



STAY TUNED FOR GROUNDBREAKING NEWS!



When North Carolina voters approved the Connect NC bond referendum in 2016, the wheels started to turn at Lake James State Park and plans for a long-awaited visitors' center were set in motion.

With an allowance of more than \$3 million for the project through the bond and other sources, the goal is to construct a visitors' center that will reflect the beauty and diversity of the areas surrounding Lake James.

Be on the lookout for exciting news in the coming weeks as things come together for this project.

SUMMERTIME BOAT TOUR – MONDAY, JULY 8

The waters and shoreline of Lake James is bursting with life and there's no better way to explore than by boat. Park Ranger Clay Veasey will be your captain and guide aboard the park patrol boat as we search for ospreys, otters, eagles and scenic vistas. The weather could be hot and muggy, so be sure to watch the forecast and dress appropriately for the day (remember it's always cooler out on the water) if you are one of the eight lucky participants. Registration is required and available on a first come, first-served basis. Call the park office at 828-584-7728 to reserve your spot. Meet at the Paddy's Creek Area East Picnic Shelter at 9:45 a.m. for a briefing and prompt 10 a.m. departure.

SNAKE WISE – WEDNESDAY, JULY 10

It's the Year of the Snake according to North Carolina State Parks and the question on everyone's mind is, "What the heck should I do if I see one?" We're going to learn the answer to that very question during this interactive, exciting and unique program that will utilize snake scenarios to mimic everyday interactions with snake and how to react. Join Park Ranger Jamie Cameron in the Catawba River Area basement classroom at 9 a.m.

OUR WATERSHED - THURSDAY, JULY 11

Learn basic information about watersheds and the Catawba River basin through hands-on demos, games and craft activities. This program is designed to increase understanding of how, where and why water flow the way it does and to discuss how human impacts and stewardship influences this most valuable resource. Meet in the Catawba River Area basement classroom at 10 a.m. The program will be held rain or shine.

THE MOON AND BEYOND – FRIDAY, JULY 12

It's been 50 years since the first human stepped foot on the moon and we want to celebrate! Join Park Supt. Nora Coffey and the Catawba Valley Astronomy Club for an evening of exploring our moon and beyond. There will be activities for all ages and telescope viewing after dark. Telescopes will be provided, but please feel free to bring your own telescopes and/or binoculars if you have them. A chair or blanket and bug spray is also recommended. Meet in the East Shelter of the Paddy's Creek Area at 7:30 p.m. for family-friendly activities and telescope viewing will begin at dark. Pre-registration is strongly encouraged by calling the park office at 828-584-7728.

JUNIOR RANGER BOOT CAMP – SUNDAY, JULY 14

Do you think you have what it takes to join the prestigious ranks of the North Carolina State Park Junior Rangers? If you do, the rangers at Lake James State Park want you! The Junior Ranger program is for kids ages 6-12 who have an interest in nature and stewardship. Join Park Ranger Jamie Cameron to receive your Junior Ranger workbook and participate in several activities that will put you well on your way towards earning your Junior Ranger certificate at patch. We'll meet at the Paddy's Creek Area bathhouse breezeway at 9 a.m. You must pre-register for this program by calling the park office at 828-584-7728.

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MUSHROOMS 101 – SUNDAY, JULY 14

Have you ever wanted to know more about mushrooms? There are hundreds of varieties of fungus growing around Lake James, with all sorts of fabulous fun facts associated with them. Human beings have a complicated relationship with wild mushrooms – some have medicinal uses, some are prized edibles, and some are deadly. Join Karen Johnson, Lake James State Park's resident mushroom enthusiast, for a leisurely stroll along the Sandy Cliff Overlook Trail to discuss what constitutes a fungus and identification techniques. Karen is a member of the Asheville Mushroom Club and the park's office administrator. Meet her at the Catawba River Area breezeway at 4 p.m.

HEXAPOD KINGDOM HIKE – THURSDAY, JULY 18

Join us for a hike along the Paddy's Creek trail to discover the world of six legged insects. We will explore what makes organisms hexapods and the unique features that distinguish the different insect families, all while hunting for specimens from the different groups. Meet at the Holly Discovery Trail Trailhead parking lot at 10 a.m.

THINGS THAT BITE, STING AND CRAWL – FRIDAY, JULY 19

If the idea of deadly serpents, black widow spiders, swarms of ticks and various other creepy-crawlies is keeping you from enjoying the great outdoors, this is the workshop for you. Park Ranger Clay Veasey will be giving nothing but the facts when it comes to critters that could do you harm and how to avoid them. We'll meet in the West Picnic Shelter at the Paddy's Creek Area for a fact-based program on how to be safe in the woods. Plan on starting at 10 a.m. and remember, the only thing we have to fear is ...

MACRO-INVERTEBRATE STUDY – THURSDAY, JULY 25

Aquatic life in our creeks and rivers go far beyond the fish and crawdads you see with a casual glance. The ecosystem of moving water can be incredibly diverse, depending on water quality and other factors. At Lake James State Park, we are lucky to have a waterway of fantastic biological diversity and this program will show participants many of the hidden animals that call Paddy's Creek home. Armed with nets, seines and buckets, participants will collect aquatic insects, crustaceans, fish, amphibians and more with park staff. This program is suitable for all ages, especially those who are willing to get wet and have a great time. We will meet in the parking lot for the Holly Discovery Trail at the Paddy's Creek Area at 10 a.m. Wear clothes you don't mind getting wet and water shoes or waders if you have them.

AQUATIC INSECTS NIGHT OUT – THURSDAY, JULY 25

We are waiting for sunset to start this activity designed to complement our Kids in the Creek program. Catch sheets will be used to collect and identify different species of adult aquatic insect. These species are the same macroinvertebrates that are found in the creeks around Lake James. A discussion of macroinvertebrate life cycles and fun facts will be included with the collection activities. We'll meet at the Paddy's Creek Area bathhouse breezeway at 8:30 p.m. and the program will end by 9:30 p.m.

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SUMMERTIME BOAT TOUR – FRIDAY, JULY 26

The waters and shoreline of Lake James is bursting with life and there's no better way to explore than by boat. Justin Allen will be your captain and guide aboard the park patrol boat as we search for ospreys, otters, eagles and scenic vistas. The weather could be hot and muggy, so be sure to watch the forecast and dress appropriately for the day (remember it's always cooler out on the water) if you are one of the eight lucky participants. Registration is required and available on a first come, first-served basis. Call the park office at 828-584-7728 to reserve your spot. Meet at the Paddy's Creek Area East Picnic Shelter at 9:45 a.m. for a briefing and prompt 10 a.m. departure.

OUR WATERSHED - THURSDAY, AUGUST 1

Learn basic information about watersheds and the Catawba River basin through hands-on demos, games and craft activities. This program is designed to increase understanding of how, where and why water flow the way it does and to discuss how human impacts and stewardship influences this most valuable resource. Meet in the Catawba River Area basement classroom at 10 a.m. The program will be held rain or shine.

SUMMERTIME BOAT TOUR – WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 7

The waters and shoreline of Lake James is bursting with life and there's no better way to explore than by boat. Park Ranger Clay Veasey will be your captain and guide aboard the park patrol boat as we search for ospreys, otters, eagles and scenic vistas. The weather could be hot and muggy, so be sure to watch the forecast and dress appropriately for the day (remember it's always cooler out on the water) if you are one of the eight lucky participants. Registration is required and available on a first come, first-served basis. Call the park office at 828-584-7728 to reserve your spot. Meet at the Paddy's Creek Area East Picnic Shelter at 9:45 a.m. for a briefing and prompt 10 a.m. departure.

HEXAPOD KINGDOM HIKE – THURSDAY, AUGUST 8

Join us for a hike along the Paddy's Creek trail to discover the world of six legged insects. We will explore what makes organisms hexapods and the unique features that distinguish the different insect families, all while hunting for specimens from the different groups. Meet at the Holly Discovery Trail Trailhead parking lot at 10 a.m.

ASTRONOMY AND BEERS – FRIDAY, AUGUST 9

You can't have alcohol at the state park, but you can gaze at the heavens with a cold brew in your hand at the neighbor's place. Lake James State Park Superintendent Nora Coffey will be co-hosting with the Catawba Valley Astronomy Club for a night of star gazing at Fonta Flora's Farmhouse Brewery at the old Whippoorwill Dairy Farm (just 1-mile northeast of the Paddy's Creek entrance at 6751 NC-126). Enjoy a cold beverage, learn some basic star gazing tips, and experience the night sky like you've never seen it. There will be telescopes and binoculars set up for viewing the night sky, but feel free to bring your own if you have them. Bug spray and folding chairs or blankets are also recommended. The show will start at dusk (between 8:30 and 9:00 p.m.) and the brewery will stay open until 10:30 p.m. to accommodate us, so don't miss this rare opportunity. All ages are welcome. No need to register for this one.

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SNAKE WISE – SUNDAY, AUG. 11

It's the Year of the Snake according to North Carolina State Parks and the question on everyone's mind is, "What the heck should I do if I see one?" We're going to learn the answer to that very question during this interactive, exciting and unique program that will utilize snake scenarios to mimic everyday interactions with snake and how to react. Join Park Ranger Jamie Cameron in the Catawba River Area basement classroom at 9 a.m.

MACRO-INVERTEBRATE STUDY – THURSDAY, AUGUST 15

Aquatic life in our creeks and rivers go far beyond the fish and crawdads you see with a casual glance. The ecosystem of moving water can be incredibly diverse, depending on water quality and other factors. At Lake James State Park, we are lucky to have a waterway of fantastic biological diversity and this program will show participants many of the hidden animals that call Paddy's Creek home. Armed with nets, seines and buckets, participants will collect aquatic insects, crustaceans, fish, amphibians and more with park staff. This program is suitable for all ages, especially those who are willing to get wet and have a great time. We will meet in the parking lot for the Holly Discovery Trail at the Paddy's Creek Area at 10 a.m. Wear clothes you don't mind getting wet and water shoes or waders if you have them.

AQUATIC INSECTS NIGHT OUT – THURSDAY, AUGUST 15

We are waiting for sunset to start this activity designed to complement our Kids in the Creek program. Catch sheets will be used to collect and identify different species of adult aquatic insect. These species are the same macroinvertebrates that are found in the creeks around Lake James. A discussion of macroinvertebrate life cycles and fun facts will be included with the collection activities. We'll meet at the Paddy's Creek Area bathhouse breezeway at 8:30 p.m. and the program will end by 9:30 p.m.

SUMMERTIME BOAT TOUR – FRIDAY, AUGUST 16

The waters and shoreline of Lake James is bursting with life and there's no better way to explore than by boat. Justin Allen will be your captain and guide aboard the park patrol boat as we search for ospreys, otters, eagles and scenic vistas. The weather could be hot and muggy, so be sure to watch the forecast and dress appropriately for the day (remember it's always cooler out on the water) if you are one of the eight lucky participants. Registration is required and available on a first come, first-served basis. Call the park office at 828-584-7728 to reserve your spot. Meet at the Paddy's Creek Area East Picnic Shelter at 9:45 a.m. for a briefing and prompt 10 a.m. departure.

OWLS AMONG US – MONDAY, AUG. 19

Throughout written history, owls have always held a special place in people's hearts. In spite of our desire to know them, owls remain mysterious. They are also relatively common in the forests and fields of western North Carolina. Once you recognize the myriad sounds owls make, a whole new world of appreciation opens. Ranger Jamie Cameron will lead a group of curious owl-seekers on a short hike along the Lake Channel Overlook trail at the Catawba River Area side of the park. We'll start from the campground parking lot at 8:30 p.m. Bring a headlamp or flashlight, binoculars if you have them and a pair of comfortable hiking shoes for this 1-hour program.

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HIKE THE PADDY'S CREEK TRAIL – THURSDAY, AUGUST 22

As the first hints of fall's inevitable approach blow in from the Blue Ridge, it's time to start getting excited about hiking season. The Paddy's Creek Trail is a leisurely trek along the Lake James shoreline that starts next to the Paddy's Creek Area bathhouse and ends at the wooden bridge. Park Ranger Clay Veasey will accompany the group and point out items of interest along the way. The hike is two miles round-trip so wear comfortable hiking shoes, dress for the weather and bring some water. We'll meet at 10 a.m. in the bathhouse breezeway.

MUSHROOMS 101 – FRIDAY, AUGUST 23

Have you ever wanted to know more about mushrooms? There are hundreds of varieties of fungus growing around Lake James, with all sorts of fabulous fun facts associated with them. Human beings have a complicated relationship with wild mushrooms – some have medicinal uses, some are prized edibles, and some a deadly. Join Karen Johnson, Lake James State Park's resident mushroom enthusiast, for a leisurely stroll along the Sandy Cliff Overlook Trail to discuss what constitutes a fungus and identification techniques. Karen is a member of the Asheville Mushroom Club and the park's office administrator. Meet her at the Catawba River Area breezeway at 10 a.m.



MUSHROOMS 101 – SATURDAY, AUGUST 24

Have you ever wanted to know more about mushrooms? There are hundreds of varieties of fungus growing around Lake James, with all sorts of fabulous fun facts associated with them. Human beings have a complicated relationship with wild mushrooms – some have medicinal uses, some are prized edibles, and some a deadly. Join Karen Johnson, Lake James State Park's resident mushroom enthusiast, for a leisurely stroll along the Sandy Cliff Overlook Trail to discuss what constitutes a fungus and identification techniques. Karen is a member of the Asheville Mushroom Club and the park's office administrator. Meet her at the Catawba River Area breezeway at 4 p.m.

NEVER TOO EARLY FALL MIGRATION BIRD HIKE – TUESDAY, AUGUST 27

Too early to be thinking about fall migration? Think again. Many species have already started their southward journey and others are starting to flock up to begin theirs. The Paddy's Creek Area is a great place to look for birds and Ranger Jamie Cameron knows just where to find them. We'll get an early start to beat the heat and take advantage of the peak hours of bird activity. Bring binoculars if you have them and wear comfortable walking shoes. Meet at the Paddy's Creek Area bathhouse breezeway at 8:30 a.m.

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FAREWELL RANGER WEAVER



Ranger Earl Weaver

Lake James State Park will be saying goodbye to Ranger Earl Weaver at the end of August, after 30 years of dedicated service to the people of North Carolina.

Weaver has been stationed here since starting his North Carolina State Parks career in 1990. The Michigan native has been a driving force in the development of the park's reputation as a premier destination for outdoor recreation in western North Carolina.

Among his many accomplishments, Ranger Weaver helped construct the walk-in tent campground at the

Catawba River Area and many other major maintenance projects and trails, oversaw the development and oversight of the native flower beds throughout the park and has been the driving force behind the hugely popular interpretive boat tour program.

Weaver served a term on the division's safety board and earned his advanced law enforcement certificate.

"Earl's skills and expertise on an enormous range of topics related to park operations will be difficult to replace," said Park Superintendent Nora Coffey. We have always counted

on Earl's uncanny knack for predicting how visitors experience the park to help plan logistics and work flow. I know that countless numbers of visitors have benefitted from his presence and that his co-workers appreciate his willingness to assist in any task; from law enforcement incidents, to search and rescue, to trail-building, to sweeping and mopping bathrooms."

Thank you Ranger Weaver, for your decades of hard work at Lake James. Your influence is evident throughout the park and it will not be forgotten. Best wishes on your retirement. It is well earned.

NATURE NOTES



Summer – there's no other season that nature exists in such abundance as this, when plants and animals seem to be in a race to procreate, grow and otherwise take full advantage of the sun's energy.

By now, many birds are already raising their second or third broods of the year. Unlike large mammals; whitetail deer, black bears, bobcats, etc., female birds will start laying a new clutch of eggs as soon as their young from the previous nesting have fledged and start feeding themselves. Eastern bluebirds and mourning doves are especially adept at making the

most of the breeding season. If you have bluebird nest boxes in your yard you can encourage re-nesting by cleaning them out after each successive batch of baby bluebirds hops out into the big world.

During this Year of the Snake in N.C. State Parks, it's proper to give snakes their due as efficient predators of songbird nests. Both eggs and hatchlings are on the menu and snakes seem to specialize in locating bird nests this time of year. Several of our native snakes are excellent climbers and will go high into the branches to grab an easy meal.

For bird enthusiasts, protecting nests from snakes and other predators means installing barriers to keep would-be egg-eaters from climbing posts where boxes have been located. A 24-inch wide sleeve of light sheet metal around the post will keep the majority of snakes and other agile predators from climbing.

It's also the season for spotted fawns to begin taking their first steps. Doe whitetails have given birth by mid- to late June and now those tiny deer are following their mothers around and learning what it takes to survive. You can help by paying attention as you drive on park roads. If you see a deer on the side of the pavement, assume it's going to step out in front of your vehicle and assume it's got a baby in toe. If a doe crosses the road, give it a few seconds to see if a fawn isn't bringing up the rear.

The best nature watching is in the early mornings and late evenings. Hope to see you out on the trail!

WHO WE ARE

A group formed in 2010, made up of dedicated people work together to help Lake James State Park meet its mission of providing opportunities for public enjoyment and education while still protecting the natural beauty and historic integrity of the State Park.

BOARD MEMBERS

Eric Jenkins - President
Robert Hunter - Vice President
Mike Sewell - Secretary
Annette Bryant - Membership Coordinator
Randall Conley - Member at Large
George Milner - Member at Large
Greg Norell - Member at Large
Shane Prisby - Member at Large
Molly Sandfoss - Member at Large
Jeff Stark - Member at Large
Jim Williams - Member at Large

To contact the Friends of Lake James State Park Group please email info@lakejamesstatepark.org

GRACE RIDGE CANOE EXCURSION

The crew from Grace Ridge Retirement Community made it out for their annual canoe excursion with a ranger on June 14. Several participants are staying active and adventurous into their 8th and 9th decades!



Free **FISHING DAY**

The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission will once again celebrate the nation's birthday with its annual Free Fishing Day. On Thursday, July 4, fishing in all of the state's fresh and salt waters is allowed without prior purchase of a fishing license. From 12 a.m. until 11:59 p.m., fishing is open to everyone. All NCWRC regulations, size and creel limits are still in effect.

THURSDAY, JULY 4TH



YEAR OF THE SNAKE: HOW SNAKES MAKE BABIES



Garter Snake

It's the topic on everyone's mind: Where do snake babies come from?

Considering a snake's shape and lack of appendages, it's not surprising to question "Well, how do they do that?" Additionally, male and female snakes are virtually identical (although females are typically larger than males), so you can't tell what sex they are just by looking at them.

During the breeding season, female snakes release pheromones into the air to attract mates. The males detect the alluring scent with a unique anatomical trick called the Jacobsen's organ, which translates air molecules that stick to the snake's tongue as it flicks in and out.

By broadcasting her availability to breed in such a fashion, the female often finds herself as the object of desire for more than one suitor. Males will often congregate around the female and sometimes battle for dominance, as they attempt to breed. Male snakes have two sex organs, called hemipenes. Once she is fertilized, the females either lay a clutch of leathery-shelled eggs or give live-birth, depending on species. Among the types in this region that give birth to babies are, garter snakes, northern watersnakes, copperheads and timber rattlesnakes. Egg-layers include ringneck snakes, corn snakes, rough green snakes and black rat snakes.

Eggs are most often laid in loose soils,

rotting logs or under leaves. In some species, the females protect the eggs until they hatch. In others they are left to develop on their own. Many animals eat snake eggs and baby snakes. Raccoons, opossums, skunks, minks, hawks and owls all prey upon snakes in their early stages of development.

By mid- to late summer we will start encountering the first baby snakes of the season. Some species look like tiny versions of the adults while others have different patterns than they will as they grow older.

With good habitat and abundant resources, snakes can thrive and occupy an important piece of the natural world.

FRIENDS OF LAKE JAMES STATE PARK

SAVE THE DATE

- July 4th is Free Fishing Day across North Carolina. Anglers can pursue all types of fish across the state without the normally required license and trout stamp (in trout waters) from 12:01 a.m. until 11:59 p.m. All size, creel and method of catching rules are still in effect.
- The 16th annual Catawba RiverFest will be Sept. 21. The Friends of Lake James State Park is seeking volunteers to serve on the festival planning committee. Vendors and exhibitors are also being sought for this family-friendly event. Consideration will be given to those with a connection to the Catawba River watershed and/or Lake James. To inquire about these opportunities and others, email info@lakejamesstatepark.org.
- On Oct. 12, the 3rd annual Lake James Dragon Boat Festival takes place. Don't miss the fantastic camaraderie and visual spectacle at the Paddy's Creek Area of Lake James State Park. Teams from across the Southeast will gather at the swim beach to compete in this ancient Chinese tradition. It's a wonderful day for spectators, but why not gather up 19 friends and participate yourself? If you form a team, the Healing Dragons of Lake James will take care of the rest; boats, paddles, training and someone to steer! Go to www.lakejamesdragonboat.com or call 813-426-3544 for more information.



LJSP TRAILS



CATAWBA RIVER AREA:

- Fishing Pier Trail (0.3 mile, easy)
- Fox Den Loop Trail (2.25 miles, moderate)
- Lake Channel Overlook Trail (1.5 miles, moderate)
- Sandy Cliff Overlook Trail (0.5 mile, easy)

PADDY'S CREEK AREA:

- Holly Discovery Trail (0.75 mile, easy)
- Mill's Creek Trail (3.6 miles, moderate)
- Overmountain Victory Trail (2.0 mile, moderate)
- Paddy's Creek Trail (2.0 miles, moderate)
- Tindo beginners' mountain bike trail (4.0 miles)
- Wimba intermediate mountain bike trail (11.25 miles)

PARK GENERAL INFO

- Gate hours for July and August are 7 a.m. until 10 p.m.
- The Paddy's Creek Area swim beach opens May 1. Beach hours are 10 a.m. until 6 p.m., seven days a week. Daily fees are \$6 for adults, \$4 for children ages 3-12.
- The Paddy's Creek Area concessions stand is open 7-days-a-week, from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. Canoe and kayak rentals cease at 4:30 p.m. and must be returned by 5:30 p.m.
- The park offices and gift shops at Catawba River and Paddy's Creek areas are open Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. until 6 p.m.

FRIENDS OF LAKE JAMES STATE PARK

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Do you have an interest in Lake James State Park? Whether you enjoy hiking the trails, swimming at the beach or just picnicking with your family, there is some part of the park for everyone.

Join the Friends of Lake James State Park group and learn about all the opportunities to help make the park a better place for everyone to enjoy. The Friends of Lake James State Park focus on working together to help Lake James State Park meet its mission of providing opportunities for public enjoyment and education while still protecting the natural beauty and historic integrity of the State Park.

There are a variety of opportunities to get involved from trail work days, to volunteering at RiverFest and other festivals. Become a member of Friends of Lake James State Park, and know that you are helping to preserve the natural beauty and historic resources of Lake James for generations to come.

FRIENDS CONTRIBUTIONS

The Friends of Lake James State Park is proud to support the hardworking staff at Lake James State Park and contribute wherever we can to help improve park operations and offer new recreational opportunities to visitors. If you think these efforts are meaningful, please consider joining our group using the form at the bottom of this page.

- Boat Camping Project; partially funded, purchased equipment including rebar driver and auger
- Stand-up Paddleboards; purchased two for rental fleet and one for lifeguard use
- Funded instructor for Waterfront Safety training for lifeguards
- Linville Overlook picnic area
- Assisted with Overmountain Victory Trail 2 construction
- Holly Discovery Trail; partially funded and dedicated, annual funding for upkeep
- Park of the Year celebration
- Sponsored night rides on mountain bike trails
- RiverFest Sponsor

HOW TO JOIN THE FRIENDS OF LAKE JAMES STATE PARK GROUP

Become a member of Friends of Lake James State Park, and know that you are helping to preserve the natural beauty and historic resources of Lake James for generations to come.

For more information please visit www.lakejamesstatepark.org or email info@lakejamesstatepark.org.

FRIENDS OF LAKE JAMES STATE PARK - MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Be a Friend of Lake James State Park

Select class of annual membership:

- Individual \$10
 Family \$25
 Corporate \$50
 Patron/Industry \$100 - \$999 \$_____
 Lifetime \$1000 (or more) \$_____

I would like to be contacted about volunteer opportunities with the Friends of Lake James State Park

Where did you hear about us? _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Phone _____

**Return to:
Friends of Lake James State Park, Inc.
P.O. Box 1327
Nebo, NC 28761**

Friends of Lake James State Park, Inc. is a registered 501(c)3 charitable organization. Receipt of membership will be supplied upon request.