

**Save  
Etowah**

# Destination Etowah



Many changes are happening at the Etowah Indian Mounds. The state budget cuts have officially hit Etowah with layoffs and reduced services and hours beginning July 1, 2009. It is a sad day when our parks need to reduce hours and staff is let go at the expense of the public who uses, visits, and supports the parks.

Beginning July 1, 2009 Etowah Indian Mounds will only be open on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Only one ranger remains to oversee the site. Will Etowah still have activities,

educational programming for children, special events like the torch light tour that we have all come to look forward to each year? So much has gone in to this park over the years and so little time to take it away.

Friends of Etowah will be asked to fill in many of the gaps but the public needs to speak out to their representatives so that more cuts and closures do not occur. Here are the representatives for Bartow County but you can contact your county too:

Georgia Senator  
Bill Heath  
[billheath@billheath.net](mailto:billheath@billheath.net)

Georgia House of Representatives  
Paul Battles  
[p.battles@yahoo.com](mailto:p.battles@yahoo.com)

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## Ken's Korner

With the recent cuts to Etowah's staff, budget, and operating hours, we will be relying on the generosity of our Friends group more than in any time in our history. Volunteerism is one area we can greatly benefit. If you would like to volunteer at the museum or volunteer to assist for events please give us a call 770-387-3747 or contact Patty at 678-574-8750. Ranger Steve will be the only office staff person left and Buster will continue his splendid maintenance duties.

It is time now for me to announce my retirement effective July 1. How ambivalent are my feelings right now! Retirement is something I have always looked forward to and considered one of the best days of my life but I am also saddened to be leaving one of the most important historical and archaeological sites in



the country. I will miss all of you who have helped to improve this site immensely over the past four years. You have meant much to me.

This announcement does not mean I will abandon Etowah Mounds when I retire. I have asked to be on the Friends of Etowah Board and I will strive to continue to improve this site. Feel free to visit us in Dahlonega.

Ken Akins, Site Manager  
Etowah Indian Mounds

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US Congress  
Phil Gingrey  
<http://gingrey.house.gov/>  
[gingrey.ga@mail.house.gov](mailto:gingrey.ga@mail.house.gov)

Visit our web site for updates and information about Etowah. The web address is: [www.friendsofetowahindianmounds.org](http://www.friendsofetowahindianmounds.org).

I also want to say a heartfelt thanks to Ken Akins, the current park manager who is retiring as of July 1.

It has been an honor to learn from you and work with you. I am going to truly miss you but I have the perfect position for you on the Friends board. So I will continue to work with you along another avenue.

I wish you all the best in your retirement. May you get to do many of the things you wish to do.

Patty Wallenburg  
[typewriting@earthlink.net](mailto:typewriting@earthlink.net)

# Georgia State Parks & Historic Sites Announce Restructuring

ATLANTA, May 27, 2009 — The Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has announced a restructuring of state parks and historic sites as a result of a nearly 39% reduction in state appropriations and 24% projected loss of revenue. Reorganization will include:

- Reducing services and access at five state parks.
- Reducing operational days and/or pursuing community support at 12 state historic sites.
- Eliminating 12% of the workforce and implementing furloughs.
- Increasing fees for accommodations, recreational activities, interpretive programs and parking.
- Pursuing alternative operation of lodges and golf courses.
- Limiting swimming pool operations.

“These decisions were heart-wrenching but were made using a business case analysis,” said DNR Commissioner Chris Clark. “We are exploring every avenue to manage budget reductions and revenue shortfalls, to properly care for our state parks and historic sites, and to minimize the impact on Georgia citizens and communities.”

The reorganization enables the agency to uphold its mission of protecting Georgia’s natural and cultural resources while also providing opportunities for recreation and education. The DNR is aggressively exploring ways for state parks, historic sites, golf courses and lodges to become more self-sustaining, while exploring opportunities for private operations of lodges and golf courses.

“Outsourcing agreements will be used only if they maintain affordable and high-quality services that are more cost-effective than our own operations,” said State Parks & Historic Sites Director Becky Kelley. “If outsourcing agreements are not possible, if our efforts do not reduce our dependence on state appropriations, or if state revenues continue to decline, further cuts and potential closures of lodges and golf courses are possible.”

Details of the restructuring efforts include:

- Beginning July 1, Bobby Brown, Hart, Providence Canyon and Sprewell Bluff state parks will have reduced services with limited facilities, no on-site manager and no emergency services. Neighboring parks will provide

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oversight. Boat ramps at Bobby Brown and Hart will remain open, but camping will become seasonal. The yurts at Bobby Brown will be relocated to other parks. The five cottages at Hart will close, as will the visitor center and group shelter at Providence Canyon. The only change at Sweetwater Creek State Park will be a reduction in days of operation at the visitor center, from seven to four days per week.

- At 12 state historic sites, hours of operation will be reduced with management transferring to nearby state parks. Possible operating agreements with local communities are being explored and future closures are possible. The impacted sites include Dahlonega Gold Museum, Chief Vann House, Etowah Indian Mounds, Fort Morris, Hofwyl-Broadfield Plantation, Jarrell Plantation, New Echota, Pickett's Mill Battlefield, Robert Toombs House, Traveler's Rest, Jefferson Davis and Lapham-Patterson House. Changes begin July 1.
- Ninety-five full- and part-time employees will be separated from their current positions (of these, 32 full-time employees will be offered part-time positions). In addition, 81 vacant positions will be eliminated and 23 staff members will be

reassigned duties. The agency is making every effort to provide assistance to employees impacted by layoffs. The DNR will also implement furloughs beginning July 1.

- On May 20, parking fees at state parks increased to \$5 daily and \$50 annually. Last year, the ParkPass program generated nearly \$3 million for maintenance and construction. Officials hope to generate an additional \$1.2 million with the increase. Additionally, state parks and historic sites will begin charging for many services that used to be free, such as interpretive programs and guided hikes.

Earlier this month, the DNR announced that swimming pools will open only at High Falls, Victoria Bryant and Magnolia Springs state parks and at George T. Bagby, Little Ocmulgee and Red Top Mountain lodges. The lodge pools are open to cottage/lodge guests only, while the High Falls pool is privately operated. The pool at Magnolia Springs will operate with support from Jenkins County and, since the pool at Victoria Bryant is able to generate a profit, it will remain open.

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Operations at all park golf courses and lodges will be adjusted to minimize expenditures and maximize revenue generation. Impacts of these adjustments are not fully determined at this time, but closures may occur.

The Department of Natural Resources operates 48 state parks and 15 state historic sites. A wide range of overnight accommodations, outdoor activities, historical programs and group facilities draw 11 million visitors each year.

For more information or to make reservations, visit [www.GeorgiaStateParks.org](http://www.GeorgiaStateParks.org) or call 800-864-7275. Friends of State Parks & Historic Sites is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting Georgia's park system. Details can be found at [www.FriendsofGaStateParks.org](http://www.FriendsofGaStateParks.org) or 888-948-2092.

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## How Can You Help?

One of the easiest ways you can help is to support your state parks and historic sites by visiting often, staying overnight, holding group events and meetings at our lodges, buying an Annual ParkPass, joining Friends of Georgia State Parks & Historic Sites and volunteering.

ParkPass fees are crucial to keeping state parks and historic sites in good condition. However, visitors can take advantage of free days on Wednesdays and the library loan program where they can check out a ParkPass or Historic Site Pass for free.

At Etowah specifically, volunteers who can be counted on to be present

and those who have ideas as to how to do fund raising and keep raising money to assist Etowah are crucial.

Friends can not do it all alone; we need help from everyone. Volunteer for a day once a month, send some ideas for fund raising, or offer to help chair a committee with other volunteers for an event. Contact your local officials about what is happening. It is going to take a lot of effort but it can certainly be done.

Please do not hesitate to contact Patty Wallenburg at [typewriting@earthlink.net](mailto:typewriting@earthlink.net) with any ideas or suggestions.

# Day of Discovery

On Saturday, June 6 at 1pm, Etowah will host archaeologist Adam King who will discuss recent findings at Etowah. Don't miss this important lecture about the latest research and findings about the settlement of Etowah.

Jim Langford of the Northwest Georgia Archaeological Society will also be giving a lecture about some of the latest findings he has been a part of.

Friends will be providing refreshments for the event.

## Etowah Indian Mounds

### Events Calendar 2009

**June 6th Day of Discovery 10am to 4pm**

Archaeologist Adam King and James Langford will discuss recent findings at Etowah and the surrounding area.

**June 16, 17, 18th Junior Ranger Program 9:30 to 11:30am**

Register for the site junior ranger program. Ages 8–12.

**June 27th Indian Flute and Dancing 10am to 4pm**

Cherokee artist Tommy Wildcat will be performing a flute concert. Dancers and drummers will provide entertainment throughout the day.

**August 29th Flint Knapping 10am to 4pm**

Flintknapping is the the art of making projectile points from different types of stone. See demonstrations of this ancient art.

**September 12th Lecture Series—"Georgia's Indian Heritage" 2:30pm**

Lecture by noted historian, Dr. Max White, on prehistoric Creek and Cherokee Indians of north Georgia.

**October 3rd Skills of the Past 10am to 4pm**

Weaponry, flintknapping, basket weaving and pottery making, crafts essential to the survival of the Native Americans of the southeast, will be demonstrated.

**October 3rd Torch Light Tour of the Ancient City 7pm to 9pm**

Step back into ancient times along a torch lit path and illuminated mounds.

Please note that some events will have a small entrance fee.