



Project Selection Criteria Information

The following is a listing of Project Selection Criteria that will be considered when identifying, evaluating and prioritizing potential conservation projects of Southern Conservation Trust.

I. Project Selection Criteria

Southern Conservation Trust preserves lands within the Southern Crescent of Metro Atlanta, focusing on wetlands, stream corridors and properties with exemplary scenic views, plant communities, and wildlife habitat.

In order to be considered for conservation, the proposed property must meet a significant number of the following criteria (not prioritized):

A. Within Focus Area (in order of priority)

1. Fayette County
2. Flint River Basin within outlying counties, including Henry, Spalding, etc.
3. Adjoining counties:
 - South Fulton below I 20 in Chattahoochee River basin
 - Coweta in Chattahoochee River basin
 - Clayton
 - Henry
 - Spalding

Meriwether

B. Ecological Value

1. The property contains a significant buffer that will:
 - a. Protect water quality and wildlife habitat
 - b. Maintain the existing habitat integrity.
 - c. Provide a corridor for wildlife movement.
2. The property contains a significant wetland.
 - a. The wetland is indicated on the US Fish and Wildlife Service's, National Wetland Inventory Map as a natural wetland.
 - b. The wetland is important wildlife habitat
 - c. The wetland has functions and values that are not officially inventoried or mapped.
 - d. This is a wetland mitigation project permitted by the Army Corps of Engineers.
3. The property's protection would protect rare, endangered or sensitive plant and animal species and/or natural community.

- a. The property contains a plant or animal species that has the status of “threatened” or “endangered”) according to the State of Georgia or U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.
<http://athens.fws.gov/endangered.html>
- b. The property contains a species or natural community type that has an “E”, “T”, “R” or “U” rank as identified by the Georgia Natural Heritage Program.
<http://georgiawildlife.dnr.state.ga.us/content/displaycontent.asp?txtDocument=89&txtPage=2>

C. Recreation Value

1. The property will provide appropriate public access that would not undermine ecological or other conservation values of the property.
 - a. Public access is needed but not available.
 - b. Public access to greenspace is limited in the region.
 - c. The property is accessible by road, existing or proposed trails, public lands or public easements.
2. The property contains existing features and/or opportunities with recreational value such as hiking trails, historically significant sites, natural features or water frontage suitable for swimming, fishing or boating.
3. The property would serve to enhance the availability and quality of recreational opportunities on adjacent lands.

D. Scenic Value

1. The property provides a significant scenic resource from land.
 - a. Property is visibly prominent and provides a view from a roadway, trail or adjacent property.
 - b. Property is situated in such a way that its development would obstruct or diminish scenic views.
 - c. Property is situated in such a way that its development would interrupt views across already protected land.
2. The property has a scenic value that would be beneficial for the overall marketability and economic development of the Southern Crescent.

E. Development pressure

1. Project preserves land that is threatened by imminent inappropriate development.
2. Project is in an area that has been previously recognized by a city, county, and/or a regional plan to have an important conservation value and/or to be under development pressure that would undermine that value.
3. Project preserves land that is vulnerable to development that would not preserve its community value.
 - a. Project benefits many members of the community and region (recreationally, aesthetically, ecologically, etc.).
 - b. Project maintains community’s connection and access (if appropriate) to adjacent scenic, public or protected land that would otherwise be disturbed by its development.
4. Land is adjacent to property that is already protected and would further reduce the possibility of inappropriate development.
5. Project land is developable and is adjacent to land that is being developed or is under development pressure.

F. Special Features

1. Unique or significant geological or landscape features exist.
2. Historically/culturally significant features exist.

II. Feasibility Issues: Southern Conservation Trust may refuse a project if:

A. Project would threaten the credibility of the Trust.

1. Project is in opposition to SCT's mission or to the criteria set forth in Sect. I.
2. Project sets an inappropriate precedent with other land owners, agencies or communities.
3. Project has ethical or public image problems.

B. The donation may not be accepted if it is determined that the donor does not provide adequate stewardship provisions and/or funds or funds would not be available.

C. Project management, monitoring, and stewardship requirements can not be met.

1. The land will not generate revenue or is not endowed to pay for stewardship of the property
2. The cost of management and monitoring is too expensive for SCT to take on the project.
3. The property is contaminated by waste, contains hazards, or has liability problems that are irreparable or too expensive to undertake.
4. Management will be difficult due to the size of the property its fragmentation, inaccessibility, vandalism, or other circumstances.
5. The terms of conservation restrictions on the property will be difficult or impossible to enforce.

D. Conservation proposal is inappropriate.

1. Title limitations exist that are in opposition to the primary conservation values of the project or would limit the ability of the conservation easement to be enforced.
2. Landowner or donor insists on provisions or reserved rights that are potentially in opposition to the primary conservation values of the project and/or SCT's mission.
3. The conservation restriction will not last in perpetuity.
4. The conservation easement protects some resources while permitting the destruction of other significant resources.
5. The cost of the conservation effort is too expensive in relation to the conservation value of the property.

E. Other problems exist.

1. Land is in litigation or an estate dispute, boundary dispute or other legal problems exist that would increase costs and complications of the project beyond the scope of Southern Conservation Trust.
2. Project size or cost is beyond reasonable financial and personnel capabilities of Southern Conservation Trust.
3. Southern Conservation Trust's board, legal counsel or staff recognize a problem not mentioned herein.