

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED NATIONAL REGISTER/GEORGIA REGISTER NOMINATION

1. Name: High Shoals Historic District

2. Location: State Route 186 in the communities of High Shoals and North High Shoals in Oconee, Morgan, and Walton counties, Georgia.

USGS Quadrangle: High Shoals, Ga.

3a. Description: The High Shoals Historic District is a small farming and mill town on the north and south banks of the Apalachee River, a tributary of the Oconee River. The Piedmont community is located in the steeply sloping river valley at the intersection of Oconee, Morgan, and Walton counties 14 miles southwest of Athens. The hourglass-shaped historic district is narrowest at the S.R. 186 bridge, which crosses the river just above the shoals. Upper and lower dams used to regulate the flow of the river are located above the site of the textile mill on the south bank. In 1928, the mill was destroyed by fire and only ruins of the foundations survive. Roughly a dozen of the 50 mill houses that were built in c.1900 remain along S.R. 186. These include saddlebag, central-hall, Georgian-plan, and gabled-ell cottages and the two-story saddlebag duplex that was built for the mill supervisors. North of the river, farming was more prevalent and farm families built larger center-hall, Georgian-plan, and gabled-ell houses. Ranch houses were built throughout High Shoals following World War II. These houses are long with low-slung hip roofs, picture windows, carports, and zoned interior plans. The district includes two small commercial buildings on Jefferson and Hillsboro roads. Built in the early 20th century, these one-room, gable-front buildings served the community as social institutions as well as stores. Community landmark buildings include the High Shoals School (c.1910), a T-shaped, two-room schoolhouse on Frazier Road, and four small gable-front churches located throughout the historic district. The High Shoals Baptist Church (1869) and the High Shoals Methodist Church (1879) and cemetery are located opposite one another on S.R. 186 south of the Apalachee River. The Holiness Church (1914) and the High Shoals Christian Church (1906) are located on Jefferson Road, north of the river.

3b. Period of Significance: 1846-1955.

3c. Acreage: Approximately 260 acres.

3d. Boundary Explanation:

4a. National Register Criteria: A and C.

4b. National Register Areas of Significance: Architecture and Community Planning and Development.

4c. Statement of Significance: In 1846, New York native Ephraim Hopping and a group of local entrepreneurs organized the High Shoals Manufacturing Company. By 1849, the company built a water-powered textile mill on the south bank of the Apalachee River for the production of cotton yarn. In 1857, Isaac Powell reorganized the company as the New High Shoals Manufacturing Company, which produced cloth for Confederate uniforms during the Civil War. By 1900, the mill had grown to a sprawling complex of three-story brick mills and smaller buildings that housed cotton warehouses, the machine shop, dye house, and boiler house. By century's end, the mill employed up to 250 of the community's 700 residents. South of the river, Powell donated land for the construction of the Baptist and Methodist churches and built roughly 50 houses for mill workers. The mill was destroyed by fire in 1928 and was not rebuilt. Little was built in the community until after World War II when ranch houses were constructed. The High Shoals Historic District is significant in the area of architecture because the architecture of the houses and community landmark buildings are representative of buildings found in mill communities during the first half of the 20th century in Georgia. The historic district is also significant under the theme of community planning and development because mill communities were integral components of mill operations and because the plan of the High Shoal Historic District is characteristic of the irregular plans that follow the dramatic topography of their riparian settings.

4d. Suggested Level of Significance: The High Shoals Historic District is significant at local level because it is an excellent example of a small farming and mill town organized along a river valley.

5. Sponsor: The nomination is sponsored on is sponsored by the Historic High Shoals Committee. Nomination materials were prepared by a consultant.