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## Tree planting project at corps parks could start in November

Jeff Gill

[jgill@gainesvilletimes.com](mailto:jgill@gainesvilletimes.com)

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Gainesville is poised to plant 180 trees at three Army Corps of Engineers parks as part of an "environmental stewardship" plan tied to the Clarks Bridge replacement project.

Gainesville City Council has voted to award the \$45,369 project to ACS Landscape Management of Oakwood.

"We are hoping to begin planting in early November and be completed by the end of the year," said Matt Tarver, Gainesville's public utilities project manager.

The project stems from Gainesville acquiring property for utility relocations as part of the Georgia Department of Transportation project on Ga. 284/Clarks Bridge Road at Lake Lanier.

As part of the effort, an easement was obtained from the corps for the laying of three pipelines on corps property, city officials have said.

The corps requires environmental stewardship provisions "to offset environmental impacts" to corps property, as part of the easement conditions.

The agency "agrees that the project, as proposed, fully satisfies the environmental stewardship provisions," Tarver wrote in a Sept. 12 memo to Public Utilities Director Kelly Randall.

The corps basically seeks a way for the government requesting the permit to "give back" to the environment in a measure that's equal to the impact, said Jeff Emmert, the corps chief ranger over natural resources and real estate, in an earlier interview.

Gainesville had sought proposals for the effort earlier this year but ended up with only one interested contractor, so officials decided to readvertise the project.

Officials have said the work would take place at Old Federal Campground at 6219 Old Federal Road, Sardis Creek Day-Use Area at 2991 Antioch Church Road and Bolding Mill Campground at 4055 Chestatee Road, all in Hall County.

As for the types of trees, "we would want a variety of species native to this area," Emmert has said. They could include oaks, pines, maples and dogwoods.

Tarver said earlier this week that the scope of the work hadn't changed.

Meanwhile, the DOT is moving along on the \$8.7 million bridge project on the Chattahoochee River portion of Lanier.

"Crews are installing new water and sewer lines across new bridge structure now," said Teri Pope, DOT district spokeswoman.

She said the DOT expects workers to start pouring the concrete deck of the new bridge in November.

Also, a pedestrian bridge running under Ga. 284 at the Lake Lanier Olympic Venue is mostly finished. "Handrails are up but not lighting yet," Pope said.

The old bridge, which was built in 1958, will be torn down once the new one, along with approaches and tunnel, are in place.

The project is set for completion by Dec. 31, 2015.

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