

# Raccoon Creek Stream & Wetland Mitigation Bank

Mitchell County, Georgia



*Remeandered channel one month after construction and planting*

About twenty years ago, a beautiful, meandering creek in southern Georgia suffered the ravages of being stripped of its dense swamp hardwood habitat and converted to a bare, straightened channel so that cotton could be grown on the surrounding land. Biohabitats was retained by the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) to design the restoration of Raccoon Creek and its surrounding wetlands.

*This project set the stage for over four miles of stream restoration and 100 acres of bottomland hardwood wetlands.*

The 770-acre site included approximately 3.5 miles of channelized, straightened stream and 120 acres of degraded wetlands. The primary approach for the site design was three-fold: 1) restore the natural geomorphology of the stream channels; 2) restore the wetland hydrology to the zones of drained hydric soil; and 3) reestablish native wetland and riparian vegetation on the site.

A nearby “reference site” featuring an undisturbed stream channel and wetlands provided a model for the restoration design. Biohabitats also developed a Stream and Wetland Mitigation Banking Instrument (MBI) for approval by the federal regulatory agencies.

By developing three alternative conceptual designs along with cost estimates and calculations of possible credits generated for each alternative, Biohabitats was able to provide GDOT with the most cost-effective design alternative that would generate the most mitigation credits. At the same time, the restoration project set the stage for the return of a very valuable ecosystem.

#### SERVICES

- Inventory & Assessments
- Design
- Construction Procurement
- Construction Management
- Post-construction Monitoring

*conservation planning*  
***ecological restoration***  
*regenerative design*



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