



Currents

More Sope Creek Trails Now Open to Bikes

Sope Creek--Five years after it started, the Sope Creek trail improvement project concluded on Friday, April 5, when a change in federal regulations allowed bikes on 6.7 miles of trail. "This is an ideal trail," said Superintendent Patty Wissinger. "We welcome families and riders looking for an introductory experience on challenging but friendly trails they can share with hikers and dog walkers." The park will host an opening bike ride Saturday, April 20, 10 AM to noon.



Left: Join park rangers in celebrating the trail opening on Saturday, April 20, from 10 AM to noon! Programs include a youth bike safety workshop and rides for children and adult beginners.

Below: A CRNRA volunteer loads trash into a pickup during a park cleanup.



Superintendent's Corner

Packing It Out

Island Ford--Sequestration means spending less--in the case of our trash cans, \$76,000 less over the summer. Although a few trash cans will remain at the Cochran Shoals fitness loop, Powers Island, Paces Mill, and Abbotts Bridge, the rest of them will be removed. Leaving no trace and packing out all trash can make the whole park a better place, but only if everyone helps out.

--Patty Wissinger,
Superintendent, CRNRA

Volunteer Focus: The Hooch Gets Swept Again!

Lake Lanier to Paces Mill--Thanks to all 553 volunteers who turned out last Saturday, April 13, for the third annual "Sweep the Hooch" river cleanup in cooperation with our partners Chattahoochee Riverkeeper and Trout Unlimited! Volunteers picked up 3.7 tons of trash. Chattahoochee River Volunteers in Parks served as group leaders for shore walkers, river waders, and paddlers cleaning up at various locations throughout the day. NPS staff also supported the event by hauling away dumpster-loads of trash.

Below: Volunteer Steve Combs of Surfrider gives a safety briefing before leading a cleanup from Powers Island to Paces Mill, our most popular float area.



UPCOMING RANGER-LED PROGRAMS

April 19 and 26; May 3 and 10: Frog Frolic Sope Creek, 8:30-10:30 PM

May 11 and 25; June 1, 2, 12 and 22: Paddle with a Ranger various times and locations

May 11 and 25; June 15: Kids' Fishing Program Island Ford Pond, 9-11 AM

Reservations required for all programs: call 678-538-1200.

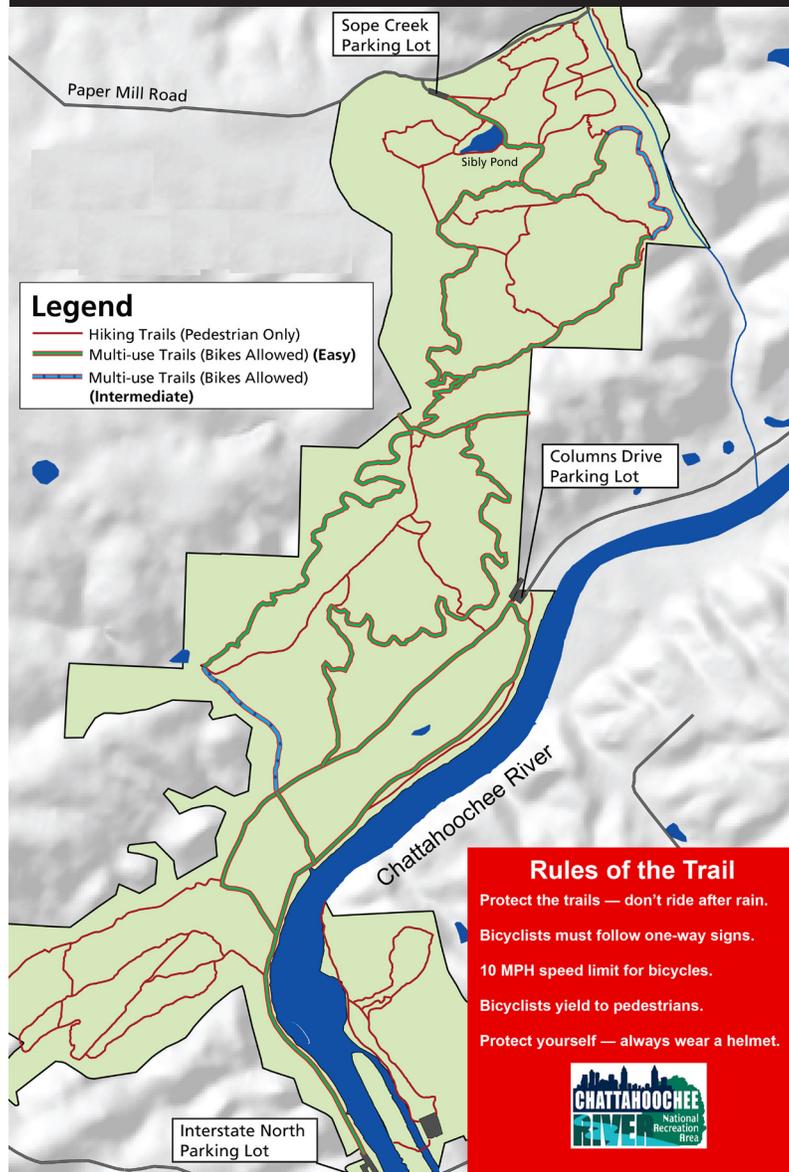
For a complete list, check our website at <http://www.nps.gov/chat/planyourvisit/events.htm>

New Places and Faces

Welcome to Visitor Use Assistant Amandip Kaur! Amandip comes to us from the US Army, where she is still an active reservist. She is a combat veteran of the Iraq War and looks forward to applying her experience in finance and transportation to her work in fees. This is her first position with the NPS.

Welcome to Acting Planning and Resource Management Chief Tim Bemisderfer! Tim has worked in the Southeast Regional office for 16 years in planning and project management. His "day job" is project management and landscape architecture. This is his second long-term detail; he previously acted as chief of facilities and resource management at Carl Sandburg Home NHS.

Below: New rules of the trail at Sope Creek. These maps were placed at several locations to help bicyclists and pedestrians locate newly-designated multi-use trails where bicycling is now allowed.



Rules of the Trail

- Protect the trails — don't ride after rain.
- Bicyclists must follow one-way signs.
- 10 MPH speed limit for bicycles.
- Bicyclists yield to pedestrians.
- Protect yourself — always wear a helmet.

SHOCKING PHOTOS!

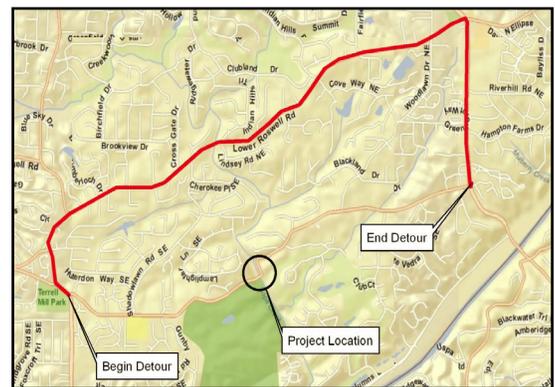
On April 9, CRNRA and US Fish and Wildlife Service staff met with the Chattahoochee Nature Center (CNC) to collect Asian swamp eels. The team used backpack electroshock equipment to stun the eels for capture.



Right: The Asian swamp eel (*Monopterus albus*), an eel-like freshwater fish, is an exotic, aquatic invasive species that has been found in several CNC ponds and in the adjacent Bull Sluice area of CRNRA. Swamp eels are predators of fish, amphibians, crustaceans, aquatic insects, and mollusks, as well as the eggs and larvae of these organisms. This research will help develop a control plan to stop the spread of the species.



Sope Creek Detour



Sope Creek--This summer, Cobb County will replace the bridge over Sope Creek on Paper Mill Road. During the project, Paper Mill Road will be closed at the bridge from May 28 to early fall 2013. Call 678-123-4567 for updates, or go to www.cobbcounty.org.