

CANAL HIWASSEE CANAL		(TENNESSEE)	(FOR ACS USE)	
STATUS SURVEYED ONLY			DATES OF CONSTRUCTION & CLOSURE	
LOCATION (ENDPOINTS OF CANAL) From a point on the Conasauga creek, 100 yds. west of Rt. 411, 1/2 m. north of Ga. line, to Ocoee creek, 2 m. east of #411 and 1/2 m. north of Rt. 64.			LENGTH CANAL 12 SLACKWATER 0 TOTAL 12	
LIFT LOCKS	NBR. 15	DIMENSIONS LOCK CHAMBER ? OVERALL _____		AQUEDUCTS NBR. 0 SECTION SIZE _____
TUNNELS 0				
DESCRIPTION: (Type of navigation, features of note (include USGS coordinates where useful); e.g., feeders (navigable & otherwise), locks other than above, type of locks, use of unusual material or methods of construction, present owner, present use & condition, etc.)				
<p>In 1826, the Tennessee Assembly chartered the Hiwassee Canal Co. to build between the above points. In turn, Congress was petitioned to obtain permission of the Cherokee Nation to build in their territory. The Indians refused but the War Department, April, 1827, sent Lt. Jefferson Vail and James Swift, a civil engineer, to survey the proposed route. Their report was published by the War Dept. in 1828. In effect, the route was feasible, with 5 locks from the Conasauga to the summit and 10 locks down to the Ocoee. A prism 50' wide and 5' deep was suggested. By the time the Cherokees had been removed, the railroads had begun to penetrate the back country and the scheme died. The dream of connecting the Gulf of Mexico and the upper Tennessee basin, is however, still very much alive. The current plans for a canal between the Warrior River and the Tennessee in Alabama is the same scheme, much enlarged.</p>				
NAMES & ADDRESSES OF GROUPS CONCERNED WITH CANAL'S PRESERVATION/RESTORATION: None Known				
REPORTER'S NAME & ADDRESS: L. W. Richardson, Rt. 2, Box 346, Gainesville, Ga. 30501				DATE May 12, 1973
HISTORICAL SUMMARY: (Original aims of company, date of incorporation, prominent engineers, cause of closure, significant alterations to structure or route, height of traffic date, transfers of ownership, etc.)				
<p>This route is the site of an Indian portage at least 400 years old. When the white settlers in East Tennessee were desperate in their hunt for an easier, shorter way to the Gulf coast markets than the traditional Tennessee, Ohio, Mississippi river route, they began to use this portage. There then developed what was possibly the first amphibious freight operation in North America. Two Cherokees of mixed blood, established boat yards and stores at the points mentioned as canal termini, Hilderbrand on the Ocoee and McNair on the Conasauga. They built heavy wagons, similar to a modern boat trailer, and for a fee, pulled loaded boats over the portage, utilizing as many as six span of oxen. The first record of this is in the Montgomery (Ala) Republican, March, 1821. It announces arrival of a boat from near Kingsport, 50' x 6' by 6' depth, 100 barrels, that had come "near 1000 miles" by the Tennessee, Hiwassee, Ocoee, Conasuga, Oostanaula and Coosa rivers, without unloading! In 1827, 12,000 gals. of whiskey</p>				
BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: (Published works relating to Canal) (alone, went over the route!				
<p>TENNESSEE, A HISTORY, Phillip M. Hamer, New York, 1933  SCRAP BOOK HISTORY OF POLK COUNTY (Tenn.), John M. Wooten, Chattanooga Public Library.  HISTORY OF NAVIGATION ON THE TENNESSEE, H. Doc. 254, Washington, 1936.  FLATBOAT TRADE IN EAST TENNESSEE, J. D. Clemmer, KNOXVILLE SENTINEL, Jan. 18, 1925</p>				
UNPUBLISHED RECORDS, LOCATION OF PHOTOS, DRAWINGS & IMPORTANT PERIODICAL REFERENCES				
NATIONAL REGISTER & HAER (HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD) STATUS:				
RETURN TO: CANAL INDEX COMMITTEE, C/O P.H. STOTT, MAINES ROAD, MOUNT KISCO, NEW YORK 10549				

USE ADDITIONAL SHEETS AS NECESSARY.  
TO MAKE AN INDEX CARD SUITABLE FOR FILING, CUT ALONG THE HEAVY LINES AND FOLD BACK ALONG THE DOTTED LINE.