



MEDIA ADVISORY

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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Corps of Engineers to open new multi-purpose trail at Lake Hartwell April 29

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA – Bikers, hikers and joggers – get ready! The [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Lake Hartwell Office](#), in partnership with the [Southern Off-Road Bicycle Association \(SORBA\)](#), will open a newly-constructed 7.6-mile multi-purpose trail at the Paynes Creek Campground area during a ribbon-cutting ceremony April 29 at 1:30 p.m.

Media interested in attending the event should RSVP by April 28 by contacting the Lake Hartwell office at 1-888-893-0678. Ask for Zach Harkness, ext. 310, or Scott Kelley, ext. 386.

Speakers at the event will include the Corps' Hartwell Project Manager Virgil Hobbs, as well as representatives from SORBA and Long Cane Trails, the Carolina-based contractor that constructed the trail. Following the ceremony, the trail will officially open to the public.

The Paynes Creek Campground is located on the Tugaloo River arm of Hartwell Lake in Hart County, Ga. The campground spans 210 acres and includes 44 camp sites. The new multi-purpose trail is located within the adjacent 190-acre day-use area owned by the Corps of Engineers.

The Paynes Creek multi-purpose trail will enhance mountain biking and recreational activities on the upper portion of Hartwell Lake and increase opportunities for bank fishing, hiking and bird watching. The trail is open to bikers, hikers and joggers.

“About 75 percent of the trail runs along the shorelines of Lake Hartwell, so hikers get to enjoy a beautiful lakeside view while they exercise,” said Zach Harkness, Lake Hartwell natural resources program manager. “The trail will be a one-of-a-kind attraction to the Lake Hartwell community. There is no other trail like this at Hartwell; the closest one is an hour away in Clemson, S.C.”

The trail project was the result of a Handshake Partnership Agreement between the Corps of Engineers and SORBA. The Corps' received a \$25,000 federal grant in January 2010 as a source of seed money to install the trail. SORBA matched the grant by donating an additional \$20,000 in volunteer efforts toward the project.

“The Challenge Partnership Handshake is a way for the Corps of Engineers to plant the seed for community projects like this multi-purpose trail,” said Ryan Hartwig, natural resources program manager at the district's headquarters in Savannah. “We draw on the expertise of groups like SORBA, who designed and mapped the trail, and we develop long-lasting relationships.”

The Handshake Partnership Program began in 2004 and is authorized under Section 225 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1992. The program aims to initiate new (or enhance existing) recreation and natural resources management opportunities. It encourages community engagement and promotes mutually beneficial activities between the Corps and partner organizations. The program allows the Corps to accept money, materials and volunteer services — following the approval of a partnership agreement — to accomplish work programs.

“Under our Partnership Agreement, SORBA will help us maintain the trail and volunteer their time to ensure the project continues to benefit the Hartwell community,” said Scott Kelley, natural resources specialist at the Lake Hartwell office.

Applications for the Handshake funds are evaluated based on sustainability; partnership value; recreational benefit; environmental stewardship value; communication and education value; and innovativeness.

For more information on the Corps of Engineers Handshake Partnership Program, visit <http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/employees/challenge/handshake.cfm>