BREAKING OUT

Grant fuels new Reedy River park

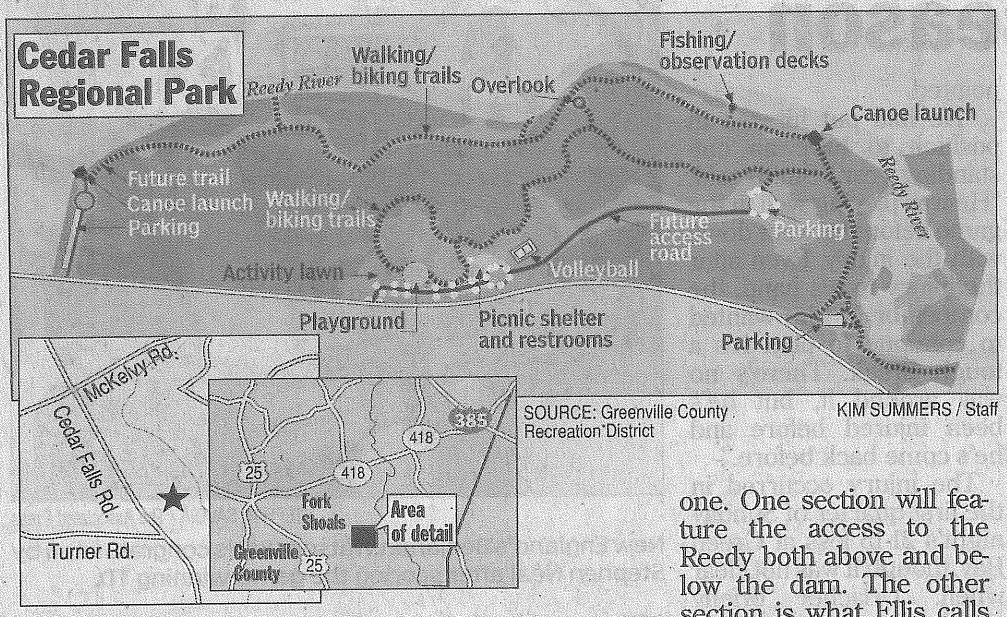
edar Falls xpected to open n 2010

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By this time next year, addlers on the Reedy Riv- in southern Greenville ounty should have ac- ess to a new park.

Cedar Falls Regional ark took a giant step to- ard reality last week hen the county got word iat it won a $413,075 rant from the S.C. De- artment of Parks, Recre- ion & Tourism. That rant was the entire mount SCPRT had to ward this year, said Paul llis, director of planning r the Greenville County ecreation District.

Combined with $2.7 mil- on set aside in the South arolina Mitigation Trust und supplied from Colo- ial Pipeline Company's 7 million fine levied in 999, the county will devel- p the 87-acre park on the eedy at Cedar Falls Road outh of State 418.



SOURCE: Greenville County Recreation District

KIM SUMMERS / Staff

The grant, funded by federal money from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, a National Park Service-funded program at SCPRT that helps pay for the acquisition of new parks and development of existing parks, will also help buy 17.5 acres at New Harrison Bridge Road along the Reedy River.

"We hope to start construction in spring of 2010," Ellis said. "Right now, there's no parking, no facilities, not even trash cans."

In fact, Ellis said, it's dangerous to be at the future park now because of hazards on the site.

"We do not want people there yet," he said. "It's dangerous."

But when it does open, Ellis said the area will essentially be two parks in one. One section will feature the access to the Reedy both above and below the dam. The other section is what Ellis calls the Recreation District's "ideal park" format.

Those park features include parking, a playground, picnic shelter, restrooms and a circular trail. The two areas will be tied together with a walking trail, Ellis said.

The unique feature of Cedar Falls is the river. With the Cedar Falls access point, Greenville County will have its first "Blue Trail." The new park will be the southern terminus for paddlers.

Dave Hargett, a member of the Friends of Reedy River and an avid paddler said if the dam is repaired then the reservoir above it forms a 1.5-mile section up to the Fork Shoals community.

"When that's at full pool," Hargett said, "that's a really sweet paddle."

The future paddling trail could offer five put-ins, including the Recreation District's Log Shoals Road site, and at: Jenkins Bridge Road, Greenville Tech's Brashier campus, New Harrison Bridge Road, and at Cedar Falls.

Below Cedar Falls is where adventuresome kayakers can hone their skills on Class II-III rapids. Hargett said paddling is totally dependent on weather. Consistent paddling is often available from March 1-June 1, he said, and often again in the fall.

"But it's like surfing," he said. "If the surf is up, then you can surf. If it rains then you can paddle the Reedy."

NATURE BECKONS

Compiled by Scott Keepfer, Outdoors Editor



On the move: This is prime time for hawk watching at Caesars Head State Park, with thousands of raptors often passing overhead in a single day. lost of these birds are broad-winged awks. Broad wings, our smallest hawk, re known for their spectacular migra- ons en masse.



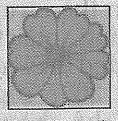
Thermal usage: Broad-winged hawks travel by rising on thermals — warm air currents — and gliding on to the next thermal. These thermals are most bundant and effective along the Blue idge escarpment. If they migrate past eptember, they may miss their window f opportunity for thermals.



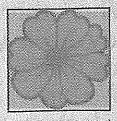
Keep feeding: Don't worry about leaving your hummingbird feeders out too long — they won't prevent your local birds from migrating. In fact, it's important that these high-energy birds have a reliable food source as they begin storing up fuel for their upcoming movements to South and Central America.



Helping hands: When squirrels are overwhelmed by an excess of acorns, they bury their nuts farther and farther away from the mast tree. This is perfect strategy for the tree because the local area is nutrient-depleted and shady, giving young trees little opportunity unless squirrels lend helping hands.



Beautiful crosses: St. Andrew's Cross is blooming now along old logging roads and in open woods. A low shrub seldom exceeding more than 3 feet tall, this plant has branches that are topped with easily identifiable yellow flowers with four petals arranged in an X-type cross.



Colorful creeks: Many wildflowers are offering their final blossoms of the season, particularly along mountain river corridors. If you're trout fishing or hiking along a creek, look for the pink blossoms of the turtlehead, the blue of lobelia and the orange of touch-me-nots this time of year.



Nature's hitchhiker: There may be no more effective hitchhiker in Mother Nature's world than the seed pods of beggar's lice. These plants still have som pink, pea-type flowers, but you'll notice first the sticky pods, which cling to your pants, socks or shoes in green rows that are difficult to remove.



Curious clusters: Woodland visitors may notice the brilliant red berries of the spicebush this time of year. Located singly along the drooping stems of the large shrub, the red berries look like misplaced dogwood berries. The leaves, stems and berries all yield a strong spicy scent.