

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

For Honey Creek Public Boating Access, Camden County, Georgia

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GADNR) requests United States Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) Office of Conservation Investment (CI) grant funding to build a public boating access facility on Honey Creek, Camden County. This Proposed Action (PA) would be completed within the community of Waverly, Georgia on property currently owned by the Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Georgia, Inc. that will be purchased by Camden County (31.0538, -81.5394) once the project is permitted. Specific activities would include constructing a boat ramp, boating service dock, fishing platform, parking area, and restroom facilities. The total project area is identified as 1.47 acres.

The facility will offer a single-lane boat ramp into Honey Creek, with a boating service dock on the north side of the ramp. The ramp is to be approximately 24-ft. wide and 130-ft. long. A floating service dock will attach to a fishing platform to offer shore-angler access. Users will access these via a 5-ft. wide fixed pier leading to a 20x30-ft. floating dock. The GADNR plans 21 trailer parking spots, seven standard parking spots, and two ADA-compliant parking spots alongside a restroom facility. Security lights will be installed in the parking area. The parking area will feature pervious paving, while paving for a vehicle turnaround, the ADA-compliant parking spots, and a right of way extending from Georgia Episcopal Center Road to the proposed ramp will be impervious.

The purpose of the PA is to provide new recreational boater and angler opportunities in Camden County. This PA will provide anglers and recreational boaters a legal, safe place to launch vessels and park at Honey Creek. When developed, the Honey Creek public boat ramp will be the only site in northern Camden County providing boating access east of Interstate 95. Lacking proximal boating access, this project will add immense value for recreational boaters and anglers. When complete, the GADNR will enter into an intergovernmental agreement with Camden County to maintain the facility through a cooperation that endures for the project's serviceable life.

An Environmental Assessment (EA) titled "Honey Creek Public Boating Access Waverly, GA, Camden County," dated "December 2024" and submitted to the Service/CI on February 14th, 2025, was prepared by GADNR. The EA explored a reasonable range of alternatives to meet project objectives, evaluated potential issues and impacts, and identified mitigation measures to lessen the degree or extent of these impacts.

Historic and cultural resources were also considered in coordination with the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and through Federal Tribal Consultation. The SHPO recommended in their response letter dated March 21, 2024, that "no historic properties that are listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places will be affected by this undertaking" and that cultural/archaeological resources "will not be impacted by the above-referenced project." In addition, six (6) Native American Tribes, which have identified interest in that area of Georgia, were invited by The Service/CI to consult on the PA and its potential impact to significant archaeological sites and other historic properties of religious and cultural significance. No response letters were received.

Based on the EA, SHPO review, and Federal Tribal Consultation, implementation of the PA would be expected to result in the following environmental, social, and economic effects:

- No long-term, adverse impacts to the physical environment.
- No adverse impact to biological resources including threatened or endangered species.
- Long-term, beneficial impacts to recreation and public health and safety.
- No adverse impacts to cultural or historic resources including National Register of Historic Places listed or eligible properties.

The Service/CI program believes the following reasonable and prudent measures are necessary and appropriate to minimize impacts. As part of this approval, the GADNR must commit to implement the reasonable, prudent measures described below:

- Best Management Practices (BMP) will be utilized to minimize any potential short-term impacts to water resources and other elements of the physical environment during and immediately following construction.
- Erosion control measures will be implemented prior to construction to minimize impacts to adjacent wetlands and/or fishery resources.
- Pursuant to Section 106, NHPA, if archaeological deposits (including but not limited to pottery or ceramics, stone tools, projectile points, dugout canoes, metal implements, historical building material that could be associated with Native American, early European, or American settlements), bones, or human remains are encountered during implementation of the proposed project, the applicant will stop all work immediately in the vicinity of the discovery and take reasonable measures to avoid or minimize harm to the finds. The GADNR will inform CI immediately, and the SHPO will be consulted. Any construction plans and work orders must stipulate that work be stopped immediately, and the Agency and the CI be contacted immediately, if any archaeological deposits are uncovered. Work in any areas identified will not resume until consultation is completed, and appropriate measures have been taken to ensure that the project is in compliance with the NHPA. Additional conditions may apply.

Provided that all the recommended reasonable and prudent measures described above are followed, the Service/CI accepts the EA dated “December 2025) and submitted February 14th, 2025, that was prepared in accordance with relevant provisions under NEPA and other relevant Federal, State, and local regulations. Based on a review of the EA and evaluation of the effects of the PA, I conclude that the PA is not a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(c) of NEPA of 1969, as amended. Consequently, no Environmental Impact Statement is required.

APPROVAL:

Paul Wilkes
Regional Manager-Southeast Region
USFWS-Office of Conservation Investment