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New and Expanded Boat Ramp Opens on Jekyll Island

Improvements make the Jekyll Island Boat Ramp and Ski Rixen Pond more enjoyable and accessible for fishermen.

Jekyll Island, GA - December 16, 2008 – The Department of Natural Resources Coastal Resources Division (CRD) and Jekyll Island Authority have announced that renovation of the Jekyll Island public boating access site is complete. Improvements include a larger, resurfaced boat ramp, a larger boating service dock, and more parking area. This \$400,000 renovation was one of four projects made possible by a \$1.5 million CRD budget enhancement approved by the Georgia legislature in 2007.

The new ramp is 50-ft wide allowing three boaters to launch or load simultaneously. It is 130 feet long and extends well below the low tide line making it possible for boaters to safely launch and recover their vessels at all stages of the tide. The service dock now provides 200 feet of perimeter providing space for several boats. Two acres of crushed-limestone-surface parking area was added to the site. The lot also includes handicapped parking and space of anglers fishing in the nearby lake, Ski Rixen Pond.

"We appreciate the Georgia DNR. Their partnership with the Jekyll Island Authority allowed us to improve Jekyll Island's boating access and provide a better experience for our guests." said Bob Krueger, Chairman of the Jekyll Island Authority Board. "It is great to see inter-agency cooperation in the process of revitalizing Jekyll Island."

The boat ramp launches into Jekyll Creek, a popular area for fisherman seeking triple tail, redfish and trout. The ramp is also a favored launch site for kayakers looking to explore the vast salt marsh, creeks, and rivers adjacent to Jekyll Island. These improvements and expansions will allow more fishermen and kayakers to enjoy Jekyll Island's intracoastal waterways.

"This project, in conjunction with Jekyll Island's other revitalization projects, creates more and better public facilities for our guests to enjoy outdoor activities on Jekyll Island," said Jones Hooks, Executive Director for the Jekyll Island Authority. "We hope our guests will enjoy the new boat ramp and the numerous other nature-based opportunities available on Jekyll Island."

In addition to the boat ramp, Ski Rixen Pond is rich fishing location for anglers seeking redfish, speckled trout, and Atlantic croaker. For those visitors wishing to explore the area without fishing, Tidelands Nature Center is a wildlife educational facility and canoe/paddleboat rental location sponsored by the University of Georgia. Tidelands is located on the shore of Ski Rixen Pond and also offers guided kayak tours through the intracoastal waterways. These tours are individual lessons in kayaking and up-close encounters with the eco-systems that border Jekyll Island.

"These recreational facilities provide opportunities to learn about not only the marine animals, but also the birds, fauna and wildlife that call Jekyll Island home," said Christa Frangiamore, Conservation Manager for the Jekyll Island Authority. "We are also using this opportunity to work with the Coastal Resources Division to take advantage of this venue to educate about marine mammal safety. We hope that guests utilizing the boat ramp, Ski Rixen Pond, and Tidelands Nature Center will appreciate Jekyll Island's rich habitats and native species."

About Jekyll Island

Jekyll Island is a barrier island on Georgia's coast – midway between Jacksonville, Fla. and Savannah, Ga. Accessible by car just minutes from I-95, Jekyll Island offers a variety of amenities, including 10 miles of beach, four golf courses, a 250-acre Historic Landmark District, water park, tennis center, an array of lodging options including hotels, cottages and campgrounds. Owned by the State of Georgia, and managed by the Jekyll Island Authority, Jekyll Island has had development limited to just 35 percent of its available land area. This unique aspect of Jekyll Island serves to preserve the critical barrier island ecosystem, and provide guests with a unique escape from the crowds and complications of other beach resort destinations. The Jekyll Island Foundation is a public 501(c)3 organization which operates exclusively for charitable and educational purposes to support the work of the Jekyll Island Authority. Please visit www.jekyllisland.com for more information or call 1-877-4JEKYLL.

About the GA DNR, Coastal Resources Division

The Ga DNR Coastal Resources Division (CRD) has primary responsibility for managing Georgia's marshes, beaches, and marine fishery resources. Based in Brunswick, CRD administers permitting programs under the Coastal Marshlands Protection Act and Shore Protection Act; issues revocable licenses for use of state-owned water bottoms; monitors coastal water quality; and manages shellfish harvest areas. CRD conducts research; management and development activities associated with recreational and commercial fishery resources; represents Georgia on regional marine fishery boards and commissions; and builds boat ramps, artificial reefs, and fishing piers. CRD has primary responsibility for the Protection of Tidewater/Right of Passage Acts.