

# **Elachee Nature Science Center**

## **Fact Sheet – January 2011**

- o Elachee Nature Science Center is a private, not-for-profit environmental education organization that provides programs for preschool and K-12 student groups. Each year Elachee serves 35,000+ students who visit us from 35 different school systems representing all of north Georgia, metro Atlanta, and neighboring states.
- o Educational field trips to Elachee meet Georgia Department of Education GPS (Georgia Performance Standards) guidelines. Elachee was the first nature center in Georgia to be accredited by SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) and CITA (Commission on Trans Regional Accreditation) and Elachee is currently the only SACS-accredited nature center in the southeast.
- o Each year an additional 30,000 visitors and program participants enjoy exhibits in the visitors' center, special programs and events, and hiking on the 12 miles of trails throughout the surrounding nature preserve. Special traveling exhibitions, teacher education programs, summer day camp, overnight education programs, facility rentals, volunteer opportunities, and fundraising events round out Elachee's offerings.
- o Elachee is located in the 1,500-acre Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve which is protected in perpetuity by a conservation easement. This idea outdoor classroom has 12+ miles of hiking trails, rushing streams, deep forests, rich wetlands, and an abundance of plant and animal life. Elachee is proud to protect and restore this unique natural resource, Hall County's largest protected greenspace and Georgia's largest contiguous conservation easement (except for southwest Georgia's quail hunting plantations). The Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve is also designated as a National Audubon Society Important Bird Area reflecting its significance as a habitat for nesting and migratory bird species.
- o Elachee's main campus is in south Hall County, just one hour north of downtown Atlanta and within a 2-hour drive of nearly half of the population of Georgia.

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- o In addition to its program offerings, Elachee's main campus facilities include the museum featuring permanent and traveling educational exhibitions, a native plant display garden, a rain garden demonstration site, bird and wildlife viewing areas, a barrier-free/handicapped accessible trail, teaching pavilions, picnic areas, and a gift shop.
- o Elachee's program sites include:
  - The main museum/nature center and administrative campus off Atlanta Highway in Gainesville;
  - The Chicopee Woods Aquatic Study Center located on Chicopee Lake on Calvary Church Road in Gainesville;
  - Lake Lanier Aquatic Study Center, a specially-equipped 40-foot pontoon boat and floating classroom, in cooperation with the Atlanta-based Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper, launching from various locations conducting the only on-the-lake science-based study of this important water resource;
  - School sites throughout the state where Elachee staff members conduct custom education programs requested by teachers.
  - Elachee's Mountain Education Center, a forty acre site adjacent to the Chattahoochee National Forest in Rabun County.
- o Our revenue comes from program fees, membership dues, admissions, fundraising events, gift shop revenues, facility rentals, and corporate and private donations.
- o The word "Elachee" is derived from the Cherokee language and means "New Green Earth." Andrea O. Timpone is Elachee's President and CEO, and Jock Hornor is our 2011 Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

### **Mission Statement**

Elachee's mission is to promote environmental understanding through education and conservation.