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## **TRENDS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR RURAL LAND USE**

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*Second Butler/Cunningham Conference on  
Agriculture and the Environment*

**November 3-4, 2003**

**Montgomery Embassy Suites Hotel  
300 Tallapoosa Street  
Montgomery, Alabama 36104**

**Sponsor**

**Butler/Cunningham Endowment to the  
College of Agriculture, Auburn University**

**Co-Sponsors**

**Alabama A & M University  
Alabama Cooperative Extension System  
Alabama Forestry Foundation  
Alabama Soil and Water Conservation  
Committee  
Southern Environmental Center  
Tuskegee University**

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### **Trends and Opportunities for Rural Land Use**

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The Butler/Cunningham conference series will explore issues related to agriculture and forestry, the environment, and rural life in Alabama. This series is funded through a generous endowment by Eugene Butler and Emory Cunningham to the Auburn University College of Agriculture. The first conference considered the status of Alabama agriculture.

### **Purpose of the Second Conference**

Traditional agriculture has declined in Alabama and millions of acres of former cropland and pasture have been idled or converted to woodland. Rural communities are suffering economic hardships, and the tax base for education and other governmental services is woefully inadequate statewide. There is an unprecedented movement of people of means into rural areas near major highways and cities. Forest land ownership is changing from industrial forestry to investment companies and private individuals. New owners of rural property usually have different land use objectives, more money, and a better environmental ethic than traditional rural Alabamians, and conflicts about property rights and land use are increasing. This conference will provide an overview of the history and current status of rural land use, examine the new dynamics of rural property values and ownership, consider issues causing conflicts and political debates, and discuss opportunities for productive and sustainable use of rural land in Alabama.

### **Conference Program**

#### November 3, 2003

8:00-9:00	Registration and continental breakfast
9:00-9:15	<b>Introduction</b>
9:15-10:00	<b>Keynote</b>
10:00-10:30	Break
10:30-12:00	<b>Historical and Current Issues</b> Topics: Alabama agriculture and rural communities; land values; influence of globalization; public opinion survey on rural land use.
12:00-1:00	Lunch
1:00-3:00	<b>Current Land Use Patterns</b> Topics: land use; changing patterns in forest land ownership; hunting and fishing concessions; movement of people of means into rural areas.
3:00-3:30	Break
3:30-5:30	<b>Economic Issues</b> Topics: factors determining value of rural land; taxation and land use; property rights; rural zoning; services for rural residents; re-assessment of rural property; absentee ownership.

#### November 4, 2003

8:00-8:30	Continental breakfast
8:30-10:30	<b>Environmental Issues</b> Topics: land uses and the environment; water quality; TMDLs; changing attitudes towards environment stewardship.
10:30-11:00	Break
11:00-12:30	<b>Land Use Opportunities</b> Topics: forestry; traditional and alternative agriculture; ecotourism and historical preservation; hunting, fishing, and other recreational uses; carbon credits; farmland preservation; rural housing development.
12:30-2:00	Lunch with speaker
2:00-3:00	<b>Panel Discussion</b>
3:00-4:00	<b>Open Discussion</b>

### **Public Opinion Poll**

A public opinion poll on Alabama rural land use will be presented and discussed at the conference.

### **Speakers**

An impressive list of speakers from across Alabama and the nation have agreed to participate.

### **Housing**

A block of rooms will be held until October 13, 2003 at the Montgomery Embassy Suites at a rate of \$99 per night. Rooms at a rate of \$69 per night also are available until October 2, 2003 at the Guesthouse Inn. Information on making room reservations will be provided in the final conference brochure to be available May 1.

### **Registration**

The registration fee of \$95 (\$50 students) includes two breakfast receptions, two luncheons, and refreshments during breaks.

### **Additional Information**

For final brochure and registration information, see our website: [www.ag.auburn.edu/BC](http://www.ag.auburn.edu/BC) or complete the form below and send to:

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For specific questions about the conference, contact:

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