

2. Needs and Opportunities

The Needs and Opportunities listed in this section were developed through discussions with stakeholders and residents, from the experiences of stakeholders and residents, through analysis of statistical data and information, and thorough review and revision as applicable to the Needs and Opportunities identified in the Echols County current. Each of the following Needs and opportunities is addressed by corresponding policies in the “Community Policies” section.

Development Patterns

Natural Resources

Needs

- ❖ Continue to enforce regulations for taxes on timber, which results in lost revenue for the County because there is no way to confirm the removal of timber. The cost-profit ratio for enforcement doesn’t make it feasible to enforce taxation.
- ❖ Protection of the wetlands is a concern because natural filters are removed, which endangers the water quality in Echols County. No enforcement ability impacts groundwater recharge areas.
- ❖ No enforcement of Part V Environmental Ordinances. (Mandated by DCA to ensure local governments have adopted regulations consistent with the Rules for Environmental Criteria, River Corridors Act)

Opportunities

- ❖ The Pine Tree industry thrives in Echols County and creates employment and tax value by replenishing the trees.
- ❖ The Alapaha River flows north to south on the west side of the County and has one boat ramp. Continue to promote the Alapaha River and its uses. This information needs to be placed in the State Tourism Brochure as one of the cleanest rivers to attract visitors.
- ❖ The Suwannee River, Grand Bay Creek, Alapahoochee River, and Toms Creek could be utilized a lot for recreational and tourist uses.
- ❖ There is a large hunting area in the eastern portion of the County and private hunting camps like Wolf Bay, Cowhouse, and May Day, which attracts a lot of visitors from Florida.

Cultural Resources

Needs

- ❖ A new building of a courthouse and sheriff’s office is needed. This is a public health need as the current building bathrooms lack capacity, which causes malfunctioning when serving large crowds. The existing courthouse and sheriff’s office have exceeded renovations.