

County official says that revamped boat access area is often 'full'

BY LAUREN PIERCE
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SENECA — Two months after the reopening of the Seneca Creek Access Area on Lake Hartwell, an Oconee County official says it's seen a lot of traffic.

The access area off Seneca Creek Road was closed to the public in January 2022 for improvements and reopened June 30 — boasting a new three-lane boat ramp, two courtesy docks, a fishing pier, a kayak launch and picnic area.

County parks, recreation and tourism (PRT) director Phil Shirley said at Thursday's PRT commission meeting the landing is "full a lot" with boaters and visitors taking advantage of the new amenities.

"I personally used it on Saturday last week. There's 49 parking spots; there may have been five or six open," he told the commission. "It's pretty regular. And it's not just boats, some of our partners who rent boats, some of our fishing guides are using it as headquarters, so you got a lot of single cars using the single car side. The fishing dock, every night you see lights on the fishing dock where it's being used, and then the kayak launch is becoming more popular as people realize it's over there."

The park at 280 Seneca Creek Road is open from daylight to dusk, and there is no fee to use the amenities.

FUTURE PLANS?

Commission chairman Shawn Johnson asked Shirley if he had plans to add umbrellas for shade to the five picnic tables at the access area.



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Boaters and visitors use the new amenities at the revamped Seneca Creek Access Area Friday afternoon in Seneca. Oconee County parks, recreation and tourism director Phil Shirley said Seneca Creek is often full with people taking advantage of the new features since it reopened two months ago.

"We didn't originally do that. I'm not opposed to looking at something like that down the road," Shirley said. "We also talked about a trail that may connect it over to (Clemson) University property. Which, if we did that, that's probably when we would consider something like that, allowing people to walk back and forth and utilize it for launch and things like that."

Shirley told The Journal if the walking trail that was mentioned to him "in passing" gains some traction, the university will "drive that."

"There's a club rowing team and they're putting that, my understanding is, between Seneca Creek and the facilities

building as well, so they were wanting a little bit of a trail there," he said. "Whether or not they want it to continue on over to the Snow Complex still has not been discussed. ... It's not anything that there's concrete as of now.

"It would be just natural trail," Shirley

added. "It wouldn't be anything that we pave or do concrete. I would just do a natural trail through the woods that we would just maybe maintain. ... I don't mind connecting over at all, but it's not something on my immediate radar."

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