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GWINNETT COUNTY PURCHASES LAND TO EXPAND LITTLE MULBERRY RIVER PARK LAND

(Lawrenceville, February 22, 2001) – As part of the 2001 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) program, Gwinnett County purchased 404.5 acres of land in northeast Gwinnett County. The land deal, which closed today for \$6.6 million, expands the 1998, \$5.1 million, green space purchase of 485 acres north of Dacula in the Hog Mountain/Hamilton Mill area, known as Little Mulberry River Park.

Combined with the adjacent Little Mulberry River Park, the 890-acre site becomes Gwinnett County's largest park, surpassing the 700-acre Tribble Mill Regional Park in size. The County identified this land parcel as a potential park acquisition dating back as far as the 1980s due to its pristine natural beauty.

Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners Chairman F. Wayne Hill pointed out the importance of this land purchase. "This is a unique piece of property in Gwinnett County, and we are very fortunate to have the opportunity to preserve this land," Hill said. "Again, I would like to thank the citizens of Gwinnett County for their support in the purchase of park land and green space," he added.

Gwinnett County Parks & Recreation will initiate planning efforts for the new park land in the upcoming year. Phylecia Wilson, chair of the Gwinnett County Recreation Authority, stated that "we envision combining the Master Plan for the Little Mulberry River Park site with an effort to begin planning the additional property. This purchase presents an opportunity to meet a wide range of recreational needs and to also preserve our natural resources."

As with the Little Mulberry River Park site, the land is not yet open for public use until planning and public access can be accommodated.

The 400+ acre purchase contains a large lake that is fed by the Little Mulberry River and its tributaries. The wooded uplands area adjoins the existing Little Mulberry River Park site. A park Master Plan for the existing park land features passive recreational use of the property, including trails, picnic areas and open space.

The mission of Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation is to provide quality parks and leisure activities to the citizens of Gwinnett County.

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