

DNR now controls land along Little River

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SENECA — Locals enjoying camping and four wheeling along the banks of the Little River near Burnt Tanyard Road will have to do it elsewhere, Larry Holcomb of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (DNR) confirmed Tuesday.

A stretch of property off of Burnt Tanyard Road along the banks of the Little River, which runs into Lake Keowee, had become a popular destination for adventurers driving all-terrain vehicles (ATV's) and camping, but such activity had resulted in significant erosion there, Holbrooks said.

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This submitted photo taken from the Burnt Tanyard Road bridge shows mud and runoff going into the Little River due to erosion caused by excessive ATV traffic.

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The deterioration of the property could not be stopped, however, because it was private property, he explained, and law enforcement could only get involved if the owner complained about the land's usage.

Now, the DNR has entered into a partnership with the property's owner, making it a wildlife management area (WMA).

"It's now a WMA and under regulation as a WMA property, which is a lot stricter than private property," Holbrooks said. "The only travel allowed there now will be by hunters and those with a WMA permit."

No camping or four wheeling will be allowed there, he said.

After the recent flooding in Oconee County, the wear and tear on the grounds by the significant traffic resulted in a complete washout of the trails once the waters came. Now that DNR has designated the property as a wildlife management area, which amounts to a lease of the land, much of the area has been fenced and demarcated by DNR signs.

"Now DNR has more oversight," Holbrooks said. "There will be no vehicles allowed there."