

# Friends of McIntosh Reserve, Inc.



F O M R N e w s l e t t e r

Fall 2013 - Volume 12 #2

[www.FriendsOfMcIntoshReserve.org](http://www.FriendsOfMcIntoshReserve.org)



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## Upcoming Events

### **October 26 (Saturday) 6:30 -9:30 pm**

The **Chattahoochee Story Project** will hold its next event, a seasonally appropriate campfire, at Campsites 4 and 5 at McIntosh Reserve. We will have music and boat-making and lots of river stories to tell! We're especially looking for personal stories of life on the river, along with bits of history and local lore.

### **November 25 (Monday) 7pm**

The **FOMR Annual Meeting** will be at Historic Banning Mills. Sally Bethea, executive director of the Chattahoochee River Keepers, will be our dinner speaker. Dinner will be at 7. Arrive early to have time to tour the facilities and surrounding areas. There will be a short business meeting to elect new board members and to make recommendations for officers for 2014. The cost of the dinner will be \$25 per person. You may pay at the door, but please make your reservations by emailing Margery at [digi@mindspring.com](mailto:digi@mindspring.com).

### **December 7 (Saturday) 10 am**

The annual **Christmas Fern and Holly Hike** at McIntosh Reserve will again be led by Wendell and Eleanor Hoomes.

### **January (Details still to be arranged)**

A screening of "Waterwar", a documentary for Georgia Public Broadcasting about the bitter, 20-year old struggle between Alabama, Florida and Georgia over one of our most precious

resources – water. What are the issues involved? How can they be resolved before the waters run dry?” (<http://waterwar.org/>) A discussion will follow the screening.

### **January 18, 10am: Walk and Talk**

This will be an **informal hike at Moore’s Bridge Park**. The plan is to hike from the old house off Old Newnan Road through the property to a Black Dirt entrance. We can hike back again, or arrange rides for those wishing to hike only one way.

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## Special Topics

### **Carroll County Access to the Chattahoochee**

The Chattahoochee River forms the border of Carroll County for some 21.5 miles, separating it from Fulton, Douglas and Coweta counties. Fortunately, for the citizens of our county, the public owns about 3 miles of this expanse – 1.5 miles along the border of McIntosh Reserve Park and another 1.5 miles along the border of Moore’s Bridge Park. At McIntosh Reserve Park, some 1.25 miles of the river is accessible for viewing, picnicking, walking, biking, riding or fishing.

While for the present there is less easy access to the river from Moore’s Bridge Park, plans for future development do include a lengthy river path at Moore’s Bridge. Plans for this path developed out of the Chattahoochee Hill Country Regional Greenway Trail, with Douglas, Carroll, Coweta and the City of Chattahoochee Hills (Fulton) collaborating to receive a \$2 million Congressional allocation through the Department of Transportation. Each county will receive 500,000 with a 20% match

Other than these two parks, public use of the river from its banks is scarce. You can see the river as you drive across the bridge at highway 16, and Coweta County has placed picnic facilities at the ramp site there.

Due to the arrival of services like the Georgia Trail Outfitters as well as to improved water quality in the river, demand for access to water crafts for riding the river or for fishing has increased exponentially in the last few years. Daryl Johnson, manager at McIntosh reports that some 3000 kayaks, canoes and other vessels passed by or stopped in at McIntosh within the last year. There are public-use ramps at Capps Ferry just north of Carroll County, at Highway 16 in Whitesburg (on the Coweta side of the river), at McIntosh Reserve, at Chattahoochee Bend State Park (on the Coweta side of the river), and at Hollingsworth Ferry, the last ramp in Carroll County. From Capps Ferry to Whitesburg is an 11 to 12 mile trip by river. Whitesburg to McIntosh is about 7 miles. Due to the big bend in the river at Chattahoochee Bend Park (duh!) it is some 5 to 8 miles from McIntosh to the ramp at the south end of Chat Bend. From there, it is about 2 miles to Hollingsworth Ferry. After that, the only easy way out of the water is in Franklin, some 14 to 15 miles down river. There are plans to build a ramp near the Black Dirt side of Moore’s Bridge. To increase safety for river travelers, Coweta and Carroll have agreed to place mile markers along the river between their borders. McIntosh personnel are expecting to place mile intervals on the Carroll side, while half-mile markers will be on the Coweta side. In an emergency, it will be useful for those seeking help to be able to report the last marker passed.

Groups such as the Chattahoochee River Keepers arrange official river excursions on the south side of Atlanta (<http://www.chattahoochee.org>). Some of these are cleaning the river events for experienced travelers. Some are river appreciation excursions for everyone. On an individual or group basis, Georgia Trail Outfitters ([georgiatrailoutfitters.com](http://georgiatrailoutfitters.com)) will rent kayaks or canoes for independent travelers, or provide guides as well. It is also possible to arrange for shuttle service (with rentals or with your own craft) as well as campsite setup and break down. Organized events and services such as these help people get out on the river to experience it first-hand.

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## Past Events

### **October 2013**

Tracy Dickerson, Forester, led a Walk and Talk on the trees of McIntosh Reserve. Tracy estimates that most of the forest of McIntosh is about 30 to 50 years old, reflecting the agricultural concentration of Chief McIntosh and the settlers who followed him. The transitional character of the forest is apparent, as hardwoods slowly replace the conifers. On the rich river bottoms, trees can grow quite large more quickly and may seem older than they are. On our walk, we identified several kinds of pine trees, the sweet gum, oaks (water, post, white), maple, (red, yellow, sugar), hickory, beach, ironwood, sourwood, sycamore, box elder, cottonwood. As he identified the trees, Tracy pointed out distinctive bark and leaf patterns and described for some specimens its main commercial or wildlife use. He introduced us to a telephone app for tree identification (vtreeid) out of Virginia Tech.



### **September 2013**



Several FOMR members were available to serve as guides for the annual Rivers Alive event at the Reserve. However, as the 300 or so participants expressed no need for guiding, the FOMR members enjoyed an informal hike, trash bags in tow. Altogether, hikers accumulated about 2000 pounds of trash. Georgia Power provided lunch and free tee shirts.

### **August 2013**

Brent Hess and Paul Jones, Fish Biologists with Georgia Department of Natural Resources, along with Riley Hess, 12 year old son of Brent, provided an informative walk and talk on the

fish of the Chattahoochee in McIntosh. They demonstrated the electric fishing rig used to monitor the fish through-out the year at specific sample sites along the river. We saw several small spotted bass, a common carp, a grass carp, a channel catfish, a painted turtle, and a long-nosed gar. All made it safely back into the river.



### **July 2013**



Dr. Tim Chowns, with the Department of Geosciences at the University of West Georgia, spoke to about 20 hikers at Moore's Bridge Park on the evolution of rivers in general, and about the Chattahoochee in particular. After his talk, he led a hike to the river to allow hikers to consider what we had learned and to look for the clues that would help us fit our local patch of earth into the bigger picture.

### **June 2013**

Dr. Barbara Ballentine, UWG and Dr. Jeremy Hyman, Western Carolina led a bird walk and talk at Moore's Bridge Park. Using Dr. Hyman's bird calling apparatus to attract the birds near to us, we were able to see the yellow-breasted chat, the Indigo bunting, the white eyed vireo, and the blue grosbeak. Other birds we heard or saw included the northern parula warbler, the yellow bill cuckoo, the eastern wood peewee, the tufted titmouse, eastern phoebe, a great crested flycatcher, a red-bellied woodpecker, a turkey vultures and lots of black vultures and cardinals. We were able to view up close the nest of a blue grosbeak.



### **May 2013**



Lynn Lewis-Weiss, biologist with the National Wild Turkey Federation, led the May Walk and Talk at Moore's Bridge Park. Lynn shared facts about the wild turkey. In the picture, Burns Stober displays the tail feathers of a gobbler. After the talk, the group walked to the river, studying turkey habitat along the way. At one point, Lynn played turkey calls from an app on her cell phone, and she presented a hand carved wood turkey caller to the one hunter in our group.

### **Note**

Expanded versions of most of the past events are available on our website: [www.FriendsOfMcIntoshReserve.org](http://www.FriendsOfMcIntoshReserve.org).

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# Projects Update

## ***Hugh Mitchell Kiosk***

Funds are still in place for the construction of the information kiosk to be built in the equestrian parking area. Funds for the materials were contributed in memory of long time FOMR member, Hugh Mitchell. Construction, which will be done by park personnel, has been delayed due to work on the trails and parking facilities at Moore's Bridge Park.

## ***Trail Restoration***

Several trail maintenance hikes have been organized throughout the spring and summer by Cathe McKinnon and Tom Anderson. In about a two hour hike, overhead branches are cut and debris is moved from the trails. If you are interested in participating in these hikes, please contact Cathe McKinnon at [coyotekatega@att.net](mailto:coyotekatega@att.net) or 770-214-1507.

## ***Brochure update***

There is no progress to report on this project. Most copies of the six brochures have been given out, and we have not yet addressed the redesign ideas suggested by park personnel. If you are interested in getting involved with this project, please contact Dita Pickering at [dpick26@gmail.com](mailto:dpick26@gmail.com).

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# News from the Park

News from the park has mostly been included at other places in the newsletter. However, it might be noted that the Park continues to host a diverse group of outdoor enthusiasts for overnight camping - such as scouts, church groups, horse folks, school groups, and river travelers. Recently, we have also been host to a group of "Big-Foot" hunters, who scoured the terrain both day and night searching for evidence of the creature's fall migration.

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# Become a Friend

New friends are welcome at any time. We invite you to contribute at a level that is convenient for you. Contributions help us pay postage and carry out projects agreed upon by the board. Memorial donations are gratefully accepted and acknowledged. Please print, complete and mail the membership form from the website <http://www.friendsofmcintoshreserve.org/Contributions.html>.

If you do not choose to complete the form, you may make your contribution payable to Friends of McIntosh Reserve, Inc. or to the Community Foundation of West Georgia (for tax purposes) with a notation that it is for FOMR. Please include your name (s), mailing address, telephone numbers and email address and mail to:

Friends of McIntosh Reserve, Inc.  
PO Box 483  
Whitesburg, GA 30185

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*FOMR website:* [www.FriendsOfMcIntoshReserve.org](http://www.FriendsOfMcIntoshReserve.org)

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