

**DRAFT**

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

**PROPOSED OLDE ROPE MILL PARK EXPANSION**

**Prepared for:  
City of Woodstock, Cherokee County, Georgia**

**Prepared by  
Cypress Cultural & Environmental Consultants, LLC**

**June 10, 2011**

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
OLDE ROPE MILL PARK EXPANSION  
CITY OF WOODSTOCK, CHEROKEE COUNTY, GEORGIA**

1. INTRODUCTION:

a. General:

This Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared utilizing a systematic, interdisciplinary approach integrating the natural and social sciences and the design arts with planning and decision-making. The proposed action and its alternatives are evaluated in multiple contexts for short-term and long-term effects and for adverse and beneficial effects. This EA indicates the effects on the human environment that are well known and do not involve unique or unknown risks, It is not anticipated that this is a precedent-setting action, nor does it represent a decision in principle about any future consideration. This EA follows the standards set forth in the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Regulation ER 200-2-2, "Procedures for Implementing NEPA."

b. Location:

The Olde Rope Mill Park is located in the City of Woodstock in Cherokee County, Georgia is bisected by the Little River, which flows from east to west. The subject property is also bisected by Interstate Highway 575 with north and southbound lanes constructed near the western border of the property (Figure 1). A large portion of the northern boundary of the property is bounded by the Georgia Northeastern Railroad (Figure 2). The City of Woodstock, Georgia currently has a long-term lease with the USACE for this area and many surrounding parcels (Figure 5).

c. Proposed Action:

The proposed action is to extend and construct trails and amenities on the USACE leased property on the northern side of the Little River and connecting the area with the existing park. These improvements include: 1) construct pedestrian bridge across the Little River; 2) canoe docks constructed at three locations along the river bank; 3) fishing platform; 4) construct concrete multiuse trails; 5) construct natural surface bicycle trails (Figure 2).

Minimum Development Alternative: The minimum development alternative would allow for the construction of natural surface trails only. This alternative would lessen the temporary impacts caused by trail construction; however the overall benefit of the park expansion would be lessened due to the lack of accessibility an all natural surface trail would provide. The trail would not be handicapped accessible nor would it be suitable for strollers or novice bicyclists. The pedestrian bridge would not be installed, thus isolating much of the proposed trails from amenities and parking. The park would not attract as many additional and new visitors that would positively impact the local economy.

“No Action” Alternative: The park expansion, with trail extension, pedestrian bridges and amenities would not be constructed. The advantage to this alternative would be that pedestrian and mountain bike traffic would not affect the northern side of the Little River within the proposed project area. However, the disadvantages would include the lack of opportunity for exercise, educational activities and utilization of the subject area on the north bank of the Little River. The property would continue to be degraded by unauthorized all terrain vehicle traffic. The park would not attract additional and new visitors that would positively impact the local economy.

d. Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action:

The USACE owns the property that has been leased by the City of Woodstock for the construction of the Olde Rope Mill Park. The Park has been constructed with the proposed additions adding several new amenities and extending the trail possibilities for visitors. However, the current park is limited in size and capabilities to provide adequate recreation for the population in the region. The population of Cherokee County alone grew by over 51% from the year 2000 to the 2010 (141,903 to 214,346) according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The expansion of the current park is necessary to meet the demands of the rapid growing population of the area. The proposed new amenities will greatly enhance the aquatic recreational opportunities in the area, as well as increase the biking and hiking opportunities in the area. Additional overflow parking will be accommodated on two city-owned parcels located to the north and south of the park (Figure 7).

e. Authority:

In Title 16 of the United States Code (USC) Section 406(d), that was approved December 2, 1944 as amended, authorizes the Secretary of the Army to lease lands at Water Resources Development Projects if those leases are in the best interest of the general public. National Environmental Policy Act documentation is required for these leases, to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of any proposed actions on leased lands of the US.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING WITHOUT THE PROJECT:

a. General Environmental Setting:

- (1) Environmental Documentation: Prior to the Olde Rope Mill Park's construction, an Environmental Assessment was conducted in December 2001 by Wetland & Ecological Consultants (Woodstock, Ga). Studies were also conducted in the area prior to Georgia Department of Transportation Trail Enhancement grant projects associated with the construction of Olde Rope Mill Park for Archaeology, Ecology and History in 2005, 2006 and 2007 (PI#0006577 and PI#0008092).
- (2) Location: The proposed improvements to the existing park is located approximately 35 miles north of Atlanta, Georgia within the city limits of Woodstock, Georgia in Cherokee County. The parcel is bounded by the Georgia Northeastern Railroad to the north and has Interstate 575 crossing near the western boundary, via overpass bridge (Figure 1).
- (3) Purpose: The proposed park improvements will enhance the recreational and educational opportunities for the general public. The additional trails will increase the opportunities for recreational activities over a larger area that is currently restricted to the existing park. The proposed expansion will greatly increase the opportunities for hiking, biking and aquatic recreation in the area.
- (4) Size: The park currently consists of approximately half of the initial 184 acres that were originally allotted for this project. The proposed additions will utilize the area north of the Little River with additional acreage utilized for mountain bike trails. The proposed improvements include the construction of a second pedestrian

bridge across the Little River with three canoe docks, a fishing platform, and a picnic/rest area. Two different natural surface trails will be constructed: the Taylor Randahl Memorial Trail Beginners Loop will be approximately 0.5 mile long and the Taylor Randahl Memorial Trail North Loop will be approximately 3.1 miles in length. The natural surface trail will also be complemented by approximately 0.5 mile of 10-foot wide concrete multiuse trails (Figure 2).

- (5) Geographical Area: The park is located within the within the Coosa River Basin (Hydrologic Unit Code 03150104). The approximate project midpoint is located at 34° 07' 55" N, 84° 31' 22" W. The project is located in Cherokee County, Georgia along the Little River approximately 0.5 mile upstream of its confluence with Allatoona Lake.

b. Significant Resource Description:

- (1) Setting: The proposed improvements to the park consist of floodplain along the Little River, which has slopes ranging from 6-10% to steeper slopes ranging from 10-60%. Elevation within the survey area ranged from 845 to 960 feet above mean sea level. The park is located upstream from Lake Allatoona along the Little River. The existing park contains several natural surface trails that are predominantly used by pedestrians and mountain bikes. The area north of the Little River is currently not accessible from the park. This area is utilized by unauthorized all terrain vehicle traffic that has caused erosion and sedimentation issues in some areas. The area of proposed park improvements is mixed forests with some of the more common species being; Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*), sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) red maple (*Acer rubrum*), river birch (*Betula nigra*), American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) and American sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*). The majority of the proposed project site consists of undeveloped wooded land.

The Georgia Northeastern Railroad is found along the northern boundary of the subject parcel. A sanitary sewer easement is located along the western edge of the Little River near the eastern boundary of the subject parcel. The Interstate 575 perpendicularly bisects the parcel. The remnants of Olde Rope Mill Road also cross the property near the interstate.

(2) Geology and Soils: There are approximately 15 different soil types found within the area of the proposed park improvements (See Figure 3: Soil Map). A few of the typical soils types are:

- Tallapoosa fine sandy is found in areas with 15-25% slopes; Well-drained.
- Hayesville sandy clay loam is found in areas with 10-25% slopes; Well-drained.
- Toccoa complex is found with frequent flooding and is moderately well-drained.
- Chewacla-Cartecay complex is somewhat poorly drained with occasional flooding.

(3) Erosion: The majority of the proposed project area is within a wooded area. However, a few areas near the banks of the Little River have exposed soil due to the unauthorized all terrain vehicle traffic. The best management practices for construction in this area will include, but are not limited to silt fencing, seeding of exposed soils and erosion control matting when necessary. The construction and installation of bridges would not require any footings or construction within the channel or streambed. The minimum development alternative would allow for the construction of natural surface trails only. This alternative would lessen the temporary impacts caused by trail construction; however the overall benefit of the park expansion would be lessened due to the lack of accessibility an all natural surface trail would provide. The trail would not be handicapped accessible nor would it be suitable for strollers or novice bicyclists. The “no action” alternative would not include any expansion to the existing park. There would be no land disturbance from trail construction. However, the unauthorized vehicle activity in the area would continue and future erosion problems would be likely. This alternative would lessen the value of the existing park my limiting the recreational opportunities in the area.

(4) Water Quality: The Little River flows through the subject area before its confluence with Allatoona Lake approximately 0.5 mile downstream. Two sections of Allatoona Lake are listed on the Georgia Environmental Protection Division’s (GAEPD) 2010 List of lakes not fully supporting designated uses

(Integrated 305(b)/303(d) List of Waters). Included in these listings is the Little River Embayment which is listed as impaired due to chlorophyll A. The proposed project should not impact this parameter. Mill Creek converges with the Little River approximately one mile upstream of the subject area. Mill Creek is also listed on the Georgia Environmental Protection Division's (GAEPD) 2010 List of Streams not fully supporting designated uses (Integrated 305(b)/303(d) List of Waters). There are four sections of Mill Creek listed as impaired for fecal coliform bacteria or fish community impairment. The proposed project should not impact Mill Creek, nor contribute to these impairment parameters. Approximately 12 linear miles of the Little River are listed as impaired for fecal coliform bacteria. The proposed project is not located along an impaired section of the Little River. Therefore, the proposed project will not impact jurisdictional water that is listed as impaired.

- (5) Wetlands and Waters of the U.S.: The U.S. Department of the Interior National Wetlands Inventory map for the area was examined (See Figure 4: National Wetlands Inventory Map). The Little River and two small tributaries of the Little River were also delineated during field surveys conducted in December 2010. The Little River varies in width from 70 to 120 feet wide along this corridor. The unnamed tributaries generally range up to 4 feet wide. These jurisdictional waters are subject to State of Georgia streambank buffer requirements as regulated by the GAEPD. The Little River confluence with Lake Allatoona is located less than 0.5 mile downstream from the subject area. Wetlands were also determined to be present on the site as indicated in Figure 6. A portion of a wetland near the center of the project corridor will be crossed by utilizing an existing elevated and graveled road bed. A small clear-span pedestrian bridge will also be constructed near this location where the wetland drainage intersects the proposed trail corridor. The minimum alternative to the construction of this portion of the trail would be to utilize the existing surface of this old roadbed. However, without proper resurfacing, the roadbed would be at risk of erosion and consequent sedimentation issues after exposure to routine traffic. The "no action" alternative would include abandoning the construction of any trail in this area. This alternative would greatly diminish the value of any park expansion to the west of Interstate 575 and would also limit the access to the park from the city-owned

parcel on the north side of the Little River that is proposed to be additional visitor parking (See Figure 7).

- (6) Fishery Resources: Both the Little River and Lake Allatoona are considered suitable habitat for several species of fish. Both waters are frequented by anglers as well. None of the tributaries to the Little River were deemed suitable sustainable habitat for fish within the proposed project corridor. The proposed project would provide additional canoe docks as well as a fishing dock within the project area.
  
- (7) Wildlife Resources: The area of the proposed project is predominantly upland forest with some riverine systems associated with the Little River corridor. The area is inhabited by a variety of wildlife including: whitetail deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), gray squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*), cottontail rabbit (*Sylvilagus floridanus*), raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), chipmunk (*Tamias striatus*), Eastern wild turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo silvestris*) and opossum (*Didelphis virginianus*).
  
- (8) Protected Species: The Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GADNR), as well as, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) lists of threatened and endangered species was consulted prior to field surveys. The GADNR list was most recently updated in July 2010. A total of 23 species are listed as endangered, threatened, rare or of concern. Of these, six fish species, two plant species, one bird species and one invertebrate species are listed as either endangered or threatened. Three listed species of fish have been recorded to have occurred in the Little River or its tributaries within with this portion of the Little River watershed (See GA DNR Letter 1). The Cherokee Darter (*Etheostoma scotti*), Lined Chub (*Hybopsis lineapunctata*) and Etowah Chub (*Hybopsis* sp. 9) have been recorded in this portion of the watershed. However, only the lined chub has been recorded within a 3-mile radius of the midpoint of the proposed project. The occurrence was recorded in the main channel of the Little River (See GA DNR Letter 2). An inquiry was also sent to the USFWS concerning their records of listed species in the area. Per email correspondence (See USFWS Correspondence) the proposed project is not likely to affect any

federally listed species. The cumulative list of species can be found in the table below with their federal and state designations:

Common Name	Scientific	Status		
		Federal	State	
<b>ANIMALS</b>	<b>ANIMALS</b>			
Lake Sturgeon	<i>Acipenser fulvescens</i>	--	C	
Etowah Crayfish	<i>Cambarus fasciatus</i>	--	T	
Etowah Darter	<i>Etheostoma etowahee</i>	E	E	
Rock Darter	<i>Etheostoma rupestre</i>	--	R	
Cherokee Darter	<i>Etheostoma scotti</i>	T	E	
Bald Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	*P	T	
Lined Chub	<i>Hybopsis lineapunctata</i>	--	R	
Etowah Chub	<i>Hybopsis sp. 9</i>	--	C	
Coosa Chub	<i>Macrhybopsis sp. 1</i>	--	C	
Frecklebelly Madtom	<i>Noturus munitus</i>	--	E	
Freckled Madtom	<i>Noturus nocturnus</i>	--	C	
Amber Darter	<i>Percina antesella</i>	E	E	
Freckled Darter	<i>Percina lenticula</i>	--	E	
Northern Pine Snake	<i>Pituophis melanoleucus melanoleucus</i>	--	C	
<b>PLANTS</b>	<b>PLANTS</b>			
Yellow Ladyslipper	<i>Cypripedium parviflorum</i>	--	R	
Piedmont Bigleaf Aster	<i>Eurybia jonesiae</i>	--	C	
Climbing Fern	<i>Lygodium palmatum</i>	--	C	
Fraser's Loosestrife	<i>Lysimachia fraseri</i>	--	R	
Indian Olive	<i>Nestronia umbellula</i>	--	R	
Chokeberry	<i>Prunus virginiana</i>	--	C	
Dwarf Sumac	<i>Rhus michauxii</i>	E	E	
Bay Star-vine	<i>Schisandra glabra</i>	--	T	
Eastern Turkeybeard	<i>Xerophyllum asphodeloides</i>	--	R	
Status: E-Endangered T-Threatened C-Candidate R-Rare P-Protected				
*- Protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act				

In correspondence received from Ms. Katrina Morris with GA DNR on September 10, 2010, none of the terrestrial species were found to have critical habitat or recorded occurrences within close proximity of the subject area. During field surveys conducted in December 2010, no specimens for any of the listed species were found.

- (9) Historic and Archeological Resources: The remnants of the Olde Rope Mill are found on the northern bank of the Little River within the proposed project corridor. Previous work conducted for the construction of the existing park has produced written documentation from the State of Georgia Department of Natural Resources Historic Preservation Office, which states that no archaeological resources, nor historical structure resources that are on the National Register of Historic Places, have been found within the area of the proposed project area. A Phase I Survey was not deemed necessary for this proposed project due to historical surveys and records on file with the USACE.
- (10) Recreation: The area of the proposed project is located directly adjacent to the Olde Rope Mill Park. This proposed project would expand the park along the north bank of the Little River. The park contains several miles of natural surface trails for all levels of cyclists, as well as provides parking, hiking, fishing and a pedestrian bridge across the Little River.
- (11) Forest: Within the proposed project area, the mixed hardwood/pine forest covers most all of the subject parcel.
- (12) Prime and Unique Farmland: No prime farmland soil types were located within the project area. None of the area is currently used for agricultural purposes.
- (13) Socioeconomic: The following community data is based upon the most readily available data found on the U.S. Census Bureau website [www.factfinder.census.gov](http://www.factfinder.census.gov). The populations of the City of Woodstock in 2009 were 22,274 in comparison to that of Cherokee County, which was 201,233. The

2009 per capita income for the City of Woodstock was \$31,632 in comparison to Cherokee County which was \$30,001, respectively.

- (14) Hazardous and Toxic Materials: A previous Environmental Assessment conducted in 2001 for the existing park provided no records or evidence indicating the use or disposal of hazardous or toxic waste near the subject area.

### 3. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION:

The USACE owns the subject area that has been leased by the City of Woodstock. The City has constructed the Olde Rope Mill Park with paved parking, concrete multi-use trails and other amenities. The previously approved pedestrian bridge is currently under construction. The proposed additions would provide over 3.6 miles of natural surface trails with approximately 0.5 mile of hard surface trail. The construction of an additional pedestrian bridge across the Little River with a fishing platform and three canoe docks have also been planned. The use of existing trail paths, roadbeds and level gradients will be utilized to minimize disturbances.

Proposed Construction: The proposed additions to the existing park include:

- a. The addition of a pedestrian bridge across the Little River that will allow park visitors to access the park property found along the northern banks of the Little River (Figure 8). The minimum alternative to this proposed bridge would be to similar to the “no action” alternative. The alternative to not install this second pedestrian bridge would greatly limit the number of park visitors that would be able to hike and bike the new area of the park. The eastern boundary of the park would be isolated by a large area that would be detrimental to novice hikers and bikers, as well as inhibit rescue efforts should a visitor need medical attention.
- b. The addition of a fishing platform will be added beneath the Interstate 575 overpass that will allow easy access to anglers. The alternative of not adding this amenity would further increase the foot traffic of anglers along the banks of the river, thereby increasing disturbance to the riparian habitat and increasing the chance of patron injury.
- c. The installation of three separate canoe docks. Two along the southern bank of the Little River within existing Park. A third will be installed near the trail terminus beneath the railroad bridge. The canoe docks add yet another element of use for the park. This greatly increases the ability of the park to provide aquatic recreation safely

- and effectively without overcrowding the trailhead area. The minimum alternative would be to construct fewer than 3 canoe docks along the park expansion. This alternative would limit the opportunities for canoe riders to dock. The “no action” alternative does not allow for the construction of any canoe docks along this section of the Little River. This would greatly diminish the opportunities for aquatic recreation within the park and the area. This alternative would also increase the chances of accidents due to canoes and kayakers attempting to enter and exit their crafts in unauthorized areas.
- d. The construction of approximately 0.5 mile of ten-foot wide concrete multi-use trail. A portion of the proposed trail will begin at the existing pedestrian bridge and terminate beneath the I-575 overpass. The second portion will begin at the new pedestrian bridge and terminate at the trail’s end beneath the Georgia Northeastern Railroad bridge that spans the Little River. The minimal action alternative would include the use of pervious surfaces along this section of trail. This would minimize storm water runoff, but would greatly increase the cost of construction along this section of trail. The “no-action” alternative would prevent the construction of any surface along this section of trail. In turn, this would cause the areas near the pedestrian bridges to be prone to erosion. This would prove to be hazardous for novice bikers and a trip hazard for many hikers.
  - e. The construction of approximately 3.6 miles of natural surface trails to be used for hiking and mountain bikes. These trails will be natural surface trails with no fill or added substrate anticipated. The minimum action alternative would include not posting signs along these sections of trail and not removing low hanging branches from trees near the trail. This would increase the danger for cyclists and hikers. The “no-action” alternative would prevent any new construction of trails along these sections of the park, but would leave the majority of the expanded park area to be susceptible to unauthorized all-terrain vehicle traffic.
  - f. The installation of six clear-span bridges over small tributaries on the natural surface trails. These bridges will be constructed of pressure treated lumber with no supports or fill placed in the streambed. The use of these bridges will greatly minimize the impact to the small tributaries. Many of these areas are currently negatively impacted by the unauthorized traffic. The minimum action alternative would include not constructed these bridges along these areas. This alternative would greatly increase the disturbance to these small tributaries and would leave these areas of trail prone

to erosion. The “no action” alternative would include not constructing trails in the areas where these tributaries are found. This alternative would greatly diminish the size of the park expansion, thereby significantly limiting the recreational value of the park expansion.

- g. The addition of markers, benches and educational signage along the trails to provide information to park users.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED ACTION:  
Biological and Physical Impacts of the Project:

- a. Land Use Changes: The additional trails will be constructed in areas where unauthorized all terrain vehicle, motorcycle and bicycle traffic currently exist. The addition of these natural surface and concrete trails will provide controlled access, thereby minimizing erosion and sedimentation that unauthorized motorized vehicle traffic currently causes within the project area.
- b. Erosion and Sedimentation: The additional trails will be maintained, thereby reducing the amount of erosion and sedimentation caused by the unauthorized activities that currently exist. Any new clearing or grading will be minimal and best management practices will be utilized to minimize erosion and sedimentation.
- c. Historical and Archaeological Resources: The National Register of Historical Places determined that the site of the Dorn Rope Mill, located along the north bank of the Little River, was eligible for inclusion on the National Register. Level II Historic American Building Survey (HABS) documentation of the mill site was completed in 1993. In June 1995, a major section of the milldam collapsed during a flash flood of the Little River. The remainder of the site, including the millrace and building foundations was not affected. Archaeological survey documentation has not been located for the north bank of the Little River for this area.
- d. Protected Species: The dwarf sumac and bay star-vine are the only terrestrial species with suitable habitat found within the subject area. These species were not observed during field reconnaissance in December 2010. The proposed park expansion and accompanying amenities will not negatively impact any of the GADNR or USFWS listed threatened and endangered species.
- e. Recreational Effects: The expansion of the existing park will provide additional opportunities for visitors to hike, bike or observe wildlife. Currently much of the area

is not accessible to the general public, but is used for unauthorized all terrain vehicle traffic.

- f. Air Quality Effects: The subject area already experiences large volumes of automobile traffic due to nearby Interstate 575. Cherokee County is one of the nonattainment counties listed in the 2008 Georgia EPD Air Protection Branch Nonattainment List. The unauthorized all terrain vehicle traffic that currently exists in the subject area would likely diminish with the controlled access of a city park. This decrease in traffic would likely be countered by an increase in automobile traffic as more visitors would likely frequent the newly expanded park. The temporary use of heavy machinery and equipment would temporarily increase the air pollutants through emissions and dust. These effects would be short-term in duration and insignificant in volume. Therefore, the overall impact to air quality would be negligible by the expansion of Olde Rope Mill Park.
- g. Water Quality: The construction that would be required to expand the Olde Rope Mill Park would result in temporary increase in turbidity to the small tributaries and to the Little River. These short-term impacts would be buffered by the use of best management practices such as silt fence, grass seeding, graveling and other control measures. The two pedestrian bridges will not require additional fill to the Little River. The Little River is not considered navigable waters; therefore Section 10 permits will not be required. The proposed tributary crossing will be clear-span bridges or boardwalks with no support structures or fill added to the stream channel. The proposed expansion of the park will greatly reduce or eliminate the current unauthorized all terrain vehicle traffic that has caused some sedimentation issues in the tributaries. The proposed project and construction activities would not directly impact any section of jurisdictional water currently listed on the GAEPD 2010 List of Streams not fully supporting designated uses (Integrated 305(b)/303(d) List of Waters), nor would the proposed project contribute to any of the listed parameters for which nearby waters are impaired.
- h. Wetlands: The wetlands that are located within the subject area will be avoided or traversed by boardwalk construction. The wetland area west of Interstate 575 along the north bank of the Little River will be avoided by the use of existing gravel roads north of the wetland. The wetland area located east of Interstate 575 along the north bank of the Little River will be avoided by utilizing an existing roadbed that was historically built by adding fill. The construction of the proposed project would not

require any wetland permitting due to avoidance of wetland areas and the use of boardwalk construction.

- i. Noise Impacts: Temporary noise impacts will occur during construction activities. The increased volume of park visitors will also generate additional low-level noise. The overall noise impacts would include a reduction in the noise generated by the motorized all terrain vehicle traffic that currently utilizes the unused property along the north bank of the Little River. The noise impacts would not be significant to the area due to the close proximity of the noise generated by Interstate 575 and other local roads in the area.
- j. Aesthetic Impacts: The construction of the Olde Rope Mill Park beautified the southern portion of the subject area south of the Little River. The proposed expansion and improvements to the park will additionally improve the overall appearance of the project area by offering a well maintained trail system along the northern side of the Little River. Consequently, this will eliminate the current unauthorized all terrain vehicle traffic that has negatively impacted the area. The temporary negative aesthetic impacts that will occur during construction will be necessary in order to provide the area with maintained trails that will enhance the overall appearance of the area.
- k. Prime and Unique Farmland: There are no prime or unique farm lands located within the subject area. This proposed project would not require a prime farmland evaluation. A “no effect” determination was concluded during the previous EA in 2001.
- l. Environmental Justice: Executive Order (EO) 12898 of February 11, 1994 requires addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of Federal actions on minority and low-income populations. No residential properties will be impacted by the proposed project.
- m. Protection of Children: Executive Order 13045 of April 21, 1997 requires, to the extent permitted by law and mission, identifying and assessing environmental health and safety risks to children posed by the proposed action. Potential health and safety risks would be present during the construction activities. Construction equipment may temporarily increase air pollutants through emissions and dust. The emissions are expected to be short-term in duration and insignificant. Construction areas will be properly fenced and posted during construction, as required.



Figure 1: Project Location Map (USGS 7.5' Quadrangle)



Soil Map—Cherokee, Gilmer, and Pickens Counties, Georgia  
(Olde Rope Mill Park Soil Map)

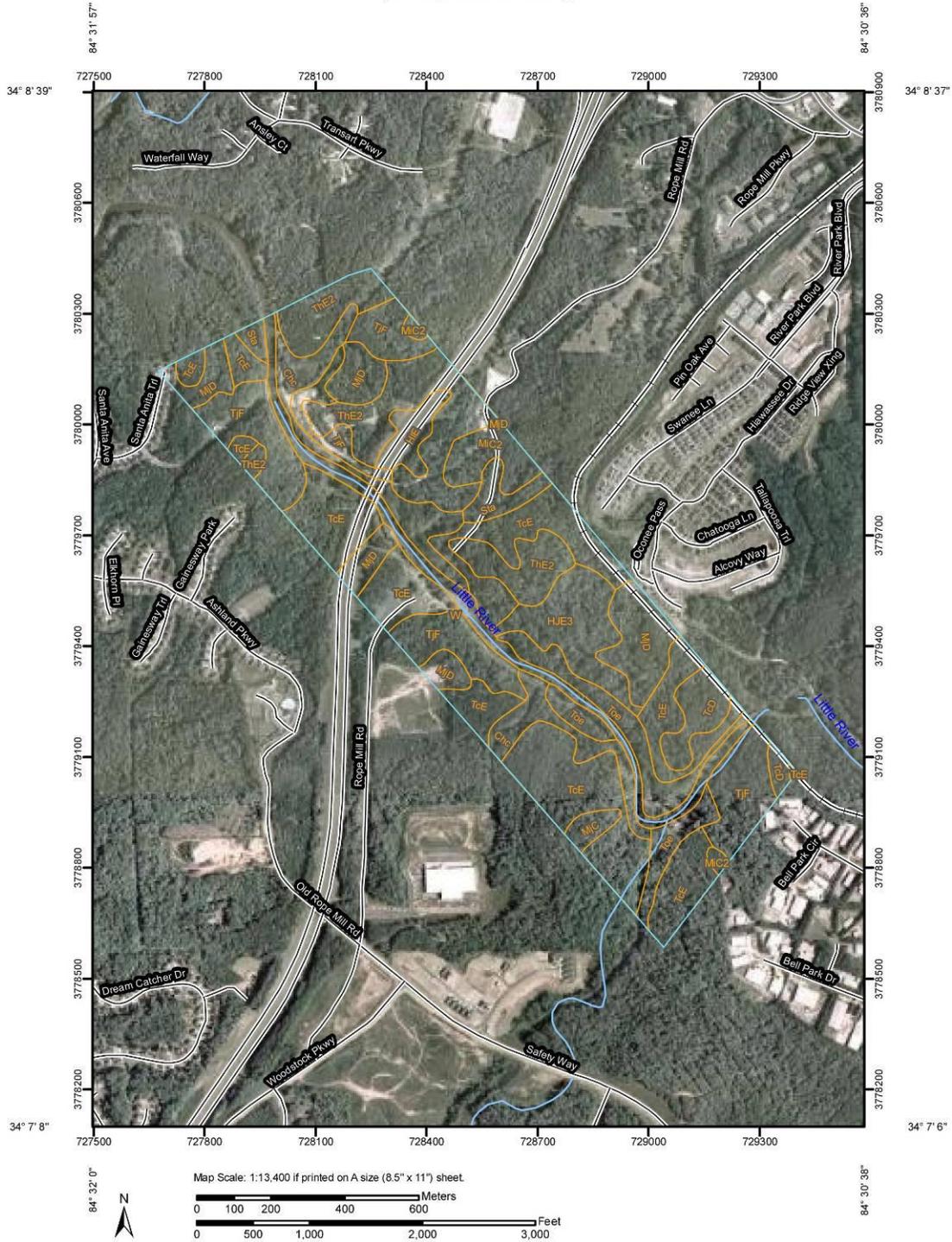


Figure 3: Soil Survey Map

Soil Map—Cherokee, Gilmer, and Pickens Counties, Georgia  
(Olde Rope Mill Park Soil Map)

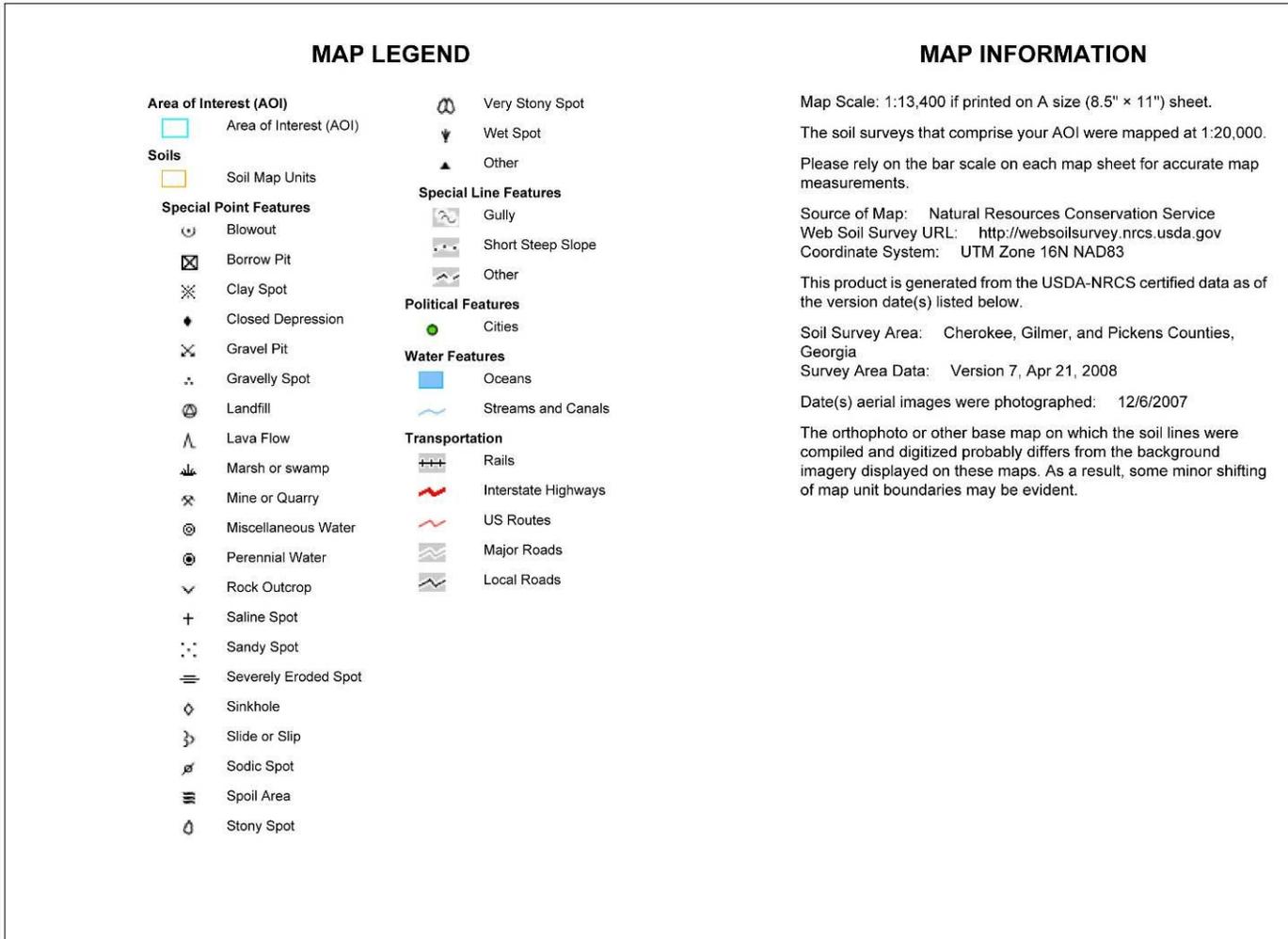


Figure 3: Soil Survey Legend

## Map Unit Legend

Cherokee, Gilmer, and Pickens Counties, Georgia (GA622)			
Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
Chc	Chewacla-Cartecay complex	21.2	7.4%
HJE3	Hayesville sandy clay loam, 10 to 25 percent slopes, severely eroded	15.0	5.3%
HIE	Hayesville fine sandy loam, 10 to 25 percent slopes	5.1	1.8%
MIC2	Madison gravelly sandy clay loam, 2 to 10 percent slopes, eroded	8.6	3.0%
MjC	Madison fine sandy loam, 6 to 10 percent slopes	2.4	0.8%
MjD	Madison fine sandy loam, 10 to 15 percent slopes	24.8	8.7%
Sta	Starr fine sandy loam	5.7	2.0%
TcD	Tallapoosa fine sandy loam, 6 to 15 percent slopes	7.9	2.8%
TcE	Tallapoosa fine sandy loam, 15 to 25 percent slopes	79.2	27.7%
ThE2	Tallapoosa gravelly sandy clay loam, 10 to 25 percent slopes, eroded	40.3	14.1%
TjF	Tallapoosa channery sandy loam, 25 to 60 percent slopes	41.6	14.6%
Toe	Toccoa complex	18.7	6.5%
W	Water	15.3	5.4%
<b>Totals for Area of Interest</b>		<b>285.7</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

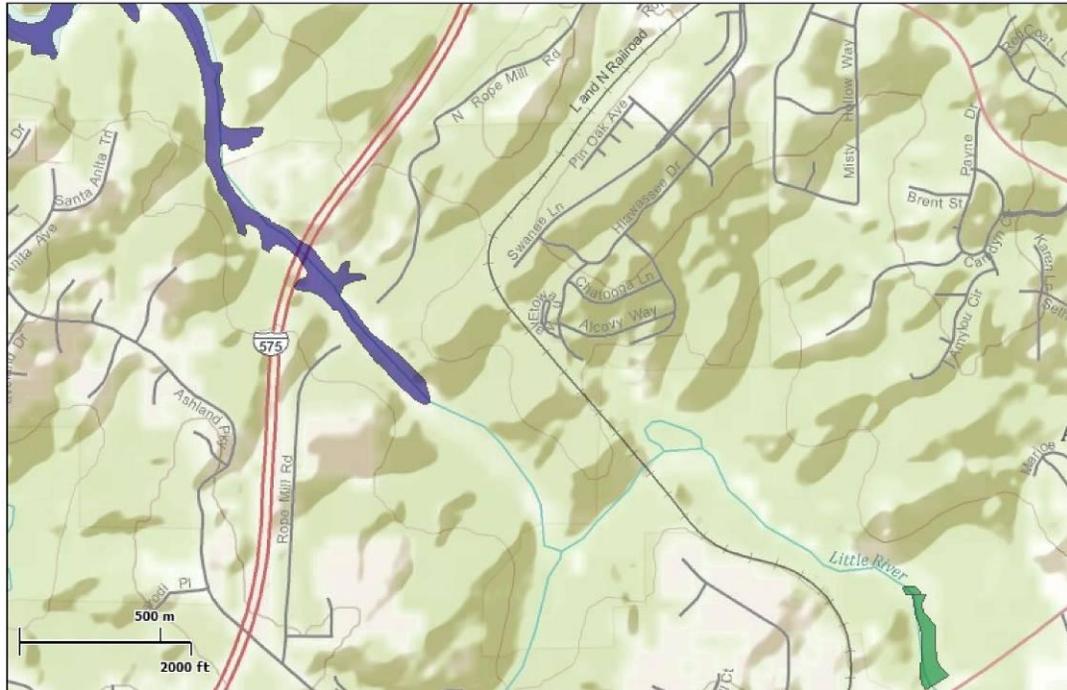
Figure 3: Soil Survey Map Unit Key



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
**National Wetlands Inventory**

**Olde Rope Mill  
Park NWI Map**

Jan 11, 2011



**Wetlands**

-  Freshwater Emergent
-  Freshwater Forested/Shrub
-  Estuarine and Marine Deepwater
-  Estuarine and Marine
-  Freshwater Pond
-  Lake
-  Riverine
-  Other

This map is for general reference only. The US Fish and Wildlife Service is not responsible for the accuracy or currentness of the base data shown on this map. All wetlands related data should be used in accordance with the layer metadata found on the Wetlands Mapper web site.

**User Remarks:**

Figure 4: National Wetlands Inventory Map

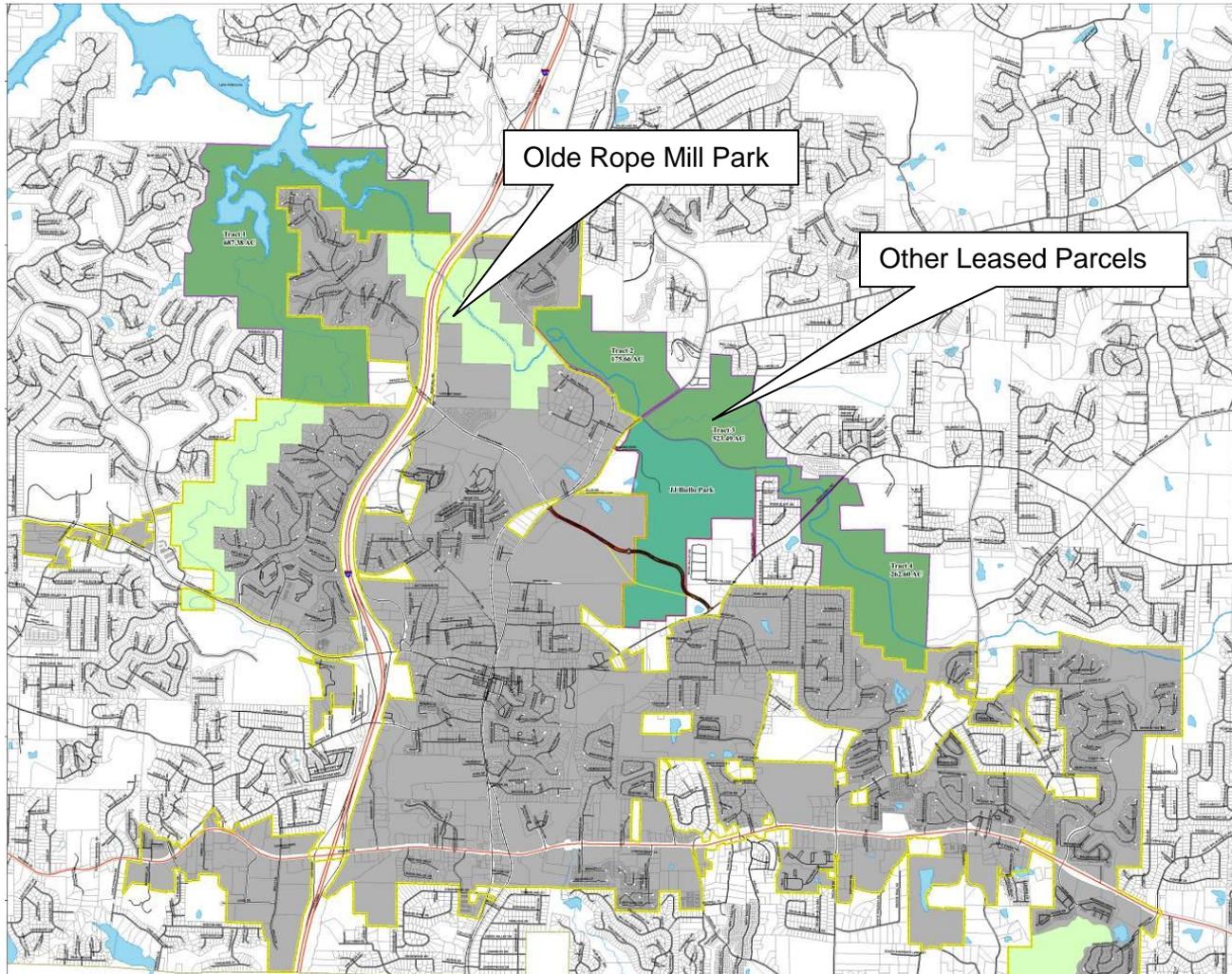


Figure 5: Corps of Engineer Parcels leased by City of Woodstock Map



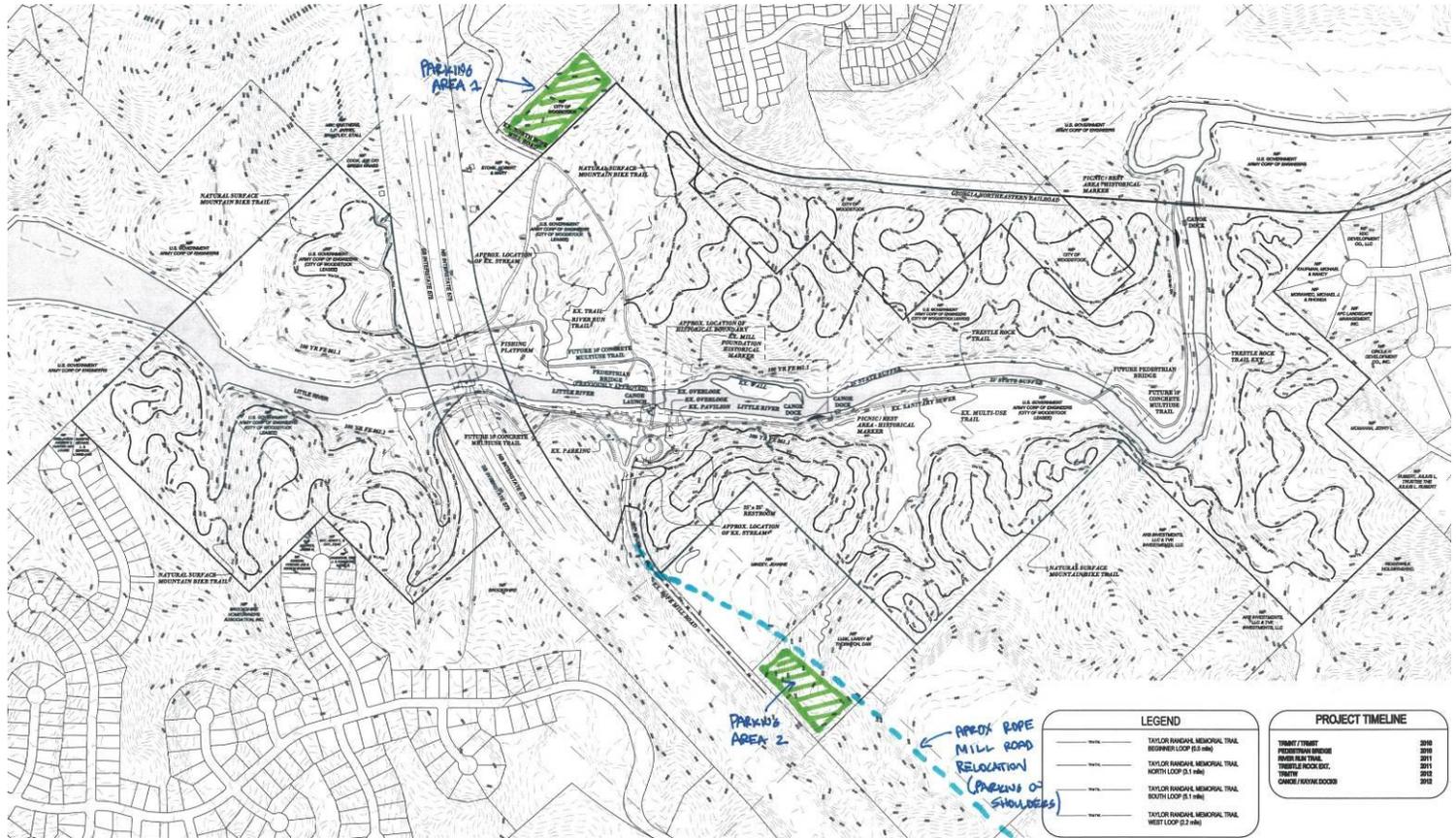


Figure 7: Future Parking Expansion Map

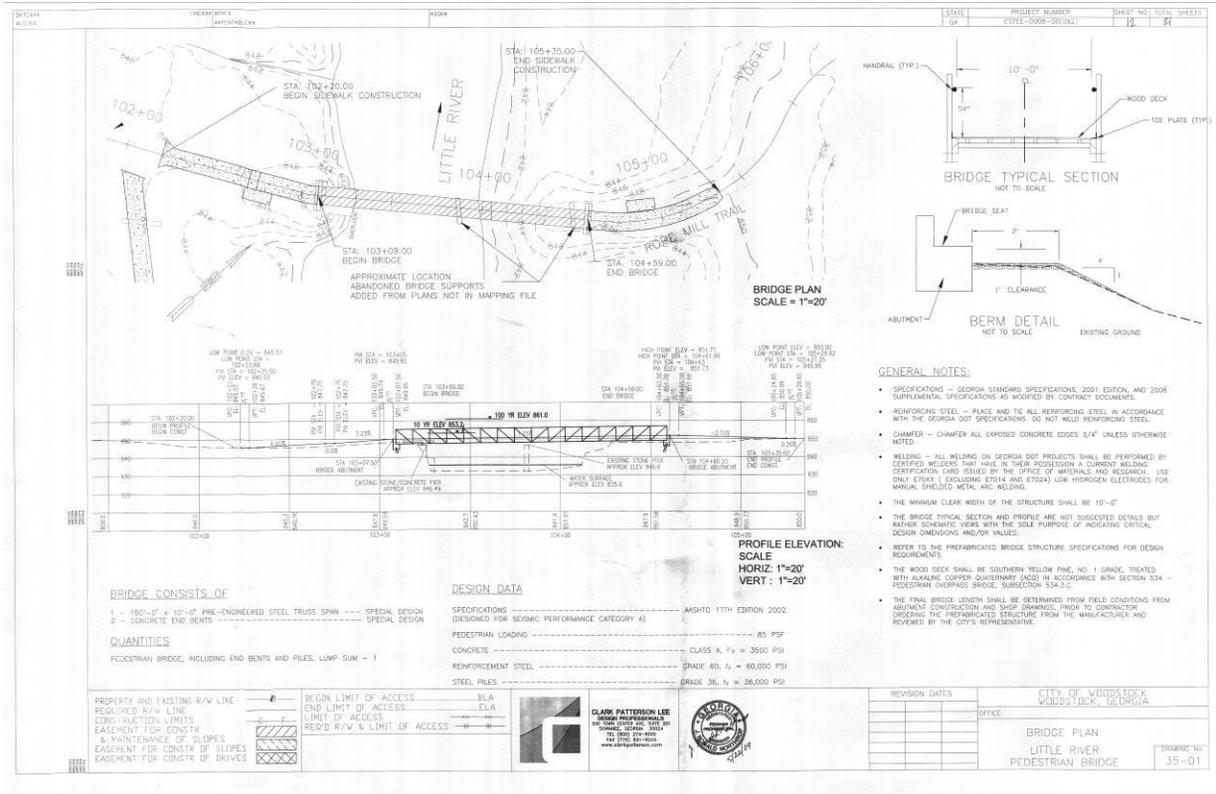


Figure 8: Little River Pedestrian Bridge Specifications



## WILDLIFE RESOURCES DIVISION

CHRIS CLARK  
COMMISSIONER

DAN FORSTER  
DIRECTOR

September 10, 2010

Erik Lunsford  
Project Ecologist  
Lunsford consulting  
104 Apple Ridge Road  
Toccoa, GA 30577

**Subject: Known occurrences of natural communities, plants and animals of highest priority conservation status on or near City of Woodstock, GA/USACOE Lease Property, Cherokee County, Georgia**

Dear Mr. Lunsford:

This is in response to your request of August 10, 2010. According to our records, within a three-mile radius of the project area there are the following Natural Heritage Database occurrences:

SW Corner (-84.57585, 34.12317; NAD27):

- US *Etheostoma scotti* (Cherokee Darter) approx. 0.5 mi. N of site in Rose Creek
- US *Etheostoma scotti* (Cherokee Darter) approx. 0.5 mi. S of site in Rose Creek
- US *Etheostoma scotti* (Cherokee Darter) approx. 2.0 mi. W of site in Kellogg Creek
- US *Etheostoma scotti* (Cherokee Darter) approx. 2.5 mi. W of site in Kellogg Creek
- US *Etheostoma scotti* (Cherokee Darter) [HISTORIC] approx. 2.0 mi. W of site in Kellogg Creek
- US *Etheostoma scotti* (Cherokee Darter) [HISTORIC] approx. 2.5 mi. W of site in Kellogg Creek

SE Corner (-84.47399, 34.09984; NAD27):

- US *Etheostoma scotti* (Cherokee Darter) in tributaries to the Little River Greenspace [Cherokee County] approx. 2.0 mi. W of site

NE Corner (-84.47555, 34.11327; NAD27):

No occurrences.

NW Corner (-84.54760, 34.14814; NAD27):

- Acipenser fulvescens* (Lake Sturgeon) approx. 2.0 mi. NW of site in the Etowah River
- US *Etheostoma scotti* (Cherokee Darter) in Downing Creek
- GA *Hybopsis lineapunctata* (Lined Chub) approx. 2.0 mi. SE of site in the Little River
- Hybopsis sp. 9* (Etowah Chub) approx. 2.5 mi. NW of site in the Little River

NONGAME CONSERVATION SECTION  
2065 U.S. HIGHWAY 278 S.E. | SOCIAL CIRCLE, GEORGIA 30025-4743  
770.918.6411 or 706.557.3032 | FAX 706.557.3033 | WWW.GEORGIAWILDLIFE.COM

Georgia Department of Natural Resources Letter 1

\* Entries above preceded by "US" indicates species with federal status (Protected, Candidate or Partial Status). Species that are federally protected in Georgia are also state protected; "GA" indicates Georgia protected species.

**Recommendations:**

We have a record of a federally listed species, *Etheostoma scotti* (Cherokee Darter) within the project area in the Little River. We also have multiple records of this species within three miles of the project area. Section 9 of the Endangered Species Act states that taking or harming of a listed species is prohibited. [We recommend all requestors with projects located near federally protected species consult with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. For southeast Georgia, please contact Strant Colwell (912-265-9336, ext.30 or Strant\_Colwell@fws.gov). In southwest Georgia, please contact John Doresky (706-544-6999 or John\_Doresky@fws.gov). In north Georgia, please contact Robin Goodloe (706-613-9493, ext.221 or Robin\_Goodloe@fws.gov).]

We are glad to see path construction, which will add to the recreation opportunities in the community. Please keep erosion to a minimum during construction and leave as much vegetation intact as possible. In wet areas, use boardwalks if possible to prevent degradation and destruction of these sensitive habitats. If the path is paved, we strongly recommend using a porous pavement that will allow water to soak through instead of running off the surface and into the creek. Please plan the path carefully and provide for adequate parking and access areas. These measures will help protect water quality, protect sensitive habitats and native species and provide for a more enjoyable recreational experience for the users.

**Data Available on the Nongame Conservation Section Website**

By visiting the Nongame Conservation Section Website you can view the highest priority species and natural community information by Quarter Quad, County and HUC8 Watershed. To access this information, please visit our GA Rare Species and Natural Community Information page at: <http://georgiawildlife.dnr.state.ga.us/content/displaycontent.asp?txtDocument=89>

An ESRI shape file of our highest priority species and natural community data by quarter quad and county is also available. It can be downloaded from: <http://georgiawildlife.dnr.state.ga.us/assets/documents/gnhp/gnhpds.zip>

**Disclaimer:**

Please keep in mind the limitations of our database. The data collected by the Nongame Conservation Section comes from a variety of sources, including museum and herbarium records, literature, and reports from individuals and organizations, as well as field surveys by our staff biologists. In most cases the information is not the result of a recent on-site survey by our staff. Many areas of Georgia have never been surveyed thoroughly. Therefore, the Nongame Conservation Section can only occasionally provide definitive information on the presence or absence of rare species on a given site. Our files are updated constantly as new information is

IR 13115

received. **Thus, information provided by our program represents the existing data in our files at the time of the request and should not be considered a final statement on the species or area under consideration.**

If you know of populations of highest priority species that are not in our database, please fill out the appropriate data collection form and send it to our office. Forms can be obtained through our web site (<http://www.georgiawildlife.com>) or by contacting our office. If I can be of further assistance, please let me know.

Sincerely,



Katrina Morris  
Environmental Review Coordinator

IR 13115

Georgia Department of Natural Resources Letter 1



MARK WILLIAMS  
COMMISSIONER

DAN FORSTER  
DIRECTOR

March 30, 2011

Erik Lunsford  
Project Ecologist  
Cypress Cultural & Environmental Consultants, LLC  
104 Apple Ridge Road  
Toccoa, GA 30577

**Subject: Known occurrences of natural communities, plants and animals of highest priority conservation status on or near City of Woodstock, GA/USACOE Lease Property, Cherokee County, Georgia**

Dear Mr. Lunsford:

This is in response to your request of March 9, 2011. According to our records, within a three-mile radius of the project site there are the following Natural Heritage Database occurrences:

GA *Hybopsis lineapunctata* (Lined Chub) on site in the Little River  
Greenspace [Cherokee County] approx. 3.0 mi. S of site

\* Entries above preceded by "US" indicates species with federal status (Protected, Candidate or Partial Status). Species that are federally protected in Georgia are also state protected; "GA" indicates Georgia protected species.

**Recommendations:**

We have a record of *Hybopsis lineapunctata* (Lined Chub) on site in the Little River. Strict erosion and sedimentation control efforts should be taken to prevent negative impacts to the Little River and its aquatic resources. Please keep erosion to a minimum during construction and leave as much vegetation intact as possible. In wet areas, use boardwalks if possible to prevent degradation and destruction of these sensitive habitats. If the path is paved, we strongly recommend using a porous pavement that will allow water to soak through instead of running off the surface and into the creek. Bridges should span the creek and avoid disturbance of the streambeds. Please plan the path carefully and provide for adequate parking and access areas. These measures will help protect water quality, protect sensitive habitats and native species and provide for a more enjoyable recreational experience for the users.

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Georgia Department of Natural Resources Letter 2

## Data Available on the Nongame Conservation Section Website

By visiting the Nongame Conservation Section Website you can view the highest priority species and natural community information by Quarter Quad, County and HUC8 Watershed. To access this information, please visit our GA Rare Species and Natural Community Information page at: <http://www.georgiawildlife.com/conservation/species-of-concern?cat=conservation>

An ESRI shape file of our highest priority species and natural community data by quarter quad and county is also available. It can be downloaded from: <http://georgiawildlife.com/sites/default/files/uploads/wildlife/nongame/zip/gnhpds.zip>

### Disclaimer:

Please keep in mind the limitations of our database. The data collected by the Nongame Conservation Section comes from a variety of sources, including museum and herbarium records, literature, and reports from individuals and organizations, as well as field surveys by our staff biologists. In most cases the information is not the result of a recent on-site survey by our staff. Many areas of Georgia have never been surveyed thoroughly. Therefore, the Nongame Conservation Section can only occasionally provide definitive information on the presence or absence of rare species on a given site. Our files are updated constantly as new information is received. **Thus, information provided by our program represents the existing data in our files at the time of the request and should not be considered a final statement on the species or area under consideration.**

If you know of populations of highest priority species that are not in our database, please fill out the appropriate data collection form and send it to our office. Forms can be obtained through our web site (<http://www.georgiawildlife.com/node/1376>) or by contacting our office. If I can be of further assistance, please let me know.

Sincerely,



Katrina Morris  
Environmental Review Coordinator

IR 13426

Georgia Department of Natural Resources Letter 2

## United States Fish and Wildlife Service Correspondence

Wed, June 8, 2011 11:58:17 PM  
Fw: Old Rope Mill Park T&E Coordination (UNCLASSIFIED)  
From: "Horton, Matthew W SAM"  
<Matthew.W.Horton@sam.usace.army.mil>  
View Contact  
To: lunsfordecology@yahoo.com

---

See email below from USFWS. Please cite and include this email in the EA.

Matt  
-----Original Message-----  
From: Robin Goodloe  
To: Horton, Matthew W SAM  
Subject: Re: Old Rope Mill Park T&E Coordination (UNCLASSIFIED)  
Sent: Jun 8, 2011 4:08 PM

Hi Matt,

These look like great improvements to the park - I wish I had something like it near my house!

The project is not likely to affect listed species or other resources under the [Fish and Wildlife](#) Service's purview. The Little River does support a few remnant Cherokee darter populations, but most are found in tributaries, and none have been located near the Park.

You and the City already have incorporated bridging, riparian protection, and other measures to minimize impacts to aquatic resources. The only suggestion I have is to design the paved trails and other [impervious surfaces](#) so that stormwater is shunted into vegetated areas ([rain gardens](#), swales, etc.), rather than conveyed directly into a stream.

Do you think our office could work with the City to design an educational display for the Park about listed species and other aquatic resources in the Little and Etowah Rivers?

Thanks for the opportunity to review,

Robin

Robin Goodloe  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Georgia Ecological Services  
105 West Park Dr., Suite D  
Athens, GA 30606  
706-613-9493 X221  
706-613-6059 fax

"Horton, Matthew W SAM" <[Matthew.W.Horton@sam.usace.army.mil](mailto:Matthew.W.Horton@sam.usace.army.mil)>

06/07/2011 04:03 PM  
To  
<[robin\\_goodloe@fws.gov](mailto:robin_goodloe@fws.gov)>  
cc

Subject  
Old Rope Mill Park T&E Coordination (UNCLASSIFIED)

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED  
[Caveats](#): NONE

Robin,

I was wanting to coordinate a project I am currently working for the City of Woodstock in Cherokee County, Ga. The project is on Corps of Engineers property and is an expansion of an existing park on [Allatoona Lake](#). The details regarding the project are in the attached DRAFT EA. I am currently working with the City's contractor to make some additional revisions prior to initiating a public notice for the EA. The [draft document](#) should give you a good idea of the location and scope of the project as well as any potential impacts.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns please let me know.

Thanks for your help,  
Matt

Matthew Horton  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
[Mobile District](#)  
Ecologist, Inland Environment Team  
[251.694.4636](#)  
[251-214-6492-cell](#)

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED  
Caveats: NONE