Ocmulgee River Blueway

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Hawkinsville-Pulaski Riverfront Park Advisory Council
March 11, 2010
Create a 54-mile blueway on the Ocmulgee River between Warner Robins and the southern end of Pulaski County.
Phase 1: Link Existing Boat Ramps in the 54 mile Blueway

- Identify each site in Twiggs, Bleckley, Houston, and Pulaski Counties
- Confirm existing conditions
- Create a canoe trail guide to be printed or loaded on websites

[Diagram of Ocmulgee River Blueway]

Prepared for: Pulaski County & City of Hawkinsville
Prepared by: National Park Service/RTCA DRAFT 3-8-10
Trail Map Example – Altamaha River State Canoe Guide
Phase 2: Evaluation of Sites

- Need for improved facilities
- Need for improved launch areas
Phase 3: Link boat landings from Macon south to Darien
Phase 3 of the Blueway Project Will:

- Link Macon and its existing blueway section on the river to
- The Ocmulgee National Monument (NPS) then connect boat landing sites downstream to
- The Altamaha River to Darien on the Georgia coast and will then connect to
- The SE Coast Saltwater Paddling Trail – FL, GA, SC, NC, and VA.
This blueway project is an outcome of Hawkinsville’s mile long Riverpark/Riverwalk Initiative started in 2006 under the guidance of NPS’s Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program.

Technical assistance provided by NPS’s Charlotte Gillis has provided Hawkinsville/Pulaski’s riverpark/riverwalk’s Mile Branch Landing with improved:

* river launch areas for canoes and kayaks
* tent camping
* restrooms for paddlers on overnight trips
* Hawkinsville-Pulaski Riverfront Park’s master plan
Hawkinsville-Pulaski Riverfront Park Local Initiative Partners

- Pulaski County
- City of Hawkinsville/Better Hometown
- Riverfront Park Citizen Advisory Council
- Rivers Alive
- Rotary
- 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
- University of Georgia Archway Program
- University of Georgia River Basin Center
- Georgia River Network
- Ocmulgee Archaeological Society
- University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service
- 4-H and FFA Organizations
- And more…
Local Rivers Alive Organization
Hawkinsville/Pulaski Mile Long Riverfront Park

Mile Branch Landing

Uchee Shoals Landing
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
Wanda Merchant, Director of Hazelhurst-Jeff Davis Board of Tourism states “there is a tremendous demand out there for access to public waters, not just the ability to get your craft in and out of the river, but facilities that make for a good overall experience. It’s fairly rare, especially on our river.”
Facilities at Towns Bluff Park in Hazlehurst, Jeff Davis County

- RV Park and Campground
  - water, electricity, picnic table, fire ring
  - comfort station with shower
  - day use area has picnic tables, shelters, restrooms

- Boat ramps
- Horseback riding trails
- Bike riding
- Bullard Creek WMA
- Walking Trails
- Heritage center with river & Indian artifacts and special events
Ocmulgee River Blueway Partners For Phases 1 & 2

- Pulaski County is the project “sponsor”
- Bleckley County
- Houston County
- Twiggs
- National Park Service’s Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program
Regional improved economic development will be realized from the events and services related to the canoe and kayak recreational activities.
Conclusion – Costs:

- The project is using existing publicly owned sites in each county with existing boat ramps
- Phase 1 costs – no costs anticipated
- Phase 2 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.
Questions?

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Thank you.