

PEARL RIVER BOATWAY

ROSS BARNETT RESERVOIR TO JACKSON AREA

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The reach of the Pearl River presented in this Atlas extends from the Ross Barnett Reservoir to Conway Slough, a distance of 16.4 river miles. The river flows in its natural channel from the reservoir to the Gulf, Mobile & Ohio Railroad bridge at Jackson and has been canalized from the railroad bridge to 0.4 mile upstream from the Woodrow Wilson Bridge. Staging and clearing have been done from the canalized reach to 0.2 mile below the mouth of Conway Slough.

The width in the natural channel varies from 120 feet at low stage to 200 feet at bankfull stage and in the canalized channel from 100 to 300 feet.

At a stage of 25.4 feet on the reservoir tailwater gage, a depth of only 1-1/2 feet occurs on some shoals in the natural channel. At higher stages, proportionately greater draft is available for boating (see notes on map). The canalized reach of the river becomes shallow and hard to navigate at a river stage of 1.5 feet on the Jackson gage. Sand bars in the new channel shift about and influence the depth. Most of the snags have been removed from below the waterworks to Conway Slough, but some remain in the natural channel. Snag and shoal areas are shown on the map, and the boatman should be alert for these navigation hazards. One navigation hazard at all except very high stages is the low-head dam at the Jackson Water Works. Water flows over this dam, but no attempt should be made to cross it in a boat at low and medium river stages. Canoes and small boats can be carried around the dam.

Banks are relatively steep along this reach of the river, but there are several places where one may land his boat and stretch his legs. The sand bars exposed during periods of low flow are good picnic and rest areas. Permission for camping should be obtained from property owner.

The river is relatively free of pollution, although sediment may cause it to be muddy. The water is suitable for recreation, but it should not be used for drinking.

Along the reach, fishermen may catch large-mouth bass; black and white crappie; bluegill; redear; chain pickerel; warmouth; and channel, blue, flathead, and spoonbill catfish. Game that might be encountered include deer, squirrel, rabbit, beaver, raccoon, opossum, mink, otter, and muskrat. Wild turkey and various species of ducks also frequent the area. Wooded areas which border the river include cypress, magnolia, hickory, oaks, cottonwood, willow, gum, elm, bay, wild fruite, and flowering vegetation.

Free-boat times shown on this Atlas are based on floating trips made by personnel of the U.S. Geological Survey. Paddles were used only to keep the boat in the main thread of the stream. The float trips were made at near-steady river stages and when winds were minimal. Variation from these conditions will cause divergence from the float times in the tables.

The tables may be used to estimate the time required to float with the current between points on the river. For example: if one wishes to compute the time required to float from the reservoir to Mississippi State Highway 25, a distance of 9.3 miles, at a time when the river stage was about 2 feet on the Jackson gage, he would simply add the three indicated free-boat times for the three subreaches between the two locations and obtain 10-1/2 hours (3+3-1/2+4=10-1/2). Float times can also be estimated for gage heights other than those shown in the tables. If the river stage is 10.0 feet on the Jackson gage, one would interpolate between values shown to obtain 5-3/4 hours (1+2-1/4+2-1/2=5-3/4) for the reach discussed above.

The stage of the Pearl River at Jackson and at the reservoir is published daily in local newspapers and announced by radio.

LEFLEURS BLUFF

In 1792 a young French Canadian trader, Louis LeFleur, established a trading post and kept boat business on the high bluffs on the west bank of the Pearl River at a location not far from what is now Jackson's downtown area. The bluffs extend some distance along the river and afforded a strategic outlook for the white settlers as they had for the Choctaw Indians before them. LeFleur's trading post became the focal point of the region, not only for transactions of business but also as an eating place. Tradition says that General Andrew Jackson, Colonel Thomas Hinds, and other distinguished gentlemen stopped here for their meals. This trading post was known far and wide as LeFleur's Bluff.

The question of the location of the State Capitol in Mississippi was a troublesome one from the early territorial days. In 1821 the General Assembly directed that Commissioners of the State as a permanent site for the new capitol. The beautiful and healthful surroundings, good water, abundance of timber, navigable streams, nearness to the Natchez Trace, and its central location caused the Commissioners to decide upon LeFleur's Bluff as the location for the capitol. The General Assembly agreed that the Capitol be named Jackson in honor of Andrew Jackson.



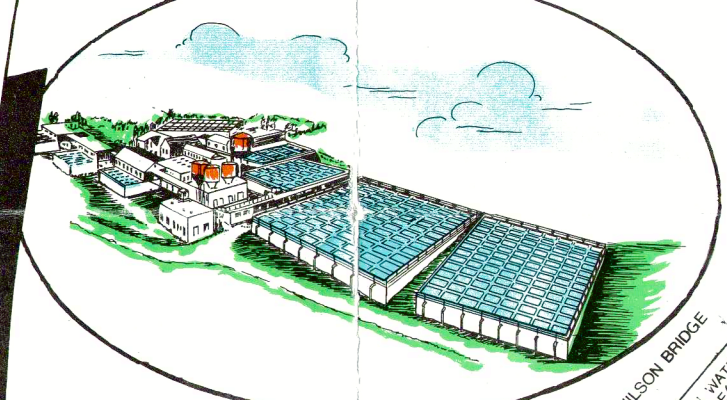
JACKSON WATER WORKS

One of the principal manmade structures along this section of the river is the low-head dam and pumping station at the Jackson Water Works at mile 11.1. The function of this impressive plant is to turn the muddy water of the Pearl River into pure drinking water, free of color, odor, taste, and bacteria.

Jackson's public water supply dates back to 1888 when a small private water company was organized. This company pumped untreated water from the Pearl River to its customers in Jackson. The only treatment this water might receive was filtration through a small charcoal filter installed by the consumer in his home. The filter removed dirt and some of the odor and taste, but it had no effect on bacteria.

In 1908 the city of Jackson bought the private company, but still no attempt was made to treat the water. In 1914 the Jackson Water Works Plant was built and, with the coming of scientific purification, water-carried diseases all but vanished in Jackson. The original plant included four 1 mgd (million gallons per day) filters.

By 1935 Jackson had grown to a city of 60,000 and the plant was enlarged to include ten 1 mgd filters. In 1970, after several additions and remodeling, the plant had a rated capacity of 35 mgd to serve 175,000 people. The plant's 22 filters range in size from the recently modernized 1 mgd units to the larger and newer 2-1/2 mgd filters.



ROSS BARNETT RESERVOIR

The Ross Barnett Reservoir, a 50-square-mile lake, reaches from the main dam just north of Jackson to within 6 miles of Carthage in Leake County, a distance by water of 43 miles.

The project had its beginning when the people of the area acted to satisfy the urgent need for an adequate water supply as well as a site for water-based recreation. In 1958 the Mississippi State Legislature created the Pearl River Valley Water Supply District which was empowered to construct, operate, and maintain a reservoir on the Pearl River. A \$25,000,000 bond issue was passed and construction was begun on the largest single project ever undertaken by the people of Mississippi. The dam was completed and storage began in 1962.

The reservoir is operated solely for recreational and water supply purposes, thus allowing the district to maintain the water level in the lake within 1 foot of its normal level of 296 feet above mean sea level.

The main dam is an earth-filled structure 64 feet high and approximately 3-1/2 miles long. Its 10 concrete spillway gates have a total discharge capacity of 180,000 cubic feet per second.

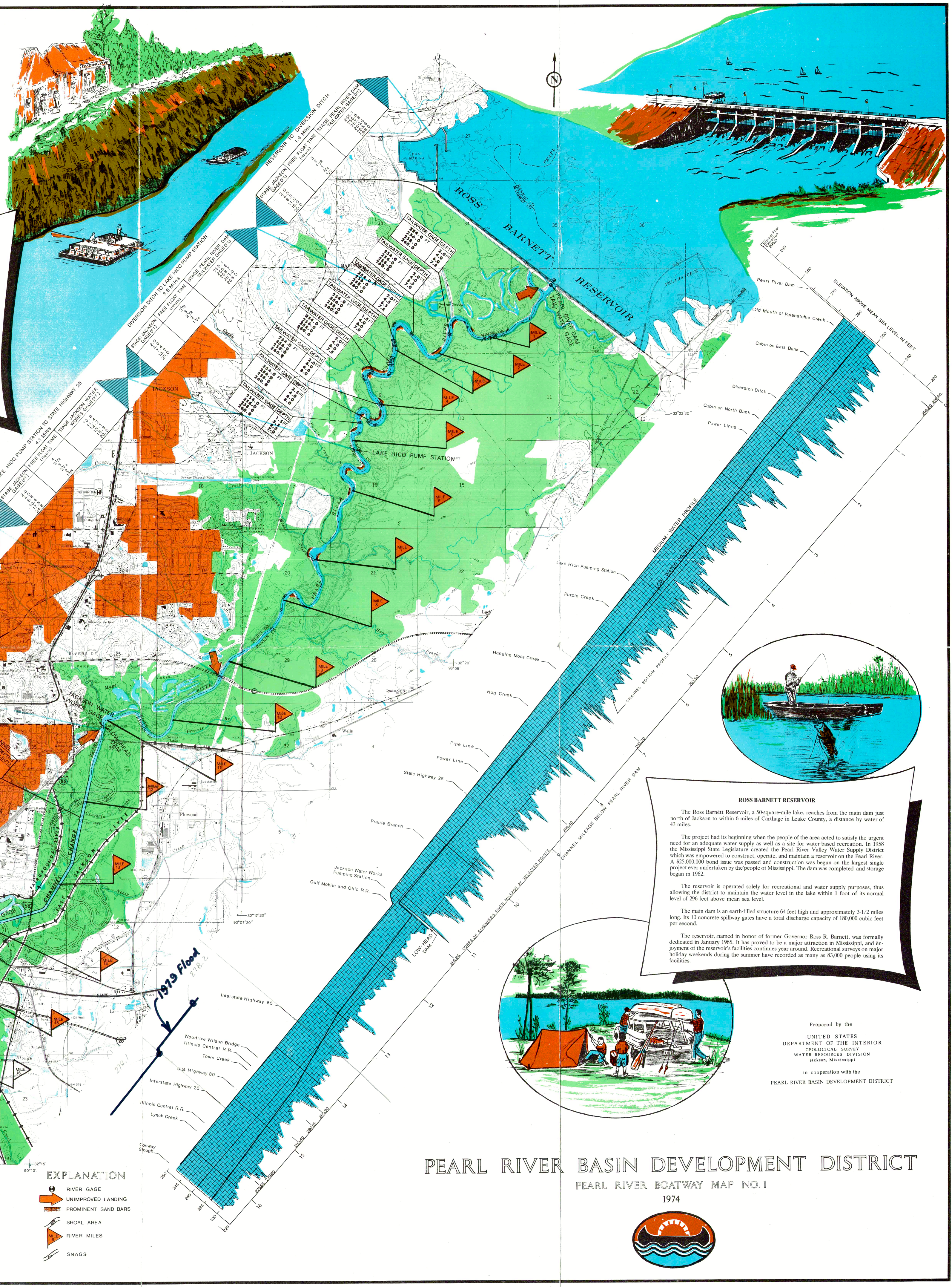
The reservoir, named in honor of former Governor Ross R. Barnett, was formally dedicated in January 1965. It has proved to be a major attraction in Mississippi, and enjoyment of the reservoir's facilities continues year around. Recreational surveys on major holiday weekends during the summer have recorded as many as 83,000 people using its facilities.



Prepared by the
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JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI
in cooperation with the
PEARL RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

PEARL RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT PEARL RIVER BOATWAY MAP NO. 1

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- EXPLANATION**
- RIVER GAGE
 - UNIMPROVED LANDING
 - PROMINENT SAND BARS
 - SHOAL AREA
 - RIVER MILES
 - SNAGS

Map compiled, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Cartography by URS and Associates
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial
photographs taken 1960. Field checked 1963.
Base modifications 1968.

SCALE
CONTOUR INTERVAL, 10 FEET
DOTTED LINES REPRESENT 1 FOOT CONTOURS
DASHED LINES REPRESENT 5 FOOT CONTOURS

