

Published Thursday, January 12, 2012

Rep. Smith one of 100 Most Influential Georgians

BY [SARAH FAY CAMPBELL](#)

The Newnan Times-Herald

For the second year in a row, State Rep. Lynn Smith, R-Newnan, has been named one of the "100 Most Influential Georgians" by Georgia Trend Magazine.

Smith was recognized this year for her efforts in making Coweta's Chattahoochee Bend State Park a reality, and for her work in shepherding public-private water project legislation through the Georgia General Assembly last year as chairwoman of the House Natural Resources and Environment Committee.

"If you enjoy spending time in Georgia's great outdoors, Smith is one of the people you can thank for a new state park, Chattahoochee Bend," it says in Smith's entry in the latest issue of Georgia Trend.

"I was absolutely surprised," Smith said. "It was an honor to be recognized last year, which was a surprise. But to get it twice in a row is kind of a double surprise, and an honor," she said. "People come and go on that list ... I'm really honored to have that designation."

There are quite a few new names on the list, Smith said. She's looking forward to meeting some of her fellow honorees at the luncheon and awards ceremony on Jan. 25.

Smith was quick to add that "no one ever achieves by themselves."

"I have to acknowledge my fellow members in the General Assembly. It takes all of us to solve problems," Smith said. "It is such an honor to be the representative from this area, that is why I'm up there."

"My dad used to say -- 'Wherever you live, you've got to find a way to be involved in your community, because that is what makes it worth living there,'" Smith said. "I've always just lived by that, and it is true."

The legislation allowing public/private partnerships for water supply projects was started in the Georgia Senate, and Smith was the House sponsor.

"I was hesitant for years about the public/private partnerships with water and I didn't want to see anything passed until we had solved the problem of transparency for our citizens," Smith said. She feels that was done by requiring all such projects to go through the local governments.

The bill was introduced by Sen. Russ Tolleson, R-Perry, chairman of the Senate Natural Resources and Environment Committee. "But we all worked on it -- the lieutenant governor's office, the speaker's office, everybody had to put a lot of time into this, including city governments, county governments. It was worked on

for months and months and months," Smith said.

Chattahoochee Bend State Park in western Coweta County was also a group effort, of course.

"It's thanks to someone's foresight that the land was purchased," Smith said. Then Coweta County funded a development plan, and lots of locals got involved.

"When it came time to get the funding, I kind of carried the baton on that in the General Assembly," Smith said. "But after that, the whole initiative was picked up by volunteers," she said. And the county committed to pay the salary of one staff member for two years, which went a long way in getting the park staffed and open.

"I'm just happy to be one of the volunteers -- happy and proud," she said. "Because it was a team effort, a concerted effort to get it done and we did. It was just amazing. It was just a realization by a small but ever-growing group of dedicated volunteers who got that park open. And I think people need to recognize as well the commitment by the county government in paying the salary of one staff member for two years."

Smith was jointed on the list by two other female members of the Georgia House, House Minority Leader Stacey Abrams, D-Atlanta, and Speaker Pro Tem Jan Jones, R-Milton.

Also on the list was Dr. Beheruz Sethna, president of the University of West Georgia.

- [About us](#)
- [Customer Service](#)
- [Social News Forms](#)
- [Privacy Policy](#)
- [Visitor Agreement](#)
- [RSS](#)
- [Mobile](#)
- [Go To Top](#)

© 2011 The Newnan Times-Herald Inc., Newnan, Georgia. Any unauthorized use, copying or mirroring is prohibited.