



## **INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM FOR BOBBY BROWN PARK • PHASE 1**

*Interpretive Planning: Interviews, Information Gathering and Research*

### **Memorial Day Campers and Public Meeting Attendees Synopsis of Responses to Questionnaire June 1, 2017**

Below is a synopsis of public responses to the Memorial Day Questionnaire and the Public Meeting Questionnaire and presentations:

**Question 1: How often have you visited Bobby Brown in last year?**

*31 out of 33 have visited more than 2 times. Many are regulars and live in the area.*

**Question 2: What are the main reasons for your visit?**

*Camping was always selected. Second most popular is Fishing.*

**Question 3: What do you enjoy most about Bobby Brown Park?**

*Listed most often was family reunions, camping with friends, fellowship in the Park, camping with grandparents and family, 3<sup>rd</sup> generation camper and continue to make memories with the children. Also listed was heated bathrooms, clean sites, friendly staff and special events.*

**Question 4: What do you enjoy least about Bobby Brown Park? What would you change about it?**

*Listed most often was no good swimming area or beach for kids, no cable service, no cell services, not enough parking, camping spots too small and need updating.*

**Question 5 for Campers: If you have attended any of the park's large festivities are there any improvements that should be addressed?**

*Response was very positive about how good the special festivities are. Suggestions for improvement are to have a band stage and improve lighting in the parking lot.*

**Question 5 for Public Meeting: What is the most interesting story or important piece of history about the area? What is the key take-home message for visitors?**

*Interpretive themes listed are history of Petersburg, Bobby Brown Park history, Russell Dam, Local operation and Hometown Pride.*

**Question 6: New Park Features that you would like to see**

*Highest Votes listed in order:*

- 1. Beach*
- 2. Cell Tower*
- 3. Fuel Station for Boats*
- 4. Additional Campsites*



5. Rustic Cabins

6. Yurts

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**Visual Preference Slide Show Results:**

**“Love It” Top picks**

<i>Image:</i>	<i>Qty Votes:</i>
<i>Slide 7-Stage &amp; amphitheatre</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Slide 8-Pavilion &amp; play area</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Slide 17-Putt putt golf</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Slide 66-Yurt style cabin</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Slide 75-Rustic cabins</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Slide 76-Boat launch/floating dock</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Slide 92-Tiny house</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Slide 94-Beach</i>	<i>17</i>

**“Do Not Like It.” Top Picks**

<i>Image:</i>	
<i>Slide 29-Baseball field</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Slide 56-modern rec center</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Slide 57-Outhouse</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Slide 98-Bears in campsite</i>	<i>14</i>

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**Collated comments from the Public Meeting:**

- Keep it simple, don't want to commercialize it.
- They want to improve what is already there before adding anything new
- More trails was requested to fully enjoy the experience of the park
- Have a venue for special events. I.e. wedding, parties, and holidays
- Everyone was in agreement for more pavilions. A suggestion was made for a multi-purpose pavilion.



**Memorial Day Campers and Public Meeting Attendees  
Detail of Collated Public Responses**

**Question 1: How often have you visited Bobby Brown in last year?**

- (2) First Time Visitor
- (3) 1-2 Times
- (31) More than 2 times

**Question 2: What are the main reasons for your visit?**

- (25) Camping
  - (17) Fishing
  - (5) Hiking
- Other: Enjoying nature, Watching wildlife, Memorial Day, Concerts and fireworks, Organize events to promote Bobby Brown Park

**Question 3: What do you enjoy most about Bobby Brown Park?**

- Likes the location on the lake
- (6) Family orientated, laid back atmosphere, relaxing
- (7) Camping with family
- Affordability, relaxing, community involvement
- (2) Friendly Atmosphere
- Heated bathrooms, quietness, spending time with family, friendly staff
- The beautiful scenery, close to home, visiting with friends
- Level to clean sites
- (2) Clean bath houses
- (2) Quiet
- (5) Maintained clean park and managed well
- Peace & relaxation, music concerts, hanging out with friends
- Family and friends have been visiting since 1970
- It's affordable. This is good for our county but needs to stay affordable. Rates need to stay the same.
- I'm a commissioner and enjoy seeing other people enjoy themselves
- The hiking trails – my husband enjoyed bringing our young grandson to fish off the pier proximity to my house
- I like the Friends group. They have done a great job.
- Fishing & Hunting – caught a 32lb striper near RB Dam which I help build
- (2) Very pretty place, well kept
- Treating a diabetic who had a heart attack.
- Dressing as a women & being in womanless pageant@ Group Shelter @ Thanksgiving
- Camping, fishing, friends and fellowship
- The people
- (2) Fellowship with other campers
- Fishing w/ grandson



I'm a third generation camper at this park. So many, many memories were made when I was a child and continue to make with my children  
Super park staff

**Question 4: What do you enjoy least**

(2) No good swimming area for kids such as a beach area at each campsite

(4) No cable TV

Packing up to go home

Sites need some trees cut to make getting campers in easier

People bringing pit bulls (shouldn't be allowed)

(3) Not enough parking, not enough lake camping spots that are large

(5) No phone service

Trash in the lake

Firepits too close to campers

No septic hook up

Loose dogs, no clean-up after them

Need boat trailer space

Too many people on one campsite (#41)

(2) Bathrooms on Savannah side need remodeling

(4) Campsites outdated

Bathrooms outdated

(2) People who don't know what quiet time is

Small bathroom stalls

(2) Wish the lake level was up

More things to do

I'd like to see a reduction in fees to Elbert Co. citizens. We are charged the same as someone that doesn't live here

(2) No swimming activities

Would like to see a pool again

Restore the pool

Need more facilities, more interpretation

No marina

No store

Office could be more. Need interpretive center.

Need cabins.

**Question 5 for Campers: If you have attended any of the park's large festivities are there any improvements that should be addressed?**

We feel everything went great maybe more than 1 food vendor

Everything is Great

They were great!

Parking/ no director's

(4) A band stage and improved lighting

More lights in the parking lot



**Question 5 for Public Meeting: What is the most interesting story or important piece of history about the area? What is the key take-home message for visitors?**

(2) How it got its name – our congressman’s son died in World War II and it was named after him.

Initial location of Petersburg – would love to learn more about the history – maybe have re-enactments, develop historical buildings

(5) Petersburg – people who lived there

Local operation & Hometown pride

Russell Dam

Fun place for family and friends

Growing up with good friends

**Question 6: New Park Features that you would like to see:**

8 Marina

16 Fuel Station for Boats

27 Cell Tower

Course/

15 Additional Campsites

2 Additional Shelters/Buildings for Large Group Gatherings

6 Nature/Hiking Trails

9 Horse Trails

2 Mountain Bike Trails

5 Interpretive Signs about History, Flora, Fauna

9 More on the History of Petersburg

8 Stargazing Nights

2 Flat-Bottom Boat Races

15 Rustic Cabins

7 Tiny Homes

9 More Parking

2 More Accessibility to Amenities

20 Country Store

1 Vending Machines

10 Canopy Walk/Ropes

Zip Line

27 Beach

9 Water Sports Area (Giant Lake Inflatables)

5 More Activities for Kids

3 Frisbee Golf

6 Miniature Golf

5 Historical Reenactments

3 Geocaching

3 Snack Bar

12 Yurts

8 Two-Lane Boat Ramp

7 Larger Boat Trailer Parking

2 Big Events like Festivals/5K Race

**Tell us what we might be missing:**

Cable TV

(2) Splash pad for kids to enjoy

Arcade game for kids

Another shelter on Broad side

Build a Beach

Cable

More areas close to camping spots for kids to play



Don't let tents camp in the fields – play areas you do have  
More full hook up sites  
More camping sites  
Clean trash out of lake  
Some campsites do not have grills  
Miniature field for kids  
Full service/septic hook up on sites  
Ask campers what size camper they own, match campers to site?  
(2) Dump station on the exit entrance instead of in middle of camping area  
(4) A lot of trees need to be cut down that's in the way of campsites and sites need to be bigger  
Make stalls in bathrooms bigger  
It's a great place to visit  
Would love to see another naturalist, history programs  
(2) Summer camps for kids  
(2) Cabins  
Swimming area  
(4) Amphitheatre with Permanent stage  
Campsites need to be larger to accommodate newer campers with more slides  
Update Campsite  
Savanna bathroom needs work



## BOBBY BROWN PARK • PHASE 2

### *Interpretive Program: Analysis and Synthesis: VISITOR GROUPS*

Visitors at Bobby Brown State Park vary in age, background, group size, group type, ability, interests, and more. Here is a selection of possible target visitor groups to whom we could cater with interpretive programs and amenities.

#### **Repeat Family Campers**

Many of the park’s regular visitors are families from Elbert County with young children. Many have been visiting since they were children themselves. This relationship with inter-generational visitors is one of the strongest and most valuable to maintain.

VISITOR EXPECTATIONS	CHALLENGES	INTERPRETIVE SOLUTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- spend a relaxing day out in nature with the family</li> <li>- trails that are easy for little feet to walk on, potentially even for strollers or Grandma’s walker</li> <li>- enjoy a picnic lunch on a pavilion with ample tables, shade, trash cans... make it easy to feed the kids</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- no beach or nearby playground for children to play</li> <li>- need more activities for kids (splash pad, arcade, XXL outdoor board games...)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- directing families to Low Water Interpretive trail for exercise and a history lesson for the whole family</li> <li>- kids can play on a replica Petersburg boat</li> </ul>

#### **First-Time Millennial Couples (Day Use or Overnight Camping)**

These are the 21–29-year-olds who show up with selfie sticks, reusable water bottles covered in stickers, and a cooler of craft beer. Then they ask for the wifi password.

VISITOR EXPECTATIONS	CHALLENGES	INTERPRETIVE GOALS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- take picture-perfect photos for their Instagram</li> <li>- explore new hiking trails</li> <li>- have fun with a romantic partner or a group</li> <li>- relax with music around the campsite</li> <li>- bring the beloved dog along</li> <li>- attend special events like concerts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- many expect cell service or internet connection</li> <li>- some do not appreciate “quiet hours”</li> <li>- might be less prepared than veteran family visitors (firewood, sunscreen, ice, beer, and paper towels...)</li> <li>- may not own a tent or camping supplies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- establish a new country store</li> <li>- install a new cell phone tower</li> <li>- establish yurt or rustic cabin camping for rent</li> <li>- install a concert stage</li> </ul>



### Groups in RVs

Many of these visitors are older and without children and expect to relax in peace, quiet, and solitude.

VISITOR EXPECTATIONS	CHALLENGES	INTERPRETIVE GOALS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- enjoy a comfortable “glamping” experience with all the comforts of home</li> <li>- appreciate events with less physical activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- campsites are too small for some RVs (need to cut back trees and add more campsites)</li> <li>- no sewage hookup</li> <li>- don’t want to over commercialize the area; want to keep the campgrounds affordable</li> <li>- they want cable TV?</li> <li>- need an air-conditioned interpretive center for rainy days or for a less physical activity option</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- design a new interpretive center</li> <li>- have some accessible trails for scooters or walkers</li> </ul>

### Groups with Boats

Lots of people come to Bobby Brown Park for the fishing on the lake. They may be overnight campers, or they may have driven in just for the day.

VISITOR EXPECTATIONS	CHALLENGES	INTERPRETIVE GOALS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- spend a safe and convenient day on the water fishing, swimming, or going on a booze cruise</li> <li>- show off their catch with a community of other fishermen, then have somewhere to clean and cook it</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- no marina or fueling station</li> <li>- not adequate boat trailer space</li> <li>- not enough large parking spots</li> <li>- need to pick up trash in the lake</li> <li>- ongoing drought keeps lake levels lower than average</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- install a marina and fuel station</li> <li>- highlight common fish species on interpretive panels along Low Water Trail</li> </ul>

### Large Groups

Bobby Brown Park regularly hosts events such as family reunions, Memorial Day, and maybe even weddings. These groups of more than ten people have different needs.

VISITOR EXPECTATIONS	CHALLENGES	INTERPRETIVE GOALS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- have enough room for everyone to gather in one place</li> <li>- have clearly-marked signage and meeting spots</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- not enough room for everyone</li> <li>- garbage dumpster is centrally-located</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- install a multi-use pavilion</li> <li>- move dumpster to park exit</li> </ul>



## **BOBBY BROWN PARK • PHASE 3**

### *Interpretive Program: THEMES AND STORLINES*

These themes are meant to provide an interpretive framework for the proposed Low Water Trail and various visitor amenities at Bobby Brown State Park.

#### **Who is Bobby Brown?**

The park is named for the Robert T. Brown, a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy who was killed during World War II aboard the USS Scorpion, son of U.S. Congressman Paul Brown of Elberton, Georgia. Petersburg, a town well-known to lawyers, doctors, and politicians, was home to two U.S. Senators (Senator Bibb and Senator Tait) at the same time. Alabama's first and second governors were also from Elbert County.

#### **Pioneers of Petersburg**

Petersburg's first inhabitants "were attracted to the terrain where mills could more easily be constructed. Ample water flow sources to power the mills, coupled with moderate valley slopes, natural falls, numerous tributaries, and a large watershed were favorable reasons for settling along the upper Savannah." The early settlers lived a modest but comfortable life planting and harvesting tobacco.

#### **A Moment in the Sun**

For about a decade, Petersburg was the third-largest town in Georgia, behind only Augusta and Savannah. By the year 1800, the town consisted of 86 half-acre lots, with a population of about 750 people. The town had a substantial commercial district boasting a tailor/seamstress shop, a blacksmith, a post office, several taverns, a pool hall, churches, two ferries, and *The Georgia/Carolina Gazette*. The site of all this hustle and bustle is now mostly submerged by Clarks Hill Lake.

#### **King Tobacco's Short Reign**

Perfectly situated on a fertile tract of land between two rivers, Petersburg was founded as a tobacco inspection site by Revolutionary War veteran Dionysus Oliver. Eager new settlers moved to town to grow tobacco and pack it for shipment into watertight oak barrels called "hogshead." Flat-bottomed "Petersburg" boats carried up to ten tons of tobacco south through the shallow, turbulent waters of the Savannah River to Augusta.

#### **The Fall of Petersburg**

By the early 1800s, tobacco production waned, and King Cotton assumed its title as the South's most important cash crop. Unlike tobacco, cotton did not require inspection before being brought to market, and conventional boats could not navigate the shallow waters and treacherous shoals. Mosquito-borne western fever sickened and killed many residents. A wave of westward expansion called frontiersmen to settle far from home. And so, the last numbered lot was sold in 1837. By 1855, Petersburg, untouched by train



tracks, too far from roads, and perched between two unpredictable rivers, became only a memory.

### **A Sea Change for Clarks Hill Lake**

A century after the last townspeople abandoned Petersburg, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers decided to build a dam and flood the dry bed to create the lake you see today. Clarks Hill Lake is located in both Georgia and South Carolina, though in South Carolina it is called J. Strom Thurmond Lake. It covers approximately 71,000 acres and has 1,200 miles of shoreline, making it the largest U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project east of the Mississippi River. It was designed for flood control, hydropower, fish and wildlife, water quality, water supply, downstream navigation, and recreation. Today, it's one of the top 10 most-visited Corps lakes in the nation!

### **Generations of Recreation**

Many families who enjoy the recreational activities at Bobby Brown Park—such as camping, fishing, and hiking—have been sharing these traditions for generations. Maybe you remember visiting the park for the first time for a family reunion or an outdoor concert. Maybe your parents took their first vacation here to camp under the stars. Maybe you remember fishing with your grandfather and frying up the day's catch over an open flame. Or maybe you're just beginning to create memories for you and your family!

### **Peek at the Past**

Evidence and artifacts of the once-thriving Petersburg are all around you. Look for footprints of houses with old bricks scattered around. Over by the historic remnants of Petersburg along the shoreline, keep an eye out for gravestones of Revolutionary War soldiers and pioneers from the local cemetery peeking out of the water. What other glimpses of the past do you see around here?

### **Flora and Fauna**

There are many special species of mammals, birds, fish, and insects around this park. *(highlight species information to come)*

### **Hometown Pride**

If you've ever had to explain where your hometown is, you know that it can be hard to pin down exactly what makes a small town special. Some love the feeling of community, the quiet scenery, or the warmth of a local tavern. Regional touchstones like comfort food, favorite songs, and beloved sports teams bring people together to celebrate something greater than themselves. Think about all the natural, man-made, and cultural attractions of the area. What makes Elbert County special to you?