



Jocassee Journal

Information and News about the Jocassee Gorges



DNR

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The new Jocassee Gorges Visitor Center is located in the Meeting House at Keowee-Toxaway State Natural Area in northern Pickens County, just off SC Highway 11. (DNR photo by Greg Lucas)

Jocassee Gorges Visitor Center opens

New center at Keowee-Toxaway State Natural Area reveals area's natural, cultural history

The new Jocassee Gorges Visitor Center recently opened at Keowee-Toxaway State Natural Area on SC 11, the Cherokee Foothills National Scenic Highway, in northern Pickens County.

The center is a joint effort of the S.C. Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism and the S.C. Department of Natural Resources (DNR). New exhibits and other visitor information serve as a gateway to the Jocassee Gorges, roughly 50,000 acres of largely undisturbed, protected land where the Blue Ridge Mountains quickly fall 2,000 feet or more to the Piedmont below.

Part of the only temperate rain forest east of the Mississippi River, the Jocassee Gorges' deeply

forested mountain coves and surging streams, waterfalls and rivers—which cut the deep gorges that led to the area's name and now help feed Lake Jocassee—are home to thousands of plants and animals, many considered scarce or rare.

The exhibits in the center tell the natural and cultural story of the area and themselves are housed in a building rich in its own history—the former Holly Springs Baptist Church. The building was donated to the state in the early 1970s after serving as a house of worship to a nearby community for more than 80 years.

The old church has been painstakingly restored and converted first into the state park's new office and now joined by the Jocassee Gorges Visitor Center. The Natural Bridge Trail behind the center, an hour's walk of moderate difficulty that traverses several different forest communities, also has



The new sign along SC Highway 11 beckons visitors to the Jocassee Gorges Visitor Center.

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Raised topographic map featured at new Jocassee Gorges Visitor Center

been improved to give hikers a better understanding of the diverse habitat of Jocassee Gorges. Also featured in the exhibits are stories about Dr. James A. Timmerman Jr., former DNR director, whose visionary leadership made the Jocassee Gorges possible, and Harry Hampton, a pioneering conservationist in South Carolina whose namesake organization helped make the Visitor Center a reality.

Design for the Visitor Center was done by Ted Cornett of ExhibitCraft Studio in Atlanta, Ga., with assistance from Jamie Thomas, also of Atlanta. The writing for the exhibit panels is done by Leigh Campbell-Taylor of Mindmade Communication of Atlanta.

The centerpiece of the Visitor Center is a raised topographic map that features many familiar landmarks in Jocassee Gorges.

Chad Prosser, director of the S.C. Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism, Don Winslow, DNR chief of staff and Rep. David Hiott of Pickens conducted the official ribbon cutting ceremony held July 7. Also speaking were Steve Jester of Duke Energy and Frank Sistare of the Harry Hampton Memorial Wildlife Fund. Both the Harry Hampton Fund (www.harryhamptonfund.org) and Duke Energy helped fund the Jocassee Gorges Visitor Center.

"The new visitor center tells the story of this amazing natural landscape and of the people who have made it their home for hundreds of years," Prosser said. "It also represents an innovative partnership between the S.C. Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism



One of the most popular features at the Jocassee Gorges Visitor Center is the raised topographic map that displays many popular destinations in the area. (DNR photo by Greg Lucas)

and DNR to interpret and provide easy access to one of South Carolina's most cherished natural resources."

Funding for the center's final completion came from various sources, including the Harry Hampton Memorial Wildlife Fund, Duke Energy, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service through DNR, the S.C. Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism's Recreational Trails Program and the S.C. State Park Service.

"Much of this area is wild and has limited access for the casual visitor," said DNR Director John Frampton. "We're pleased the partnership between the DNR and S.C. Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism has produced greater accessibility to this special place."

The center is open daily from 11 a.m. to noon and 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, contact the park at (864) 868-2605 or keoweetoxaway@scprt.com, or Greg Lucas of DNR at (864) 654-1671, extension 22, or lucascg@dnr.sc.gov. ❁

Be sure to register with State Parks when hiking Foothills Trail

Inform park staff if leaving vehicle

Hiking involves numerous safety precautions, but the most important one of all may be letting others know your plans.

If you plan to begin your hike on the Foothills Trail at a South Carolina State Park, make sure to fill out a hiker registration card at the trail head.

If you plan to park a vehicle at Table Rock, Oconee, or Caesars Head state parks while hiking for multiple days on the Foothills Trail, inform park staff of your plans. They can issue a permit for your vehicle dash, letting rangers know where you are and when you plan to pick up your vehicle.

This practice can help prevent undue concern and unnecessary search and rescue preparations. ❁

South Carolina, North Carolina strike deal on Jocassee Gorges access

Code is available from Gorges State Park, DNR for access to Crossroads Mountain area

The two sister Carolina states have finally struck a deal over access to Crossroads Mountain, a remote section of the Jocassee Gorges in northern Oconee County.

“Crossroads will still be the most difficult place to reach in our state,” said Mark Hall, Jocassee Gorges project manager, “but at least folks can get there and enjoy it, as it is such a special place.” Crossroads Mountain lies between the Toxaway and Horsepasture rivers along the northernmost reaches in South Carolina near the state line with North Carolina.

A free code is available to access the Crossroads Mountain area. To obtain a code that is good 24 hours a day, 365 days a year:

- 1) Stop at the Gorges State Park office in Sapphire, N.C., and provide phone number and driver’s license number.
- 2) E-mail Gorges State Park at susan.chappell@ncdenr.gov and provide phone number and driver’s license number.
- 3) Call Gorges State Park at (828) 966-9099 and provide phone number and driver’s license number.
- 4) Call the Jocassee Gorges field office at (864) 878-9071 or the Clemson DNR office at (864) 654-1671, Monday through Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m.

For the past several years, a legal technicality

prevented use of the access route that winds through Gorges State Park in North Carolina. Duke Energy, the S.C. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources developed a cooperative agreement that will allow patrons of the South Carolina side of Jocassee Gorges to gain vehicular

access through North Carolina’s Gorges State Park to get to Crossroads Mountain.

Year-round access will be allowed via Chestnut Mountain Road in North Carolina, beginning Sept. 15. Chestnut Mountain Road begins at N.C. Highway 281 near Toxaway. Chestnut Mountain Road passes through North Carolina’s Gorges State Park, and users will pass through a key-coded gate.

“Anyone who wishes to venture into the wilds of the Crossroads Mountain Area

should use a vehicle with plenty of clearance and preferably four-wheel drive,” said Hall. “It is a rough area with steep grades, and the drive can easily take an hour or more.” Crossroads Mountain has two small camping sites that are first-come, first-served. It also has several old logging roads that are perfect for hiking, hunting, mountain biking, sightseeing or fishing on Lake Jocassee. A trip into Crossroads requires the dedication of at least six or eight hours, Hall said.

Users are urged to strictly follow the rules of the North Carolina State Parks system while passing through Gorges State Park. “Respect for others and our natural resources is the key that will allow this agreement to remain a win-win situation for everyone involved,” Hall said. 



A group of Foothills Trail Conference hikers who are day-hiking the entire 77-mile trail in sections pauses for a moment at Bear Gap before setting out on a hike in the remote backcountry of Jocassee Gorges. Bear Gap is along the primitive road on the way into Crossroads Mountain. The states of North Carolina and South Carolina recently reached an agreement on access into the Crossroads Mountain area of South Carolina.



The pair of peregrine falcons that have taken up residence near Jumping Off Rock in northern Pickens County recently fledged another set of offspring. (Photo by Heyward Douglass)

Peregrine falcons succeed again!

Falcon movements, use of Jumping Off Rock area differ from 2008

The pair of peregrine falcons that chose Jumping Off Rock as their nest site did it again this year!

Two immature peregrine falcons were observed with the two adults in late July. Last year, the fledglings were identified much earlier, causing biologists with the S.C. Department of Natural Resources to worry throughout the summer that the second nesting attempt had failed.

In early 2008, DNR closed the entire area to public use to make sure the second known pair of nesting peregrines in the state had plenty of breathing room. Things worked out, and the new pair added two more individuals to the population. In 2009, however, the area was opened for traffic through the area but the site was posted to prohibit stopping, foot travel or parking. Some unsubstantiated reports of the fledglings came from visitors who used the new overlook, which is about 300 yards from the falcon's lair.

Mark Hall, DNR Jocassee Gorges project manager, visited the site many times and tried to

identify new birds. Hall was disappointed when he found broken clay targets and notebook paper riddled with shotgun pellets at the new overlook. "This is exactly the kind of thing that will force us to close it off and ruin it for everyone," he said.

Hall was concerned that allowing traffic through the area might have caused the falcons to move or had negatively effected their nesting attempt. It was Hall who first spotted the birds exhibiting nesting behavior near Jumping Off Rock in early January 2009.

In 2009, falcon movements and use of the area differed significantly from spring 2008, and Hall thinks the birds might have selected a new nest site. Although he thought he heard fledglings in 2009, he never saw them. In late July, the Jocassee wildlife technician crew was working on the road in the area and called Hall to report that a complete flight of two adult and two immature peregrines had passed the new overlook several times. Hall and his crew plan to rappel down the rock face to try to learn more about what took place with the nesting peregrines in their secretive summer of 2009.

Stay posted for a report on the findings in a future issue of the *Jocassee Journal*. ❁

Wild raven-forests of the Jocassee Gorges

Carolina hemlocks holding their own against woolly adelgids

By Will F. Blozan

To me, the raven is the embodiment of wilderness. They exist in the inaccessible, wild and craggy regions that are increasingly hard to find in the southeastern United States. They need undisturbed space and seclusion to thrive. Well adapted and at ease in their environment, they play with wild abandon and speak in varied and lively tongues. They exist because of wilderness.

Like the raven, there is another wild member of our South Carolina woodlands. It too occupies the regions of rare human visits. Its personality is similar, shaped by its environment and expressive in its love of life.

Not many would expect this beast to be a tree, but once you experience the realm of the Carolina hemlock you will agree.

Occupying a unique ecological niche defined by a delicate balance of sun, water, fire, and bedrock, the realm of the Carolina hemlock is wild and free. Their love of exposed, steep cliffs allows their boughs to play in the fierce winds and scoff at persistent drought and sun. Crowns are shaped by the winds and-like the raven-have adapted to life in

the rugged high peaks.

Each tree has a unique record of its past expressed in the shape of the tree. Lessons of persistence and tenacity abound.

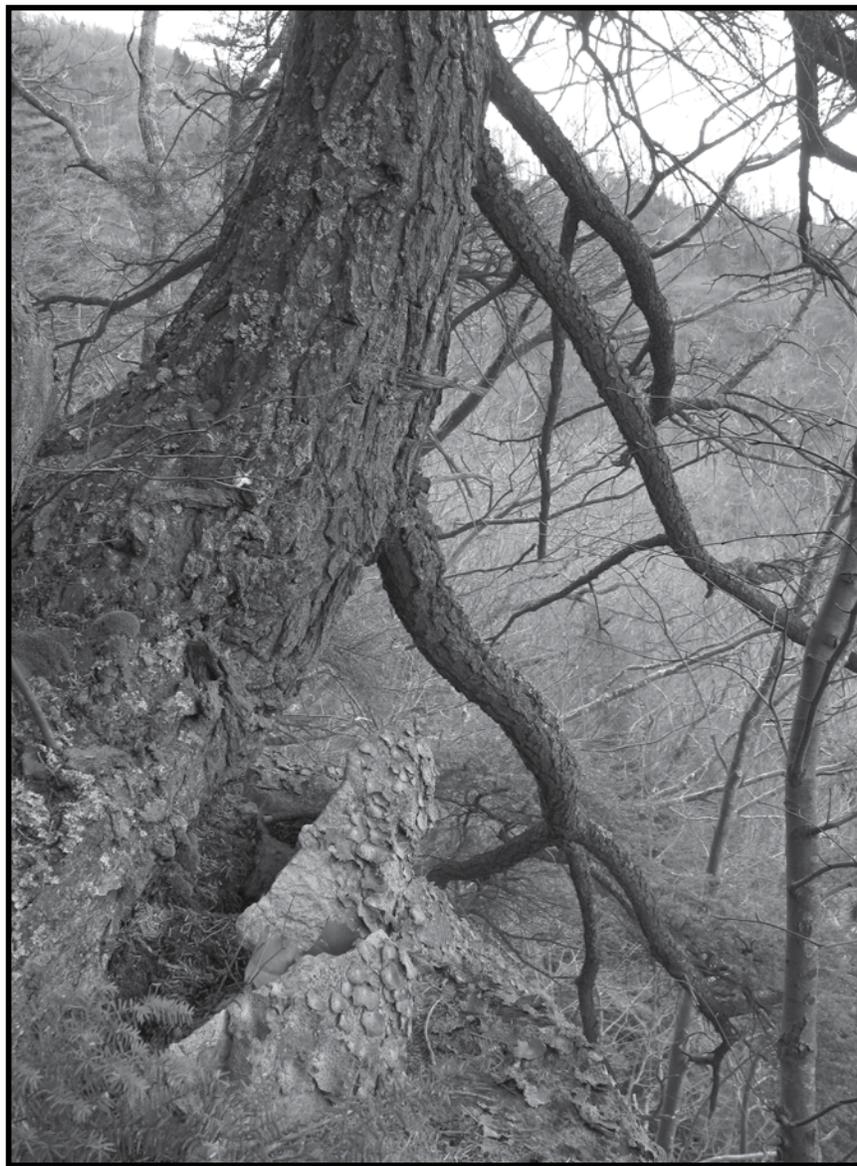
Although far removed from humans, the rare Carolina hemlock forests of the Jocassee Gorges region are under a deadly threat by a small insect called the hemlock woolly adelgid. This introduced

insect is deadly to the trees but fortunately they can be protected with insecticides. Due to the foresight of the S.C. Department of Natural Resources, almost all of the raven-forests of Carolina hemlock have been protected in the state of South Carolina.

These forests—at the southern end of their globally rare range—are among the finest remaining on earth. The adelgids have devastated the vast majority of the stands further north. South Carolina remains in possession of healthy groves for the ravens to play. May their wild abandon continue to be expressed and the mountains enjoy their joyful play. 🌿

(Will F. Blozan is president of the Eastern Native Tree Society and president of Appalachian

Arborists Inc. in Black Mountain, N.C., which treated many of the Carolina hemlocks in Jocassee Gorges. To learn more about hemlocks and woolly adelgids, visit www.appalachianarborists.com.)



Carolina hemlocks often grow along rock outcrops, above 2,000 feet, unlike their cousins the Eastern hemlock, which are normally found near water in lower elevations. (Photo by Will Blozan)

Up from the thicke

Birchwood Center works to preserve and promote the arts, folklife, history and conservation of Blue Ridge region

By Dot Jackson

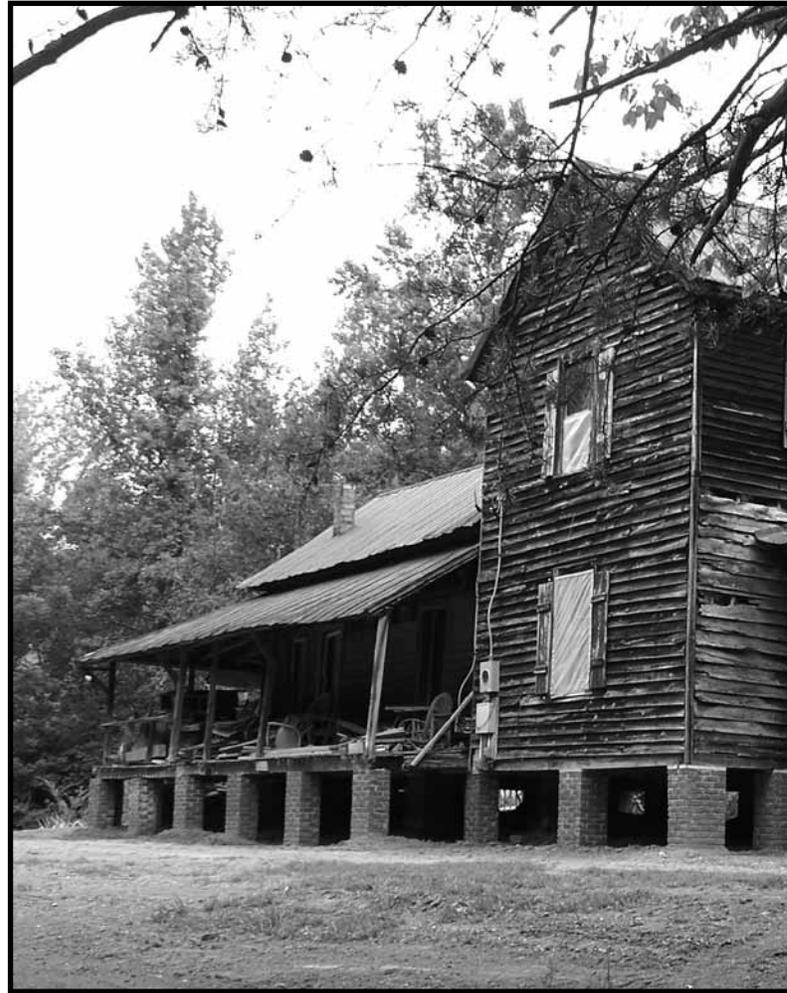
On first sight, it was hopeless. Abandoned for many years, shot at and shorn of its ancient hardware, battered by storms and left to decay, the Sutherland-Masters House mortified three buyers who first saw it too late—after their purchase was signed.

The fourth knew it from far better times. Clear off the jungle of saplings and briars, sweep out the debris from a decade of vandals, stand on its back porch and look across grown-over fields, and there would stand Table Rock, regal and reassuring as it was nearly 200 years ago, when the young Amos Sutherland family moved onto the place in 1813. (Sutherland offspring would live here for 101 years; in 1914 the Masters family moved in, and remained until 1983.)

Aghast as they were, the three unwary modern buyers, all scholarly retirees, were too kind to slay on the spot the one who had lured them into this deal. What they'd long hoped for was a piece of mountain land somewhere, where they could build four little cabins and look out for each other, in old age.



The Sutherland-Masters house had fallen on hard times when Birchwood founders set out to make it live again, with the help of many volunteers, for the benefit of the community and the region.



The house rises again! The Sutherland-Masters house, built in 1813, is now the headquarters for the Birchwood Center for Arts and Folklife.

What they never envisioned was a poison ivy farm centered by a dismal wreck with obscene sayings painted on the walls, and images of marijuana leaves (actually pretty fair art work), along with threats of "Murder!" sprayed on the ceiling.

But money had changed hands, beyond retrieving. The consensus was, "We've got it. We sure can't live in it. Now, what in the world are we going to do with this thing?"

Thus, in the year 2001, Birchwood Center for Arts and Folklife was born, chartered as an educational, non-profit, public-service institution.

Its early mission statement promised devotion to preservation and promotion of the cultural and environmental heritage of the South Carolina Upcountry, and the Blue Ridge region. The premises have mercifully changed a lot, but the ideal changed not a whit.

Using the old house for programs was a bad idea, at least without extensive renovations.

ts, Birchwood rises



t nearly 200 years ago, is being restored to serve as
fe. (Photos by Linda Bowie)

But within a couple of years, collaboration with nearby Table Rock State Park, the Pickens County Museum, McKinney Chapel, the State Museum in Columbia, the city of Liberty, Greenville's Upcountry History Museum and area schools and libraries began to make outreach possible.

Thus came such offerings as the now-annual book fairs and art sales, programs on herbal medicine, shag dancing, archaeology, folk plays, poetry, bird and wildflower identification, clogging, regional history, guided nature hikes, music, even a large and vigorously-attended political stump rally.

Birchwood philosophy held that everything that could be offered free to the public would be. Only when performers had to be paid a serious wage were tickets to be sold, and a recent \$10 space reservation fee was added to the art and craft sale.

Now governed by a 13-member working board, with an advisory council of various experts, the center's physical, on-site growth has begun.

The public contributed, as has the S.C. Arts Commission, S.C. Humanities, Pickens County and several businesses.

This summer the old house was raised several feet from its haphazard pillars and a new foundation and some new sills were installed. A new roof is coming, as are windows, doors, wiring, heating, air-conditioning and plumbing.

Board members Buddy Thompson and Tony Niemeyer, of the Reserve at Lake Keowee, have had site-plans drawn to include faculty cabins and a classroom/community building. Through an easement gift now in negotiation, a new entry from S.C. Highway 11 would avoid congestion on Birchwood Road, the current access.

Meanwhile, the 2010 calendar is filling up with events and adventures, to be announced on the Web site at www.birchwoodcenter.org. To all of them, everyone is invited. 🌿

(Journalist, author and editor Dot Jackson is the site manager and lives at Birchwood Center in northern Pickens County. She is the author of the popular novel "Refuge" and won the Weatherford Prize for Literature in 2007.)



Many hands make light work during a summer workday at the Birchwood Center.



Before (left) and after photos show the transformation in the Cane Creek dove field, now open on Wednesdays in Jocassee Gorges during dove season. The Cane Creek dove field can be accessed from the Shooting Tree



Ridge entrance to Jocassee Gorges on Cleo Chapman Road in Eastatoee Valley, and is located about 4 miles from this entrance via the Shooting Tree Ridge and Cane Creek roads. (DNR photos by Mark Hall)

Cane Creek dove field opens in Jocassee Gorges

Opening in heavily forested area will also benefit black bears, songbirds

A new dove field will be open on Wednesday afternoons of the mourning dove season in the Jocassee Gorges in northern Pickens County.

Visitors who travel this fall along Cane Creek Road in Jocassee Gorges in northern Pickens County will encounter some changes. The new highlight along the route is a 16-acre clearing that will provide some dove hunting in Jocassee Gorges. “It is the largest open area on the entire property,” said Mark Hall, Jocassee Gorges project manager with the S.C. Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The decision to create the new dove field on Jocassee resulted from the fact that wildlife technicians could work on lands owned by the state. Resources and funds for managing non-DNR lands have dwindled in recent years due to budget and personnel reductions. Thus, managing a dove field on Jocassee made good logistical and economic sense.

Finding a level place within the rugged Jocassee Gorges landscape was a fairly tough thing to do, according to Hall. Fortunately, DNR uses good tools for spatial analysis of the landscape. Digital topographic maps and a geographical information system (GIS) were key factors in the search for flat ground. The area along Cane Creek road that was identified is about the largest flat area within Jocassee. “Large” in this case means more than 10 acres, since most productive dove fields are more than 10 acres in size. The field has some small hills, but it is moderately flat in comparison to the balance of the land, where

slopes of more than 30 percent are common.

DNR developed a careful plan to avoid archeological sites, as well as potential harm to any uncommon flora, fauna or water resources. The area was clear-cut in 2006, when planted pines were removed during the harvest. The white pine plantation that was removed was on a site that was not suitable for the tree species. The tree stumps were left to deteriorate for more than two years, and then the area was cleared by a contractor. DNR was able to hire Appalachian Grading of Sunset to stump, grub, disk, grade and lime the 16 acres for a little over \$1,000 per acre. DNR staff finished the job with seeding of browntop millet. Recent rains have allowed the crop to establish a good root system, stabilize the soils and create an attractive sea of green amongst the solid forest.

The browntop millet will produce and shed seed in early September. Doves will be attracted, and dove hunting will be limited to Wednesday afternoons after Sept. 15, when the interior Jocassee Gorges roads open to the public. In the future, the field will be planted to ensure the soil is protected. Permanent strips of switchgrass will be used along with annual plantings of wheat, dove proso and browntop millet. The large field is the only substantial opening on Jocassee, and it is sure to receive attention from many other wildlife species, such as songbirds and black bear.

DNR will monitor dove utilization and hunter success, and then make decisions as to how to best manage the field for both the resources and the public. 

New trail open along Reedy Cove Creek

Trail follows portions of old Appalachian Lumber railroad

The recently completed hiking trail to the top of Twin Falls (also known as Reedy Cove Falls) provides access to this stunning waterfall completely on public Jocassee Gorges lands.

Prior to this project, access to the falls had been through private land. The new hiker-friendly trail was professionally designed by Dr. Walt Cook, retired University of Georgia forestry professor of Athens, Ga., and built by Deno Contos of Benchmark Trails of Greenville.

The Reedy Cove trailhead, with a small hiker parking area, is located on Cleo Chapman Road a half-mile from the intersection with US 178. The trail, which is 1.1 miles long one way, is marked in both directions with signage.

The improved trail route starts on forested roads and then climbs a hillside through hardwood and pine forests. This portion of the trail contains several enormous beeches worth investigating. The trail traces the creek's path through rocky terrain made passable thanks to the three-foot bridges and numerous timber steps constructed by Benchmark Trails. Hikers can also get a glimpse into the past while following the old logging rail line of Appalachian Lumber Co; just keep an eye out for



Numerous timber steps make steep grades a little easier on the new trail along Reedy Cove Creek in northern Pickens County. The Reedy Cove trailhead, with a small hiker parking area, is located on Cleo Chapman Road a half-mile from the intersection with US 178. The trail is 1.1 miles long one way. (Photo by Deno Contos)

twisted old rails, which are the result of past floods.

The trail ends at the top of Twin Falls with winter-time views into Eastatoee Valley, where Reedy Cove Creek finally joins Eastatoee Creek. ❁

Camp group enjoys hiking on Foothills Trail

The Insight Girls group from Talisman Camps, based in Zirconia, N.C., enjoyed the Foothills Trail for six days, hiking from Laurel Valley to Whitewater River.

We enjoyed Hilliard Falls and our picnic at Whitewater River on our last day. We think that going uphill is hard, but it is fun to be outside. The rivers were a lot of fun, and we found some great campsites. We enjoyed spending time together and playing in the water.

The trail was tough, but absolutely beautiful. The staff would like to thank the wonderful Foothills Conference members who helped them along the way! Talisman Camps and Programs (www.talismancamps.com) offer outdoor adventure summer and semester programs for children and



The Foothills Trail was home for six days to the Insight Girls group from Talisman Camps, based in Zirconia, N.C., which hiked from Laurel Valley to Whitewater River.

adolescents with ADHD, Learning Disabilities, and Asperger's Syndrome. ✿
(The Insight Girls were led by Talisman counselors Ariel Schwartz of Arlington, Va., and Sarah Menor of West Palm Beach, Fla.)

Duke Energy shoreline structure renovation and removal underway

Inspection program began in 1996 to identify and correct problem structures on Duke Energy lakes

Inspections of piers and structures located along the shoreline of Lakes Keowee and Jocassee were conducted this past summer by Duke Energy staff as part of its Structure Renovation/Removal Program.

"The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission license that provides guidelines for operating hydroelectric plants also requires us to make sure these structures remain in good repair and do not pose a hazard to public safety and navigation," said Joe Hall, director of Duke Energy's Lake Services. "Our inspections completed so far show about five percent of the piers on Duke Energy's Lakes are in need of major repair."

The inspection program was initiated in 1996 to survey, identify and correct problem structures on lakes managed by Duke Energy Carolinas. The inspection on Lakes Keowee and Jocassee began in May 2009 and will be completed this year.

As part of the Lake Keowee and Lake Jocassee

inspections, crews look for signs of obvious neglect such as missing planks, inadequate flotation or structural failure. Structures inspected are located inside the shoreline.

When unsafe conditions are found, owners are notified and asked to contact Duke with a plan for repair or removal. "Property owner cooperation on other lakes has been outstanding," said Hall. If repairs are not made or structures and abandoned boats are not removed, steps will be taken for removal at the owner's expense and any previous permits revoked.

Duke Energy is the third largest electric power holding company in the United States, based on kilowatt-hour sales. Its regulated utility operations serve about 4 million customers located in five states—North Carolina, South Carolina, Indiana, Ohio and Kentucky—representing a population of about 11 million people.

Headquartered in Charlotte, N.C., Duke Energy is a Fortune 500 company traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol DUK. More information about the company is available on the Internet at: www.duke-energy.com. ✿

Midlands nonprofit builds Jocassee Gorges camp to serve children in need

Camp Hannon partners with Clemson University Youth Learning Institute, Cliffs Communities

The Scott Hannon Memorial Foundation of Irmo has been building on its mission of serving children in need since 1991. Now, the nonprofit is working to build a camp to serve thousands more children.

This summer the foundation held a groundbreaking ceremony for Camp Hannon, a new camp to be developed in the Upstate that will satisfy the organization's vision of serving thousands more needy children from across South Carolina. Camp Hannon is a collaborative initiative that joins the Hannon Foundation in partnership with Clemson University's Youth Learning Institute and Pinnacle Partners, a nonprofit foundation of The Cliffs Communities, an Upstate developer of luxury residential communities and other properties.

The camp site is located at Pinnacle Falls in the Jocassee Gorges area at the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains—an 80-acre tract of mountain land in northern Pickens County. Jim Anthony, CEO and founder of The Cliffs Communities, donated the property to Clemson. The land features hardwood forests, lush mountain laurel and rhododendron thickets, creeks and a 65-foot waterfall.

"It is amazing to see what collaboration can mean for kids," said Thomas Buxton, Hannon Foundation Board president. "Camp Hannon is a three-way partnership that combines the resources, talents and passions of organizations committed to improving the lives of children."



This summer the Scott Hannon Memorial Foundation of Irmo held a groundbreaking ceremony for Camp Hannon, a new camp in the Jocassee Gorges area.

Buxton says the Phase I build-out of Camp Hannon includes boys and girls cottages and a 500-seat, multi-purpose auditorium. Also this summer, the foundation announced the hiring of its first executive director and hosted its 19th annual charity golf tournament in Myrtle Beach to raise additional funds toward the \$2 million goal needed to complete construction of the camp.

Anthony Meyer, the foundation's new executive director, said, "The creation of Camp Hannon will help to improve self-esteem and heal the hurts of children by providing hope, love and needed assistance. Many lives will be changed by the

creation of this camp and we welcome other partners who embrace the vision of serving kids."

Meyer added that Clemson University's Youth Learning Institute would be responsible for management of the camp and programs. When fully operational, Camp Hannon is expected to serve up to 10,000 children annually. Already, the foundation helps between 200 to 300 needy children attend Camp Angel Tree and Camp New Horizons each summer, as well as sponsors a major Christmas giving program for children who reside at Epworth Children's Home in Columbia.

In addition to youth currently served by Hannon Foundation sponsored programs, Meyer says Camp Hannon will host many other summer and year-round programs to allow young people to experience the magic of the outdoors, develop healthy lifestyles, make new friends and create lifelong memories. 🌿

(For more information about the Hannon Foundation, contact Anthony Meyer at (803) 603-0271 or Anthony@scotthannon.com.)

New trail planned at Eastatoee Creek

Hikers asked to leave flagging in place near The Narrows

People hiking on the trail at Eastatoee Creek Heritage Preserve are asked not to disturb any flagging that they may see in the preserve near the area

called "The Narrows."

A trail is being planned by the S.C. Department of Natural Resources that will offer a great view of this beautiful section of Eastatoee Creek. Work is expected to begin later this year, but may be delayed if the flagging is moved! 🌿



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S.C. Department of Natural Resources

John E. Frampton, Director

Editor: Greg Lucas

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Trouble on horizon for Jocassee bats

White nose syndrome, which has killed hundreds of thousands of bats, expected to arrive in South Carolina

White nose syndrome, a wildlife crisis of unprecedented proportions, has killed hundreds of thousands of bats from Vermont to Virginia and appears to be heading south and west.

First discovered in New York in the winter of 2006-2007, white nose syndrome (WNS) got its name from obvious white fungal growth on the faces of bats in their cave or mine hibernation sites. The fungus, *Geomyces destructans*, was not previously known to science. It prefers the cool temperatures typical of wintering sites (called hibernacula) for bats. Bats afflicted with WNS have fungus growing on their muzzles, ears and wing and tail membranes. In the summer, bats afflicted with WNS do not exhibit the white fungal growth, but they do have damaged wing and tail membranes which may hamper flight, foraging and temperature regulation. Afflicted bats appear to starve to death. Estimates of bat mortality from WNS range from 500,000 to 1.5



Rafinesque's big-eared bat

million. WNS only affects bats; it has not been seen in other animals.

Now WNS is in southernmost Virginia and is expected to expand its swath of destruction in the major cave belts of Kentucky and Tennessee, according to Mary Bunch, S.C. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) wildlife biologist based in Clemson.

"Many of the bats found in Jocassee Gorges, such as little brown, big brown, small-footed, northern long-eared, pipistrelles and Rafinesque's big-eared bats, are the same species which are vulnerable to WNS," Bunch said. "It is likely that we'll see WNS reach South Carolina's

bats. There's no treatment or cure for WNS yet. Fortunately, WNS does not appear to afflict tree roosting bats. The red bat is a common tree roosting bat in Jocassee Gorges."

If anyone discovers large numbers of dead bats (not single bats), they are asked to report them to the nearest DNR office. 

For more information on WNS, go to <http://www.fort.usgs.gov/WNS/> or http://www.fws.gov/northeast/white_nose.html.