

# NORTH AUGUSTA'S BRICK POND PARK

## Historical Land Use of this Savannah River Floodplain

**Brick Pond Park Ponds Then & Now**

During the industrial use of this site, clay and other soils were removed for manufacturing. The workers dug pits to remove the soils they needed. The pits were left open in most cases and became pockets for rainwater and flood water to collect. These "borrow pits" became stagnant pools where aquatic wildlife could not thrive.

The City of North Augusta, its partners, and the community are dedicated to preserving sensitive habitats in North Augusta and providing recreation for citizens. With planning and hard work, the ponds you see today are designed to provide a safe and healthy environment for wildlife and an educational experience for its visitors.

To achieve the restoration, native wetland plants were added and a constructed treatment pond was built to remove pollutants. Other features to move water and provide oxygen were installed. As the water quality within the wetlands continues to improve, wildlife will become more abundant. Brick Pond Park is within the migratory flyway and will also be a safe resting point for many species of migratory birds and waterfowl.

Enjoy your visit!

**The Savannah River and its Floodplain**

The Savannah River and its associated streams date back 12,000 years or more. Until recently, it served as major transportation route from the Atlantic Ocean to the mountains for Native Americans and most people that came after them. Savannah River drains over 10,500 acres of land starting at its headwaters in the Blue Ridge Mountains through the Piedmont and the Coastal Plain to the Atlantic Ocean. Brick Pond Park is situated on the Savannah River flood plain and is located in the Lower Savannah reach of the Savannah River below the fall line. The fall line is the border between the Piedmont and the Coastal Plain in the southeastern United States. Southeastern floodplains are regarded as important habitat for reproduction, foraging, and refuge for wildlife. Brick Pond Park prior to industrial uses was a swampy area that routinely flooded. After the construction of dams above North Augusta, the flooding became rare. Since 1934, three dams have been constructed to reduce flooding problems, produce hydropower and to create wildlife and recreation habitat. The closest of these dams is the Strom Thurmond (formerly Clark Hill) located 22 miles upstream from the park. It was completed in 1954. The Strom Thurmond dam, the Augusta Diversion Canal (built in 1845) and the Stevens Creek dam built around 1912, primarily effect river flows in this area. According to a study conducted by the University of Georgia in 2003, the water level of the Savannah River is approximately a third less than before all of the dams within it were constructed. The Lower Savannah reach stretches from the Thurmond Dam to the estuary at the Houlihan Bridge on Highway 17 in South Carolina. The Lower Savannah reach is 181 miles in length and collects water from 3600 square miles.

**The Historical Use of this Land**

The area along the Savannah River has been home to humans since the Paleo-Indian period (as far back as 10,000 BC). Fast forwarding through time, we find that during the colonial period, industries used the Savannah River and its streams to turn machinery with falling water. The large scale use of the river to power industrial processes began in the 1820's. Brick Pond Park is located on an old industrial site. Several industries have used the site for the past century. In 1890's, potters began producing pottery, jugs for the dispensary system, terra cotta pots, and brick at this location. Due to a series of floods in 1929, they moved their operation farther up near Buena Vista Avenue, and in the 1950's back to the riverfront where the present North Augusta Greenway Trail crosses Center Street. The North Augusta Dispensary, a welding shop, oil companies, brick manufacturers, and other businesses have been located here. By the late 1920's, flooding became so common and rebuilding too costly for owners to rebuild and most of the industries moved to higher ground. All of the industrial uses of the property have ended.

The industrial use of this area created a legacy of waste, borrow pits (dug out holes), and other trash and debris. The ponds that remained filled with rainwater and stormwater from city streets. The ponds were stagnant and received pollution from stormwater. The City of North Augusta and its partners have restored the ponds so they will remove pollution from stormwater as it enters the wetlands. The waterfalls were added in Brick Pond Park to move water throughout the system and to provide aeration to increase the oxygen available for plants and aquatic creatures. The restored ponds now function as a healthy wetland system. The City of North Augusta maintains the restored wetlands for wildlife use and created Brick Pond Park to re-entail wildlife and people to the riverfront of North Augusta.



**Borrow Pit Pond**



**Ponds Before Restoration**

**Welding Debris**



For more information on the restoration and development of Brick Pond Park, visit our website [www.northaugusta.net](http://www.northaugusta.net)

**Waste Bricks**



**Pottery Kilns**



**Large Mill to Mix the Soils and Clays**



**Perched Wetland Before**

**Remnant of Brick Making Plant**



**Pottery Kilns**



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