

Smith Mountain Trail Tall

Signage project will highlight more than just CRATA paths

In addition to the nature displays and exhibits that are in process for the Smith Mountain signage project, there will be kiosks and signs describing other trail opportunities in the Lake Martin area, said Cherokee Ridge Alpine Trail Association (CRATA) board member Harold Banks.

These will include CRATA trails at Overlook Park and the Deadening Trail, as well as new trails now under construction south of Martin Dam at the Yates Forever Wild property, which will open this year. But CRATA also will showcase the Russell Forest Trail System, an amazing network of trails for hikers, bicycles and horse riders. The Russell Forest system offers access to more than 100 miles of trails that wind through scenic woods, open meadows, streams and rocky outcroppings.

The trails at Wind Creek State Park will be highlighted as well. These include hiking and horse riding trails that are accessible for a reasonable day-use fee.

And the trail signage will include the quiet, contemplative handicapped-accessible trails at Horseshoe Bend National Military Park, where they offer access to one of most pivotal events in the formation of the United States, the Battle of Horseshoe Bend.

The Piedmont Plateau Birding Trail, which is part of the Alabama Birding Trails system and includes several sites throughout the lake area, also will be highlighted in the Smith Mountain signage project now under way.

Alabama Power Company's natural and undeveloped Martin Dam project lands will be noted as accessible, too.

Even the local paddling trails will be get a mention. The Alabama Scenic River Trail, which runs through Lake Martin with designated

campsites for canoeists and kayakers, and the Harold Banks Canoe Trail on the Tallapoosa River will be included.

"I believe out-of-town visitors will be wowed at the number and diversity of other outdoor recreation opportunities surrounding the lake

and will want to visit often," said Dadeville's Harold Banks, who also is the namesake of the Harold Banks Canoe Trail.

See the donation form at top right to make your contribution to the improvements at Lake Martin's historic Smith Mountain.

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