# Jordan Lake State Recreation Area General Management Plan



North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

**Division of Parks and Recreation** 

**Coastal Region** 

FEBRUARY 2017

### I. MISSION AND PURPOSE

### **MISSION STATEMENT:**

**Conservation**: To protect North Carolina's natural diversity through careful selection and stewardship of state parks system lands;

**Recreation**: To provide and promote outdoor recreation opportunities in the state parks system and throughout the state; and

**Education**: To encourage appreciation of North Carolina's natural and cultural heritage through diverse educational opportunities; for all citizens of and visitors to the State of North Carolina.

**PURPOSE:** The State of North Carolina offers unique archaeologic, geologic, biologic, scenic and recreational resources. These resources are part of the heritage of the people of this State. The heritage of a people should be preserved and managed by those people for their use and for the use of their visitors and descendants.

### **PARK PURPOSE:**

Filled in 1981, the B. Everett Jordan Lake was authorized by the U.S. Congress to provide for flood control, water supply, water quality control, recreation, and fish and wildlife conservation. The lake and dam are managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Wilmington District. Management of the lake and its surrounding public lands are done in coordination with the state of North Carolina.

The 13,900 acre Jordan Lake and its associated recreation areas are a major statewide recreational resources for land and water-based recreational activities. A variety of facilities encourage use of the lake and provide opportunities for resource-compatible recreational activities such as fishing, swimming, sunbathing, motor boating, waterskiing, wind surfing, sailing, picnicking, hiking, and natural and cultural resource interpretation. Diverse overnight camping opportunities such as: tent and trailer, group, primitive and recreational vehicle camping are available. A private concession marina at Crosswinds operates for the convenience of park visitors.

Jordan Lake State Recreation Area affords outstanding scenic vistas of the lake and its shoreline. Unlike many earlier U.S. Army Corps of Engineers projects, the 180 miles of shoreline of Jordan Lake is protected by public ownership. Scenic stream openings, beaches, bluffs, and rock outcrops punctuate the rolling topography of the forested lake shore. The diverse topography creates scenic views of open water, narrow curving channels, coves, and long finger-like inlets. Jordan Lake and its surrounding lands provide a large, undeveloped, open space that contrasts with nearby expanding urbanization. Any additional development by the division at Jordan Lake State Recreation Area should be made to preserve the unspoiled natural scenic quality of the lake.

Jordan Lake and its surrounding public lands serve to protect aquatic and terrestrial habitats and provide excellent opportunities for biological resource interpretation. The lake is a major oasis for

wintering water birds and a stopover site for numerous migrating species. Our national symbol, the American Bald Eagle, nests here as do a myriad of songbirds, shorebirds, and raptors. The project lands serve as important wildlife corridors. Natural areas associated with the Jordan Lake project are representative Piedmont habitats that include a wide variety of Piedmont natural communities, from bottomland wetland forests to upland hardwood and pine forests.

The Jordan Lake project contains important archaeological and cultural resources. Many Native American sites have been identified as well as representative period structures and cemeteries. Four sites, including an archaic prehistoric archaeological site, a late woodland prehistoric site, a 19th century farm complex, and a 19th Century rural community, have been placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Jordan Lake State Recreation Area exists primarily because of its outstanding recreational and scenic values and also for its biological, archaeological and geological significance. The division is charged with preserving these and other values and providing park experiences that promote pride in and understanding of natural heritage of North Carolina.

### II. HISTORY

The New Hope River Valley was included in the Granville Grant and was first settled by Scottish Highlanders in the 1740s. Early economic pursuits of these settlers were primarily agricultural. Cultivated crops included corn, tobacco, potatoes, peas, and beans. Domesticated hogs and cattle were also raised. Later, the New Hope River Valley was the scene of several Revolutionary War skirmishes.

The population of the area remained rural, and farming activities continued to thrive up until the Civil War period. During this conflict, normal farming activities were greatly curtailed, since many local farmers enlisted in the Confederate cause. Following the Civil War, farming activities resumed. Cotton had become the most important crop, with tobacco second. By the 1920s, local lumber mills had clear-cut most of the existing forests, and attention was turned to dairy farming and poultry production.

Following a disastrous hurricane and subsequent flood that struck the Cape Fear River Basin in 1945, Congress directed the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to undertake a comprehensive study of water resource needs in the area. The project, then known as New Hope Lake, was authorized in 1963 to provide for flood control, water supply, water quality control, recreation, and fish and wildlife conservation. In 1973, the project name was changed to B. Everett Jordan Dam and Lake in honor of the former senator from North Carolina.

Before construction could start, significant land acquisition was necessary. Approximately 1,072 separate land tracts comprising 46,768 acres was acquired. The majority of these land tracts were managed as small farms and homesteads. Farming, particularly in the northern end of the project area, was declining, and the rural landscape was already being pressured by the growing urban areas of Raleigh, Cary, Durham, and Chapel Hill.

With construction and legal problems resolved, the lake was filled in 1981. In October 1981, the

federal government entered into a 50-year lease with the state of North Carolina for almost the entirety of the project area, 45,478 acres of land and water. Under the lease agreement, the state manages the land and water for public park, recreational, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources management purposes, with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers assisting as necessary. The federal government agreed to fund 100 percent of costs for initial master plan development, and the state agreed to assume all costs of operation, maintenance, and replacement of recreational facilities. In keeping with these multiple purposes, the leased acreage is divided and is managed by three state agencies: the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, the Division of Forest Resources, and the Division of Parks and Recreation.

The N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission manages permanent wildlife lands primarily for wildlife and low-density recreation, such as hunting and wildlife observation. These game lands are identified by boundary signs and other markings. The N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission also manages interim game lands, which are also known as future recreation areas. These interim-use lands will be managed as wildlife lands until they are developed for recreation. A 24-month notice, on or before June 30, is necessary prior to transfer of control on the interim lands. Once developed for recreation, these lands will be managed by the Division of Parks and Recreation or by a local government.

The Division of Forest Resources manages the Educational State Forest lands at Jordan Lake to provide an educational opportunity for school groups and the general public. The Division of Forest Resources seeks to make people more aware of the natural resources of the area and the impact of uses on these resources.

The recreation lands at Jordan Lake are managed primarily for high and low density recreation, with hunting excluded. The Division of Parks and Recreation is the primary managing agency of these areas. Jordan Lake State Recreation Area is one of the most visited park units in the state park system and is recognized by many as a major statewide recreational resource.

As of June 1, 2016, Jordan Lake Recreation Area manages 4,558 acres.

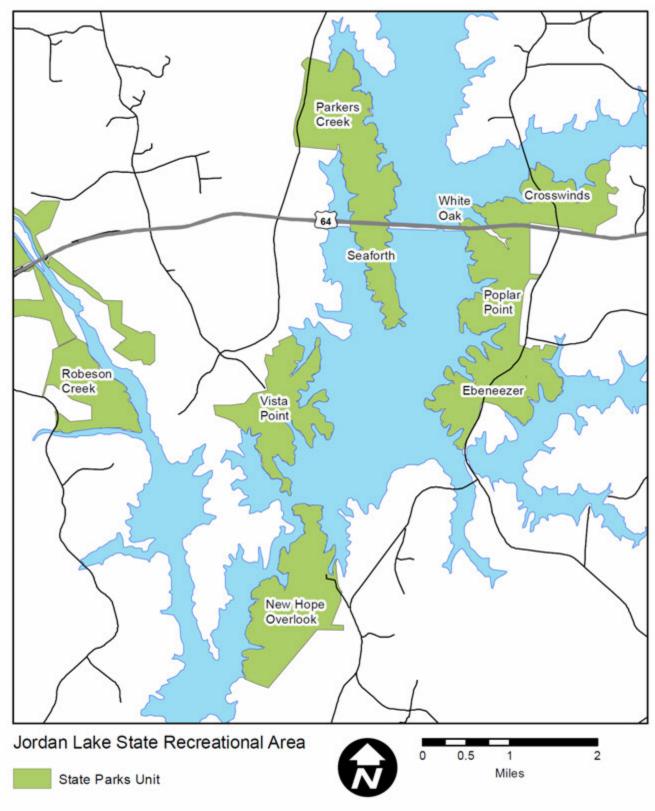
### **III. THEMES AND INVENTORY**

### Jordan Lake State Recreation Area Theme Table

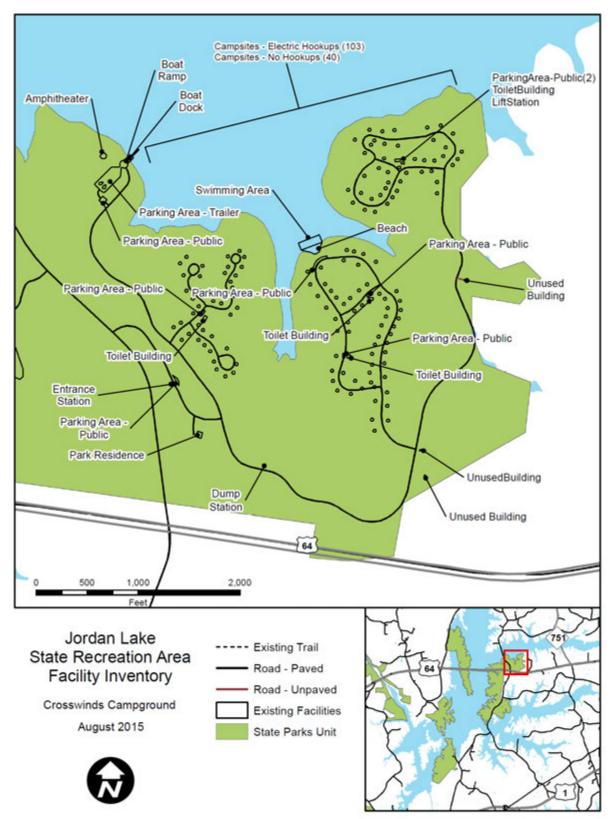
Theme Type	Theme	Jordan Lake Significance	State Parks System Representatio n
Archeological/Historic	Rural-Domestic	High	Adequate
Archeological/Historic	Underwater	High	Moderate
Archeological/Prehistoric	Burial/Cemetery	High	Moderate
Archeological/Prehistoric	Campsite/Activity Area	High	Adequate
Archeological/Prehistoric	Quarry-Other	High	Adequate
Archeological/Prehistoric	Underwater	High	Adequate
Archeological/Prehistoric	Village	High	Moderate
Archeological/Standing Structure	Rural-Domestic	High	Adequate
Biological	Piedmont and Coastal Plain Mesic Forests	High	Adequate
Biological	Piedmont and Coastal Plain Oak Forests	High	Adequate
Biological	Piedmont Upland Pools and Depressions	High	Moderate
Geologic	Sedimentary Features	High	Moderate
Scenic	Forests	High	Moderate
Scenic	Meadows/Grasslands	High	Little
Scenic	Reservoirs/Lakes	High	Adequate
Scenic	Rivers	High	Little
Scenic	Scenic Vistas	High	Moderate

\*See the System Wide Plan for references to Theme and Inventory terms. Themes have both actual and "potential" future needs to be at a park.

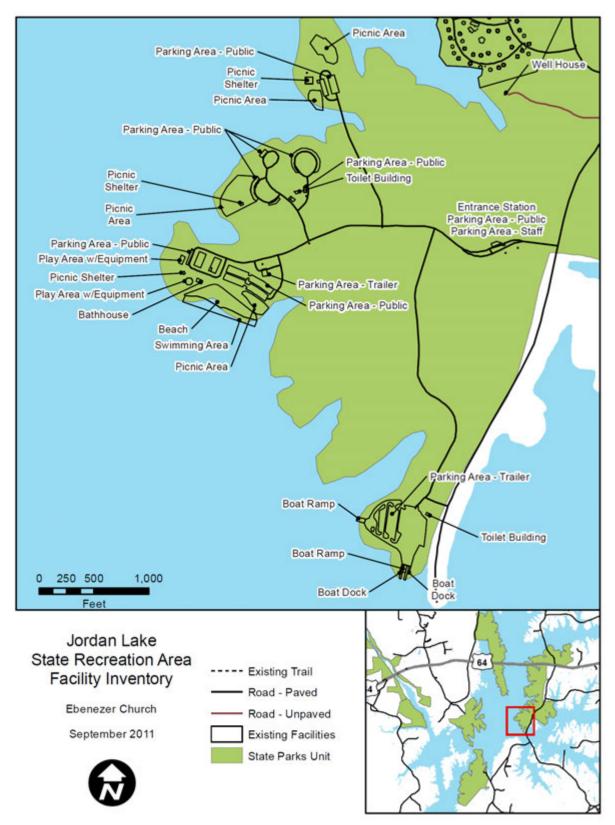
## RECREATION AREAS JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA



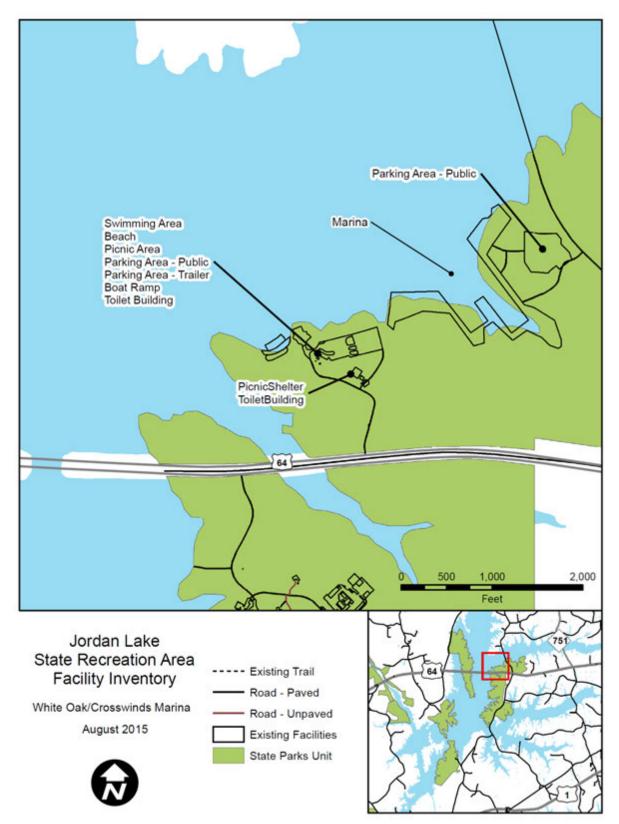
### CROSSWINDS CAMPGROUND JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA



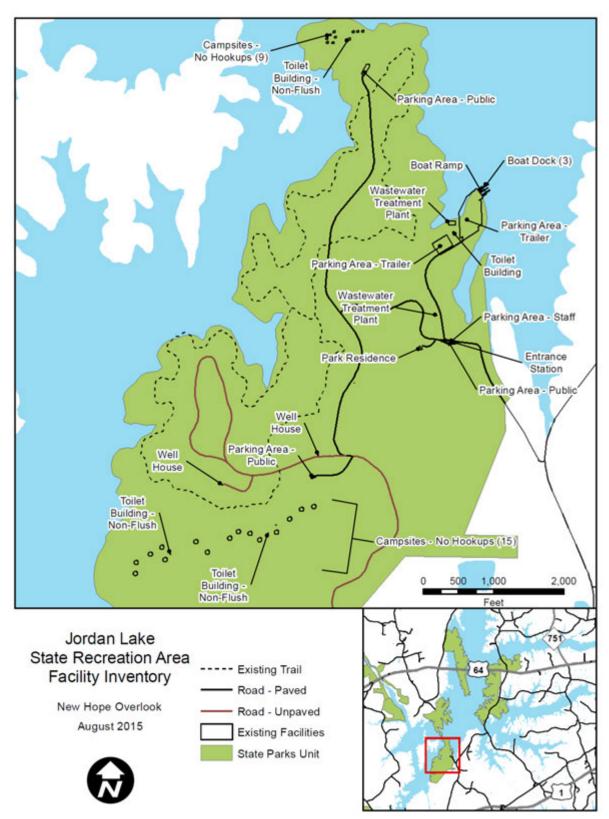
### EBENEZER CHURCH JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA



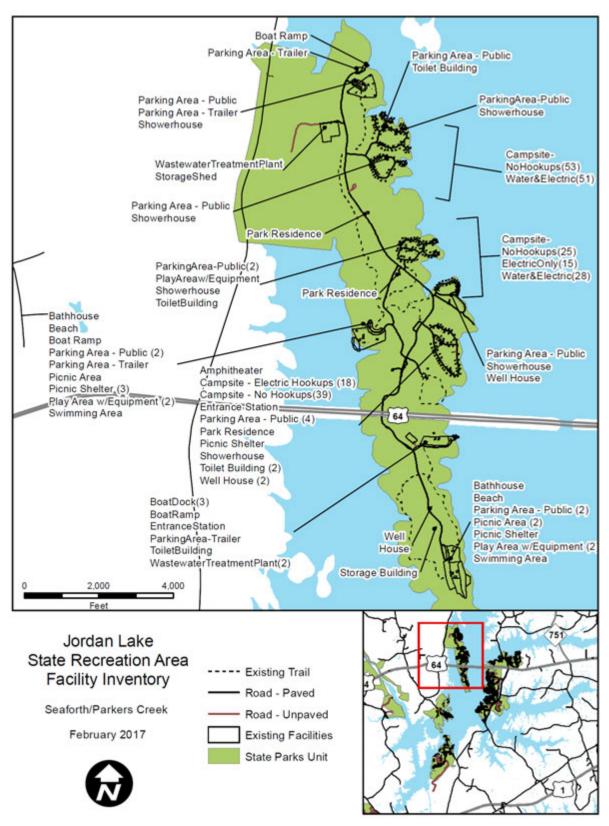
### WHITE OAK/CROSSWINDS MARINA JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA



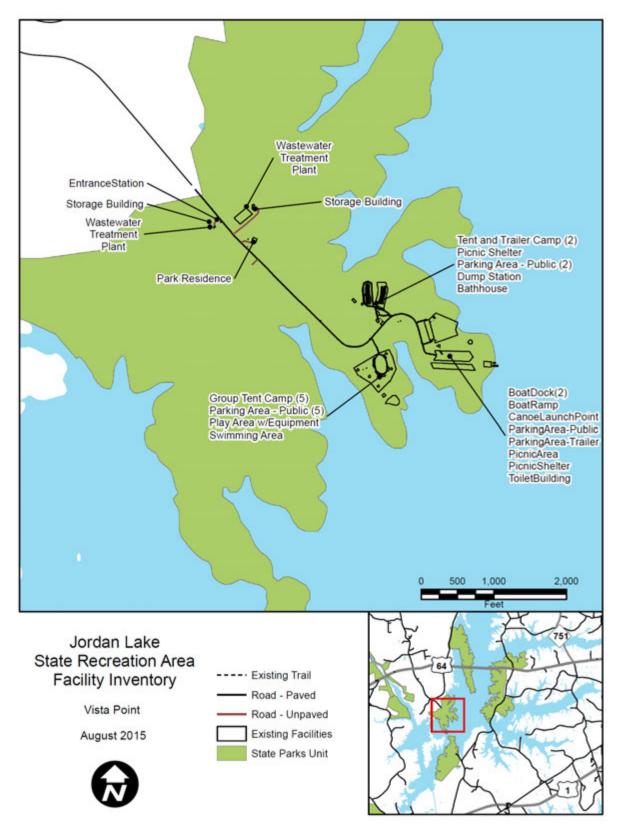
### NEW HOPE OVERLOOK JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA



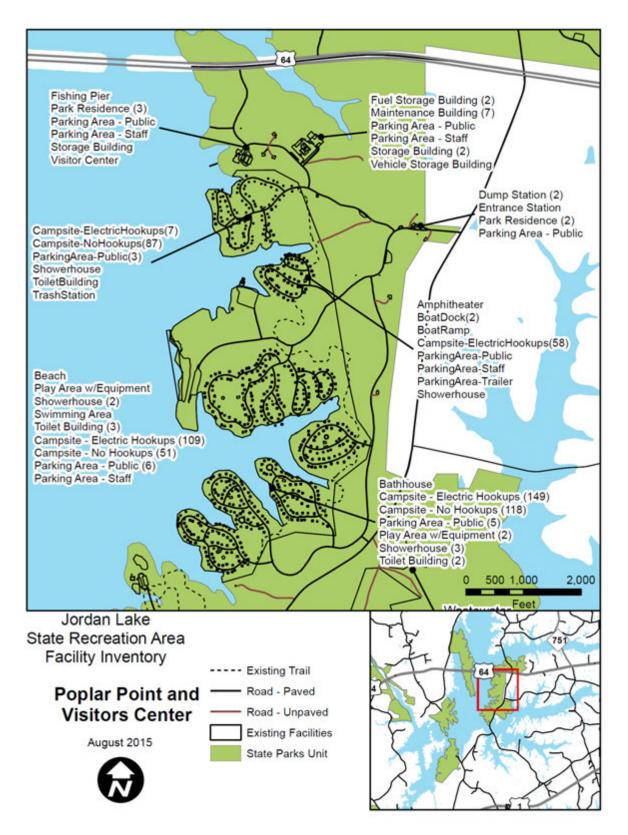
#### SEAFORTH/PARKERS CREEK JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA



### VISTA POINT JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA



#### POPLAR POINT AND VISITOR CENTER JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA



### TRAIL INVENTORY JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATON AREA

Trail Inventory	Hiking
Crosswinds Trail	1.50
Ebenezer Church Trail	1.00
Old Oak Trail	1.00
Connector Trail at Ebenezer Church	0.50
Ebenezer Church Trail	1.00
New Hope Overlook Trail	5.40
Children's Nature Trail at Parkers Creek	2.25
Connector Trail at Parkers Creek	1.50
Parkers Creek Trail	2.25
Poplar Point Campground Trail	2.04
Jordan Lake Track Trail/Seaforth Pond Trail	1.55
Vista Point Blue Trail	1.23
Vista Point Red Trail	3.00
Jordan Lake SRA Total (miles)	24.22

### TRAILS:

### CROSSWINDS

<u>**Crosswinds Campground</u></u>: is an easy 1.50-mile trail begins at the boat ramp parking lot and ends near campsite C1. The trail connects the boat ramp to each camping loop. Hikers can see a wide variety of native spring wildflowers including Trout Lily and Bigleaf Snowbell. Crosswinds Campground is for registered campers only.</u>** 

### **EBENEZER CHURCH AREA**

**Ebenezer Church Trail:** is an easy 1.00-mile loop trail that passes the site of the historic Ebenezer Church. An interpretive display marks the location. Parts of the path follow an abandoned roadbed and traverse a large farm pond. The trailhead is located on the southeast corner of the beach parking lot.

<u>Old Oak Trail</u> is an easy 1-mile loop trail that begins at the parking lot in Ebenezer Picnic Area A. This trail can be cut to one half mile by taking the shortcut loop, making this a great trail for small children. Hikers will see large hollow oaks, two ponds, fence rows and of the farm ruminants that used to fill the area.

**Connector Trail at Ebenezer Church:** is a half-mile Connecting Trail at Ebenezer area which begins at Picnic "Area A" parking lot and connects to the beach parking lot. This trail is an alternative route to connect to Ebenezer Church.

### **NEW HOPE**

**New Hope Trail**: New Hope Trail is a strenuous hike which begins near the bathrooms at the boat ramp. The red loop is 5.40 miles and the blue loop is 2.70 miles long. This is the most challenging trail with several steep hills. Hikers will enjoy views of the lake, mature hardwood forests, groves of mountain laurel, lush creek crossings and a variety of wildflowers and ferns.

### **PARKERS CREEK**

**<u>Children's Nature Trail at Parkers Creek:</u>** is a 2.25-mile loop trail that begins at Picnic Shelter #3. Hikers will enjoy a long boardwalk, an old farm pond, and see old tobacco rows.

<u>Connector Trail at Parkers Creek at Parkers Creek</u>: is 1.50 miles and connects each camping loop to the swimming beach. Hikers can see signs of old home sites, including rock foundations, farm fencing and ornamental plants.

Parkers Creek Trail: is a 2.25 miles and connects portions of Parkers Creek campground.

### **POPLAR POINT**

**Poplar Point Campground Trail** This easy 2.00-mile trail winds its way from loop B to loop J and can be accessed from each camping loop. Hikers can see flowering trees such as: Fringe tree, Magnolia, Sourwood, Dogwood and Witch Hazel. Poplar Point Campground is for registered campers only.

### SEAFORTH

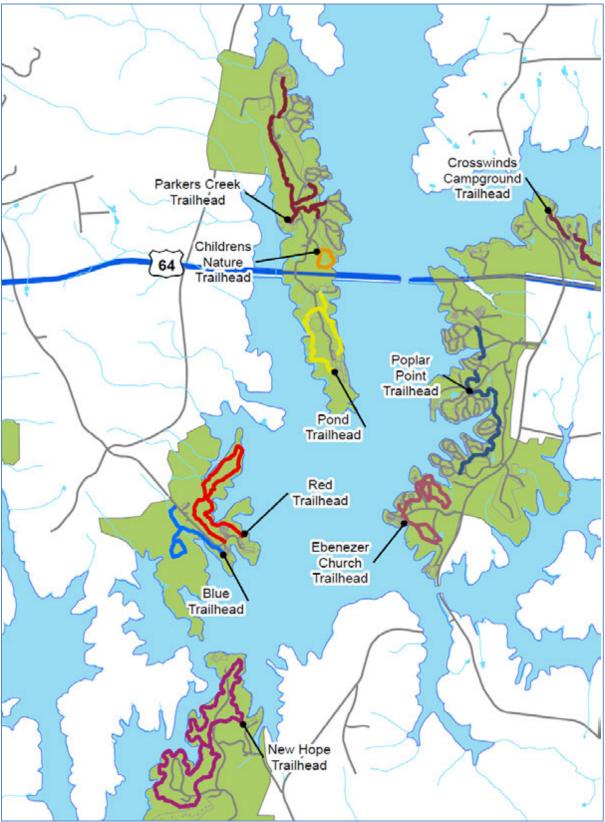
**Jordan Lake Track Trail /Seaforth Pond Trail:** The Pond Trail is an easy 1.55-mile trail. The path is nearly a loop; it begins at the display case on the western side of the beach parking lot and ends near Picnic Shelter #9. Hikers will enjoy views of the lake while walking through loblolly pine forests, hardwood forests, an old field, and past three ponds. A long boardwalk traverses a wetland area with buttonbush, black needle rush and other water-loving vegetation.

### **VISTA POINT**

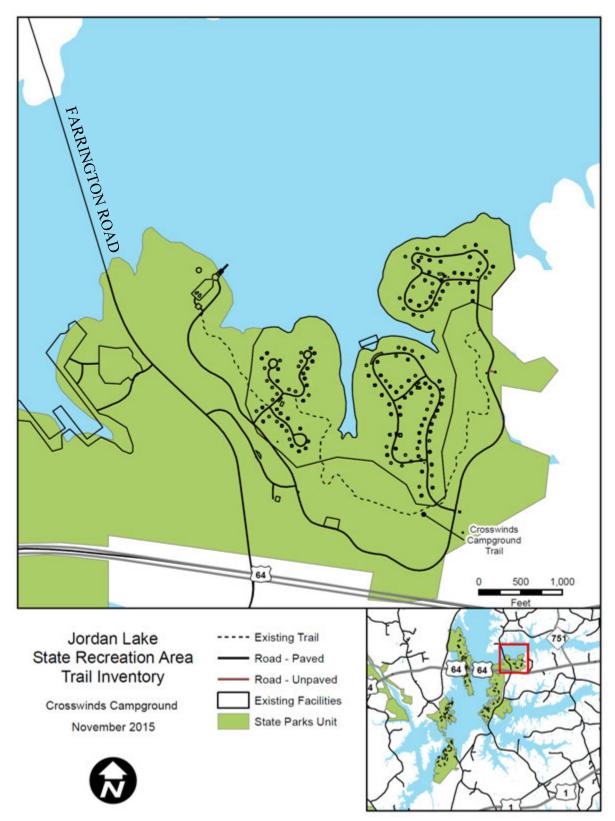
<u>Vista Point Blue Trail</u> is a 1.23-mile loop trail that begins near the entrance gate. Hikers will see an old tobacco barn. Summer hikers can look for red Cardinal flower in the wetland area near the boardwalk.

**Vista Point Red Trail:** is an easy 3.00-mile hike that begins near the shower house. It is nearly a loop trail, but requires walking along the park road for about 100 yards to end up back at the shower house. Hikers can see pine and mixed hardwood forests. American Holly trees, and golden Bur Marigolds.

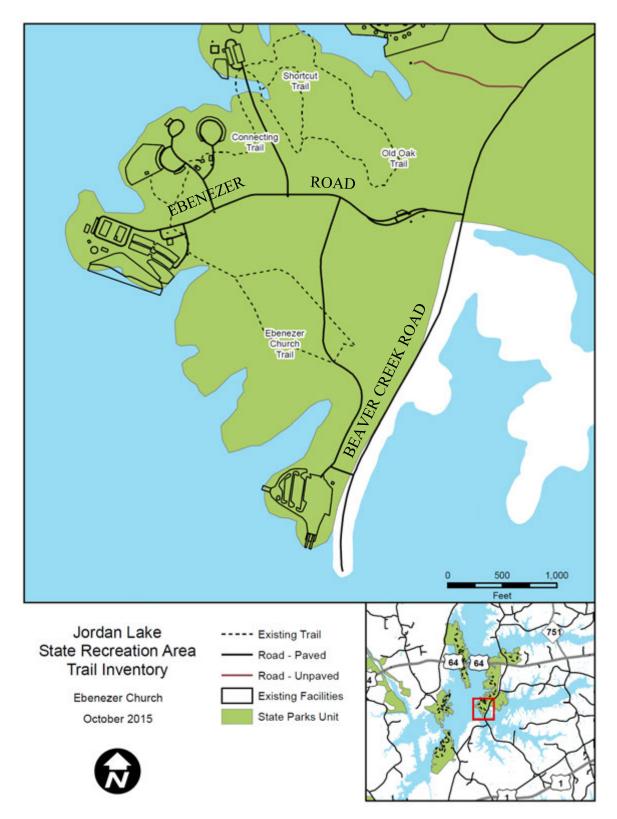
### TRAILHEAD SYSTEM JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA



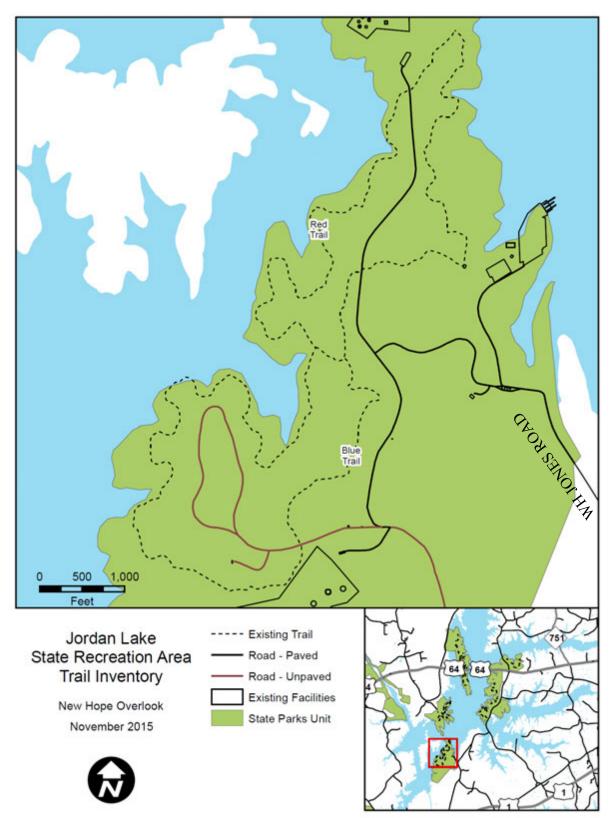
### TRAIL INVENTORY - CROSSWINDS CAMPGROUND JORDAN LAKE RECREATIONAL AREA



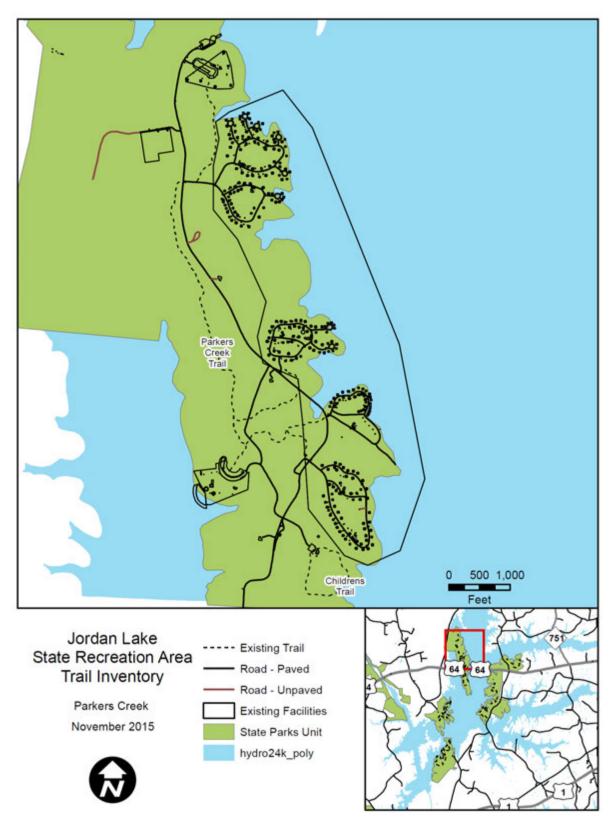
### TRAIL INVENTORY - EBENEZER CHURCH JORDAN LAKE RECREATIONAL AREA



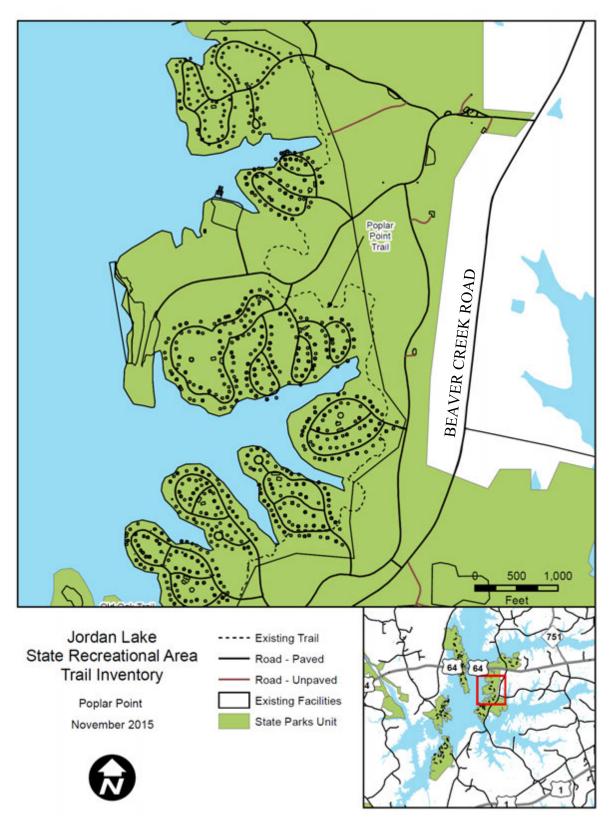
### TRAIL INVENTORY - NEW HOPE OVERLOOK JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA



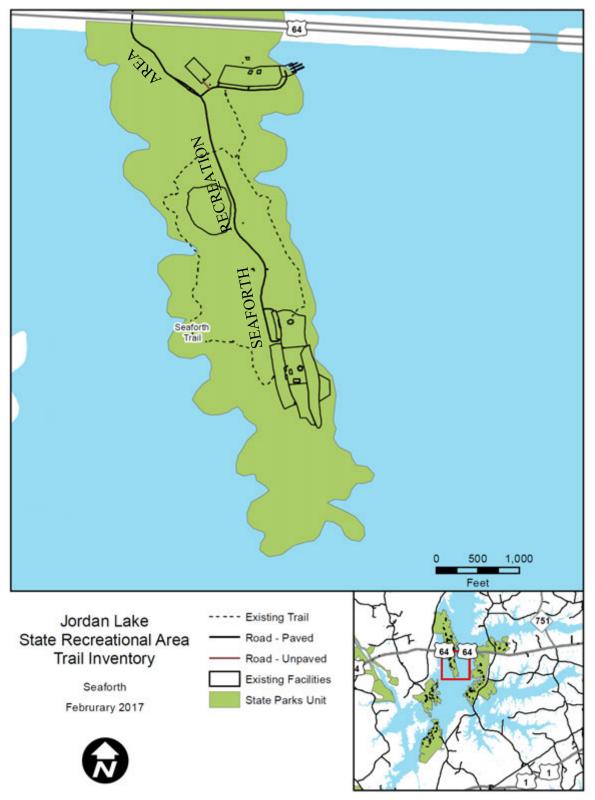
### TRAIL INVENTORY - PARKERS CREEK TRAIL /CHILDRENS TRAIL JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA



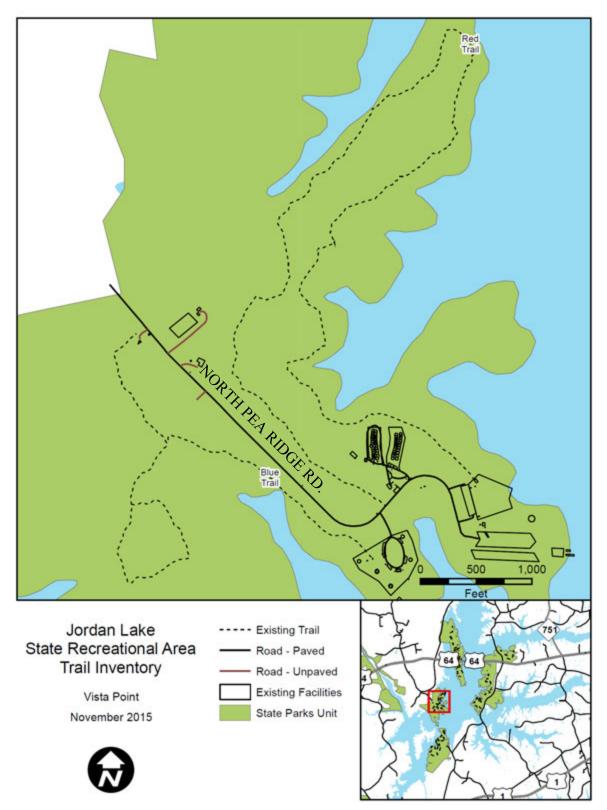
### TRAIL INVENTORY POPLAR POINT JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA



### TRAIL INVENTORY - SEAFORTH TRAIL JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA



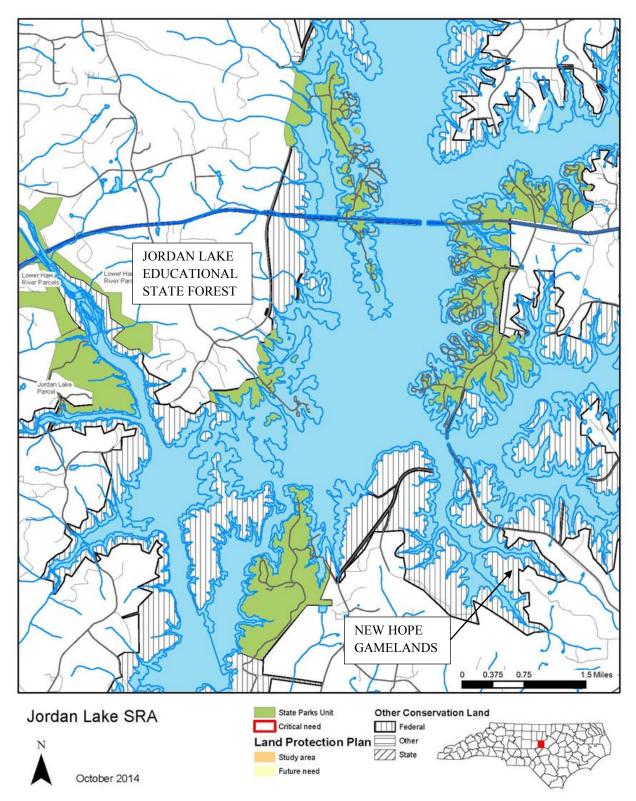
### TRAIL INVENTORY VISTA POINT JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA



### **IV. PLANNING**



### LAND PROTECTION PLAN –<u>NO CRITICAL ACRES NOTED</u> JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA



#### PROJECT EVALUATION PROGRAM LIST JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA

Project	Project Title	Cost
1	Campsite Improvements (Electric)	\$5,885,703
2	Wastewater System Improvements	\$2,437,000
3	Swim Beach Improvements	\$842,059
4	Park Wide Restroom Building and Showerhouse	\$1,235,504
5	Road and Parking Improvements	\$2,898,904
6	Fee Station Access Lane Improvements	\$271,723
7	Interpretive Trail	\$221,403
8	Parkers Creek Campground Improvements	\$2,637,968
9	Maintenance Area and Warehouse Improvements	\$1,654,864
TOTAL		\$18,085,128

\*\* Estimated protect cost does not include contingencies, design fee, nor escalation.

#### **1.** Campsite Improvements (Electric)

The existing electric service to 474 campsites at Jordan Lake State Recreation Area does not meet the needs of larger recreational vehicles and trailer campers that use these campgrounds. Circuit breakers trip due to overloads, which creates a potential safety and fire hazard. Electric service improvements will require a complete replacement of the electrical system to include: a power panel at each site with an electrical service panel for up to 12 sites including wire, and pedestal and meter for a group of sites.

This project includes upgrading all existing campsites that are presently served by electricity to 50-amp service (upgraded from existing 30-amp). This improvement includes all existing sites with electric service at: Loops C and E at Poplar Point (sites 58 and 109); Area B and C at Crosswinds Campground (sites 68 and 61); the 55-site recreational vehicle group campground at Vista Point; and Loops 1-4 at Parkers Creek (sites 26, 17, 27, 53 sites, respectively).

Future campground improvement projects should evaluate the feasibility of adding sewer and water to electrical sites.

#### 2. Wastewater System Improvements

Much of the sewer system is aged and deteriorating (built in 1980). This project provides upgrades to the sewer systems for the Poplar Point (which serves the administrative area, Ebenezer Church, Crosswind Marina, Crosswind Campground, White Oak, and the nearby Chatham County water treatment plant); Parkers Creek; Vista Point; and Seaforth.

The Poplar Point system will also be improved with the following: area lights and a perimeter of 6-ft. tall chain link fencing will be installed around the two main pump stations; two- 243-gpm irrigation pumps will be replaced and the spray field will be renovated with PVC piping, spray heads and valves.

The Parkers Creek system will also be enhanced by: replacing the PVC piping, spray heads, valves, and irrigation pumps for the spray field; adding an aeration pump for the lagoon; and adding a proposed spray field to improve the irrigation performance.

The Vista Point system will also be improved by replacing irrigation piping underground to meet current standards.

The Seaforth system will be improved with repair of spray field of piping, spray heads, valves, and related equipment to meet construction standards.

### 3. Swim Beach Improvements

Erosion and current continually pushes sand away from the swim areas. Scope of work includes: remove sections of concrete sidewalk at Ebenezer Church, grading, aeration, drainage, trench drains, seeding, swale and install concrete sidewalks.

Occasional replenishment is required to keep sand at the swim beaches. This project will add an adequate amount of sand to the swim beaches at Ebenezer Church, Poplar Point, and Vista Point as needed.

This project also includes additional improvements to the Ebenezer Church recreation area. The existing four-table picnic shelter at the swim beach will be expanded to an eight (8) -universal accessible table shelter to help meet the demand for covered picnicking opportunities at the beach. Approximately 100 native shade trees will be planted to provide a long-term, sustainable solution for soil stabilization and additional shade for park visitors. Contractor will mark existing utilities prior to installation. Ebenezer Church is regularly used by professional and amateur astronomers from the Morehead Planetarium and the Chapel Hill Astronomical and Observation Society for star gazing programs. Representatives from these astronomy groups should be consulted regarding the location of the tree planting to minimize viewing obstructions.

### 4. Park Wide Restroom Building and Shower house Improvements

Twelve (12) of the shower houses and restroom buildings at Parkers Creek and Vista Point were not constructed with covered areas over the entrances and their rooflines do not extend beyond the exterior building. This sub-standard design accelerates exterior water damage to the structures and requires frequent maintenance to replace siding. Some of these restroom facilities have rain gutters to control storm drainage, while others do not.

This project will extend the roofline overhang of the 12 restroom facilities with standard building practices similar to the new restroom facilities at other recreational areas. Several shower houses and toilet buildings will be upgraded with solar tubes for natural lighting and retrofitted with exhaust systems to improve air flow and reduce moisture to current sustainable building standards.

#### 5. Road and Parking Improvements

The project involves extensive road improvements throughout Jordan Lake State Recreation Area. All park roads and parking areas at Poplar Point, Seaforth, and Ebenezer Church will be patched, sealed, and re-striped to current standards. The waste water treatment plant maintenance road at Poplar Point will be stabilized with min 6" stone and paved with 1½-inch plant mix and 2 feet wide road shoulders will be re graded, seeded and stabilized. The dump station road and wastewater treatment maintenance road at Parkers Creek will be patched and cape sealed. The existing canoe access road at Robeson Creek will be paved and the boat launch parking lot will be sealed and painting with standard traffic markings. At New Hope Overlook, the side entrance road and the boat launch parking lot will be patched, sealed, and standard traffic markings. At the administrative area, the entrance road, boat ramp road, and ranger residence road will be patched, cape sealed and standard traffic markings. Additionally, the maintenance area parking lot at the administrative area will be patched and cape sealed.

#### 6. Fee Station Access Lane Improvements

This project will improve the traffic flow around the existing fee stations located at Ebenezer Church, and Parkers Creek to prevent traffic backing up onto roads outside of the park during times of peak visitation. Each of the fee stations at the three recreation areas will be improved with the following: widening of traffic lanes; providing additional traffic lanes to allow fees to be collected on both sides of the fee stations; signage; utility relocation; and site grading, drainage improvements, 5 overflow parking spaces and paving as needed.

### 7. Interpretive Trail

This project includes the construction of a universal interpretive trail near the visitor center. Scope of work includes: 3,000 linear feet hiking trail (0.57 mile) with an approximate 1,500-square foot boardwalk for interpretive programs. Directional and educational signage will also be installed.

### 8. Parkers Creek Campground Improvements

Parkers Creek is one of the oldest recreation areas at Jordan Lake, constructed in 1986. The campgrounds are in poor condition and in need of major renovations.

This project consists of general improvements to the Parkers Creek recreation area. Approximately 80 percent of the tent- trailer campsites (205 sites) and all six group campsites in this recreation area require extensive improvements including: timbers, impact pads, grills, light holders, tent pads, screening, picnic tables, trash cans, site signage, and grading. The boat trailer parking area will be expanded to accommodate 10 additional vehicles with boat trailers. This expansion of the boat trailer parking area is not in conflict with the recommendations of the year 2000 boating study, because this parking expansion will only accommodate those visitors who would normally park their boat trailer at their campsite. The group camp parking area at Parkers Creek is undersized and is often at capacity during the peak use season. Approximate 3.0 acres nearby will be cleared, graded and seeded as a grassed overflow parking area to alleviate parking congestion in the group camp area.

Additionally, the basketball court area will be renovated by resurfacing and stripping. Site furnishings include: two (2) 50" high standard basketball goals.

#### 9. Maintenance Area and Warehouse Improvements

The maintenance area for Jordan Lake State Recreation Area will be expanded for storage and enclosed work space. The auto shop building will be expanded by approximately 825 square foot and an additional 3,720 square foot vehicle storage building will be constructed behind the existing vehicle storage building. Utilities and fencing will be relocated to accommodate this expansion. Two 1,000-gallon fuel storage tanks will be added to supplement the existing fuel storage capacity.

The warehouse is adjacent to the Jordan Lake State Recreation Area maintenance area. The warehouse area consists of a large paved yard with a 7,500 square foot main warehouse with office, a 4,300 – square foot warehouse storage building, and a 130 - square foot ammunition storage building. This project will expand the main warehouse building by 7,000 square foot and expand the ammunition storage building by 133 square foot.

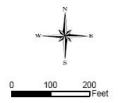
### PROJECT #3: SWIM BEACH IMPROVEMENTS JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA



#### Ebenezer Improvements

Jordan Lake State Recreation Area 2009







PROJECT #3: SWIM BEACH IMPROVEMENTS AND FISHING PIER AT VISTA POINT JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA

Vista Point Improvements Jordan Lake State Recreation Area 2009





100 200 Feet

### PROJECT #6: FEE STATION ACCESS LANE IMPROVEMENTS JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA



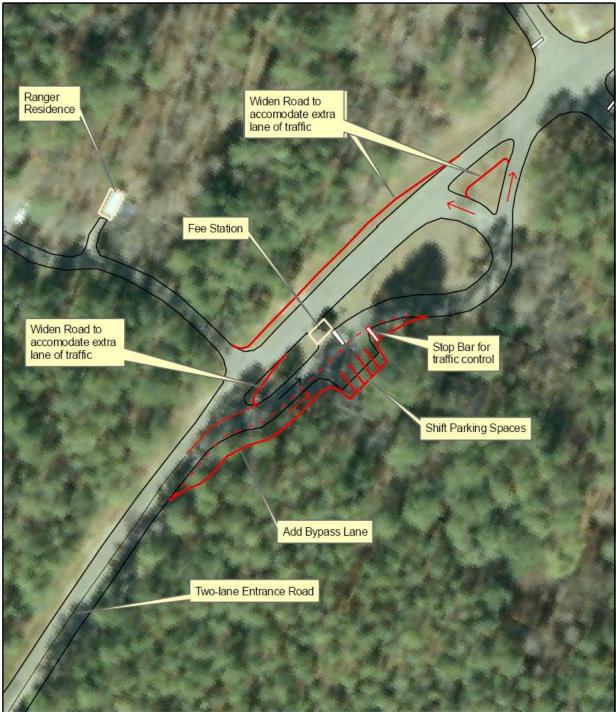
Jordan Lake State Recreation Area Legend Proposed Improvement Existing Road CONCEPTUAL ONLY - NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION Existing Facility

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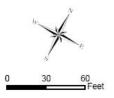
Feet

### PROJECT #7: FEE STATION ACCESS LANE IMPROVEMENTS AT PARKERS CREEK JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA

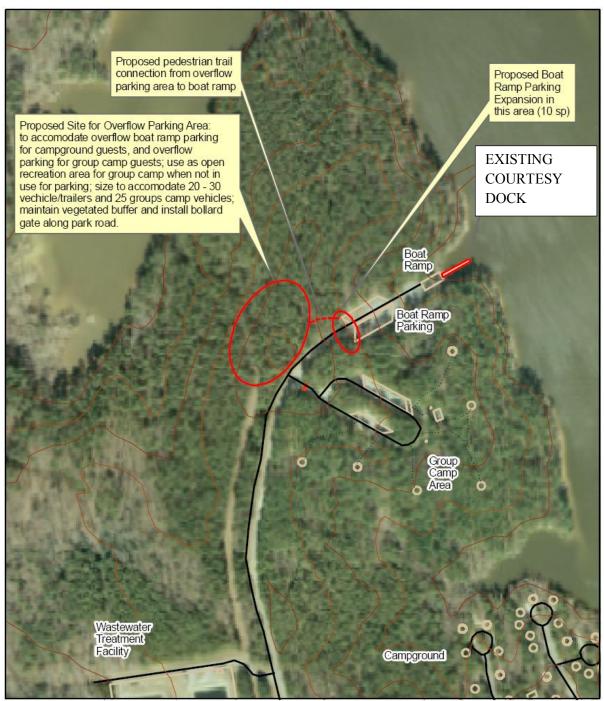


Parkers Creek Fee Station Jordan Lake State Recreation Area 2009



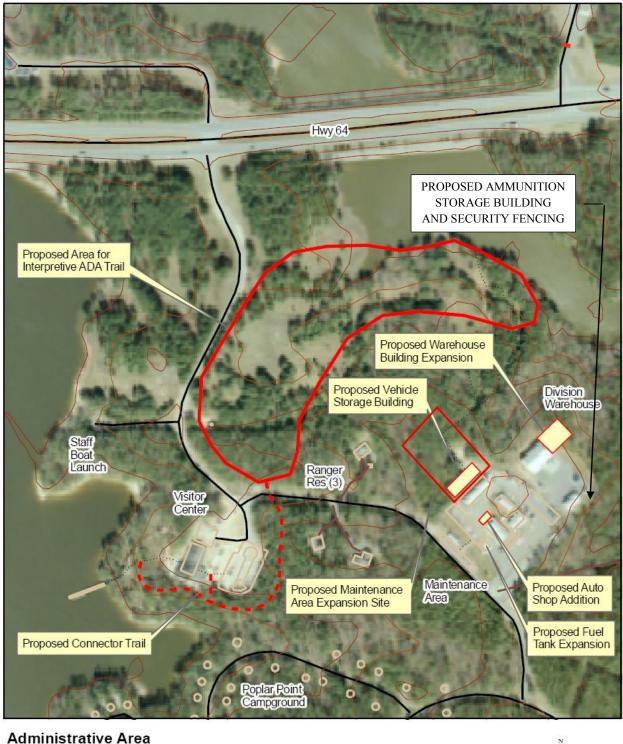


### PROJECT#8: PARKERS CREEK CAMPGROUND IMPROVEMENTS JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA





### PROJECT #9: MAINTENANCE AREA AND WAREHOUSE IMPROVEMENTS JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA





### PARK MAP JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA

