



File Code: 2710

Date: May 1, 2008

Dear Forest Stakeholder:

The US Forest Service is asking for your comments on the following applications for special use authorizations to use National Forest System (NFS) lands:

- ❖ The North Georgia Distance Running Camp, Inc. (NGDRC), represented by Brian Robinson, is requesting a special use authorization to conduct a cross country running camp for high school age students. The camp would use the Jake/Bull Mountain trail complex, the Miller Trek Trail System, the Cooper Creek Trail System, and portions of Duncan Ridge, Coosa Backcountry, Jacks Knob, and Benton McKaye Trails. The camp runs would occur between the hours of 9 AM and 11 AM from July 14, 2008 through July 17, 2008. NGDRC is expecting up to 150 participants per day including runners, trainers, and staff. Participants will stay off site and be bussed in daily to use the trails for cross country training purposes. The NGDRC would be responsible for removing the trash and temporary facilities from the parking areas each day following their activity. No group running will be permitted in designated Wilderness Areas. This is an annual activity that has occurred on NFS trails for several years with no known adverse effects. This scoping period may cover the next five NGDRC activities provided that none of the critical factors (time of year, place, type of activity, group size, etc.) change.
- ❖ The Georgia Recreational Trail Riders Association (GARTRA), represented by John Medicus, is requesting a special use authorization to conduct a recreation event. The event consists of an organized two day dual-sport motorcycle ride on roads and trails within the Chattahoochee National Forest. The event would use NFS system roads in Union, Fannin, Gilmer, Dawson, and Lumpkin Counties and the Whissenhunt Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) trail system. The event would begin on June 7, 2008 and end on June 8, 2008. GARTRA is expecting up to 120 participants per day. GARTRA would be responsible for removing the trash that results from their activity from National Forest System lands. All bikes on NFS roads are required to be street legal (must have lights, turn signals, liability insurance, meet noise restrictions, etc.). This is an annual activity that has occurred on NFS trails for several years with no known adverse effects. This scoping period may cover the next five GARTRA activities provided that none of the critical factors (time of year, place, type of activity, group size, etc.) change.
- ❖ The Forest Service occasionally receives requests from boat dock retailers to use National Forest System boat launches to unload materials and nearby shoreline to construct the boat docks. The areas that are commonly requested are Lakewood Landing, Morganton Point, Lake Blue Ridge, and Lake Chatuge boat launches. The activities typically consist of using the boat launch for no more than a ten minute duration to unload supplies and equipment and mooring the dock structure to anchors on the shoreline adjacent to the boat ramp while construction is taking place, which usually lasts 4 to 5 days. Any authorization given to boat dock builders would limit the duration that the ramp could be in use, give priority to



recreational users, limit the number of boat docks that could be in construction status at a given time, and set up some general housekeeping rules to make sure that the area around the ramp does not become congested with construction equipment, materials, or debris. The builders would be expected to pay the daily standard amenity fee associated with some of these areas as well as the permit fee for the commercial activity. This scoping period may cover the next five years provided that no serious conflicts arise as a result of boat dock building activities at these sites.

An analysis is currently being conducted by Forest Service personnel for these types of special use authorization requests, including an assessment of the possible environmental effects of the proposed actions on NFS lands. Also, the Forest Service is closely monitoring the impact that these types of activities may have on other users of the areas.

In general, the special use process involves a review of each application received to determine how the request would affect NFS lands and the public's use of these lands. Special use applications must be consistent with Federal, State, and local laws, regulations, and special orders that apply to the National Forests. Applications must also be consistent with the Forest Plan for the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests (January, 2004), including all objectives and standards for management of the lands where a proposed special use area(s) is located.

I would like to hear from you regarding the proposed activities before making my decision for this request. The proposed activities appear to fall into a category of actions that may be excluded from documentation in an environmental impact statement or environmental assessment. This determination, however, will not be finalized until after consideration of your comments and concerns.

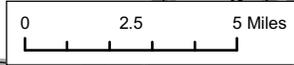
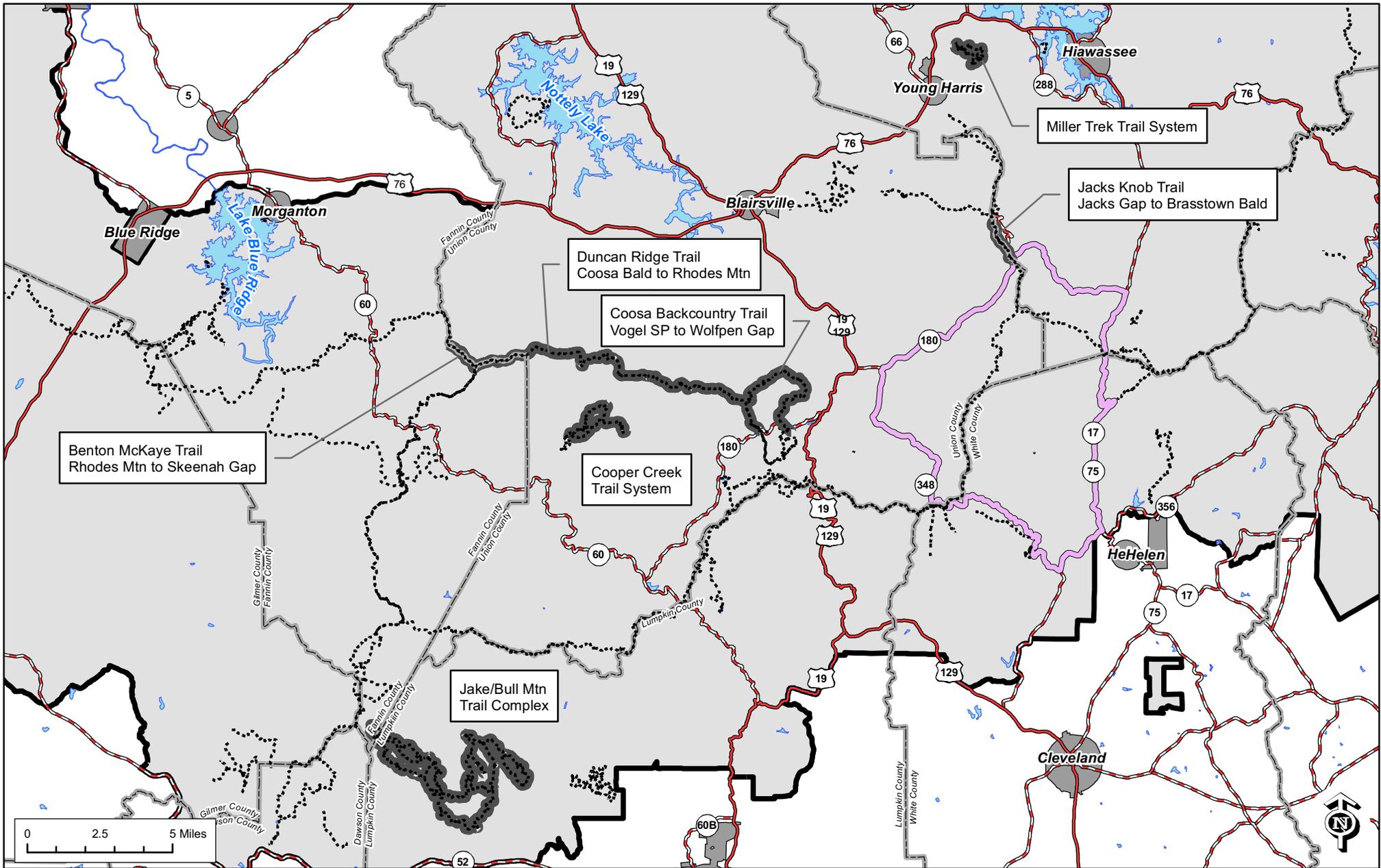
**To have your comments considered in our decision process, we would appreciate receiving your comments by May 30, 2008.** This will help ensure a complete and thorough analysis of these activities. Send your written comments to the Blue Ridge Ranger District at the address provided on the letterhead. You may also comment by phone or fax (see letterhead), by e-mail to [chatt\\_comments@fs.fed.us](mailto:chatt_comments@fs.fed.us), or in person at our office on Highway 515 West in Blairsville, Georgia.

Please note that you will be sent further correspondence on the proposed action *only* if you request a response in your reply. Feel free to call the Forest Service office if you have additional questions or would like more information regarding these proposed activities.

Thank you for your interest and involvement.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Alan Polk*  
Alan Polk  
District Ranger



### NGDRC Cross Country Running Trails

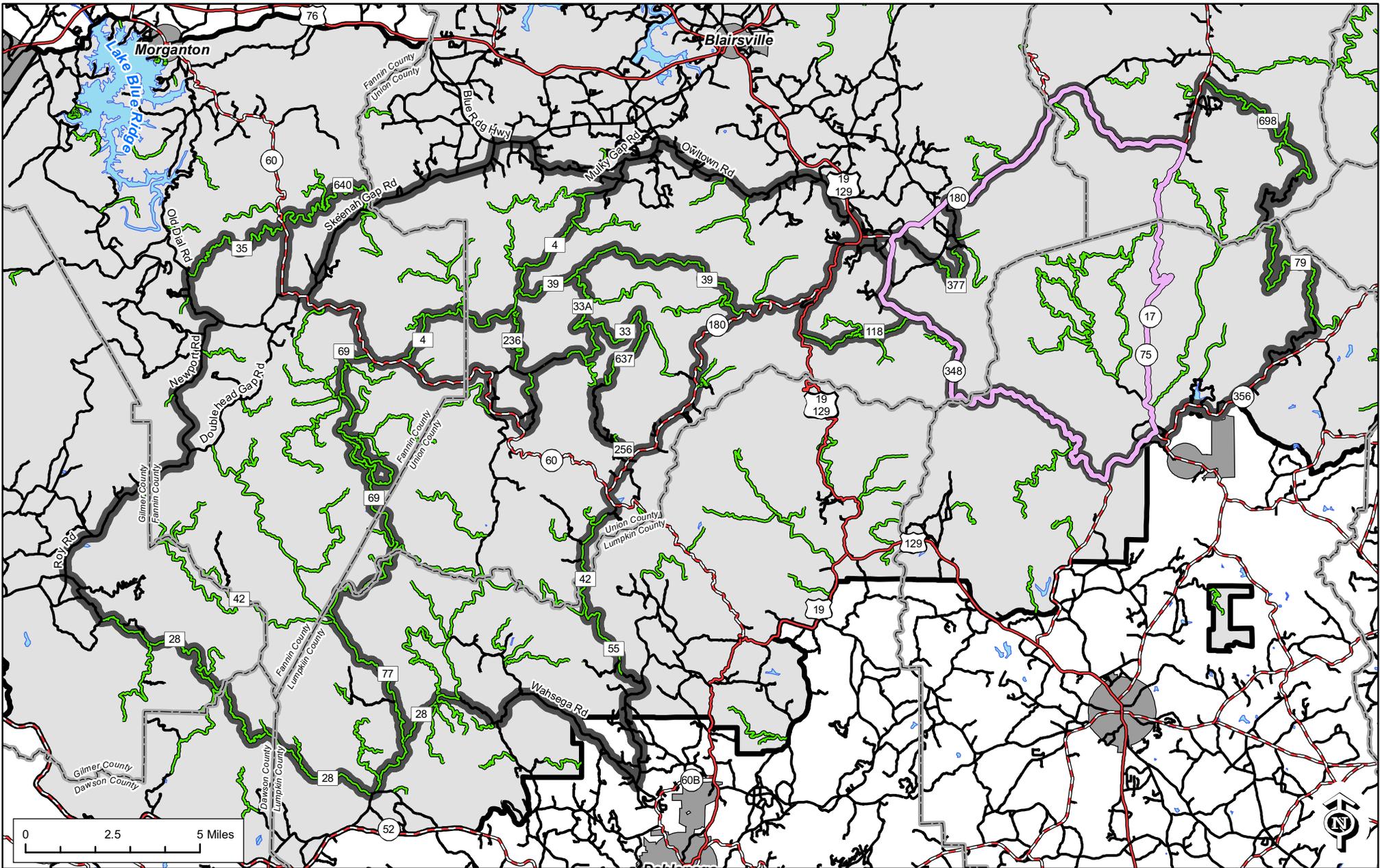
#### Legend

- Running Route
- State Highway
- Scenic Highway
- US Highway
- Trails
- Chattahoochee NF
- County Line
- City

#### VICINITY MAP



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## GARTRA Dual Sport Motorcycle Ride



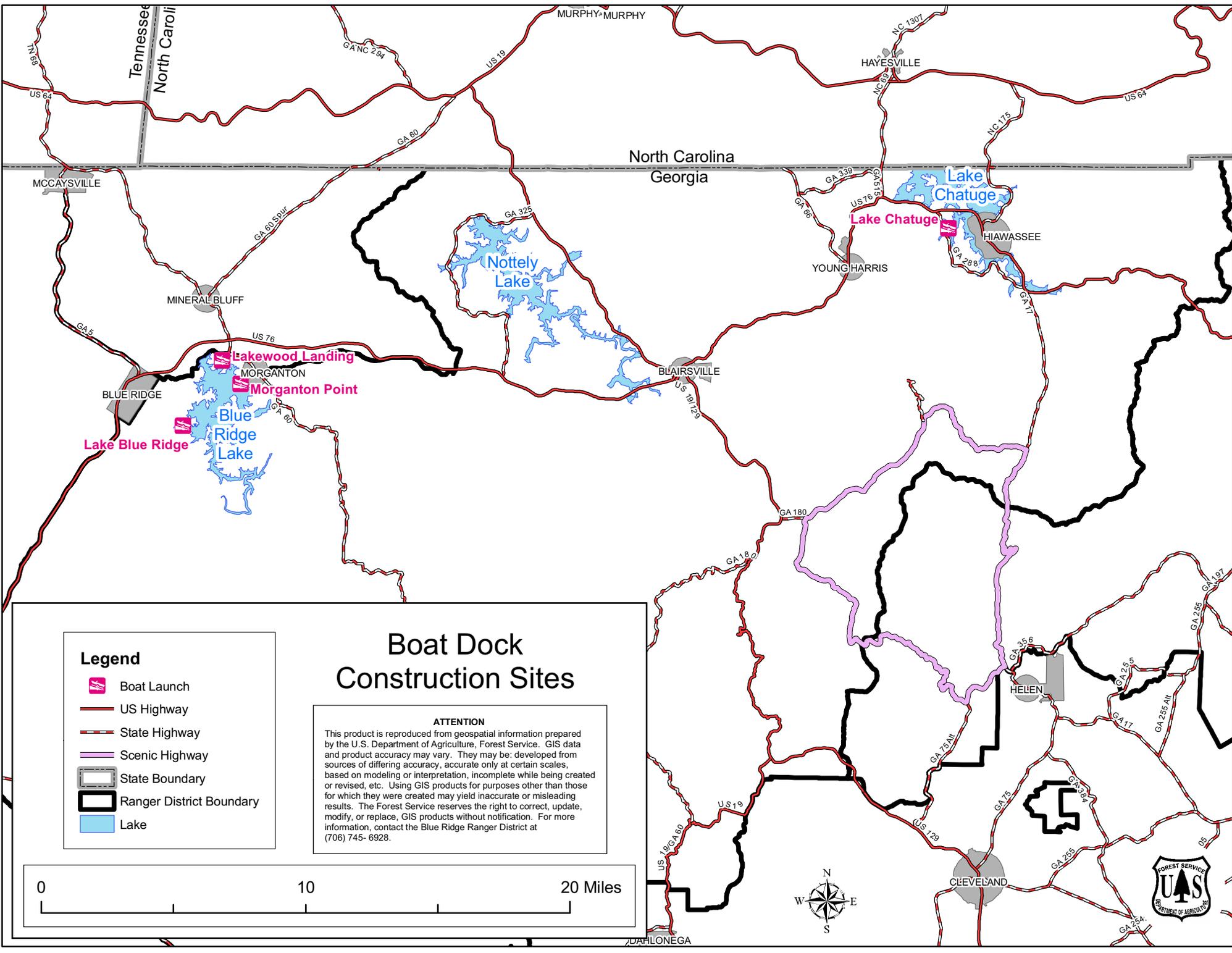
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### Legend

- |               |                     |                  |
|---------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Ride Route    | Scenic Highway      | Chattahoochee NF |
| US Highway    | County/Private Road | County Line      |
| State Highway | FS Road             | City             |

### VICINITY MAP





**Legend**

-  Boat Launch
-  US Highway
-  State Highway
-  Scenic Highway
-  State Boundary
-  Ranger District Boundary
-  Lake

## Boat Dock Construction Sites

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