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NEWS RELEASE

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GWINNETT COUNTY FINALIZES PASSIVE PARK LAND ACQUISITION DETAILS

(Lawrenceville, March 28, 2003) – Gwinnett County officials have settled the price of a significant piece of land in eastern Gwinnett County, which the County acquired for use as a park. Located in the Harbins area, the total 1,615 acres will be used for future open space and recreational purposes and constitutes Gwinnett’s largest single park acquisition.

Gwinnett County acquired the land in two parcels. The County purchased a 21.29-acre tract from Leslie P. Harrison for \$17,500 per acre. The second tract of 1,593.86 acres was purchased from J. Harold Harrison at a cost of \$16,626 per acre. The purchase was funded primarily by the 2001 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax. The 2000 Parks and Recreation Capital Improvement Program, which set priorities for the 2001 sales tax program, identified a need for a community park in the Harbins area of Gwinnett County.

The land, which is part of the Alcovy River watershed, contains hundreds of acres of mixed hardwood and pine forest, streams, tributaries, and a portion of the Alcovy River. Along with water quality protection, the acquisition meets other Gwinnett County Greenspace Program goals such as opportunities for passive recreation and protection of natural habitat and corridors for native plant and animal species.

“We are happy to conclude the purchase of this land,” said Gwinnett County Commission Chairman F. Wayne Hill. “This property, with its many natural qualities, bolsters Gwinnett County’s commitment to preserve natural areas and will enhance the quality of life for all of Gwinnett’s citizens. I am looking forward to the creation of a legacy park that residents will enjoy for many generations to come.”

“This significant land purchase is a direct result of the cooperation of eight commissioners during their various terms of office,” said Gwinnett County Administrator Charlotte Nash. “Over

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the course of several years, Commission Chairman F. Wayne Hill and District Commissioners Marcia Neaton, Bert Nasuti, John Dunn, and Kevin Kenerly, as well as former district commissioners Tommy Hughes, Patti Muise, and Judy Waters all played a key role in the preservation of this beautiful piece of land today.”

Gwinnett County has taken steps to secure the property. Park Police Unit officers patrol the land and fencing, barriers, and signage have been erected on the site. There are no public facilities on the land, which is not open to the public at this time.

County staff will soon begin an inventory and analysis phase for planning the park. This process includes thorough mapping, taking inventory of the site’s natural features, learning the history of the site, and so on. The Parks and Recreation Project Administration Division will begin to create a master plan for the park in 2004.

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