Hawkinsville-Pulaski Riverpark

Karen Bailey
Director of Hawkinsville Better Hometown
Hawkinsville-Pulaski Riverpark Advisory Council Member
Mile Branch Landing with 2 boat ramps
Hawkinsville, Georgia
Hawkinsville/Pulaski Mile Long Riverfront Park

Mile Branch Landing

Uchee Shoals Landing
Tent camping with 2 pavilions and new restrooms with hot showers
Tent camping in Mile Branch Landing
BALDCYPRESS

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Characteristics:
Cone-shaped "knees" projecting from submerged roots when growing in wetland soils. The only conifer that sheds its needle-shaped leaves each winter.

Uses: Native Americans used large tree trunks for making dugout canoes. Native Americans first dug grooves in the wood with primitive tools and then hot coals were placed in these grooves to burn the wood into the shape of a canoe.
Section of mile long Riverwalk Trail

Example of a proposed elevated riverwalk trail necessary for part of the mile long riverwalk
Mile Branch Landing’s Future Additions

- Environmental education building
- Large enclosed picnic pavilion
- 2\textsuperscript{nd} restroom facility
- Outdoor amphitheater
- Additional Parking
- Fishing platforms cantilevered from riverwalk
Hawkinsville-Pulaski Riverfront Park Local Initiative Partners

- Pulaski County
- City of Hawkinsville/Better Hometown
- Riverfront Park Citizen Advisory Council
- Rivers Alive
- Hawkinsville Rotary Club
- Pulaski County Middle School
- Hawkinsville High School
- Volunteers
Many Federal, State and Group Partners

- National Park Service
- Middle Georgia Regional Commission
- Congressman Jim Marshall
- Georgia Department of Natural Resources
- NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service)/USDA
- Georgia Department of Transportation (DOT)
- Jimmy Carter Plant Management Center (PMC)/NRCS
- Georgia Department of Community Affairs
- Pulaski County Middle School
- University of Georgia Archway Program
- University of Georgia River Basin Center
- Georgia River Network – Paddle Georgia
- Georgia Canoe Association
- Ocmulgee Archaeological Society
- University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service
- 4-H and FFA Organizations
- And more…
Funding

- Technical Svcs Grant NPS: $ 
- DNR Land & Water Grant: $90,000
- 2 Congressional Earmarks: $90,000
- Environmental Assessment: $90,000
- NRCS/USDA: $800
- Middle GA Regional Comm.
- Georgia DNR–Boat Ramps/Parking
- Georgia DOT – Donated Shrubs
- Rivers Alive/501c3 - Fundraising, Events
- United Givers – Security Cameras
Local Rivers Alive Organization
2007 Paddle Georgia Event Ended With A Bar-B-Q and Overnight Camping at Mile Branch Landing, Hawkinsville

Hawkinsville/Pulaski’s Mile Branch Landing

Local Rivers Alive Organization hosted the event along with Pulaski County community members
The first people arrived in the area that became Pulaski County sometime during the last Ice Age. Archaic evidence has proven that Paleoindians hunted in the area with their distinctive Clovis spear points as early as 12,000 years ago, and that the Creek Indians still traveled through these parts less than 200 years ago. Between these times, Archaic, Woodland, and Mississippian Indians lived and hunted throughout the county, relying on the abundant natural resources of the Upper Coastal Plains for tools, food, clothing, and shelter. For example, evidence of stone tools, made from locally available rock called chert, has been found throughout the county. And though little organic material exists from the Prehistoric Period, extensive animal remains, particularly of deer, turtles, and birds, indicate that sacred feasts were observed on one nearby.

The Ocmulgee River, along with its tributaries like Mile Creek, played a major role in Native American life in Middle Georgia, and a number of important sites in the county testify to this fact. Additionally, several trails converged at the old river crossing known as Uchee Shoals, and led to Creek towns in western Georgia, eastern Alabama, and the western boundary of Georgia during the Historic Period. These trails included the Uchee Trail, the River Trail, and the Indian Path—all of which were important highways for moving trade goods and hunting parties across the state. In 1512, the Ocmulgee was the western boundary of Georgia, and a series of forts was built along the river to protect the new settlements against Indian attack. Fort Mitchell, located at Hartwell, was one of four such forts in Pulaski County.

By the early 1830s most of the Indians remaining in Georgia immigrated or were forcibly removed west into Territory (later Oklahoma) along what came to be known as the Trail of Tears. Today there are federally recognized Creek Indian tribes or their offshoots in Oklahoma, Alabama, Louisiana, Texas, and Florida, and these descendants of Middle Georgia’s Indians live a modern lifestyle, they continue to honor the pride of their ancestors.

**Cultural Periods Represented Within Middle Georgia**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Period</th>
<th>Earliest</th>
<th>Latest</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early, Middle, and Late Archaic</td>
<td>1000 BC</td>
<td>1000 AD</td>
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**One of Hawkinsville-Pulaski’s Riverwalk Interpretive Signs**

The sign provides information about the history and cultural heritage of Pulaski County, including the presence of Paleoindians, the role of the Ocmulgee River, and the early history of Georgia's indigenous peoples.
Major mile long riverpark & blueway benefits:

• Community environmental awareness and education
• Historical & cultural awareness
• Recreational opportunities
• Regional improved economic development from the events and services related to the canoe and kayak recreational activities.
Old Cotton Mill – Now Loft Apartment Project along Hawkinsville-Pulaski’s mile long riverwalk
Ocmulgee Community Market
Building 8 Exterior (south elevation) and Interior (south side)
Questions?

Karen Bailey, Director Hawkinsville
Better Hometown
Ocmulgee River Blueway

Karen Hunt

Hawkinsville-Pulaski Riverpark Advisory Council Member
Retired and community volunteer
Ocmulgee River Blueway
Pulaski County is the project “sponsor”
City of Hawkinsville, Georgia
Bleckley County
Houston County
Twiggs County
National Park Service’s Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program
Phase 1 of the Ocmulgee River Blueway has been Completed

A 54 mile blueway has been created on the Ocmulgee River between Warner Robins and the southern end of Pulaski County

(courtesy of oacs-atlanta.com)
Existing boat landings from Macon south to Darien–Phase 1 of Blueway
The existing boat ramps have been linked in the 54 mile Blueway

The four partnering counties have:

• Identified each boat ramp site in Twiggs, Bleckley, Houston, and Pulaski Counties
• Confirmed existing site conditions
• Created a canoe trail guide for these seven boat ramp sites to be printed or loaded on websites
• Installed mile marker identification signs at each boat ramp site to coordinate with the Altamaha River’s boat ramps signage
Proposed Ocmulgee River Blueway
Trail Map Example – Altamaha River State Canoe Guide

Key to Numbered Landings

Mile Number, Boat-Kayak Rental, Camping, Picnic Area, Food, Fresh Water, Gasoline, Fish Bait, Public Restrooms, Lat. & Long., Websites of local areas around Numbered Landings, Road info, Public land identified, etc.
Ocmulgee Blueway Guide
Links to the Ocmulgee Blueway Guide

http://www.pulaskico.com

http://www.garivers.org/
Phase 2 of the Blueway Project Will:

- Link Macon and its existing blueway – The Ocmulgee Heritage Trail to
- The Ocmulgee National Monument (NPS) & then connect boat landing sites downstream to
- The Altamaha River and on to Darien on the Georgia coast
Proposed Ocmulgee River Blueway

Compare this slide to the following one!
Confluence Forks – Lumber City

Ocmulgee River

Oconee River

Altamaha River

Courtesy of James Holland Photography
Conclusion – Costs:

- The Ocmulgee Blueway project is using existing publicly owned sites in each county with existing boat ramps.
- Phase 1 & 2 costs – no costs.
- Improvements may be added to each site at the discretion of each county. Marketing information and web links could be created by each county at minimal costs. Grants may be available (e.g. GA DNR Recreational Trails Program).
Proposed Paddling Trail
Questions?

Karen Hunt, Hawkinsville-Pulaski Riverpark Advisory Council