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# Chattahoochee Bend State Park: Grand opening likely in July

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At long last, Coweta's new state park, Chattahoochee Bend, will be opening to the public.

The park, located along the Chattahoochee River in the "flat rock" area of northwest Coweta, should be open in the next few months, if not sooner.

The contractor for phase one of the project is set to be finished with work by May 20, said Trint Wicklund, park manager. But that will depend on the weather.

In addition to the completion of construction, the other issue is that the full staff isn't yet in place. Wicklund has his office manager, but hasn't yet procured an assistant manager, who will live on-site, and a maintenance person.

Once the construction is done and the staff is hired, "we'll be able to pick an opening date," Wicklund said.

There is also the need for some road patching. A few sections of the main park entrance road have been seriously damaged by dumptrucks and other large equipment, and will have to be patched. Wicklund said he hasn't gotten a timeline on when that patching work will be done.

Current park features are two campgrounds, one for RVs and one for tents, an "Adirondack" style group camp that can hold up to 32 and two sets of platform camping sites along the river. There is a boat ramp at the river, along with two picnic shelters, a playground and several shady picnic sites complete with grills and prep tables, and an observation tower.

Though the park will be open soon, it won't be "complete" for many years. There are plans for additional amenities in phase two, which will be done at an as-yet undetermined time in the future.

And there are many miles of hiking trails left to be built, as well as future mountain bike and equestrian trails.

Due to state budget constraints, all trail building is being done by volunteer labor, headed up by the Friends of Chattahoochee Bend State Park.

So far, more than five miles of trail have been completed, with many more left to go.

All are welcome to come out and volunteer, at the trail-building days typically held the fourth Saturday of each month.

The next trail building event will be May 21, starting at 9 a.m. Volunteers should meet at the visitor's center on Bobwhite Way.

May 21 will also be the date of the Bend Friends' third annual meeting. The meeting will include the election of board members, and a short presentation. The meeting begins at 1:30, following the conclusion of the trail work.

The friends are also busy with plans for a grand opening celebration, complete with state dignitaries, with Gov. Nathan Deal and former Gov. Sonny Perdue to be invited. The grand opening is tentatively planned for sometime in July.

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