



GREAT TRAILS STATE COALITION

TRAIL GROUPS WORKING TOGETHER TO SUCCESSFULLY INFLUENCE POLICY

Palmer McIntyre

Piedmont Land Conservancy/Piedmont Legacy Trails

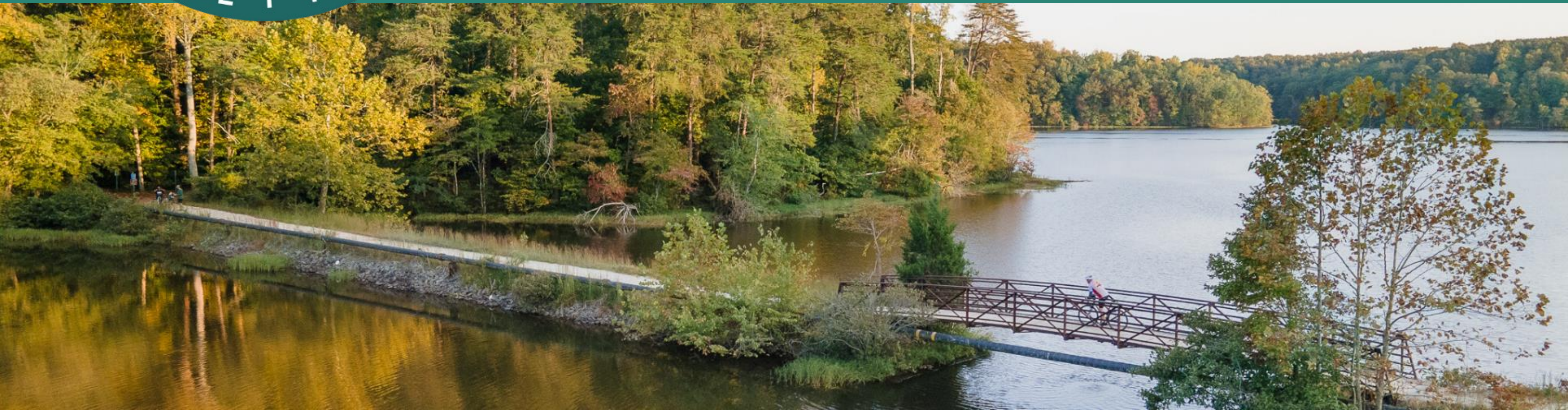


Image by Piedmont Fat Tire Society



Image by Piedmont Legacy Trails



Image by NC State Parks



Image by
NCDOT



WHO WE ARE

- A broad, diverse coalition committed to bringing the benefits of trails to all of North Carolina
- All trail types: Hike / Bike / Walk / Run / Paddle / Ride
- All 100 Counties
- Advising partners: NC State Parks, NCDOT, NC Outdoor Recreation Industry Office, Visit NC





THE BIG BOLD VISION

- Secure sustained state funding for trails
- Brand North Carolina as “The Great Trails State”

WHY

- Historically, very little direct state investment in trails and greenways



FLORIDA

Since 2015, State Legislature appropriates \$25M annually to implement projects in the Florida Greenways and Trails System Plan.



NEW YORK

In 2017, a plan was announced by the Governor to create a continuous 750 mile trail connecting New York City to Canada and Buffalo to Albany and appropriated \$200M for project.

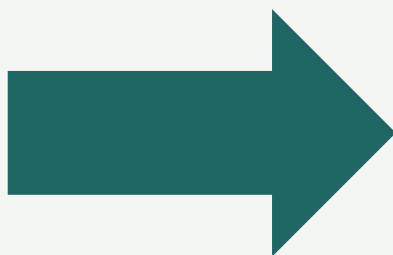


The Great Trails State Coalition Builds & Expands Upon on NCDOT's Plan



THE PLAN

Led by NCDOT & focuses on shared use paths
connecting all 100 counties



THE COALITION

Led by broad -based coalition & focuses on
investment -ready trail projects of all types
throughout NC

OUR STEPS TO SUCCESS



GATHER THE
PARTNERS



SET THE
GOALS



MAKE THE
CASE

Data:

- economic
- health
- safety
- unmet demand



BUILD THE
INFRASTRUCTURE

- Webpage
- Briefing
- Paper/Handouts



BUILD
RELATIONSHIPS



COALITION PARTNERS



CAROLINA
THREAD
TRAIL.



THE
CONSERVATION FUND



COALITION PARTNERS

STATE AGENCIES



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THE GOALS

BUILDING NATURE TRAILS

NC State Parks

Recurring Funding:
\$2.3M to strengthen the
NC Trails Program and
support official State
Trails

Non-recurring
Funding: \$18M for trail
construction and land
purchase dollars

BUILDING GREENWAYS

NCDOT/OREC

Non-recurring
Funding:
\$45M to leverage
federal dollars for
paved greenways and
\$2M for rural
feasibility studies

SUPPORTING TOURISM

Visit NC

Recurring Funding:
\$100,000 to help rural
communities promote
tourism

Non-Recurring
Funding:
\$150,000 to create a
Great Trails State web
portal

DESIGNATE 2023 YEAR OF THE TRAIL

In the 2021 long
session both the
House and Senate
passed a bill declaring
2023 the Year of the
Trail.

**It was signed into law
on August 18, 2021**

FUNDING SUCCESS!



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WHY TRAILS?





WHY TRAILS?

A NCDOT study of a **one-time \$26.7M** investment in just 4 NC trails created the following economic impacts:



\$19.4M

Estimated annual sales revenue at local businesses along the four greenways



\$25.7M

Estimated annual savings due to more physical activity, less pollution and congestion, and fewer traffic injuries from greenway use



\$48.7M

Estimated business revenue from greenway construction



790 JOB

Are supported annually through greenway construction

Every **\$1.00** spent on trail construction generates **\$1.72 ANNUALLY** from local business revenue, sales tax revenue, & benefits related to health and transportation.



"Outdoor Recreation is a \$28 Billion Industry in North Carolina.

Our greenways and blueways are the infrastructure that supports that industry. Outdoor recreation is going to play a huge role in the COVID recovery process. There is no question that a project like this is great for the health of our residents and the health of our economy."

- AMY ALLISON, NC OUTDOOR RECREATION INDUSTRY OFFICE

Photo: Bicycle Tourism and Outdoor Recreation Spending in Duck, NC by Jason Reyes, Alta





WHY TRAILS?

Statewide Independent Bicycle and Pedestrian Funding Comparison

STATE DOT	ANNUAL BUDGET	POPULATION IN 2019 (IN MILLIONS)	BIKE/PED \$S SPENT PER PERSON	% OF BUDGET FOR INDEPENDENT BIKE/ PED PROJECTS
Georgia	\$1 million - \$5 million	10.62	\$0.09 - \$0.47	0.1% to 0.5%
Tennessee	\$10 million - \$50 million	6.83	\$1.46 - \$7.32	0.05% to 0.1%
Florida	\$10 million - \$50 million	21.48	\$0.46 - \$2.33	>2%
Montana	\$5 million - \$10 million	1.07	\$4.67 - \$9.35	1% to 2%
Louisiana	\$5 million - \$10 million	4.65	\$1.08 - \$2.15	0.5% to 1%
Arkansas	\$5 million - \$10 million	3.02	\$1.66 - \$3.31	
Virginia	< \$1 million	8.54	< \$0.12	>2%
Missouri	< \$1 million	6.14	< \$0.16	<0.05%
North Carolina	< \$1 million	10.49	< \$0.10	<0.05%

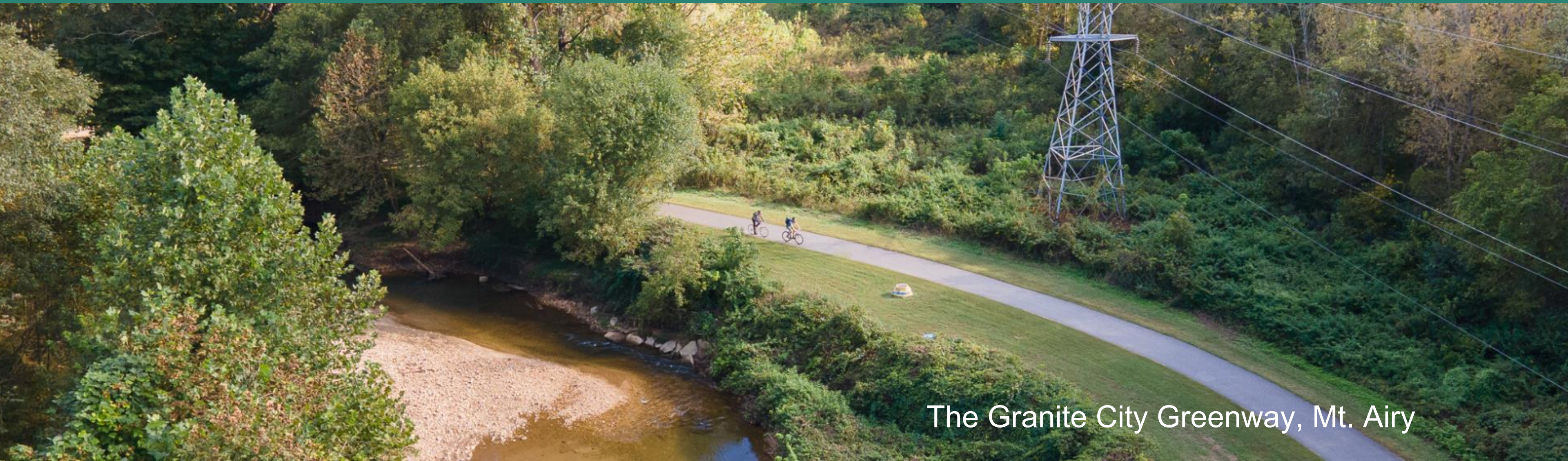
Source: Bench-marking Non-motorized Policies and Project Delivery, 2020





STATE FUNDING WILL LEVERAGE FEDERAL INVESTMENT FOR HARD SURFACE TRAILS

- To serve as local match to leverage new federal dollars



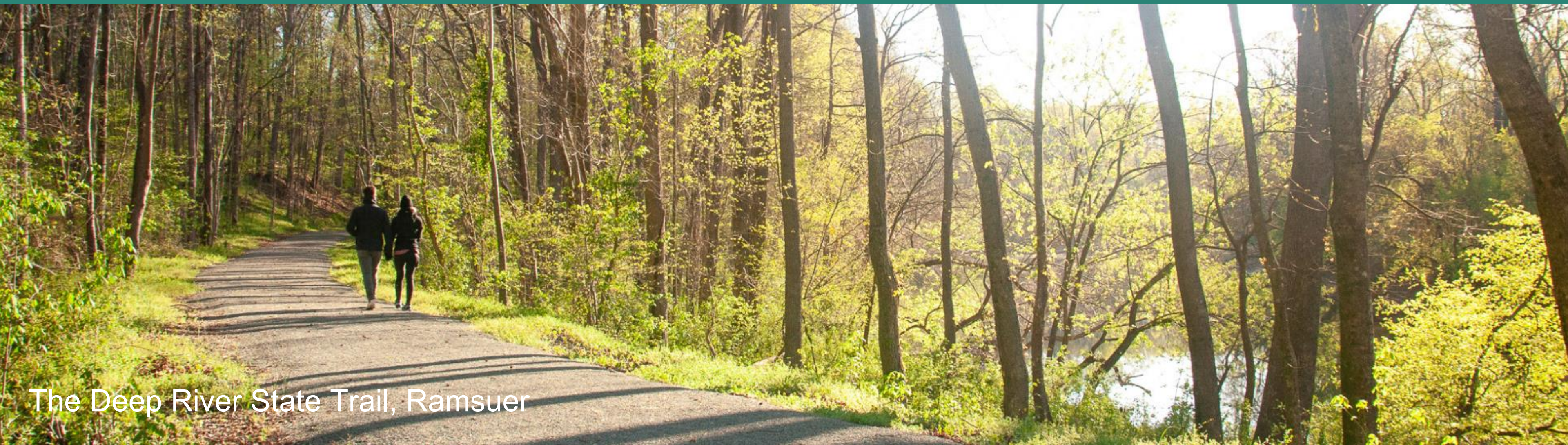
The Granite City Greenway, Mt. Airy



STATE FUNDING FOR RURAL TRAIL PLANNING

THE MISSING LINK

- Many rural NC communities need this type of “seed” funding to get their projects construction -ready through planning, feasibility, and preliminary design work
- This is key to meeting many Federal requirements for construction funds, serving as a catalyst for rural economic development



The Deep River State Trail, Ramsuer



STATE FUNDING FOR NATURAL SURFACE TRAILS

- Hiking, Mountain Biking, Paddling, and Horseback
- To support the authorized State Trails as well as local natural surface trails

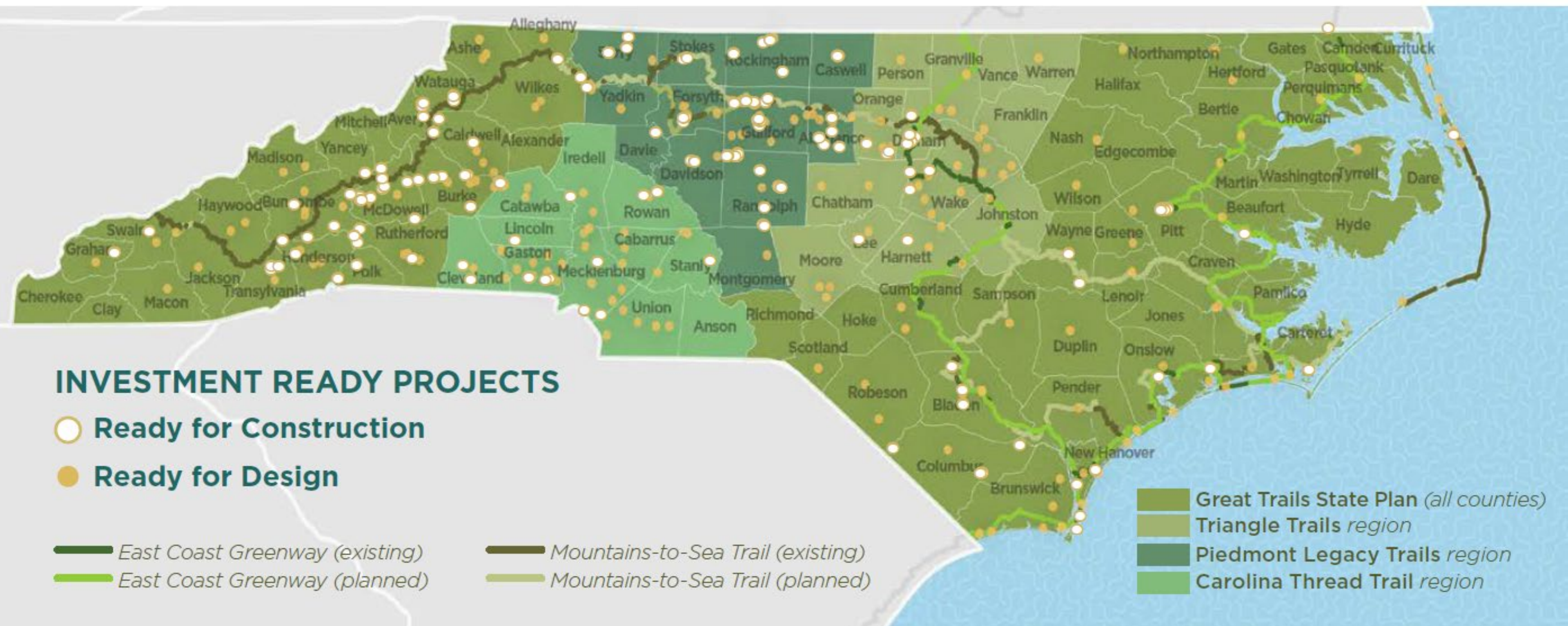


Mountains -to -Sea Trail, Balsam Grove



INVESTMENT READY

Communities have invested in planning and identified trail projects in all 100 counties.



OUR STEPS TO SUCCESS

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BUILD THE INFRASTRUCTURE

INFRASTRUCTURE/SUPPORTS

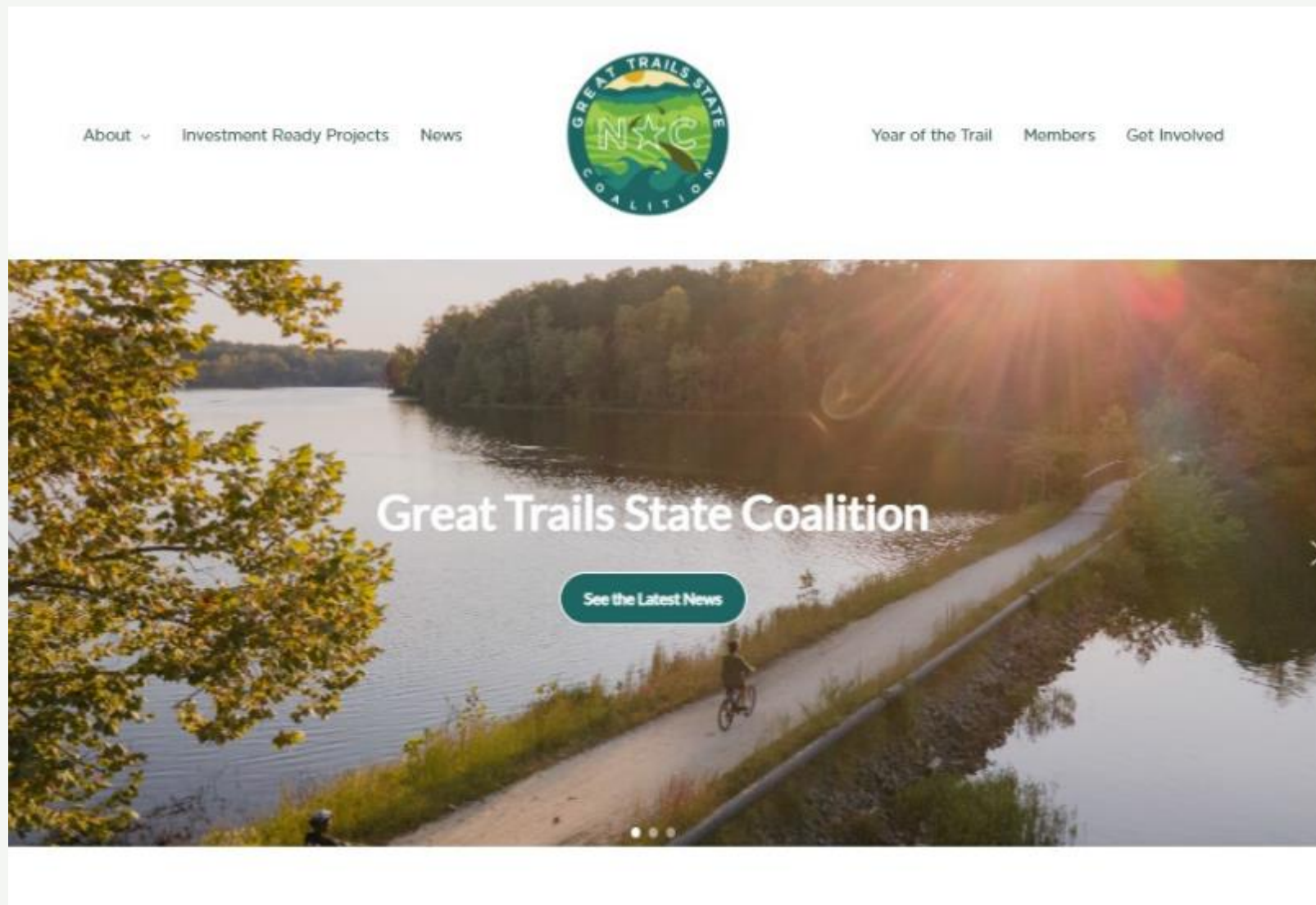
Develop the messaging

- Clarifying the messaging
- Writing scripts

Develop the delivery processes

- Webpage
- Handouts

WWW.GREATTRAILSNC.ORG



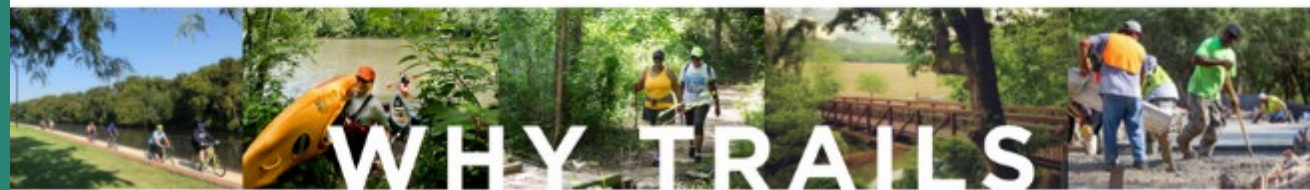
BUILD THE INFRASTRUCTURE



The Great Trails State Coalition

Who We Are: A broad, diverse coalition committed to bringing the benefits of trails to all of North Carolina.

All Trail Types • All 100 Counties
Hike | Bike | Walk | Run | Paddle | Ride



WHY TRAILS

Healthy Residents

Trail use has increased more than **300%** in some places in the last year. The pandemic has demonstrated how eager North Carolinians are for safe places to be outside in nature.

Thriving Economy

Outdoor recreation is a **\$28 billion** industry, and will be an important part of our economic recovery from Covid-19. New trails can help build both physical and economic connections and allow us to capitalize on NC's natural beauty, warm people and rich history.

Statewide Impact

NCDOT's Great Trails State Plan, to be published in 2021, is a plan to connect all 100 NC counties by trails. State funding will provide matching dollars for significant federal funds and speed investment ready projects to completion, benefitting citizens and the outdoor recreation economy.

Transportation Choices

Off-road trail networks help people safely get to their destinations. Each year more than 3,000 pedestrians and 850 bicyclists are hit by vehicles in North Carolina, making NC one of the most dangerous states in the US for walking and bicycling.

RETURN on INVESTMENT:

EVERY \$1.00 SPENT ON TRAIL CONSTRUCTION GENERATES \$1.72 ANNUALLY FROM LOCAL BUSINESS REVENUE, SALES TAX REVENUE, & BENEFITS RELATED TO HEALTH & TRANSPORTATION.

A NCDOT study of a **one-time \$26.7M** investment in just 4 NC trails created the following economic impacts:



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NEXT STEPS

The Great Trails State Coalition recommends building upon NC's trail legacy by investing in and expanding our current trail systems:

Build Nature Trails NC State Parks		Build Greenways DOT/OREC		Support Tourism Visit NC	
Recurring	Non-Recurring	Non-Recurring	Non-Recurring	Recurring	Non-Recurring
\$2.3M to strengthen the NC Trails Program and support official State Trails	\$18M for construction and land purchase dollars	\$45M to leverage federal dollars for paved greenways	\$2M for rural feasibility studies	\$100,000 to help rural communities promote tourism	\$150,000 to construct a Great Trails State web portal

Apart from some PARTF funding, there is no current state investment in trail construction. All State dollars spent for trail construction are federal pass through funds. NC lags far behind peer states in state investment in trail construction.

Officially designate **2023** as NC Year of the Trail to celebrate and spur trail growth.

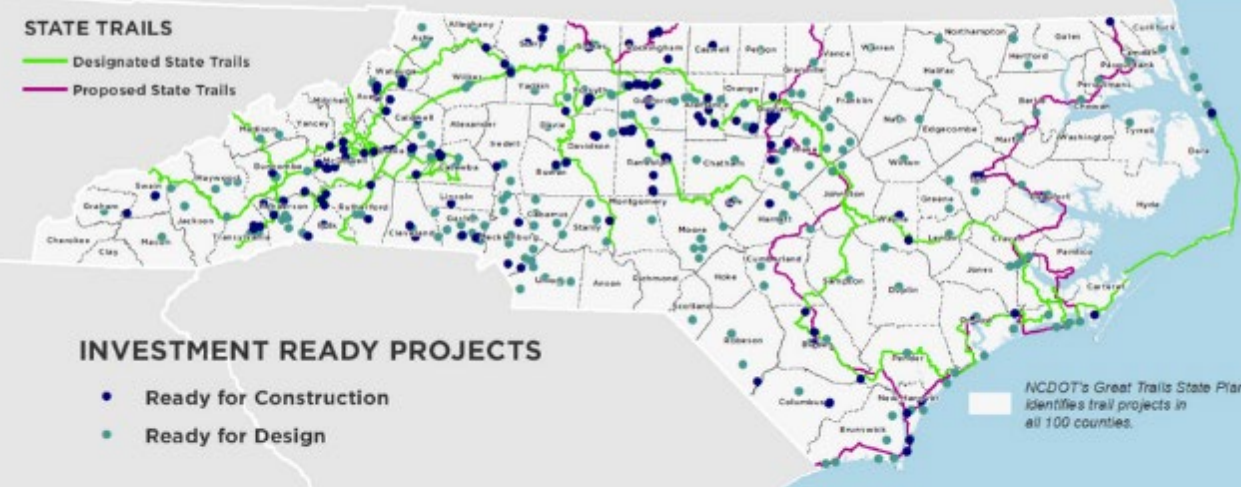


INVESTMENT READY

There are 157 projects in 52 counties, representing an estimated \$230 million of construction costs. NC DOT's Great Trails State Plan identifies future projects in all 100 counties.

STATE TRAILS

- Designated State Trails
- Proposed State Trails



INVESTMENT READY PROJECTS

- Ready for Construction
- Ready for Design

NCDOT's Great Trails State Plan identifies trail projects in all 100 counties.

With NC investment in trails, we can create jobs, support rural economies, create safe places for healthy recreation, and improve quality of life in communities in all 100 NC counties.

www.GreatTrailsNC.org

Want more information?

Contact Tony Solari at (919)744-8803 or solarigovernmentsolutions@gmail.com



OUR STEPS TO SUCCESS

GATHER THE
PARTHERS

SET THE
GOALS

MAKE THE
CASE

BUILD THE
INFRASTRUCTURE

BUILD
RELATIONSHIPS

Data:

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City of Wilmington



Jackrabbit Trail (WNC Outdoors)



Town of Duck

THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

- Role of a Lobbyist
- Identify legislative champions
 - Rep Blackwell
 - Rep Arp
 - Senator Brent Jackson
- Importance of tools
- Role of legislative departmental liaison





Yadkin River Greenway | Alta



Art-to-Heart Trail | NC DOT



Lumber River State Park | NC State Parks

THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

- Roles of Coalition Members
 - Personal visits
 - Input into bill language
 - Email campaigns
 - Letters
 - Handwritten cards
- Challenges





2021 LONG SESSION SUCCESS!

- 2023 Year of the Trail Designation
- Budget funding – first time ever
 - \$29.15 M for the Complete the Trails Fund

2021-2022 BUDGET SUCCESS!

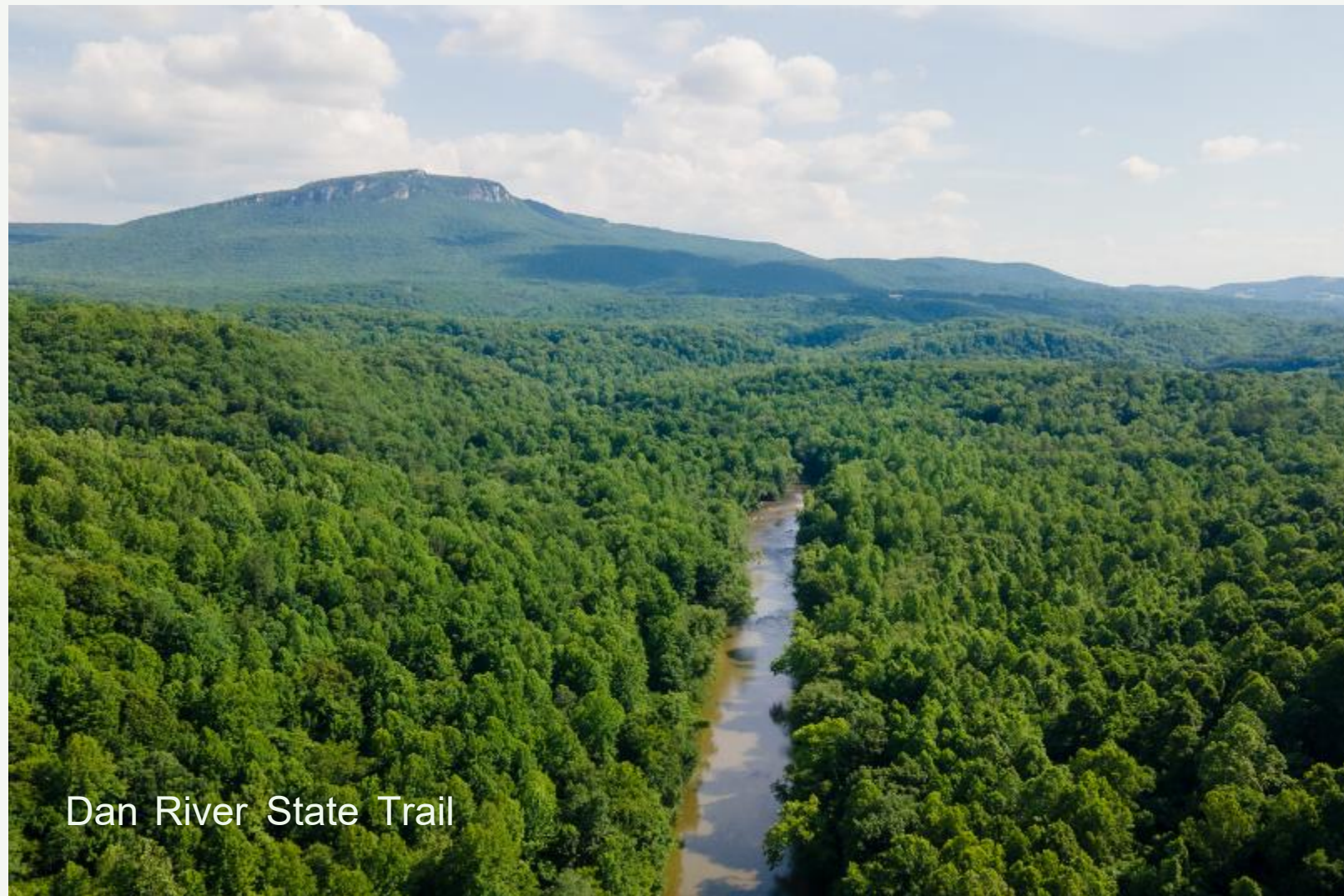
Yadkin River State Trail



- Authorizes the Roanoke River Paddle Trail (now 12 State Trails)
- Creates the **Complete the Trails Fund** for State Trails with \$29.25M NR
 - \$25.1M in grant funding for State Trails projects
 - \$50K capacity building grants for nonprofit organizations supporting State Trails (one MOU signed per State Trail)
 - \$1.025M for Dan River and Roanoke River Paddle Trails
 - \$425K for Yadkin River and French Broad Paddle Trails
 - \$2.150M to plan and develop connector trails to small municipalities (<25K) to State Trails
- A new staff position within the NC Trails Program
- \$2M for shared use path feasibility studies



2021-2022 STATE BUDGET



Dan River State Trail

Grant funding for State Trail Projects

- Planning, design, land and easement acquisition for natural surface trails and paddle trail facilities.
- Construction/rehabilitation of natural surface trails, bridges and boardwalks, and trail facilities such as trailheads and camping sites.
- Trail signage and maintenance
- Matching funds for federal grants



But that's not all...

- \$62.7 M for LWF (plus \$15 M for floodplain protection & restoration)
- \$61.7 M for PARTF in FY 2021 -22
- \$3M for the Wilderness Gateway State Trail
- \$50,000 for Northern Peaks Trail
- \$100,000 NR for Ecusta Trail
- \$750K for DuPont State Recreational Forest
- \$150,000 to Blue Ridge Conservancy for the Watauga Paddle Trail
- \$4 million for Vade Mecum at Hanging Rock State Park
- \$550,000 for Mayo River State Park land purchase
- \$4 million for Pilot Mountain Bear Shoals Trail
- \$3.1 million for Rendezvous Mountain Park, to be a satellite annex of Stone Mountain SP
- \$110,000 Town of Connelly Springs for multiple purposes including trails
- \$465,000 NR to Western Piedmont Council for Trails Development
- \$2,000,000 NR Town of Shelby Trails
- \$1,000,000 NR Moonshine and Motorsports Cultural Trails
- \$500,000 to BRC for Middle Fork Greenway
- \$450K to Archdale for greenway expansion and maintenance
- \$1.7M to Fayetteville for trail upgrades
- \$50K to Kings Mountain for Kings Mountain Gateway Trail
- \$93,100 to Lincolnton for the Lincolnton Rail Trail
- \$40K to Lansing for upgrades to the Creeper Trail
- \$250K Macon County Greenway
- \$500,000 Cape Carteret Trail
- \$50,000 Ramseur for the Deep River State Trail
- \$1,850,000 City of Gastonia Catawba Creek Greenway

\$149.2 M



SHOWCASE
PROMOTE
&
CELEBRATE
Trails

2023 YEAR OF THE TRAIL



- Public engagement
- Media attention
- Educational tracks
- Legislative connections
- NC State Parks Interpretive Theme
- Trail events in all 100 counties
- Corporate sponsorships





SHOWCASE PROMOTE & CELEBRATE Trails

2023 YEAR OF THE TRAIL



- Engage with PR firm
- Logo, colors, and branding guide to share
- Central Website to promote Events, sell YOTT branded merchandise, and share other info about trails
- Promotional video(s) (Will distribute)
- Social media handles (IG, Twitter, FB, YouTube) to promote the Year of the Trail events and information and inspiration to get on NC's trails
- Banners and signs for Year of the Trail events
- Billboard Advertising
- Conference Booth set -up
- Partnership with PBS NC
- Toolkits for local governments – how to create a YOTT event





SHOWCASE
PROMOTE
&
CELEBRATE
Trails

2023 YEAR OF THE TRAIL



“Year of the Trail will be a tremendous opportunity to highlight North Carolina’s exceptional network of trails, and educate the public and elected officials about their value to our residents and communities.”

- Kate Dixon, Executive Director, Friends of the Mountains

-to -Sea Trail





MOVING FORWARD

- Building Coalition Structure
- Year of the Trail - 2023
- Trails Caucus – launch in 2023
- Sustained trail funding for all trails



MOVING FORWARD FEDERAL SIDE



- ARPA
- Infrastructure Bill
- Build Back Better
- 2021 RAISE Projects





HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT THE EFFORTS?

- Become a member of the Great Trails State Coalition
- Get involved with Year of the Trail
 - State level
 - Fundraising
 - Planning
 - Regional/Local level
 - Organize events





Help us celebrate trails in North Carolina in 2023, and together, let's show why North Carolina is

THE GREAT TRAILS STATE

www.greattrailsnc.org