

## **Preserve Project Details and Benefits and Core Messaging Points**

In its entirety, the Gentry Springs Preserve project has the capacity to positively impact the students and citizens of Montevallo in a number of different ways in four specific categories:

### **Ecological:**

- Currently, the natural environment of this property provides vital environmental services to the residents of Montevallo, including air/water quality mitigation and filtration and groundwater recharge that decreases downstream erosion/flood plain damage issues.
- Hosts one of the only old-growth forests in an area of Montevallo predominantly occupied by timber companies practicing ecologically threatening deforestation practices.
- Preserves the site of at least one free-flowing natural spring.
- Provides a safe habitat for animal habitation and propagation in an area predominantly leased to private hunting clubs.

### **Economical:**

- Thanks to the support of the Birmingham Urban Mountain Pedalers, a 200+ member organization dedicated to increasing public trail systems in the Jefferson-Shelby area, stands to serve as the next major site of a B.U.M.P. trail system.
- Through state and regional events, B.U.M.P. has generated hundreds of thousands of dollars in increased Shelby County tourism dollars and made green space a priority in our county due to the success of the Oak Mountain Trail system.
- Trail aspect of project would likely lead to the establishment of new bicycle-centered businesses, jobs within the City of Montevallo.
- At one time, Gentry Springs was a primary water supply source for the University of Montevallo; due to its elevated position, the cost to transport water via gravity-fed pipes to UM was virtually nil. The potential for re-establishing this site as a freshwater resource for UM could reduce annual campus expenses significantly.
- Institutional profit due to parking/event/usage fees.

### **Education:**

- Currently, this site is slated to serve as an educational resource for 6 UM academic courses in the Fall semester. In terms of student scientific data collection, site historical research, athletics training, economic analyses, and other forms of student undergraduate and graduate research.
- Likewise, the Preserve could represent a crucial aspect of campus outreach to local Shelby County schools, by actively involving students and teachers in the scientific data collection process in a manner that emphasizes environmentally sustainable practices in an enjoyable setting that leaves students with a grand impression of UM.
- To facilitate periodic camps in conjunction with the UM JWSO, Ebenezer Swamp, and UM Organic Garden to emphasize student education in sustainability, with different programs collaboratively designed to meet the needs of different demographics, such as the Boy Scouts of America, local churches, local schools, and others.

### **Publicity and General Sustainability:**

-With the preservation of this property, UM would effectively be preserving natural ecosystems on more property than its own campus. This fact alone could be used to increase public image and freshman recruitment, but also represents a major carbon offset potential for the entire UM institution. This fact would allow UM to be publicly recognized as the only state institution actively working towards full carbon-neutrality.