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Oconee County parks gain national recognition

Devils Fork makes list of top family campgrounds; Oconee State Park selected for hiking trails

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WALHALLA — Two Oconee County parks have made the grade among the best in the country in their category, according to Reserve America's annual recognition of outdoor recreation destinations.

Devils Fork State Park near Salem and Oconee State Park in Mountain Rest were among the 15 parks in South Carolina recognized by Reserve America. South Carolina has 47 state parks.

Devils Fork made the list of "America's Top 100 Family Campgrounds" along with four other parks in the state. Devils Fork features beautiful Lake Jocassee, a 7,500-acre and 300-foot-deep reservoir created by Duke Energy in 1973. The park is a favorite destination for campers and boaters.

Oconee State Park gained national recognition by making the list of "Top 50 Hiking Trails." It was the only South Carolina Park on the list.

Nestled deep in the Blue Ridge foothills, Oconee State Park serves as the southern trailhead of the Foothills Trails, an 80-mile wilderness hike on the Blue Ridge Escarpment. The park also features several other picturesque, but non-demanding hiking trails.

Parks are recognized by Reserve America based on testimonials, campground ratings and feedback from park rangers.