



Forest
Service

Chattahoochee-Oconee
National Forests
Conasauga Ranger District

3941 Highway 76
Chatsworth, GA 30705
(706) 695-6736

File Code: 1950
Route To:

Date: January 9, 2008

Subject: Lake Conasauga Partial Decommissioning

Dear Interested Citizen:

The Conasauga Ranger District is proposing to partially decommission the Lake Conasauga Recreation Area in Murray County. What is decommissioning? It is the term used for withdrawing facilities from service.

The changes proposed at Lake Conasauga focus on little used facilities within the recreation area, not the sites more frequently used by the public. The overall mix and variety of recreational opportunities will not change significantly. Once a facility is removed, the site will be rehabilitated to a natural condition. The following actions are proposed:

1. Decommission the Loop B Campground.

Loop B consists of four campsites, a chemical toilet, an access road, and an access trail to the Lake. Loop B was closed during the 2007 use season, yet visitor use of the remaining 31 open campsites never exceeded capacity.

2. Decommission one picnic shelter and three picnic sites.

The picnic area currently contains 17 individual picnic sites and two group shelters. The shelter and picnic sites proposed for decommissioning are the ones most removed from the access parking lot and the farthest from the lake. They are seldom used.

3. Decommission the Overflow Campground well.

The well and hand pump have been out-of-service for three years without any known impacts on the recreating public.

The Lake Conasauga Recreation Area falls within Management Prescriptions 7.B, 8.E.3, and 11. The proposed action will implement direction in the Chattahoochee-Oconee Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) listed under Recreation Opportunities/Experiences, Goal 31: "Provide a spectrum of high quality, nature-based recreation settings and opportunities, that reflect the unique or exceptional resources of the Forest and the interests of the public on an environmentally sustainable, financially sound, and operationally effective basis. Adapt management of recreation facilities and opportunities as needed to shift limited resources to those opportunities."



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I would like to hear from you regarding this project before making my decision. The project appears to fall into a category of actions that may be excluded from documentation in an environmental impact statement or environmental assessment. Specifically, the project falls within the following categorical exclusion from the Forest Service Environmental Policy and Procedures Handbook (1909.15), Chapter 30: Category 5, Chapter 31.12: Repair and maintenance of recreation facilities.

This determination will not be finalized until after consideration of your comments. Responses should contain relevant facts or comments that we can consider in reaching a final decision on these projects. Comments received, including names, become part of the project record and are available for public review. We would appreciate receiving your comments on the project **by February 15, 2008**. This will ensure a thorough and complete analysis of the proposal.

Send your written comments to the Conasauga District office at the address given on the letterhead. You may also comment by phone (see letterhead) or email to Larry Thomas (lrthomas@fs.fed.us) or in person to our office in Chatsworth, Georgia within the normal weekday business hours of 8:00 am to 4:30 pm.

Please note that you will be sent further correspondence on these proposals *only* if you comment on them or request further correspondence on them. Final decision documents are posted on the Forest website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/conf/sopa/planning.htm>.

Thank you for your interest in the management of the Conasauga Ranger District.

Sincerely,

/s/ Michele H Jones

MICHELE H. JONES
District Ranger

ENCLOSURE: 1 MAP