



# Oconee River Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc.

## 2005 Annual Report





### **The RC&D Mission**

Over 35 years ago, Congress established a unique program within the U.S. Department of Agriculture designed to help rural people help themselves.

This program assists local people by providing the tools and technical support needed to stabilize and grow their own communities, while at the same time, protect and develop their natural resources. Local councils provide direction and planning and coordinate the implementation of specific projects within designated council boundaries. These guiding principles define the Resource Conservation and Development program. This program, with a focus on local direction and control, is one of the most successful rural development programs of the federal government.

### **Oconee River RC&D**

In 1968, the Oconee River RC&D Council began the planning process to obtain official status for two proposed RC&D Areas, the Oconee River and the Broad River. In January 1979, after several years of delays, a Steering Committee sent a delegation of elected and lay leaders to Washington, D.C. A combined and expanded application was submitted, and the Council was officially chartered in September 1979. The original charter designated a 10-county area. Since then, there have been two expansions and the Council area now consists of 14 counties. The Council is an independent 501(c)(3), nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with a primary focus of the acceleration of conservation, development and proper use of natural and human resources within its 14-county area. The board of directors consists of two volunteer representatives from each of the 14 member counties and one volunteer representative from each of four Soil and Water Conservation Districts within the council boundaries.

#### ***Our Mission***

Provide leadership and technical support to the citizens of the Oconee River RC&D Council Area with the conservation, development and proper use of natural and human resources to enhance the quality of life and achieve sustainable development.

#### ***Our Vision***

A vibrant region with a sustainable environment that contains a diverse and stable economy, thus providing a unique quality of life for its citizens.

#### ***Our Goals***

Land Conservation ~ Improve quality of soil resources by promoting projects that reduce erosion and sedimentation.

Water Management ~ Improve quality of water resources by promoting agricultural water management and water quality projects.

Community Development ~ Promote economic self-sufficiency and development in rural communities through improved transportation and agricultural marketing.

Land Management ~ Promote farm land protection through community partnerships, while encouraging wildlife habitat protection.

Council Self-Sufficiency ~ Increase management efficiency of Council operations.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT:

On behalf of the Oconee River RC&D Council and the Executive Board, I take great pride in presenting our 2005 Annual Report. The Annual Report provides an overview of Council activities and accomplishments throughout the year.



It has been a busy and successful year! The initiated, completed and on-going projects indicate the strength and depth of the Oconee River RC&D Council. We could not have accomplished our goals without the support and partnerships with local, state and federal agencies, organizations and individuals that provided funding through grants and contributions. We are appreciative of this support, and especially the support of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service for providing the infrastructure, staff and leadership to make the RC&D program possible.

I want to express my personal thanks to the RC&D Council members that provide leadership to our communities. Their hard work and dedication is evident in our success, and we are extremely grateful for the time and dedication of our volunteers. These efforts are enhanced by our excellent RC&D staff.

As I conclude my term of Presidency, I would like to say my work with the Council has been a very rewarding experience. I look forward to continuing to work with the Council as we continue to serve our communities. As we focus on another year of activities, I want to encourage our members to continue to volunteer their time and skills to "make a difference". I would also like to encourage anyone who is not currently involved in RC&D to consider becoming involved. There is no greater reward than knowing you have made a difference in your community.

Larry Eley  
Council President

## FROM THE COORDINATOR:

Have you ever noticed that even when you are looking for the excitement and invigoration of change that change can be a scary thing? As I adjust to changes in my life, sometimes I am looking forward and sometimes I am looking backward. As I write my comments, I have now finished my first full year as Coordinator at Oconee River RC&D, and I am definitely looking forward.

When asked in January of 2005 if I liked my new position as Coordinator, I would respond with a rather unconvincing yes, but when asked the same question in January 2006 I can speak from the heart with a resounding Yes. Adjusting to change takes time. It also takes time to get to know people and develop working partnerships and friends. Time has given me an opportunity to become familiar with existing Council projects and contribute my ideas and energy toward the development of new projects that will help carry the Council forward.

It was an eventful year at the Oconee River RC&D office. We started our year by summarizing the Council's 25 years of accomplishments to celebrate its silver anniversary. We used this same summary to promote the RC&D program locally and nationally for increased Congressional funding, recognizing the importance of Council Self-Sufficiency and planning for a productive future. At the midpoint of our year, we arranged and painted the office! You would not believe how this has changed our outlook and increased our efficiency. At the end of the year, the Council itself faced major change as it closed out its enduring and incredibly successful no-till planting and education program. The emotional appeal of this project seemingly had the Equipment Committee spellbound, but their good business sense allowed the program to play out gracefully, creating four new businesses for our now independent equipment operators!

One thing is for sure about the federal and Council employees that staff the Oconee River RC&D office. We work together as a team. We do what it takes to get the job done, regardless of position description. I extend my sincere appreciation and thanks to Millie, Jim and Renay for being great co-workers.

I am looking forward to working on all of the new projects the Council and support staff are dreaming up!

Holli Kuykendall  
RC&D Coordinator

## 2005 Council Membership

### Baldwin County

Bill Millians  
Bobby Blizzard

### Barrow County

Tom Bell  
Eddie Elder

### Clarke County

Charles Carter  
Edgar Wood

### Elbert County

Charles Kinney  
Phyllis Thompson

### Greene County

Charles Crumbley  
Titus Andrews

### Hancock County

Claudia Snead  
Jessie Mitchell

### Jackson County

Harold Fletcher  
Henry Braselton

### Madison County

Victor Johnson  
John Dunleavy

### Morgan County

John Nunn  
Walter Curtis Butler Jr.

### Oconee County

Bubber Wilkes  
Melvin Davis

### Oglethorpe County

Doug Bower  
Carol Nimmons

### Putnam County

Sylbie Yon  
Tony Clack

### Taliaferro County

Vacancy  
Bobby Moore

### Walton County

Lee Dillard  
Tim Jackson

### Broad River SWCD

Phil Sims

### Oconee River SWCD

Henry Braselton

### Piedmont SWCD

Larry Eley

### Walton County SWCD

Cliff Harrison

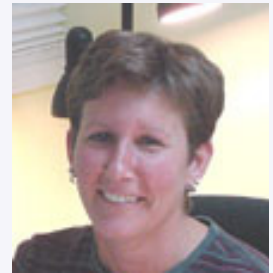
### Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center

Jim Dove

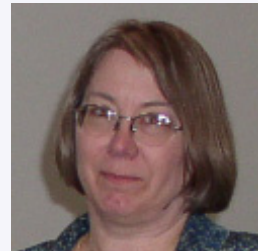
## 2005 Officers

President - Larry Eley  
Vice-President - Tom Bell  
Secretary - Lee Dillard  
Treasurer - Bubber Wilkes

## Council Staff



**Holli Kuykendall**  
*Coordinator*



**Millie Gardner**  
*Secretary*



**Jim Wren**  
*Coordinator  
Assistant*



**Renay Armit**  
*Accounting  
Manager*

## Oconee River RC&D

### 2005 Projects, Activities, and Accomplishments

#### LAND CONSERVATION

##### No-Till Planting

Conservation tillage is recognized nationwide for its positive effects on soil and water quality. For the environment, conservation tillage reduces soil erosion. For the producer, conservation tillage improves the bottom line of production by reducing fuel consumption and the cost of labor.



Working through the Georgia Soil & Water Conservation Commission, the Council received a grant in 1988 to purchase equipment for a no-till demonstration project. With the educational and resource objectives of

the program complete, operation of the Council's no-till planting program concluded on November 30, 2005. A total of 76,000 acres were planted using the Council's no-till equipment since the project was initiated. Sale of the Council's equipment resulted in the creation of three new businesses as previous operators will now provide the no-till planting service as independent contractors.

##### Hydroseeding

Hydroseeding is an ideal planting method to treat critical erosion problems associated with road banks, construction sites, and steep slopes.



The Council's hydroseeding program was designed to meet the needs of and help stop erosion problems for small landowners and units of government. With the educational and resource objectives of the Council's program complete, operation of the hydroseeding equipment has been transferred to an independent contractor to continue the program.

#### WATER MANAGEMENT

##### Piedmont Pumpout Project



In 1987, the Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) identified a potential problem with animal waste disposal around Lakes Sinclair and Oconee. With one-third of Georgia's dairies located in five counties around the two lakes, the potential for pollution was considered high. A task force formed to develop solutions to the problem recommended using pumpout equipment and nutrient management plans to dispose of excess animal waste. The Piedmont SWCD and Oconee River RC&D joined forces, and with a grant from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, began the Lagoon Pumpout Program to assist

landowners. Using pumpout equipment, animal waste is pumped from existing holding ponds onto pastures and cropland, turning a waste product into a resource.



##### 2005 Accomplishments:

13 Landowners were assisted during 2005, bringing the total to over 238 landowners assisted, and over 16,250 acres treated.

## Oconee River RC&D 2005 Projects, Activities, and Accomplishments

### WATER MANAGEMENT

#### LOWER LAKE OCONEE 319 PROJECT

To help combat the problem of agricultural wastes and residues in the Lower Lake Oconee Watershed, a team effort led by the Oconee River RC&D Council resulted in a grant in the amount of \$919,000 in 2002 from the Department of Natural Resources, Georgia Environmental Protection Division. Concluding in 2005, Oconee River RC&D Council has administered the project, which required the installation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) throughout the Lower Lake Oconee Watershed over a three-year period. The Natural Resources Conservation Service provided technical assistance for the project through its Field and Area Office staff.

The purpose of the project was to implement BMPs in the watershed that would help reduce pollution caused by animal waste and runoff resulting from agricultural production. Agricultural BMPs are voluntary conservation techniques landowners can use, and are one of the most practical approaches for protecting water quality by effectively reducing waste and nutrient runoff pollution.

A total of 41 producers in eight Council counties were assisted with BMPs including fencing, stream crossings, stackhouses, and other NRCS approved practices. Landowners qualifying for grant funding were assisted in implementing their BMPs with a 60% match toward project costs. The landowner provided the remaining 40% with an in-kind contribution of either labor or monetary funds. In addition to assisting producers with the implementation of BMPs, the project focused on educational outreach, including field days and presentations made to producers and a variety of agricultural and environmental organizations.



*Jim Wren  
Project Coordinator*

#### *Oglethorpe County Field Day*



As the Lower Lake Oconee 319 Project wound down to a successful conclusion, Oconee River RC&D hosted two Producer Field Days to highlight project accomplishments. The Oglethorpe County Field Day was held on October 25 at the Russ Yeany farm with approximately 35 people in attendance. The Walton County Field Day was held on July 9, 2005 at the Hubert Harris farm with approximately 30 people in attendance. The field days were held in partnership with the Broad River and Walton County Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and the Oglethorpe County and Walton County Extension Service offices.



*Russ Yeany served as an excellent spokesperson for best management practices and answered questions from fellow producers.*

#### 2005 Accomplishments:

Oconee River RC&D Council provided financial assistance in the amount of \$164,572 to 25 producers for BMP's to include water troughs, exclusion fencing, pipeline, pasture planting, cross-fencing, and heavy use areas.

County	# of Producers Assisted	Total Funding
Barrow	4	\$ 8,411
Greene	9	\$50,480
Oconee	6	\$30,996
Oglethorpe	5	\$58,302
Walton	1	\$16,383

## WATER MANAGEMENT

### Winter Feeder Tour

Oconee River RC&D, in partnership with the Georgia Grazing Lands Conservation Coalition (GGLCC), hosted a Winter Feeder Fact-Finding Tour on March 8, 2005. The tour was organized to visit two winter feeders that were installed as demonstrations on working livestock operations in the RC&D area. The first stop of the tour was Danny Duvall's Greene County farm where a wooden winter feeder structure was cost-shared through the Lower Lake Oconee 319 water quality project administered by Oconee River RC&D. The second tour stop was George Lohr's Morgan County farm where a steel structure was cost-shared through the Sugar Creek 319 water quality project administered by the Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission. Local offices of the Natural Resources Conservation Service provided technical assistance to install both structures.



The objective of the tour was to provide an overview of how neighboring states, such as North Carolina, are implementing the winter feeder practice. Success stories, planning and ranking documents, and quick facts concerning the demonstration structures were provided to the participants to educate and help make recommendations on how Georgia should proceed with promoting the practice through cost-share programs available in the state.



Our appreciation is extended to all of those involved in the tour, from the conservationists and engineers in neighboring states that shared information with us, to the conservationists and engineers in Georgia that provided planning and design information for our

demonstration winter feeders, to the participants of the tour that provided their thoughts on the practice. It was generally agreed that the winter feeder practice promotes environmental quality, while sustaining production and economic efficiency.

The information and discussions that resulted from this tour have helped pave the way for implementing the Winter Feeder practice in Georgia.



## WATER MANAGEMENT

### Rooty and Crooked Creek Watersheds 319 Project

The headwaters of Rooty and Crook Creek are located in central Putnam County. Both Rooty and Crooked Creek drain into Lake Sinclair. The water quality in Rooty Creek is of particular concern since there is a drinking water intake facility being proposed for the Rooty Creek embayment of Lake Sinclair. The intake facility would help provide water for the city of Milledgeville.

In June 2005, the RC&D Council signed a contract with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Environmental Protection Division to financially assist producers in the two watersheds with the installation and management of conservation practices. An Advisory Board representing local groups, including Putnam-Baldwin-Jones Cattlemen's

Association, Farm Bureau, and the Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District is functioning to provide guidance on the project. The Putnam County offices of the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Extension Service are partnering with the RC&D Council to provide technical and educational assistance to operations within the watersheds.



In addition to public water quality benefits that will result from the project, implementation of Best Management Practices oftentimes helps the bottom line and management capabilities of the producers that implement them. The total project as contracted is valued at \$430,000 with \$258,000 provided in 319 funding for administration and BMP application. The project will

impact 12,600 acres in the Rooty and Crooked Creek Watersheds.

### *Field Day Held October 4*



A producer field day was held at the Richard and Sheila Key farm on October 4 to kick-off the sign-up for participation in this project. Producers were able to view and discuss best management practices. The project will offer practices such as exclusion fencing, livestock water systems, heavy use areas, cross fencing, stream bank protection, nutrient management, and stream buffers.



The project is designed to assist with a variety of livestock, forestry and cropping practices that protect water quality and enhance management efficiency. For the first time in Georgia, this project will offer producers cost-share assistance with the establishment of shade structures to assist with grazing management. Producers often request assistance with providing shade as they exclude livestock from riparian areas and provide alternative water.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### Georgia Cooperative Development Center

Golden Triangle RC&D Council in Blakely, Georgia received a grant from USDA-Rural Development in September 2004 to expand their successful Cooperative Development Center and extend services statewide by involving and promoting the cooperative business structure through each RC&D Council in Georgia. The Georgia Cooperative Development Center is designed to bring the agriculture and tourism industries together and provide technical assistance to interested cooperative groups. Cooperatives allow farmers and others to work together to add value to existing enterprises or to find new enterprises which will increase their bottom line. The end result is a better economy for rural Georgia.

**On October 6, 2005 poultry producers in the Council area participated in a tour of Ed Rollins' R-GROW Poultry Based Composting Facility in Giles County, TN. Other sponsors of the tour were the Georgia Cooperative Development Center and UGA - Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development.**

**During 2005, Oconee River RC&D Council submitted and received funding for feasibility studies and business plans for three proposals:**

**Marketing cooperative to compost and add value to poultry litter. The grant proposal was submitted on behalf of three Oconee County producers, and was funded for \$20,000.**

**A mobile poultry processing facility in Hancock County. Amount funded was \$7,000.**

**A vegetable packing shed in Hancock County. Amount funded was \$5,000.**

Oconee River RC&D Council participated in monthly meetings to review and approve grant applications submitted to the Georgia Cooperative Development Center for funding.

## Wheels to Work

Transportation is often the major barrier that restricts welfare recipients from obtaining employment. Elimination of this barrier was the motivation of the "Peach on Wheels" program, which began in 1997 with a grant from Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority. The concept was to provide affordable, reliable transportation to selected Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) clients. Participants received a no-interest loan with low payments for a used vehicle, financial and budget management assistance, training on general car maintenance responsibilities, and moral support.

Initially Oconee River RC&D partnered with DFCS and the Local Coordinating Councils in Elbert, Greene, Hancock, Putnam, and Walton Counties. In 1998, the pro-

gram underwent a name change to "Wheels to Work", and expanded to the entire Council area of 14 counties. The original grant provided vehicles to 24 clients from 1997-1999. In 2000, the Georgia Department of Human Resources was appropriated more than \$10 million statewide for the Wheels to Work Program. From this appropriation, and continued partnership with DFCS, Oconee River RC&D Council received a grant of \$945,100 to place at least 160 vehicles. Council goals were exceeded with a total placement of 178 vehicles during 2000-2001.



*Bill Millians and Bobby Blizzard  
(Baldwin County Board Representatives)  
presenting keys to new WTW client  
Stephanie Stubbs*

## COMMUNITY

### Polly Hardigree Ward Memorial Scholarship



As provided through agreement with Ms. Vivian Ward to develop a wildlife sanctuary in Oconee County, an annual scholarship is provided to an Oconee County high school student majoring in a natural resources course of study. The 2005 Polly Hardigree Ward Memorial Scholarship was presented to Anna Kyle Shealy on May 19 at the Oconee County High School's Honors Day celebration. Anna is now attending Abraham Baldwin Agriculture College in Tifton and epitomizes the type of student the scholarship is intended for. She has been active in 4-H and the Future Farmers of America, was a member of the Beta Club and National Honor Society, and participated in the Oconee County Chamber of Commerce Youth Leadership Program.

## LAND MANAGEMENT

### David Henry Hardigree Wildlife Sanctuary

Of all the worthwhile projects the Oconee River RC&D has been involved with, none has had the emotional appeal and interest as does the David Henry Hardigree Wildlife Sanctuary. In 1992, Vivian Ward ("Miss Vivian" to everyone who knew her), granddaughter of David Henry Hardigree, and the Oconee River RC&D entered into an agreement that created a wildlife sanctuary on approximately 83 acres in Oconee County just south of Watkinsville. Through this agreement, the Council developed a wildlife management plan for implementation over a number of years. The land is planned to serve as a sanctuary for wildlife and is also a working agricultural farm that produces hay, oats, wheat, and other grasses and grains that attract wildlife to the site. The agreement also provided for Council funding of the Polly Hardigree Ward Scholarship.

Miss Vivian passed away in 2003. It was her dream to leave a legacy by creating a sanctuary for wildlife and for people who love wildlife as she did. Thanks to her vision, there will always be a little piece of Georgia the way it used to be. And as she wished, the Council now owns Miss Vivian's home place which is adjacent to the Sanctuary, purchased from her estate by the Council in February 2004.

#### 2005 Sanctuary Activities & Accomplishments

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) funding was applied for and received through NRCS in the amount of \$3,000 for creating wildlife food plots, prescribed burning, and pest management. NRCS also provided technical assistance.

Coordinated with Georgia Forestry Commission to develop a Forest Stewardship Plan.

Appointed a Sanctuary Operations Manager to handle daily activities.

Applied for and received funding through the WINGS program to create wildlife food plots using periodic disking. WINGS is administered by the Two Rivers RC&D Council.

Completed timber harvest of selected pines and hardwoods.

## Other Accomplishments During 2005

~ Hosted Annual Banquet on January 27, 2005 celebrating 25 years.



Volunteer of Year Award was presented to Bill Millians, Council Board Representative for Baldwin County.

~ Hosted the Georgia RC&D Council's quarterly meeting at the Madison Markets in Madison, GA on August 18 and 19. In addition to business topics, the training agenda included presentations on farmland protection and the Georgia Land Conservation Program, Georgia's water quantity concerns, state transportation issues, and a cultural history of Madison.

~ Assisted NRCS with coordination of Georgia Grazing Lands Conservation Coalition activities by submitting news articles to promote the 2005 GGLCC cost-share project. Assistance was provided to the GGLCC to bring their 2003 cost-share projection to conclusion by processing payments to producers in an amount exceeding \$100,000.

~ Assisted the Oconee County Partnership for Farmland Protection in their efforts to permanently protect farmland in Oconee County. Through the Partnership's efforts, a proposal was developed for the 2005 NRCS Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program. Proposal was selected for funding in the amount of \$158,500 for 47.6 acres in Oconee County with a total easement value of \$316,800. The Partnership also provided assistance to the Athens Land Trust with a second proposal, in Clarke County, which was selected for funding in the amount of \$83,750, with a total easement value of \$167,000.



~ Submitted application for the National RC&D "Circle of Diamonds". Membership in the "Circle of Diamonds" demonstrates a Council's exemplary public accountability and recognizes Councils that have produced quality programs within their local community.

~ Finalized a "Personnel Policy Manual" and a "Financial Policy", and continued work on a "Council Member Handbook". These documents are part of the Council's on-going process to obtain self-sufficiency.

~ Went "live" with the development of a web site. Council's home page can be viewed at [www.oconeeriverred.org](http://www.oconeeriverred.org).

OCONEE RIVER RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AREA, INC.  
 STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
 For the Year Ended December 31, 2004

ASSETS

CURRENT ASSETS

Cash	\$ 244,428
Current notes receivable - net of allowance FOR UNCOLLECTIBLE OF \$11,900	20,680
Investments	<u>261,342</u>

TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS

526,450

PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

Land	84,000
Buildings	96,260
Equipment	<u>589,180</u>

769,440

Less: accumulated depreciation	<u>(394,257)</u>
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375,183

\$ 901,633

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Accounts payable	\$ 506
Payroll taxes payable	1,444
Current portion of long-term debt	<u>3,587</u>

TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES

5,537

LONG-TERM NOTE PAYABLE

29,855

NET ASSETS

Unrestricted	710,447
Temporarily restricted	71,794
Permanently restricted	<u>84,000</u>

866,241

\$ 901,633

OCONEE RIVER RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AREA, INC.  
 STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES  
 For the Year Ended December 31, 2004

REVENUES	
Grants	\$ 30,519
Program revenues	45,419
Dues	8,800
Interest income	917
Other Income	56,027
Net assets released from restrictions	<u>79,300</u>
	220,982
EXPENSES	
Wheels to Work	16,401
Other program costs	176,613
General and administrative	<u>62,797</u>
	<u>255,811</u>
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	<u>(34,829)</u>
TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS	
Restricted donations	80,145
Restricted receivables	<u>(79,300)</u>
Net assets released from restrictions	
INCREASE IN TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS	<u>845</u>
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN NET ASSETS	(33,984)
NET ASSETS, beginning of year	<u>900,225</u>
NET ASSETS, end of year	<u><u>\$ 866,241</u></u>

OCONEE RIVER RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AREA, INC.  
STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS  
For the Year Ended December 31, 2004

CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	
Increase (decrease) in net assets	\$ (33,984)
Adjustments to reconcile net income to net cash provided by operating activities:	
Depreciation	40,032
(Increase) decrease in accounts receivable	82,650
Increase (decrease) in accounts payable	(9,735)
Increase (decrease) in accrued liabilities	<u>(2,332)</u>
NET CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES	76,631
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES	
Cash payments for the purchase of property	(80,145)
Cash proceeds from investing activities	<u>7,610</u>
NET CASH USED BY INVESTING ACTIVITIES	<u>(72,535)</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES	
Principal payments on long-term debt	<u>(6,000)</u>
NET CASH USED BY FINANCING ACTIVITIES	<u>(6,000)</u>
NET INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH AND EQUIVALENTS	(1,904)
CASH AND EQUIVALENTS, BEGINNING	<u>246,332</u>
CASH AND EQUIVALENTS, ENDING	<u>\$ 244,428</u>

Oconee River RC&D  
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