



Jocassee Journal

Information and News about the Jocassee Gorges



DNR

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© Pickens County Museum of Art & History

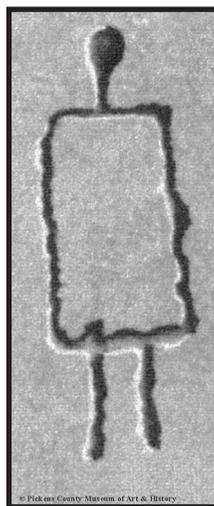
An artist's rendering shows the proposed South Carolina Rock Art Center at Hagood Mill Historic Site and Folklife Center near Pickens. (Photos courtesy of Pickens County Cultural Commission)

Fund-raising campaign begins to preserve ancient rock carvings

South Carolina Rock Art Center proposed for Pickens County's Hagood Mill Historic Site and Folklife Center

A vision to preserve more than 40 Upstate petroglyphs—rock carvings chiseled into the landscape by prehistoric American Indians perhaps more than 1,000 years ago—has been launched as local residents and officials announced a goal of \$300,000 to create a South Carolina Rock Art Center in Pickens County.

The capital campaign to fund the Center is called "Preserving a Place of Ancient Voices" and is headed by the Pickens County Cultural Commission in hopes of raising the money to create a state-of-the-art facility at Hagood Mill Historic Site and Folklife Center.



Petroglyph

Native American petroglyphs, or rock carvings, were discovered in 2003 on a large, 30-foot-long rock at Hagood Mill Historic Site and Folklife Center. This set of Native American depictions includes more than 40 carvings ranging in size from about 6 inches to more than a foot high, which archaeologists speculate to be more than a thousand years old.

Archaeologist Tommy Charles' 10-year "South Carolina Rock Art Survey" for the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology survey documented more than 300 petroglyph sites in the state, with the majority being found in the upstate counties of Oconee, Pickens and Greenville. Many of the petroglyphs discovered during the survey are at high elevations and are hard to reach for the general public, making

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Archaeologist Tommy Charles of the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology checks on the petroglyphs at Hagood Mill Historic Site and Folklife Center near Pickens. (Photos courtesy of Pickens County Cultural Commission)

Center will allow access to rock carvings

Continued from page 1

the easily accessible ones at Hagood Mill all the more important.

The South Carolina Rock Art Center will be a two-room structure built directly over the mill site's petroglyphs for their permanent protection and display. The Center will be located about 200 feet upstream from the old Hagood Mill. One room will house the rock and viewing platform. Artifacts, photographic images and displays from the 10-year South Carolina Rock Art Survey will occupy the second room. The building exterior will echo the historic mill, with lap siding and rock foundation.

The Hagood Mill Petroglyph Site "is one of the most impressive petroglyph sites discovered in South Carolina," said archaeologist Tommy Charles. "There are 17 human figures plus a number of abstract motifs carved on the host rock. The human figures represent all but two that have been recorded in the state that is located on publicly owned property and accessible to all citizens. By virtue of its ownership and location on a National Register property, it is at present our state's only petroglyph site that meets



The carvings, including abstracts and 17 rare human figures, were discovered in 2003 in a large rock outcropping on the Hagood Mill property.

the criteria for long-term preservation and that may simultaneously serve the public as an educational center for Native American rock art."

To make a tax-deductible donation to the South Carolina Rock Art Center, send a check, made payable to The Pickens County Museum, to The Pickens County Museum, Rock Art Center, 307 Johnson St., Pickens, SC 29671. For more information, call the Museum at (864) 898-5963 or send an e-mail to picmus@co.pickens.sc.us. ❁

Record number of black bears harvested in mountains

Pickens County tops list with 40 bears

After receiving a tremendous number of nuisance bear calls last year, state wildlife biologists weren't surprised that hunters had a record-breaking bear season in 2009.

The final tally was 92 bears, a total that more than doubled the total harvest from eight of the previous 10 seasons and easily eclipsed the all-time record harvest of 58 set in 2007.

"In my opinion, it's not an over-harvest whatsoever,"

said Skip Still, recently retired black bear biologist with the S.C. Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

"There's as much bear sign out there now as there was prior to the season. Hunters could harvest that many every year and not hurt the population." In fact, a number of nuisance bear calls have been received

by DNR since December 2009, and one bear had to be relocated in February after it forced its way into a Pickens garage to eat a bag of dog food.

The Upstate black bear population is estimated at around 1,000 animals by biologists, and appears to be expanding considerably, as evidenced by a sharp surge in bear sightings in areas on the periphery of their traditional mountain habitat. Bears have been reported in Anderson, Laurens, Spartanburg and Union counties in the past year.

"We've had good bear reproduction over the past few years and our scent-station survey showed the second-highest visitation rate ever," said Richard Morton, DNR biologist. "I guess we're seeing the results of all that."

The results were evident during the 12-day

season held in October 2009. A total of 28 bears were harvested during the still (gun) hunt portion of the season, and 64 bears were taken during the subsequent party (dog) hunt the following week.

Each of the counties in Game Zone 1 saw a record harvest, with Pickens County leading the way with 40 bears. Oconee County yielded 32 bears, followed by Greenville County with 20.

"We had perfect conditions for a big season," said Morton.



Outdoor Dream Foundation hunters Vance Mabery (left) and Dakota Helmuth both bagged bears during the 2009 season.

Morton cited favorable weather and a scattered acorn crop as primary factors working in the hunters' favor. Perfect weather enhanced tracking ability during the party hunt while the hit-or-miss acorn crop had bears on the move and focusing on areas where white oak acorns were abundant.

The biggest bear of the season—a 537-pound boar—was taken on the final day of the still hunt by Gary

Banks of Marietta. This bear had been trapped and relocated in April 2009 by DNR wildlife technicians after several nuisance reports were received on it. It was tagged and released in Oconee County and weighed an estimated 400 pounds at the time.

Several other large bears were harvested during the October 2009 bear season. Another hunter killed a 495-pound bear, and several in the 300- to 400-pound range were also harvested.

Three young hunters on hunts with the Outdoor Dream Foundation, which provides outdoors experiences for young people battling life-threatening illness or injury, were each successful. Todd Mulvie of Easley, Dakota Helmuth of Cumming, Ga., and Vance Mabery of Harrisonburg, Va., each harvested bears. 🌿

Youth bluegrass program receives S.C. Arts Commission grant

Grassroots effort funds instruments, instruction for teaching bluegrass music to Pickens County students

Preserving Our Southern Appalachian Music, a grassroots effort to teach bluegrass music to children, has been awarded a \$6,000 grant by the South Carolina Arts Commission for the 2010 fiscal year.

With the assistance of this support, Preserving Our Southern Appalachian Music (POSAM) will be able to provide instruments and fund instruction for Young Appalachian Musicians (YAM) to about 200 Pickens County students at Ambler, A.R. Lewis, Hagood and Holly Springs elementary schools and Pickens Middle School. Students pay for lessons and instrument rental based on a sliding scale.

“The South Carolina Arts Commission will assist Preserving Our Southern Appalachian Music in offering instruction playing string instruments to children in six Pickens County schools during the 2009-2010 school,” said Betty McDaniel, YAM executive director. “This funding will help us achieve our mission teaching children to play traditional Southern Appalachian music by ear.”

Several local organizations and individuals are helping Preserving Our Southern Appalachian Music meet its obligation of matching the Arts Commission grant with local dollars and in-kind expenses. Organizations supporting the grant are the School District of Pickens County; Pickens County Museum and Hagood Mill; Birchwood Center for Arts and Folklife; Table Rock State Park; Pumpkintown Community Club; and the Upcountry History Museum of Greenville. Among individual contributors is Vicky Anthony of Pickens.

“Holly Springs is a special school,” Anthony said, “and I wanted to provide a donation to this program as an expression of gratitude for the encouragement my son, Jake, received when he attended school there.” Jake Anthony lives in Los Angeles, teaches at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), coaches voice students and composes for Warner Brothers.

Residents can see how the Arts Commission



Pickens County Young Appalachian Musicians (from left) Peyton O’Kelley, Danielle Yother, Anaston Broom and Gabe Sickels show that bluegrass pickers can be cool and a little goofy, all at the same time!

grant and local funds are being applied by visiting a YAM member school and observing an after-school class or by visiting the Oolenoy Community Center in Pumpkintown on a Friday night and enjoying a bluegrass jam session.

A fund-raiser for the program will be held Saturday, May 1—the Papa John Memorial Music Festival at Pickens High School stadium. At least five bluegrass/old time bands will perform, along with the Young Appalachian Musicians.

Young Appalachian Musicians are sponsored by Preserving Our Southern Appalachian Music Inc., a charitable non-profit organization to which all contributions are tax deductible. Donations may be made to YAM Program, c/o Betty McDaniel,

792 Holly Springs School Road, Pickens, SC 29671. For more information, call (864) 878-4257 or (864) 878-1177 or e-mail POSAM_Info@yahoo.com.

The South Carolina Arts Commission is the state agency charged with creating a thriving arts environment that benefits all South Carolinians, regardless of their location or circumstances. Created by the South Carolina General Assembly in 1967, the Arts Commission is working to increase public participation in the arts by providing services, grants and leadership initiatives in three areas: arts education, community arts development and artist development. Headquartered in Columbia, the Arts Commission is funded by the state of South Carolina and by the federal government through the National Endowment for the Arts. For more information, visit www.SouthCarolinaArts.com or call (803) 734-8696. ❁

“This funding will help us achieve our mission teaching children to play traditional Southern Appalachian music by ear.”

—Betty McDaniel



The Carrick Creek Trail at Table Rock State Park in northern Pickens County is one of the state's most popular trails. A new overlook will soon be completed on the trail, with the funding coming from state taxpayer donations. (Photo courtesy of S.C. State Park Service)

New waterfall overlook to be erected

Funding for Table Rock project comes from tax form check off

Work is expected to be completed by summer 2010 on a new overlook at a popular hiking trail at Table Rock State Park, with the funding coming from state taxpayer donations.

The \$43,000 donated in 2008 returns through the "Check Off for State Parks" form—Schedule I-330—will be used to build a new mountainside trail overlook and viewing area on Carrick Creek in the landmark Blue Ridge park.

"It will provide a safe access point for our visitors to view one of the most incredible waterfalls in this area, and it will protect the resources at the same time," said Poll Knowland, park manager at Table Rock State Park in northern Pickens County. The wooden deck platform on the Carrick Creek Trail should be finished before summer.

More than 48,000 hikers used the Carrick Creek Trail last year, Knowland said.

South Carolina taxpayers can again directly support state parks when they file their 2009 state income tax returns. The S.C. State Park Service is now working to identify other projects across the state that could be funded with donations from 2009 returns. Taxpayers can designate any amount from \$1 up to be used directly for state park improvements. "Check Off for State Parks" funds are not used for daily operations.

"We know it's a tough economy," said Chad Prosser, director of the S.C. Department of Parks,

Recreation & Tourism. "But even a small donation can add up to big support of South Carolina State Parks. Checking off for parks when you file your 2009 state tax return is a simple way to demonstrate your support and contribute to some of our state's most treasured amenities."

The S.C. State Park Service receives only a small portion of its budget from state taxes and is one of the most self-sufficient state park systems in the country. The parks depend on their own revenues and charitable contributions for maintenance and improvements.

The S.C. State Park Service manages 47 state parks, covering more than 80,000 acres that include more than 3,000 campsites, 220 cabins and villas, lake and river access, historic sites, public beaches, sand hills pine woods and mountain forest. For more information, go to www.Checkoff4SCParks.com or www.SouthCarolinaParks.com.

Another check off available to conservation-minded taxpayers is the Endangered Wildlife Fund, or "Check Off for Wildlife Fund," the foundation of support for threatened and endangered wildlife in South Carolina. The Fund enables the S.C. Department of Natural Resources to better protect threatened and endangered wildlife, which in turn strengthens the environment for all species. Look for line 27 on the long form (SC1040) or line 13 on the short form (SC1040A) of the S.C. Department of Revenue Individual Tax Return form, then complete and submit Form I-330. ❁

Jocassee peregrine falcon

By Joey Holleman
The State newspaper

After years of worrying that someone might accidentally fall off Jumping Off Rock, Mark Hall went over the edge on purpose.

Hall, the manager of the 43,500 acres maintained by the state in the Jocassee Gorges, and two climbing experts didn't jump off as much as they rappelled over one of the most scenic cliffs in South Carolina.

And while it was a blast to explore uncharted territory, they did it with a serious purpose—ensuring the well-being of one of only two known nesting pairs of peregrine falcons in the state.

The birds showed up for the first time in 2008 and came back in 2009. But they moved from their established nest early this year, apparently spooked by human activity nearby.

“We're trying to find out where they moved,” Hall said.

What they found should encourage bird-lovers and those who appreciate the views around Jumping Off Rock.

The S.C. Department of Natural Resources closed the portion of Horsepasture Road nearest the cliffs in 2008 after Hall first spotted the rare birds, which came off the endangered species list in 1999 but still number fewer than 4,000 breeding pairs in North America.

The closing frustrated locals who ride four-wheelers and trucks up the rugged gravel road to enjoy the view from Jumping Off Rock of Lake Jocassee and the North Carolina mountains. The spot is so picturesque, it's where Gov. David Beasley announced the historic preservation of the Jocassee Gorges in 1997.

Hall isn't sure of the derivation of the rock face's name; to his knowledge, nobody has jumped off it. Recreational rock climbing isn't allowed on the face.



The DNR restricted access to Jumping Off Rock when peregrine falcons were discovered nesting there.



Mark Hall (left), DNR land manager for Jocassee Gorges, and John Buford, from Brevard College in North Carolina, examine a peregrine falcon nest. (Photos by Tim Dominick of The State.)

It's hard to imagine anyone has jumped off the rock face and lived to tell about it. The sheer drop ranges from about 25 feet (to a skinny ledge) to nearly 300 feet.

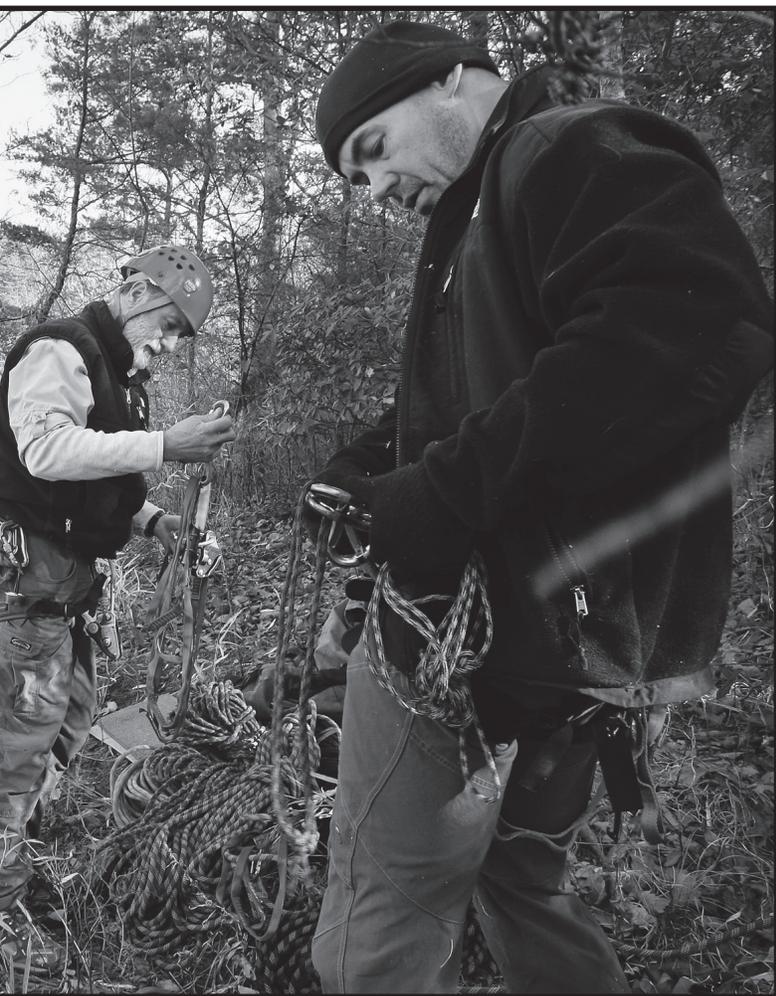
As more visitors discovered the site in recent years, Hall grew concerned that someone would fall over the precipice. While the road was closed in 2008, the state built a more structured (and safer) overlook about 200 yards away.

The road was reopened in 2009, but the old parking area near Jumping Off Rock was closed and the most dangerous portion of the cliffs was declared off limits to visitors.

Hall thinks most visitors adhered to the new rules. But shortly after the falcons returned in January 2009, they suddenly abandoned their first nest. Trash indicated people had been shooting skeet above the birds' nest, which was accessible on a ledge to the west of Jumping Off Rock.

Hall was worried about the birds' safety until he spotted their spectacular aerial show a few weeks later.

ns relocate to safer home



along with climbing instructors Robert Dye (center) and John Buford, prepare to rappel over Jumping Off Rock in search of a new nest site for peregrine falcons (State newspaper)

The crow-sized birds are among the fastest in the world, diving as fast as 200 mph to attack other birds in the sky.

Their acrobatics are seen throughout the mountain bluffs of the East Coast and even among the skyscrapers in New York City. But the only other nesting pair in South Carolina in recent years was on the back side of Table Rock Mountain, Hall said.

The Jumping Off Rock pair, which probably started their lives nearby in North Carolina, produced young each of the past two springs. The young birds typically stay within 100 miles of their parents. So protecting the nesting site is important to ensure the birds maintain a foothold in South Carolina.

Hall asked climbing instructors Robert Dye and John Buford of Brevard College in North Carolina to help him find the new nest site this month. It's the ideal time, because birds leave in the summer before returning in January.

Dye, who years ago dangled from helicopters to help band young peregrine falcons in Canada, jumped at the chance. He was the first to rappel over the edge

on a rope anchored to a large tree.

For the first known "jump" off Jumping Off Rock, Dye's descent was anticlimactic. He slid over quietly, concentrating on his path down a steep rock slope to a ledge about 25 feet down.

"So you think they were on a ledge below where I'm standing?" Dye asked when he reached the first ledge.

"Yep," Hall said.

"I'd buy that," Dye said. "That doesn't look like a place where a fox is going to run up and grab a chick."

Hall then followed Dye down the rope, with Buford going down last. They anchored other ropes to trees on the ledge, then edged out onto the last of the series of ledges. From there, they could see the underside of a ledge to the west that sticks out about 10 feet.

Whitewash (evidence of bird poop) streaked down from a smaller rock tucked under the overhang. Even with binoculars, it was impossible to see more sure-fire evidence such as bones left over from meals. But the whitewash was under what looked like an ideal nest site, and it was near a dead tree branch where Hall most often spotted the falcons this year.

"I bet that's their primary site," Hall said from his precarious perch. "I never could get a three-dimensional view of that site until I got right here."

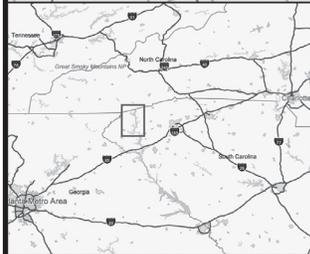
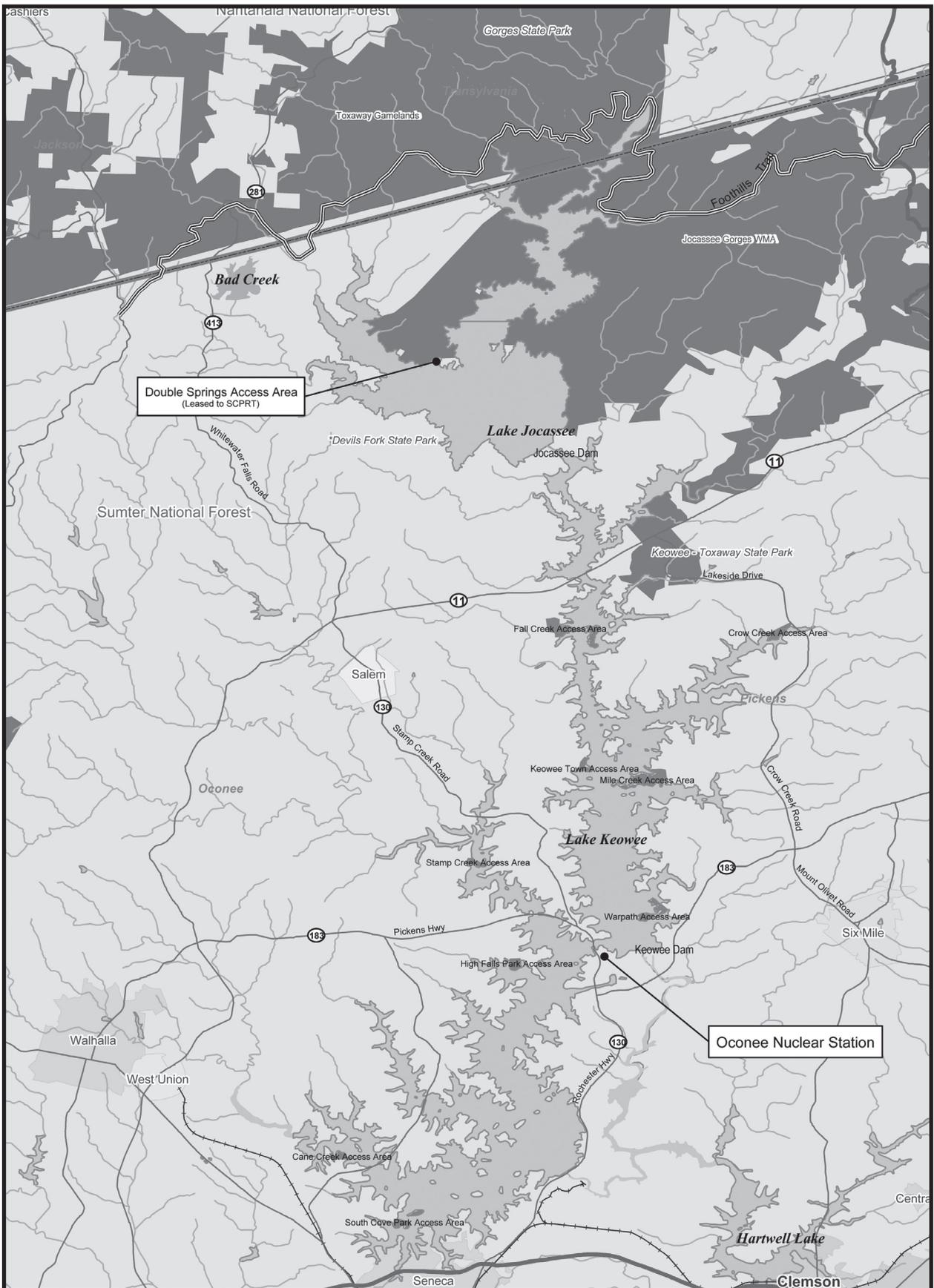
Puffing hard after the climb back up, Hall looked satisfied. The birds had moved up to a nicer home in the same neighborhood.

"The other nest was much more accessible (to humans or predators such as foxes)," Hall said. The new nest is "harder to watch, but maybe it's a good thing they moved." ❁

(This article appeared in The State newspaper in Columbia Dec. 20, 2009.)



Mark Hall is assisted back up to the top of Jumping Off Rock by climbing instructor John Buford from Brevard College after rappelling off the edge in search of the nest of a pair of peregrine falcons.



Legend

Limited Access	Lake/Pond
Highway	Stream/River
Major Road	Park or National Forest
Local Road	Access Area
Railroads (Local)	States
Stream	Cities
Dam	
Foothills Trail	

Keowee-Toxaway Overview Map



Note: Devils Fork State Park is owned by Duke Energy and leased to SCPRT.
 Source: SCDNR website, 2007; ESRI base data 2006.

Relicensing of Keowee-Toxaway Hydro Project underway

License for Jocassee, Keowee hydro facilities expires in 2016

Late in 2009, Duke Energy initiated the relicensing of its Keowee-Toxaway Hydroelectric Project, a process that likely will extend past 2014.

Why does it take so long to relicense a hydroelectric project and what's involved?

“The relicensing process is a bit daunting,” said Jen Huff, Duke Energy project manager in charge of the relicensing effort. “It requires input from the communities, company resources and the involvement of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), the agency responsible for issuing our license.”

Duke Energy owns and operates the Keowee-Toxaway Hydroelectric Project, located on the Keowee and Little Rivers in the Savannah River Basin. The project consists of two hydroelectric developments—Keowee Hydro Station and the Jocassee Pumped Storage Facility. Together, these two stations can produce 820 megawatts of clean, economical power.

FERC issued a license for the project in 1966 that will expire in 2016. The Federal Power Act requires nonfederal hydroelectric projects to file for a new license before the original license expires. Typically, a new license is granted for 30 to 50 years.

“The FERC places conditions on a new license to ensure that equal consideration is given to both power and non-power benefits such as water quality, water supply, cultural resources, recreation, and fish and wildlife habitat enhancement and protection,” said Huff.

Duke Energy will use FERC's Integrated Licensing Process (ILP), which is designed to provide a predictable, efficient and timely licensing process that continues to ensure adequate resource protection.

The licensing process includes numerous steps that Duke Energy must complete before filing for a new license in 2014. These steps include:

- Filing with FERC a Pre-Application Document (PAD) and Notice of Intent (NOI). The PAD brings together all existing, relevant information about the Project and its effects on resources, as well as a schedule for developing the license application.
- Through its scoping process, FERC will identify and refine issues, discuss existing information, identify information gaps, and finalize a process plan.
- Completion of relicensing studies in 2012 and 2013.
- Duke Energy will file the license application by August 2014.

As part of the relicensing process,

Duke Energy is sponsoring a stakeholder team with the goal of achieving a stakeholder agreement addressing all aspects of Project operation for the next license term.

“We have found that early stakeholder involvement in relicensing enhances the process and results in relicensing agreements among the many stakeholder organizations,” said Huff.

Duke Energy's stakeholder team includes representatives of local, state and federal resource agencies, Native American Tribes, nongovernment organizations and the public. Members of the team have been identified and will continue to meet through at least 2014 when the license application is submitted to the FERC.

Additional information on Duke Energy's licensing efforts can be found at www.Duke-Energy.com. You can sign up to receive a quarterly Keowee-Jocassee newsletter by sending an e-mail to ktrelicensing@duke-energy.com. 



Lake Jocassee's pumped storage facility, operated by Duke Energy, and the surrounding area are part of the Keowee-Toxaway relicensing. The Keowee-Toxaway Hydroelectric Project's license won't expire until 2016, but the relicensing meetings began in 2009. (DNR photo by Greg Lucas)

Nine-year-old angler reels in record brook trout

Fish caught in North Saluda River in northern Greenville County

A 9-year-old angler from Tigerville recently caught a brook trout that tied a 31-year-old South Carolina state record for the species.

Riley Dunn, 9, caught a 2-pound, 6.08-ounce brook trout in the North Saluda River in northern Greenville County in January 2010. Since existing records must be exceeded by a minimum of 2 ounces to be supplanted in the state record book, Riley's catch will share the top spot with a 2-pound, 6-ounce brook trout caught by L. Dean Chapman of Salem on the Chattooga River in 1979.

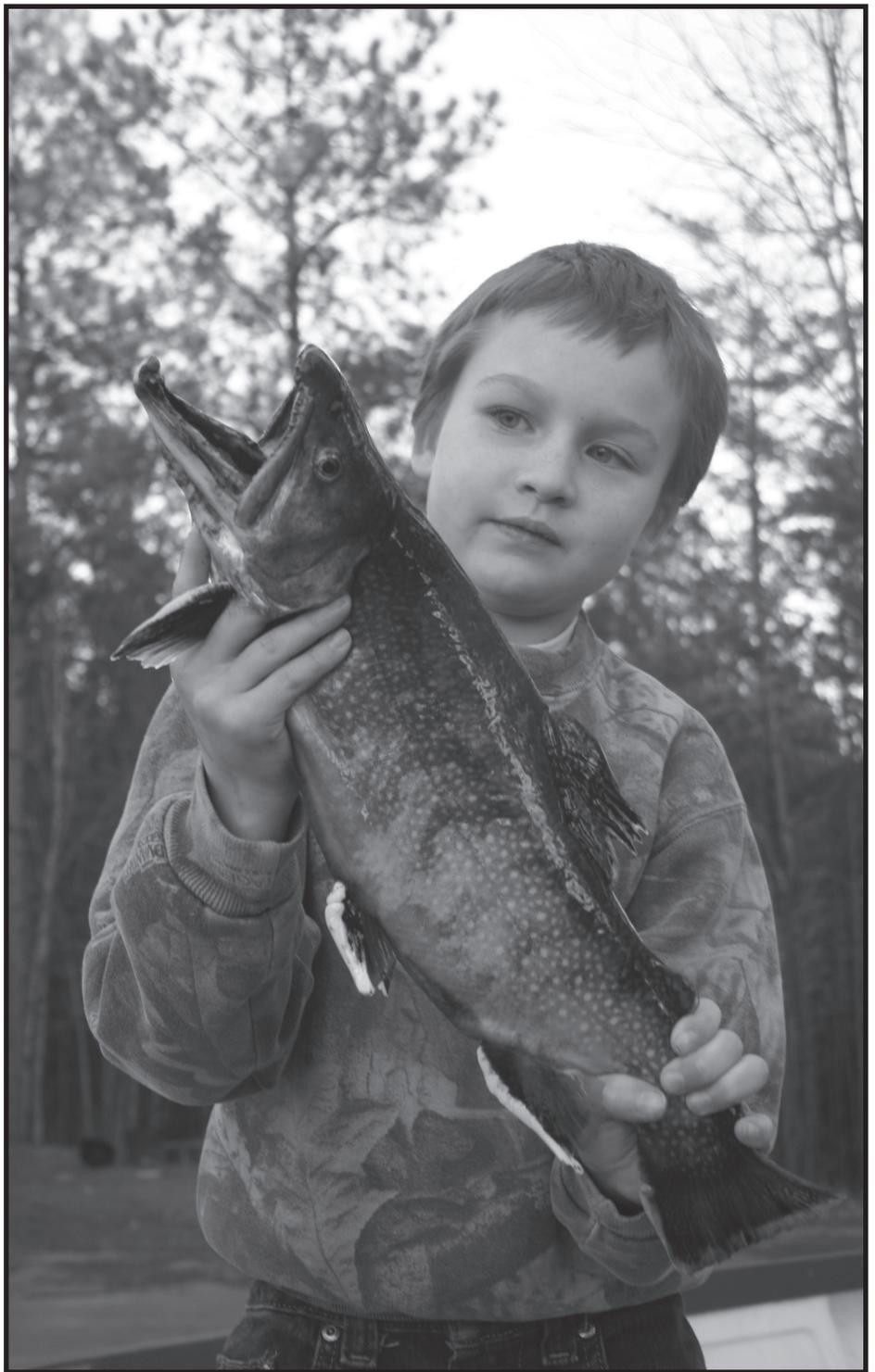
Riley and his father, Marcus, were fishing on the North Saluda River when Riley hooked the big brookie on his "secret bait."

A fourth grader at Tigerville Elementary, Riley immediately showed the fish to his father, who noticed the white tips on the fins—telltale markings of a brook trout.

After returning home, Riley's grandfather suggested they have the fish weighed. That evening they had the fish weighed on certified scales at Jordan's Processing in Greer, which confirmed their belief that the trout might challenge the state standard.

Dan Rankin, regional fisheries biologist for the S.C. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) based in Clemson, confirmed Riley's catch and submitted the required paperwork for final approval. Soon, Riley will be the youngest record holder on the state's freshwater records list.

Rankin said the North Saluda is one of more than a dozen mountain streams and rivers that receive an annual stocking of close to 30,000 brook



Riley Dunn of Tigerville shows off his brook trout, which tied a 31-year-old state record. Riley, a fourth-grader at Tigerville Elementary in Greenville County, caught the big brookie in the North Saluda River.

trout, produced at the DNR's Walhalla State Fish Hatchery in northern Oconee County. The fish are typically 9 inches long when stocked, although several hundred larger "brood" fish are released each year as well.

"We have stocked quite a few that were really good-sized when they were released," Rankin said. "This one was probably a 3-year-old fish." ❁

‘A painful reminder of what once was’

Jocassee author reminisces about world lost under lake’s waters

By Debbie Fletcher

I’m often asked how it felt to drive up to Lake Jocassee for the first time. I watched the last half hour of “Deliverance” yesterday, which, I know, has caused my mind to drift back to this event. Even though I watched them build the dam—and the coffer dam that is at Devil’s Fork State Park—the absence of water certainly softened the real blow I would later experience.

The first time I went to Lake Jocassee was about 11 years ago, I guess. My husband and I were in the area, so we took the meandering road that once led into the valley to see the lake. I was not prepared for the emotions that I would feel when suddenly the road curved sharply to the right, whereas once it continued straight down the mountain into the valley. We parked the car and looked out over the water. A real sense of sadness enveloped me. At that point, I had to decide if I was going to be bitter about this for the rest of my life, or try to “reconnect” with the Jocassee I loved so much. I chose the latter.

My immediate family, for the most part, has never laid eyes on the lake. It’s a painful reminder of what once was. My uncle recently put it very aptly. He said, *“You know, Jocassee wasn’t just a house - or a piece of land. We had a love affair with that place.”* Finally, someone was able to express in a concise sentence why we loved it so. I was quoted on a CNN piece as saying, “I don’t know what it was about Jocassee that just got into our souls...but it did.”

I remember my first boat ride on the lake. I had a good sense of where our property was in the lake, and we purposely boated across “our” land. I glanced back at the dam, knowing that it spanned the mountains over which Uncle Buck made his final landing approach as we flew into the valley. Sad. Just sad. But I was determined to make peace with our loss, so we boated over to a quiet cove and anchored there for a while. I jumped into the water,

fully expecting to feel the sensation of ice cold water, but the water was warm. It felt unnatural. I surfaced (crying a bit) and pleaded for help to get me out quick. *“I feel like I just jumped into someone’s grave!”*

Well, a lot has happened since then. Attakulla Lodge has been located, mostly still intact, and divers have visited her a dozen times. I’ve learned to scuba dive, and I’ve met the divers on the way back from the Lodge in order to “hang on the line” with them as they decompress. We always celebrate another successful, safe dive to 300 feet by having a picnic on the boat: homemade fried

chicken, sandwiches, brownies, trail mix. Fried chicken was the house special at Attakulla Lodge, and I tell the divers that you’re not going to visit MY house and not get fried chicken! It’s not just a dive—it’s an event!

We are hoping for a good diving season this year, as many things affect the dive. The visibility at 300 feet is affected by so many things (recent rains, temperature, even whether or not they are generating electricity at

Bad Creek). This year we are hoping for some near-perfect conditions, so we can finally get that picture that everyone is waiting to see: a panoramic picture of the Lodge in her present condition. Here’s hoping! She was discovered on Aug. 4, 2004, with the first dive by Jackie Smith and Charles Johnson on Aug. 7, 2004. This was the dive in which they brought me what I refer to as my “Jocassee treasure”—the sidelight from the front door. I’ve recorded the whole story in a revision to my book.

Please check back, and I’ll keep you posted! Dive season may begin around July. Here’s hoping!!

(Debbie Fletcher spent her childhood summers in Jocassee Valley, now covered by the waters of Lake Jocassee. She is the author of “Whippoorwill Farewell: Jocassee Remembered.” This article first appeared as a blog entry on her Web site, www.jocasseeremembered.com.) 🌸



Debbie Fletcher, left, and Claudia Hembree are cousins and both are authors of books on Jocassee Valley. (DNR photo by Greg Lucas)



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New Foothills Trail signs now in place

The Foothills Trail received new entrance signage in December at the Laurel Valley and Sassafras Mountain trailheads, and at the boat-in trail access areas on Lake Jocassee. The signs, identified by the dark brown stain and yellow routed lettering, replaced dilapidated and damaged signs previously in place. Duke Energy's effort to replace the signs was part of a partnership to work with the Foothills Trail Conference to replace old signage along the trail and add additional signage. To help identify the trail and enhance the trail's aesthetics and value, Duke Energy will be looking to replace more signs and information kiosks along the trail in the near future. The Foothills Trail Conference has also embarked upon a sign project, and many of its new signs are expected to be put in place along the 77-mile trail in 2010.