

IMAGINATION

Spalding found a novel (and green) way to grow companies

Environmentally conscious companies have good reason to look at Spalding County in 2014. The county is marketing one of Georgia's first mixed-use "eco parks," a 570-acre development that is as committed to the countryside as it is to the companies who choose to locate there.

The park's attributes and criteria can be a brand builder for businesses that make and sell "green" products. Roughly a third of the property will be undeveloped, offering a forest walking trail, historic lodge and a centrally located lake with "the best bass fishing in the Southeast," according to David Luckie, executive director of the county's development authority.

Eleven other lakes will serve as retention and detention ponds. Drought-resistant plants will define the landscape; energy-efficient lighting will be a park standard. As for the buildings themselves – they'll have to meet the eco-friendly criteria being finalized by the authority.

The long-term plan, developed with the help of experts from Georgia Tech, is to add a hotel/conference center and a residential neighborhood, according to Luckie.

"The best part is that when you're here, you feel like you're miles from anywhere," he adds, "but you're really just three miles from Griffin and seven miles from I-75. There's going to be nothing else like it in Georgia."

Nearly 600 acres of Spalding countryside are slated for one of Georgia's first 'eco parks.'
PHOTO: Spalding County Development Authority

