populations of Canby's dropwort; a plant in the parsley family. Drainage of wetlands in the mid-Atlantic Coastal Plain for conversion to agricultural production has severely affected the plant, hence the preserve's importance.

Vulnerability

This site provides ideal growing conditions for the federally endangered Canby's dropwort. The deep, poorly drained soil traps water and maintains a shallow pool, while the high organic content provides a wealth of nutrients. Because the endangered plant requires sunny habitat, the site's openness is crucial to plant health. The Nature Conservancy conducts an intensive annual monitoring program to assess the health of the dropwort and works with surrounding landowners to protect a buffer zone around the pond. Volunteers have helped plant trees, remove trash and mark boundaries.

Jurisdictional Wetlands

OVERVIEW

Location: Distributed widely, accounting for approximately 10% of the region's surface area

Size: Approximately 328,000Acres

AQUATIC RESOURCES

Regional Importance and Value

Wetlands provide a multitude of ecological, economic and social benefits, habitat for fish, wildlife and a variety of plants. Wetlands are nurseries for many freshwater fishes and shellfish of commercial and recreational importance. Wetlands are also important landscape features because they collect, hold and slowly release flood water, recharge groundwater, act as filters to cleanse water of impurities, recycle nutrients, and provide recreation and wildlife viewing opportunities.

Vulnerability

Although Georgia currently has more than 7.5 million acres of wetlands, many acres have been lost or impaired piecemeal by draining, dredging, filling, excavating, building, pollution, and other acts. Comprising a portion of the Coastal Plains Province, the River Valley has among the higher concentrations of the state's wetland acreage. Damaging or destroying wetlands threatens public safety and the general welfare.

The environmental significance of this area is such that it has been designated a Vital Area of the state, and as such is deemed to be a Regionally Important Resource.

River Corridors

OVERVIEW

Location: Harris, Muscogee, Chattahoochee, Stewart, Quitman, Clay, Talbot, Taylor, Macon, Dooly and Sumter Counties
Along the Chattahoochee and Flint Rivers and portions of Kinchafoonee and Upatoi Creeks

Length: Approximately 290 miles

AQUATIC RESOURCES

Wildlife Habitat

Recreation

Control Sedimentation

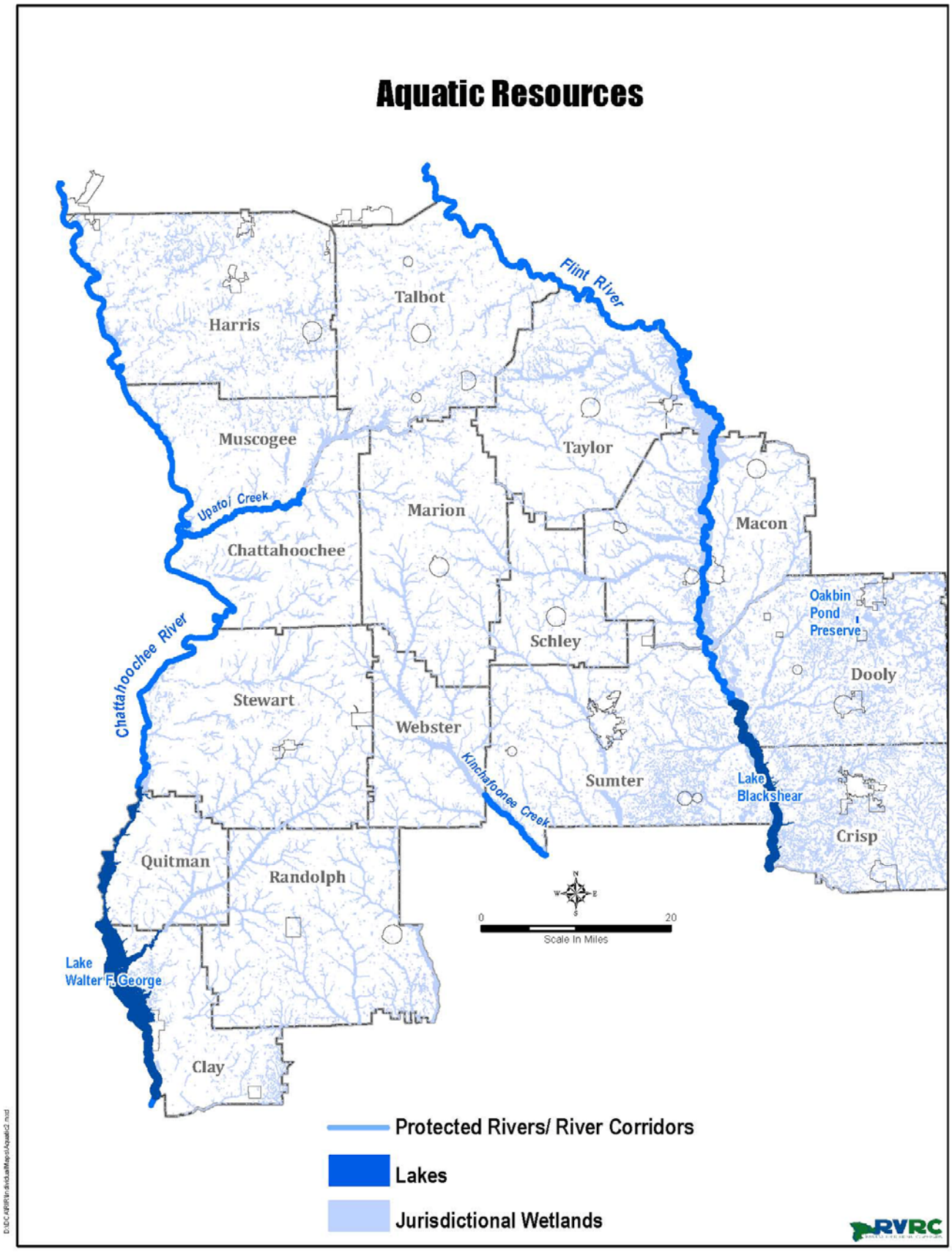
Flood Control

Regional Importance and Value

In enacting the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 the Georgia General Assembly defined a "river corridor" as all land (*not elsewhere regulated*) in the areas of a perennial stream or watercourse with an average annual flow of at least 400 cubic feet per second … 100 feet on both sides of the river as measured from the river banks at mean high water (§12-2-8(c)(3)). The legislature authorized the state to develop minimum planning standards and procedures for the protection of river corridors via establishment of natural vegetative buffer area bordering each designated corridor. These corridors are of vital importance in that they help preserve qualities that make a river suitable as a habitat for wildlife, a site for recreation, and a source for clean drinking water. River corridors also allow the free movement of wildlife from area to area, help control erosion and river sedimentation, and help absorb floodwaters.

Vulnerability

The environmental significance of this area is such that it has been designated a Vital Area of the state, and as such is deemed to be a Regionally Important Resource.


Aquatic Resources
Flint River
Talbot
Harris
Muscogee
Taylor
Upatoi Creek
Marion
Macon
Chattahoochee
Chattahoochee River
Oakbin Pond Preserve
Schley
Dooly
Stewart
Webster
Kinchafoonee Creek
Sumter
Lake Blackshear
Crisp
Quitman
Randolph
Lake Walter F. George
Clay
0
20
Scale In Miles
Protected Rivers/ River Corridors
Lakes
Jurisdictional Wetlands
RVRC

GENERAL POLICIES AND PROTECTION MEASURES

What follows is a list of general policies and protection measures that are intended primarily as guidance for local governments in planning and decisions that affect the Regionally Important Aquatic Resources identified in this plan. In addition, the River Valley Regional Commission will use these policies and protection measures when reviewing local comprehensive plans for consistency with regional plans, and to encourage local governments to adopt the policies and enhancement activities most appropriate for protection of the significant resources located within their respective communities.

- Protection and conservation of the Regionally Important Aquatic Resources will be an important component of future growth and development.

- Low impact development that preserves, protects and maintains natural topography, existing vegetation and environmentally sensitive areas will be encouraged.

- Infrastructure networks such as water and sanitary sewer will be planned to encourage more compact development and steer development away from environmentally sensitive resources.

- A green infrastructure network will be encouraged to protect water quality.

- Promote public education in environmental awareness and participation in environmental stewardship, e.g. adopt-a-stream, annual clean-up events.

- Application of BMPs is expected in agricultural and forested activities.

- Implementation of Total Maximum Daily Load Implementation Plans for streams on the EPA 303(d) list is important to the health of the Region's waterways. Amend or create land development ordinances that:
  - encourage cluster subdivisions with such amenities as walking/bicycle trails, passive parks, and greenbelts,
  - reduce burdensome parking requirements and street widths minimizing impervious paving and unnecessary site clearance,
  - reduce building footprints and encourage clustering buildings to limit site disturbance,
  - require DRI-scale developments to survey the environmental features of the site (topography, soils, hydrology, trees, vegetation, wildlife habitat, historical and cultural sites) and preserve sensitive areas as parks, trails or greenbelts, and
  - encourage developers to think "green" in their designs.

- Amend stormwater management ordinances to provide for new developments within one mile of a Regionally Important Aquatic Resource:
  - reducing the proportion of the site covered in impervious surfaces, e.g. roofs and pavements,
  - using porous pavement materials to allow underlying soil to absorb precipitation and filter rainfall of pollutants;
  - encouraging installation of green roofs;
  - substituting vegetated soil for paved turnarounds to reduce runoff and

provide for natural absorption and infiltration of rainwater;
    - substituting vegetated swales for curbs, gutters and drainage pipes;
    - allow the construction of bioretention areas or rain gardens in parking lot islands or within small pockets of residential areas.

- Identify and prioritize lands within one mile of Regionally Important Resources for possible acquisition for conservation purposes.

- Participate in the Land and Water Conservation Fund (and other) Program(s) for acquisition of priority conservation areas.

- Explore partnerships and creative strategies to protect priority areas.

- Implement Georgia Department of Natural Resources Environmental Planning Criteria (water supply watersheds, river corridors, significant groundwater recharge areas and wetlands)

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Aquatic Resources, like the Natural Resources identified in the previous section, are vulnerable to development activity. These resources are highly susceptible to pollution generated by industrial, agricultural and development activities. The resulting negative impacts could include reduced water quality, as well as posing a danger to health of wetlands and bird, fish, and wildlife as well as to their habitats. To reduce the vulnerability of these resources to threats posed by pollution and encroachment by development, the following best management practices are recommended for use by developers or landowners when designing new developments within one mile of the Regionally Important Aquatic Resources.

- Minimize the area of site clearance and disturbance to the greatest extent possible to the development footprint, preserving trees, ground cover and soils that naturally mitigate wind and water erosion.

- Employ aquatic buffers as natural boundaries between waterways and development and to protect on-site wetlands.

- To allow underlying soil to absorb and filter rainfall of pollutants and reduce runoff:

    - Maximize design flexibility for utility services and infrastructure to minimize impervious surfaces, i.e. roofs, pavement
    - Use porous paving materials wherever possible
    - Substitute paved turnarounds with vegetated soil
    - Substitute curbs, gutters and drainage pipes with swales

- Require DRI-scale developments to survey the environmental features of the site (topography, soils, hydrology, trees, vegetation, wildlife habitat, historical and cultural sites) and identify sensitive areas for preservation as open space, parks, trails or greenbelts.

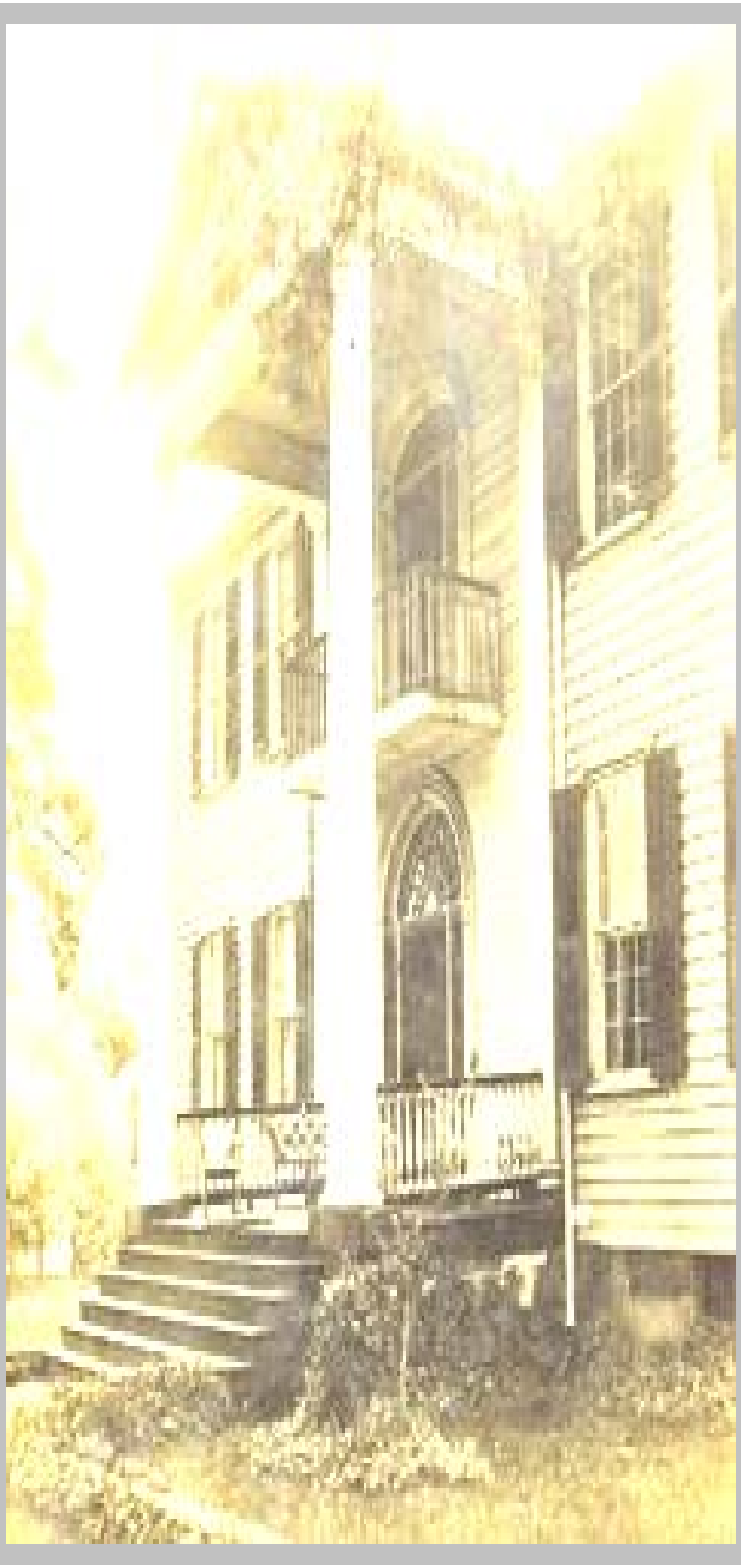
- Construct bio-retention areas or rain gardens to facilitate rainwater absorption and filtration of pollutants on-site.

- Encourage cluster development to preserve open space and natural features on the development site

- Reduce parking requirements and street widths to the minimum feasible to minimize site clearance needs

- For new agricultural and forestry operations, consult the necessary representatives where necessary and initiate appropriate best management practices.

HISTORIC RESOURCES



SUMMARY – HISTORIC RESOURCES

Historic Resources are among those components of life that contribute to development of the Region's sense of place; characteristics that generally distinguish it from other regions. While most events are not known beyond the site of occurrence, some have impacts which reverberate far beyond the site. Some examples of the latter are identified herein. While each community has a unique history and locally significant resources, not all of these resources played a role in the greater development of the Region. The purpose of this Plan is to pursue a more widespread approach to preserving resources that represent the history of the Region as a whole. The resources presented herein have a historical significance; impacting the Region, state and nation.

The Commission collected nominations for historic resources not only from regional stakeholders, but also considered sites listed in Georgia Register and National Register of Historic Places. All sites listed on the National Register are also listed on the Georgia Register.

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the Nation's historic buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, it is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archeological resources. Listing in the National Register provides formal recognition of a property's historical, architectural, or archaeological significance based on national standards. Properties can be nominated to the National Register individually, as a historic district, or as Multiple Property Submission, which is a thematic nomination that simultaneously nominates groups of related significant properties.

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for listing in the National Register, historic resources (districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects) generally must be at least 50 years old; must possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association; and must be considered significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture. The National Register includes:

- All historic areas in the National Park System;
- National Historic Landmarks that have been designated by the Secretary of the Interior for their significance to all Americans; and
- Properties significant to the Nation, State, or community that have been nominated by State historic preservation offices, Federal agencies, and
- Tribal preservation offices, and have been approved by the National Park Service.

Results of Listing

Listing in the National Register honors a historic place by recognizing its importance to its community, state, or the Nation. Under Federal law, owners of private property listed in the National Register are free to maintain, manage, or dispose of their property as they choose provided that there is no Federal involvement. Owners have no obligation to open their properties to the public, to restore them or even to maintain them. Owners of listed properties may be able to obtain Federal investment tax credits and Georgia historic preservation tax incentives provided certain qualifications are met.

While the most effective preservation efforts for historic resources occur at the local level through tools such as architectural design guidelines and development regulations, only by viewing these resources holistically can the Region ensure that broader preservation steps are taken to protect the resources that shaped the Region's history.

Andersonville National Historic Site

OVERVIEW

Location: Macon County, near Andersonville

Owner/Operator: National Park Service

Date Built: 1864

Recognitions: National Register of Historic Places

HISTORIC RESOURCES

Graves located at the National Cemetery at Andersonville.

Aerial view of Camp Sumter

Masonry building located in the Park.

Reenactment of Civil War soldiers

Regional Importance and Value

Andersonville National Historic Site commemorates the sacrifices, untold hardships, and tremendous courage of Americans held as prisoners of war. The site is comprised of the site of Camp Sumter (Andersonville Prison), the Andersonville National Cemetery and the National Prisoner of War Museum. The stated purpose of the 1970 legislation establishing Andersonville National Historic Site was "…to interpret the role of prisoners-of-war camps in history…" and "commemorate the sacrifice of Americans who lost their lives in such camps."

Camp Sumter was one of the largest military prisons established by the Confederacy during the Civil War. Over 45,000 Union soldiers were confined at this prison with nearly 13,000 dying from disease, poor sanitation, malnutrition, overcrowding and exposure to the elements. The National Cemetery at Andersonville serves as the final resting place for those who perished while being held as POWs at Camp Sumter, and as an honored burial place for present-day veterans.

Vulnerability

The mission of the National Park Service is to preserve, protect, and share the natural and cultural resources and values of this land and its people. This is done by offering technical assistance, providing recognition, and funding community projects across the country. The National Park Service has a network of public and private partners that work together to achieve these goals and promote the opportunities and responsibilities of stewardship to the next generation.

Jimmy Carter National Historic Site

OVERVIEW

Location: Sumter County, Ga.

Owner/Operator: National Park Service

Date Built: 1920s

Recognitions: National Register of Historic Places

HISTORIC RESOURCES

Plains High School

Campaign Headquarters

Entrance Sign to Plains

Downtown Plains

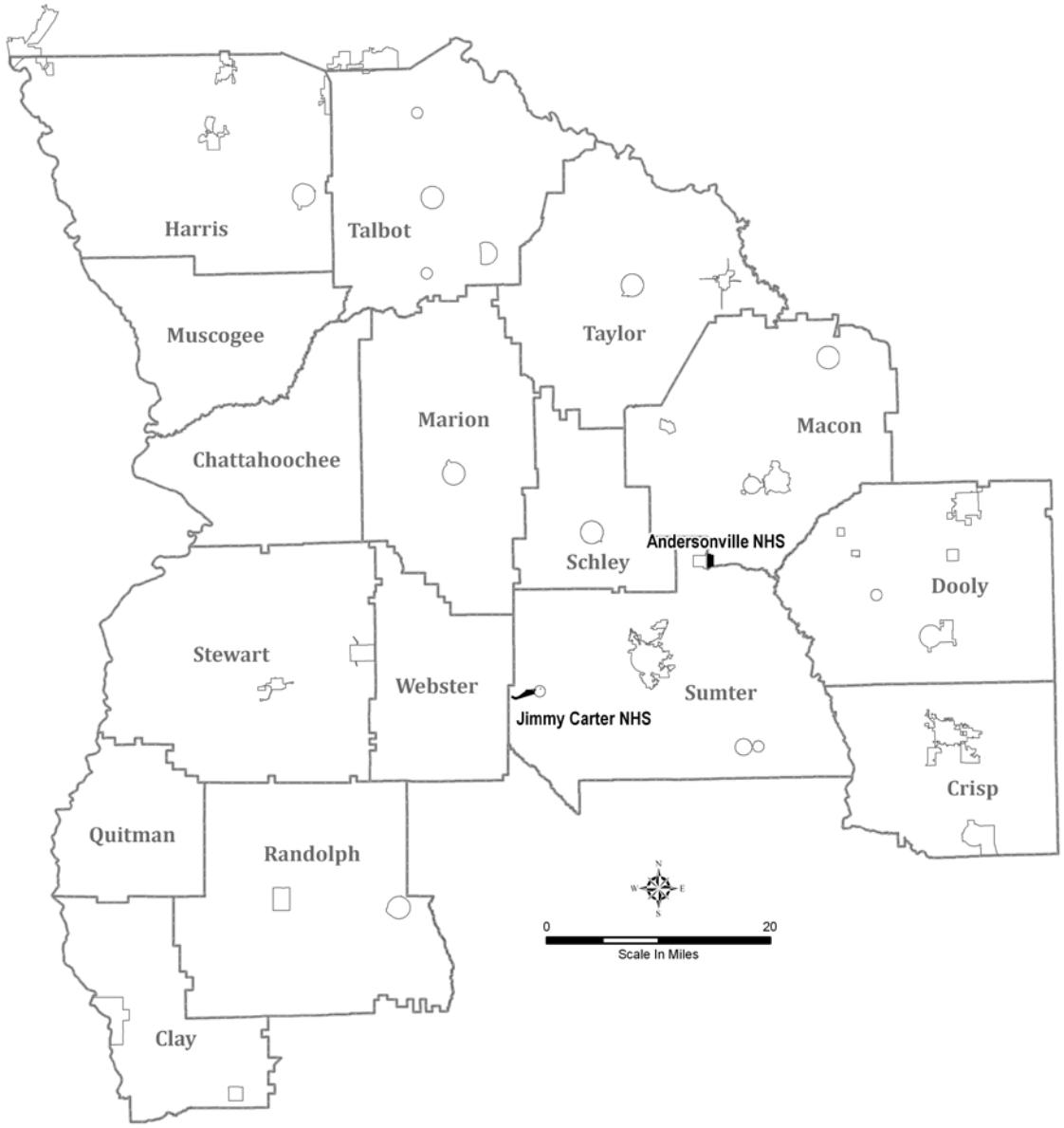
Regional Importance and Value

The Jimmy Carter National Historic Site consists of four sites in or near Plains, Georgia. Plains High School opened in 1921 and both Jimmy Carter and Rosalyn Smith Carter received their secondary public education at the school. The school now serves as the museum and visitor center for the site. The Plains Train Depot, constructed in 1888, served as the presidential campaign headquarters for Jimmy and now houses a self-guided museum detailing his grassroots campaign. The Carter farm was purchased by the National Park Service in 1994 and consists of seventeen of the original 360 acre farm with the residence and surrounding structures. Restored to its appearance before electricity was installed in 1938, the Carter farm reflects the background and influences that contributed to the development of President Carter's beliefs and character. The Carters currently reside in a home they had constructed in 1961. While the house is closed to the public, it is visible from the city's main thoroughfare.

Vulnerability

The mission of the National Park Service is to preserve, protect, and share the natural and cultural resources and values of this land and its people. This is done by offering technical assistance, providing recognition, and funding community projects across the country. The National Park Service has a network of public and private partners that work together to achieve these goals and promote the opportunities and responsibilities of stewardship to the next generation.

National Historic Sites



National Historic Sites

GENERAL POLICIES AND PROTECTION MEASURES

The following General Policies and Protection Measures are presented as best practice recommendations for appropriate management of Historic Resources. They are intended to provide guidance, direction and assistance to local government officials and community leaders in planning and decisions that affect Historic Resources. The River Valley Regional Commission will utilize these policies and protection measures when reviewing local comprehensive plans for consistency with regional plans, and to encourage local governments to adopt policies and protection measures most appropriate for protection of resources located in particular communities.

- Preservation, protection, and promotion of historic resources are critical to preservation of the Region's heritage.

- Protection and conservation of Regionally Important Historic Resources are important to future growth and development.

- Wherever feasible, maintenance of use or appropriate, adaptive reuse of historic buildings, sites, structures, districts, and objects is to be encouraged; through application of incentives when appropriate.

- Historic resources should be promoted, as appropriate, as tourist attractions.

- To maximize efficiencies and effectiveness preservation activity should be coordinated with any appropriate local, state and federal or non-governmental preservation-oriented entity.

- Heritage resources are to be protected from destruction, and from inappropriate infill development or incompatible alterations that would diminish historic integrity.

- New and re-development that preserves historic fabric and character is to be encouraged; development that threatens/alters historic fabric or character is to be discouraged.

- New infrastructure should be developed in a pattern complimentary to the existing street grid to steer development away from areas of natural, cultural, historic, and environmentally sensitive resources.

- Literal imitation of existing historic styles is to be discouraged. To prevent false interpretations of history and historic character new construction, additions, and infill development is to be compatible, not identical, to historic buildings.

- Projects involving resources listed on the National Register of Historic Places should adhere to the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.* Developments involving properties of purely local significance should; nevertheless, strive for these same standards.

- Regulations should scale signage to the site and architecture of the building(s); lighting and color of signage should be strictly controlled.

Historic Resources, like Natural and Aquatic Resources, are vulnerable to the impacts of development and human activities. However, unlike resources relating the natural environment, these resources relate to the heritage and history of the Region, and are often found in more developed areas. As a result, the integrity of many of the historic resources listed often depends upon the surrounding buildings and development, which can either enhance or detract from the value of the resource.

As a result, it is important to ensure that development occurring within a one mile radius of the resource is complimentary, but not so restrictive as to preclude new development and growth. Adaptive re-use developments and rehabilitation of existing historic buildings is often an economically viable means of creating economic development opportunities such as tourism. By considering and examining the potential effects of any new development such as building roads and infrastructure, demolition, rehabilitation of adjacent structures, infill development, or redevelopment, the impacts on the historic resources can be lessened, if not completely negated.

Provided below is a list of recommended best management practices for development/re-development affecting historic properties. These practices are intended to guide any and all parties designing development activities within a one-mile radius of Regionally Important Historic Resources.

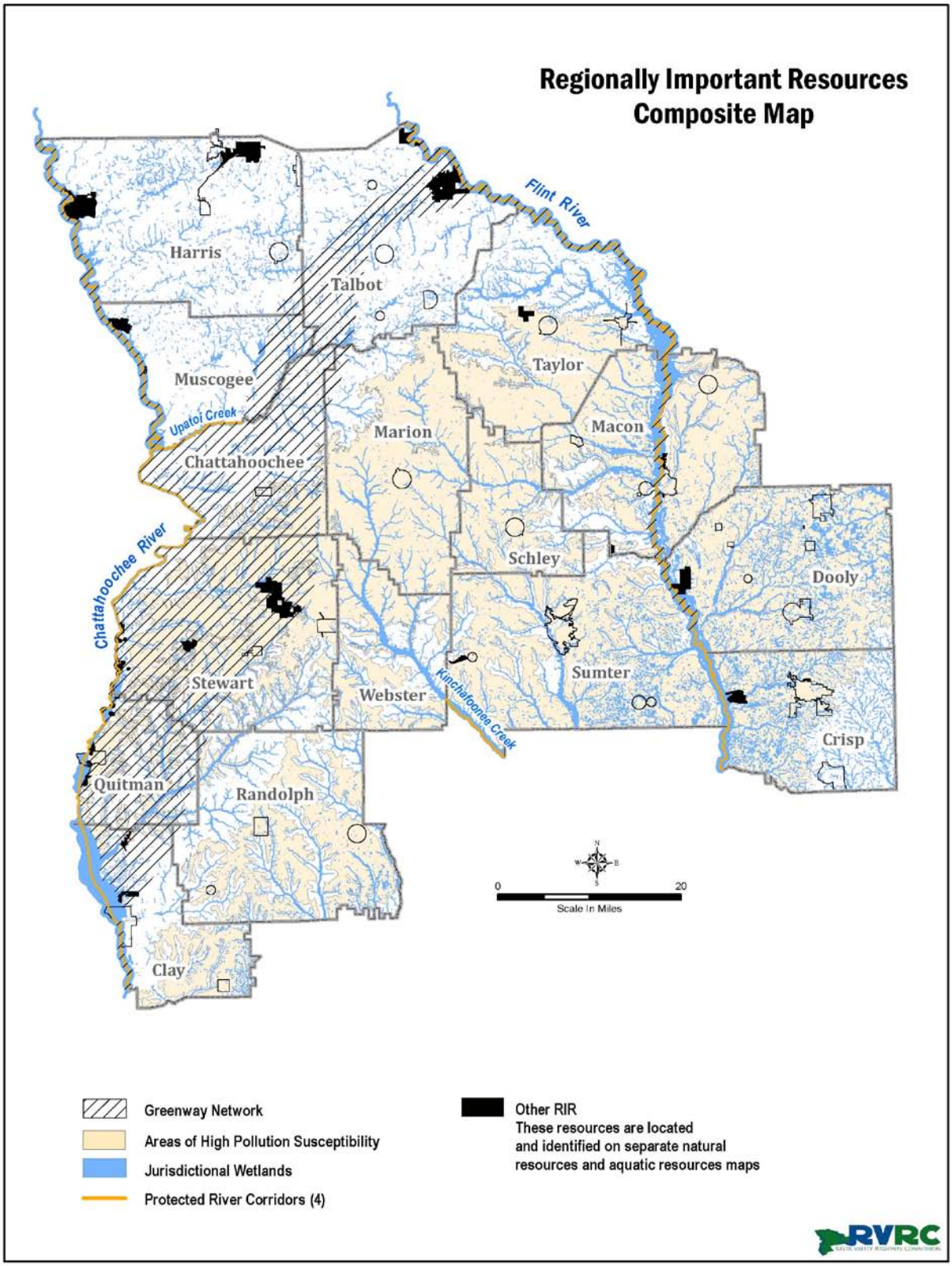
- Maintain existing street grid patterns and uniform facade alignment in new construction by orienting new structures at similar setbacks and lot configurations as existing structures, i.e. parallel to lot lines, not at an angle; orienting primary facades toward the street; aligning building front at street edge, etc.

- Preserve the character of historic downtowns by constructing new and infill development similar in appearance in mass and scale to existing historic structures.

- Site plans, building design, and landscaping should be sensitive to the cultural and natural features of the site, such as topography and views, and should employ cluster development practices and techniques to preserve open space.

- The location, materials and screening of parking areas should minimize visual and environmental impacts, and make the areas more attractive and pedestrian-friendly.

- Take advantage of significant site features, e.g. view shed, trees, and existing heritage resources, as amenities to more easily blend new, infill, and redevelopment into the historic context.


Regionally Important Resources
Composite Map
Flint River
Harris
Talbot
Taylor
Muscogee
Upatoi Creek
Marion
Macon
Chattahoochee
Chattahoochee River
Schley
Dooly
Stewart
Webster
Kinchafoonee Creek
Sumter
Crisp
Quitman
Randolph
Clay
0
20
Scale In Miles
Greenway Network
Areas of High Pollution Susceptibility
Jurisdictional Wetlands
Protected River Corridors (4)
Other RIR
These resources are located
and identified on separate natural
resources and aquatic resources maps
RVRC

APPENDIX

Appendix A – Stakeholders 47

Appendix B – RIR Nomination Form 48

Appendix C – Nominated Resources 49

APPENDIX A - STAKEHOLDERS

Name	Company	Position
Bill Turner	WC Bradley Foundation	-
John Turner	Trees Columbus	President
-	Oxbow Meadows	Director
Candice Wayman	Coalition for Sound Growth	-
-	U.S. Army Corp of Engineers	-
Brant Slay	The Nature Conservancy	-
Wade Harrison	The Nature Conservancy	-
-	The Georgia Conservancy	-
-	Callaway Gardens	-
Forrest Hill	Two Rivers RD&D	-
Pete Swiderek	Fort Benning Directorate of Public Works	-
Sally Bethea	River Keeper	Chattahoochee
Gordon Rogers	River Keeper	Flint
Jack L. McClung	NRCS/USDA	Soil Conservation Technician
Bert Earley	GA Forestry Commission	-
Karen Reese	NRCS	-
Mike Goare	USDA	-
Ben Mosley	GA Soil and Water Conservation Commission	-
Jo McManus	GA Farm Bureau	-
Alva Hopkins	GA Forestry Association	Director of Communications
April Chapman	GA Green Industry Association	Director of Communications
Brent Matthews	GA Erosion and Sedimentation Training Institute	-
Bryan Wagoner	GA Association of Water Professionals	Director of Communications
Josh Holmes	Georgia Land Trust	-
Dr. Carole Rutland	RiverWay South	Executive Director

Regionally Important Resource Nomination Form

A Regionally Important Resource is any **natural** or **cultural** resource, or resource area, possessing significant regional value and importance and which is vulnerable to human actions or activities.

Information about the organization/agency/government submitting nomination:

Name of organization/agency/government: _____

Address: _____

Contact person: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

Information about the resource being nominated:

Name of resource: _____

Location of resource: _____

Briefly describe the importance of this resource and its value to the River Valley Region:

Briefly describe how, and to what degree this resource is threatened or endangered:

Please return to the RVRC no later than November 23, 2009

RVRC
RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COMMISSION

Columbus Office
1428 Second Avenue
P.O. Box 1908
Columbus, GA 31902-1908

APPENDIX C - NOMINATED RESOURCES

This section consists of the identification and description of all resources nominated for inclusion in the Regional Resource Plan. However; not all nominated resources have been included in the Plan. In the general absence of development pressure the majority of the Region's local governments have not developed the administrative capacity to apply many of the policies and practices described herein to the limited developments that have occurred. Based on history and current conditions, the Region's resources are expected to have limited exposure to adverse development pressures for the foreseeable future. For these reasons the only resources included in the Plan are those stipulated in applicable law or in subsequent implementing regulations.

Nominated by Chattahoochee County

Chattahoochee County Jail
The Chattahoochee County Jail is located on Mt. Olive and Boyd Street in Cusseta, Georgia. The property was purchased by the county government in 1854. This two story brick structure with a metal roof was built in 1902 to replace a wooden jail that had been in use since 1855. The exterior shows evidence of Romanesque influence in its arched window and door openings, and the extended second story of the central bay. On June 14, 1902, the county contracted with the Pauly Jail and Manufacturing Company of St. Louis, Missouri to construct the jail for $5,000. The second floor has the original pre-fabricated iron jail cell. Until the state penitentiary was opened in 1911, there was no place to house prisoners above the county level. Thus, the county jail was a very important penal institution. This jail served the county until 1975. On March 13, 1986 the jail was placed on the national register. The Chattahoochee County Historic Preservation Society, Inc. continues in the restoration of the jail.

Nominated by Clay County

Pioneer Village
This is the site of the original outpost created in Fort Gaines. The site consists of several cabins and out-buildings depicting the frontier settlement. Age, weather and lack of upkeep have affected the continued viability of the project.

Lake Walter F. George, Chattahoochee River
The commission feels the lake and Chattahoochee River are both critically important natural resources to Clay County as well as surrounding counties. It provides a source of navigation, recreating and tourism for our area. Threatened water wars from Alabama and Florida may play a significant role in the continued well-being of Lake Walter F. George and the Chattahoochee River.

Clay County Courthouse
The existing courthouse is not the original courthouse but the current site. The courthouse serves the Superior Court, Juvenile Court, Magistrate, Probate Judge and Tax Assessor. It is a historical landmark for the county. Due to its age, it is in need of repairs and updates. It has limited access for handicap and requires special arrangements for court as the court rooms are upstairs and not accessible.

Highway 27 Historic Courthouse Corridor
This newly established corridor runs along highway 27 from north Georgia to South Georgia. The intent is to create a tourism corridor to draw travelers to the downtown areas and view Georgia's many historical courthouses. Signage, advertising, etc. are all needed to create and protect this corridor.

Frontier Village
Frontier Village overlooks the Chattahoochee River. The park has existed since 1908, and most of the buildings being a century old, were moved from various parts of Clay County. There are several different buildings located in the village, including the Boy Scout Cabin. In 1928 the Boy Scouts, led by local minister Emmett Emerson Gardner, received permission to build a log cabin in the

southwest corner of Bluff and Commerce Streets. The boys cut the logs, scraped them, and built the hut themselves. An old Cannon is located on the site, and has rested in the same spot since the Civil War. Since 1908 it has undergone a number of restorations. The Toll House was one of John Dill's houses used for Methodist Church Services. In the 1820s, John Sutlive bought it and used it as a toll and rest stop for the ferry located under the bluff. The Grist Mill was donated by Robert Watson, once located just east of Day's Crossroads, northeast of Fort Gaines. A Confederate Fort was once on this site, however all that remains of the fort erected on the bluff to overlook the river is a watchtower. A statue honoring Otis Micco is also on the site. Micco is a famous Native American overwhelmed by American forces in the early days of Fort Gaines. The ongoing preservation of the current houses and the addition of these other buildings have presented an unending challenge to the city. Future support and funding will be needed to maintain this monumentally historic site.

Sutton's Corner
Originally located on the edge of long-ago plantations, this ancient frontier store complex has been restored and relocated to the former "Globe Tavern and Inn Stagecoach Stop" in Fort Gaines. The "Corner" has been endorsed by museum curators as, "one of a kind in America." Travel back in time to the 1840's and enter a frontier country store with it's petticoat counters, wooden cash registers, antique post office, grist mill, tobacco twister, velvet bean sheller and over 4,000 artifacts (many of which are the only surviving artifacts in the U.S. today). From the 1840's through the post-civil War South, the country store was an intimate and functional part of the social and economic lives of its customers. It was the hub of the local universe — market place, banking and credit source, recreation center, public forum, and news exchange. Literally, everything from swaddling clothes to coffins, from plow shares to Christmas candy, from patent medicines to corsets was included in its inventory. Through three generations, the Suttons did just that, commencing their fortunes selling off the back of a mule wagon. This historical museum is far more than a nostalgic look at an almost vanished institution. It reveals the economic importance of the frontier country store to the southern economy, balancing its romance and color with the grim realties of surviving in the frontier days.

Nominated by Columbus-Muscogee County

"Ma" Rainey House
Gertrude "Ma" Rainey (1886-1939) is known as the "Mother of the Blues." Born Gertrude Pridgett in Columbus, Georgia, on April 26, 1886, Rainey was the first woman known to sing the blues. Her accompanists included Louis Armstrong and Fletcher Henderson. Rainey is given credit for being the first woman to bring the blues into the popular entertainment of her day—vaudeville, minstrel, and tent shows. During the 1910s and 1920s, Ma Rainey became the foremost proponent of the blues style. She was the most rural of the classic blues singers, drawing most of her support from a Southern audience. Between 1923 and 1929, she recorded more than 100 sides at Paramount. However, male blues singers soon began to surpass female blues singers in popularity while the blues in general went into a decline. Rainey's last recording was in 1928, but she continued to perform until 1935, when she left the circuit and went back home to Columbus, Georgia, where she ran two theaters until she died in 1939 of heart failure. In 1983 Ma Rainey was posthumously inducted into the Blues Foundation's Hall of Fame. In 1990 the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame followed suit, citing her as an early influence on Rock and Roll. In 1994 the U.S. Postal Service honored her with a stamp.

Carson McCullers House
Carson McCullers was born Feb. 19, 1917, in Columbus, Ga., was a U.S. novelist and short-story writer was critically acclaimed author of several popular novels in the 1940s and '50s, including *The Member of the Wedding* (1946). *The Member of the Wedding* was dramatized for the stage in the 1950s and filmed in 1952 and 1997. Other films based on her books are *Reflections in a Golden Eye* (1967, with Elizabeth Taylor and Marlon Brando), *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* (1968, starring Alan Arkin) and *The Ballad of the Sad Café* (1991). She studied at Columbia and New York universities and eventually settled in New York's Greenwich Village.

Columbus RiverWalk
The RiverWalk is a 15 mile linear park along the Chattahoochee River. The park has a trail for cyclists, walkers, joggers, etc.

Port Columbus Civil War Naval Museum
The museum features 40,000 square feet of exhibits dealing with the Civil War at sea. Remains of two original Civil War Confederate Navy ships anchor the displays along with full sized reconstructions of parts of three other famous ships including the USS Monitor. Visitors get to enter a full sized ironclad ship and more experience a combat scene from the inside, the nation's only Civil War ironclad combat simulator.

The National Infantry Museum
The National Infantry Museum and Soldier Center is located in Columbus, Georgia, the Home of the Infantry and one of the Army's largest installations. This world-class tribute to Infantrymen past, present and future is the first of its kind in the United States. Throughout the 190,000-square-foot museum, visitors will take an interactive journey through every war fought by the U.S. over the past two centuries. The museum hosts an enviable collection of more than 30,000 artifacts. Era galleries trace Infantry history from before the Revolutionary War to action today in Iraq and Afghanistan. There is a special gallery recognizing Medal of Honor recipients and one that pays tribute to those who love an Infantryman, and the sacrifices they make supporting him. There is also an IMAX Theatre.

Alma Woodsey Thomas House
Alma Thomas (September 22, 1891 – February 24, 1978) was an African American Expressionist painter and art educator. Born and raised in Columbus, Georgia, Thomas moved to Washington, D.C., she was the first graduate of Howard University's art department, the first African American woman to earn a Master of Fine Arts degree from Columbia University, the first African American woman to have a solo exhibit at the Whitney Museum of American Art. Two of Thomas's works were hung in the White House. Her *Watusi (Hard Edge)*, a work inspired by Henri Matisse's paper cutout *The Snail*, with colors reversed hung in the East Wing office of First Lady Michelle Obama but was later sent back.

William H. Spencer House
William Spencer (1857-1925) was an African-American pioneer who, for a half century, led in the development of local schools for members of his race. His house, built in 1912, of two-story frame construction with classical revival influence was Spencer's residence until his death. His family later gave it to the Muscogee County School District to be used for educational purposes. In 1968, it was given to the William H. Spencer Golden Owlettes, a non-profit educational and cultural corporation formed originally of alumni of Spencer High School, named in Professor Spencer's honor. There are several original items in the house, including a piano which belonged to his daughter and used by her to teach piano to many children of the neighborhood. The house is maintained as a museum and is available for meetings and appropriate social functions.

OxBow Meadows
The OxBow Meadows Environmental Learning Center is a regional, hands-on nature center in Columbus, Georgia dedicated to providing quality educational programs and resources that promote environmental awareness and citizen science and to inspire individuals to conserve, protect and restore the natural environment.

Bibb City
Bibb City is a former town in Muscogee County, Georgia, United States. As of the 2000 census, it had a total population of 510. Formerly an incorporated city surrounding—and managed by—the Bibb Manufacturing Co. mill, the city dissolved its charter on December 7 of 2000, two years after the mill closed and there was no longer funding to continue city operations. Incorporated in superior court in August 1909, Bibb City is now a neighborhood of the city of Columbus, Georgia. In September 2006, Bibb City was nominated for National Register of Historic Places by the State Historic Preservation Officer, and the designation was approved in 2010.

<u>Nominated by Dooly County</u>

Historic Downtown Vienna:
Historic Downtown Vienna is part of a locally designated historic district and also listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The City of Vienna has put ordinances in place that provide a

measure of protection to these historic buildings and resource; however, due to the local economy, funds needed to keep these buildings in sound condition to ensure their continue longevity are lacking. Demolition by neglect is the real threat.

Georgia State Cotton Museum:
The museum serves as a tourism draw from I-75, an educational center for area schools, and a gateway to the River Valley Region from the Interstate. This Region's history and heritage is deeply rooted in agriculture and especially the cotton crop. The museum is housed in an historic one-room school house built in the late 19th Century. The existence of the museum and the building structure are threatened due to lack of funding.

Jenkins School:
Built in 1934 by the WPA, this is possibly one of the first buildings built with federal grant money. The English vernacular style building served as the Vienna School until 1959 when new high school building was constructed. At that time the school was renamed Jenkins School and served as the local elementary school. In the 1980s the building was purchased by a private school, Faith Christian, and continues in that capacity today. Neglect – The school is very small with around 20 students using only a small portion of the large building with the other areas used for storage or left to deteriorate.

Nominated by Harris County

Pine Mountain Trail
This well-maintained trail is rated one of the best trail systems in Georgia. It was built and is maintained by the Pine Mountain Trail Association, and is designed for maximum enjoyment of both the day hiker and the overnight backpacker. Main trail (23 miles) and loop connectors (20 miles) total over 43 miles of hiking trails. The main trail is marked in blue blazes, connectors in white and the Mountain Creek Trail has red blazes. Wooden signs mark all connector loops and crossings, campsites and parking lots.

Callaway Gardens
Callaway Gardens is a 13,000 acre resort complex located in Pine Mountain, Georgia, just outside of Columbus, Georgia. The resort draws over 750,000 visitors annually. Callaway Gardens was founded in 1952. The site hosts various events throughout the year including the annual Steeplechase, Fantasy in Lights, Sky High Hot Air Balloon Festival, the Azalea Bowl, and the Masters Water-ski. In addition, the Gardens maintain Robin Lake Beach, the world's largest man-made, white sand beach. It stretches a mile around 65 acre Robin Lake. The Cecil B. Day Butterfly Center is also located in the Gardens. The Day Butterfly Center was designed to recreate a rain forest environment. Every element of the conservatory allows the approximately 50 species of butterflies, numerous tropical plants, tropical birds, and guests to interact with their surroundings.

Nominated by Marion County

Pasaquan:
Pasaquan is a 7-acre compound near Buena Vista, Georgia, created by an eccentric artist named Eddie Owens Martin, who called himself St. EOM. Assisted by his mother, he learned to read despite little formal schooling. At fourteen he left home. After wandering around Georgia and Florida for several months as an itinerant fruit picker, Eddie drifted north, found New York City, where he stayed until the mid-1950s. In New York, Eddie quickly became a savvy street character in Greenwich Village. For more than thirty years he survived in New York, employing whatever means necessary to get by. The New York art scene fed his expanding flamboyant personality and fired his artistic spirit. All the while he was a habitual visitor to the city's museums, libraries, studios, and art galleries. In the late 1930s, during an extended and fever-ridden illness, Martin experienced the first of a series of phenomenal visions. In the initial vision, he was confronted by a trio of extraordinarily tall personages who identified themselves as people of the future -- special envoys from a vaporous land called Pasaquan, a place where the past, the present, the future, and everything else all come together." He had been chosen by them, he later reported, to delineate an understanding of the peace and beauty that the future might hold for mankind, if mankind would take heed. On that day, Eddie Owens Martin of Marion County, Georgia, became St. EOM. The

empowered visitors in his vision revealed how he was to communicate with and receive cosmic instruction from the energies of the universe, and how to follow a course that would enable him to artfully render the futuristic world of Pasaquan in paint and pen, metal and concrete. The most compelling instruction that he received from them was this: To "return to Georgia and do something." That is precisely what he did for over thirty years. Pasaquan, an internationally renowned art site, consists of six major structures, including a redesigned 1885 farmhouse, painted concrete sculptures, and 4 acres of painted masonry concrete walls. In September 2008, Pasaquan was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Nominated by Quitman County

Old Quitman County Jail
The Quitman County Jail, with 12" thick brick walls, is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Nominated by Randolph County

Fletcher Henderson House
Fletcher Henderson (1897-1952) a performer, arranger, and bandleader, became a popular and influential figure in big band and swing music during the 1920s. The Georgia native born on December 18 1897, in Cuthbert, is credited with forming the first big band orchestra around 1920 in New York City. He grew up in a cultured household and was taught to play piano by mother. After earning a degree in chemistry and mathematics at Atlanta University (later Clark Atlanta University), Henderson set off for New York City to find a job as a chemist. Henderson, an African American, soon looked to music for employment opportunities after being turned down for work in his field. He found his first job as a song demonstrator which led to stints as a house pianist for Black Swan records and as a touring pianist and bandleader for the blues singer Ethel Waters. Henderson accompanied numerous female blues singers, including Ida Cox, Gertrude "Ma" Rainey, Bessie Smith, Clara Smith, and Trixie Smith. During the same period, Henderson began recording his own group. In 1921 the Fletcher Henderson Orchestra made several records and attracted some of the best musicians and soloists in New York. The addition of trumpeter Louis Armstrong led Redman to arrange songs that showcased Armstrong's improvisational talent, and others. The dual focus on improvisation and tight arrangements began the movement toward the swing era. Academics and critics argue about the style of music played by Henderson's first band, calling it everything from an imitation of Paul Whiteman's non-jazz dance orchestra to the original genius of big-band swing. By 1935 Henderson disbanded the group to become the arranger and an occasional accompanist for Benny Goodman, who had the most popular swing band at the time. Goodman directed much of the credit for his success to Henderson, who had written arrangements for Goodman's group for many years. Henderson's innovative instrumentation and arrangement laid the foundations for swing. Henderson's legacy also includes the recruitment of top musicians, who usually went on to greater fame under other leaders or with their own names. In 1950 Henderson suffered a stroke and died on December 29, 1952. He is buried in Cuthbert.

Andrew College
Andrew College is a private, liberal arts junior college located a few blocks off the town square in Cuthbert, Randolph County, Georgia, United States. It is associated with the United Methodist Church and is the ninth-oldest college in Georgia. The Andrew College charter is the second oldest charter in the United States for giving an educational institution the right to confer degrees upon women. The college opened in 1854 as a four-year college known as Andrew Female College. It was named in honor of Bishop James O. Andrew, who was responsible for the founding of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. In 1856 Bishop Andrew came to Cuthbert to dedicate the school to “the service of God. In 1917, Andrew College became a two-year college. Because it was still offering preparatory programs, it remained a member of the Southern Association of Secondary Schools. Andrew remained a college serving only women until 1956, when it became coeducational.

Nominated by Stewart County

Westville
Westville is an outdoor history museum which depicts an 1850 west Georgia village. They dotted the 1850s countryside in the southern United States. Experience a community in the twenty-first

century similar to the ones in which our ancestors lived in the middle of the nineteenth century. See where the antebellum townspeople worshipped, voted, and went to school. Westville has over thirty authentically restored and furnished pre-Civil War buildings: houses, stores, workshops, churches, school, and courthouse. In fact, it has all the ingredients of a functioning town. Guides and interpreters in 1850's dress and will take you through the history of Westville, its people, and their times.

Providence Canyon State Park
Visitors are often amazed when they visit "Georgia's Little Grand Canyon." The massive gullies, as deep as 150 feet, were caused by poor farming practices during the 1800s. Hikers who explore the deepest canyons will usually find a thin layer of water along the trail, indication of the water table below. Colorful wildflowers, as well as the pink, orange, red and purple hues of the soft canyon soil, make a beautiful natural painting at this unique park. The rare Plumleaf Azalea grows only in this region and blooms during July and August when most azaleas have lost their color. Visitors can enjoy views of the canyons from the rim trail, and backpackers can stay overnight along the backcountry trail. Camping and cottages are available nearby at Florence Marina State Park on beautiful Lake Walter F. George.

Roods Creek Indian Mounds
The Roods Creek Indian Mounds on Lake Walter F. George, eight mounds were focal pointes of an Indian community and served as a center for political and ceremonial activities during the Mississippian period.

Singer Moye Mounds
Dating to the Mississippian Period (A.D. 800-1600), the Singer-Moye site, located in south central Stewart County, is home to eight earthen mounds ranging from three to forty-six feet in height. The well-preserved site occupies approximately thirty-five acres of mixed pine and hardwood forest. The Singer-Moye site doubtless served a significant sociopolitical role in the prehistory of the Chattahoochee River basin and perhaps of the surrounding areas. The fact that the site was occupied whether continuously or at different times for a span of more than 300 years attests to its prominence. Singer-Moye's numerous and complex arrangement of mounds, several of which are large and show evidence of later additions, further support the notion that this site was a special place in the local Mississippian settlement system. Exactly what functions and services this site and its inhabitants provided to the peoples of the lower Chattahoochee basin are unknown, but it likely was a place for social governance and periodic meetings and rituals, as well as the year-round home of a sizeable community. Professional archaeologists first visited the site in the late 1950s, when Joseph Mahan of the Columbus Museum of Arts and Crafts (which became known later as the Columbus Museum) and Harold A. Huscher of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., collected a small number of surface artifacts. From that time until 2007, teams from the University of Georgia and the Columbus Museum intermittently conducted a variety of tests and excavations. Also discovered were extensive cultural remains and trash heaps that indicate the presence of a sizeable village associated with the mounds. Ceramic collections and radiocarbon dates from the excavations firmly place Singer-Moye within the Mississippian Period of the greater Southeast. So far, Mound C has yielded the earliest dates of A.D. 1100-1200.

Nominated by The Nature Conservancy

Fall Line wetland plant communities
Ravines, slopes, and wetlands scattered throughout the Fall Line of southern Talbot County, northern Marion County and Taylor County. These plant communities harbor a high diversity of plant and animal species, often rare, including carnivorous plants such as pitcher points, and native wild orchids. These islands of biodiversity in the River Valley Region are difficult to recover once lost, so protection and management is critical. They depend on both moisture and fire at different times and to different degrees an unusual combination unique to the topography and soils of the Fall Line. Incompatible land use including fire exclusion and hydrological disruption (ditching and draining) are the most common threats to this important resource. Ongoing assessment of these plant communities have revealed some species known to exist in only a handful of places in the entire state, rated by Natureserve.org as imperiled or critically–impaired.

Gopher Tortoise:
Deep Sand hills and ridges of Talbot, Marion and Taylor Counties (Fall Line Sand hills)
The Gopher Tortoise is listed as threatened by the state of Georgia, is federally listed in Louisiana, Mississippi, and western Alabama, and has been petitioned for federal listing in this part of its range as well. The species depends on the sandy soils and longleaf pine – scrub oak – grassland ecosystems of the Fall Line Sandhills. It is also considered a "keystone species" as it burrows provide habitat for over 300 animal species. The species is threatened primarily by habitat loss associated with increasing development. As Fort Benning's mission continues to grow, encouraging development around the installation, the treat to the remaining habitat will become increasingly severe and the argument for federal listing, with associated land-use restrictions, more compelling.

Fall Line streams:
Shoals and rapids on stream in Harris, Muscogee, Talbot and Taylor Counties
These streams are tributaries of the Chattahoochee and Flint Rivers; such as Mulberry, Flat Shoals, and Big Lazer Creeks. Due to the distinctive geology and ecology of the Fall Line, these streams often support unique communities of aquatic flora and fauna. The federally endangered Relict Trillium (Trillium residuum) and the state threatened shoals spider-lily (Hymeneal's coronaries) are just a few examples of the beauty and biodiversity associated with these streams. Sedimentation from traffic-induced erosion, incompatible development, and fragmentation are the most severe threatens to this resource. These streams occupy a relatively small geographic area as it is, but the rapid growth in development in the region has intensified the threat they face.

Piedmont and Montana Longleaf Pine:
Harris and Talbot Counties, e.g. Pine Mountain and Sprewell Bluff.
The Piedmont and Montana longleaf pine ecosystem is a particularly unique forest ecosystem found today only in a few raining highland areas of northwest Georgia and northeast Alabama. Longleaf pine in the piedmont and mountains represents an unusual fire-adapted condition with high diversity of unique plant and animal species. This resource is being threatened primarily by fire suppression, forest conversion, and urban development. Without regular recurrence of fire, hardwood communities quickly suppress and shade out longleaf pine seedlings, and the mature pines eventually disappear from the forest as hardwood trees take over.

RiverWay South:
The following resources were hand-written on a map used as part of an RIR program during a RiverWay South meeting.

Columbus
Carson McCullers Childhood home
River Walk
Bike Trail
Ma Rainey House
Museums: Port Columbus, National Infantry, Columbus
Ten historic districts
Alma Thomas House
Bibb City
Ox Bow Meadows

Cuthbert
Fletcher Henderson Home
Andrew College

Fort Gaines
Historic District
Frontier Village
Sutton's Corner

Georgetown
Old Quitman County Jail

Chattahoochee County
Old Jail

Lumpkin/Stewart County
Westville
Providence Canyon
Rood Creek Mounds
Singer Moyer Mounds

Harris County
Callaway Gardens
Pine Mountain Hiking Trail

Marion County
Pasaquan
Gopher Tortoise habitat

Nominated by Regional Commission Staff:

Columbus Historic Riverfront Industrial District
The power of the Chattahoochee River across the Fall Line made Columbus one of the earliest major textile centers in the South. The city's oldest three dams (1828, 1844, and 1900) and the five industries associated with these dams on the river; City Mills (1828), Eagle and Phenix Mills (1850), Columbus Iron Works (1853), Muscogee Manufacturing Company (1868), and Bibb Manufacturing Company (1900) form the district. The sites within this district contain rare examples of early technologies utilized to transfer the power of the river to manufacturing. The most architecturally significant feature of this district is a six block area along the west side of Front Avenue which contains only industrial and commercial buildings.

Octagon House
This house is among the few fully realized double octagon houses in the U.S. The Octagon House exemplifies a fad that climaxed following publication of Squire Fowler's "A Home for All" on octagon design. The original house, built in 1829-30, was a simple rectangular frame with the octagonal four-room addition added in front of the original structure in 1863.

Springer Opera House
Opened in 1871, this opera house hosted celebrated personalities in the late 19th and early 20th centuries such as Edwin Booth, John Philip Sousa, Will Rogers, Ethel Barrymore, Oscar Wilde, Ma Rainey, William Jennings Bryan, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Lillie Langtry. It was converted to a movie house during the Depression and was slated for demolition in 1964. A group of citizens roused the community to save the Springer and a newly renovated Opera House reopened in 1965. At that time, Governor Jimmy Carter designated the Springer as the State Theater of Georgia. In 1998, the Springer once again underwent renovation. The $12 million project rejuvenated the entire theater and included areas untouched in 1964, a complete outfitting with state of the art equipment, and an ambitious historic interior treatment.

Historic Districts distributed throughout the Region