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Georgia DNR to open new fishing pier at Hartwell Dam; Corps to conduct gate test

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA – The [Georgia Department of Natural Resources](#) will open and dedicate a new fishing pier below the [Hartwell Dam](#) at 10 a.m. on Jan. 15, giving anglers greater access to fishing areas adjacent to the facility on the Georgia side of the Savannah River. In addition, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will conduct a routine gate test at the dam at 11 a.m. the same day.

The two events are open to the public. The dedication ceremony will take place at the Georgia River Recreation area off of U.S. Highway 29 just below Hartwell Dam in Hart County, Ga.

Georgia DNR received funding for the pier as part of a natural resource damage settlement related to PCB contamination of Twelve Mile Creek which feeds into Lake Hartwell. The PCB contamination resulted from discharges from a manufacturing plant formerly located along the creek. The construction of this pier marks the first use of monies from the settlement trust fund. After the dedication, Georgia officials will transfer the pier to the Corps of Engineers.

The [Savannah District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers](#) owns and operates the Hartwell Dam and Lake project for flood risk reduction, hydropower production, recreation, water supply, water quality, navigation, and environmental stewardship. The states of Georgia and South Carolina along with the Savannah District operate numerous recreation facilities along the reservoir's shore.

The pier will connect to an existing fishing pier on the dam and allow renewed public access to the original pier as well as provide new opportunities to fish below the structure. The Corps of Engineers closed access to the original pier following the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, because parking and entry to the pier allowed vehicles too near the dam's power plant. With the new pier, parking and access will be available at an existing public recreation area.

Corps to conduct gate test

In addition, the Savannah District will conduct a required safety test on the spillway gates of Hartwell Dam after the ceremony. The test will ensure the gates work properly and can be activated in the event of an emergency to protect the dam and people and property downstream. The test is required annually as part of the Corps of Engineers Dam Safety Program but has been postponed due to drought. The last such test was conducted in 2007.

For public safety, the Highway 29 bridge will be closed to pedestrians during the gate test. Cars will not be allowed to stop. Observation points for the test include the new pier and the walking trails atop the earthen portions of the dam on both sides of the river. Those who plan to attend should park at the South Carolina Dam Viewing Area, or (in Georgia) at the Georgia River Recreation Area.

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Photo caption: Construction workers install a section of a new fishing pier below Hartwell Dam in December 2009. The new pier will open public access to an existing pier closed since the 9-11 terrorist attacks. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources headed the building project as part of a settlement over PCB contamination in Twelve Mile River. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which owns and operates Hartwell Dam and Lake, will assume ownership of the pier after a ribbon-cutting ceremony Jan. 15 at 10 a.m. at the dam. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers photo by Jaime Sykes.)

Media wishing to attend the dedication and gate test should contact the Savannah District Public Affairs office, 912-652-5014. **Georgia Department of Natural Resources contact: Melissa Cummings, 770-918-6788.**

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