

The Santee Project: A Detour to Success

Overview

Students will be introduced to the Old Santee Canal and the Santee Cooper Project. They will become familiar with the two topics, map specific locations, and weigh the positive and negative aspects of the project.

Connection to the Curriculum

This lesson is related to geography, science, language arts, and South Carolina History.

South Carolina Social Studies Academic Standards

- 8-2.5 Explain the economic and political tensions between the people of the Upcountry and the Lowcountry of South Carolina, including the economic struggles of both groups following the American Revolution, their disagreement over representation in the General Assembly and the location of the new capital city, and the transformation of the state's economy that was caused by the production of cotton and convinced lowcountry men to share power with upcountry men.
- 8-6.5 Explain the effects of the Great Depression and the lasting impact of New Deal programs on South Carolina, including the Rural Electrification Act, the Civilian Conservation Corps, Works Progress Administration and Public Works Administration building projects, the Social Security Act, and the Santee Cooper electricity project.

Social Studies Literacy Elements

F. Ask geographic questions: Where is it located? Why is it there? What is significant about its location? How is its location related to that of other people, places, and environments?

P. Locate, gather, and process information from a variety of primary and secondary sources including maps

S. Interpret and synthesize information obtained from a variety of sources—graphs, charts, tables, diagrams, texts, photographs, documents, and interviews

Time

Two to three fifty-minute class periods

Materials

South Carolina: An Atlas

(Optional) 27-minute video – “Santee Canal – America’s First Superhighway”

South Carolina Interactive Geography (SCIG) disc

Computer

South Carolina Highway map

Dry erase markers

Objectives

1. Students will become familiar with the Old Santee Canal.
2. Students will research the Santee Cooper Dam Project.
3. Students will locate selected sites on a map.
4. Students will compare the positive and negative aspects of the project.
5. Students will be able to explain why a rediversion canal was needed.

Procedures

1. (Optional) Watch the video “Santee Canal: America’s First Superhighway”. Discuss some of the problems which were experienced during the building of the canal. Have the students orally explain what led to the end of the canal.
2. In a group of four locate and mark with a dry erase marker the following sites on the South Carolina Highway Map: Santee River, Santee National Wildlife Refuge, Santee Dam, Lake Marion, Lake Moultrie, the diversion canal between the two lakes, Pinopolis Dam, Francis Marion National Forest, Cooper River, Bonneau, Saint Stephen, Moncks Corner, Old Santee Canal State Park, I-95 where it crosses Lake Marion, and the rediversion canal going from Lake Moultrie back into the Santee River. This needs to be checked for accuracy once it is completed.
3. Trace the rivers that make up the Santee River System. (Broad, Saluda, Catawba, Congaree, Wateree, and Santee) A map of the South Carolina rivers can be found on page 4 of *South Carolina: An Atlas*.
4. View a portion of SCIG – “Environment and Society” – How Human Actions Modify the Physical Environment – click on the Santee Cooper Dam Project. Use the disk as a resource in completing the following activities.
5. Create a chart showing the positive and negative aspects of the Santee Cooper Project. This will be done as a group.
6. Each group will prepare a written explanation of why the rediversion canal was needed.
7. Each student will write a brief paper concluding if the project should be judged a failure or a success and include the reasons why they feel this way.

Suggested Evaluation

1. Completion of map activities.
2. See attached evaluation.

Extensions

1. Map other canals found during this time period. *South Carolina: An Atlas*, page 21.
2. Research and prepare a report on malaria.
3. Contact the Old Santee Canal or the Santee Cooper Project for more information.
4. What was the purpose of the Columbia Canal? Describe the various uses of this canal.
5. Compare the building of Lake Murray to Lakes Marion and Moultrie.

Resources

South Carolina Highway Map, South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism

“Santee Canal: America’s First Superhighway”

Santee Cooper Corporate Communications

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South Carolina: An Atlas and South Carolina Interactive Geography Disc (SCIG)

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www.cas.sc.edu/cege

South Carolina: The Making of a Landscape. Charles F. Kovacik and John J. Winberry.

University of South Carolina Press. Columbia, 1989.

Santee Cooper

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Moncks Corner, SC 29461

(843) 761-8000

The Santee Project Group Evaluation

Group Members

1. Locate and mark the following sites on the South Carolina Highway Map: Santee National Wildlife Refuge, Santee Dam, Lake Marion, Lake Moultrie, the diversion canal between the two lakes, Pinopolis Dam, Francis Marion National Forest, Cooper River, Bonneau, Saint Stephen, Moncks Corner, Old Santee Canal State park, I-95 where it crosses Lake Marion, and the rediversion canal going from Lake Moultrie back into the Santee River. This activity is worth up to 25 points and needs to be checked by the teacher. Points earned = _____.
2. Trace the rivers that make up the Santee River System. (Broad, Saluda, Catawba, Congaree, Wateree, and Santee) Using the map scale found on the map, estimate the total in miles of this river system. This activity is worth 25 points and needs to be checked by the teacher. Estimation in miles = _____. Points earned = _____.
3. View a portion of SCIG – “Environment and Society” – How Human Actions Modify the Physical Environment – click on the Santee Cooper Dam Project. Use the disc as a resource in completing the following activities.
4. On another piece of paper create a chart showing the positive and negative aspects of the Santee Cooper Project. This is worth up to 25 points and needs to be turned in to the teacher. Points earned = _____.
5. Explain fully why the rediversion canal was needed. This activity needs to include a written explanation and a visual aid. This is worth up to 25 points and will be turned in to the teacher. Points earned = _____.

Total Points Earned = _____

**Evaluation
Judgement Paper
Santee Project**

Name of Student _____

1. Content – (30 points) _____

2. Organization – (25 points) _____

3. Justified Conclusion – (25 points) _____

4. Mechanics – (15 points) _____

5. Neatness – (5 points) _____

Total Points _____

Additional Comments:

Background Information

THE OLD SANTEE CANAL

In the late 1700's, crops from the upland fields had to be hauled by wagon or floated down the Santee River into the Atlantic Ocean and then shipped along the coast to Charleston. An easier and more cost-effective method was needed. The first attempt to link Charleston and Columbia by connecting the Santee River with the Cooper River took place in the 1790's. The construction of the Santee Canal took seven years and cost \$650,000. It was 22 miles long, 35 feet wide, and 5 and a half feet deep. The canal was opened to traffic in 1801 with peak usage occurring around 1830. The railroad systems started taking over most of the cotton traffic after this. Most of the original canal now lies beneath Lake Moultrie

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SANTEE COOPER PROJECT

The plan to connect Columbia and Charleston was reborn in the early 1930's during the Great Depression. Cotton prices were low and unemployment was high. The South Carolina General Assembly created the South Carolina Public Service Authority in 1934. The authority was to build canals, dams, power plants, and to divert the Santee.

The Works Progress Administration (WPA) was responsible for clearing the land. This began in 1939 and drew in workers from all over the state. Experts joined the project to tackle the problem of malaria. This improved the health of the entire area. The Resettlement Division was established to help in relocating the families who lived in the areas that would be flooded by the project.

The last spillway gates were closed on the Santee Dam in 1941 and waters began to fill Lakes Marion and Moultrie. Santee Cooper produced its first electricity in 1942. Santee Cooper now serves customers in Berkley, Georgetown, and Horry counties.