



GRAPHIC CONTRIBUTED | CRESCENT RESOURCES
This map shows where Lake James State Park currently exists and where its 3,000-acre expansion will take place.

LAKE: No camping allowed

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ly members access to those graves. He said family members can contact the local state park office in Marion.

Some of the issues in the master plan will include:

- Which areas of the Longmorn peninsula and Paddy Creek watershed are suitable as sites for facilities and which areas should be left to nature.
- What types of recreational and educational facilities, such as a visitor center, swim beaches, boating access, campgrounds, picnic areas and trails, will be provided.
- Where land and water access, road systems, maintenance compounds and other infrastructure will be located.
- How trails and overlooks can be configured to take advantage of scenic viewsheds and provide for the greatest visitor enjoyment.

"We know that people in the region are anxious to begin enjoying this property and we're just as eager to begin incorporating it into the state park," said Lewis Ledford, director of the division. "However, allowing public access would be unwise, during this interim period, before we can ensure out-

door recreational opportunities in a safe and healthy environment as well as protection of the natural resources on the property."

Gravely said there will be two public meetings in the Lake James area in the spring to allow for public input and recommendations on future plans for the park.

Brian Searcy, owner of CBS Sports in Morganton, said he understands the need to close the property but he doesn't necessarily like it. He said, however, the property has been private and closed off from a large majority of the public for years.

Searcy said as a child, he used to camp with his family along the lake and hopes for more public access and camping.

As he remembered his time on the lake, Searcy said, "It was a nice way to enjoy the lake."

For more information, contact the local state park at 828-652-5047.

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