



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Savannah District

Budget Reductions Force Temporary Closure of Recreation Areas at Hartwell Lake Beginning 2008 Season

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SAVANNAH, GA. -- The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District announced it has altered its park operations at Hartwell Lake during fiscal year 2008, from October 1, 2007 through September 30, 2008, due to significant projected budget reductions. To meet these reductions, the Hartwell Lake and Dam Office will temporarily close several parks, lake access areas and campgrounds and shorten the "open season" in others.

"We took several options into account to determine how to best operate the parks with the funds we expect to receive," said Virgil Hobbs, Hartwell Project Manager and acting Chief of Operations Division for the Savannah District. "We want to minimize the impact to visitors."

Savannah District officials focused on operating and maintenance costs for the parks in deciding where and when cutbacks should be made. Areas or time periods receiving less visitation than others were targeted for reduced operations. "We tried to distribute the impacts evenly so no area of the lake was affected more than others," Hobbs said. In addition, he said the Corps hopes to expand the Project's volunteer program in order to allow more use of its facilities. Groups or individuals wanting to volunteer should contact the Hartwell Project Office toll free at 1-888-893-0300.

Some lesser-used areas will be closed to enable the Corps to focus maintenance efforts in the more highly-visited parks to provide Hartwell Lake's customary high level of service.

The most significant difference in operation from years past will be the months the parks will remain open and the closure of lesser-used boat ramp only areas. Officials condensed the recreation season to the months that receive the greatest visitation, mainly May through

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September. This will only affect campgrounds and day use areas operated by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. Several areas will be completely closed throughout 2008.

The following areas closed on Oct. 1 and will remain closed throughout 2008:

Georgia River Campground
Milltown Campground
Hart Group Day Use Area
Mullins Ford Access Area
Honea Path Access Area
Denver Access Area
Powderbag Creek Access Area
Durham Access Area
Mary Ann Branch Access Area
Jarrett Access Area
Spring Branch Access Area
Townville Access Area
Apple Island Access Area

These areas closed on Oct. 1 and will reopen in 2008 according to the following schedule:

Paynes Creek Campground	Open May 1 through July 9
Coneross Campground	Open May 1 through Sept. 9
Crescent Group Campground	Open May 1 through Sept. 9
Twin Lakes Day Use	Open May 1 through Oct. 1
Elrod Ferry Day Use Area	Open May 1 through Oct. 1
River Forks Day Use Area	Open May 1 through Oct. 1
Singing Pines Day Use Area	Open May 1 through Oct. 1
12 Mile Day Use Area	Open May 1 through Oct. 1
Friendship Day Use Area	Open May 1 through Oct. 1
Weldon Island Day Use Area	Open May 1 through Oct. 1
Long Point Day Use Area	Open May 1 through July 9

These areas closed today and will reopen in 2008 according to the schedule below:

Springfield Campground	Open May 1 through Sept. 9
Oconee Point Campground	Open May 1 through Sept. 9

These areas will close Dec. 1 and will reopen in 2008 according to the following schedule:

Twin Lakes Campground	Open May 1 through Sept. 9
Watsadler Campground	Open May 1 through Sept. 9

Unlike fees collected by other national recreation providers, such as the U. S. Forest Service and the National Park Service, user fees collected by the Army Corps of Engineers are not retained to support the local project, but by law enter the U. S. Treasury.

The Corps continues to monitor this budget reduction situation and will adjust park operations as needed in the future. The availability of additional funding and volunteer support would allow an increase in park operations in some areas. However, further funding reductions may force additional cutbacks in the customary level of service outlined above.

For the most current information on park openings and closings, please visit our web site at www.sas.usace.army.mil/lakes/hartwell or call the Hartwell Lake Office toll free at 1-888-893-0678.

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Media representatives should contact the Public Affairs Office at 912-652-5014/5770 for more information.

