

# North Carolina Trails Day All Set for June 4

By Darrell McBane  
State Trails Coordinator

Governor James Hunt has proclaimed June 4 as North Carolina Trails Day, to focus attention on existing trail opportunities and the need to further develop trails across North Carolina.

North Carolina Trails Day will replace the Governor's traditional proclamation of May as Trails Month. This change was made to coincide with June 4 as National Trails Day, which has been promoted by the American Hiking Society since 1993. On this day, the American Hiking Society tries to focus the nation's attention on our current trails system and encourage citizens to support programs, activities, policies and

strategies necessary to improve trail systems at the local, state and federal level.

"North Carolina is blessed with a variety of unique natural resources and recreational opportunities," Hunt said in the proclamation. "Our citizens have therefore developed a deep appreciation for the outdoors, enjoying recreational pursuits of all types."

North Carolina trails vary in length from less than five miles to 130 miles and range from rugged paths, greenways, rail-trails and river trails. These trails serve hikers, bicyclists, canoeists and equestrians.

"Citizen involvement in the planning, construction and maintenance of

trails in North Carolina is increasing through the support of the North Carolina Trails Committee, non-profit corporations, volunteer trail organizations and local, state and federal agencies. Cooperatively, we are working to promote and develop a trails system from the mountains to the sea."

Governor Hunt concluded by saying, "the expansion of the state system of trails offers an opportunity for all North Carolinians to enjoy the natural heritage of our state and to experience nature firsthand, with the added bonus of improving their physical fitness. It is appropriate, therefore, that citizens become involved in the development of trails within our state borders." *A copy of the proclamation can be found on page 12.*

## Lake James Canal Bridge Access Closed

By Superintendent Tim Benton

NEBO - Only three (3) public boat access ramps will be available this summer at Lake James State Park. Delays in the renovation of the Canal Bridge Access have forced officials to close those ramps until next year.

In mid-January, Duke Power Company removed the old ramps at Canal Bridge Access with plans to construct three new ones with a dock. Heavy rains in March raised the lake level and brought work to a halt. With fish spawning and the summer season near, work will have to be delayed until next winter, when lake levels should drop again.

The access areas that will be open for the 1994 summer season include: Linville Access off of NC 126, which has parking for approximately 40 vehicles; North Fork Access off of Hankins Road, north of Marion, which has a number of parking spots and four ramps; and Hidden Cove Access, located on old NC 126 just west of Canal Bridge, with parking for 40 vehicles.

The parking lot at the Canal Bridge Access will be open for overflow parking for those who have to put their boats in at another access area, but cannot park there because the lots are full.

Boaters should keep in mind parking is not allowed on roadsides or where signs indicate no parking. Visitors

should note also that unless other facilities are provided, boat access parking is for boaters only.

## Pettigrew Fishing Pier Under Construction

By Superintendent Sid Shearin

CRESWELL - Construction of a handicapped accessible fishing pier with a launch area for johnboats, canoes, or other small water crafts is underway at Pettigrew State Park. Once complete, it will be eight feet wide and approximately 220 feet long.

During this building period, the entrance gate to the West End Access will be locked. Visitors using the area must park outside the gate until the pier is complete.

The West End project began when the Conservation Fund donated land surrounding Lake Phelps' northwest side to the park. The area near Shore Drive, commonly called "the dog pen" had traditionally been used as a launch area, but unfortunately slowly turned into a dumping ground.

Through Carolina Power and Light's "Business Adopts State Parks" matching grant program, the West End Access project is moving into full gear. Tideland Electric Membership Coop-

eration provided over \$5,000 worth of in-kind services by removing power lines from the West End area. Sprint/Carolina Telephone buried their lines for another \$5,000 worth of services. CP&L helped design the handicapped-accessible pier. The business match funds and a few other contributions will help finance the construction.

Other groups have assisted. The Plymouth Boy Scout Troop #383 received over \$1,100 dollars to construct a trail from the West End to the Moccasin Overlook. The troop also helped remove debris from the area. Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge also removed debris and moved dirt to install the parking area.

Funding for restrooms, drinking water, light systems and exhibits for the access area is included in the recommended list of projects for the recently passed \$35 million bond referendum. If the project is approved by the legislature, the money might be available later this year.