


DATE: OCTOBER 4, 2021

ARC REVIEW CODE: V2109241

TO: MAYOR MIKE BODKER, City of Johns Creek  
 ATTN TO: BEN SONG, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR, City of Johns Creek  
 FROM: Douglas R. Hooker, Executive Director, ARC

  
 Digital signature  
 Original on file

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) has completed regional review of the following proposal. Below is the ARC finding. The Atlanta Regional Commission reviewed the proposed project's relationship regional plans, goals, and policies and impacts it might have on the activities, plans, goals, and policies of other local jurisdictions and state, federal, and other agencies.

**Name of Proposal:** RC-21-02JC Cauley Creek Park

**Submitting Local Government:** City of Johns Creek

**Review Type:** Metro River

**Date Opened:** September 24, 2021

**Date Closed:** October 4, 2021

**FINDING:** ARC staff has completed its review of the application for a MRPA Certificate for this proposed project in the Chattahoochee River Corridor. ARC's finding is that the project is consistent with the Chattahoochee River Corridor Plan.

**Additional Comments:** Comments received from National Park Service and Gwinnett County. See attached.

## THE FOLLOWING LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND AGENCIES RECEIVED NOTICE OF THIS REVIEW:

ARC COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
 CHATTAHOOCHEE RIVERKEEPER  
 CITY OF DULUTH  
 GEORGIA CONSERVANCY

ARC NATURAL RESOURCES  
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE-CRNRA  
 GWINNETT COUNTY

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
 CITY OF JOHNS CREEK  
 FULTON COUNTY

If you have any questions regarding this review, please contact Donald Shockey at (470) 378-1531 or [dshockey@atlantaregional.org](mailto:dshockey@atlantaregional.org). This finding will be published to the ARC website at <https://atlantaregional.org/plan-reviews>.



# United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service  
Chattahoochee River  
National Recreation Area  
1978 Island Ford Parkway  
Sandy Springs, GA 30350



1.A.2

September 29, 2021

Donald Shockey  
Atlanta Regional Commission  
40 Courtland Street, NE  
Atlanta, GA 30303

Dear Mr. Shockey:

This letter is a notification of receipt of the MRPA Review Notification RC-21-02 JC Cauley Creek Park for the City of Johns Creek in Fulton County, Georgia. This project will involve the construction of a new City park on 142 acres bordering the Chattahoochee River. The park will include multi-use trails, recreational fields, office building, restrooms, a concessions facility, parking, and other various outdoor facilities. The analysis estimates that 60.72 of land disturbance and 124.91 of impervious area meet the criteria for vulnerability categories B, C, D, and E.

Congress established the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area (CRNRA), a unit of the National Park Service (NPS), in 1978 to assure the preservation and protection of a 48-mile stretch of the Chattahoochee River from Buford Dam to Peachtree Creek. CRNRA consists of the river and its bed along with the lands, waters, and interests within the park's authorized boundary. Congress expressly provided the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the National Park Service (NPS) and CRNRA, with the authority to protect the "natural, scenic, recreation, historic and other values" of the Chattahoochee River. While the objective of providing recreational opportunities and access to the Chattahoochee River is in line with the park's mission of preserving the recreation and natural resources, we are concerned that the project could cause detrimental impacts to park resources if proper Best Management Practices (BMPs) are not followed and maintained. It is with these concerns in mind that NPS offers the following comments and recommendations:

## Overlooks within NPS Jurisdiction

NPS has administrative jurisdiction over the river up to the ordinary high-water mark within the authorized boundary of CRNRA, including the location of the proposed river overlooks. It is likely that the proposed overlooks will fall within the authorized boundary of CRNRA and will require to a NPS Special Use Permit.

**Recommendation:** If the proposed overlooks will impact the bank of the river below the ordinary high-water park, we request the applicant contacted the park early in the design process so we can coordinate on the permitting and approval process.

### Connection to NPS Property

Although not covered by this review, the site design for the area previously reviewed in 2003 as RC-03-07FC (Quail Hollow Estates Expansion) does not show the proposed connection between the Cauley Creek park and the proposed future Abbotts Greenway on NPS property.

#### **Recommendation:**

Please coordinate with the park to ensure we have the most up-to-date designs for the Abbotts Greenway project.

### Introduce/Promote Non-native Species

Construction activities have the potential to transport exotic invasive plant and animal species.

**Recommendation:** We request that all equipment be washed and cleaned of mud and debris that may transport unwanted pests before being brought on-site. The NPS encourages the project applicant to use only native grass seed or native vegetation for stabilizing the project area following construction.

### Landscaping with Native Species

Landscaping with native plant species provides a beautiful, hardy, drought-resistant landscape that benefits the natural environment. It requires less water, fertilizer, and pesticides, therefore costing less in maintenance. Furthermore, native plants promote stewardship of our natural heritage by supporting pollinators, birds, and other wildlife while supporting biological diversity and ecological functions.

**Recommendation:** Since the project location situated between the CRNRA's Rogers Bridge and Abbotts Bridge Units, NPS encourages the use native plant species for landscaping to reduce the spread of non-native species into the park's natural areas.

### Erosion and Sedimentation

In general, to protect the stream and water quality during construction, Best Management Practices (BMPs) should be designed and implemented to comply with the standards and specifications outlined in the *Manual for Erosion and Sediment Control in Georgia* (Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission). An approved erosion and sedimentation control plan should be implemented before soil disturbances occur within the project site to avoid violating the Erosion and Sedimentation Act of 1975.

Currently, the Chattahoochee River at the proposed project site is listed as impaired on the state of Georgia's 303(d) listing for not fully meeting its designated uses. CRNRA is vested in improving the current state of this water body, and any addition of sediment or run-off would further disrupt the current water quality condition. Due to the proximity of this proposed project to the Chattahoochee River, caution is advised to prevent a flush of sediment deposits during the construction process.

**Recommendation:** After proper installation, continued and unfailing maintenance and repair of the BMP's should be guaranteed in order to ensure their effectiveness and specifically to control, as far as possible, the effects of this project on the river.

### Installation of Impervious Surface

The addition of impervious surface in the form of roads, parking lots, and other facilities common of urban development contributes to the growing problem of uncontrolled storm water

runoff and resulting pollutant loads. This leads to adverse effects on hydrology and ecological functions of the Chattahoochee River and its tributaries.

**Recommendation:** We request that the applicant seriously consider using pervious materials whenever possible for the construction of this project to reduce impacts associated with stormwater runoff.

We appreciate your consideration of these comments. Please feel free to contact park's Chief of Planning, Resources and Education, Beth Wheeler, directly if you have any questions or concerns that we could help to address. She can be reached at 404-803-7641 or by email at [Beth\\_Byrd@nps.gov](mailto:Beth_Byrd@nps.gov).

Thank you,

(Acting for)

Ann Honious  
Superintendent



October 1, 2021

Donald Shockey  
Plan Review Coordinator, Community Development  
Atlanta Regional Commission  
229 Peachtree Street NE, Ste 100  
Atlanta, GA 30303

Dear Mr. Shockey:

The Gwinnett County Department of Planning and Development has reviewed the Metropolitan River Protection Act (MRPA) application prepared by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) regarding the proposed Cauley Creek Park. The proposed park will be constructed on approximately 142 acres located on Bell Road, in the City of Johns Creek bordering the Chattahoochee River. A portion of the site was previously reviewed in 2003 (RC-03-07FC) and is excluded from this review.

### **PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

The applicant proposes to build a new park that will feature multi-use trails, recreational fields, and various outdoor facilities. It will include restrooms, an office building, a concessions facility, and parking. The site is 141.7 acres in total, with 103.9 acres within the Metro River Corridor, is a 2000-foot buffer from the banks of the Chattahoochee River, with special regulations.

According to the City of Johns Creek Comprehensive Plan 2018, single-family residential development is the most prominent land use at 53.5% of total land. The proposed recreational development is classified as a recreational use within the City of Johns Creek which makes up 18.6% of the land. According to the Official Zoning Map of Johns Creek (February 22, 2016) the area is zoned AG-1 (Agricultural). The Future Land Use Map for the area shows change to Recreation for the proposed development area.

### **COMPATIBILITY WITH EXISTING PLANS**

The Johns Creek Comprehensive Plan 2018 is organized into seven Community Areas. The proposed project is located in the Shakerag Area, an area rich in history and historic properties. The area consists of wooded country roads and fields adjacent to large and small-scale residential subdivisions. The Cauley Creek Park project aligns with the City of John Creek's vision for the community by maintaining its rural nature, providing connectivity, and creating recreational opportunities to Gwinnett County's Park system and land owned by the National Park Service.

### **NATURAL RESOURCES**

Staff recommend that the developers of Cauley Creek Park work with ARC and the City of Johns Creek to preserve the option to plan for a connected trail system in the future. The Chattahoochee Corridor, known as the Chattahoochee Trail Network, is an important component of Gwinnett County's greenway program. The interconnected trail infrastructure will provide recreational and transportation uses throughout Fulton County and Gwinnett County. The Rogers Bridge Trail is a collaboration between Gwinnett and Fulton Counties and the Cities of Johns Creek and Duluth. The new pedestrian bridge will be constructed to provide a connection across the

Chattahoochee River and provide access to the Western Gwinnett Bikeway.

Gwinnett County recommends that all work at a minimum be in accordance with the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual 2016 Edition and Best Stormwater Management Practices. All rules and regulations of the Metropolitan River Protection Act should be verified prior to any land disturbance or construction of any structure.

Gwinnett County appreciates the opportunity to comment on this proposed development, and sincerely hopes that these comments will be given consideration as the review process moves forward. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding Gwinnett County's position on this issue.

Thank you,

*Cyndi Sloan*

Planning Division Director